

Exploring the Nexus: Emotional Intelligence and Religious Behaviour among University Students

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Abstract

Over the past 20 years, educational, psychological, and sociological studies have concentrated on emotional intelligence. The study investigated university students' religious behaviour and emotional intelligence perceptions. The study's population was university students, and the researcher used quantitative research. The researcher sampled the population using essential random sampling. Researchers collected data from 300 university students. They conducted this investigation using a questionnaire. It was self-developed and pilot-tested, and the researcher found its validity and reliability using set procedures. The questionnaire was 0.814 Cronchbech Alpha reliable. The conclusion of the study "Exploring the Nexus: Emotional Intelligence and Religious Behaviour among University Students" sheds light on the intricate web of relationships between university students' religious behaviour, emotional intelligence, and how they perceive their own emotions. There has to be more education and understanding surrounding emotional intelligence, given that many students are clueless about it and have varying degrees of ease when expressing themselves. These findings provide a wealth of information for universities to use to pursue students' holistic well-being, particularly in areas like emotional intelligence and religious diversity.

Keywords: Emotional intelligence, Religious behaviour, University students.

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Introduction

Emotional intelligence has gained significant attention in educational, psychological, and social studies, and research has focused on it for the past 20 years. Studies have shown that individuals with high emotional intelligence are more likely to have better mental health, form stronger relationships, and succeed personally and professionally. Moreover, schools have started incorporating emotional intelligence training into their curriculum to help students develop these crucial skills. Additionally, the impact of emotional intelligence on social interactions and conflict resolution has highlighted its importance in creating a more empathetic and harmonious society (Furnham & Petrides, 2003). Research has shown that individuals with high emotional intelligence are more likely to have better mental health, form stronger relationships, and succeed personally and professionally. However, they also contribute to creating a more empathetic and harmonious society. This recognition has led schools to incorporate emotional intelligence training into their curriculum, recognizing its crucial role in developing students' social interactions and conflict-resolution skills. By equipping young individuals with emotional intelligence, we are fostering a better-equipped generation to navigate the complexities of human relationships and contribute positively to their communities (Bar-On, 2010).

Emotional intelligence is necessary for many aspects of our lives, including the quality of our personal and professional relationships and our ability to succeed in our careers. It is the ability to recognize and manage one's feelings and constructively and positively communicate them. In today's fast-paced and internationally linked society, high emotional intelligence is becoming an increasingly critical factor for successfully navigating the intricacies of human relationships and attaining personal progress. People with high emotional intelligence can connect with people more effectively, communicate efficiently, and empathize with those around them. They can

gracefully handle disputes and conflicts due to this capacity, which contributes to stronger relationships. Emotional intelligence is highly valued in the workplace because it encourages cooperation, leadership, and flexibility, which are crucial for success in today's competitive job market. Increasing one's emotional intelligence is vital for one's overall health and may significantly influence one's level of satisfaction in both their personal and professional lives (Cui, 2021).

Emotionally intelligent people can communicate their wants and desires in personal interactions, leading to more pleasant and meaningful connections for both parties. It gives people the ability to empathize with other people, understand the perspectives of others, and respond in a helpful and caring manner (Bullough, 2021). It creates mutual respect and trust amongst people, strengthening their bond. Emotional intelligence is another crucial component in successfully mediating disagreements and resolving conflicts. Emotionally intelligent people can keep calm, listen carefully, and think of constructive solutions in challenging situations rather than responding rashly or resorting to violence. This capability prevents additional damage to existing relationships and fosters a healthy and positive environment (Gueldner, 2020).

Additionally, emotional intelligence allows people to empathize with others by enabling them to appreciate their feelings and points of view. Conflicts may be addressed with empathy and understanding by acknowledging and respecting the feelings of those involved. It will result in stronger ties and a more peaceful environment. Emotional intelligence is a crucial skill that supports successful interaction, collaboration, and harmony among people, creating the framework for rewarding and long-lasting relationships. Emotional intelligence identifies, understands, and manages emotions (Cohen & Jonathan, 1999).

Emotional intelligence is necessary for both personal growth and increased self-awareness, in addition to its role in enhancing interpersonal

interactions. People with high levels of emotional intelligence can recognize and understand their feelings and how those feelings influence their thoughts and actions. As a result of their improved self-awareness, people can make better decisions and cope with the obstacles that life throws at them with greater ease and resiliency. Emotional intelligence also allows people to control their feelings and successfully deal with stressful situations, both beneficial to their mental health and overall well-being (Elias, Maurice, et al., 1997).

People with high emotional intelligence can effectively identify and interpret not only their feelings but also those of other people. Because of their capacity for empathy, they can form better connections with the people around them and have more meaningful relationships. When others are in need, emotionally intelligent people can offer support, consolation, and understanding. It enables them to experience joy and fulfilment in their lives and the lives of the people with whom they connect. For instance, a manager with a high level of emotional intelligence could see that one of their employees is experiencing feelings of being overworked and stressed out. Instead of dismissing or disregarding the employees' worries, the manager takes the time to listen to them and demonstrate that they understand those (Haynes & Norris, 2003).

Statement of the Problem

The relationship between student's emotional intelligence and religious behaviour at the university level is a multifaceted research problem that requires exploration. Addressing this gap in the literature is crucial for gaining insights into how these two elements interact and shape the lives of young adults during a pivotal stage of personal and academic development. By delving into this issue, researchers can provide valuable information that may inform educational strategies and support systems to enhance student's overall well-being and personal growth. The research topic, "Students' Emotional Intelligence and Religious Behavior at the University Level," addresses a critical aspect of

the contemporary educational landscape. Students' emotional well-being and engagement in religious activities have garnered increasing attention at universities worldwide. The study aims to get university students' perceptions of emotional intelligence and religious behaviour.

Review of Related Literature

Recognizing and comprehending one's feelings and how others experience those feelings are essential components of developing self-awareness. Self-regulation is another aspect of emotional intelligence, which refers to managing and controlling one's feelings to keep one calm and make logical judgments. Self-regulation is essential in trying circumstances because it enables people to maintain their composure and calm even in high-stress surroundings. It makes self-regulation a vital life skill. They can reason and make judgments based on reasoning instead of relying exclusively on their feelings. Self-awareness also enables people to realize the influence of their feelings on other people, enabling them to modify their actions appropriately and preserve the quality of the connections in their lives (Salovey et al., 1997).

Self-regulation is an additional essential facet of emotional intelligence that can benefit conflict resolution. It requires exerting control over their emotions and instincts, particularly when faced with challenging conditions. People who have received instruction in self-control are better able to respond rationally and calmly to challenging situations rather than reacting emotionally or aggressively. It makes finding constructive answers to problems easier and reduces the intensity of conflict. People who can self-regulate well have a better chance of maintaining their emotional well-being and keeping conflicts from becoming more heated (Zins & Joseph, 2004).

The hallmarks of motivation are the desire and capacity to persist in the face of challenges and progress toward one's objectives. It involves being able to develop and pursue one's personal as well as professional objectives despite the obstacles that may be there. Motivated people can keep their

concentration and perseverance up to achieve the goals they have set for themselves because they have a purpose in mind. They are very clear about what they want to achieve and willing to put in a lot of effort and sacrifice. A strong sense of motivation, essential for controlling and managing one's emotions, also makes it possible to maintain one's optimism and resolve in the face of adversity (Ashkanasy et al., 2002)

The capacity to comprehend and identify with another person's emotions is referred to as empathy. It enables people to connect on a deeper level, therefore demonstrating compassion and understanding. Individuals may strengthen their connections with one another, more successfully settle issues, and cultivate an environment that is both positive and welcoming when they demonstrate empathy. It is an essential component of emotional intelligence that fosters understanding and empathy in one's relationships with others. Empathy, which facilitates healthier connections and resolves problems, is critical to creating a sense of belonging and inclusion (Caruso et al., 2004).

Religious behaviour refers to any action or practice related to one's beliefs and practices in a religious or spiritual context. At the same time, Emotional Intelligence relates to an individual's mental state to perceive the religious and social context. Religious behaviour can encompass various activities, including prayer, meditation, worship, pilgrimage, fasting, charitable giving, and participation in religious ceremonies and rituals (Lowicki, 2017). These religious behaviours often significantly shape individuals' identities, values, and relationships with others. They provide a sense of purpose and meaning and offer opportunities for individuals to connect with something greater than themselves. Additionally, religious behaviours can profoundly impact individuals' well-being and mental health, as they can provide comfort, solace, and a sense of belonging.

The origins of religious behaviour can be traced back to the earliest human civilizations, where religious beliefs and practices were an integral

part of daily life. Religion has significantly shaped cultural practices, social norms, and individual behaviour (Durkheim, 2001).

Different faiths have distinctive doctrines, rites, and customs that influence their adherents' behaviour. For instance, critical Christian religious practices include frequent church attendance, partaking in the sacraments, and reading and studying the Bible. Islam strongly emphasizes the Five Pillars of Islam, daily prayer, and the observance of Ramadan (Khan, 2016).

In order to better understand how religion affects people's behaviour and societal views, psychologists and sociologists have also studied religious behaviour. While some studies have found that religious behaviour might improve mental health and well-being, others have expressed worry about how religious behaviour may encourage intolerance and prejudice toward people with different beliefs or backgrounds (Agorastos, 2014). These concerns have sparked a growing interest in examining the relationship between religion and social attitudes. Researchers have conducted numerous studies to explore the impact of religious behaviour on individuals' attitudes toward diversity, inclusivity, and acceptance. The findings of these studies have been both enlightening and thought-provoking, shedding light on the complex interplay between religious beliefs and societal views.

Emotional intelligence and religious behaviour are two critical areas of study in psychology. Emotional intelligence is the ability to understand and manage one's emotions and those of others, while religious behaviour involves the practice of religious rituals and beliefs. The relationship between emotional intelligence and religious behaviour has drawn more attention in recent years, especially in the context of higher education. This study examines this connection and how emotional intelligence affects religious behaviour among university students (Lowicki, 2017).

Recent studies have raised the possibility of a link between emotional intelligence and religious

behaviour, particularly in the context of higher education. University students are frequently exposed to different religious and cultural practices, which may affect how they develop emotionally and behave in public. The rigours of a university education can also be overwhelming. Thus, students may need to use their emotional intelligence abilities to control their emotions and achieve academic success. Furthermore, exploring emotional intelligence with religious behaviour in higher education can shed light on the role of spirituality in shaping students' emotional development and overall well-being. As individuals navigate the complexities of university life, their emotional intelligence may play a crucial role in adapting to new environments, understanding diverse perspectives, and maintaining healthy relationships with peers of different religious backgrounds (Frost & Peter, 2003).

Additionally, the demands of academic rigour and the pressure to excel academically can create a heightened need for emotional regulation and resilience among students. However, it is essential to note that more than emotional intelligence is needed to guarantee success in these areas. There can be instances where highly emotionally intelligent individuals struggle to adapt to new environments due to other factors, such as social anxiety or communication barriers. Additionally, academic success can sometimes be achieved through sheer determination and hard work without relying on emotional regulation or resilience.

Religious identity and beliefs play a central role in shaping individuals and societies across the globe. They provide a moral compass, a sense of purpose, and a framework for understanding the world. Religion can unite people, fostering a sense of community and shared values. However, it can also be a source of conflict and division, as differing religious beliefs often lead to tensions and misunderstandings. Regardless, religious identity and beliefs remain integral to human culture and continue to shape how we perceive and interact with the world around us. These

aspects of human existence encompass a rich and intricate tapestry of cultural, social, and personal dimensions. Understanding religious identity and beliefs is essential for fostering tolerance, promoting interfaith dialogue, and addressing the myriad global challenges stemming from differing religious perspectives (Becker & Hofmeister, 2001).

Religious identity is diverse and multifaceted, with individuals often identifying strongly with a particular faith tradition. This identity can manifest in various ways, from religious practices and rituals to attire and dietary choices. It often becomes a fundamental part of one's self-concept and influences how individuals relate to the world. Furthermore, religious identity significantly shapes individuals' moral and ethical frameworks, guiding their decision-making processes and behaviour. It fosters a sense of belonging and community, providing individuals with a support system and a sense of purpose. However, it is crucial to recognize the importance of religious pluralism and respect for different beliefs to promote understanding and peaceful coexistence in our increasingly diverse and interconnected world (Bettendorf & Dijkgraaf, 2007).

Religious identity is deeply intertwined with culture. Religion informs spiritual beliefs and traditions, art, music, and even governance structures in many societies. For example, Hinduism in India and Islam in the Middle East significantly shape the cultural fabric of these regions. Religious pluralism acknowledges the richness and diversity that different beliefs bring to society, fostering an environment where individuals can freely express their faith without fear of persecution or discrimination. We open ourselves to new perspectives and ideas by embracing religious pluralism and promoting dialogue and mutual respect. It, in turn, can lead to greater understanding and peaceful coexistence among people from different religious backgrounds, fostering a sense of unity and harmony in our global community (Conner, 2010).

While religious identity often ties individuals to a broader religious community, personal beliefs within that community can vary widely. People may interpret religious texts differently, resulting in a spectrum of religious beliefs even within the same faith tradition. This diversity of beliefs should be celebrated rather than feared, as it encourages critical thinking and individuals to question their beliefs. By embracing this diversity, we can create a platform for open-minded discussions where people can learn from one another and challenge their biases. Ultimately, recognizing the complexity of religious beliefs can lead to a more tolerant and inclusive society where individuals are valued for their unique perspectives and contributions (Crockett & Voas, 2006).

Understanding and respecting diverse religious identities and beliefs is crucial for promoting tolerance and pluralism. These values are essential to fostering peaceful coexistence in a world marked by religious diversity. By engaging in open and respectful dialogue about religious beliefs, individuals can gain a deeper understanding of different perspectives and bridge gaps between various faiths. It can foster a sense of unity and empathy, helping to dismantle stereotypes and prejudices that often arise from ignorance or fear. Moreover, promoting religious tolerance and pluralism can also create a space where individuals feel safe to freely express their beliefs without fear of discrimination or persecution, ultimately leading to a more harmonious and accepting society (Durkheim, 1995).

For many, religious beliefs serve as a moral compass, guiding individuals in their ethical decision-making. Different religions offer distinct ethical frameworks, which can lead to varying perspectives on issues such as abortion, capital punishment, and social justice. This diversity in ethical perspectives can enrich societal conversations and challenge individuals to evaluate their beliefs critically. It encourages a more inclusive approach to problem-solving as people learn to respect and consider different

viewpoints. In a society that values religious tolerance and pluralism, individuals are more likely to engage in constructive dialogue, fostering empathy and understanding among diverse communities. Ultimately, this leads to a more just and compassionate society that appreciates the value of diversity and embraces the importance of religious freedom (Foner & Alba, 2008).

Religious identity often intersects with political affiliations and ideologies. The influence of religious beliefs on political decision-making can be profound, shaping policies on issues such as marriage equality, immigration, and climate change. These policies can directly impact marginalized communities, making it crucial to engage in conversations that consider the diverse religious perspectives within society. We can foster a more inclusive and equitable political landscape by promoting dialogue that acknowledges the intersectionality of religious and political identities. It not only strengthens the democratic process but also ensures that the rights and needs of all individuals, regardless of their religious beliefs, are respected and protected (Jacobson, 1997).

The relationship between religion and science is an ongoing dialogue that explores the compatibility or tension between religious beliefs and scientific discoveries. Debates on topics like evolution, the origin of the universe, and medical advancements often involve these two realms. This dialogue is crucial in maintaining a balance between faith and reason, allowing individuals to reconcile their religious beliefs with scientific evidence. By fostering open and respectful conversations, society can bridge the gap between these seemingly opposing forces and promote a more inclusive and understanding environment. Ultimately, this dialogue can lead to groundbreaking discoveries and advancements that benefit religion and science, demonstrating their potential for collaboration rather than conflict (Lehrer, 2008).

In an increasingly globalized and secular world, the role of religion is evolving. Some argue that

religious identity is waning, while others contend it remains a powerful force shaping contemporary societies. Regardless of the varying opinions, it is undeniable that religion continues to play a significant role in people's lives, providing comfort, guidance, and a sense of belonging. Moreover, religious institutions often contribute to charitable efforts, social justice movements, and community development, highlighting their potential for positive impact. By acknowledging and understanding the role of religion in society, we can foster a more inclusive and empathetic environment that values diverse perspectives and promotes harmonious coexistence between religion and science (Laurence & Vaisse, 2006).

Religious identity and beliefs can be a source of strength, solace, and community for many, but they can also become a source of conflict. Promoting education and discussion and encouraging people to consider and appreciate various religious and scientific viewpoints can help achieve this. By emphasizing common values and shared goals, societies can bridge the gap between religion and science, fostering an environment where mutual respect and collaboration thrive. Additionally, implementing policies that protect religious freedoms while ensuring scientific advancements are not hindered can help strike a balance that benefits all members of society (Maliepaard et al., 2010).

To summarize the above discussion, religious identity and beliefs are central to the human experience, profoundly influencing individuals and societies. Understanding and respecting this aspect of human diversity is essential for fostering a more harmonious and inclusive world. By engaging in open dialogue, promoting tolerance, and acknowledging the complexities of religious identity, we can work towards a future where diverse beliefs can coexist in peace and harmony.

Delimitations

Delimitation limits a research study to make it more doable with available resources. The current research exploring the nexus of university undergraduates about emotional intelligence and

religious behaviour has the following limitations due to limited assets and time: The study targeted BS students. This limitation simplifies the research and provides in-depth insights into undergraduate student perspectives. The research focused on COMSATS University Islamabad and University of Education Vehari Campus students. This limit is intended to make the research more achievable within the constraints and allow for a deeper analysis of attitudes in an academic setting. Given resource and time constraints, these limits are necessary for research project feasibility and practicality. The study narrows its focus to BS students and specific campuses to gain in-depth analysis while meeting research objectives within limits.

Research Methodology

The researchers used a quantitative research method to explore the nexus of undergraduates majoring in the social sciences and humanities at the bachelor's level were included from two universities in district Vehari, i.e. COMSATS University Islamabad, and University of Education, Vehari Campus. A random sample of three hundred BS students took part in the research. This sample size of 300 students is sufficiently large to represent all undergraduates statistically. The researcher himself developed the questionnaire through related literature used in this study. Undergraduate students' perspectives were solicited using a questionnaire for this descriptive study, which assessed the role of emotional intelligence on students' religious behaviour. The questionnaire used five point likert scale questions to provide a complete picture of the student's emotional intelligence and religious behaviour. The participants who were chosen for the study were asked to fill out these questions. The research conclusions were based on the carefully checked and analyzed results from SPSS. The researcher understood the study goals and derived significant conclusions from the collected data thanks to this all-encompassing methodological approach.

Data Analysis



Researchers developed a questionnaire to collect data for this study to reach the goal above. The selected participants were given a questionnaire to

fill out, and the results of the data analysis are as follows:

Table 1

Students' responses about emotional intelligence and religious behaviour in form of dichotomous questions

Sr. No.	Items	Yes	No
1	Do you know about Emotional intelligence?	95	205
2	Do you feel comfort in your expressions?	125	175
3	Do you have ability to manage stress and negative emotions?	75	225
4	Do you have ability to sense peer's feeling?	117	183
5	Do you know about religious behaviour?	165	135
6	Do you think religious behaviour affect emotions?	201	99
7	Do positive emotions add pleasure to your life?	180	120
8	Do you manage bad situations quickly?	145	155
9	Do you motivate yourself, when you feel bad?	171	129
10	Do you appreciate others, when they do well?	181	119

statement, "Do you know about emotional intelligence".

It has been brought to our attention that "Do you feel comfort in your expressions?" was met with a negative response (No) from one hundred and seventy five respondents. In contrast, one hundred and twenty five of the respondents gave a positive response (Yes) to the statement.

Most students (225) responses "No" to the statement "Do you have the ability to manage stress and negative emotions?" whereas rest of the respondents (75) answered "Yes" to the statement.

The majority of students (183) responded "No", whereas 117 respondents responded "Yes" for the statement, "Do you have ability to sense peer's feeling?". The results indicated that most of the students are not able to sense the feelings of their fellows.

As a result of their familiarity with religious conduct, the students responded in the affirmative. One hundred and sixty five students affirm, whereas students (135) responded in the negative way in response to the statement, "Do you know about religious behaviour?"

The analyses based on emotional intelligence and religious behaviour are presented in Table 1, along with the responses from the students. The frequency scores for each statement are displayed in the table, with responses being measured on a scale ranging in between, "Yes" or "No".

A more significant number of students have a favorable view towards the question, "Do you think religious behaviour affects emotions?" Two hundred and one respondents responded the statement in affirmative way, while ninety nine respondents responded negatively.

Students are not aware about emotional intelligence, as the majority of the students (205) who responded "No" and rest of the students (95) responded "Yes" affirmed the

When asked whether positive emotions add pleasure to their life, respondents (180) responded in affirmative way to the statement

"Do positive emotions add pleasure to your life?" The message was met with a negative response from one hundred and twenty respondents.

One hundred forty-five respondents claimed to be able to rapidly manage challenging situations, while 155 reported having difficulties doing so. This indicates that the divide is relatively even.

Even though 129 respondents described having problems motivating themselves, most participants (171) claimed that they could self-motivate when they were feeling down.

While 119 respondents did not share this perspective, a sizeable majority of respondents (181) responded that they believe it is important to show appreciation to people when they are successful.

Findings and Conclusion

The findings of the study titled "Exploring the Nexus: Emotional Intelligence and Religious Behaviour among University Students" provide some of the most fascinating insights into the junction of emotional intelligence and religious behaviour. A significant finding is that most students are unaware of emotional intelligence. This is demonstrated by the fact that 205 respondents answered "No" to the question, "Do you know about emotional intelligence?" Moreover, only 95 students responded with a "Yes." This is a noteworthy revelation. Furthermore, the study indicates a dichotomy in the level of comfort in expression, with 175 respondents expressing discomfort (No) and 125 respondents feeling at ease (Yes). This presents a dichotomy in the level of comfort in expression.

About the ability to control stress and negative emotions, 225 of the students who

were polled revealed that they did not possess this capability. This is in contrast to the 75 respondents who stated that they did possess this capability. According to the study's findings, there is a widespread challenge among students in identifying their classmates' emotions. This is evidenced by the fact that 183 respondents responded "No" to the question, "Do you have the ability to sense your peers' feelings?" while 117 responded favorably. When asked, "Do you know about religious behaviour?" One hundred sixty-five pupils responded positively, which is a noteworthy finding about religious behaviour for the students. On the other hand, 135 pupils gave a refusal response. Interestingly, although 99 of the respondents shared a negative attitude on the subject, a higher number of students (201) believe that religious behaviour has a good effect on emotions.

Lastly, when the impact of happy emotions was discussed, 180 respondents admitted that pleasant emotions contributed to the joy they experienced in their lives, whereas 120 respondents voiced the opposite opinion. This study's results indicate intricate relationships between emotional intelligence, religious behaviour, and the perception of emotions among college students. These findings offer valuable insights that can be used for further investigation and development.

The conclusion of the study "Exploring the Nexus: Emotional Intelligence and Religious Behaviour among University Students" sheds light on the intricate web of relationships between university students' religious behaviour, emotional intelligence, and how they perceive their own emotions. There has to be more education and understanding surrounding emotional intelligence, given that many students are clueless about it and

have varying degrees of ease when expressing themselves. Particularly noteworthy are the difficulties in recognising the emotions of one's peers and in managing one's stress and destructive emotions.

Many students acknowledge the positive effect of religious behaviour on emotions, while a smaller group expresses a negative attitude; this highlights a significant difference in attitudes that the survey reveals. With this complex picture, we can probe the complex relationship between university students' religious views and emotional experiences.

University campuses need to take a more comprehensive approach to emotional education and support due to the complexity of emotion perception, particularly as it relates to religious behaviour. We can find ways to promote emotional well-being by acknowledging that pleasant emotions significantly contribute to the total delight felt by many respondents.

In addition to adding to our theoretical knowledge of the connection between emotional intelligence and religious behaviour, these results have real-world applications for creating individualized

treatments and curricula. These findings provide a wealth of information for universities to use to pursue students' holistic well-being, particularly in areas like emotional intelligence and religious diversity.

Recommendations

The current study suggest the following recommendations;

1. Universities may adopt comprehensive emotional intelligence education programs to address students' lack of awareness and comfort in expressing emotions.
2. Emotional support programs can address peer emotion recognition and stress management issues, creating a more inclusive and friendly campus atmosphere.
3. The complex relationship between emotional intelligence, religious behaviour, and emotional experiences may be explored in university dynamic education programs to improve emotional well-being by recognizing the positive effects of pleasant emotions and accommodating diverse religious behaviour attitudes.

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