

Relations of Challenge-Hindrance Stressors with Organizational Citizenship Behavior: the Role of Positive Emotion and Power Distance

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Keywords: challenge-hindrance stressors, OCB, power distance, positive emotions

Abstract. The study investigates how challenge and hindrance influence organizational citizenship behaviour (OCB) in the organizational culture of China. Based on Conservation of resources theory, the authors found whether challenge stressors or hindrance stressors had negative links with OCB. In addition, results showed that positive emotion perfectly mediated the relationship between two-dimensional stressors and OCB. Although, power distance had not directly moderating effect on the model, there is an indirect moderation when the relationship between stressors and OCB is mediated by positive emotion. The higher power distance, the indirect effect of positive emotion is more obvious. This research could provide some theoretical implications for future stressors study and practical implications for management.

1. Introduction

Organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) is held to be critical to the survival of an organization and can maximize the efficiency and productivity of both the employee and the organization that ultimately contribute to the effective functioning of organization^[1]. The environmental uncertainty and the intensification of market competition make the autonomy of employees become an important source for enterprises to improve their competitiveness, and organizational citizenship behaviors, as the main manifestation of autonomy, become the focus of enterprises. Meanwhile, the fierce market competition also leads to the increase of work stress of employees. Although OCB is closely related to work performance, it is described as extra-role behaviors that are not included in the formal performance system. As a result, whether employees show their organizational citizenship behaviors when they feel pressure has been a hot topic research field, but until now there is not consistent theory about theoretical attribution, and internal mechanism.

In the 21st century, there was a new breakthrough in the classification of work stress dimensions. Cavanaugh classified stressors into challenge stressors and hindrance stressors according to different intrinsic attribute of stressors. Challenge stressors are considered as positive motivation to improve work performance and can be overcome. On the contrary, hindrance stressors are difficult to overcome so that the achievement of goals and career is impeded^[2]. The proposal of two-dimensional stressors provides the theoretical proof that stress has positive effect on work results, for example, challenge stressors tend to be positively related to job satisfaction^[3], task performance^{[4][5]}, the innovation ability^[6], and negative effect on job search behavior, job withdrawal behavior, and resignation intention. Hindrance stressors are negatively related to a variety of work attitudes and behaviors. Rodell and Judge build and test a model specifying the dynamic, emotion-based relationship among challenge and hindrance stressors and OCB. Results showed that challenge stressors had offsetting indirect links with citizenship behaviors through attentiveness and hindrance stressors had a negative indirect effect on citizenship behaviors through anxiety^[7]. Webster found that the two types of stressors have no significant direct impact on organizational citizenship behaviors, no matter it is directed at the organization or the individual^[8], but they can have indirect impact through job satisfaction or emotional cognition.

Despite these progresses, it remains unclear how challenge and hindrance stressors related with OCB under different organizational cultures and the mediating effect of positive emotion. Based on the above researches, our purpose in this study, therefore, was to build and test a model, the

relationship among challenge and hindrance stressor and OCB through positive emotion in different power distance. According to the conservation of resource theory, integrating the literature on stress literature and organizational citizenship behaviors, by confirming the different effects of challenge and hindrance stressors on organizational citizenship behaviors, we will provide new evidence for the previous conclusion that two kinds of stressors have different effects on discretionary behaviors. Secondly, this study extends the application of resource conservation theory to stressors. Finally, power distance as moderator will exam whither organizational culture can influence the relationship among challenge and hindrance stressors and work attitude and behaviors.

2. Theory and Hypothesis

2.1 Hindrance and Challenge Stressors and Organization Citizenship Behaviors

Conservation of resources (COR) theory defined that stress is a reaction to environment in which there is the threat of a net loss of resources, the net loss of resources, and a lack of resources gain following the investment of resources^{[9][10]}. Cavanaugh and Lepine classified stressors as challenge stressors and hindrance stressors. Challenge stressors include workload, time pressure, working range, and working responsibility. Challenge stressors require resources to overcome, but it is described as a process that resources are invested to obtain more revenue. Nonetheless, the future revenue is not sure, which depends on a whether the lost resources are compensated; this judgment is affected by individual traits, organization environment, individual experience and so forth. Lepine(2005) argued that stressors are associated with beliefs the relationship between effort expended on coping with these work demands and the likelihood of success and the relationship between success in meeting the demands and revenue^[5]. Rodell and Judge found that the relationship between stressors and behaviors is influenced by individual characters^[7]. Hence, the positive motivation of challenge stressors is restricted by many complex factors. On the contrary, hindrance stressors is considered as the loss and obviously negative according to COR.

Organization citizenship behavior is referred as behaviors that go beyond the call of duty, but it is widely accepted that OCB have accumulative positive effect on organizational functioning^[11]. In view of this, Organization encourage employee to increase OCB. Nevertheless, OCB is limited by individual resources; the limited resources of employees primarily meet the demands of their own work. Whether the limited resources are invested to OCB is up to employees. Particularly, challenge and hindrance work complicate the decision. Empirical researches on the relationship between stressors and OCB have been inconsistent in terms of direction, and ignored the influence of organizational culture.

2.2 Positive Emotions as a Mediating Variate

Positive emotions are associated with some kind of need to meet, usually accompanied by subjective experience of pleasure, and can improve the enthusiasm of people and activities^[12]. In Fredrickson's The Broaden-and-Build Theory of positive emotions, he believes that positive emotion can expand the sequence of individual thinking activities and the psychological activity space, and the expansion of psychological space increases the acceptability of individuals to subsequent meaningful events, which means that individuals will have more opportunities and possibilities of experience of positive emotion. On the one hand, experiences of positive emotions reverse the effects of negative emotions. On the other hand, positive emotions build individual enduring personal resources, ranging from physical and intellectual resources to social and psychological resources, so that it can promote friendly behaviors, social connections^{[13][14]}.

According to the theory of resource conservation, stress generate from the loss of resources or the expected loss of resources^[9], therefor, both challenge and hindrance stressors make individuals threaten by the loss of resources^[16]. Positive emotions can build personal resources, and reduce the damage caused by stress^[14]. The Broaden-and-Build of positive emotion broadens individual cognition of the stressors. People in a positive state have more psychological resources to response

to stressors. Individuals will improve their ability to cope with challenge and hindrance stressors and are more willing to help others. Various prior studies have demonstrated that individuals experiencing positive emotions more actively engage in citizenship behaviors^[17]. Challenge stressors can bring potential stress, but because the available income in the future, the stress is likely to transform positive power. Positive emotion improves the individual's cognition of the possibility that the challenge stressors are related to the income. This is despite the fact that hindrance stressors are difficult to be compensated in the future, and individuals take defensive positions to conserve their resources. The Broaden-and-Build of positive emotion will offset some of the negative effects of stress^[14], so that the subsequent behaviors under the influence of stress will not be affected. Given the above analysis, we predicted that

Hypothesis 1: Positive emotion will mediate the relationship between the challenge stressors and OCB, and the indirect effect will be positive.

Hypothesis 2: Positive emotion will mediate the relationship between the hindrance stressors and OCB, and the indirect effect will be positive.

2.3 Moderating Role of Power Distance

2.3.1 Directly Moderating Effect of Power Distance

Power distance indicates the extent to which a society accepts unequal distribution of power in institution and organizations^[10]. As one of the most important factor of organizational culture, power distance can influence the relationship between resources and behaviors^[18]. It is found in the research of resource conservation theory individual cognition of resource value will be affected by different social environments, among many resources, autonomy, competence and relatedness are the key resources to achieve the goal, which can create demand transformation and improve performance^[20]. According to Hofstede, people in high power distance endorse submissiveness to superiors, prefer superiors who exercise autocratic or paternalistic leadership, and not expect to participate in decision making^[21]. The restriction of strict hierarchy system leads to unequal distribution of rights and resources and less autonomy for employees. Those high in power distance lacking resource is likely to reduce organizational citizenship behaviors to preferentially complete the work assigned by leaders and avoid to offending the interests of leaders when employees face the stressors.

In low power distance culture, subordinates expect superiors to consult, have strong autonomy, more support and more power resources than those in high power distance^[21]. Employees with low power distance orientation are more willing to accept challenge stressors due to the process of resource investment will yield more benefits in the future. In terms of hindrance stressors, employees in low power distance are less threatened by status. Extra resources will be made available to offset the loss of hindrance stressors. We can expect:

Hypothesis 3: Power distance will directly moderate the two forms stressors-OCB relationship, which will be more positive in higher lower distance.

2.3.2 Indirectly Moderating Effect of Power Distance

Within a culture, two dimensions may influence how OCB is perceived, as well as whether employees are inclined to demonstrate OCB^[23]. Employees with high power distance orientation are accustomed to accept the fact that there will be differences in treatment, status, and rewards based on pre-set criteria over which there may be little control. In high power distance, the more positive emotion might encourage employees to initiative outside of their specified role; as a result of broaden-and-build function of positive emotion is more significant. Employees in low power distance inclined to invested resources to work which can acquire explicit remuneration, consequently, positive emotions have little effect on OCB.

Hypothesis 4: Power distance will indirectly moderate the relationship between two forms stressors and OCB through positive emotion, which will be more positive in the higher power

distance.

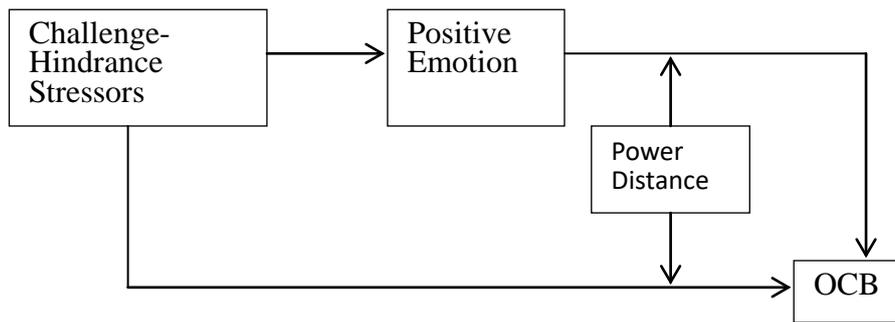


Figure 1 Conceptual model of relationship among stressors, positive emotion, and OCB

3. Method

3.1 Sample

Participants were 300 full-time workers of various organizations throughout the China. They represented a broad range of area, including Sichuan, Shanghai, Beijing and many more. Among the valid questionnaires, 56.6% participants were female, 43.4% were male. In terms of participants' educational background, 47.8% had obtained college degree, 13.9% had received either a master's degree or a doctorate, 16.8% had completed college, 21.6% had obtained high school diploma or below.

3.2 Procedure and Measures

We put the survey online to measure employees' stress, power distance, organization citizenship behaviors and positive emotion. The questionnaire was distributed via the Internet. There are 278 valid questionnaires and effective recovery rate is 91.3%.

Challenge and hindrance stressors. We used challenge-hindrancel stressors scale created by Cavanaugh et al. (2000)^[2]. There are 11 items, including 6 items about challenge stressors and 5 items about hindrance stressors. The challenge stressors scale assessed perceived levels of workload, time urgency, job responsibility, and work complexity. The hindrance items assessed perceived levels of red tape, role ambiguity, role conflict, and hassles. Using a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree. The scale was verified by Chinese scholars Liu Dege, Zhang Yunlin and Sun Jianmin, and the reliability and validity were relatively reliable. The mean coefficient alpha was 0.915 for challenge stressors and 0.861 for hindrance stressors.

Power distance. A six-item scale to measure power distance was taken from the research of Dorfman and Howell(1988)^[23]. Items include, for example: "Employees should not disagree with management decision" and "Managers should seldom ask for opinions of employees. Using a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree. The mean coefficient alpha was 0.862.

Positive emotion. A five-item scale to measure power distance was taken from research of Chinese scholar Tang Chaoying. The scale was created based on prior PANAS emotion scale created by Watson, Tellegen, and Clark^[24]. The items include "excited", "enthusiastic", "active", "proud", and "inspired". Using a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree. The mean coefficient alpha was 0.894.

Organization citizenship behavior. We measured organization citizenship behavior using 10 items from Bachrach(2007)^[25]. Seven items assessed the help behaviors that employees help their colleagues deal with job problems. The other three items assessed the behaviors that employee responsibly participate in organizational activities. Using a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree. The mean coefficient alpha was 0.939.

Control variables. In order to avoid irrelevant variables influencing the results of the study, in the analysis, gender, age, education background and working years were set as control variables.

4. Results

4.1 Confirmatory Factor Analysis and Descriptive Statistics

Prior to assessing our structural model and hypotheses, we assessed the measurement model using AMOS 23. The first model estimated the relationships among all five study variables. Results of this model are shown in Table 1 and suggest good fit with the data. Although the goodness-of-fit index(GFI) was 0.806, which may be related with large sample size, the comparative fit index(CFI), Tucker-Lewis index (TLI), and root-mean-square error of approximation(RNSEA) all suggested good fit(0.919, 0.911,0.064, respectively). Overall, the results indicate that there is high discriminant validity among challenge stressors, hindrance stressors, power distance, positive emotion, and organizational citizenship behavior.

Table 1 Results of confirmatory factor analysis

Model	X ² /df	GFI	CFI	RMSEA	TLI	IFI
M1	2.109	0.806	0.919	0.064	0.911	0.919
M2	2.251	0.793	0.908	0.068	0.900	0.908
M3	3.190	0.665	0.837	0.090	0.825	0.838
M4	4.595	0.565	0.731	0.115	0.712	0.733
M5	5.586	0.430	0.657	0.121	0.633	0.658

Note.: N=274, M1 included challenge stressors, hindrance stressors, power distance, positive emotion, organizational citizenship behavior; M2 combined challenge stressors and hindrance stressors into one factor; M3 combined challenge stressors, hindrance stressors, and power distance into one factor; M4 combined challenge stressors, hindrance stressors, power distance, and positive emotion into one factor; M5 combined all items as one factor.

Table 2 Means, standard deviations, and correlations

	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
PD	14.15	5.72	0.85							
CS	16.60	6.79	0.55**	0.92						
HS	13.04	5.24	0.60**	0.80**	0.86					
PE	17.14	4.91	-0.60**	-0.52**	-0.61**	0.90				
OCB	37.60	9.23	-0.71**	-0.38**	-0.49**	0.75**	0.94			
Sex	1.57	0.50	0.02	0.14*	0.10	-0.08	0.02	1		
Age	2.19	1.02	-0.32**	-0.50**	-0.40**	0.41**	0.38**	-0.16**	1	
ED	3.42	1.19	0.04	0.20**	0.13*	-0.06	0.07	0.05	-0.37**	1
YW	3.03	1.57	-0.31**	-0.58**	-0.50**	0.42**	-0.35**	-0.22*	0.88**	-0.48**

Note: N=274; *p < 0.1, **p < 0.05. Values on the diagonal are reliability estimates. PD: power distance; OCB=organizational citizenship behavior; ED=education background; YW: years of working; CS: challenge stressors; HS: hindrance stressors; PE: positive emotion.

The Table 2 showed the means, standard deviations, correlations. The result presented that challenge stressors and positive emotion are correlated at -0.6, and hindrance stressors and positive emotion are correlated at -0.49. Both of the correlations are significant. In addition, the relationship among challenge and hindrance stressors and OCB were both negative.

4.2 Hierarchical Regression

4.2.1 Mediation Analysis

Testing for mediation using the intermediary analysis approach created by Baron and Kenny (1986) verified the mediating role of positive emotions ^[26]. Prior to the hierarchical regression

analysis of the mediating effect test, the relevant variables were standardized in order to reduce the influence of multicollinearity on the regression coefficient. We found that challenge stressors are negatively related to both positive emotion and OCB ($r=-0.004$, $p<0.01$; $r=-0.245$, $p<0.01$, respectively) in model fifth of Table 3. As displayed in model 6 of Table 3, positive emotion positively related to OCB ($r=0.706$, $p<0.01$), and challenge stressors have no effect on OCB ($r=0.037$, $p=0.470$).

Hindrance stressors had a negative effect on positive emotion and OCB ($r=-0.516$, $p<0.01$; $r=-0.394$, $p<0.01$). Model 8 of Table 3 presented that positive emotion had positive effect on OCB, and hindrance stressors had no effect on OCB, when positive emotion was controlled as mediation. According to testing mediation approach recommended by Baron and Kenny(1986),we can concluded that positive emotion is perfect mediation that mediates the relationship between challenge stressors and OCB. Therefore, Hypothesis 1 and 2 was confirmed, positive emotion will mediate the relationship between the two forms stressors and OCB, The higher the positive emotion is, the less the stressors influence organizational citizenship behavior through positive emotion.

Table 3 Results of hierarchical regression analysis of mediating effect

Variables	Positive Emotion				OCB			
	M1	M2	M3	M4	M5	M6	M7	M8
Gender	0.05	0.025	0.011	0.22	0.104	0.087	0.093	0.086*
Age	0.10	0.140	0.204*	0.23*	0.259*	0.160	0.311*	0.175*
ED	0.152*	0.137*	0.097	0.26**	0.277**	0.180**	0.240**	0.175**
YW	0.263**	0.138	0.035	0.19*	0.132	0.035	0.012	-0.012
CS		-0.400**			-0.245**	0.037		
HS			-0.516**				-0.394**	-0.048
PE						0.706**		0.671**
F	16.521**	66.973**	36.014**	17.97**	18.705**	66.973**	26.679**	67.111**
R ²	0.198**	0.775**	0.634**	0.21**	0.509**	0.775**	0.577*	0.775**
ΔR^2	0.186**	0.601	0.402**	0.20**	0.259**	0.601**	0.332**	0.601**

Note: N=274; * $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$. Values on the diagonal are reliability estimates. PD: power distance; OCB=organizational citizenship behavior; ED=education background; YW: years of working; CS: challenge stressors; HS: hindrance stressors; PE: positive emotion.

4.2.2 Moderating Effects

To test moderating effects of power distance, we use hierarchical regression. Table 4 presented the interaction of challenge stressors and power distance did not associate with OCB ($r=-0.152$, $p=0.124$). Likewise, model 5 showed the interaction of hindrance stressors and power distance had no effect on OCB ($r=-0.154$, $p=0.119$). Hypotheses 3 predicted that power distance can directly moderate the relationship among challenge and hindrance stressors and OCB was not supported. Although the direct effect moderation model was not significant, we can combine mediation and moderation to test indirectly moderation of power distance according to Edwards and Lambert (2007).

Model 7 in Table 4 the interaction of challenge stressors and power distance did not associate with positive emotion ($r=-0.059$, $p=0.263$). Model 8 reported that the interaction of hindrance stressors and power distance had no effect on positive emotion ($r=-0.055$, $p=0.501$). Coefficient estimates in Table 4 showed that the interaction of positive emotion and power distance positively associate with OCB. Model 3 in Table 4 presented that power distance indirectly moderate the relationship between challenge stressors and OCB through the path from positive to OCB($r=0.211$, $p<0.01$). Meanwhile, power distance indirectly moderate the relationship between hindrance stressors and OCB through the same path ($r=0.244$, $p<0.01$). In order to further test hypotheses 4, we use the approach of conditional indirect effect test created by Preacher,Rucker and Hayes (2007)^[27]. The result showed the confidence intervals for the conditional effects that challenge stressors is negative with OCB yielded a bootstrap 95% CI of $\{-0.278,-0.118\}$ and $\{-0.376,-$

0.164}, and hindrance stressors is negative with OCB yielded a bootstrap 95% CI of {-0.327,-0.142} and {-0.449,-0.255}. The results suggested two forms stressors have more strong effect on OCB mediated by positive emotion in high power distance. Hypothesis 4 is supported.

Table 4 Results of hierarchical regression analysis of mediating effect

Variables	OCB						Positive Emotion	
	M1	M2	M3	M4	M5	M6	M7	M8
Gender	0.056	0.031	0.031	0.061	0.035	0.036	0.004	0.006
Age	0.114	0.026	0.02	0.131	0.023	0.013	0.058	0.118
ED	0.123	0.078*	0.073*	0.114	0.080*	0.071	0.047	0.038
YW	0.187	0.175*	0.179**	0.112*	0.132	0.143	0.165	0.074
CS	0.101	0.179**	0.176**				0.176**	
HS				0.052	0.091*	0.093*		0.320**
PD	0.603**	0.328**	0.328**	0.509**	0.296**	0.274**	0.402**	0.323**
PE		0.435**	0.435**		0.433**	0.437**		
CS*PD	0.152		0.043*				0.059	
HS*PD				0.154		0.056		0.033
PE*PD		0.224**	0.211**		0.230**	0.211**		
R ²	0.573**	0.757**	0.871**	0.550**	0.745**	0.747**	0.422	0.475
ΔR ²	0.562**	0.750**	0.758**	0.570**	0.737**	0.739**	0.003	0.461
F	51.030*	103.104**	91.930**	50.300**	96.746**	86.698**	29.480**	34.315**

Note: N=274; *p < 0.1, **p < 0.05. Values on the diagonal are reliability estimates. PD: power distance; OCB=organizational citizenship behavior; ED=education background; YW: years of working; CS: challenge stressors; HS: hindrance stressors; PE: positive emotion.

5. Discussion

The aim of the research is to examine how challenge and hindrance stressors impact the extra-role behaviors. Prior research has concentrated on the relationships between two-dimensional stressors and work performance, emotion, and behaviors, but there is not still a consistent conclusion of how stressors influence the extra-role behaviors, such as OCB. Based on conservation of resources, the findings reported here support the challenge and hindrance stressors have negative effect on OCB and positive emotion. The mediating effect of positive emotion was supported. Although the total moderating effect of power distance on the relationships of stressors and OCB, that result concealed a significant indirectly moderating effect on the relationships through positive emotion.

Challenge and hindrance stressors exhibited a negative link with organizational citizenship behaviors. Rodell and Judge (2009) found that challenge stressors significantly positively related to organizational citizenship behavior, and no significant correlation between organizational citizenship behavior and hindrance stressors. Webster (2010) found that the stressors have no significant correlation with organizational citizenship behavior. In response to this significant difference, we explored the role of power distance and positive emotion in the relationship between two-dimensional stressors and OCB.

According to conservation of resource theory, individuals strive to obtain, maintain, and protect their own resources in the field of physical, cognitive, and social work. The individuals who have abundant resources are possibly willing to meet the task^[9]. Both challenge and hindrance stressors would threaten the loss of resources, when the loss resources are not compensative, stressors negatively linked with behaviors. The present research suggested that positive emotion can extend and build the resources to relieve the negative effect of the loss of resources^[14], in other words, positive emotions can fully mediate the negative influence of challenge and hindrance stressors on organizational citizenship behaviors.

5.1 Theoretical and Practical Implications

At the most general level, our research contributes to the literature on stress by building the model of two forms stressors and OCB based on the resource conservation theory and broaden-and-build theory of positive emotions. Although prior researches have tested the relationship based on Western culture, the paper verified the mechanism of stressors and organizational citizenship behavior in Chinese organizational culture and expanded the application of two-dimensional stressors in Chinese organization. Furthermore, there is no consistent conclusion about the influence of challenge and hindrance stressors on positive emotion. We examine the conclusion that both challenge and hindrance stressors are negatively correlated with positive emotion by using the Broaden-and-Build Theory of positive emotions. Another contribution that the study reported here supported that power distance affects employees' perception of stressors, so that the relationship of stressors and behaviors would be moderated. However, the moderating effect is indirectly, we explored the mediation of positive emotion, which showed that power distance had positive effect on the relationship of positive emotion and OCB. The conclusion of this study complements previous research conclusions, revealed that there may be different mechanisms of challenge and hindrance stressors with working outcome, and that organizational culture plays important roles in different mechanisms.

The present study suggests that managers should remove the hindrance stressors, at the same time, combine the characteristics and actual situation of employees to set work goals and assign work tasks. Enterprises should set up corresponding incentive mechanism of challenging work tasks for different types of jobs or positions to prevent the positive effect of challenge stressors being weakened. We found that positive emotion can offset the negative effect of stressors, so that employees increase work performance. This suggests that organization must keep positive emotion and improve ability to work under stress. In addition, extra-role behaviors, which are excluded from the formal compensation system, such as organizational citizenship behaviors, should not be inspired by excessive working hours and task beyond employees' resources to avoid impairing positive motivation. Power distance influences the relationship between stressors and OCB in the context of mediation of positive emotion. In high power distance, managers should increase employees' positive emotion to reduce the strict atmosphere and improve working efficiency.

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