

A Study on Impact of Moonlighting on Employee Job Satisfaction and Retention in It Sector Hyderabad

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Abstract: In today's evolving work environment, Human Resource (HR) policies play a crucial role in shaping employee behaviour, satisfaction, and retention. This study explores the impact of HR policies—especially those related to moonlighting—on employee job satisfaction and retention rates. With the growing gig economy and flexible work models, moonlighting has become more prevalent, raising questions about how organizations manage this trend. The research investigates employee perceptions of moonlighting regulations and their influence on job-related attitudes. A quantitative approach was adopted using structured questionnaires distributed across various sectors, with responses analysed through statistical tools like frequency analysis and Likert scales. Findings reveal that transparent and flexible HR policies enhance employee satisfaction and retention, while rigid or poorly communicated policies contribute to dissatisfaction and turnover. Gender-based differences in perception were also observed. The study emphasizes the importance of employee-centric HR practices that align with the changing expectations of the modern workforce.

Keywords: Human Resource Policies, Moonlighting, Job Satisfaction, Employee Retention, Gig Economy, Work-Life Balance, HR Policy Perception, Organizational Commitment.

I. INTRODUCTION

In today's dynamic organizational landscape, human resource management (HRM) has evolved into a strategic function that shapes workplace culture and influences employee behaviour. The rise of globalization, digitalization, and shifting workforce expectations has led organization to adopt more flexible work models. Among these developments, moonlighting- where employees take up secondary jobs or freelance work in addition to their primary roles- has gained prominence, especially in the IT sector.

While moonlighting offers financial and professional growth opportunities for employees, it also poses challenges for employers in maintaining engagement and organizational commitment. Its influence on key outcomes like job satisfaction and employee retention is complex and context-dependent. Job satisfaction reflects how positively employees perceive their roles, responsibilities, and work environment, while retention refers to the organization's ability to maintain a stable and committed workforce.

This study investigates how moonlighting practices impact job satisfaction and retention among employees in selected IT companies in Hyderabad. It aims to provide insights into employee perceptions and how HR policies can effectively manage moonlighting to support organizational goals.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Meyer and Allen (1991) They proposed the Three-Component Model of organizational commitment: affective, continuance, and normative. Employees who view HR policies as fair and supportive develop emotional attachment to the organization. This attachment reduces voluntary turnover. Emotional commitment is especially important in competitive job markets. Supportive HR practices can enhance loyalty and reduce attrition.

Herzberg (1959) Introduced the Two-Factor Theory distinguishing hygiene factors from motivators. Motivators like recognition and growth opportunities lead to job satisfaction. Flexible HR policies supports intrinsic motivation. Secondary employment options can improve employee morale. Satisfied employees are more committed and retained.

Armstrong (2014) Emphasized the importance of strategic HR policies in building positive workplaces. Transparent and consistent HR practices foster employee trust. Employee involvement and recognition boost morale. Such practices enhance satisfaction and loyalty. A positive environment reduces turnover.

Dessler (2017) Stressed the alignment of HR practices with employee expectations. Key areas include compensation, training, career growth, and appraisals. Effective HR policies motivate and satisfies employees. Higher satisfaction leads to lower attrition. Well-structured HR frameworks shape better work experiences.

Robbins & Judge (2019) Studied the psychological impact of HR policies on behaviour and performance. Work-life balance, rewards, and feedback improve employee satisfaction. Satisfied employees show higher motivation and productivity. Positive experiences reduce the desire to quit. HR policies directly influence retention.

Choudhary (2020) Explored demographic factors influencing moonlighting. Young urban employees are more likely to moonlight. Fewer women engage in moonlighting due to social roles. These insights help design inclusive HR policies. Demographics must be considered in moonlighting management.

Singh & Sharma (2021) Examined moonlighting trends in digital and knowledge sectors. Employees moonlight to fulfil financial and personal goals. Moonlighting can affect focus and performance. There are risks like burnout and data breaches. Proper HR controls are necessary to manage moonlighting.

Gupta & Rao (2022) Studied the integration of flexibility in HR to manage moonlighting. Controlled moonlighting can boost satisfaction and engagement. Flexible HR policies foster autonomy and Trust in employees enhances productivity. Supportive systems can improve retention.

Malodia & Butail (2023) Focused on job satisfaction and moonlighting in the Indian IT sector. Used survey data and the Attitudes and Alternatives Model. Lower job satisfaction led to higher moonlighting intentions. Key issues include poor recognition and limited growth. Improving satisfaction can reduce secondary job tendencies.

Sharma & Rautela (2024) Reviewed 89 studies to understand moonlighting's causes and effects. Identified drivers like financial need, workload, and HR policies. Moonlighting often causes stress, reduced satisfaction.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Objectives of The Study

1. Toexaminetherelationshipbetweenmoonlightingandemployeejobsatisfaction.
2. To analyze the impact of moonlighting on employee retention.

Hypotheses of The Study

H0: - No significant relationship between moonlighting and employee job satisfaction.
H0:- Moonlighting has no significant impact on employee retention.

Research methodology

Data collection: Primary data was collected using a structured questionnaire circulated online, targeting employees from IT sectors.

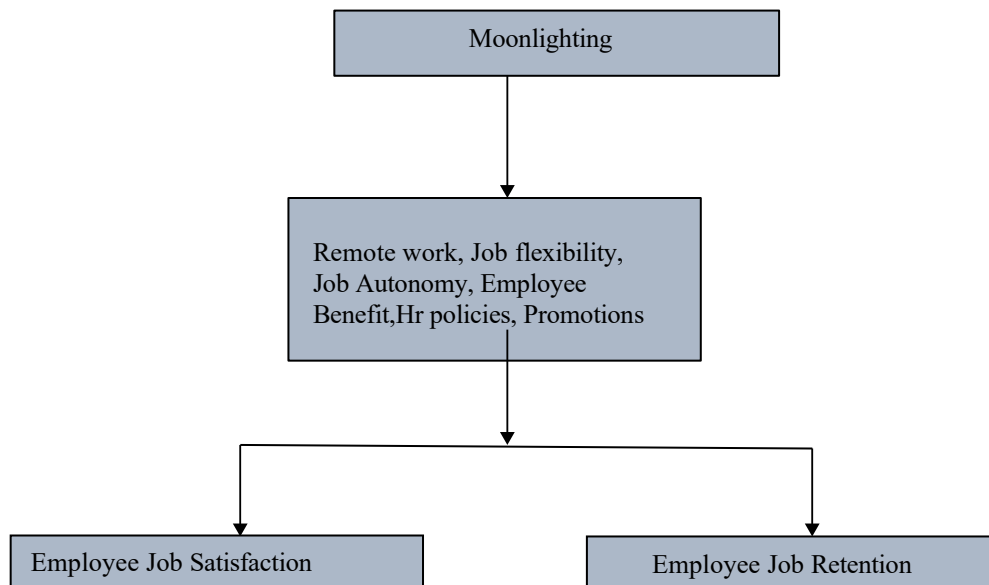
Secondary data, including research papers, HR reports, and policy documents, supplemented the primary data.

Sample size: Convenience sampling was used due to ease of accessibility, resulting in over 116valid responses.

Periodofstudy:45 days

Research tools: To discover the data, the study will be using regression technique in statistical package for social sciences and ms-excel. These tools are helpful to identify the relationship between the factors of coffee budging and identifying the impact of employee productivity and organizational performance.

Research MODEL:



Independent Variable: Moonlighting

Dependent Variable: Employee job satisfaction and Employee retention

Mediating Variables: HR Policies

IV. DATA ANALYSIS & INTERPRETATION

Age	No. of Employees	Percentage
19-22	18	15. 52%
22-30	42	36. 21%
31-35	28	24. 14%
36-40	17	14. 66%
40 above	11	9. 48%

Source: Compiled Data

The above graph tells the majority of respondents (42 out of 118) fall within the age group of 22–30, indicating a strong representation of young adults in the sample. The next most common age groups are 31–35 (28 respondents) and 19–22 (18 respondents). Fewer participants are aged 36–40 (17) and 40 above (11), suggesting that older age groups are less represented in the study.

Employment Type

Age	No. of Employees	Percentage
Entrepreneur	4	3. 45%
Freelancer/Contractor	4	3. 45%
Full-time employee	78	67. 24%
Other	22	18. 97%
Part-time employee	8	6. 90%

This above graph and able data show the breakdown of occupation types among respondents. The vast majority, 78 individuals, are full-time employees. "Other" occupations also represent a significant portion with 22 individuals, while entrepreneurs, freelancers/contractors, and part-time employees constitute smaller, equal groups of 4 and 8 respectively.

Number of hours working

Option	No. of Employees	Percentage
20 hours	26	22. 41%
21-40 hours	38	32. 76%
41-60 hours	42	36. 21%
Option 4	10	8. 62%

Source: Compiled Data

This above table data presents the distribution of weekly work hours for primary jobs. The largest group, with 42 individuals, works between 41 and 60 hours per week. The 21-40 hours category is the second largest with 38 individuals, while 26 people work 20 hours and 10 individuals chose "Option 4".

Number of Years working

option	No. of employees	Percentage
6 years	8	6. 90%
1 year	86	74. 14%
1-3 years	16	13. 79%
4-6 years	6	5. 17%

Source: Compiled Data

This above graphs data displays the tenure of individuals in their primary jobs. The overwhelming majority, 86 respondents, have been working for 1 year. The categories of 1-3 years, >6 years, and 4-6 years represent significantly smaller groups, with 16, 8, and 6 respondents respectively.

Moonlighting is necessary for Financial stability

Option	No. of Employees	Percentage
Agree	36	31. 03%
Disagree	6	5. 17%
Neutral	30	25. 86%
Strongly Agree	34	29. 31%
Strongly Disagree	10	8. 62%

Source: Compiled Data

The above table and graph data reveal significant insights into employees 'perceptions regarding the necessity of moonlighting for financial stability. A majority of respondents, 36 agreeing and 34 strongly agreeing, totaling 70 individuals, believe that moonlighting is essential to maintain their financial well-being. This indicates a prevalent sentiment that income from primary employment alone may not suffice for many individuals, leading them to seek additional sources of income. Meanwhile, 30 respondents remained neutral, suggesting uncertainty or varying personal circumstances that affect their stance on the matter. On the other hand, only a small portion of respondents—6 who disagreed and 10 who strongly disagreed, totaling 16—did not consider moonlighting necessary for financial stability. This distribution highlights that while some employees feel financially secure with a single job.

Helps to earn extra income.

Option	No. of Employees	Percentage
Agree	40	34. 48%
Neutral	34	29. 31%
Strongly Agree	30	25. 86%
Strongly Disagree	12	10. 34%

Source: Compiled Data

The above graph data suggests that moonlighting is widely perceived as a beneficial means of earning additional income. Out of the total respondents, 40 agreed and 30 strongly agreed that moon lighting helps them financially highlighting a clear majority who recognize its economic advantages. This shows that form any individuals, income from a primary job may not be sufficient to meet their financial needs or goals, leading them to take up secondary employment or freelance opportunities.

Additionally, 34 participants selected a neutral response, which could indicate either limited personal experience with moonlighting or a lack of strong opinion on the matter. On the other hand, only 12 respondents strongly disagreed, representing a small minority who may either not engage in moonlighting or believe it doesn't significantly contribute to their income.

Moonlighting Status Affects primary job performance

Option	No. of Employees	Percentage
Agree	36	31. 03%
Disagree	14	12. 07%
Neutral	48	41. 38%
Strongly Agree	12	10. 34%
Strongly Disagree	6	5. 17%

Source: Compiled Data

From the above data responses show mixed views on whether moonlighting affects primary job performance. A total of 48 respondents (36 agree, 12 strongly agree) feel it does have an impact. However, an equal number (48) remained neutral, suggesting uncertainty or varying experiences. Only 20 respondents (14 disagree, 6 strongly disagree) believe it doesn't affect their main job. This indicates that while many acknowledge negative effects, opinions are divided based on individual situation.

Helps for Skill Development via Moonlighting

Option	No. of Employees	Percentage
Agree	44	37. 93%
Disagree	2	1. 72%
Neutral	36	31. 03%
Strongly Agree	26	22. 41%
Strongly Disagree	8	6. 90%

Source: Compiled Data.

The data indicates that a majority of respondents view moonlighting as an opportunity to develop new skills. A total of

70 individuals (44 agree, 26 strongly agree) support this view, suggesting that engaging in additional work helps them enhance their professional abilities. 36 respondents remained neutral, indicating that some may not have experienced noticeable skill development or are unsure of its impact. Only 10 (2 disagree, 8 strongly disagree) believe moonlighting does not contribute to skill growth. Overall, the responses reflect a positive perception of moonlighting as a means for personal and professional.

Financial Necessity of Moonlighting

Option	No. of Employees	Percentage
Agree	36	31.03%
Disagree	6	5.17%
Neutral	30	25.86%
Strongly Agree	34	29.31%
Strongly Disagree	10	8.62%

Source: Compiled Data

The above data reveals that a majority of respondents consider moonlighting necessary for their financial stability. A total of 70 participants (36 agree and 34 strongly agree) believe that additional income from moonlighting is important to meet their financial needs. 30 respondents chose a neutral stance, indicating uncertainty or varying financial situations. On the other hand, only 16 individuals (6 disagree and 10 strongly disagree) felt that moonlighting is not essential for financial stability. Overall, the responses highlight that for most participants, moonlighting plays a crucial role in maintaining financial well-being.

Job satisfied with primary job

Option	No. of Employees	Percentage
Agree	36	31.03%
Disagree	8	6.90%
Neutral	28	24.14%
Strongly Agree	38	32.76%
Strongly Disagree	6	5.17%

Source: Compiled Data

The below graphs tell the majority of respondents reported positive job satisfaction, with 38 strongly agreeing and 36 agreeing that they are satisfied with their primary job. A smaller portion remained neutral (28), while only a few expressed dissatisfaction—8 disagreed and 6 strongly disagreed. Overall, this indicates a generally high level of job satisfaction among the respondents.

Opportunities for Growth and Development

Option	No. of Employees	Percentage
Agree	34	29.31%
Disagree	8	6.90%
Neutral	40	34.48%
Strongly Agree	32	27.59%
Strongly Disagree	2	1.72%

Source: Compiled Data

From the above graph the responses indicate that most participants perceive their jobs as providing opportunities for growth and development. A total of 66 respondents agreed or strongly agreed (34 and 32 respectively), while 40 remained neutral. Only a small number expressed dissatisfaction, with 8 disagreeing and 2 strongly disagreeing. This suggests that while many employees recognize growth opportunities in their jobs, a significant portion remains undecided, indicating room for improvement in career development support.

Recognition & Value in primary job.

Option	No. of employees	Percentage
Agree	46	39. 66%
Disagree	6	5. 17%
Neutral	28	24. 14%
Strongly Agree	28	24. 14%
Strongly Disagree	8	6. 90%

Source: Compiled Data

The responses show that a majority of employees feel valued and recognized in their primary job, with 46 agreeing and 28 strongly agreeing. However, 28 respondents remained neutral, suggesting uncertainty or mixed experiences. A smaller group expressed negative sentiments, with 6 disagreeing and 8 strongly disagreeing. Overall, the data reflects a generally positive perception of recognition at work, though a notable portion of employees may not consistently feel appreciated.

Workload is manageable.

Option	No. of Employees	Percentage
Agree	38	32. 76%
Disagree	8	6. 90%
Neutral	36	31. 03%
Strongly Agree	28	24. 14%
Strongly Disagree	6	5. 17%

Source: Compiled Data

The above table data indicates that a majority of respondents find their workload manageable, with 38 agreeing and 28 strongly agreeing. However, 36 participants remained neutral, which may suggest uncertainty or variability in workload. A smaller number reported dissatisfaction, with 8 disagreeing and 6 strongly disagreeing. Overall, the responses reflect a generally positive view of workload manageability, though a significant neutral segment points to potential inconsistencies in workload experience.

Employee Retention Intent for long-term

Option	No. of Employees	Percentage
Agree	42	36. 21%
Disagree	12	10. 34%
Neutral	28	24. 14%
Strongly Agree	28	24. 14%
Strongly Disagree	6	5. 17%

Source: Compiled Data

The responses suggest that a majority of employees intend to stay with their primary employer long-term, with 42 agreeing and 28 strongly agreeing. Meanwhile, 28 respondents were neutral, indicating indecision or uncertainty about their long-term plans. A smaller portion expressed an intention to leave, with 12 disagreeing and 6 strongly disagreeing. Overall, the data reflects a generally positive outlook employee retention, though the neutral and negative responses highlight areas where employers could focus on strengthening long-term commitment.

Well-being Support for employee

Option	No. of Employees	Percentage
Agree	46	39. 66%
Disagree	6	5. 17%
Neutral	42	36. 21%
Strongly Agree	20	17. 24%
Strongly Disagree	2	1. 72%

Source: Compiled Data

The data indicates that most employees believe their employer provides adequate support for employee well-being, with 46 agreeing and 20 strongly agreeing. A large number of respondents (42) remained neutral, which could suggest mixed experiences or a lack of clear communication regarding wellbeing initiatives. Only a few

expressed dissatisfaction, with 6 disagreeing and 2 strongly disagreeing. Overall, the responses reflect a generally positive perception of well-being support, though the high number of neutral responses suggests there is room for increased clarity or improvement in well-being programs.

Clear and well-communicated policies regarding moon lighting.

Options	No. of Employees	Percentage
Agree	44	37. 93%
Disagree	4	3. 45%
Neutral	40	34. 48%
Strongly Agree	22	18. 97%
Strongly Disagree	6	5. 17%

Source: Compiled Data

The data shows that a majority of employees believe their organization has clear and well-communicated policies regarding moonlighting, with 44 agreeing and 22 strongly agreeing. However, a substantial number (40) remained neutral, which may indicate a lack of awareness or clarity about the policies among some employees. Only a few disagreed (4) or strongly disagreed (6). Overall, the responses suggest that while many employees recognize clarity in moonlighting policies, better communication may be needed to reach those who are unsure.

Employer Recommendation

Options	No. of Employees	Percentage
Agree	44	37. 93%
Disagree	4	3. 45%
Neutral	40	34. 48%
Strongly Agree	22	18. 97%
Strongly Disagree	6	5. 17%

Source: Compiled Data

The data reveals that a majority of employees feel comfortable discussing their moonlighting activities with HR without fear of negative consequences, with 44 agreeing and 22 strongly agreeing. However, a notable portion of respondents (40) remained neutral, indicating uncertainty or hesitation about having such conversations. Only a small number expressed discomfort, with 4 disagreeing and 6 strongly disagreeing. Overall, the findings suggest a generally open environment regarding moonlighting discussions, though efforts to build greater trust and transparency could help address the concerns of those who remain unsure.

Correlation Analysis Objective 1:

To examine the relationship between moonlighting and employee job satisfaction.

H₀₁: No significant relationship between moonlighting and employee job satisfaction

Correlations			
		Moonlighting score	Job score
moonlighting score	Pearson Correlation	1	.617**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		<.001
	N	116	116
Job score	Pearson Correlation	.617**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	
	N	116	116

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

The correlation analysis between moonlighting and current job satisfaction reveals a positive and statistically significant relationship, with a Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.617 and a p-value less than 0.001. This indicates a moderately strong correlation, suggesting that as moonlighting tendencies increase, employee satisfaction with their current job also tends to increase. Since the significance level is well below 0.01, we reject the null hypothesis (H₀₁), which stated that there is no significant relationship between moonlighting and job satisfaction, and accept the alternative hypothesis (H₁₁). Therefore, the data supports the conclusion that moonlighting is significantly associated with employee job satisfaction, implying that employees who engage in additional work may perceive their overall employment experience more positively—possibly due to financial gains, skill development, or autonomy. The null hypothesis is rejected, and accept the alternative hypothesis. A significant relationship exists between moonlighting and employee job satisfaction.

Regression Analysis

Objective 2: To analyse the impact of moonlighting on employee retention.

H₀₂: Moonlighting has no significant impact on employee retention.

Ordinal Regression analysis on Moonlighting and Retention.

Model Fitting Information				
Model	-2 Log Likelihood	Chi-Square	df	Sig.
Intercept Only	408.523			
Final	365.842	42.680	5	<.001

Link function: Logit.

Goodness-of-Fit			
	Chi-Square	df	Sig.
Pearson	2566.622	571	<.001

Deviance	304.730	571	1.000
Link function: Logit.			

Pseudo R-Square	
Cox and Snell	.308
Nagelkerke	.312
Mc Fadden	.084
Link function: Logit.	

Source: Compiled Data

The ordinal regression model was conducted using the PLUM (Polytomous Universal Model) procedure to assess the impact of moonlighting scores and age on employee retention scores. The model fitting information indicates a significant improvement over the intercept-only model, with a Chi-Square value of 42.680 ($df = 5$, $p < .001$), suggesting that the predictors collectively contribute meaningfully to explaining the variation in retention scores. The goodness-of-fit statistics show a Pearson Chi-Square significance of $< .001$ and a deviance significance of 1.000, implying that the model fits the data well. The Pseudo R-square values (Cox and Snell=.308, Nagelkerke=.312, and Mc Fadden=.084) reflect a moderate level of explained variance in retention scores by the model. Based on the ordinal regression analysis, the results provide evidence to support the alternative hypothesis that moonlighting score has a significant effect on employee retention score. The parameter estimate for moonlighting score is 1.524 with a p-value of less than 0.001, indicating a strong and statistically significant positive relationship. This means that as employees' moonlighting scores increase, their likelihood of having a higher retention score also increases, suggesting that moonlighting positively influences retention. On the other hand, the analysis does not support the alternative hypothesis for age. None of the age categories show a statistically significant impact on retention score, as all p-values exceeded the 0.05 threshold. Therefore, we retain the null hypothesis for age, concluding that age does not significantly affect employee retention in this model.

Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis is accepted, Moonlighting significantly impacts employee retention.

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

1. A large number of employees engage in moonlighting, primarily for financial stability.
2. Over 60% of respondents agreed that moonlighting is essential for financial reasons.
3. A moderate positive correlation ($r=0.617$, $p<0.01$) exists between moonlighting and job satisfaction.
4. Employees involved in moonlighting still report satisfactory levels of job satisfaction, especially when HR policies are supportive.
5. Ordinal regression shows a significant positive relationship between moonlighting and retention ($p < 0.001$).
6. This contradicts the finding that moonlighting leads to lower retention—needs clarification or deeper discussion.
7. Many respondents perceive HR policies on moonlighting as unclear or poorly communicated.
8. A large portion expressed fear or hesitation in discussing moonlighting with HR.
9. Many employees believe moonlighting helps develop new skills and enhances employability.
10. Most moonlighters are between ages 22–30, and the sample is dominated by full-time IT employees with under 3 years of experience.

SUGGESTIONS OF THE STUDY

1. Organizations should consider more adaptive and transparent HR policies that acknowledge employees' desire for additional income or growth opportunities.
2. Companies should set clear, written policies on moonlighting to avoid confusion and ensure mutual trust between management and employees.

3. Introducing wellness programs and balanced workloads can reduce the need for employees to seek additional jobs.
4. Employees should feel safe discussing secondary work or financial concerns without fear of penalty, which can improve trust and satisfaction.
5. Offering performance-based incentives, recognition, and career growth opportunities can enhance retention and discourage moonlighting.
6. Regular surveys and feedback mechanisms should be used to assess employee satisfaction and improve HR practices.
7. Addressing different expectations and perceptions across gender groups can help create inclusive and supportive workplace policies.
8. HR departments should evaluate the effectiveness of moonlighting policies and make data-driven adjustments as workforce needs evolve.
9. Providing workshops or counseling on financial management can reduce employees' need to seek extra income through moonlighting.
10. By offering flexible or part-time roles within the organization itself, companies can retain talent who might otherwise moonlight elsewhere.

V. CONCLUSION

This study explored the influence of moonlighting and related HR policies on employee job satisfaction and retention, specifically within the IT sector in Hyderabad. The findings revealed that transparent, flexible, and employee-centric HR policies play a significant role in enhancing job satisfaction and reducing turnover intentions. While moonlighting can pose challenges, it also reflects the evolving needs and aspirations of the modern workforce. Employees are more likely to remain loyal to organizations that acknowledge their personal and professional goals and offer supportive work environments. The study also highlighted varying perceptions based on gender and other demographics, emphasizing the need for inclusive HR practices. Overall, the research underscores the importance for organizations to rethink traditional HR approaches and adopt policies that align with the dynamic nature of today's work culture.

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