

## SPIRITUALITY; A WAY TO LEAD CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY IN MADURAI DISTRICT

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CHIDAMBARAM, TAMILNADU ABSTRACT

*The purpose of this paper is to explore the mechanism of how spirituality leads to corporate social responsibility. Corporate social responsibility and spirituality are both fields of study within the management literature that have finally reached a critical mass within the last decade. Spirituality can prove emancipatory and enable individuals to explore a new relationship with work. These observations about the nature of human affairs, written millennia ago, refer to the creative energy that can arise when people touch on the sacred or spiritual. At its heart, a multidimensional perspective challenges proponents of corporate social responsibility to develop new ways of thinking about what is right, by moving from what it is good to do, to what it is good to be. Corporate social responsibility thus demands an open inquiry into spiritual questions. The paper introduces potential benefits and caveats of bringing spirituality into the social responsibility; providing recommendations and suggestions for practitioners to incorporate spirituality positively in social responsibility.*

**Key words:** Spirituality, Corporate Social Responsibility, Individual, Organization, Management

### INTRODUCTION

Spirituality and Corporate Social Responsibility is a fascinating read for anyone with an interest in ways in which spirituality relates to what is or what should be driving businesses and organizations to a more responsible behaviour. Today's spirituality, Biberman and Whitty (1997) argue, brings a postmodern perspective on working life. Mainstream management discourse still dismisses the new interest in spirituality as swimming against the tide of the typically modern concerns of today's organizations, which, for the most part, not only remain disinterested in spirituality, but are also resistant to its inclusion in corporate life (Grant, O'Neil and Stephens, 2004; Gull and Doh, 2004; Jurkiewicz and Giacalone 2004). Like animals, people in organizations can lose touch with their own instinctual compass and emotional needs. Mitroff et al. begins by introducing the interior dimension of animals (and humans) that is in communication in a "whisperer" relationship. Exterior dimensions are constituted by actions and behaviours whereas interior dimensions include thinking, feeling, and values. In a whispering relationship the interior dimensions of the animal and human are deeply connected and only distinguishable by their outward appearance.

People are recognized that the community around the company is one of the important stakeholders for the company because the support of the local community is necessary for existence, survival, and development of the company. Accordingly, as an integral part of the community environment, a company needs to be committed to working to provide the greatest

benefit to the community as much as possible. In addition, it is also important to realize that the company's operations could potentially impact on the surrounding community. Therefore, a company needs to do a variety of activities that touch people's needs. In essence, if a company wants to be existing and accepted, it has to include also the responsibility of a social nature. Many people seek their understanding of what is right through deep inquiry into questions concerning the sacred or spirituality.

Spirituality is central to many of the daily decisions people in the 'South' make about their own and their community's development, including that of whether or not to participate in risky but potentially beneficial social action. Conscience can be defined as one's subjective ethical guidance system (Nee, 1968). Beyond an individual's cognitively held beliefs and values, conscience informs regarding what is just and thought of as an individual's most deeply held value system. Linkages may not only occur vertically, but also horizontally and diagonally across a multiplicity of value-chains. In this new conception, string like linkages can create value for a corporation in unpredictable ways. This cooperative perspective suggests that the locus of control does not lie entirely with management, but in networks of relationships. These networks explain the impact of relatively small non-government organizations such as Greenpeace on large multinational corporations and how its strategic and symbolic actions can have an immense impact on public perceptions.

Management has much to do with running "for -profit" organizations such as businesses, as well as non-profit organizations such as universities, charities and governments. There is no one theory of management and no one theory of ideal organization. One definition of management theory is that it is "concerned with a set of behaviours and thoughts of how a business could achieve its goals and objectives" (Nixon, 2003:2). An awareness that profit and sustainability of a business entity in the long run can only be obtained through public welfare has encouraged the company's commitment to social responsibility (Abidin, 2006). Organizations are responsible for much of the deterioration of the environment; hence they have a responsibility to care for it. More ever living organisms have feelings, which give them an intrinsic value beside their instrumental values. So we should care when our activity on the earth causes suffering and loss. Theories of management the address sustainability seek to bring ecological sustainability into the programme of management as widely as possible. It recognizes the value of life-support systems and the intrinsic value of individual living organisms, as well as our corresponding responsibilities (Birch and Cobb, 1981).

Peter Drucker regards management as a central institution in society and suggests that there are very few differences between managing a business, diocese, hospital, university, symphony orchestra, research laboratory, research laboratory, trade union or government agency. In this view, management should not be concerned with power, but with responsibility. In a similar vein, Charles Handy is concerned with how companies manage their goals beyond the pursuit of profit, and develop into communities of human endeavour (Kennedy, 1991). Many people work primarily to make a living; it adds little or nothing to the meaning of their lives. For some, job drudgery is hard to avoid, while, for others, work makes a major contribution to their lives and imbues them with meaning. "A sense of meaning and purpose" Clive Hamilton (2003:46) writes, 'is the single attitude most strongly associated with life-satisfaction' what makes life intrinsically valuable is it s experience of values such as forgiveness, love, courage, generosity and caring. Intensity of experience contrasts' with monotonous regularity that inhibits intensity. "Be ye perfect" is an injunction from the New Testament.

The ethos of process thought affirms the intrinsic value of each individual, which is worthy of respect quite apart from the individual's instrumental value to the organization. The mechanistic model has nothing to say about ethical responsibilities, but in process thought, ethical consequences flow from postulating internal relations or feelings all the way down from humans to quarks-consequences which have to do with our valuation of the environment. We need to look after nature because nature looks after us; it provides us with resources, life-support systems and natural pollution control. Alan Downs (1995) has found that it has done so: he gives example of impaired organizations whose situation was materially worsened and whose mediocre financial benefits were bought at enormous human cost.

Taylor focused on the nuts and bolts of an organization; the human relations model addressed the needs of the employee. People are emotional beings rather than economic ones, and organizational are co-operative social systems rather the mechanical ones. As Dunphy, Griffiths and Been (2003:3) emphasize, 'corporations are the fundamental cells of modern economic life and their phenomenal success in transforming the earth's resources into wealth has shaped the physical and social world in which we live corporations have contributed to these problems and therefore have a responsibility to be part of the answer.

Finally, the growing interest in spirituality is evident in corporations, corporate meeting rooms, and the business world as well. For example, a growing numbers of organizations, including large corporations such as Intel, Coca-Cola, Boeing, and Sears, are reported to have incorporated spirituality in their workplaces, strategies, or cultures (Burack, 1999; Konz and Ryan, 1999, Wagner-Marsh, and Conley, 1999; Gogoi, 2005). Grzeda and Assogbavi (2011, 239) offer the following working definition for spirituality in management: It "consists of those management behaviors driven entirely by spiritual values, teachings, or beliefs, regardless of their source, creating connections between behavior and personal spiritual meanings which are cognitively acknowledged and affectively valued by the manager." The political narrative is dominated by neo-liberal villains (e.g. George W. Bush) contrasted with spiritually minded thinkers (e.g. Mahatma Gandhi).

There is virtually no mention of the modern corporation or of corporate social responsibility. "From the social responsibility perspective, the interests of shareholders cannot be neatly divided off from those of other stakeholders; all these interests co arise in a complex, dynamic process... The spiritual thus interpenetrates the consciousness of corporations, whose survival depends on a vast web of circumstances and whose existence arises not only from financial capital, but also natural, social and symbolic 'capital'... At its heart, a multidimensional perspective challenges proponents of corporate social responsibility to develop new ways of thinking about what is right, by moving from what it is good to do, to what it is good to be. Corporate social responsibility thus demands an open inquiry into spiritual questions" (p. 13-14)

#### **OBJECTIVES:**

- Describe spiritual activities and its effect on employees.
- Describe the incorporation of CSR action in employees in Madurai district industries.
- Finally suggesting a viable strategy for implementing spiritual activities which leads to CSR action in Madurai District industrial sector employees.
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## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

### SPIRITUALITY:

Spirituality is the concept and values such as transcendence, balance, purity, altruism, meaning in life, life with a deep connection to the universe, and a greater awareness of one's self in addition to (God, or the power of energy) which provides the energy and wisdom that transcends the material aspects of life (Klerk, 2005). In a related vein, [Lawler \(2003\)](#) argues that organizations that search for spiritual or noble purposes are generally successful in terms of establishing goals toward motivating and retaining their employees.

My definition of spirituality is no more complicated than Gandhi's definition: To be in service to the weak and the frail. That is absolutely my path. My spiritual theme is kindness. Tenacious and fierce kindness! Kindness, which makes you re-think many actions. Kindness is my religion. Spiritual consciousness emphasizes on equilibrium with market requirements, social needs and natural environment. In these organizations human beings are viewed as multi-potential, meaning seeking entities. Organizations moving from market consciousness to social and spiritual consciousness achieve better integration of ideals of efficiency, equity and equilibrium. (PANDEY and GUPTA, 2008, p. 896).

The final perspective on 'Why be responsible?' holds that responsibility is grounded in our nature as spiritual beings who have an inherent longing (whether or not we are aware of it) to realize who we truly are, individually and collectively. Thus, our most intrinsic motivation is to realize our essential spiritual nature and purpose, not to fill an ever-present set of need based desires (Chakraborty 1991). Although this perspective first emerged in writings on leadership from the 1990's (Harman and Porter 1997), its basis is wisdom handed down over the ages by those who have been recognized for their spiritual accomplishments (Huxley 1946/1990).

A basic tenet of this perspective is that once leaders have developed their own spiritual self-awareness, they naturally exercise it in some form of service beyond self-interest (Greenleaf 1998). The dualistic distinction between one's self and others becomes replaced by a deeply felt connectivity – and the ordinary distinction between responsibility to one's self and to others attenuates. In light of this, [López, Ramos, and Ramos \(2009\)](#) and [Pfeffer \(2003\)](#) criticize businesses that focus only on the goal of maximizing shareholders' value and profits at the cost of their mission and values because they can discourage employees from revealing their spirituality in the workplace.

Fogel (2000), a 1993 Nobel laureate in economics, stresses the importance of spirituality in the new economy. He identifies 15 vital spiritual resources that include such concepts as "a sense of purpose, a sense of opportunity, a sense of community, a strong family ethic, a strong work ethic, and high self esteem." The implication of his view is that capitalism should take spiritual values into account in order to survive in the new economy. It should be noted that Fogel uses the term "spirituality" in a way that is not connected to any particular religion or group. Similarly, Rhodes (2006) maintains: "A spiritual workplace provides resources to help people uncover their creative potential and to practice creativity within the organization."

### CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY:

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) is a relatively new field of study which embraces concepts that are value laden and susceptible to particular ideological and emotional interpretations. Much of the early research conducted in this area has focused on the relationship

between CSR and profitability based on the argument that first and foremost, businesses have responsibilities that are economic in nature. As such, organizations have an obligation to produce goods and services that society wants and to sell them at a profit; accordingly, all other business roles are predicted on this fundamental assumption (Carroll, 1979, p. 50).

Since the 1980s, however, corporations have been expected to shoulder many social burdens, largely through philanthropic support and/or lending expertise to community agencies, schools, art institutions, local government, and non-profit community groups. This has prompted a growing number of studies on various facets of CSR that are more aligned with the social rather than the economic/financial end of the continuum (Quazi, 2003).

Corporate social responsibility is the subset of corporate responsibilities that deals with a company's voluntary/discretionary relationships with its societal and community stakeholders. CSR is typically undertaken with some intent to improve an important aspect of society or relationships with communities or non-governmental organizations (NGOs) (nonprofits). CSR is frequently operationalized as community relations, philanthropic, multi-sector collaboration, or volunteer activities. CSR as generally used falls into what Carroll (1979, 1998) termed the discretionary and ethical responsibilities of business. .

According to Webster's Deluxe Unabridged Dictionary, (responsibility) is derived from the late Latin *responsabilis* - requiring an answer. The word can be seen as having two parts: response + able, i.e. the ability to respond, to be able to answer for one's conduct and obligations. Ultimately it means: 'expected or obligated to account (for something, to someone)... involving duties ...able to distinguish between right and wrong ...trustworthy, dependable, and reliable'. But this definition raises substantive questions, such as why be accountable, for what and to whom?

To ascertain how CSR is implemented in organizations, some research uses a developmental framework to show change in awareness, strategy, and action over time, and posits stages of CSR from elementary to transforming (e.g., Mirvis & Googins, 2006). Jackson and Nelson (2004) take more of a how-to approach, offering a principle-based framework for mastering what they call the "new rules of the game." Examples of principles include harnessing innovation for the public good, putting people at the centre, and spreading economic opportunity.

Milton Friedman's view (1962, 133) may still make a great deal of sense to many students. "There is one and only one social responsibility of business — to use its resources and engage in activities designed to increase its profits so long as it stays within the rules of the game, which is to say, engages in open and free competition without deception or fraud."

During the 1960s and 1970s, companies came under considerable fire from social activists and scholars alike for their practices in particular domains, including environmental irresponsibility (e.g., Rachael Carson's *Silent Spring*), political engagement (e.g., Edwin Epstein's seminal *The Corporation in American Politics*[1969] and David Vogel's *Lobbying the Corporation* about ten years later). Irresponsible behavior and practices that had gone long unnoticed spawned social movements, including the environmental movement, the consumer movement, and the product safety movement, plus a wave of corporate political activism in which companies proactively exerted power over the public interest agenda.

Our definition of corporate social responsibility (CSR) will be the one cited in Hollender and Fenichell (2004, p. 29): ... an ongoing commitment by business to behave ethically and to contribute to economic development when demonstrating respect for people, communities, society at large,

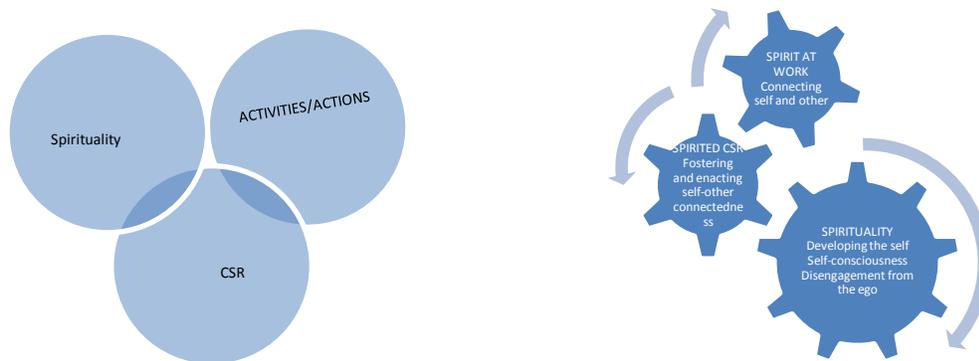
and the environment. In short, CSR marries the concepts of global citizenship with environmental stewardship and sustainable development.

John P. Mackey, CEO and co-founder of Whole Foods Market, asserts that customer satisfaction is more important than profit maximization. He is an advocate for what is referred to as values-driven capitalism. The firm has to consciously work to improve society and not rely solely on the “invisible hand” of the marketplace to achieve this result. In fact, the company stopped selling lobsters because it did not like the way the animals were treated. The company is also increasing its spending on its purchases of produce from local farmers (Nocera, 2006).

## METHODOLOGY

This study is a quantitative research about the spiritual activities and corporate social responsibility (CSR) actions that affect the positive attitudes of employees in industries at Madurai district. The objective is to study the activities of spirituality and corporate social responsibility (CSR) actions in industry at Madurai and about the attitude of their employees that affect it. The structured interview which is used as the major instrument for data collection is an in-depth interview. The data is obtained via 150 random employees who are working in the industry of Madurai district. The sampling group consists of both male and female, aged 20 years old and above in the industries.

## RELATIONSHIP DIAGRAM:



Apart from using survey through direct interview, the questionnaire was distributed randomly to employers who were the targeted respondents. This research paper is a descriptive study and data for this study was generated through the self-administered questionnaire among the sample of employees. The questionnaire was created to measure several components from which some questionnaire items were selected for the purpose of the study. Apart from demographic information, 11 question items of the survey document were used in the present study.

For subjective measures, single-item measure for testing a theoretical component is known to be problematic since an item being used may be under represented for the component or the single indicator is likely to suffer from measurement errors. Therefore, multiple-item scale systems were employed to ensure the components and their sub-components were not misrepresented. Thus a 22-item scale was used which includes statements like “SPIRITUAL ACTIVITIES (intrinsic) and “CSR DID YOU USE” (extrinsic) items. The results show a significant relationship between intrinsic spiritual orientation and an employees’ ethical belief.

## DATA ANALYSIS

In the questionnaire, Spirituality was measured using nine items from the Manuel Canteras and Lluís Oviedo's five point scale. Thirteen CSR items were from the Student Investigator Survey (2014). These values were deemed best to represent Spirituality and CSR orientations. Confirmatory factor analysis was used to assess and confirm the paired sample analysis of these researches. For the Madurai sample, the corresponding values are 0.80 for spiritual activities and 0.86 for CSR Action respectively

### HYPOTHESES TESTED:

Name Hypotheses Result

H1. There is a positive significant relationship between Spiritual activities and 'CSR did you use'  
Significant

H2. There is a negative significant relationship between Spiritual activities and 'CSR did you use'  
Not Significant

H3. There is a negative significant relationship between Spirituality and CSR. Significant

H4. There is a positive significant relationship between Spirituality and CSR. Not Significant

TABLE -I

**Case Processing Summary**

	Cases					
	Included		Excluded		Total	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
SPIRITUAL ACTIVITIES * CSR ACTION DID YOU USE	110	99.1%	1	.9%	111	100.0%
SPIRITUAL ACTIVITIES * CSR	110	99.1%	1	.9%	111	100.0%

### INTERPRETATION:

The questionnaires were distributed and collected by the researcher from employees in industries in Madurai. One hundred and fifty copies of the questionnaires were sent to companies in Madurai. A total of 110 usable questionnaires were completed, representing approximately a 73% response rate. So of the questionnaires, 110 were taken for consideration other 27% were not returned and/or not filled properly. So researcher takes 110 questionnaires and converted to 100%.

TABLE –II

## ANOVA

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
SPIRITUALITY	Between Groups	1586.945	2	793.473	6.267	.003
	Within Groups	13548.373	107	126.620		
	Total	15135.318	109			
CSR	Between Groups	3778.496	2	1889.248	6.245	.003
	Within Groups	32368.922	107	302.513		
	Total	6147.418	109			

## INTERPRETATION:

Having obtained the measures of SPIRITUALITY and CSR following ANNOVA model the values were categorised - between groups and within the groups. DF was equal to 2(CSR and Spirituality) for between groups whereas within the groups DF was equal to 107. Factor value Spirituality was 6.267 and CSR was 6.245 and significant value was the same (.003).

TABLE-III

## One-Sample Test

	Test Value = 2					
					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Lower	Upper
SPIRITUAL ACTIVITIES	-13.350	109	.000	-1.07273	-1.2320	-.9135
CSR ACTION DID YOU USE	-12.905	109	.000	-1.00000	-1.1536	-.8464

## INTERPRETATION:

The obtained measure of Spirituality Activities and CSR Action through sample test model was built with test value = 2 (CSR and Spirituality) and the sig. 2 tailed value is same= .000. The t value of Spiritual activities is -13.350 and CSR action value is -12.905. So the value is near by the test value.

TABLE-IV

**SPIRITUAL ACTIVITIES \* CSR ACTION DID YOU USE**

SPIRITUAL ACTIVITIES			
CSR ACTION DID YOU USE	Mean	N	Std. Deviation
LOW	1.8333	36	.50709
MEDIUM	.9211	38	.48666
HIGH	.0278	36	.16667
Total	.9273	110	.84277

**INTERPRETATION:**

The results of this study found that Spiritual activities mostly affect the positive attitude of employees in the industry in Madurai and the next value is Corporate Social Responsibility Action. However, the results of this study show that the Spiritual Activities that is performed in the industry of Madurai affect the positive attitude of the employees but some activities such as Corporate Social Responsibility Action affected the attitude of employees in medium level since these activities have no direct impact on employee or their organization.

TABLE -V

**Paired Samples Correlations**

		N	Correlation	Sig.
Pair 1	SPIRITUAL ACTIVITIES & CSR ACTION DID YOU USE	110	.806	.000
Pair 2	SPIRITUALITY & CSR	110	.860	.000

**INTREPRETATION:**

The results of this study using Paired samples correlations found that Spiritual activities and CSR Action is the same for the correlation value of 0.806 and Spirituality and CSR value of 0.860. So the significant value is same for both relationship values that are .000. So the paired samples correlations are related to the research.

TABLE - VI

**EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION MARITAL STATUS WORK EXPERIENCE GENDER AGE \*  
SPIRITUAL ACTIVITIES**

SPIRITUAL ACTIVITIES		EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION	MARITAL STATUS	WORK EXPERIENCE	GENDER	AGE
LOW	Mean	1.4884	1.5581	7.3372	.7209	38.4419
	N	43	43	43	43	43
	Std. Deviation	1.09918	.79589	4.18859	.45385	10.68667
MEDIUM	Mean	1.3636	1.6818	7.0000	.5909	39.5455
	N	22	22	22	22	22
	Std. Deviation	.84771	.83873	3.34166	.50324	9.98917
HIGH	Mean	1.5556	1.7111	7.9333	.5778	40.0222
	N	45	45	45	45	45
	Std. Deviation	.98985	1.05792	4.31646	.49949	10.08484
Total	Mean	1.4909	1.6455	7.5136	.6364	39.3091
	N	110	110	110	110	110
	Std. Deviation	1.00225	.91457	4.07074	.48325	10.23732

### INTERPRETATION

The demographic information includes the following characteristics; educational qualification, marital status, work experience, gender and age. The demographic information shown in Table VI is based on N=110 for spiritual activities finding by low, medium and high. From 110 respondents of this study, 43 (39%) were of low level, 22(20%) were of medium level and 45 (41%) were of high level. So the result shows that a spiritual activity was high among the employees.

TABLE - VII

**EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION MARITAL STATUS WORK EXPERIENCE GENDER AGE \*  
CSR ACTION DID YOU USE**

CSR ACTION DID YOU USE	EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION	MARITAL STATUS	WORK EXPERIENCE	GENDER	AGE	
LOW	Mean	1.5946	1.6486	8.0270	.5946	40.7297
	N	37	37	37	37	37
	Std. Deviation	.92675	1.05978	4.37630	.49774	9.78561
MEDIUM	Mean	1.3514	1.7297	7.5135	.5405	39.2162
	N	37	37	37	37	37
	Std. Deviation	.97799	.93240	3.37369	.50523	9.58626
HIGH	Mean	1.5278	1.5556	6.9861	.7778	37.9444
	N	36	36	36	36	36
	Std. Deviation	1.10805	.73463	4.43120	.42164	11.37150
Total	Mean	1.4909	1.6455	7.5136	.6364	39.3091
	N	110	110	110	110	110
	Std. Deviation	1.00225	.91457	4.07074	.48325	10.23732

### INTREPRETATION

The demographic information includes the following characteristics; educational qualification, marital status, work experience, gender and age. The demographic information shown in Table VI is based on N=110 for CSR Action level finding by low, medium and high. From 110 respondents of this study, 37 (34%) were of low level, 37(34%) were of medium level and 36 (32%) were of high level. So the result shows that CSR Action should be same in low and medium level among the employees,

### Conclusion:

As already mentioned, the individual character of the examples was very important. The aim was not to find one company that served as the norm for all other companies, but to demonstrate that there were many possibilities towards finding a successful strategy. Nevertheless, the examples were also aimed at inspiring other companies to find their way. This study only collected data from employees who are in the industries in Madurai District. For the further study, other groups of employees in another industry which located in the same province or in another province that have the variety of culture or company workers should be studied. Also, at least these study follow up should be performed to limit time to complete the questionnaires or structured interview, focused on Spiritual Activities and Corporate Social Responsibility Action (CSR Action) from previous study. Moreover, researchers should study the factor that affect the effective format of Spiritual Activities to increase comparative advantages for Corporate Social Responsibility action. This interpenetrating relationship of Spiritual Activities with our Society is carefully examined in every Corporate Social Responsibility Action. Researchers have the challenge to

develop their own opinions and frameworks for understanding the role of spirituality in creating Corporate Social Responsibility among employees in various industries.

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