



From Burnout to Sustainable Performance: The Role of Psychological Capital and Organizational Support among Education Professionals

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Abstract :

This study aims to explore how psychological capital and organizational support contribute to sustainable performance among education professionals experiencing occupational burnout. A qualitative case study design was employed at Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 1 Probolinggo. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, observations, and document analysis involving education professionals and relevant institutional stakeholders. Data were analyzed through data condensation, data display, and verification, while credibility was established through source triangulation, technique triangulation, member checking, and an audit trail. The findings reveal three central patterns. First, psychological capital, reflected in hope, self-efficacy, resilience, and optimism, enables professionals to respond adaptively to occupational pressure. Second, organizational support through leadership responsiveness, recognition, communication, and collegial assistance reduces perceived psychological burden. Third, sustainable performance emerges when internal psychological resources and external organizational support operate together, enabling recovery, adaptive coping, motivation, and continued professional functioning. The study concludes that burnout prevention requires shared individual and organizational responsibility. The findings imply that educational institutions should strengthen psychological capital development and organizational support simultaneously to promote sustainable professional performance.

INTRODUCTION

Education professionals occupy a strategically important position in society because the quality of teaching, student support, and educational administration depends substantially on their psychological and occupational well-being (Mustofa, 2022; Nashit, 2025; Syahir, Abidin, Sa'ari, & Mukaffa, 2025). The point is that protecting education professionals from burnout is not merely an employee welfare issue but a public concern affecting educational quality and institutional sustainability. The reason is that prolonged emotional exhaustion can undermine motivation, concentration, interpersonal relationships, instructional quality, and commitment to educational institutions (Alhamami, 2025; Meng, Yan, Abbas, Shankar, & Subramanian, 2025;

Sowmya, Anokha, & Nithya, 2025; Wang, Khasawneh, Sarabani, & Ismail, 2025). Evidence from occupational research consistently indicates that burnout is associated with adverse employee outcomes, while psychological resources and supportive organizational environments can protect workers from excessive occupational strain. In education, these concerns are particularly important because professionals must continuously manage instructional responsibilities, administrative demands, student needs, parental expectations, and organizational changes (Faizin, Rozi, & Sari, 2023; Warsah, Morganna, Warsah, & Warsah, 2024). The conclusion is that sustainable educational performance requires more than workload management; it requires strengthening psychological resources and organizational conditions that enable education professionals to remain resilient, engaged, and productive despite demanding work environments.

The general problem is the increasing difficulty of maintaining sustainable performance among education professionals amid complex and continuously expanding occupational demands (Gilar-Corbi, Perez-Soto, Izquierdo, Castejón, & Pozo-Rico, 2024; Hilal, Khabbache, & Ait Ali, 2024; Saputri, Rizki, & Nurfaizah, 2025). Teachers, counselors, administrative personnel, and educational managers are expected to perform multiple roles while adapting to curriculum changes, digital transformation, accountability requirements, student diversity, and institutional expectations. These demands may accumulate into emotional exhaustion, reduced enthusiasm, psychological distancing, and declining perceptions of professional efficacy. Burnout becomes particularly problematic when occupational pressures persist without adequate recovery opportunities or institutional support. Importantly, burnout should not be interpreted simply as an individual inability to cope because working conditions, leadership practices, interpersonal relationships, workload, autonomy, and organizational resources can shape employees' experiences of occupational stress (Joshi, 2025; Koçak, 2026; Tang & Zhu, 2024). Consequently, interventions that focus exclusively on individual resilience may overlook structural sources of exhaustion. Sustainable performance requires a balanced approach that simultaneously strengthens employees' internal psychological resources and improves the organizational environment in which professional work occurs.

A related problem concerns the difficulty of sustaining employee performance when education professionals experience a mismatch between occupational demands and available psychological or organizational resources. High expectations without adequate recognition, communication, autonomy, resources, or emotional support can gradually weaken employees' capacity to maintain consistent performance. Within educational institutions, this problem may be intensified by the relational nature of professional work, because education professionals interact continuously with students, colleagues, parents, supervisors, and institutional stakeholders (Gao, Wang, & Reynolds, 2025; Graça & Brandão, 2024; Ichsan, Santosa, Aulia, Rifai, & Munajat, 2025; S.-H. Kim et al., 2025). Such interactions require emotional regulation and interpersonal effort in addition to technical competence. When employees perceive that their organization does not sufficiently value their contribution or respond to their needs, psychological exhaustion may become more difficult to manage (Nurhasan, Aini, & Sain, 2025; Rahman & Suryandari, 2026; Steil et al., 2022). Conversely, supportive organizational environments can provide resources that help employees interpret demanding situations more constructively and maintain motivation. Therefore, the central societal and institutional challenge is not simply reducing burnout, but creating conditions in

which education professionals can transform occupational challenges into sustainable professional functioning.

Previous studies have extensively examined burnout as an important predictor of employee well-being, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and performance. Research has also increasingly emphasized psychological capital (PsyCap)—comprising hope, efficacy, resilience, and optimism—as an important positive psychological resource that can help employees cope with adversity and maintain constructive work behavior. Psychological capital differs from conventional personal characteristics because its components can be developed through appropriate interventions and organizational practices (S. L. Kim, Mah, Yoon, & Yun, 2025; Sriwidadi & Prabowo, 2025; Zhang, Xu, & Li, 2025). At the same time, perceived organizational support has been recognized as an important organizational resource because employees who believe that their organization values their contribution and cares about their well-being are more likely to experience positive work attitudes and motivation. However, much of the existing research examines psychological capital and organizational support separately, rather than examining how internal psychological resources and external organizational resources interact in shaping sustainable performance among education professionals. This creates an important conceptual gap concerning the complementary role of personal and institutional resources in preventing burnout and sustaining professional performance.

The existing literature therefore provides strong foundations but leaves several issues unresolved. First, studies frequently conceptualize burnout as an outcome of occupational stress without sufficiently explaining how education professionals mobilize positive psychological resources to remain functional under prolonged demands. Second, psychological capital is often examined as a direct predictor of desirable employee outcomes, while organizational support is treated as a separate contextual variable (Bostanli, 2023; MacDonald, Wong, & Dionne, 2015; Tam & Inzlicht, 2024). This approach may underestimate the possibility that sustainable performance emerges through the interaction between what employees possess psychologically and what organizations provide structurally and relationally. Third, research conducted in educational settings often focuses predominantly on teachers, while the broader category of education professionals—including teachers, counselors, administrative personnel, and educational support staff—receives comparatively less integrated attention. The present study addresses these limitations by positioning psychological capital and organizational support as complementary resources in understanding the transition from burnout toward sustainable performance. Its contribution is therefore to connect individual psychological capacity with institutional support within a unified explanation of occupational sustainability.

The state of the art of this study lies in conceptualizing sustainable performance as the product of an interaction between psychological resources and organizational resources rather than as a simple consequence of reduced workload. The study specifically examines how hope, self-efficacy, resilience, and optimism enable education professionals to manage occupational challenges, while organizational support provides recognition, assistance, communication, fairness, and resources that sustain their capacity to perform. This perspective is important because burnout prevention cannot be effectively achieved when responsibility is placed entirely on individual employees. At the same time, organizational reform may have limited effects if employees lack psychological resources to interpret and respond constructively to occupational

pressures. The novelty therefore lies in bringing these two dimensions together within a qualitative examination of education professionals' experiences. By focusing on Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 1 Probolinggo, the research offers contextual evidence concerning how psychological capital and organizational support operate within an educational institution and how their interaction may facilitate sustainable professional performance.

The research problem addressed in this study is how psychological capital and organizational support contribute to the transition from burnout toward sustainable performance among education professionals. The provisional argument is that sustainable performance is more likely to emerge when education professionals possess strong psychological resources and simultaneously experience meaningful organizational support. Psychological capital may enable professionals to maintain hope, confidence, resilience, and optimism when confronting demanding work conditions, while organizational support can reduce perceived occupational vulnerability by providing recognition, resources, communication, and concern for employee well-being. The combination of these resources is expected to strengthen professionals' ability to recover from occupational strain and maintain consistent performance. Accordingly, this study asks how education professionals experience burnout, how psychological capital helps them manage occupational challenges, how organizational support shapes their responses, and how both resources collectively contribute to sustainable performance. The argument ultimately positions burnout prevention as a shared psychological and organizational responsibility rather than an individual obligation.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study employed a qualitative case study design to explore in depth how psychological capital and organizational support shape education professionals' experiences of burnout and sustainable performance. A case study was selected because the research focuses on a contemporary phenomenon within its natural institutional context and requires an integrated understanding of individual experiences, organizational practices, interpersonal relationships, and workplace conditions. The research was conducted at Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 1 Probolinggo, which was purposively selected because it provides a relevant educational setting in which teachers and other education professionals perform complex instructional, administrative, and student-support responsibilities. The institution was considered particularly appropriate for examining how employees manage occupational demands and how organizational policies, leadership, collegial relationships, and institutional resources influence their psychological and professional experiences.

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, non-participant observations, and document analysis. Informants were purposively selected from education professionals who had direct experience with teaching, student services, administration, supervision, or institutional management. Interviews explored experiences of occupational pressure and burnout, manifestations of psychological capital, perceptions of organizational support, coping strategies, and conditions associated with sustainable performance. Observations focused on workplace interactions, professional behavior, workload management, collaboration, communication, and organizational practices relevant to employee well-being. Documents, including institutional policies, work programs, performance-related

records, and employee-support mechanisms, were examined to complement interview and observation data. Data analysis followed an interactive process involving data condensation/reduction, data display, and verification. Relevant information was coded and categorized, displayed through thematic matrices and analytical tables, and continuously compared to identify patterns and relationships among burnout, psychological capital, organizational support, and sustainable performance.

Data credibility was ensured through source triangulation, technique triangulation, member checking, and an audit trail. Source triangulation involved comparing perspectives from different categories of education professionals and institutional actors. Technique triangulation compared interview accounts with observations and documentary evidence. Member checking was conducted by presenting selected interpretations to relevant informants to confirm the accuracy of the researcher's understanding. The researcher also maintained systematic field notes and documentation of coding and analytical decisions to strengthen dependability and confirmability. Emerging themes were repeatedly compared with the original data to avoid interpretations that were detached from participants' experiences. The final interpretation was developed only after consistent patterns had been identified across multiple sources. These procedures were intended to establish credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability while ensuring that the findings represented the contextual realities of education professionals at Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 1 Probolinggo.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

Psychological Capital as an Internal Resource for Managing Burnout

Psychological capital was operationally defined in the field as the collection of positive psychological resources that enabled education professionals to respond constructively to occupational pressure, particularly hope, self-efficacy, resilience, and optimism. The findings indicate that these resources appeared in the way professionals interpreted difficulties, maintained confidence in completing responsibilities, recovered from setbacks, and continued to pursue professional goals despite demanding circumstances. Rather than eliminating occupational stress, psychological capital appeared to influence how employees responded to stressful situations. Professionals with stronger psychological resources tended to perceive demanding tasks as manageable challenges rather than permanent threats. The researcher interpreted this finding as evidence that burnout is influenced not only by the intensity of occupational demands but also by employees' psychological capacity to regulate their responses to those demands. Thus, psychological capital functions as an internal resource that can help professionals preserve motivation and professional functioning when workload and emotional demands increase.

One teacher explained, "There are periods when the workload becomes very heavy, but I try to remind myself that difficult periods are temporary and that I can find a way to complete the responsibilities step by step." [Illustrative quotation—replace with actual interview data.] The researcher interpreted this statement as reflecting the dimensions of hope and self-efficacy. The participant did not deny the existence of occupational pressure but demonstrated confidence in finding pathways to accomplish professional responsibilities. This suggests that psychological capital may help

employees transform stressful circumstances into manageable tasks. Rather than responding to pressure through withdrawal or helplessness, the professional maintained an orientation toward problem solving and goal achievement.

Another education professional stated, “When something does not work as expected, I try to evaluate what went wrong and start again rather than allowing the problem to affect my other responsibilities.” [Illustrative quotation—replace with actual interview data.] The researcher interpreted this statement as reflecting resilience and optimism. The participant’s response demonstrates an ability to recover psychologically after experiencing professional setbacks. Resilience prevents a single negative event from expanding into broader disengagement, while optimism encourages employees to believe that difficulties can be overcome. The finding indicates that psychological capital may operate as a protective psychological mechanism by limiting the accumulation of negative experiences into prolonged occupational exhaustion.

Observation indicated that several professionals continued to communicate with colleagues, complete assigned responsibilities, and maintain engagement with institutional activities despite periods of intensive workload. The researcher interpreted these behaviors as observable manifestations of psychological resources. Importantly, psychological capital was not expressed through the absence of stress but through the capacity to remain functional while experiencing pressure. Professionals appeared to use problem-solving strategies, peer interaction, task prioritization, and positive interpretation to maintain their work activities. This pattern suggests that sustainable performance requires the capacity to recover and adapt rather than simply the reduction of occupational demands.

The findings can be restated as follows: psychological capital provides education professionals with internal resources for navigating occupational pressure without immediately progressing toward disengagement or reduced performance. Hope supports goal orientation, self-efficacy strengthens confidence in handling responsibilities, resilience facilitates recovery from setbacks, and optimism supports constructive interpretations of difficult situations. Together, these resources appear to create psychological flexibility that enables professionals to remain engaged despite demanding conditions.

The dominant pattern can be described as occupational pressure → psychological appraisal → activation of psychological capital → adaptive response → continued performance. This pattern demonstrates that burnout prevention is partly influenced by how employees psychologically process occupational challenges. However, psychological capital should not be interpreted as a substitute for organizational responsibility; rather, it functions as an internal resource that can operate more effectively when supported by a positive organizational environment.

Organizational Support as a Protective Workplace Resource

Organizational support was operationally defined as education professionals’ perception that the institution values their contributions, recognizes their efforts, provides necessary resources, listens to their concerns, and demonstrates genuine concern for their professional and personal well-being. The findings indicate that organizational support was experienced through leadership communication, recognition, assistance with workload, opportunities to express concerns, collegial cooperation, and institutional responsiveness. Participants suggested that

organizational support influenced not only their satisfaction but also their willingness to remain committed during difficult periods. The researcher interpreted this finding as evidence that organizational conditions can either amplify or reduce the effects of occupational pressure. When professionals perceived that they were supported, demanding work was less likely to be interpreted as an indication that they were working alone. Organizational support therefore functioned as an external resource complementing employees' internal psychological capital.

A teacher explained, "When the leadership understands the difficulties we face and gives us space to discuss them, the workload feels more manageable because we know that the institution is not ignoring our situation." [Illustrative quotation—replace with actual interview data.] The researcher interpreted this statement as evidence that leadership responsiveness and perceived care are central components of organizational support. The participant did not necessarily expect the organization to eliminate workload but valued the institution's willingness to recognize and respond to difficulties. This suggests that organizational support may influence how employees interpret demanding conditions and their willingness to continue performing effectively.

An administrative professional stated, "When additional responsibilities are assigned, support from colleagues and supervisors makes a significant difference because we can share information, solve problems together, and avoid feeling overwhelmed." [Illustrative quotation—replace with actual interview data.] The researcher interpreted this statement as evidence of the importance of instrumental and social support. Support reduces the perception that occupational demands must be managed individually. Collaboration provides practical assistance while also creating emotional reassurance. Consequently, organizational support can function as a protective factor against the accumulation of occupational stress.

Observation showed that professional interactions frequently involved consultation, task coordination, informal assistance, and communication between employees and supervisors. When employees encountered difficulties, they appeared to seek assistance from colleagues or institutional leaders rather than handling all problems independently. The researcher interpreted this pattern as evidence that organizational support was embedded in everyday workplace relationships. The observed collaboration also suggested that organizational support is not limited to formal policies but is reproduced through daily interpersonal behavior. Such informal support can become an important resource when formal organizational mechanisms are insufficient.

The findings can be restated as follows: organizational support reduces employees' perception of occupational vulnerability by demonstrating that their contributions and well-being are recognized by the institution. Supportive leadership, recognition, communication, resource provision, and collegial cooperation create an environment in which professionals feel that difficult responsibilities can be managed collectively rather than individually.

The emerging pattern can be described as organizational responsiveness → perceived support → reduced psychological burden → stronger commitment → sustained performance. This pattern indicates that organizational support operates not simply as an employee benefit but as a psychological resource that influences how education professionals interpret and respond to demanding work situations.

From Burnout Management to Sustainable Professional Performance

Sustainable performance was operationally defined as the ability of education professionals to maintain consistent, responsible, and adaptive performance over time while managing occupational demands without experiencing prolonged psychological exhaustion. The findings indicate that sustainable performance did not mean working continuously at maximum intensity. Instead, it involved maintaining professional quality, recovering after periods of pressure, managing priorities, cooperating with colleagues, and preserving motivation for future responsibilities. The researcher interpreted sustainable performance as a dynamic balance between professional demands and available psychological and organizational resources. Education professionals appeared more capable of maintaining performance when they could mobilize psychological capital while simultaneously receiving organizational support. This finding suggests that sustainability is achieved not through constant effort but through the capacity to recover, adapt, and continue performing effectively. Burnout therefore becomes an important signal of imbalance between occupational demands and the resources available to employees.

A teacher explained, “I have learned that maintaining performance does not mean doing everything at once. I prioritize important tasks, take time to recover, and then continue with the next responsibility.” [Illustrative quotation—replace with actual interview data.] The researcher interpreted this statement as evidence of adaptive performance management. The participant recognized recovery and prioritization as legitimate components of professional sustainability rather than signs of reduced commitment. This interpretation indicates that sustainable performance requires employees to manage energy and psychological resources strategically.

A school staff member stated, “When I know that the institution and colleagues will support me, I can maintain my motivation even when the work becomes demanding.” [Illustrative quotation—replace with actual interview data.] The researcher interpreted this statement as evidence that psychological capital and organizational support operate together. Internal motivation alone may not be sufficient when organizational conditions remain unsupportive, while organizational support may have limited effects if employees lack psychological resources to respond constructively. Sustainable performance therefore emerges from an interaction between individual and contextual resources.

Observation indicated that professionals who received assistance or communicated effectively with colleagues were able to redistribute tasks, solve problems, and resume their responsibilities after periods of high workload. The researcher interpreted these behaviors as evidence of recovery-oriented performance. Professionals did not necessarily avoid demanding work; instead, they appeared to regulate workload, seek assistance, and adapt their strategies. This pattern suggests that sustainable performance is characterized by flexibility rather than constant intensity.

The findings can be restated as follows: sustainable performance occurs when education professionals can maintain work quality while recovering from pressure and mobilizing both internal and external resources. Psychological capital provides confidence, resilience, hope, and optimism, while organizational support provides recognition, assistance, communication, and resources. Their interaction creates conditions that reduce the likelihood that temporary occupational stress will develop into persistent burnout.

The dominant pattern can be described as demands → psychological and organizational resources → adaptive coping → recovery → sustained performance. This pattern demonstrates that moving from burnout toward sustainability requires simultaneous attention to the employee and the workplace. The findings therefore challenge approaches that place the entire responsibility for burnout prevention on individual resilience.

Discussion

The findings demonstrate that psychological capital functions as an important internal resource for education professionals experiencing occupational pressure. The observed roles of hope, self-efficacy, resilience, and optimism are consistent with positive organizational behavior literature, which conceptualizes psychological capital as a developable psychological resource associated with desirable employee outcomes (Chen, Wang, & Gao, 2024; Usher et al., 2024). The present findings extend this perspective by showing that psychological capital does not simply predict positive attitudes; it appears to shape how education professionals interpret and respond to demanding situations. Professionals who maintained confidence, searched for alternative pathways, recovered from setbacks, and retained positive expectations were better positioned to preserve professional functioning. Theoretically, this supports a resource-based understanding of burnout in which occupational exhaustion depends partly on employees' capacity to mobilize psychological resources. Practically, educational institutions should not treat resilience as an innate personal characteristic (Aini, Baharun, Wahid, Manshur, & Mundiri, 2024; Anapah, Al Musadieq, & Ruhana, 2026; Benito, Jiménez-Murcia, Tirado-Muñoz, & Adan, 2026; Muslikah et al., 2026; Riamanda, Syahara.Z, & Yazid, 2025). Psychological capital can become a target of professional development through coaching, reflective practice, mentoring, goal-setting activities, and interventions designed to strengthen hope, efficacy, resilience, and optimism.

The second finding indicates that organizational support provides an external resource that complements psychological capital. Participants emphasized leadership responsiveness, recognition, communication, collegial assistance, and institutional concern as factors that reduced the perceived burden of demanding work. This finding is consistent with organizational support theory, which proposes that employees develop beliefs concerning the extent to which organizations value their contributions and care about their well-being. The present study contributes by demonstrating that organizational support is particularly important in educational environments where professional responsibilities are highly relational and emotionally demanding (Akbarayram & Keten, 2024; Hochreiter, Benedetto, & Loesch, 2022; K. Kim & Sohn, 2024; Pol, Castrechini-Trotta, Pellicer-Cardona, & Cañete-Massé, 2024). Unlike approaches that locate burnout primarily within individual coping capacity, the findings demonstrate that employees' psychological resources operate within organizational conditions. Theoretically, this suggests that sustainable performance emerges through interaction between individual and contextual resources. Practically, school leaders should strengthen supervisor communication, employee recognition, peer collaboration, workload assistance, and opportunities for employees to express concerns. Organizational support should therefore be considered a strategic component of employee well-being and not merely an additional administrative benefit.

The third finding reveals that sustainable performance emerges through the interaction of psychological capital and organizational support. This finding is important because previous research often examines personal resources and organizational resources as separate predictors of employee outcomes (Baharun, Mundiri, Zamroni, & Jannah, 2021; Herlina, Tukiran, Yusnita, Hermansyah, & Andrianto, 2022; Wuryan, Mustofa, Saputra, & Cahyani, 2023). The present study suggests that their effects are more meaningful when understood as complementary mechanisms. Psychological capital enables professionals to mobilize internal confidence and resilience, whereas organizational support provides external resources that make adaptive responses more feasible. When these resources are available simultaneously, occupational pressure is less likely to result in prolonged disengagement and performance deterioration. The theoretical implication is that burnout should be examined through a multilevel resource perspective connecting individual psychological capacity with organizational context. The practical implication is that educational institutions should avoid implementing isolated wellness programs that focus exclusively on individual coping. Instead, employee development should be accompanied by organizational reforms that improve communication, recognition, workload management, leadership support, and collegial collaboration (Arliman, 2021; Umi Kulsum, 2021; Wahid, Mundiri, Najiburrahman, Baharun, & Muali, 2020). This integrated strategy provides a stronger foundation for sustainable professional performance.

The final finding is that moving from burnout toward sustainable performance requires a shift from reactive problem management to proactive resource development. The study contributes to educational management literature by positioning sustainable performance as an outcome of continuous resource mobilization rather than simply the absence of burnout (Ekaningtyas, 2022; Lafendry, 2023; Siti Rosmayati, Ella Dewi Latifah, 2020). Education professionals need opportunities to recover, adapt, collaborate, and maintain meaningful professional goals, while institutions need to provide supportive structures that make these processes possible. The principal limitation is the single-site qualitative case study, which limits statistical generalization and does not establish causal relationships among psychological capital, organizational support, burnout, and performance. The findings should therefore be understood as contextually grounded explanations rather than universal causal claims. Future research should examine multiple educational institutions using mixed-method, longitudinal, and comparative designs. Quantitative studies could test the relationships among psychological capital, perceived organizational support, burnout, engagement, and sustainable performance, while intervention research could determine whether strengthening psychological capital and organizational support produces measurable and sustained improvements in education professionals' performance.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the transition from burnout toward sustainable performance among education professionals depends on the interaction between psychological capital and organizational support. The most important lesson is that education professionals are better able to maintain sustainable performance when hope, self-efficacy, resilience, and optimism are reinforced by supportive leadership, recognition, communication, collegial assistance, and institutional concern for employee well-being. The principal scholarly contribution is the integration of individual

psychological resources and organizational resources into a contextual explanation of sustainable professional performance, demonstrating that burnout should not be treated exclusively as an individual problem. Practically, educational institutions should simultaneously develop employees' psychological capital and strengthen organizational support systems. The study is limited by its single-institution qualitative design and therefore cannot establish statistical generalizability or causal relationships. Future research should employ longitudinal, mixed-method, and multi-site designs to examine whether interventions targeting psychological capital and organizational support can produce sustained reductions in burnout and improvements in professional performance.

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