

Destination Tourism In Odisha: The Empirical Measures On Tourist Wellness At Destination

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ABSTRACT

This article emerges from the analysis of the data corresponding to the tourism activity in the state Odisha and in Golden triangle basically, considering: the arrival of domestic tourists and international visitors, and the arrival of tourists in the coastal region. Subsequently, it is intended to place ecotourism as an option for sustainable development, which helps generate additional income for local communities and contributes to the protection and conservation of natural resources. The analysis of Odisha tourism in the above categories, in addition to the discussion about the criteria and characteristics of destination tourism versus sustainable development, allows us to visualize the potential that this activity poses to emerging economies. The discussion about destination tourism and sustainability shows that there is a mutually beneficial relationship when the community is incorporated in the development of tourism projects, as demonstrated in Odisha. Nonetheless, some challenges are marked in the destinations that has no government support or equitable tourism legislation, in addition to the absence of quality research, can overshadow any potential natural resource to practice destination tourism activities in global markets representing tourism.

Keywords: global tourism, tourism in Odisha, destination tourism, India tourism, challenges in tourism, sustainable tourism

INTRODUCTION

For the last few decades, tourism has become one of the major forces for economic growth in many developing and developed countries. Tourism contributes to economic growth through various channels including foreign currency earnings, attracting international investment, increasing tax revenues and creating additional employment opportunities. Thus, to develop tourism is good for the development of economy, and to advocate ecological civilization construction, sustainable and green development is the basic contents (Shunzhong, 2009). And it is also advocated in the industry of tourism. Since the 1980s, the people of great vision has come out with the connotation and the features of sustainable tourism and it gradually developed and also became the focus of the researches (Scott and Becken, 2010). Meanwhile, tourism destination is as the spatial carrier of tourism, and also its evaluation and development have become the research hot spots. (Rai and Sundriyal, 1997). Based on reviewing the related literature about the evaluation of tourism destinations, the paper would summarize the ideas of the scholars from the aspects of tourism environmental carrying capacity, tourist satisfaction, tourism resources exploitation and sustainable development, to understand the research status and to have an outlook of its future research direction (Mayor and Tol, 2010).

DISCOVERING ODISHA'S ENCHANTING TREASURES: A JOURNEY OF WHOLESOME WONDER

Odisha, formerly known as Orissa, boasts a rich tapestry of history and mythology that dates back thousands of years. The region is steeped in ancient traditions, witnessed through its magnificent temples, vibrant festivals, and unique art forms (Peeters and Dubois, 2010). The sun-kissed beaches along the Bay of Bengal and the lush greenery of its hinterlands make Odisha a diverse and visually stunning destination.

For history enthusiasts, Odisha is a living museum with archaeological wonders like the world-famous Konark Sun Temple, a UNESCO World Heritage Site renowned for its architectural standard. Additionally, the sacred city of Puri attracts pilgrims and tourists alike with its grand Jagannath Temple, an iconic symbol of devotion and spirituality.

Odisha's cultural vibrancy is showcased through its traditional dance forms, such as the graceful Odissi, energetic Chhau, and vibrant folk dances that reflect the joys and struggles of its people. The colourful festivals, like the RathYatra and Durga Puja, add fervor and fervency to the state's cultural mosaic.

Nature enthusiasts will find solace in the lush forests, serene lakes, and roaring waterfalls of Odisha. The Simlipal National Park and the Bhitarkanika Mangrove Forest are home to an incredible array of flora and fauna, including the majestic Royal Bengal Tiger and the playful Irrawaddy dolphins.

The coastal charm of Odisha is undeniable, with pristine beaches like Puri, Gopalpur, and Chandipur inviting visitors to unwind amidst the calming sea breeze and golden sands. The picturesque Chilika Lake, Asia's largest brackish water lagoon, is a paradise for birdwatchers and nature lovers.

The Government of Odisha recognizes the immense potential of tourism as a catalyst for economic growth, social development, and cultural preservation. Over the years, the government has undertaken various initiatives and policies to promote and develop tourism in the state. Here are some key aspects of the government's efforts in fostering tourism development in Odisha:

1. Infrastructure Development: The government has invested in improving infrastructure, including road networks, airports, and rail connectivity, to make various tourist destinations more accessible and convenient for tourists (Nawijn and Peeters, 2010).

2. Promotion of Tourist Destinations: Odisha has a rich cultural and historical heritage, along with diverse natural landscapes. The government actively promotes these destinations through marketing campaigns, both domestically and internationally, to attract more tourists (Nyaupane and Thapa, 2004). Emphasis is placed on showcasing iconic sites like the Konark Sun Temple, Puri Jagannath Temple, Chilika Lake, and various tribal and eco-tourism hotspots.

3. Heritage Conservation: The preservation and restoration of heritage sites, temples, monuments, and cultural artefacts are given significant importance. The government collaborates with relevant authorities, experts, and organizations to protect and conserve these invaluable treasures for future generations.

4. Eco-Tourism and Wildlife Conservation: Odisha's lush forests and wildlife sanctuaries are promoted for eco-tourism to attract nature enthusiasts and adventure seekers. The government focuses on sustainable tourism practices to ensure the preservation of biodiversity and ecological balance.

5. Tribal Tourism: Odisha is home to a rich diversity of tribal communities with their unique customs and traditions. The government encourages responsible tourism that provides economic opportunities to tribal communities while respecting their way of life and cultural integrity (Høyer, 2009).

6. Hospitality and Skill Development: To enhance the quality of services offered to tourists, the government supports skill development initiatives for people involved in the tourism industry. Training programs are conducted to improve hospitality, language skills, and cultural awareness among tourism service providers (Gongmei *et al.*, 2009).

7. Investment Facilitation: The government facilitates private sector investment in the tourism industry by offering various incentives, subsidies, and tax benefits to encourage the development of hotels, resorts, and other tourism-related infrastructure.

8. Tourist Safety and Security: Ensuring the safety and security of tourists is a priority for the government. Steps are taken to enhance the presence of law enforcement agencies in tourist areas and to provide necessary assistance to travellers.

9. Festivals and Events: The government promotes and supports cultural festivals and events, which not only showcase the state's rich heritage but also attract domestic and international tourists, boosting local economies.

10. Tourism Policy and Regulation: The government formulates and updates tourism policies to address the evolving needs of the industry and to create an investor-friendly environment (Balint, 2006).

By implementing these measures, the Government of Odisha aims to harness the potential of tourism as a powerful tool for socio-economic development, while also preserving the state's natural and cultural heritage for future generations to enjoy (Archer and Fletcher, 1996).

DESTINATION TOURISM OF ODISHA: A JOURNEY OF WHOLESOME WONDER

Odisha, a captivating state on the eastern coast of India, offers a diverse array of destination tourism experiences that cater to a wide range of interests (Mirsha *et al.*, 2011). From ancient temples and historical landmarks to scenic landscapes and pristine beaches, Odisha has something to enthrall every traveller (Dawson and Scott, 2007). Here are some of the top destinations that make Odisha a unique and alluring tourist hotspot:

1. Bhubaneswar: Known as the "Temple City of India," Bhubaneswar is home to an impressive collection of ancient temples, many of which date back to the 6th century AD. The Lingaraj Temple, Mukteswar Temple, and Rajarani Temple are architectural marvels that showcase the mastery of ancient Odishan craftsmen. Bhubaneswar also boasts modern attractions, parks, and museums.

2. Konark: The iconic Sun Temple in Konark is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and a crowning jewel of Odisha's architecture. Shaped like a massive chariot with intricately carved stone wheels, the Konark Sun Temple is dedicated to the Sun God Surya and is a testament to the state's rich heritage.

3. Puri: It is one of the four sacred Hindu pilgrimage sites and home to the revered Jagannath Temple, dedicated to Lord Jagannath. The annual RathYatra festival, where the deities are carried in grand chariots, draws millions of devotees and tourists from around the world. Puri's golden beaches and the bustling beachfront add to its charm.

4. Chilika Lake: Asia's largest brackish water lagoon, Chilika is a paradise for birdwatchers and nature enthusiasts. The lake supports a rich ecosystem of migratory birds, including flamingos, pelicans, and herons. Boat rides on the lake offer an opportunity to explore its tranquil beauty and spot playful Irrawaddy dolphins (Kala, 2007).

Odisha's destination tourism showcases a harmonious blend of ancient heritage, vibrant culture, and awe-inspiring natural beauty. Whether it is from the history buff, a nature lover, or seeking a spiritual journey, Odisha welcomes with open arms to explore its diverse and enchanting offerings.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Some of the related literature reviews have been presented here for finding the research gap. In terms of context and aligning with previous studies (Gössling *et al.*, 2020), pandemic threats confirm the financial burden on tourism firms from the first wave of COVID-19, but also the ensuing employment crisis through, for example, employee lay off. The human resource challenges facing the industry at the beginning of COVID-19 identified in this study (Ansari, 2012).

The study aligns with those noted in previous studies (Sigala, 2020). Operational issues such as business closure and supply chain issues identified in this study conform to impacts noted in other studies (Endler *et al.*, 2009).

Abuzar Nomani and Mohd. Kamraj Rais Khan (2015) this research is aim at to determine human resource development in tourism industry. They suggest for the growth and development of tourism in India HRD strategies focusing on sustainability based industry practices, tourism development, value systems and behavioural patterns among all the stakeholders are required to be implemented.

Mass tourism faced significant challenges, with service systems being replaced by more specialized and sustainable options (Kaushal & Srivastava, 2021). Tourists travelled less but stayed for longer periods, robots and automated systems became widely used, while digital systems became more powerful (Chan, 2020).

Birgit Elands et.al (2015) carry out a study on ecotourism in Lawachara National park in Bangladesh. The research focus on local people's perceptions of the contribution of ecotourism to sustainable development and the role of co- management in it. A list of social, economic, environmental and institutional impacts of ecotourism was developed.

K.S. Sarangdhar (2020) carried out a research on the existing tourist destinations in and around Solapur. The study reflects the inflow of tourist to Solapur compare to Maharashtra state is highest in the month of September. Whereas foreign tourists' inflow is very negligible.

S. Vijayanand (2014) focuses on the different issues and challenges of pilgrimage tourism its importance, socioeconomic scope, communications issue present at the pilgrimage location of Tanjur. He suggests certain things like advertising of pilgrimage tourism. The aim is to increase the benefits of pilgrimage tourist Tanjur's people in terms of foreign exchange, employment generation, income and government revenue. There is a need of widespread group efforts for policy making and encouraging pilgrimage tourism (Qadeer and John, 2009).

Amit Katoch and Prasant Gautam (2015) the author talk about the rural people's understanding of the need of rural tourism's development and its consequent benefits to the villagers around Dharamshala. They get the villagers are aware of tourism a day it's benefits but they have very less understanding about rural tourism and rural tourism policy implemented by the state as well as central government but they are receptive about the advantages of tourism but not having a clear view of the negative aspects of tourism.

Shadi Ali Al Hrouit and Badaruddin Mohamed (2015) carry out research on nature and characteristics of employees working in the tourism and hospitality industry in Pulau Pinang, Malaysia. The nature and behaviour of the employees have been investigated through analysis of documents.

Scott (2011), informed about the most important supply side factors that influence individuals and households in buying tourism property in South Africa. The findings show the five pull factors are in order of importance natural resources, competitiveness, government policy, country's perception and infrastructure, and economy. The study also provided a better understanding of the factors that influence the decision of foreigners to invest in tourism properties in South Africa and tourism destination marketing (Miyoshi and Mason, 2009).

Raktida Siri et.al (2012) carried out a research on the Indian tourists' motivation and perception of Bangkok, Thailand. The research covers both push and pull factors and how these factors encourage Indian travellers. Muhammad Sabbir Rahman (2012) in his study generally focuses on to test the tourists' perception in the choice of selection of a destination under perspective of Bangladesh tourism environment. He analyses (n=250) from major tourist spots from Bangladesh.

Research gap: There is no literature in the previous research, on tourist preferences and also the research based on the state of Odisha. So it is a gap to measure and suggest here.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The relevant data for the study has been collected from both the primary and secondary sources; the primary data is collected through telephonic and field survey conducted on various tourists those are visiting at different destinations like, Chilka, Puri and Konark most preferably. the responses were based upon a structured questionnaire, based on Likert scale. Also some personal interviews, discussions and mails with all types of tourists at destinations were conducted. One set of questionnaires were designed for the both type of tourists, i.e. domestic and foreign (Dwyer and Kim, 2003). The questionnaire designed had both open ended and close ended questions. The observation was done using Liker's scale and the hypotheses were tested through tools factorial test, descriptive test with chi-square. The research question was sought on three main statements based on **Wellness Feelings on Destinations (value)** given below:

Wellness Feelings on Destinations (value)

A1: Publicity of destinations are more effective in creating a sense of appealing

A2: Destinations are under security and peace environment

A3: lifestyle changes as per the demographic changes marked significantly in the tourist places

A4: Heartthrob for one brand segment

A5: A common sense of feeling between the destinations around the state

A6: A common link found with the destinations, relaxation and curiosity

A7: Destination features along with accommodation feel satisfied you

A8: Competitive destination pricing

Scope and relevance

The scope and relevance of destination tourism in Odisha are considerable due to several factors:

Cultural Heritage: Odisha boasts a diverse and vibrant cultural heritage, with ancient temples, traditional dance forms like Odissi, and handicrafts. Tourists are drawn to places. **Breath taking Beaches:** Odisha has a long coastline with pristine beaches, such as Puri Beach, Chandrabhaga Beach, and Gopalpur-On-Sea. These beaches attract tourists seeking relaxation, water sports, and beachside activities.

Wildlife and Nature Tourism: The state is also known for its wildlife sanctuaries and national parks, like Bhitarkanika National Park and Simlipal National Park, which offer opportunities for wildlife enthusiasts to spot various species of flora and fauna.

Art and Handicrafts: Odisha is renowned for its intricate handicrafts, including Pattachitra (traditional paintings on cloth), stone and wood carvings, and exquisite silver filigree work. Tourists often seek out these crafts as souvenirs (Hall, 2010).

Spiritual and Pilgrimage Tourism: Apart from the famous Jagannath Temple, Odisha has several other significant temples and religious sites, making it a pilgrimage destination for devotees.

Festivals and Fairs: Odisha celebrates various festivals with grandeur and enthusiasm, such as Durga Puja, Durga Puja, and Makar Sankranti. These events attract cultural enthusiasts from different parts of the country and abroad.

Adventure Tourism: The state's varied topography allows for adventure activities like trekking, water sports, and wildlife safaris.

Tribal Tourism: Odisha is home to a significant tribal population, each with its unique culture and traditions. Some tourists seek to experience and understand the lifestyle of these tribes.

The scope of the study is limited to Odisha tourism and covers most attractive destinations with 156 tourists covering places from Konark, Puri and Chilka.

The relevance of destination tourism in Odisha lies in its potential for economic growth and employment opportunities. When tourism thrives, it creates a ripple effect by generating income for locals through various tourism-related businesses (Amelung & Viner, 2006). Moreover, it helps in preserving and promoting the state's cultural and natural heritage, as the revenue generated can be reinvested in conservation efforts.

However, for tourism to flourish, certain challenges need to be addressed, such as improving infrastructure, ensuring the safety and security of tourists, and maintaining a balance between tourism development and ecological conservation (Bakhat and Rosselló, 2011). Sustainable tourism practices are essential to preserve the unique attractions that draw visitors to Odisha in the first place.

Objective of the research: The only objective to find wellness factors responsible at destinations

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS

In this part average monthly income and age has been cross examined with gender of tourists.

Table-1: Cross factor test (Gender & Age)

		Age				Total
		less than 25 years	26-35	36-45	46-55	
gender Male	Count	41	76	37	21	175
	% within age	87.2%	92.7%	92.5%	100.0%	92.1%
Female	Count	6	6	3	0	15
	% within age	12.8%	7.3%	7.5%	0.0%	7.9%
Total	Count	47	82	40	21	190
	% within age	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

CHI-SQAURE- 3.380, DF-3, SIG-0.337

Table – 1 reported the **Cross factor test** of age and gender of 190 tourists. It indicated the cross sectional relationship in both numbers and percentage wise. The gender categorization is depicted as male and female category wise. The age has been categorized as: below 25 years, 26-35 years, 36-45 years and 46-55 years. This present study revealed that maximum respondents i.e. 82 are in the age group of 26-35years, whereas the lowest among all are 21, which are in the age group of 46-55years. 175 male tourist were maximum to the total where only 15 were female tourist of different age groups. The chi-square results 3.380 depicted a wide difference across age the age groups which can be drawn for inferences across groups.

Table-2: Cross factor test (Gender & Monthly average income)

		Monthly Average income				Total
		Less than INR 20,000	Less than INR 30,000	Less than INR 50,000	Less than INR 1Lakh	
gender Male	Count	76	85	13	1	175
	% within monthly income	92.7%	90.4%	100.0%	100.0%	92.1%
Female	Count	6	9	0	0	15
	% within monthly income	7.3%	9.6%	0.0%	0.0%	7.9%
Total	Count	82	94	13	1	190
	% within monthly income	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

chi-square=1.602 with df=3 and sig=0.659

Table – 2 reported the **Cross factor test** of age and gender of 190 tourists. It indicated the cross sectional relationship in both numbers and percentage wise. The gender categorization is depicted as male and female category wise. The income (average monthly income) has been categorized as: Less than INR 20,000, Less than INR 30,000, Less than INR 50,000 and Less than INR 1Lakh. This present study revealed that maximum respondents i.e. 94 are in the income group of less than 30000 INR followed by less than 20000 INR. 175 male tourist were maximum to the total where only 15 were female tourist of different income groups. The chi-square results 1.602 depicted a wide difference across income groups which can be drawn for inferences across groups.

Factor Analysis A: TOURIST WELLNESS& PREFERENCES**Table 3: Communalities of Tourist Wellness & Preferences**

		Initial	Extraction
A1	Publicity of destinations are more effective in creating a sense of appealing	1.00	0.798
A2	Destinations are under security and peace environment	1.00	0.612
A3	lifestyle changes as per the demographic changes marked significantly in the tourist places	1.00	0.623
A4	Heartthrob for one brand segment	1.00	0.734
A5	A common sense of feeling between the destinations around the state	1.00	0.690
A6	A common link found with the destinations , relaxation and curiosity	1.00	0.621
A7	Destination features along with accommodation feel satisfied you	1.00	0.524
A8	Competitive destination pricing	1.00	0.818

Source: Own Compilation from Collected data

Table 3 indicates communalities of eight factors, which indicate the proportion of the variance in response to the factors important for the “**Tourist Wellness & Preferences**”. The extraction communalities are estimates of the variance in each variable accounted for by the components. The initial values are also high and equal to 1.0 in all the cases. Further, in the extraction values in the communalities in this table are reflected high i.e. A8 followed by A1 against “Competitive pricing” and “publicity endorsing products is effective” respectively, which indicates that the extracted components represent the variables well.

Table 4 Total Variance of Tourist Wellness & Preferences

Component	Initial Eigen values		Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	1.391	17.39	17.39	1.391	17.39	17.39
2	1.275	15.933	33.323	1.275	15.933	33.323
3	1.141	14.269	47.592	1.141	14.269	47.592
4	1.023	12.783	60.374	1.023	12.783	60.374
5	0.934	11.675	72.05			
6	0.834	10.431	82.481			
7	0.723	9.032	91.512			
8	0.679	8.488	100			

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Source: Own Compilation from Collected data

Table 4 indicates total variance analysis of eight components with initial Eigen values of **Tourist Wellness & Preferences** which shows the variance explained by the initial solution and sum of squared loadings. In the initial Eigen values for factors were taken those were above one. So it indicates that, four factors were responsible for the question on ‘impact assessment’ on **Tourist Wellness & Preferences**. The second section of the table-shows the extracted components. They explain nearly 60 percent of the variability in the original eight variables, so it suggests the four latent influences are associated with **Tourist Wellness & Preferences**, but there remains unexplained due to lot of variations. Here, the complexity of the data set by using these components can be considerably reduced the, with only a 40 percent loss of information. Thus, about 40 percent of the variation explained by the initial solution is not lost due to the factors uniqueness to the original variables.

Table-5 : Component Matrix^a

		Component			
		1	2	3	4
A1	Publicity of destinations are more effective in creating a sense of appealing	.365	-.520	-.102	.562
A2	Destinations are under security and peace environment	.580	.211	.465	-.122
A3	lifestyle changes as per the demographic changes marked significantly in the tourist places	.187	.749	-.025	-.162
A4	Heartthrob for one brand segment	.150	.594	.106	.590
A5	A common sense of feeling between the destinations around the state	.224	-.030	.753	.269
A6	A common link found with the destinations , relaxation and curiosity	.557	-.097	.439	.295
A7	Destination features along with accommodation feel satisfied you	.602	.053	-.041	.396
A8	Competitive destination pricing	.378	.182	.376	.023

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

a. 4 components extracted.

Source: Own Compilation from Collected data

The table -5 produces a solution using Principal component extraction on **Tourist Wellness & Preferences**, which is then given a factor wise assessing the effect. The factor maintains the cumulative percentage of variation explained by the extracted components, but that variation is now spread more evenly over the components. The more changes in the individuals suggest that the unrotated matrix. Here, as per the initial value exhibited in the total variance table-4, In the first column it shows higher on A1: Publicity of destinations are more effective in creating a sense of appealing (0.365), A2: Destinations are under security and peace environment (0.580), A6: A common link found with the destinations, relaxation and curiosity (0.557) and A7: Destination features along with accommodation feel satisfied you (0.602). Using the saved components is also preferable to using these variables for assessing the effect of **Tourist Wellness & Preferences**, because the components are representative of all eight original variables, and the extracted components are not linearly correlated with each other.

Table -6: Rotated Component Matrix^a

		Component			
		1	2	3	4
A1	Publicity of destinations are more effective in creating a sense of appealing	.246	.216	.487	.140
A2	Destinations are under security and peace environment	-.084	.739	.349	-.237
A3	lifestyle changes as per the demographic changes marked significantly in the tourist places	.104	-.170	-.659	.386
A4	Heartthrob for one brand segment	-.117	-.055	-.079	.843
A5	A common sense of feeling between the destinations around the state	.492	.437	.278	.424
A6	A common link found with the destinations , relaxation and curiosity	.774	.000	.012	-.013
A7	Destination features along with accommodation feel satisfied you	.613	.336	.110	.150
A8	Competitive destination pricing	.068	.521	.179	-.100

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

Source: Own Compilation from Collected data

The table -6 produces a solution using Principal component analysis on **Tourist Wellness & Preferences**, which is then given a Varimax rotation for assessing the effect. The rotation maintains the cumulative percentage of variation explained by the extracted components, but that variation is now spread more evenly over the components. The more changes in the individuals suggest that the rotated component matrix would be easier to interpret than the unrotated matrix. Here, as per the initial value exhibited in the total variance table-, In the first column it shows higher on A1, Publicity of destinations are more effective in creating a sense of appealing (0.246), A5: A common sense of feeling between the destinations around the state (0.492), A6: A common link found with the destinations, relaxation and curiosity (0.774) and A7: Destination features along with accommodation feel satisfied you (0.613). Using the saved components is also preferable to using these variables for assessing the effect of **Tourist Wellness & Preferences**, because the components are representative of all eight original variables, and the extracted components are not linearly correlated with each other.

CONCLUSION

The study investigates critical shifts impacting the Odisha tourism space in present times after COVID 19 scenario. Furthermore, the current study examines tourism challenges and growth perspective at destinations and product development challenges faced by tourist regions as a consequence of market dynamics (Carrera and Bridges, 2006). Drawing upon a sample of 190 tourists in Odisha those are coming as domestic and some foreign tourists, the critical shifts were identified and key among them include accommodation, safety, transportation, appealing sense etc. for the future growth of the Odisha tourism industry's value chain in the context. A conclusion is reached that to attain long term sustainable development of the industry, it is critical that tourism operators re-set and deploy sharpened strategies which are in synch with the realities obtaining in the broader operating environment. Policy recommendations and managerial implications are also preferred (McKercher *et al.*, 2010). Further, they have to look on the following factors that are identified in the present research as: Destinations are under security and peace environment, lifestyle changes as per the demographic changes marked significantly in the tourist places and competitive pricing at destinations.

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