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**Urdu Translation and Validation of the Self-Transcendence Scale in Pakistan****MS. Esha Shoukat**Trainee Clinical Psychologist  
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**Abstract**

The Self-transcendence Scale is employed in the present study. According to Reed (1991), the term was developed for the purpose of expanding the concept of self-transcendence. In order to achieve conceptual, linguistic, and cultural equivalence of the translated tools, forward backward translation techniques and expert panel review were done. To check the translation's validity and appropriateness, a sample of 460 adults were selected through convenience sampling technique. An Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was conducted on the 15 items of the self-transcendence scale. Results of the EFA revealed that self-transcendence has a two-factor structure: intrapersonal and interpersonal. The factor loadings for all the items were acceptable ranging from 0.510 to 0.786. The total variance of the study was accounted for 50.60%. It explains the complicated type of the construct. Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) conducted to validate the factor structure using a sample of 400 adults drawn independently. The acceptable fit of the final model yielded  $\chi^2/df = 2.60$ , RMSEA = 0.079, GFI = 0.91 and CFI = 0.91. The internal consistency results were good with Cronbach's alpha = 0.90. More evidence of construct and discriminant validity was obtained. In general, results revealed that Urdu version of Self-Transcendence Scale is a reliable, and psychometrically accepted measure to be used on Pakistani population.

**Keywords:** Self-Transcendence, Urdu translation, psychometric validation, factor analysis, CFA, EFA.

**1. Introduction**

Within the collectivistic culture of Pakistan, social connectedness, spirituality, relationships or interconnectedness influence behavior and psychological functioning. In socio-cultural environment of a society certain variables are important. Self-transcendence means going beyond one's self, one's ego, interests and desires. Connecting with others humanity and other existences requires going beyond yourself according to this conceptualization. The analysis of psychological phenomenon in such a context is suited for the concept of self-transcendence.

Self-transcendence refers to the ability to expand self-boundaries. It is possible either by connecting with either others or the environment. Moreover, you find meaning in one's

experiences (Reed, 1991). Self-transcendence is a developmental resource that can result in psychological well-being, resilience and adaptive coping across a range of populations (Reed, 1991; Van de Vijver & Hambleton).

The notion of self-transcendence has a strong presence in humanistic and developmental theories in which a person not only seeks to grow but also finds meaning and purpose beyond the self (Reed, 1991). It represents the seamless merging of intrapersonal, interpersonal and temporal dimensions of experience, which enables individuals to achieve psychological balance and existential significance. Studies indicate that people who rate highly for self-transcendence have more emotional stability, a greater sense of optimism, and are more satisfied with life (Ellermann & Reed, 2001; Runquist & Reed, 2007).

The Self-Transcendence Scale (STS) is a self-reporting instrument that gauges the degree to which people expand their self-boundaries. This scale was conceptualized and developed for the general population by Pamela Reed (Reed, 1991). There are 15 items that represent various viewpoints/behaviour patterns impacting self-transcendence. According to Reed people reflect inwardly, reach outward in connection to others, and integrate past, present and future (Reed, 1989; Reed, 1991). According to Reed, the maximum score that can be obtained on the scale is 60, while the minimum score is 15. Higher scores denote greater self-transcendence. A low amount of self-transcendence is indicated by scores of 15-30, 31.

Studies have proved STS reliability and validity via psychometric evidence. The internal consistency estimates for the STS were in the range of .80 to .94 (Coward, 1990; Coward, 1991; Reed, 1989; Reed, 1991). Additionally, multiple contexts and cultures have offered proof for the construct validity and integrity of the STS. In particular, the Swedish older adults' STS adaptation made use of NF and EFA analysis to indicate adequate internal consistency and factor structure (Norberg et al., 2015) as well as the Spanish adaptations having moderate to strong reliability coefficients (range:  $\alpha = 0.77$  to 0.83) indicating validity and reliability among the Spanish population (Pena Gayo et al., 2018).

Research carried out with caregivers of people with dementia further indicated a multidimensional structure of scores in the previous studies a most notably in accordance with dimensions of the theoretical model of self-transcendence and thus support the construct validity of the measure (Zaguri Greener et al., 2025). Self-transcendence has been linked to enhanced life satisfaction (Ellermann & Reed, 2001), reduced depressive symptoms (Haugan et al., 2012; Pena Gayo et al., 2018), and improved coping and planning abilities (Haugan et al., 2012).

Although STS are used internationally, it is not properly researched in the case of Pakistan. Thus, development of a culturally relevant and linguistically valid version of the scale in Urdu is essential. The Pakistani literacy level that is according to Pakistan Bureau of Statistics upcoming stats in collaboration with UNICEF. The figures on literacy tell us that quite a sizable number of people are not very proficient in the English Language and may be less aware of the tested tools in English language.

Thus, translation and validation of STS in Urdu is important to accurately assess probable subjects to make meaningful interpretations. Psychological tools' translation is more than simply a linguistic transformation. This is a process of cultural adaptation that requires the reproduction of content so that the items keep their conceptual equivalence (Van de Vijver & Hambleton, 1996). In the absence of translation and validation, the use of such a tool may produce skewed or invalid results because of language differences, procedural differences, cultural norm differences and item interpretation differences.

The reliability and validity of the adapted instrument are ensured via forward-backward translation, expert panel, psychometric validation, etc. as stated by Van de Vijver & Hambleton (1996). With the rising influence of self-transcendence on psychological dysfunction, coping and well-being, the current study is an attempt to translate and validate STS (Self-Transcendence Scale) in Urdu language. As a result, this will allow it to be used in Pakistan.

## **2. Method**

The present research study was conducted in two major phases. The first phase involved translating the self-transcendence scale into Urdu. The factorial structure of the self-transcendence scale was examined in the second phase to validate it through psychometric analysis in the indigenous cultural context.

## **3. Study**

### **3.1. Phase 1: Translation of the Scale**

The first Draft of the Self-Transcendence Scale (STS) was actually created by Reed in 1991. Self transcendence scale measures an individual's self-transcendence level through self-report instrument. The purpose of this phase was to translate the STS Urdu version from English in this way to ensure conceptual equivalence and clarity for Pakistani adults. The original author was contacted to a formal permission taken for the translation. The translation process was done in accordance with Brislin's (1970) suggestions.

#### **3.1.1 Conceptual Definitions**

In order to ensure that the translation was indeed accurate and the content was the same, each item's conceptual meaning was checked using the English version of the STS (Reed, 1991). Referring to the theoretical construct of STS helped maintain this.

#### **3.1.2 Recruitment and Briefing**

The expert was required to be bilingual in English and Urdu to oversee the translation. The researcher thoroughly recruited and briefed the expert in terms of the study, self-transcendence, and conceptual not literal equivalence. Moreover, the research supervisor was closely involved in all steps of the translation.

#### **3.1.3 Forward Translation**

While writing Urdu translation of STS, two bilingual experts having academic and clinical background of psychology translated the English version of STS (Reed, 1991) into Urdu language independently. They were also experts in the English and Urdu languages. In the course of the

translation, the translators kept the conceptual equivalence rather than the literal (word to word) agreement (Brislin, 1970).

With the consideration of above discussed, in consequence, two independent Urdu versions were formed. When writing the Urdu version there were several things in mind regarding grammatical constructions, cultural fitness, clarity in language, level of understanding and expression of original items in Urdu.

### **3.1.4 Reconciled Version of Forward Translation**

The committee, comprised of senior psychologists and academic experts, evaluated the two independently translated versions. The members compared two versions for content judging on semantic equivalence, cultural relevance and conceptual replication of each item.

Following thorough discussion and agreement, an appropriate wording version was selected, leading to the creation of the Urdu Self-Transcendence Scale. Minor modifications were made where necessary following Brislin (1970) recommendations.

### **3.1.5 Backward Translation**

An English back translation of the final version of Urdu, carried out by a bilingual expert, who was unexposed to the original scale, was performed to achieve linguistic and conceptual equivalence. The process of review and verification is very essential. This also aids in the detection and rectification of potential inaccuracies (Brislin, 1970). The authors compared the back-translated version to the original in English Reed (1991). After the review, amendments in the Urdu version were made to ensure equivalence.

### **3.1.6 Review of Forward and Backward Translations**

The forward-translated and back-translated versions were compared in detail to identify and resolve any discrepancies through expert discussion. The Urdu version maintained the same conceptual meaning as the original scale but the wording was suitable for the Pakistanis. The scale was correctly grammar-checked and nothing was weird about the wording.

## **3.2 Phase 2: Validation of the Scale**

### **3.2.1 Appropriateness of Translation**

Through the convenience sampling technique, a total of 460 adults were recruited to establish the fit of Urdu translation of Self-transcendence scale. Participants were administered the online (Google Forms) and paper-pencil survey to collect data. The participants received clear instructions regarding the completion of the questionnaire. Participants found the questionnaire without a time limit and were requested to respond sincerely. The Urdu version of the scale items was clear and understandable for the target population because most of the participants did not report any ambiguity or grammatical issues in their understanding of the items.

### **3.2.2 Testing out Items of the Questionnaire**

The instrument was translated and evaluated for content. The next step was to test the scale for suitability in the target population. A few items may present cultural bias or may be hard to understand. Thus, the observation of participants' responses and reactions was made. Participants

were asked if they found anything hard, confusing or inappropriate based on their culture. The clarity and relevance of the items on the scale were assessed through participants' responses. Any challenging or unclear items were recorded and rectified.

### **3.2.3 Participants**

A total of 460 adult members were taken as the sample on the basis of convenient sampling. The adult members were taken from the general population. The research included both men and women as subjects. The minimum qualification for participation was matriculation so that the respondents were able to read the Urdu version of the questionnaire and understand it very well. The members were noted to have different educational backgrounds, social backgrounds. The participants come from different backgrounds including the age, educational, social and other demographic variables. Consequently, the sample represented a larger population.

### **3.2.4 Instrument**

The study used the Urdu version of the Self-Transcendence Scale (Reed, 1991). The scale has shown reasonable psychometric properties in previous studies.

### **3.2.5 Self-Transcendence Scale (STS) (Reed, 1991)**

The Self-Transcendence Scale (STS) is a measure of the self-transcendence of a person by self-report. The scale is a 15-item scale. The items reflect behaviors and thoughts associated with the expansion of self-boundaries in the intrapersonal, interpersonal, and temporality dimensions.

People's potential reactions to the scale are on a likert-type scale. The scale has been designed in a manner that higher score on the scale is expected to reflect a greater level of self-transcendence. According to Coward (1990), Cronbach's alpha on a reliable scale ranges from .80 to .88.

### **3.2.6 Procedure**

Both online and offline methods were utilized for data collection. The questionnaire was distributed in online mode by Google Form and for offline mode printed questionnaire was given. Participants were approached using convenience sampling technique.

Before the initiation of data collection, the participants were provided information regarding the study. The participants of the study consented to participate in it. All answers will be kept private and anonymous. As per their response all the statements were instructed to be answered carefully. No time limit was specified for filling the questionnaire.

### **3.2.7 Results**

The participants had no significant difficulty in comprehending the self-transcendence scale in Urdu. The items were straightforward, culturally relevant, and easy to follow. As a result, the Urdu version was thought to be appropriate for Pakistani adult population and finalized for further psychometric evaluations in the next phases.

## **3.3 Factorial Structure of the Self-Transcendence Scale (STS)**

Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was used to test the factor structure on the same sample.

### **3.3.1 Linguistic Validation of the Self-Transcendence Scale**

The measure was validated in this step to achieve high levels of reliability and validity, including, convergent and discriminant validity. Also, conceptual equivalence of STS's original English version and Urdu version indicated clarity and cultural appropriateness (Reed, 1991; Brislin, 1970).

### 3.3.1 Determining Psychometric Properties of the STS

Evaluation of the psychometric properties of Urdu STS was performed in two steps: Step I Involves establishing the factor structure using exploratory factor analysis. Step II involves confirming the factor structure through Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA).

### 3.3.2 Step I: Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA)

Using SPSS, EFA on the 15 items of the STS was conducted to reconfirm the factor structure of the Urdu version of the STS. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure and Bartlett's test of sphericity determined sample adequacy. The Bartlett's test of Sphericity was significant ( $\chi^2 = 296.5, p < .001$ ). The KMO result of 0.90 also showed excellent sampling adequacy confirming the factorability of the data (Kaiser, 1974).

Varimax rotation was used to execute Principal Component Analysis for examining the factor structure of self-transcendence scale. The analysis revealed a two-factor structure; the rotation convergence occurred in three iterations. Items with loadings above .47 were selected. Personal growth, social engagement, and spirituality were reflected in items on the first factor. The second factor's items positively represented acceptance of oneself, adjustment to life changes, accepting aging and realities of life.

Thus, 50.683% is the overall variance explained by both the factors. After rotating the factors, the first one accounted for 25.469% of the variance and the second 25.213%. The process of rotation completed in three iterations. The factor loading was between .510 and .786 which was indicative of moderate to high factor structure. The concept of self-transcendence is assumed to be multidimensional.

**Table 1: Exploratory Factor Analysis of Self-Transcendence (ST): Rotated Component Matrix**

ST Items	Component	
	ST-1	ST-2
ST-1: ایسے مشغولے یا دلچسپیاں رکھتا/رکھتی ہوں جو مجھے لطف دیتی ہیں	.587	
ST-2: عمر بڑھنے کے ساتھ خود کو قبول کر رہا/رہی ہوں		.526
ST-3: ممکنہ حد تک کوگوں اور معاشرے کے ساتھ شامل ہوتا/ہوتی ہوں	.510	
ST-4: اپنی موجودہ حالات زندگی کے ساتھ مطابقت اختیار کر رہا/رہی ہو		.707
ST-5: اپنی جسمانی قابلیتوں میں تبدیلیوں کے ساتھ خود کو ڈھال رہا/رہی ہو		.514
ST-6: اپنی دانائی یا تجربے کو دوسروں کے ساتھ بانٹ رہا/رہی ہوں	.666	
ST-7: اپنے ماضی کے تجربات میں معنی تلاش کر رہا/رہی ہوں		.708
ST-8: کسی نہ کسی طرح دوسروں کی مدد کر رہا/رہی ہوں	.684	
ST-9: سیکھنے میں مسلسل دلچسپی رکھ رہا/رہی ہوں	.710	
ST-10: کچھ چیزوں سے آگے بڑھنے کے قابل ہوں جو پہلے میرے لیے بہت اہم لگتی تھیں	.786	
ST-11: موت کو زندگی کا ایک حصہ تسلیم کر رہا/رہی ہوں		.669

ST-12:	اپنے روحانی عقائد میں معنی تلاش کر رہا رہی ہوں	.541
ST-13:	جب مجھے ضرورت ہو تو دوسروں کو میری مدد کرنے دیتا ہوں/دیتی ہوں	.633
ST-14:	اپنی زندگی کی رفتار کا لطف اٹھا رہا رہی ہوں	.683
ST-15:	ماضی کے پچھتاوے چھوڑ رہا رہی ہوں	589

Note: Extraction method = principal component analysis. Rotation method = promax with Kaiser normalization. Values  $>.3$  are suppressed.

### Model

3: Four components extracted with eigenvalue 1.1 and greater. Total variance explained: 50.7%. Rotation converged in 10 iterations.

### Model 2: Two

components extracted. Total variance explained: 35.3%. Rotation converged in 3 iterations

Note: Extraction method = principal component analysis. Rotation method = promax with Kaiser normalization. Values  $>.3$  are suppressed.

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35.3%. Rotation converged in 3 iterations

Cumulative Percentage of Variance Explained	50.68%
Cronbach's $\alpha$	.90

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Note: Extraction method = principal component analysis. Rotation method = Varimax with Kaiser Normalization. Values  $>.47$  are suppressed. Total variance explained: 50.68%. Rotation converged in 3 iterations.

### 3.3.3 Scoring Technique

Higher scores on the 15-item Urdu Self-Transcendence Scale indicated higher self-transcendence (Reed, 1991).

### 3.3.4 Reliability Analysis

The internal consistency of Urdu self-transcendence scale was determined through McDonald's omega. According to the factor loadings, omega for Factor 1 was 0.84, while for

Factor 2 it was 0.83. This indicates good internal consistency of scale dimensions (Reed, 1991; Coward, 1990).

### 3.3.5 Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)

The purpose of the second phase was to confirm the factor structure of the translated version of the Self-Transcendence Scale.

### 3.3.6 Confirmatory Factor Analysis of Self-Transcendence Scale

The Self-Transcendence Scale underwent confirmatory factor analysis, and the model fit indices of the tested model are displayed in Table 3.

**Table 2: Fit indices of Confirmatory Factor Analysis of Self Transcendence Scale**

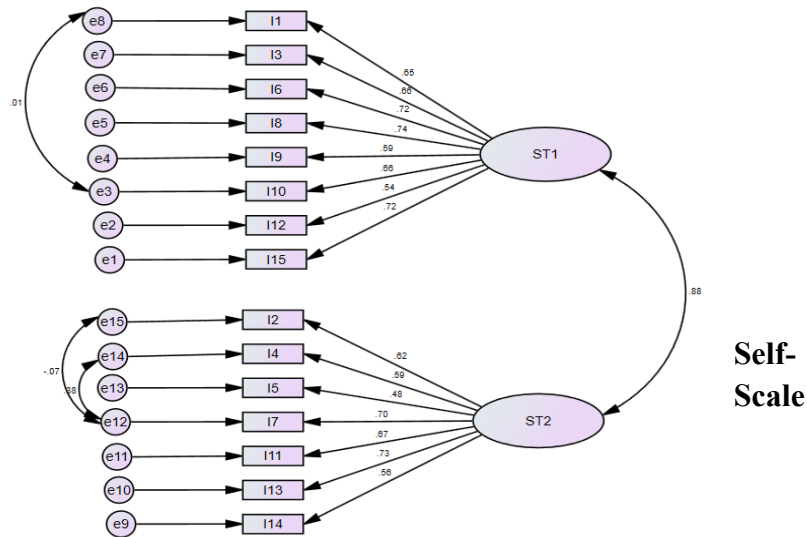
Model	$\chi^2$	Df	$\chi^2/df$	GFI	CFI	RMSEA
Initial Model	6275.13	105	5.79	0.87	0.85	0.102
Final Model	192.40	74	2.60	0.91	0.91	0.079

Note: N = 400,  $\chi^2$  = chi-square, df = degrees of freedom, GFI = goodness-of-fit index, CFI = comparative fit index, RMSEA = root mean square error of approximation.

Confirmatory factor analysis was done to verify the factor structure of the Self-Transcendence Scale as shown in Table 2. The acceptable ranges for  $\chi^2/df$ , RMSEA, GFI and CFI are values between 0 and 3 for  $\chi^2/df$ , values  $\leq 0.08$  for RMSEA, and values  $\geq 0.90$  for GFI and CFI (Hair et al., 2010; Hu and Bentler, 1999), but values 0.80–0.90 have been considered acceptable in some studies. Table 2 shows that the first model has a very bad fit. The calculation for the model's  $\chi^2$  (105) was 6275.13,  $\chi^2/df = 5.79$ , RMSEA = 0.102, GFI = 0.87; and CFI = 0.85. The values of the RMSEA were more than 0.08 and GFI and CFI were less than 0.90. The fit of the model did not reach an acceptable level.

Model fit was improved using modifications indices along with theoretical justifications. After respecifying the original model, the fit indices were improved. The final model exhibited a  $\chi^2$  (84) = 192.40,  $\chi^2/df = 2.60$ , RMSEA=0.079, GFI=0.91, and CFI=0.91. However all indices are showing improvement in comparison. Fit indices relative were computed to assess the overall adequacy of the model due to the chi-square statistic being sensitive to sample size and model complexity. Consistent with previous research on the Urdu Adaptation of Self Report Altruism Scale, where model modifications were applied to improve model fit (Zia & Fahd, 2022), the present study also employed similar modification procedures. The final model significantly improved the factor structure representation of the Self-Transcendence Scale for the Pakistani sample, according to these results. Specifically, GFI has reached an acceptable level CFI has approached an acceptable level and RMSEA has also reached the acceptable level and improved model fit.

**Figure 1: Confirmatory Factor Analysis of Self-Transcendence Scale: Final Factor Loading of Self Transcendence Scale (STS)**



**Table 3: CFA for Transcendence**

Item	Estimate	Item	Estimate	Item	Estimate
I1	0.654	I2	0.625	I3	0.661
I4	0.590	I5	0.480	I6	0.724
I7	0.696	I8	0.737	I9	0.591
I10	0.658	I11	0.669	I12	0.538
I13	0.730	I14	0.564	I15	0.718

**4. Discussion**

This study was mainly aimed at translation and validation of the Self-Transcendence Scale (STS) in Urdu for the general Pakistani population. The standardized guidelines for scale translation were used to orient the forward-backward translation process, the expert panel review process, and the cultural adaptation (Brislin, 1970; Reed, 1991).

The explanatory analysis of STS 15 items was carried out with the help of SPSS for refiguring the factor structure of Urdu version. The KMO value was .90, and that Bartlett’s test of sphericity was significant ( $\chi^2=296.5, p<.001$ ) Factor structure was analyzed by applying principal component analysis (with varimax rotation). Two factor solution was discovered through the analysis. Three iterations were utilized to converge the rotation. Any item with a factor loading less than .47 was suppressed.

The first factor included items associated with personal growth, social involvement and spirituality; while the second included those associated with self-acceptance, adjustment to life- and acceptance of aging and life’s realities. Combined, both the factor captured 50.683% variance.

After rotation, factor 1 explained 25.469 percent of the variance and factor 2 explained 25.213 percent of the variance. A stable factor solution is supported by the three iteration convergence of the rotation. The factor loadings from 0.510 to 0.786 demonstrate a moderate to strong factor structure that supports the multidimensional conceptualization of self-transcendence (Reed, 1991; Ellermann & Reed, 2001).

The factor structure was further validated through CFA. According to the final model, the data fit was acceptable i.e.  $\chi^2/df = 2.60$  RMSEA = 0.079 GFI=0.91; CFI=0.91. The result of these indices allows us to conclude that the Urdu STS two-factor structure is an acceptable model fit in the Pakistani population. The improvement of the initial model after modifications based on the modification indices was considerable. As such, the results are consistent with the CFA guidelines (Hair et al., 2010; Hu & Bentler, 1999).

The scale has demonstrated a good internal consistency with Cronbach's alpha = 0.90 which indicates a high reliability of Urdu version of STS. Through acceptable factor loadings of each item, construct validity was established. Additionally, discriminant validity was established upon confirming that the two factors were discriminate but theoretically related constructs in accordance with CFA (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). The clarity, cultural appropriateness, and ease of understanding of the Urdu items were reported to be satisfactory by participants. There were no major difficulties in the comprehension of the scale signifying the linguistic and cultural suitability of the scale for Pakistani context.

On the whole, the results give strong support that the Urdu-translated Self-Transcendence Scale is a good and fairly-valid measure of self-transcendence among the Pakistani adults. The scale is internally consistent, has conclusive construct validity, and adequate factorial validity so that it can be used for research and clinical purposes. The sample of the study was assumed to be linguistically representative of the Pakistani population. The use of convenience sampling to recruit participants may limit generalizability.

Future studies are needed on samples that represent diverse areas socioeconomic and educational levels across Pakistan. Further improvement of the model may enhance fit indices and strengthen factorial validity in future validations. This STS adaptation will help cross-cultural psychological studies by providing a culturally relevant self-transcendence measure for Urdu-speaking individuals for the first time.

## 5. Conclusion

Self-Transcendence Scale Urdu version had good reliability  $\alpha = 0.90$ . The factor loadings of the items were satisfactory (0.51–0.78) which confirmed supporting evidence for construct validity and discriminant validity, which indicated a different but related nature of the two factors. Findings from the exploratory factor analysis identified two factors, which explained 50.683% of the variance, covering intrapersonal and interpersonal. Confirmatory Factor Analysis confirmed an acceptable model fit after modification ( $\chi^2/df = 2.60$ , RMSEA = 0.079, GFI = 0.91, CFI = 0.91), indicating an adequacy of the measurement model. On the whole, the Urdu STS is a reliable

instrument for measuring self-transcendence in Pakistani adults and is psychometrically acceptable for research and applied purposes.

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