

# How and Why Extrinsic Religiosity Fashions Muslim Consumer Behavior in a Multi-Faith Geography

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## Abstract

**Purpose** – The purpose of this paper is to investigate the relationships between extrinsic religiosity and consumer behavior in an Islamic dominant context, and the dynamics that affect Muslims' purchasing decisions in the sector of drinks. **Design/methodology/approach** – The approach is a quantitative one, based on a post-positivism philosophical stance. **Findings** – The findings indicate that poor and low faith Muslim consumers from different Islamic affiliations do purchase and consume non-alcoholic beverages that follow halal norms only, as recommended by their religious beliefs. Nevertheless, poorly religious Muslims consumers are often into syncretic consumption mixing both halal beverages and non-halal beverages. In a word, the findings demonstrate that Muslims extrinsic religiosity is strongly related to consumer behavior in this particular geography. **Research originality** – This research findings serve to remind the different manufacturers in the beverage sector that they should put an emphasis on both innovation and hyper-segmentation, to meet the various expectations of consumers in such a vibrant multi-religious environment. **Practical implications** – There should be a strong and a rigorous segmentation of the beverage sector, by proposing various type of products that should meet the extrinsic religious consumers' core needs and expectations within a geography where African traditional consumption ties are strongly affecting Muslim consumption behavior.

## Keywords

Extrinsic Religiosity, Consumer Behavior, Drinks, Marketing, Africa

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## 1. Introduction

Despite the existence of a huge literature for religiosity and halal consumption [1, 2] there is not a clear knowledge of the Muslim consumer choices and purchasing decisions in the West African context. Though, a little investigation has been made in the African geography and predominantly in Burkina Faso, researchers have not specifically addressed the extrinsic religious consumers core needs of the Muslim community. Consequently, this present research purpose is to explore extrinsic religious beliefs and consumer behavior in

the present geography, to understand the extrinsic consumer choices, and purchasing decisions in the different main Muslim communities of the context.

Burkina Faso has 60.5% of Muslims, 23.2% of Christians, 15.3% of Animists, 0.6% of minor religions and 0.4% without a religious belief [3]. In terms of Muslim groups, it is common to find the Ahmadiyyas, the Lahilaas, the Shiites, and the Sunnis. However, the present research has not been able to record the Ahmadiyya Muslim consumers as they are not numerous in the context.

Thus, the research question here is: Why are extrinsic

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Muslim consumers tolerant towards non-halal beverages drinking in Burkina Faso's geography?

The research objectives are for instance:

1. to test the correlation between extrinsic religiosity and consumer behavior in relation to the beverage sector in Burkina Faso;
2. to assess the reverse effect i.e. the relationships between consumer behavior and extrinsic religiosity;
3. to evaluate the relationships concerning personality traits, extrinsic religiosity and consumer behavior.

The present research is therefore conducted with a clear emphasis on a strong and a sound literature review that defines the concepts and underlines the associated research theories.

## 2. Literature Review

The challenge at this point is to first of all elucidate the research concepts, and second, to recapitulate the main concerned salient theories for the present research.

**Extrinsic religiosity:** Extrinsic religiosity is well-defined by several salient authors. Patel [4] views extrinsic religiosity as the low-degree of beliefs of an individual to his or her spiritual faith. Delener [5] defines extrinsic religiosity in the same way. This author describes extrinsic religiosity as the low-slung level of religious commitment of an individual to his/her sacred community. Bonewell [6] rather understands extrinsic religiosity as the use of religious faith to procure some comfort or to acquire one's personal living conditions. In the point of view of some authors like Agarwala, Mishra and Singh [7] extrinsic religiosity is characterized by a low religious level that influences consumer's attitudes, values, and consumer's consumption choices and decisions.

Nassè [8] approaches extrinsic religiosity as a low religious belief that is characterized by a materialistic view of religious life. The believer is mainly focused on the materialistic dimension of religious life rather than the spiritual dimension of religious life. The author perceives extrinsic religiosity in the syncretic dimension of consumption where the religious consumer makes the choice not to necessarily abide to his or her religion consumption principles.

After defining extrinsic religiosity, the following section puts a light on the consumer behavior concept.

**Consumer behavior:** Some numerous researchers have given a clear and a sound approach to the marketing concept of consumer behavior. In the Western geography, for some authors such as Esso and Dibb [9], Bergadaa and Faure [10], consumer behavior refers to the manner, and to the reasons

why some individuals consume some specific products or some given services. Diop [11] approaches the concept of consumer behavior as a specified consumer's attitude that is related to the use of some products or services, and that is also specific to a particular sociocultural geography. However, Diop [12] is much more relevant in that the concept of consumer behavior is characterized by some values that considerably affect the shopping choices and consumption orientation of individuals. Thus, some core values such as beliefs, knowledge, customs, and attitudes affect consumption. The present research context depicts the concept of consumer behavior may be understood as the decisions mode, the examination mode, and the evaluation mode of individuals concerning some products and some services before making their purchases or repurchases with some specific choice, consumption, quality, taste, advertising or price requirements and expectations.

Most Important Theoretical Underpinnings.

The diverse and sound conflicting theories are:

*The individualistic theory of consumer behavior:* Luna and Gupta [13], De Mooij and Hofstede [14], Nayeem [15], Frank, Enkawa, and Schvaneveldt [16], Islam and Chandrasekaran [17], are some salient researchers that support this self-concerned approach of consumer behavior by revealing that some aspects such as the consumer's own personality, and character as well as attitude can influence consumption orientations. They accentuate that consumer behavior is driven by some actions that are self-centered and self-interested in term of the consumer's experience.

*The collectivist theory of consumer behavior:* This theory is approved by some researchers such as Shavitt et al. [18], De Mooij [19], Arnould and Thompson [20], Banyte and Matulioniene [21], Salciuviene et al. [22], Soares, Farhangmehr and Shoham [23], and Claussen et al. [24], who assert that the consumer behavior is not self-centered but it is rather society-centered or affected by the common consumption shared values and consumption attitudes of the consumer's social group.

*The culturalist theory of consumer behavior:* However, Fam et al. [25], Jung and Kau [26], Alam, Mohd, and Hisham [27], Al-Hyari, Alnsour, Al-Weshah, and Haffar [28], Durmaz et al. [29], Benabdallah and Jolibert [30], Ahmad et al. [31], Bazzeem [32], Esteban [33], and Campanella [34], bring their contributions in stating that consumer behavior is culture-centered. In this perspective, consumer behavior is guided by his/her culture consumption habits, lifestyles and practices. Thus, the individual expresses his/her cultural consumption natural life through the products that this individual is purchasing or buying to consume.

The present sound literature review demonstrates that little is known about extrinsic religiosity and consumption in the West African geography. The conceptual framework here seeks to show that low-level religious people are very tolerant in consuming both halal and non-halal products, particularly in a multicultural, and in a multi-religious environment.

Thus, marketing research should consider a hyper-segmentation of such environment by proposing both halal products and non-halal products. Understanding the consumers' real needs and expectations within an environment that is characterized by syncretic consumption, religious tolerance and consumption imitation styles can help companies to build a better marketing strategy.

However, financial issues are very central to consider in a very poor country such as Burkina Faso where the purchasing power of most consumers is very low [35]. Thus, these economic challenges alone might not explain complete variations in the sales and purchase decisions processes of products concerning consumers, what means that other features may well influence consumer behavior. Among these features there are not only collectivist components, individualistic components, but also cultural components in general, and various religious components in particular.

Religious Beliefs, Muslim Consumer and African Consumption Culture.

In the West African geography, the weight of traditional and cultural practices on Muslim religious practices is extraordinary such in way that some consumers do consume

both the halal and non-halal products. This consumption habit is reinforced by ethnocentric and syncretic behaviors [36]. It is not rare to find some Muslims who are also associated to traditional rituals. For instance, during funerals it happens that some Muslims consume non-halal beverages, and this is viewed as an obedience to their ancestors' consumption principles or as a conformity to their ethnic group requirements. Thus, they can purchase or consume both halal and non-halal beverages during traditional rituals that are celebrated in the name of the entire family or community. A part from these collectivists motive they are also some individual motives that favor the consumption of both halal beverages and non-halal beverages in the context. Some observations in the context show that some Muslim consumers are influenced by their religious beliefs to consume halal products specifically in the beverage sector. Nevertheless, a certain number of the Muslim consumers fail to abide to their religious consumption prescription due to syncretism, fashion, and a low religious beliefs and practice.

Research hypotheses or research propositions.

H<sub>1</sub> or P<sub>1</sub>: *Extrinsic religiosity is strongly associated to consumer behavior.*

H<sub>2</sub> or P<sub>2</sub>: *Consumer behavior is also strongly associated to extrinsic religiosity.*

H<sub>3</sub> or P<sub>3</sub>: *Personality traits moderate the relationship between extrinsic religiosity and consumer behavior.*

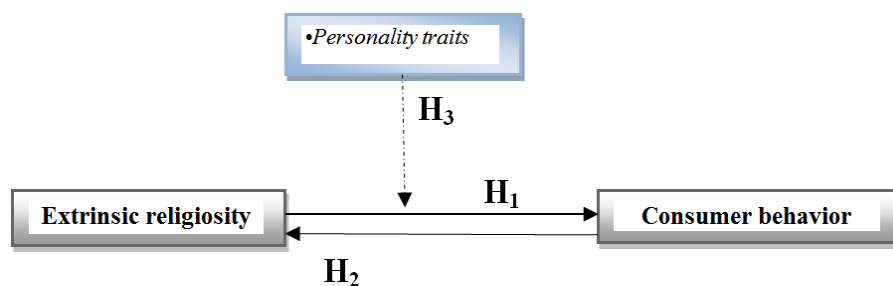


Figure 1. Research Model.

(Source, Nassè, 2015-2018.)

### 3. Methodology

#### 3.1. Epistemological Posture

The philosophical standpoint is the post-positivist one. Creswell [37] post-positivism stance challenges the positivism point of view, by stating that there is not a pure truth relating to scientific knowledge specifically when it comes to studies that involve consumers' behavior. Thus, for Phillips and Burbules [38] scientific knowledge may be

inadequate, imperfect and antifoundational.

#### 3.2. Participants

Research criteria to select respondents include age sequence from 10 to 65 years and above, to assure that participants are able to understand the research purpose and concepts. Other considerations are gender balance, what means that, it considers both female and male consumers. Finally, the social class of respondents includes two classes the poor, and the rich.

### 3.3. Context

The research area covers the capital city Ouagadougou, within Kadiogo province. Ouagadougou is a cosmopolitan capital city and it has an important concentration of the Muslim population that is at the same time multicultural. It is therefore easy to find some respondents that are willing to participate to the research.

### 3.4. Research Instruments

For the quantitative research, a questionnaire is used to collect the answers of the respondents. The scale of Allport and Ross [39] is used, and it is partially readapted into the research context. The research items are measured on a 4 points Likert scale. The questionnaires are also validated, and pre-tested, and their contents are revised several times to assure that the respondents understand the concepts, and the questions under investigation.

### 3.5. Sampling Technique and Sample Frame

This is a combination of both random sampling technique and snowballing technique. Respondents are chosen and they are given the same chance of selection. To increase the respondents' number, the technique of snowballing is used [40]. The present research also indicates the details of the sample frame. Referring to the national statistics, the population of Burkina Faso in 2010 is 14, 017, 262 inhabitants [41]. Christians represent 23.2%, Muslims represent 60.5%, Traditionalists represent 15.3%, other religions represent 0.6%, and Atheists represent 0.4% of the total population. Applying these statistics to the study area, Ouagadougou has a total population of 1,915,102 inhabitants. Relating the 60.5% of Muslims national to the total population of Ouagadougou, it is estimated that 1,158,636.71

Muslims believers live in the capital city Ouagadougou. The sampling frame, from which, the sample size is drawn for the research is 1,158,636.71 believers.

### 3.6. Sample Size

The sample size is set using subsequent formula:  $n = (p \times (1-p)) / (e / 1.96)^2$ . In the formula,  $p$  represents the observed percentage, and  $e$  represents the maximum error [42]. The maximum error is 0.5 percent, what means that the observed percentage is 50%;

$n = 0.25 / (e / 1.96)^2$ . The number of respondents for a maximum error of 7%, is  $n = 196$ . The respondents in the research are 235, and this is broadly acceptable.

### 3.7. Data Collection and Data Analysis

The quantitative data is collected for a period of two (2) years in French language or sometimes in the local languages. Then, the data is translated from these languages into English. After its translation the quantitative data is analyzed using Sphinx IQ, Sphinx Survey-V5, and Sphinx IQ<sup>2</sup>. Some observations are also used to complete the research information.

### 3.8. Validation of the Research

The alphas of Cronbach of the diverse items for the variables are computed to see if they are strongly correlated between them. As indicated on Table 1, the alpha of Cronbach value for the 11 items representing 'extrinsic religiosity' is .73, what reveals a strong correlation between the items. In the same way, the value of the alpha of Cronbach for the 9 items representing 'consumer behavior' is .63, what demonstrates a strong correlation between the research items. Thus, the research tools make measurements more accurate [43].

The post validation of the quantitative data is done and it is found that the respondents restate the same views.

**Table 1.** Values of Cronbach's alpha for the different items.

Variables	Number of items	Alpha of Cronbach	Conclusion
Extrinsic religiosity	11 items	.73	Sufficiently correlated
Consumer behavior	9 items	.63	Sufficiently correlated

(Source: Nassè, Fieldwork, 2015-2018).

### 3.9. Unit of Analysis, Ethical Considerations and Anonymity

The unit of analysis is the consumer of non-alcoholic industrial drinks being a Muslim. In terms of ethical considerations, the research topic on religiosity and consumer behavior being a very taboo subject in the Muslim context, respondents' participation is voluntary and the information given by respondent is handled with careful attention and a full respect of consideration of their anonymity. The researcher has given a huge consideration to the different

religious affiliations, and the respondents have been free to provide their answers.

## 4. Results and Discussion

### 4.1. Results

The sample shows some Muslim consumers that belong to three different denominations: the Shiite consumers, the Lahilaa consumers, and the Sunni consumers (see Table 2 below). It is found that the Lahilaa Muslim consumers, and

the Sunni Muslim consumers are more cooperative and they have given more participation to the research than the Shiite Muslim consumers that are more introvert in the context.

**Table 2.** Statistics of Muslim consumers.

	Type of consumers	Numbers of respondents	Percentage
Muslim affiliation	Shiites	58	24.7%
	Lahilaas	88	37.4%
	Sunnis	89	37.9%
	Total	235	100%

(Source: Nassè, Fieldwork, 2015-2018)

**Table 3.** Results of the correlation of extrinsic religiosity and consumer behavior.

Variables crossing	Results	Conclusion
"Extrinsic religiosity" and "Consumer behavior" *p<.05	p-value = <.01; $\chi^2 = 3829.13$ ; df = 400	The relationship is strongly significant.

(Source: Nassè, Fieldwork, 2015-2018)

H<sub>1</sub>: Extrinsic religiosity is strongly associated to consumer behavior.

H<sub>0</sub>: Extrinsic religiosity is not strongly associated to consumer behavior

Table 3 indicates that the relationship between the variable "extrinsic religiosity" and "consumer behavior" is highly significant with  $p < .01$ ,  $df = 400$  and  $\chi^2 = 3829.13$ . This result

allows the researcher to reject the null hypothesis and to conclude that there is a relationship between "extrinsic religiosity" and "consumer behavior". Thus, the first hypothesis is confirmed.

H<sub>1</sub>: Extrinsic religiosity is strongly associated to consumer behavior.

**Table 4.** Results of the correlation of consumer behavior and extrinsic religiosity.

Variables crossing	Results	Conclusion
"Consumer behavior" and "Extrinsic religiosity" *p<.05	p-value = <.01; $\chi^2 = 3829.13$ ; df = 400	The relationship is strongly significant

(Source: Nassè, Fieldwork, 2015-2018)

Consumer behavior and extrinsic religiosity.

H<sub>2</sub>: Consumer behavior is strongly associated to extrinsic religiosity.

H<sub>0</sub>: Consumer behavior is not strongly associated to extrinsic religiosity.

Table 4 represents the results of the crossing of "consumer behavior" and "extrinsic religiosity". The crossings of the variables are carried out in an opposite direction to see if the

reverse effect is also major. This crossing shows that the relationship between the variable "consumer behavior" and the variable "extrinsic religiosity" is strongly significant, with  $p < .01$ ,  $df = 400$  and  $\chi^2 = 3829.13$ . This result allows the researcher to reject the null hypothesis, and to confirm the second hypothesis. The second hypothesis is confirmed.

H<sub>2</sub>: Consumer behavior is strongly associated to extrinsic religiosity.

**Table 5.** Results of the correlations between personality traits, extrinsic religiosity and consumer behavior.

Variables crossing	Results	Conclusion
"Personality traits" and "Extrinsic religiosity"	p-value = <.01; $\chi^2 = 3134.72$ ; df = 320	The relationship is strongly significant
"Personality traits" and " Consumer behavior "	p-value = <.01; $\chi^2 = 2636.49$ ; df = 320	The relationship is strongly significant

(Source: Nassè, Fieldwork, 2015-2018)

Personality traits, extrinsic religiosity, and consumer behavior.

H<sub>3</sub>: Personality traits moderate the relationship between extrinsic religiosity and consumer behavior.

H<sub>0</sub>: Personality traits do not moderate the relationship between extrinsic religiosity and consumer behavior.

Table 5 represents the results of the crossing of "personality traits",

"extrinsic religiosity", and "consumer behavior". First, the crossing of "personality traits", and "extrinsic religiosity" shows that the relationship between "personality traits", and "extrinsic religiosity" is strongly significant, with  $p < .01$ ,  $df = 320$  and  $\chi^2 = 3134.72$ . Second, the crossing of "personality traits", and "consumer behavior" shows that the relationship between "personality traits", and "consumer behavior" is strongly

significant, with  $p < .01$ ,  $df = 320$  and  $\chi^2 = 2636.49$ .

This result allows the researcher to reject the null hypothesis and to confirm the third hypothesis is confirmed. Thus, the third hypothesis is confirmed.

H<sub>3</sub>: Personality traits moderate the relationship between extrinsic religiosity and consumer behavior.

As a final point, the graph confirms that the relationships are significant.

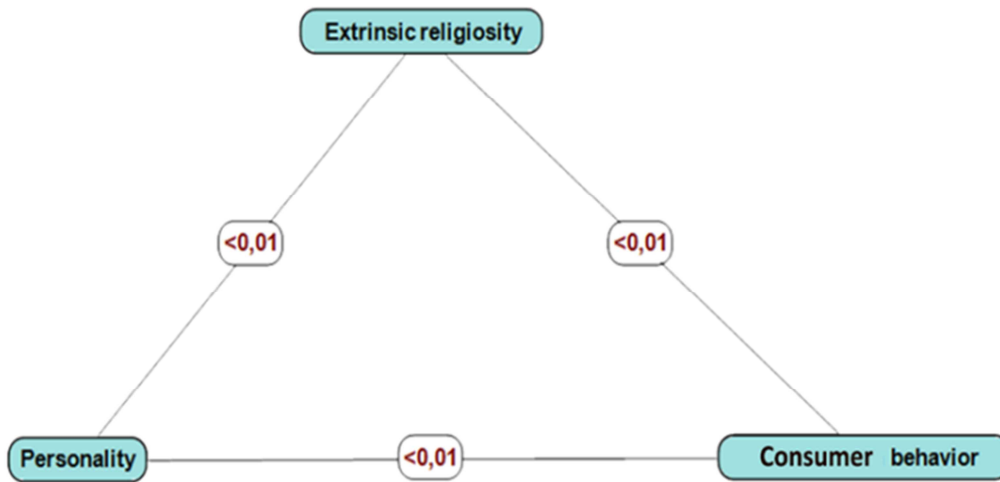


Figure 2. Graph of relationships of the 3 diverse variables.

(Source: Nassè, Fieldwork, 2015-2018)

## 4.2. Discussion

Extrinsic religiosity and consumer behavior.

Some previous research and document analysis, have brought out some strong relationships between religiosity and the consumer behavior [44]; [45]. However, the present research is focused on showing the relationship between extrinsic relationship and consumer within a context that is particular. It also brings out the particular Muslim consumer choices and purchasing decisions with regards to industrial beverages. In this regard, Sunni Muslim consumers and Lahilaa Muslim consumers are consuming and purchasing halal beverages. Sometimes, they consume due to influence of non-Muslims consumers (Atheists, Christians and Traditionalists) or they purchase it for family members or friends that are not necessarily Muslims.

Consumer behavior and extrinsic religiosity.

The previous research has shown a unidirectional relational relationship between religious beliefs and consumer behavior [46]. Nevertheless, the present research brings out the reverse effects by showing that consumer behavior also has an effect on extrinsic religiosity. Thus the relationship is bidirectional.

Personality traits, extrinsic religiosity and consumer behavior.

Most of the studies on the research topic fail to bring out some clear relationships concerning personality traits, extrinsic religiosity and consumer behavior. The present research shows that personality traits such as age and gender affects the relationship between extrinsic religiosity and

consumer behavior. The observation is that the very young generation of consumers do not consider religious prohibition of drinking non-halal drinks. Thus, the young consumers consume both halal beverages, and non-halal beverages. Some observations also show that male consumers are those who consume and purchase both halal beverages and non-halal beverages as compared to women who are more faithful to religious consumption norms. It is found that at least 23% of the surveyed have once consumed non-halal beverages.

## 5. Conclusion and Implications

### 5.1. Implications in Marketing Perspectives

It is essential to make a hyper-segmentation of the beverage sector to efficiently meet the core expectations and needs of the different Muslim consumers in the context. There is a need to make available the halal beverages following the expectations and needs of each Muslim group, and the understanding of what a halal beverage is according to each Muslim group, since the understanding of a halal beverage from Sunni consumers differs, from the Shiite consumers, and from the Lahilaa consumers, and also for minority Muslim groups in the context such as Ahmadiyya Muslim consumers. In this perspective, Sandikci [47] strongly points out that the Muslim consumers' needs and desires differ. The marketing top management of beverage companies should plan the strategic diversification of products, and innovative products, and also highly qualitative and environment friendly products which also take into account the expectations, and the needs of

both highly religious and non-highly religious consumers.

## 5.2. Implications for the Authorities

The authorities should continuously control the quality of the drinks on the market because some of the companies do not conform to the quality norms. The pricing policy should also be regulated to avoid the deliberate increase of product prices by businesses that are operating in the drinks sector.

## 5.3. Future Research

The upcoming research will seek to understand how intrinsic religious beliefs influence consumer behavior in term of consumption choices and purchasing decisions in a Muslim predominant geography.

## Appendix

**Table 6.** Age range of respondents.

Age range	Number of respondents	Percentage
10 to 25 years old	195	83%
26 to 35 years old	20	8.5%
36 to 45 years old.	20	8.5%
46 and above	0.0	0.0%
Total	235	100%

(Source: Nassè, Fieldwork, 2015-2018)

**Table 7.** Social class of respondents.

Social class	Number of respondents	percentage
Poor	90	38.3%
Rich	145	61.7%
Total	235	100%

(Source: Nassè, Fieldwork, 2015-2018)

**Table 8.** Marital status of respondents.

Marital status	Number of respondents	Percentage
Single	134	57%
Married	77	32.8%
Divorced	24	10.2%
Total	235	100%

(Source: Nassè, Fieldwork, 2015-2018)

**Table 9.** Profession of respondents.

Profession	Number of respondents	Percentage
Private sector	40	17%
Unemployed	173	73.6%
Public sector	22	9.4%

(Source: Nassè, Fieldwork, 2015-2018)

**Table 10.** Level of education of respondents.

Education level	Number of respondents	Percentage
University	142	60.4%
High school	93	39.6%
Primary school	0	0%
Total	235	100%

(Source: Nassè, Fieldwork, 2015-2018)

**Table 11.** Gender of the respondents.

Gender	Number of respondents	Percentage
Men	57	24.3%
Women	178	75.7%
Total	235	100%

(Source: Nassè, Fieldwork, 2015-2018)

**Table 12.** Nationality of the respondents.

Nationality	Number of respondents	Percentage
Burkinabe	189	80.4%
Non Burkinabe	46	19.6%
Total	235	100%

(Source, Nassè, Fieldwork, 2015-2018)

## Originality

This research findings serve to remind the beverage manufacturers, that, they should have a hyper-segmentation of the drinks sector, following the requirements of a multi-religious environment.

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## Conflicting of Interests

The author declares that there is no conflict of interests.

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