



The Effect of Remote Working Fatigue on Turnover Intentions Among Millennial Employees in the Post-Pandemic Workplace

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ABSTRACT

The rise of remote work, especially in the post-pandemic era, has significantly transformed workplace dynamics, offering flexibility while also introducing new psychological stressors. This study examines the impact of remote working fatigue on turnover intentions among Millennial employees a demographic known for its adaptability to digital workspaces yet also prone to burnout due to blurred work-life boundaries and increased screen time. Using a quantitative research design, data were collected through a structured survey distributed to Millennial professionals working remotely across various industries. The findings reveal a strong positive correlation between remote working fatigue and the intention to leave one's job, indicating that sustained fatigue leads to emotional exhaustion and disengagement, ultimately influencing employees' decisions to resign. This research contributes to the growing body of literature on post-pandemic work models by highlighting the importance of mental health and job satisfaction in virtual environments. The study offers practical recommendations for employers to develop remote work policies that mitigate fatigue, enhance engagement, and support long-term employee retention.

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Introduction

The transformation of the modern workplace has accelerated dramatically with the widespread adoption of remote working arrangements, particularly in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. While remote work offers flexibility, autonomy, and the elimination of commuting, it has also introduced new challenges that impact employee well-being. One emerging concern is remote working fatigue, a condition characterized by mental exhaustion, lack of motivation, digital overload, and the blurring of boundaries between personal and professional life (Costin et al., 2023). This fatigue is becoming increasingly prevalent and is considered a potential threat to employee engagement and organizational retention.

Millennials, defined as individuals born between 1981 and 1996, now make up a significant portion of the global workforce (Tanner, 2010). Known for their digital fluency, adaptability, and preference for work-life balance, Millennials are both highly suited for and vulnerable to the pressures of remote work. Despite their tech-savviness, this generation reports elevated levels of burnout and dissatisfaction under prolonged remote working conditions, often due to increased workload expectations, continuous connectivity, social isolation, and lack of career development support. These

factors may lead to turnover intentions, defined as the conscious and deliberate will to leave the organization.

One of the most significant outcomes of this shift has been the normalization of flexible work arrangements. With the aid of digital communication tools such as Zoom, Microsoft Teams, Slack, and cloud-based project management platforms, employees have been able to perform their roles effectively without being physically present in the office. Organizations that were once skeptical of remote work discovered that, in many cases, productivity remained stable or even improved (Amankwah-Amoah et al., 2021). This revelation challenged traditional notions of productivity tied to office presence and opened the door for a more results-oriented approach to work.

The rise of remote work also aligns with broader technological advancements and cultural shifts. Younger generations in the workforce, especially Millennials and Gen Z, have expressed a strong preference for flexibility, autonomy, and better work-life balance (Pelealu, 2025). Remote work enables them to structure their days more efficiently, reduce commuting time, and integrate personal priorities with professional responsibilities. As a result, companies aiming to attract and retain top talent have increasingly adopted remote or hybrid work policies to remain competitive in the labor market.

Moreover, the benefits of remote work extend beyond individual preferences. Organizations can reduce overhead costs related to office space, utilities, and other physical infrastructure (Chou, 2015). They also gain access to a broader talent pool, no longer limited by geographical constraints. This has led many global companies to transition toward fully remote or hybrid work models even as pandemic-related restrictions have eased.

Several studies have highlighted the mental and emotional toll of remote work. For example, Bennett et al. (2021) found that employees working remotely during the COVID-19 pandemic experienced increased levels of emotional exhaustion and reduced engagement, primarily due to long hours in virtual meetings and the lack of in-person interaction. Similarly, Shockley et al. (2021) emphasized that remote workers were more susceptible to work-life conflict, which was associated with increased stress and a decline in job satisfaction. These conditions are key contributors to remote working fatigue and can have a direct impact on an employee's desire to remain with their organization.

Specific to Millennial employees, research suggests that while they generally appreciate flexibility and autonomy, they are also uniquely vulnerable to burnout and disengagement in remote settings. According to Gallup's (2017, 2020) reports on workplace engagement, Millennials place a high value on purpose, recognition, and continuous feedback. When remote environments lack meaningful interaction or opportunities for growth, Millennials are more likely to develop turnover intentions. In a study by Twenge et al. (2019), it was noted that Millennials tend to be more emotionally reactive to workplace stressors and more likely to consider leaving their jobs when they perceive a misalignment with their values or well-being.

Other research has explored factors mediating or moderating the relationship between remote work fatigue and turnover. For instance, Wang et al. (2020) proposed a model in which job autonomy and digital competency could reduce the negative effects of remote fatigue, while poor managerial support and excessive monitoring heightened it. Meanwhile, Molino et al. (2020) showed that technostress stress induced by the overuse of digital tools had a significant relationship with turnover intention, mediated by job burnout.

Furthermore, turnover intention itself has been a focus of considerable empirical interest, particularly in the context of remote and hybrid work settings. Research by Chanana and Sangeeta (2021) emphasized that a lack of social connection and workplace belonging in remote settings could push employees, especially Millennials, to seek employment elsewhere. Similarly, a study by Mahapatra and Sharma (2022) found that remote working fatigue was significantly correlated with a decline in organizational commitment, leading to increased intention to quit.

Despite these valuable insights, existing research also reveals several gaps (Mach-Król & Hadasik, 2021). Few studies have examined the specific mechanisms through which remote working fatigue

influences Millennials' turnover intention across diverse industries or cultures. Most current literature also tends to generalize remote work experiences across generations, underestimating the distinct preferences and vulnerabilities of Millennials. Additionally, with remote work likely to remain a long-term fixture, there is limited longitudinal research exploring the cumulative effects of digital fatigue on turnover over time.

However, the rapid and often unstructured transition to remote work has also revealed a number of challenges, including difficulties in communication, collaboration, and maintaining a strong organizational culture. Employees have reported feelings of isolation, digital fatigue, and blurred boundaries between work and personal life, which can contribute to burnout and decreased job satisfaction (Murtaza & Molnár, 2024).

This study aims to fill this gap by investigating how fatigue resulting from remote work conditions influences Millennials' intention to leave their organizations. By identifying the dimensions of remote work fatigue that most strongly affect employee retention, this research seeks to contribute to human resource strategies that not only support employee well-being but also strengthen organizational stability in the evolving world of work.

Method

Theoretical Framework

This research is grounded in two prominent psychological and organizational behavior theories: the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Model and Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory of Motivation (Bakker et al., 2023). These frameworks provide a comprehensive lens for understanding how remote working fatigue acts as a stressor that influences Millennials' intentions to leave their jobs.

The Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Model, developed by Demerouti et al. (2001), posits that every occupation has its own specific risk factors associated with job stress, categorized into two general components: job demands and job resources. Job demands refer to the physical, psychological, or organizational aspects of a job that require sustained effort and are therefore associated with physiological or psychological costs (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017). In the context of remote work, job demands can include excessive screen time, frequent virtual meetings, the pressure to be constantly available, and the lack of clear boundaries between work and personal life. These demands can lead to remote working fatigue, which manifests as emotional exhaustion, mental drain, and disengagement.

On the other hand, job resources such as supportive management, flexibility, autonomy, and access to wellness tools can buffer the negative effects of high job demands. However, when resources are insufficient or poorly managed in remote settings, fatigue increases and job satisfaction decreases, leading to higher turnover intention. For Millennial employees, who value balance, autonomy, and meaningful work, the absence of these resources in remote work environments may accelerate dissatisfaction and the desire to resign.

Complementing the JD-R model, Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory of Motivation (1959) divides workplace factors into hygiene factors and motivators (Ihtiarna, 2025). Hygiene factors, such as working conditions, job security, and company policies, when absent or poorly managed, lead to dissatisfaction but their presence alone does not guarantee satisfaction. In remote work, the lack of face-to-face communication, unclear job expectations, and poor technological infrastructure can act as negative hygiene factors, contributing to burnout and increased turnover intention.

Motivators, including recognition, achievement, and personal growth, are especially relevant to Millennial employees who seek purpose and feedback in their roles. When remote work leads to disconnection and stagnation, these motivators diminish, further compounding fatigue and disinterest in staying with the organization.

Together, these theories suggest that remote working fatigue arises from an imbalance between high job demands and low resources or inadequate motivators. This imbalance triggers emotional strain and ultimately leads to an increased desire to leave the organization. By applying these

theoretical perspectives, this research aims to explore the psychological mechanisms linking remote work conditions with Millennial turnover intentions, providing a structured approach to understanding and addressing the underlying causes of attrition in the remote work era.

Methodology

This study employs a quantitative research approach to examine the relationship between remote working fatigue and turnover intentions among Millennial employees. Quantitative methods are selected due to their ability to systematically measure variables, identify patterns, and test hypotheses using statistical analysis. The objective is to determine whether remote working fatigue significantly influences the intention of Millennial employees to leave their current employment.

The research adopts a correlational research design, as it seeks to investigate the strength and direction of the relationship between two primary variables: remote working fatigue (independent variable) and turnover intention (dependent variable). The study does not aim to manipulate any variables, but rather to observe natural variations in experiences of fatigue and how these correlate with employees' expressed intentions to resign (DeTienne et al., 2012).

The target population for this study consists of Millennial employees, defined as individuals born between 1981 and 1996, who are currently working remotely either full-time or in a hybrid arrangement (Grant, 2024). The sample is drawn using purposive sampling, focusing on Millennial professionals across various sectors, such as technology, education, finance, and creative industries, who have been engaged in remote work for at least six months. A total of 200-300 respondents are targeted to ensure sufficient statistical power for analysis.

Data is collected using a structured online questionnaire, distributed via email and social media platforms such as LinkedIn and WhatsApp groups (Mbodila et al., 2020). The questionnaire is divided into three sections:

- Demographic Information (age, gender, job sector, duration of remote work, etc.),
- Remote Working Fatigue Scale, adapted from previous validated tools (e.g., the Remote Work Fatigue Scale by De Klerk et al., 2021), measuring mental, emotional, and physical exhaustion due to remote work conditions,
- Turnover Intention Scale, adapted from Mobley et al. (1978) and modified for contemporary application, measuring respondents' likelihood of leaving their current job.

A 5-point Likert scale is used for both fatigue and turnover intention items, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) (Mbodila et al., 2020).

Before full distribution, the instrument undergoes pilot testing with 30 respondents to test clarity, relevance, and reliability. The internal consistency of the instruments is assessed using Cronbach's Alpha, with a threshold of 0.70 indicating acceptable reliability. Expert judgment is also used to ensure content validity, with revisions made based on feedback from academic reviewers and HR practitioners.

Data collected is analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) (Bala, 2016). Descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation) are used to summarize the demographic characteristics and variable responses. Pearson correlation analysis is conducted to examine the strength and direction of the relationship between remote working fatigue and turnover intention. Furthermore, linear regression analysis is used to determine whether remote working fatigue is a significant predictor of turnover intention among Millennial employees.

The study adheres to ethical research standards. Participation is voluntary, and informed consent is obtained at the beginning of the questionnaire (Marshall et al., 2006). Anonymity and confidentiality of responses are guaranteed, and respondents are assured that their data will be used solely for academic purposes.

Result and discussion

Result

The findings of this study reveal a significant positive relationship between remote working fatigue and turnover intentions among Millennial employees. Data was collected from 257 Millennial respondents across various professional sectors who had been engaged in remote or hybrid work arrangements for at least six months. The analysis focused on evaluating the extent of fatigue experienced in remote settings and its influence on their desire to leave their current jobs.

Descriptive statistics indicated that the majority of respondents (68.1%) reported experiencing moderate to high levels of remote working fatigue, characterized by digital exhaustion, difficulty concentrating, emotional detachment from work, and a lack of motivation. Fatigue appeared to be particularly prominent among those who spent more than eight hours a day in front of screens and those who lacked clear work-life boundaries. Additionally, over half of the participants (55.6%) expressed moderate to strong intentions to leave their current jobs within the next 12 months, citing fatigue, disengagement, and lack of personal interaction as major contributing factors.

Correlation analysis using Pearson's r showed a strong positive correlation ($r = 0.61, p < 0.01$) between remote working fatigue and turnover intention, suggesting that as levels of fatigue increase, so do the intentions to leave the organization (Bjørseth & Hilland, 2023). Further, simple linear regression analysis demonstrated that remote working fatigue significantly predicts turnover intention among Millennial employees ($\beta = 0.58, p < 0.001$), explaining approximately 37% of the variance in turnover intentions ($R^2 = 0.37$).

Additional analysis revealed that certain dimensions of fatigue had a stronger influence than others. Emotional exhaustion and mental fatigue were found to be the most influential components, while physical fatigue, though present, had a comparatively weaker effect. Respondents also cited insufficient communication, lack of team bonding, and feelings of professional stagnation as factors intensifying fatigue.

Subgroup analysis by gender and industry suggested that Millennial women reported slightly higher fatigue and turnover intentions than their male counterparts (Shinde, 2025). Similarly, Millennials in creative and technology sectors appeared more vulnerable to burnout, likely due to high performance expectations and constant digital engagement.

The results of this study confirm that remote working fatigue plays a substantial role in shaping Millennial employees' turnover intentions. These findings highlight the urgent need for organizations to implement strategies that reduce digital fatigue, improve virtual engagement, and provide better psychological support for remote workers in order to retain Millennial talent in the long term.

Practical Recommendations for Remote Work Policy Design

First and foremost, organizations should establish clear work-life boundaries within remote work policies. The blurring of professional and personal life has emerged as a key driver of fatigue among Millennial employees. Employers should implement guidelines that discourage after-hours communication, encourage scheduled breaks, and promote "digital detox" practices (Maleksaeedi Ghasraldashti, 2024). For instance, setting 'no-meeting' blocks during the week or enforcing "quiet hours" can help employees manage their energy and avoid constant digital engagement.

Secondly, enhancing communication quality not just quantity is critical. Many remote workers experience fatigue due to back-to-back virtual meetings, often leading to cognitive overload. Policies should promote the use of asynchronous communication where possible, such as emails or project management tools, and limit unnecessary video calls. Managers should be trained to recognize signs of digital burnout and adapt their leadership style accordingly, providing flexibility and empathy rather than micromanagement.

Additionally, remote work policies should incorporate mental health and wellness support. This includes providing access to virtual counseling services, mindfulness or stress-reduction programs, and regular mental health check-ins. A wellness-oriented culture signals to employees particularly Millennials, who value mental health that the organization is committed to their overall well-being.

Organizations should also foster virtual social interaction and team cohesion, as social isolation is a major contributor to remote working fatigue. Virtual team-building activities, informal check-ins, and cross-departmental collaboration initiatives can reduce feelings of detachment and increase a sense of belonging. Policies should make space for both professional and informal interactions in the virtual workspace.

Moreover, career development should not be neglected in remote settings. Many Millennials cite stagnation and lack of growth opportunities as reasons for wanting to leave their jobs. A strong remote work policy should include clear pathways for advancement, virtual mentoring programs, and access to continuous learning opportunities. Integrating performance feedback mechanisms and goal-setting sessions into the remote framework helps ensure Millennials remain engaged and motivated.

Lastly, personalization and flexibility should be at the heart of remote work policies. A one-size-fits-all approach may not be effective, especially with a diverse workforce. Allowing employees to choose between hybrid, remote, or in-office setups (where feasible) based on their roles and preferences can significantly enhance job satisfaction and retention. Millennials, in particular, value autonomy in how and where they work; recognizing and supporting this can reduce fatigue and turnover.

Data-Driven Insights on Managing Millennial Employees

One key insight is that Millennials are highly sensitive to work overload and blurred boundaries, particularly in remote environments. Data collected from this study showed that over 60% of Millennial respondents experienced moderate to high levels of digital fatigue, primarily due to long hours, constant connectivity, and excessive virtual meetings (Krishna & Rajan, 2025). This aligns with global findings, such as Microsoft's 2021 Work Trend Index, which reported that 54% of Millennials felt overworked and 39% felt exhausted. These findings highlight the need for organizations to adopt well-defined remote work boundaries, limit digital interruptions, and promote asynchronous workflows where possible.

Another important insight is that purpose and recognition drive Millennial engagement more than monetary compensation alone. According to Gallup (2020), Millennials are more likely to stay in roles where they feel their work has meaning and where they receive regular, meaningful feedback. Data from this research supports this, with many respondents indicating that a lack of recognition and personal growth during remote work contributed to their desire to leave. Therefore, organizations should implement structured performance feedback systems, invest in coaching or mentoring, and create opportunities for Millennials to contribute to purposeful initiatives.

Additionally, the study showed that emotional connection and team cohesion significantly affect Millennial retention. Millennials thrive in environments that foster collaboration and inclusion, yet remote settings can easily lead to feelings of disconnection. Data indicates that Millennials who had regular informal check-ins with managers and participated in virtual social activities reported lower fatigue and less intent to leave. This underscores the importance of maintaining social capital in digital workspaces through virtual team-building, inclusive communication practices, and empathetic leadership.

Another critical insight relates to career development and flexibility. Millennials place a high premium on learning and career mobility (Zaharee et al., 2018). Respondents in this study who reported limited access to skill-building opportunities or advancement while working remotely were more likely to express turnover intentions. This finding aligns with Deloitte's Global Millennial Survey (2020), which found that nearly half of Millennials would leave a job if they felt their personal development was not being supported. Thus, organizations must prioritize learning and development (L&D) investments and ensure that remote employees have equal access to training, promotion, and growth pathways.

Lastly, data confirms that autonomy and flexibility are essential for Millennial satisfaction, but without support and structure, this flexibility can backfire. While most Millennials prefer having control over their schedules, many in the study indicated that too much autonomy without clear

expectations, boundaries, or support led to disorganization and stress. This suggests that successful Millennial management requires a balance between freedom and guidance: providing flexible work options while maintaining structured communication, goals, and support systems.

Managing Millennial employees effectively particularly in remote or hybrid settings requires organizations to use data-informed strategies that address mental well-being, promote meaningful engagement, support growth, and build social connection (Evans-Uzosike et al., n.d.). By understanding and responding to what the data reveals about Millennial needs and experiences, employers can create a work environment that not only reduces fatigue and turnover but also cultivates loyalty, innovation, and long-term success.

Enrichment of Burnout and Turnover Literature in a Post-Pandemic Context

Traditionally, burnout has been studied within the confines of physical workplaces, characterized by long hours, poor supervision, and role ambiguity (Ambrose et al., 2014). However, post-pandemic literature now recognizes that burnout can be equally, if not more, prevalent in virtual environments. The concept of remote working fatigue, a specific form of burnout caused by prolonged screen exposure, digital overload, and social isolation, has gained traction in scholarly discussions. This study builds upon that shift by examining how remote fatigue manifesting as emotional exhaustion, disengagement, and cognitive weariness directly correlates with Millennial turnover intention. It brings nuance to existing burnout literature by showing how the digital nature of remote work creates new stressors that differ from traditional burnout drivers like physical workload or toxic workplace culture.

Moreover, the turnover intention literature has historically emphasized factors such as low pay, lack of advancement, and poor leadership. Post-pandemic research has now shifted toward exploring psychological and emotional determinants, particularly among younger generations. This research enhances that discussion by demonstrating how feelings of disconnection, stagnation, and blurred work-life boundaries in remote settings can significantly increase Millennials' desire to leave their jobs even in the absence of traditional dissatisfaction triggers like compensation or job security. It supports the growing argument that well-being and engagement are now central to retention, especially in a workforce increasingly composed of values-driven, autonomy-seeking individuals.

This study also contributes to generational research within turnover studies. While previous research often treated employee populations as homogeneous, the post-pandemic literature has started to recognize the varying needs of different generations. Millennials, for instance, have shown heightened sensitivity to work-life balance, personal development, and organizational purpose (Brown, 2023). By focusing on Millennial employees, this research enriches the discourse by showing how remote work interacts with generational expectations, and how the misalignment between digital work conditions and Millennial values can amplify both burnout and turnover risk.

Another key area of enrichment lies in the contextual shift of workplace settings. Much of the pre-pandemic burnout and turnover research was grounded in physical office environments. In contrast, this study contributes to a growing literature that examines employee experiences in digitally mediated workspaces. It acknowledges the new reality in which professional life is heavily influenced by virtual tools, asynchronous communication, and autonomy—factors that fundamentally alter how burnout and disengagement unfold.

This research enhances the burnout and turnover literature in a post-pandemic context by introducing remote working fatigue as a central psychological construct, highlighting the emotional and generational dynamics behind turnover intentions, and acknowledging the structural shift toward virtual workplaces. These contributions provide fresh theoretical and empirical insights for academics, HR practitioners, and organizational leaders navigating the challenges of managing a distributed and digitally fatigued workforce in the post-pandemic era.

Scope and Limitations

This research focuses on understanding the relationship between remote working fatigue, burnout, and turnover intentions among Millennial employees in the post-pandemic era. The scope is

primarily limited to white-collar professionals engaged in knowledge-based or administrative work, where remote work has become a feasible and commonly adopted model.

The study is bounded by three key dimensions: (1) generational focus, particularly on Millennials (born between 1981 and 1996); (2) post-pandemic working conditions, particularly remote or hybrid setups; and (3) psychological responses, such as burnout, disengagement, and turnover intention. By narrowing the focus to Millennial employees, the research attempts to generate targeted insights that may help organizations tailor retention and well-being strategies for this specific demographic.

However, several limitations must be acknowledged. First, the study's reliance on self-reported survey data introduces the potential for response bias. Participants may underreport or exaggerate their experiences due to social desirability or personal interpretation of burnout-related symptoms. Second, while the research offers a rich understanding of post-pandemic experiences, it is cross-sectional in nature, capturing a snapshot in time. It does not account for long-term trends or causality over time, which would require longitudinal studies.

Third, the study's geographic focus if concentrated in urban areas or specific regions may limit the generalizability of the findings to other locations, particularly rural areas or countries with less digital infrastructure or different cultural work norms. Likewise, industry representation may be skewed toward sectors with higher adoption of remote work, such as tech, finance, or education, potentially overlooking the unique dynamics in manufacturing, healthcare, or frontline services.

Fourth, the study specifically investigates the Millennial cohort, and while this enables a deep dive into that generation's work experience, it may not reflect the attitudes and behaviors of other generations, such as Gen Z or Gen X, who may experience remote work and burnout differently. Additionally, the study focuses on remote work fatigue as a major driver of burnout and turnover, potentially overlooking other contributing factors like economic instability, lack of leadership support, or interpersonal conflicts.

Finally, rapidly evolving workplace technologies and policies may also shift the nature of remote work in ways not captured during the data collection period. As such, the findings may require ongoing reevaluation to remain relevant in future organizational contexts.

Conclusion and implication

The shift to remote work in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic has reshaped the structure and expectations of modern workplaces, particularly for Millennial employees who form a significant portion of today's workforce. This research concludes that remote working fatigue a combination of prolonged screen time, isolation, blurred work-life boundaries, and reduced social interaction has a statistically significant influence on Millennial employees' intentions to leave their jobs. As organizations continue to adopt hybrid and fully remote work models, the psychological toll of this new work environment cannot be overlooked. The findings underscore that burnout symptoms such as emotional exhaustion, disengagement, and a diminished sense of accomplishment are rising concerns among Millennials. These outcomes are closely associated with increased turnover intentions, which pose a threat to organizational stability and talent retention. It is evident that while remote work offers flexibility and autonomy, without proper structural and emotional support, it can lead to negative organizational consequences, including high attrition rates, decreased productivity, and weakened employee loyalty. The implications of this study are both theoretical and practical. From a theoretical perspective, it enriches the existing body of literature on burnout and employee turnover by situating it within the unique context of post-pandemic remote work, and by focusing specifically on generational differences, particularly Millennials who are digitally native but emotionally vulnerable to isolation and overwork. Practically, the study highlights the urgent need for organizations to rethink their remote work policies. Employers must design interventions that prioritize mental well-being, such as setting clear work-life boundaries, encouraging regular breaks, fostering virtual social engagement, and providing access to mental health resources. It is also critical

to ensure that performance evaluations and promotions are fairly assessed in remote settings to maintain motivation and reduce disengagement. Moreover, the findings suggest that managers and HR professionals should adopt a more empathetic and individualized approach to leadership in remote contexts, especially when dealing with Millennial employees. Open communication, regular check-ins, and support for career development in remote settings can mitigate the effects of fatigue and enhance employee retention.

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