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Influence of Facebook and X (Formally Twitter) Contents on Insecurity in Promoting Security Consciousness among Residents in Southeast, Nigeria

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Abstract

This study investigated the influence of Facebook and X (formally twitter) contents on insecurity in promoting security consciousness among residents in Southeast, Nigeria. This investigation finds expression on the technology determinism theory and the social disorganisation theory which gave the study a foundational bearing by explaining the relationship between the various variables in the study. This study adopted the convergent parallel research design. The study had an estimated population of 8,147,285 from which a sample size of 385 was arrived at using Wimmer and Dominick online sample size calculator for the quantitative aspect of the study, while 10 served as the sample size for the qualitative aspect. The multi-stage sampling technique was used in selecting respondents for the study while two respondents were interviewed from the select communities across Southeast, Nigeria. The questionnaire and interview guide were used in generating data. The findings of this study revealed that there is a high level of exposure to Facebook and X (formally twitter) contents on insecurity by residents of Southeast, Nigeria at 45%. Findings also revealed that there is a significant influence of these Facebook and X (formally twitter) contents on insecurity on the Southeasterners as people now place restrictions in their movements as well as security measures around their homes, at grand mean of 3.1. The researchers concluded that the influence of Facebook and X (formally Twitter) contents on insecurity induce security consciousness among residents in Southeast, Nigeria, is dependent on their level of exposure to these Facebook and X (formally Twitter) contents. This researchers, therefore, recommended that the media generally should give more prominence to stories on insecurity in their reportage given the crucial role of the media in mitigating the crisis coupled with the fact that the insurgence poses an immediate security threat to Nigerians in Southeast, Nigeria.



Keywords: Facebook and X, Security consciousness, Southeast Nigeria.

Introduction

Nigeria which is perceived as the giant of Africa has witnessed unprecedented incidents of insecurity ranging from the activities of Fulani Herdsmen; Boko Haram insurgencies, armed robber attacks, kidnapping, political/religious crisis, murder, destruction of oil facilities by Niger Delta militants, child abduction/ trafficking etc (Ndubuisi-Okolo & Anigbogu 2019). The alarming rate at which the economic, political, social and religious affairs of the nation are dwindling at present is a real symptom of insecurity (Osa & Agbo, 2022). Igben and Okpodu (2023) explained that insecurity is “the state of fear, anxiety, restlessness, uncertainty, stemming from lackadaisical attitude of our disgruntled and greedy politicians, militants and Boko Haram Sects”. Insecurity in Nigeria has led to the destruction of lives, properties and equipment; relocation and closing down of businesses, Adeleke (2015).

Insecurity in Southeast escalated after the Eastern Security Network managed to repulse the initial push by the Nigerian Army, but IPOB ended the initial crisis by unilaterally withdrawing the ESN from Orlu (Nwagbala & Ejike, 2022). Asare (2023), posit that more than 400 Nigerian soldiers were deployed to oust the ESN and the authorities declared a curfew which was brutally enforced. The curfew and the anticipation of imminent heavy fighting caused civilians to flee the city en masse. From that moment lots of claims have been circulating on social media on the challenging security menace between the Nigerian army, Biafra, ESN etc. social media has become an arena where people source for information on happenings across the region. Babale and Nasidi (2019) explained that many social media platforms over the years have been utilized for the sharing of information or messages on insecurity insurgents in the country particularly in Southeast Nigeria where kidnapping, organ harvesting, Fulani herdsmen, armed robber attacks, political/religious crisis, murder, trafficking etc are on the increase.

Despite social media efforts in promoting awareness on this ugly menace, it seems not to be holding water within the Southeastern region as there are daily reportage of unknown gun men attacks, IPOB compulsory sit at home activities, Fulani herdsmen attacks, kidnapping, trafficking, murder, organ harvesters etc across the region. Could it be the social media are not doing enough in creating awareness on these issues to instigate the required action or reactions from the indigenous people of Southeast, Nigeria, to bring a lasting solution to this menace? It is on this premise that the researchers intends to examine the influence of Facebook and X (formally twitter) contents on insecurity in promoting security consciousness among residents in Southeast Nigeria.

Research Objectives

1. Examine the level of exposure of residents of Southeast to Facebook and X (formally Twitter) contents on insecurity.
2. Evaluate the knowledge level of Southeast residents on security issues as a result of Facebook and X (formally Twitter) contents on insecurity.
3. Determine the perception of Southeast residents on insecurity matters as posted in Facebook and X (formally Twitter).
4. Investigate how Facebook and X (formally Twitter) contents on insecurity have induced security consciousness among residents in Southeast, Nigeria.
5. Identify factors that can promote security consciousness among residents of Southeast, Nigeria.

Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored technology determinism theory and social disorganization theory.



According to Beard, (1927), the term is believed to have been coined by Thorstein Veblen (1857-1929), an American social scientist. Technological determinism is a theory suggesting that technology fundamentally shapes society and human behavior. It posits that technology fundamentally shapes society and human behavior. It posits that technological advancements drive social and cultural change, rather than the other way around. Essentially, it argues that technology is the primary force behind societal development (Beard, 1927). The relevance of this theory to this study remains that for as long as technology continues to evolve as people especially Southeast residents continue to utilize the various platforms and ICT gadgets development is certainly inevitable. This is because technological advancements such as mobile phones, laptops, Ipads and the internet has made it easy to receive and share information above development across the globe within seconds. This means that technology inventions such as Facebook and X (formally Twitter) through its contents on insecurity will certainly promote security consciousness among residents of Southeast, Nigeria.

Social Disorganization Theory was first used by Shaw and McKay in 1942 to describe crime and delinquency in urban North American cities, it posits that weak social structures and institutions within a community lead to a breakdown in social order and increase crime rates (Christian, 2018). This theory suggests that communities with weak social structures, characterized by things like poverty, high residential mobility, and racial heterogeneity, are more prone to crime and insecurity. These weak structures hinder the community's ability to regulate and provide social control, making it easier for criminal activities to flourish. For example, in Nigeria, the high levels of poverty and unemployment are often associated with higher rates of crime and insecurity. The relevance of this theory to the study is that the level of insecurity in Southeast, Nigeria, will continue to get worse if the government and those in power do not put stiff measures in place to ensure order is maintained in Nigeria especially within the Southeastern region. The government and policy makers can start utilizing social media space like Facebook and X in the dissemination of government policies with regard to job creation, maintenance of law and order etc as a means of communicating peace and oneness in Southeast, Nigeria.

Method

The convergent parallel research design. This method is a system by which research design deals with the collection of two different set of data; qualitative (interview) and quantitative data (survey). The population of this study comprised active Facebook and X (formally Twitter) users in Southeast, Nigeria. According to NapoleonCat (2025), the population of Facebook users in Southeast, Nigeria, is estimated to be 7,114,650, while the population of X (formally Twitter) users in Southeast, Nigeria according to Simon (2025), is estimated to be 1,032,635. This sum up to 8,147,285 Facebook and X (formally Twitter) active users in Southeast, Nigeria. The security agencies (Police and Local Vigilante) from the select communities within Southeast, Nigeria formed the population for the qualitative analysis. The Wimmer and Dominic Online sample size calculator was used to arrive at a population size of 385 with a 95% confidence level and 5% margin of error. While the sample size of 10 was purposively arrived at in the qualitative aspect of the study (in-depth interview). The multi-stage sampling technique was adopted for the distribution of material for data collection across the five Southeastern states in Nigeria. **Stage 1:** The researcher listed the states and its metropolis in each of the states in Southeast; Abia State (Umuahia), Anambra State (Awka), Ebonyi State (Abakiliki), Enugu State (Enugu), Imo State (Owerri). **Stage 2:** The researcher listed the LGAs in each of the metropolis in Southeastern states; **Umuahia:** Umuahia North and Umuahia South. **Awka:** Awka South, Awka North, **Abakiliki:** Abakiliki, Izzi, and Ohaukwu, **Enugu:** Enugu East, Enugu North, and Enugu South, **Owerri:** Owerri North, Owerri West, and Owerri Municipal. **Stage 3:** The researcher purposively select two local government areas from each metropolis in Southeast Nigeria. This is because these local government areas can be easily assessed for the administration of instrument. **Umuahia:** Umuahia North and Umuahia South, **Awka:** Awka South and Awka North, **Abakiliki:** Abakiliki and Izzi, **Enugu:** Enugu East and Enugu South, **Owerri:** Owerri West



and Owerri Municipal. **Stage 4:** The researcher purposively select two communities from each of the select LGA's in the state capitals, making it 20 communities. These communities include; **Umuahia:** Umuahia North (Umuahia and Ohuhu) and Umuahia South (Umuokpara and Old Umuahia), **Awka:** Awka South (Awka and OkpunoAwka) and Awka North (Achalla and Amanuke), **Abakiliki:** Abakiliki (Amagu and Abakpa) and Izzi (Ndieze and Igbeagu), **Enugu:** Enugu East (Amoji and Azama) and Enugu South (Amaechi and Obiagu), **Owerri:** Owerri Municipal (Egbu and Orji) and Owerri West (Nekede and Umugoma). The reason for selecting these was based on the fact that they are within the central areas of the state capitals and can be assessed easily by the researcher. In each of the communities, the researcher judgmentally selected 20 respondents. Respondents consent were sought before they were asked to fill the questionnaire. They were assured of keeping their identity hidden. The questionnaire and the interview guide were face validated by an expert in communication from the department of Mass Communication at Imo State University. Simple percentage table and the Likert scale was used to analyze the questionnaire items; Strongly disagree (1), Disagree (2), Agree (3), and (4) Strongly Agree. The interview guide was structured in an open ended format while every item in the questionnaire and were organized in accordance with the research objectives. In order to ensure reliability of the instrument, the researchers adopted the test-retest technique. The result gotten was calculated using Cronbach's Alpha statistics formula. The result gave .820 which showed a perfect reliability. For the qualitative aspect, the member check was used to test the trustworthiness of the interview guide. The responses of the interviewees were given to the research assistants for scrutiny and fact checking. The validated questionnaire copies were administered on the spot basis by the researchers this allow for appropriate filling of the questionnaire through assisting respondents to understand areas they may find difficult to comprehend. On the aspect of the in-depth interview, personal contacts with the interviewees guided performance leading to the actualization of expected data collection.

Findings

A total of three hundred and eighty five (385) copies of questionnaire were administered across the five (5) states in Southeast, Nigeria. Out of it 383 (99%) copies wereretrievied from the respondents. While 2 (1%) copies were inappropriately filled.

Research Question One: What is the level of exposure of residents of Southeast to Facebook and X (formally Twitter) contents on insecurity?

Table one: Respondent response to their level of exposure to Facebook and X (formally Twitter) contents on insecurity?

Items	Frequency	Percentage
Very High	119	31
High	173	45
Moderate	79	21
Low	12	3
Total	383	100

Source: Field Survey (2025)

The analysis of respondents response to their level of exposure to Facebook and X (formally Twitter) contents on insecurity indicates that there is a high level of exposure to Facebook and X (formally Twitter) contents on insecurity among residents of Southeast, Nigeria, at 45%.

Research Question Two: What is the knowledge level of Southeast residents on security issues as a result of Facebook and X (formally Twitter) contents on insecurity?

N=383



Table Two: Respondents response to their knowledge level of security issues as a result of Facebook and X (formally Twitter) contents on insecurity

Items	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Decision
The need to be security conscious as a result of my exposure to these Facebook and X contents on insecurity	167	139	49	28	3.1	Accepted
I have better understanding of the various techniques kidnappers and organ harvesters, bandits, and terrorists deploy to get victims as a result of their exposure to Facebook and X.	159	171	32	21	3.2	Accepted
Facebook and X contents on insecurity has increased my knowledge of armed robbery, thugs, and one chance activities in Southeast.	147	173	51	12	3.1	Accepted
Grand Mean					3.1	Accepted

Source: Field Survey (2025)

Key : SA= Strongly Agree 3.3-4.0, A= Agree 2.5-3.2, D = Disagree 1.8-2.4, SD= Strongly Disagree 1-1.7.

Decision Rule: the mean value for decision is 2.5. Therefore if the calculated mean is between 1-2.4 the researcher will reject the item posed but if the calculated mean is between 2.5-4.0 the researcher will accept the item.

Result obtained from the knowledge level of Southeast residents on security issues as a result of Facebook and X (formally Twitter) contents on insecurity revealed that at an average mean of 3.1 the knowledge level of insecurity has increased drastically. This goes as much to say that people now know the activities of kidnappers, bandits, organ harvesters, armed robbers and terrorists in the region. This means that residents of southeast, Nigeria, now know the kind of cars used for their operations and the dangerous places across the region. It is therefore safe to say that there is a recommendable level of knowledge of insecurity by residents of Southeast as a result of their exposure to Facebook and X (formally twitter) contents on insecurity.

Research Question Three: What is the perception of Southeast residents on insecurity matters as posted in Facebook and X (formally Twitter)?

N= 383



Table Three: Respondent response to their perception of insecurity matters projected on Facebook and X.

Items	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Decision
I think the cause of the long lasted insecurity menace could be highly political.	171	169	27	16	3.2	Accepted
I think the insecurity contents on Facebook and X (formally twitter) are excess and induce fear.	51	137	173	22	2.5	Accepted
I think it is inappropriate to assume that every conflict is related to religious colourations.	109	183	57	34	2.9	Accepted
Grand Mean					2.8	Accepted

Source: Field Survey (2025)

Result gotten from the analysis on the perception of Southeast residents on insecurity matters as posted in Facebook and X (formally twitter) revealed that respondents see insecurity as an enemy to development and its existence in Southeast has crippled the regions economy. Respondents also opined that the long lasted insecurity menace could be highly political while suggesting the need for sensorship of Facebook and X contents on insecurity as most of its contents induce fear and panic in society. Respondents also opined that it is inappropriate to assume that every conflict is related to religious colourations on a grand mean of 2.9.

Research Question Four: What is the influence of Facebook and X (formally Twitter) contents on insecurity in inducing security consciousness among residents in Southeast, Nigeria?

N=383

Table Four: Respondent response to the influence of Facebook and X (formally Twitter) contents on insecurity in inducing security consciousness among residents in Southeast, Nigeria

Items	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Decision
The police and local vigilante are now my first contact whenever there is an attack or suspicious movement in my environment	121	137	103	22	2.9	Accepted
I now put security measures around my home.	121	147	93	22	2.9	Accepted



I now limit to unnecessary movements especially at night.	171	169	27	16	3.2	Accepted
Grand Mean					3.0	Accepted

Source: Field Survey (2025)

Result gotten from the analysis on the influence of Facebook and X (formally twitter) contents on insecurity in inducing security consciousness among residents in Southeast, Nigeria revealed that the police and local vigilante are now my first contact whenever there is an attack or suspicion movement in my environment, that people now put security measures around their homes as their movements are also now limited especially at night. It was also revealed that respondents now pay close attention to every instruction from security personnel and they desist from sharing information that will incite fear in my locality at a grand mean of 3.1.

Research Question Five: What are the factors that can promote security consciousness among residents of Southeast, Nigeria?

N=383

Table Five: Respondents response to factors that promotes security consciousness among residents of Southeast, Nigeria.

Items	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Decision
I believe a security conscious person will at all cost avoid show off of accessories	109	183	77	14	3.0	Accepted
Divulging sensitive information about your private life to people either physically or on social media.	187	149	29	18	3.3	Accepted
Promotion of public enlightenment programs to educate the masses of several security measures in the midst of crisis will induce security consciousness.	142	201	29	11	3.3	Accepted
Grand Mean					3.2	Accepted

Source: Field Survey (2025)

The result gotten from the analysis on the factors that can promote security consciousness among residents of Southeast, Nigeria shows that most respondents agreed that a security conscious person will at all cost avoid show off of accessories, and avoid divulging sensitive information about his/her private life to people either physically or on social media. Analysis of data also show that public enlightenment should be encouraged to educate the masses of several security measures in the midst of crisis at a grand mean of 3.0.



Analysis from the qualitative data revealed that residents of Southeast, Nigeria are highly exposed to facebook and X contents on insecurity. This is because insecurity in the Southeast region has been loud in the past few years and anyone who is active in these social media platforms especially Facebook and X are daily exposed to contents on insecurity. Respondents response on their knowledge level on security issues revealed that there is an appreciable knowledge level of Southeast, Nigeria residents of insecurity as a result of their exposure to facebook and X (formally twitter) contents on insecurity. This means that the more they see theses contents on facebook and X the more they talk and educate other people to apply precautionary measures in their movements and other activities.

The opinion of respondents on their perception of insecurity matters posted on Facebook and X clearly indicates that respondents frown at these insecurity menace and they see insecurity as an enemy to development and its existence in Southeast has crippled the regions' economy. Respondents also opined that the long lasted insecurity menace could be highly political while suggesting the need for sensorship of Facebook and X contents on insecurity as most of its contents induces fear and panic in the society.

Furthermore, comments on the influence of Facebook and X contents on insecurity in inducing security consciousness among residents in Southeast, Nigeria clearly show that there is a significant influence of these Facebook and X content on insecurity on the people as people have placed certain restrictions in their movements, placed security measures around their homes, and closely working with security personnel to maintain peace among others. Indeed the influence of these platforms in inducing security consciousness among residents in Southeast, Nigeria is significant.

Analysis of the comments from the respondents show that security conscious individuals will limit show off of accessories. Peoples' consciousness on security matters will increase when security agencies get them involved in their parades. Also, contents on insecurity should be seen on Facebook and X since most persons rely on them for information.

Discussion

The quantitative data obtained from the level of exposure of residents of Southeast to Facebook and X (formally Twitter) contents on insecurity revealed that most respondents have Facebook and X account and they can comfortably afford data they always come across contents on insecurity on these platforms which have also resulted in a high level of exposure to Facebook and X (formally twitter) contents on insecurity at 45%. Findings from the qualitative data show that residents of Southeast, Nigeria are highly exposed to Facebook and X contents on insecurity. This is because insecurity in the Southeast region has been loud in the past few years and anyone who is active in these social media platforms are daily exposed to contents on insecurity. In support of this findings Etumnu et al. (2025) found that majority of people had frequent exposure to security-related posts on social media platforms and were aware of security alertness messages sent through these platforms. Also, Alexander et al (2019) established in their study that the level of frequency in newspaper coverage of Fulani herdsman attacks on host communities is high. Olanrewaju, et al. (2021) revealed that there was no day in the period under investigation that the issue of the abducted Chibok girls did not get attention in the press.

Findings of this study revealed that at an average mean of 3.1 the knowledge level of insecurity has increased drastically. This goes as much to say that people now know the activities of kidnappers, bandits, organ harvesters, armed robbers and terrorists in the region. This means that residents of southeast, Nigeria, now know the kind of cars used for their operations and the dangerous places across the region. It is therefore safe to say that there is a recommendable level of knowledge of insecurity by residents of



Southeast as a result of their exposure to Facebook and X (formally twitter) contents on insecurity. The qualitative data also show that there is an appreciable knowledge level of Southeast, Nigeria residents of insecurity as a result of their exposure to Facebook and X (formally Twitter) contents on insecurity. Contrary to this findings, Suemo et al. (2022), explained that radio was not proactive enough in the prevention of farmers' attacks as it (radio) mostly disseminates information meant to address those attacks through straight news format without further investigation for more intensive information that could effectively help more in the prevention of such attacks. Mustapha-Koik (2019) found that there are lots of constraints in the reportage of issues on insecurity which range from the terrorist group, media owners and the security agencies. Ndubuisi-Okolo and Anigbuogu, (2019) found that insecurity is a major hindrance to the growth of industrialisation and sustainable development in Nigeria at large.

Result gotten from the quantitative analysis revealed that respondents see insecurity as an enemy to development and its existence in Southeast has crippled the regions economy. They also opined that the long lasted insecurity menace could be highly political while suggesting the need for sensorship of Facebook and X contents on insecurity as most of its contents induces fear and panic in society. Findings from the qualitative data show that respondents frown at these insecurity challenges faced by residents of Southeast, Nigeria. They also opined that one major factor contributing to the stunted development in the region is attributed to insecurity. Some of the interviewees were of the opinion that insecurity in Southeast is political. In line with this finding Edogor et al. (2015) found that social media active users perceive the portrayals of the crisis on social media as excess and over-blown, especially on Facebook by mostly users between 15 and 35 years old. Nwagbo and Ofoke (2025) also found that there has been worsening insecurity evident in the incessant attacks by unknown gunmen which has greatly affected the ease of doing of business in Southeast and has led to loss of income and poor socio-economic development of the region. Ibrahim and Nguru (2020), explained that even in instances when conflicts arose as a result of other factors, they usually assumed religious colourations. Hyacinth (2017), posit that NTA's reports on the abduction of the Chibok school girls are often in favour of government while Channels Television's reports on the abduction are often balanced.

These findings further buttress the theoretical framework of social disorganization theory which explained that the level of insecurity in Southeast, Nigeria, will continue to get worse if the government and those in power do not put stiff measures in place to ensure order is maintained in Nigeria especially within the Southeastern region. This theory simply means that the rate of insecurity in the region will drastically reduce if jobs and other social amenities are made available to the people.

Result gotten from the analysis of data revealed that the police and local vigilante are now people's first contact whenever there is an attack or suspicious movement in my environment, that people now put security measures around their homes as their movements are also now limited especially at night at a grand mean of 3.0 (N=383) Findings from the qualitative data revealed that there is a significant influence of these Facebook and X content on insecurity on the Southeasterners as people have placed certain restrictions in their movements, placed security measures around their homes, and closely working with security personnel to maintain peace among others. These findings agree with that of Edegoh and Asemah (2014), who found in their study that the media campaign on security has positive influence on respondents and that the level of exposure of the respondents, to the security awareness campaign is high. Igben and Okpodu (2023) disagrees with this finding as it argued that process and quality of data collection has been largely affected as a result of insecurity which makes it difficult for committed researchers to access relevant sites and physical locations for the purpose of securing reliable and valid data. Kente and Sheyigari (2021) also second this in their study as they established that Nigerian media



most frequently use news frames (peace neutral and mixed frames), and do not handle or project matters of insecurity with urgency in their reportage.

This further explains the relevance of technology determinism theory which maintains that for as long as technology continues to evolve as people especially Southeast residents continue to utilize the various platforms and ICT gadgets development is certainly inevitable. This means that technology inventions such as Facebook and X (formally Twitter) through its contents on insecurity will certainly promote security consciousness among residents of Southeast, Nigeria.

Findings of this study shows that most respondents agreed that a security conscious person will at all cost avoid show off of accessories, and avoid divulging sensitive information about your private life to people either physically or on social media. It further revealed that public enlightenment programmes should be encouraged to educate the masses of several security measures in the midst of crisis at a grand mean of 3.2 (N=383). Findings from the qualitative data also revealed that security conscious individuals will limit show off of accessories. Peoples' consciousness on security matters will increase when security agencies get them involved in their parades. This finding is supported by that of Ukwu et al. (2024) which found that factors such as the actions of security personnel, herders, self-determination agitators, and the government's selective justice contribute to the region's insecurity. Adeodu et al. (2024), found that poverty, unemployment and illiteracy are the major causes of insecurity in Nigeria especially in the northeast and southeast of Nigeria. Mustapha-Koik (2019), in his study revealed that based on the lack of security and organizational support, the reporters covering the Boko Haram crisis have become less committed following perceived personal risks from their reporting.

Conclusion and Recommendations

It is no doubt that most residents of Southeast, Nigeria, are well exposed to social media platforms like Facebook and X and as such they are equally aware to a large extent of the insecurity menace in the region as evident in the findings. This high awareness level has increased their knowledge and sharpened their perception of insecurity challenges faced in the region. It is safe to say that Facebook and X (formally Twitter) contents on insecurity have a significant influence on Southeast residents in inducing security consciousness in the region. This implies that the influence of Facebook and X (formally Twitter) contents on security in inducing security consciousness among residents in Southeast, Nigeria, is dependent on their level of exposure to these Facebook and X (formally Twitter) contents.

Based on the findings of this study the following recommendations were made;

1. Other social media platforms as well as traditional media channels should be utilized to engage people on the matter of insecurity across the states in Southeast, region and Nigeria at large.
2. The media generally should continue to give more prominence to stories on insecurity in their reportage and enlighten people on measures to take during crisis.
3. There should be more social media education campaigns on insecurity and also censorship of these contents should be encouraged especially on Facebook and X.
4. There should be optimization of positive frames to promote the peace media initiative which forms the critical plank of positive media interventions.
5. Reports on insecurity must be devoid of all form of ethnic, religious or political sentiments.

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