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# Cultural Value-Based Digital Ethno-Counseling to Improve Student Well-Being

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**Abstract:** Student mental health in Indonesia has become a pressing issue due to the increasing prevalence of psychological disorders and the low utilization of counseling services, which negatively affect student well-being. Digital counseling expands access to support services but faces ethical and cultural challenges. Therefore, ethnocounseling based on local cultural values offers a more contextual alternative. This study aims to examine the implementation of digital ethnocounseling grounded in Bugis-Makassar cultural values and its impact on student well-being. A qualitative approach using a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) design was employed. The literature selection process followed the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) guidelines, screening 200 articles obtained through Publish or Perish and selecting 15 relevant studies. The findings indicate that optimizing digital technology while maintaining local wisdom can support educational transformation toward Golden Indonesia 2045. Integrating Bugis-Makassar cultural values into digital counseling may enhance student well-being while preserving cultural identity. Further development and empirical testing of digital ethnocounseling models across diverse school contexts are recommended.

**Keywords**: student mental health; digital counselling; ethocounseling; Bugis-Makassar culture; student well-being

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## Introduction

The mental health of students in Indonesia is currently an increasingly pressing concern. The Indonesian Health Survey revealed that nearly 2% of the population aged 15 and over are known to live with a mental disorder, with depression, anxiety, and schizophrenia being the most common (Ministry of Health of the Republic of Indonesia, 2023). Furthermore, the results of the Indonesia National Adolescent Mental Health Survey indicate that approximately 34.9% of all adolescents, equivalent to 15.5 million individuals, experience mental health disorders (Center for Reproductive Health et al., 2022). This situation is even more concerning because although one-third of adolescents experience psychological distress, only a small proportion utilize available support services (Center for Reproductive Health et al., 2022). This indicates a significant gap between the need for and access to mental health services among adolescents. The impact of low student well-being extends beyond academic achievement to emotional maturity and readiness to face life's challenges (Purwanto & Ahmadin, 2026). Therefore, increasing student well-being is an important aspect that needs attention in the education system.

Along with technological developments, counseling services are also undergoing a digital transformation. Technology-based counseling or e-counseling is considered capable of expanding access to services, reducing stigma, and providing psychological support without being limited by time and space (Ifdil et al., 2025). In Indonesia, the implementation of digital counseling services has also been proven to increase counselor competence and students' positive perceptions of the importance of mental health (Wijayanto et al., 2026). However, the use of technology in counseling still requires careful planning so as not to reduce the quality of the counseling relationship itself.

On the other hand, the ethnocounseling approach emphasizes the importance of cultural values in the counseling process. Ethnocounseling is a service tailored to the values, norms, and outlook of a culture, making it more contextual and easily accepted by clients (Pramudita & Muslihati, 2024). In Indonesia's multicultural

society, this approach is highly relevant, especially since existing counseling practices are often general and lack cultural considerations. Research shows that integrating local cultural values can strengthen the relationship between counselors and clients and increase trust in the counseling process (Pramudita & Muslihati, 2024; Hastuti et al., 2026). In South Sulawesi, Bugis-Makassar values such as *sipakatau, sipakalebbi,* and *sipakainge* have great potential to serve as the basis for more contextual and inclusive counseling services (Buana et al., 2025).

Combining an ethnocounseling approach with digital technology is a relevant strategy in addressing current counseling service challenges. Multicultural e-counseling services enable broader reach without compromising cultural sensitivity (Habibah, 2019). Previous research has shown that integrating cultural values into counseling can reduce stigma, strengthen self-identity, and improve individual psychosocial well-being (Juwanto et al., 2025).

However, there are still gaps that need to be addressed. Studies on ethnocounseling based on Bugis-Makassar cultural values are generally still conceptual and have not been widely tested in the context of applied counseling services. The results of research by Anggraeni, R. P. and Taniady, V. (2020) confirm that local Bugis values reflected in the principles of *sipakatau, sipakalebbi,* and *sipakainge* play an important role in supporting student character formation. However, the scope of this research has not gone beyond the realm of character education and has not examined its application in other contexts. Meanwhile, research by Aswar, A. et al. (2023) has formulated a concept of Bugis culture-based counseling that includes human nature, ideal and problematic personalities, and counselor criteria, but it is still limited to the conceptual level and has not been developed into a counseling service model that is applicable in educational settings. This gap indicates the need to develop a counseling model that is not only based on local cultural values, but also implementable in the practice of guidance and counseling services.

Based on these conditions, this study aims to explore the application of a digital ethnocounseling model based on Bugis-Makassar cultural values in guidance and counseling services and analyze its impact on improving student well-being. The research focuses on how local cultural values such as *sipakatau, sipakalebbi,* and *sipakainge* are integrated into digital ethnocounseling and their impact on students' psychological well-being.

The research questions (RQs) in this study are as follows:
RQ1: How does digital ethnocounseling improve student well-being?
RQ2: How are Bugis-Makassar cultural values (*sipakatau, sipakalebbi,* and *sipakainge'*) integrated into digital ethnocounseling to support improved student well-being?

## Method

This study used a qualitative approach with a systematic literature review (SLR) design to examine the implementation of culturally based digital ethnocounseling in improving student well-being. A qualitative approach was chosen because it focuses on understanding meaning, interpreting phenomena, and synthesizing findings from relevant scientific sources (Aspers & Corte, 2021). SLR allows researchers to collect, critically assess, and integrate findings from various studies to systematically answer research questions (Page et al., 2021; Smela et al., 2023).

The literature selection process followed the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) guidelines, which include four stages: identification, screening, eligibility, and inclusion. In the identification stage, a literature search was conducted through the Google Scholar database and the Publish or Perish application with keywords ethnocounseling, digital ethnocounseling, digital counseling, *sipakatau, sipakalebbi, sipakainge,* cultural values, and student well-being, resulting in 200 articles. As shown in the PRISMA diagram, of the 200 identified articles, screening was carried out, leaving 120 articles. 88 articles were successfully retrieved for review, while 28 articles were inaccessible and 15 articles only had abstracts available. During the eligibility assessment stage, articles were thoroughly reviewed based on inclusion criteria (discussing digital counseling/cultural values/student well-being, published between 2019 and 2026, ISSN/accredited journal, full text) and exclusion criteria (opinion articles, irrelevant). This process resulted in 15 articles as the primary sources for the analysis.

The data collection technique used a documentation study with a literature analysis sheet containing the article's identity, objectives, methods, main findings, and topic relevance (Chand, 2025; Kayesa & Shung-king, 2021). The data were analyzed using thematic analysis (Ahmed et al., 2025) through three stages: organizing the data, grouping the findings, and drawing out the main results. The themes analyzed included the implementation of digital ethnocounseling, integration of local cultural values, the effectiveness of digital media, supporting and inhibiting factors, and their impact on student well-being.

Data validity was strengthened through source triangulation, which involved comparing, complementing, and integrating findings from various relevant articles (Gutierrez et al., 2025). All research procedures were designed systematically, transparently, and scientifically accountable (Page et al., 2021). This is expected to comprehensively explain the relationship between the implementation of culturally value-based digital ethnocounseling and improved student well-being and contribute to the development of adaptive, contextual, and culturally value-oriented counseling services.

## Results And Discussion

The following is a summary of the results of the literature study in table form containing information from various references that have been analyzed. This table summarizes 15 research titles, year of publication, authors, and the main results of each study related to the implementation of digital ethnocounseling, the integration of local cultural values (especially the values of *sipakatau, sipakalebbi, sipakainge* Bugis-Makassar), and their influence on improving student well-being in the digital era. The compilation of this table aims to provide a comparative overview of the approaches used, the focus of the findings, and the contribution of each study to the development of a more contextual, adaptive, and local wisdom-based digital ethnocounseling model towards improving student psychological well-being.

Based on the PRISMA selection flow in Figure 1, as many as 200 articles were successfully identified from the database, the following is the process of determining the manuscript for the literature review using the PRISMA method, the following is a picture of the Prisma Data Flow of the literature search process based on.

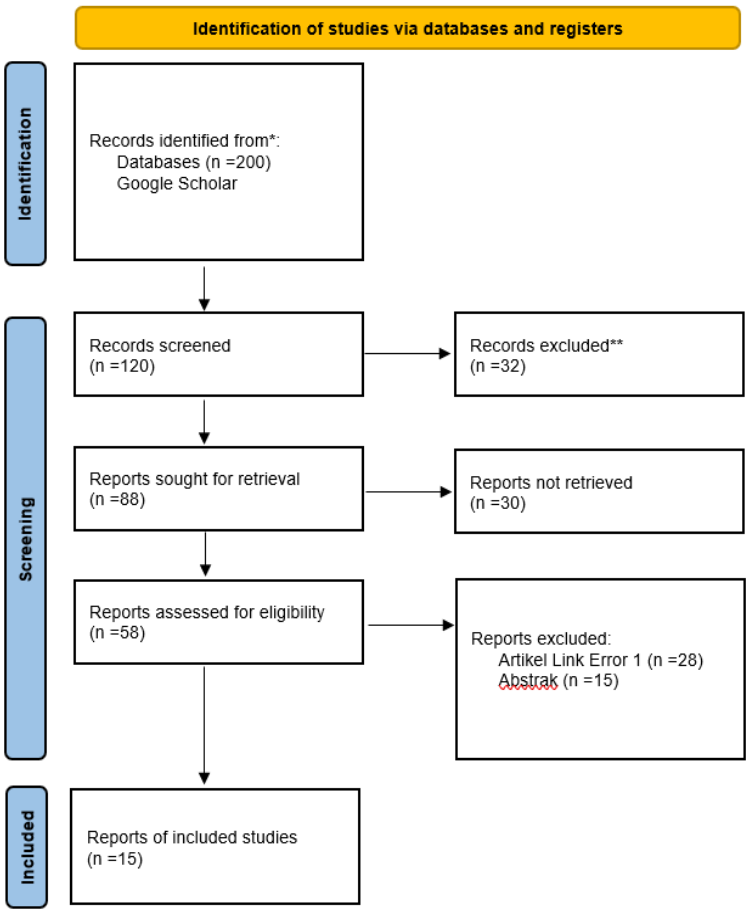



**Figure 1.** Data Prisma Flow of the literature search process based on

Based on a review of 15 articles summarized in Table 1, four main themes were found that strengthen the argument about the implementation of digital ethnocounseling based on cultural values in improving student well-being.

First, the Bugis-Makassar cultural values (*sipakatau, sipakalebbi, sipakainge*) have been proven to be a solid foundation for contextual and humanistic counseling practices. Research by Astinah et al. (2025) shows that the self-advocacy of guidance and counseling teachers at SMPN X Parepare was successful because they integrated these three values in communication and collaboration with all school stakeholders. A similar finding is reinforced by Prayogo et al. (2025) who stated that the 3S values are effective in preventing bullying by increasing awareness of mutual respect and reminders.

Furthermore, Aswar et al. (2023) through hermeneutics of Kajaolaliddong's thinking discovered the concept of human nature (*Ade', Bicara, Rapang, Wari*) and the criteria for an ideal counselor (*Ininnawa Deceng, Macca Mpinru, Macca Duppai Ada, Poada Ada Tongeng*) which serve as an ethical foundation for Bugis counselors.

**Table 1.** Title, Research, and Study Findings

| No | Article Title (Year) | Study Findings |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | School Counselor Self-Advocacy: The Role of Local Cultural Values of *Sipakatau, Sipakalebbi, and Sipakainge* (Astinah et al., 2025) | A qualitative study at SMPN X Parepare found that self-advocacy of guidance and counseling teachers based on the values of *sipakatau, sipakalebbi,* and *sipakainge* improved communication and cooperation between the principal, teachers, students, and parents so that guidance and counseling services could be implemented more inclusively, fairly, and effectively. |
| 2 | Classical Guidance Using the Problem-Based Learning Method on 3S Values to Prevent Student Bullying Behaviour (Prayogo et al., 2025) | A literature review proposes a collaboration between classical guidance and the PBL method based on the 3S values (*sipakatau, sipakalebbi, sipakainge*) to prevent bullying. The *sipakatau* value teaches mutual respect for dignity, *sipakalebbi* emphasizes appreciation, and *sipakainge* encourages reminding each other of kindness. |
| 3 | *Sipakatau*, *Sipakainge*, *Sipakalebbi*, *Siri Na Pace*: A Multicultural Counseling Model in Terminating Moral Degradation (Izramadhani et al., 2024) | A multicultural counseling model based on 4S (*sipakatau, sipakainge, sipakalebbi, siri na pacce*) was developed through R&D at SMK Negeri 1 Pangkep. A trial on 10 students showed a decrease in moral degradation from high to low category with the Wilcoxon test (Asymp. Sig. 0.007 < 0.05). |
| 4 | Internalization of Bugis Local Cultural Values (*Sipakatau, Sipakalebbi, and Sipakainge*): Efforts to Improve Character Education in the Digital Era (Anggraeni et al., 2020) | Internalizing Bugis cultural values, namely *sipakatau, sipakalebbi,* and *sipakainge*, is a crucial foundation for strengthening students' character amidst digital development. These three values foster the development of a young generation that upholds ethics, respects diversity, and is responsible. |
| 5 | *Pappaseng* Counseling: An Ethnoconseling Model Based on Bugis-Makassar Local Wisdom to Enhance Adolescent Psychological Well-Being (Latif et al., 2025) | The hypothetical Pappaseng Counseling model integrates the values of *acca* (wisdom), *lempu'* (honesty), *warani* (courage), and *getteng* (steadfastness) with the six dimensions of psychological well-being (Ryff). The counseling process goes through the stages of *Mappatabe'* to *Maccamming Kale* using folklore techniques (*pau-pau rikadong*) and *elong/warekkada* analysis. |
| 6 | Modernizing Mental Health: The Role, Ethics, and Competencies of Counseling in the Digital Age (Maola et al., 2025) | Tele-counseling, counseling apps, and AI interventions have been found to expand access to flexible mental health services, but they pose an ethical paradox: increased risks of privacy violations, algorithmic bias, and emotional disconnection. In adolescents, digital counseling is correlated with social media addiction, cyberbullying, and digital isolation. |

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|---|---|---|
| 7 | Concept of counseling for indigenous Bugis culture from Kajaolaliddong thought (Aswar et al., 2023) | The hermeneutic study of Kajaolaliddong's thoughts resulted in the concept of indigenous Bugis counseling which includes the nature of human beings (*Ade', Bicara, Rapang, Wari*), ideal personality (*Lempu', Acca'*), problematic personality (*Dena Talinge, Madongo,* etc.), as well as the criteria for an ideal counselor (*Ininnawa Deceng, Macca Mpinru, Macca Duppai Ada, Poada Ada Tongeng*). |
| 8 | The Relationship Between Local Cultural Values and Effective Counseling Techniques: A Literature Review (Hastuti et al., 2026) | Integrating local cultural values into counseling techniques has the potential to significantly increase the effectiveness of counseling services (active listening, empathic reflection, supportive communication), increase the effectiveness of interventions, build therapeutic alliances, reduce resistance, and increase client openness compared to generic approaches. |
| 9 | Innovative Digital-Based Guidance and Counseling Transformation to Strengthen Students' Mental Health Literacy (Wijayanto et al., 2026) | The implementation of a digital counseling service model through the "Heart and Screen Unite" training at SMK Plus Al Aitaam Bandung has been shown to improve counselors' competency in utilizing digital technology by an average of 35%. Furthermore, students' positive perceptions of mental health increased from 62% to 89%, accompanied by a decrease in stigma regarding access to counseling services. |
| 10 | Mental Health of College Students in the Digital Era: A Review of Clinical and Social Psychology Literature (Karyati & Julisawati, 2025) | Excessive social media use, cyberbullying, digital fatigue, and reduced social interaction increase the risk of stress, anxiety, and depression in college students. From a clinical psychology perspective, treatment involves early diagnosis, CBT, and online counseling services. Meanwhile, a social psychology perspective emphasizes the importance of social support and the establishment of healthy digital norms. However, the use of local cultural values as a basis for intervention remains understudied. |
| 11 | Online Counseling on Global Issues: Systematic Literature Review (Ifdil et al., 2025) | Demonstrating that e-counseling is effective in increasing accessibility of mental health services and addressing stigma, challenges include technological vulnerabilities (security and data privacy), limitations on interpersonal relationships due to the loss of non-verbal communication, and the need to adapt methods to cultural diversity. |
| 12 | Effectiveness of a Multicultural Counseling Approach with Local Cultural Integration in Addressing Psychosocial Problems of Children Facing Mental Health Stigma (Juwanto et al., 2025) | This study demonstrates that integrating local culture into counseling can reduce stigma, increase family and community support, strengthen children's self-identity, and improve psychosocial well-being. This approach is effective, relevant, and adaptive to Indonesia's cultural diversity. |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 13 | Multicultural E-Counseling in the Digital Era (Habibah, 2019) | Multicultural e-counseling (Econsticultural) combines digital technology with a multicultural approach. E-counseling expands access, facilitates communication, and reaches clients from diverse cultural backgrounds. The success of the service depends on the counselor's ability to understand the client's values, language, and cultural characteristics. |
| 14 | Integration of Luwu Local Wisdom with Family Counseling: A Literature Study on *Sipakatau, Sipakainge,* and *Sipakalebbi'* (Masdar & Kadir, 2025) | A literature study found that the values of *sipakatau* (humanizing each other), *sipakainge* (reminding each other), and *sipakalebbi* (respecting each other) can be integrated into family counseling. These three values foster open communication, mutual respect, and caring among family members, effectively resolve parent-child and husband-wife conflicts, and strengthen family resilience and harmony. |
| 15 | Enhancing University Students' Interpersonal Competence Through KIPAS Counseling Grounded in Bugis *Pappaseng* (Sudirman et al., 2025) | The KIPAS counseling model based on Bugis pappaseng (*lempu', getteng', siri' na pacce, reso* values) was developed with ADDIE and tested on 60 students. Results: significant improvement in five dimensions of interpersonal competence (effective communication, positive interaction, understanding self and others, appreciation and empathy, social solidarity) from an average score of 61.2 (moderate) to 81.3 (high), with $t = 14.27$ ($p < 0.001$) and Cohen's $d = 1.25$ (large effect). |

Second, the integration of local cultural values in counseling is not only conceptual but has been empirically proven effective. The 4S-based multicultural counseling model (*siri' na pace, sipakatau, sipakainge, and sipakalebbi*) developed by Izramadhani et al. (2024) successfully reduced adolescent moral degradation from high to low with statistical significance ($p < 0.05$). Similarly, the KIPAS model based on Bugis pappaseng tested by Sudirman et al. (2025) on 60 students showed a very significant increase in interpersonal competence ($t = 14.27$; $p < 0.001$; Cohen's $d = 1.25$). These findings align with the literature review by Hastuti et al. (2026) which concluded that the integration of local cultural values in counseling techniques (active listening, empathic reflection, supportive communication) significantly increases the effectiveness of interventions and reduces client resistance..

Third, digital counseling services (e-counseling) have been shown to expand access and reduce stigma, but face ethical and cultural challenges. Wijayanto et al. (2026) reported a 35% increase in digital counselor competency and a 62% increase in students' positive perceptions of mental health after implementing a digital counseling service model. However, Maola et al. (2025) and Ifdil et al. (2025) caution that online counseling is vulnerable to privacy violations, loss of non-verbal communication, and a lack of adaptation to local cultural contexts. These gaps are directly addressed by a digital ethnocounseling approach that integrates cultural values into digital platforms (Habibah, 2019)..

Fourth, the integration of cultural value-based ethnocounseling with digital platforms (digital ethnocounseling) produces a service model that is contextual, adaptive, and oriented towards improving student well-being. Juwanto et al. (2025) demonstrated that integrating local culture into multicultural counseling can reduce stigma, strengthen self-identity, and improve children's psychosocial well-being. Bahari et al. (2025) demonstrated that the values of *sipakatau, sipakainge,* and *sipakalebbi* can be integrated into family counseling to build open communication and harmony. Meanwhile, Latif et al. (2025) offered the Pappaseng Counseling hypothesis model, which systematically links the values of *acca, lempu', warani,* a*nd getteng* with the six dimensions of psychological well-being (Ryff). Karyati & Julisawati (2025) emphasized that mental health interventions in the digital era still lack a local culture-based approach a gap that digital ethnocounseling fills.

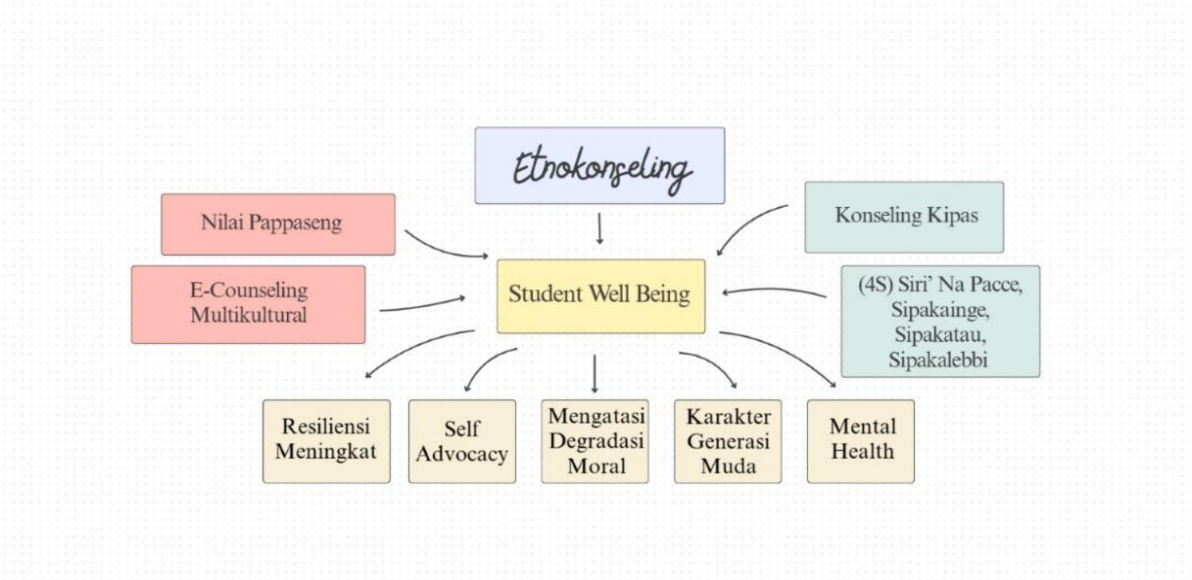



**Figure 2.** Conceptual Implementation of Digital Ethnocounseling Based on Bugis-Makassar Cultural Values

These findings demonstrate that accelerated educational transformation can be achieved through the optimization of digital technology while remaining grounded in local wisdom, as a strategic component of the journey towards Golden Indonesia 2045. Integrating Bugis-Makassar cultural values into digital counseling services not only addresses students' mental health challenges but also preserves the nation's cultural identity amidst globalization. Adaptive and contextual digital ethnocounseling services are a crucial pillar in developing superior, character-based, and globally competitive human resources..

## Conclusion

Based on the results and discussion described, it can be concluded that the implementation of digital ethnocounseling based on cultural values, particularly the values of *sipakatau, sipakalebbi,* and *sipakainge* from the Bugis-Makassar culture, has proven to have significant potential in improving student well-being in the digital era. These local cultural values not only serve as the foundation for contextual and humanistic counseling practices, but have also been empirically tested through various intervention models such as 3S-based multicultural counseling and the KIPAS model, which have shown a significant reduction in moral degradation and an increase in students' interpersonal competencies. On the other hand, digital counseling services (e-counseling) are able to expand access and reduce stigma towards mental health, but still face ethical and cultural challenges such as privacy violations and a lack of adaptation to local values. This gap is addressed through a digital ethnocounseling approach that integrates local wisdom into digital platforms, resulting in services that are more adaptive, inclusive, and oriented towards students' psychological well-being. Thus, accelerating educational transformation through optimizing digital technology while remaining grounded in local wisdom is a crucial strategy toward Golden Indonesia 2045, as it not only addresses adolescent mental health challenges but also preserves the nation's cultural identity while developing superior, character-driven, and globally competitive human resources. This study recommends the need for further development and testing of a systematically integrated digital ethnocounseling model across various school contexts in Indonesia.

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