

FACEBOOK AND RURAL COMMUNITIES: AN ANALYSIS OF SOCIAL COMPARISON AND OVERSHARING THROUGH ERVING GOFFMAN DRAMATURGICAL PERSPECTIVE

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Abstrak

Penelitian ini pada dasarnya berfokus pada analisis social comparison dan oversharing masyarakat pedesaan pengguna facebook. Jenis penelitian yang digunakan adalah *field research* yang bersifat deskriptif kualitatif dengan pendekatan etnografi visual. Analisis data yang digunakan adalah model analisis data interaktif dan dianalisis melalui perspektif dramaturgi Erving Goffman. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa social comparison dan oversharing adalah manifestasi dari upaya masyarakat pedesaan pengguna facebook untuk mengontrol citra diri mereka di front stage. Social comparison berfokus pada upaya mempertahankan status melalui perbandingan, oversharing berfokus pada upaya untuk membangun autentisitas melalui pengungkapan back stage. Akan tetapi, kedua perilaku ini seringkali dapat menimbulkan konflik. Data menunjukkan bahwa mayoritas postingan (76.4%) pengguna facebook berisiko sedang-berat. Atau dalam makna lain, data ini mencerminkan kurangnya kesadaran akan batas antara performans publik dan kehidupan pribadi. Selain itu, penelitian ini memberikan rekomendasi atas implikasi yang ada, yakni; a) masyarakat pedesaan perlu memahami dan menerapkan literasi digital untuk memahami risiko privasi; b) masyarakat pedesaan perlu memahami dan menggunakan fitur privasi media sosial; c) masyarakat pedesaan perlu membedakan antara informasi yang pantas dibagikan dan informasi yang sensitif. Singkatnya, penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa perilaku sosial masyarakat pedesaan di media sosial facebook adalah pertunjukkan kompleks yang membutuhkan keseimbangan antara impresi public dan privasi pribadi.

Kata kunci: facebook; oversharing; teori dramaturgi; social comparison

Abstract

This study essentially focuses on analyzing social comparison and oversharing among rural Facebook users. The type of research used is descriptive qualitative field research with a visual ethnography approach. Data analysis used an interactive data analysis model and was analyzed through Erving Goffman's dramaturgical perspective. The results of the study indicate that social comparison and oversharing are manifestations of rural Facebook users' efforts to control their self-image on the front stage. Social comparison focuses on maintaining status through comparison, while oversharing focuses on building authenticity through backstage disclosure. However, these two behaviors can often lead to conflict. The data shows that the majority of posts (76.4%) of Facebook users are at moderate-to-severe risk. Or in other words, this data reflects a lack of awareness of the boundaries between public performance and private life. In addition, this study provides recommendations on existing implications, namely: a) rural communities need to understand and apply digital literacy to understand privacy risks; b) rural communities need to understand and use social media privacy features; c) rural communities need to distinguish between information that is appropriate to share and sensitive information. In short, this study shows that the social behavior of rural communities on Facebook social media is a complex performance that requires a balance between public impressions and personal privacy.

Keywords: facebook; oversharing; dramaturgical theory; social comparasion

INTRODUCTION

With the rapid development of technology and information, social media has become extremely popular and widely used by the public. These platforms are often used for interaction and communication, earning additional income, marketing and business, sharing and disseminating information, expressing opinions and social criticism, and even providing education and learning. However, beyond all this, social media has also become a new platform that has given rise to diverse behaviors. Two of these behaviors are referred to as social comparison and oversharing (Sun et al., 2025). We see this massively on social media, especially among rural communities who actively use Facebook. Social comparison and oversharing have different impacts on urban and rural communities. In urban communities, social comparison is more common in aspirational aspects such as careers, luxurious lifestyles, travel, and idealistic physical appearance (Shinan & Garcia, 2025). While oversharing can be a tool for personal branding or seeking validation from a broad and anonymous audience, it can also be a reflection of stress and mental exhaustion in society (Vogel & Rose, 2016).

In contrast, oversharing and social comparison among rural communities are much more personal and direct (Wang & Wang, 2021). Social comparison occurs between neighbors, siblings, or close relatives about tangible things like a child's success, the possession of a new item, or the family's economic status. Meanwhile, oversharing, which frequently occurs on Facebook, is not only related to venting but can also trigger real social conflict (Akhtar, 2020). Thus, the impact is more concrete and threatens established social structures. In short, these two behaviors can essentially be affiliated into a single component that has serious consequences for the mental health and social relationships of rural communities.

Social comparison and oversharing are behaviors widely considered detrimental to rural communities, especially those actively using Facebook. These behaviors can have serious negative consequences, such as triggering stress and depression, *cyberbullying*, envy, and jealousy, potentially leading to mental health problems (Carraturo et al., 2023). Low self-esteem, triggers negative impacts on careers, triggers arguments, results in loss of privacy, threatens personal security from the crimes of others, and can trigger the loss of self-respect and self-image, and can even be a trigger for the breakdown of relationships between people (Swari & Tobing, 2024).

Social comparison is the behavior of comparing oneself with others driven by inner desires. As stated by Festinger, when an individual is in an uncertain environment, this inner drive will encourage the individual to compare himself with others in certain aspects to increase his control over his external environment (Xu & Li, 2024). Social comparison, on the other hand, is said to be a fundamental psychological process, and is divided into two main types: upward social comparison and downward social comparison. Upward social comparison involves comparing oneself with individuals who are considered better in certain aspects, which can motivate self-improvement but can lead to feelings of inadequacy. Conversely, downward social comparison involves comparing oneself with individuals who are considered worse than oneself, and can increase self-esteem and provide a sense of relief or superiority (Tian et al., 2025).

Meanwhile, oversharing is generally understood as the behavior of providing personal information that is done too often, or in another sense, it is said to be an act of providing excessive personal information to a large audience (Brammer et al., 2022). Rosa (2022) calls it a condition where individuals are unable to limit themselves when providing personal

information to the public, both online and offline. Pawestri (2024) said this behavior is based on several factors including the desire to get attention or *attention seeking*, feelings of loneliness, lack of awareness of *personal boundaries*, thirst for praise or validation, and addiction to social media. In addition, oversharing behavior is also based on the desire to be the center of attention of others (Aisy et al., 2023). The inability to set boundaries, past trauma, and the desire to satisfy others (Aura, 2023).

Given this, we certainly need an appropriate method and approach to address this behavior. However, before we discuss this, we first need to understand the social comparison and oversharing behavior of rural communities on Facebook, the motives for this behavior, and its implications for the community itself. This is crucial to identify more appropriate methods and approaches based on the context and situation of the problem. Based on this, this study focuses on analyzing social comparison and oversharing among rural Facebook users.

METHOD

The type of research used is descriptive qualitative *field research* (Creswell, 2016) with a visual ethnography approach (Hine, 2000). This is because this type of research and approach will be used to observe, investigate, and analyze social comparison and oversharing in rural communities on Facebook. The primary data used by researchers in this study include 100 posts in Facebook social media users in the villages of Beleka, Beleke Daye, and Beleke Lebe Sane. This primary data, consisting of 100 posts, as sorted based on oversharing and social comparison categories to be used as analysis data. Secondary data used by researchers in this study comes from journal articles, news, and books related to social comparison and oversharing that occurs on Facebook. Data collection used is non-participant observation (Sugiyono, 2018) and literature study (Moleong, 2011). The data analysis used is an interactive data analysis model (Citra, 2020) and analyzed through Erving Goffman's dramaturgical perspective (Mulyana, 2003). So that later, researchers can produce accurate and objective research results based on the focus of this research.

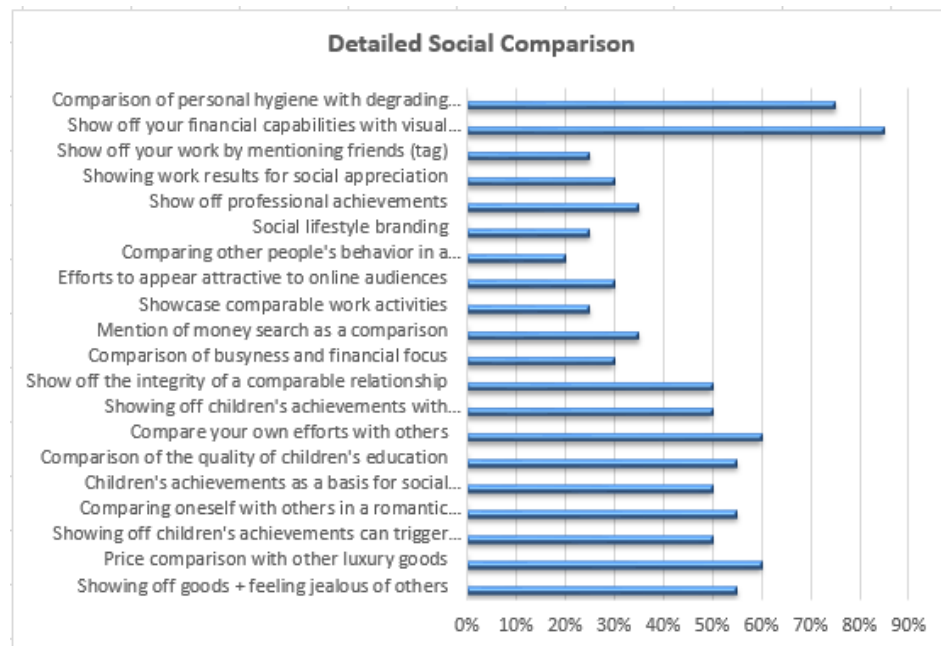
RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The Overview of Social Comparison and Oversharing

Behavior is a series of activities or activities of living organisms (humans) that can be seen in our daily lives (Tu'u, 2004). Behavior is also divided into three areas, namely; First; cognitive area, or behavioral area related to reasoning process activities and brain activities in developing rational abilities which include the ability to recognize and remember *knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation*; Second; affective area, or behavioral area related to emotional or feeling abilities which include the ability to *receive, be responsive, value, organize, and characterize*; Third; psychomotor, or the area of behavior related to physical movement which includes the ability to imitate, readiness, guided responses, mechanisms, complex apparent responses, adaptation, and creation (Notoatmodjo, 2007).

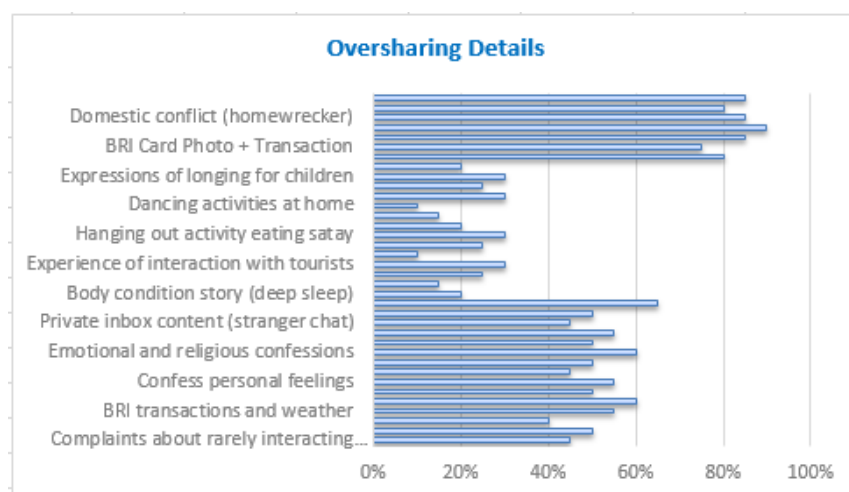
Behavior is divided into two parts according to the background of its emergence: behavior that is carried out consciously and intentionally, and behavior that is carried out unconsciously or unintentionally. Normatively, it is divided into good or praiseworthy behavior (*al-hasanah* or *al-mahmudah*), and bad or reprehensible behavior or (*as-sayyiah* or *al-madzmumah*). Meanwhile, in the context of types and levels, it consists of five levels; material (an-organic), plant-based (vegetative), animal-based (animal behavior), behavior that is commonly carried

out by humans (human behavior), and behavior that is commonly carried out by angels (religious behavior) (Jauhari, 2016).



Graphic 1. Detailed Social Comarasion

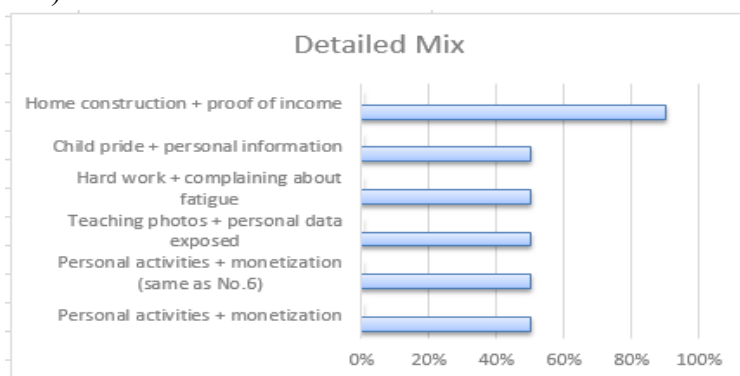
The social comparison behavior of rural communities on Facebook social media consists of 20 posts with the most sub-categories related to children's achievements (3 posts), luxury goods (2 posts), and professional activities (3 posts). Meanwhile, related to the distribution of the severity of the behavior, it is depicted in the following percentage results; Mild severity consists of 9 posts/45% with the category of non-sensitive comparison posts such as professional activities (25%) and academic achievements (35%); Moderate severity consists of 9 posts/45% with the category of posts showing off achievements/implicit wealth such as expensive tools equivalent to jeeps (60%), children's pride at carnivals (50%); Severe severity consists of 2 posts/10% with the category of extreme show-off posts with negative impacts such as building a house + proof of income (85%), and negative comments about success (75%).



Graphic 2. Oversharing Details

The oversharing behavior of rural communities on Facebook social media consists of 36 posts, or in other words, oversharing behavior is more dominant compared to social comparison

behavior which amounts to 20 posts. The most sub-categories in this behavior are related to emotional venting (a total of 7 posts), family problems (a total of 5 posts), and financial information (a total of 3 posts). Meanwhile, related to the distribution of the severity of the behavior, it is depicted in the following percentage results; Mild severity consists of 14 posts/38.9% with daily post categories such as school activities (15%), and photos of children with expressions of affection (40%); Moderate severity consists of 17 posts/47.2% with post categories sharing moderate emotions/privacy such as emotional venting (45-65%), and financial transactions (55%); Severe severity consists of 5 posts/13.9% with post categories of sensitive data such as family problems + suicidal thoughts (90%), and photos of account cards + transactions (75%).



Graphic 3. Detailed Mix

In addition to the two behaviors above, researchers also found a description of comparashare behavior. A term we use to refer to the combined behavior of social comparison and oversharing depicted behind the posts of rural communities on Facebook social media. Based on the existing data, the comparashare behavior consists of 6 posts with 2 sub-categories; General pattern; daily activities + finances (totaling 3 posts), and achievements + personal data (totaling 2 posts). Meanwhile, related to the distribution of the severity of the behavior, it is depicted in the following percentage results: Moderate severity consists of 5 posts/83.3% with a moderate combined risk post category such as hard work + venting fatigue (50%); Severe severity consists of 1 post/16.7% with a heavy combination post category of social comparison of abilities + oversharing financial details.

Through the data description above, in this context we conclude that researchers not only found a description of social comparison and oversharing behavior alone. However, we also found a description of comparashare, a term we use to refer to the combined behavior of social comparison and oversharing depicted in rural community posts on Facebook social media. In addition, we also concluded that the proportion of severity of these three categories is depicted as follows: Oversharing category with a mild severity level of 38.9%, moderate 47.2%, and severe 13.9%; Social comparison category with a mild severity level of 45%, moderate 45%, and severe 10%; Comparashare category with a mild level of 0%, moderate 83%, and severe severity recorded 16.7%.

Analysis of Behavioral Motives through Erving Goffman's Dramaturgical Perspective

Behavior is one of the products that can be produced through social interaction. As stated by Albert Bandura in his theory known as Social Learning Theory (Putri et al., 2024). Moreno in his book says; this can occur based on three fundamental concepts of Social Learning Theory, or what we know as Triadic Reciprocal Causation which consists of Personal Determinants, Behavioral Determinants, and Environmental Determinants (Moreno, 2010). Through this, it

can be understood that the social comparison and oversharing behavior of rural communities on Facebook social media is essentially an accumulation of social learning activities that occur in everyday life, both online and offline.

The motives of social comparison and oversharing in this context are seen through community posts, and analyzed using Erving Goffman's dramaturgy theory (Mulyana, 2019). A theory that states that social interaction is essentially a theatrical performance, where each individual plays the role of an "actor" who shows an "adjusted self-image" to the audience to maintain a positive impression (Goffman, 1959). The principles of this theory consist of three keys (Septian & Febriana, 2025). Front stage, or the principle that says that when an individual is in front of an audience, the individual will present themselves in a way that is in accordance with social expectations; Back stage, or the principle that says that when an individual is in a private environment, the individual will be freer to be himself without social pressure; Impression management, or the principle that says that individuals have the freedom to form the identity they want to project to others.

In the context of social media, this theory can be interpreted as meaning that social media users are actors who interact with a broad audience. Social comparison behavior can be understood as impression management (Mansell & Ang, 2015). While the actor's (rural community) posts on social media are part of the front stage principle, and the private activities contained in the posts (rural community) are part of the back stage. Social comparison in this context is behavior carried out to compare oneself with others in aspects to assess achievements, possessions, or lifestyle. As this is also depicted in the graph of the severity of social comparison.

The main motives for social comparison consist of two: gaining social validation and prestige and forming an identity through differences, as explained below;

a. Gaining Social Validation and Prestige

This behavioral motive can be interpreted as rural communities who use Facebook frequently posting achievements, such as "Children's Achievements," "Professional Activities," or "Luxury Items," to compare with others, as illustrated in posts by Facebook users with the initials N1, SHL1, and LL1. Taking a look at Goffman's perspective, (Schiffrin, 1996). This behavioral motive can be understood as an actor's (Facebook social media user's) attempt to control their self-narrative to ensure that others see a successful and competitive version of themselves. This is also in line with the research findings of Garber et al. (2018) and Piko et al. (2024) about social comparison based on Festinger's views (Xu & Li, 2024) that individuals basically have a natural urge to compare themselves with others in order to obtain an accurate self-evaluation.

b. Shaping Identity Through Difference

This behavioral motive can be interpreted as people comparing themselves with the aim of affirming their unique identity. For example, such as "Lifestyle Differences," as this is illustrated in data showing 45 % of social comparison posts are in the medium category. Or in other words, this data indicates that this behavior has become a routine pattern among Facebook users (rural communities). This social comparison behavior is carried out based on this motive because an individual's social identity is essentially very dependent on comparisons with others (DeWal et al., 2011). Therefore, social comparison becomes one way to strengthen the desired identity scenario for Facebook social media users.

Oversharing is basically a behavior of giving out excessive personal information (Brammer et al., 2022). Furthermore, oversharing can also be understood as a condition where individuals cannot limit themselves when providing personal information to the public, both online and

offline (Rosa, 2022). Oversharing in this context has two main motives: building intimacy and authenticity, and increasing engagement. This is explained as follows;

a. Building Intimacy and Authenticity

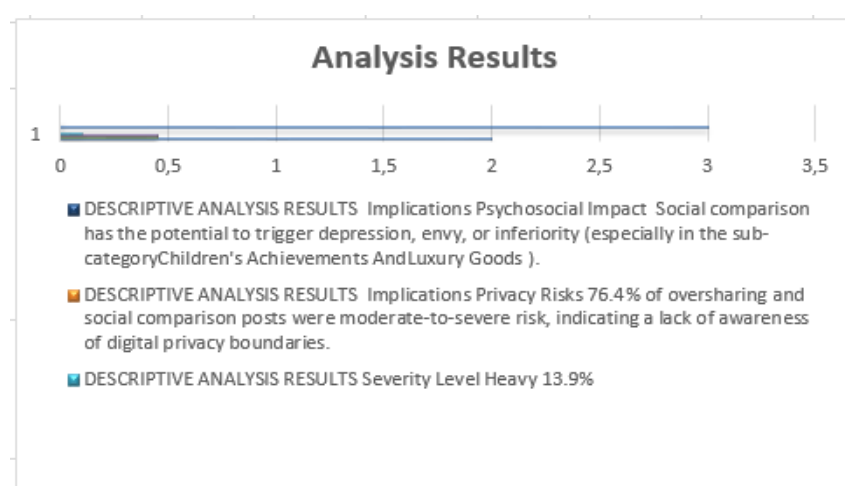
The motive for oversharing behavior in this context can be understood as a form of desire to show simplicity and openness so that the audience feels close and trusts him, such as BZ2's post that posted "Hard work + venting fatigue", or LC1's post that posted "Contents of personal inbox", AR3, and HA1 who posted "Household Problems". When viewed through Erving Goffman's dramaturgical theory (Schiffrin, 1996). The motive for oversharing in this context can be understood as an attempt by users to blur the boundaries between the front stage (public performance) and the back stage (private life). In other words, Facebook users want to see their authenticity. However, they are often unaware that overexposing personal information can have negative consequences.

b. Increase Engagement

In this context, the motive for oversharing can be understood as a desire to share personal stories to increase engagement on Facebook, such as comments and likes. This is illustrated by the data, which shows that 47.2% of oversharing posts fall into the moderate category. In short, these 47.2% of posts indicate that the motive for oversharing is to increase engagement.

These are some of the motives we can present in the context of social comparison and oversharing. We also analyzed the comparashare motive found in posts by rural communities on Facebook. Our analysis is based on Erving Goffman's dramaturgical theory (Schiffrin, 1996) shows that the motives of this behavior lead to efforts to maintain status in the public space (front stage), and to build authenticity and connection with the audience. In short, the main motives of social comparison among rural communities on Facebook social media consist of; motives to gain social validation and prestige, and to form identity through differences. The main motives of oversharing consist of; motives to build intimacy and authenticity, and to increase engagement. Meanwhile, the motives of comparashare consist of; motives to maintain status in the public space, and to build authenticity and connection with the audience.

The Overview of Implications and Recommendations



Graphic 4. Analysis Results

The implications, in general, are the impacts resulting from an individual's behavior. Social comparison and oversharing are part of that behavior itself. Because, essentially, behavior is the concrete manifestation of an action or conduct (Mustafa, 2011). Social comparison as a

behavior is divided into two main types: upward social comparison and downward social comparison. Upward social comparison, which is comparing oneself to individuals who are considered better in certain aspects, can motivate self-improvement but can lead to feelings of inadequacy. Conversely, downward social comparison, which is comparing oneself to individuals who are considered worse than oneself, can increase self-esteem and provide a sense of relief or superiority (Tian et al., 2025). Meanwhile, oversharing is the behavior of providing excessive personal information to other people or to the public (Susilo et al., 2025).

Social comparison in this context refers to the first type of social (Tian et al., 2025) and has the potential to negatively impact the psychological aspects of rural Facebook users. For example, it can trigger depression, envy, and feelings of inferiority, especially in the subcategories of Children's Achievements and Luxury Goods. Oversharing in this context can lead to increased privacy risks, such as data misuse, cyberbullying, and fraud. This is also in line with the results of the analysis found on comparashare, which shows that this behavior can significantly increase privacy risks. Based on these implications, there are several recommendations that we can put forward, namely; a) rural Facebook users need to understand and apply digital literacy to understand privacy risks; b) rural Facebook users need to understand and use social media privacy features; c) rural communities also need to distinguish between information that is to be shared and sensitive information.

CONCLUSION

Based on existing data and Erving Goffman's dramaturgical theory as one of the analytical models used in this study, social comparison and oversharing are manifestations of efforts by rural Facebook users to control their self-image on the front stage. Social comparison focuses on maintaining status through comparison, while oversharing focuses on building authenticity through backstage disclosure. However, these two behaviors can often lead to conflict: users want to appear successful and authentic, but unknowingly expose their privacy at risk. The data shows that the majority of posts (76.4%) by rural Facebook users are moderate to severe risk, or in other words, this data reflects a lack of awareness of the boundaries between public performance and private life.

Therefore, rural Facebook users need to be more aware of how their behavior in the front stage (public space) can affect the back stage (privacy) and psychological well-being. Meanwhile, regarding the recommendations that we can propose, namely; a) rural communities need to understand and apply digital literacy to understand privacy risks; b) rural communities need to understand and use social media privacy features; c) rural communities need to distinguish between information that is appropriate to share and sensitive information. In short, this study shows that the social behavior of rural communities on the Facebook social media platform is a complex performance that requires a balance between public impressions and personal privacy.

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