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THE IMPACT OF EMPLOYEE WELFARE SUSTAINABILITY TOWARDS IMPROVING LABOUR EFFICIENCY IN THE SELECTED TERTIARY INSTITUTIONSIN THE SOUTH EAST, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

Employee welfare programmes is a financial and non-financial reward offers by many organisations. It entails everything form of services, facilities and benefits that are provided or done by an employer towards the comfort and improvement of employees. It is a corporate attitude or commitment reflected in the expressed care for employees at all levels, underpinning their work and the environment in which it is performed. It is undertaken in order to motivate employees and raise the productivity levels by using training and development, employee referral scheme, substantive and progressive plan record to improve employee performance in the organisation. They are capable of attracting and holding employees, higher efficiency, boost the morale of employees, build a competitive edge to get timely result, assisting employees in meeting their needs, helping in lowering unit cost of production, improving morale, increasing employee security and blunting the sharp edges of management. An employee who feels appreciated will be more fulfilled, satisfied and more productive. It is with this view that the writers undertake a study of the Impact of Employee Welfare Sustainability towards improving labour efficiency in selected Tertiary Institution in the South East, Nigeria.

KEYWORDS: Efficiency, Employee Welfare, Labour, Tertiary Istitution, Sustainability

1. INTRODUCTION

One of the basic functions of management is to determine how employees can be motivated to high productivity by satisfying their needs. This assumption presupposes that every worker has some internal urges which propel him in specific directions towards the realization of his entire life's ambition. According to Anikpo (2014) the direction of those urges or needs differs from one employee to another. However, certain uniform clusters of needs have been very easy to determine and when these needs are being provided, it will help to enhance productivity in the public sector.According to Nzelibe and Moruku (1990, 2010) the assumption that Nigeria workers are motivated to perform more by increased in wages and other salary supplement such as pay leaves, fees for health care programme, bonuses, pension and gratuity plans and insurance have received some support. Consequently, both Labour Unions and Nigeria government, fringe and welfare benefits have become common supplement to wages in Nigeria establishment. Agu (2008) on his part paints a clear picture of the impact and relevance of employee welfare when he contended thus; it would be unreasonable to support that people would continue to find satisfaction in cooperation in company affairs. If no reciprocal interest is shown in their individual needs and problems.

Many scholars argue that there exists somewhat a kind of relationship between labour productivity and employee welfare benefits and services. For instance, Onitiri (1983) opines that poor standards of living, bad health, lack of education, bad housing, poor transportation to and fro work, bad conditions in the work place reduce workers' productivity and which culminate to low productivity and in turn reduces the capacity of the society to improve working conditions, most especially housing, transportation, food and health facilities which could the other way round substantially improve the workers productivity. The increased concern for labour productivity on the part of union and management is hinged on three factors. The first, according to Aderinto (1981) is the awareness that labour welfare cannot increase beyond the capacity generated by a given economy. Consequently, how much union can increase the welfare of their members depends largely upon the resources generated by the productivity of total work force.

Secondly, the age-old tradition that productivity issue is an exclusive discretion of management is fast fading out. This is so because of the widespread adoption of the principle of labour participation in management at the enterprise levels. The third reason is the labour increasing awareness of its social responsibility not only to its employer, but also to its consumer – user of labour output. In Nigeria, the agitation for the fulfillment of employee needs have culminated in many service dispute from the general strike of 1945, through the sheeting of coal miner at Enugu in 1949, the deck employee strike of 1964, the minimum wages' strike of 2013 and the very recent IPPS wages' strike of 2020. There is no doubt that sound and equitable administered progrmames of staff welfare programmes is an important and integral part of well balance public services relations. Such welfare programmes has the advantage of providing needed production by employees, improving morale, helping to give a sense of loyalty and pride which adding to the company's reputation in the community as a good place of work and will attract desirable applicants and provide an incentives for quality performance on the job. Employee welfare entails everything from services, facilities and benefits that are provided or done by an employer for the advantage or comfort of an employee. It is undertaken in order to motivate employees and raise the productivity levels. In most cases, employee welfare comes in monetary form, but it doesn't always bend that way. (Agba, Chukwurah, Achimugu and Agboni-ata 2012).

The motive of this study is to review the essence of the Impact of Employee Welfare Sustainability towards improving Labour Efficiency in selected Tertiary Institution in the South East, Nigeria.This welfare program will help to motivate the employees for better job performance and also to reduce employer and employees crisis. By so doing, there will be improvement in productivity and performance. Staff welfare programmes are issues which every employer or organization must handle properly. No organization can function effectively without a productive staff and the staff can be productive when they receive motivational incentives. These incentives help in boosting their morale and motivate them to put in their best for the actualization of the goal of the organization In most tertiary institutions especially the South East geo-political zone staff were observed to be less dedicated to work and this is as a result of lack of motivational incentives from management. This invariably results to low productivity.

1.1 Objectives of the study

- Determine the effect of Labour efficiency towards the sustainability of employee welfare.
- To ascertain the nature of relationship between employee welfare and labour efficiency

1.2 Research questions

- How has Labour efficiency affected the sustainability of employee welfare?
- Is there any positive relationship between Employee Welfare and Labour Efficiency?

1.3 Hypotheses

- Labour Efficiency has significant effect towards the sustainability of Employee welfare.
- There is a significantly positive relationship between Employee welfare and Labour efficiency

2. CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATIONS

2.1 Welfar Programme

Employee welfare is defined as efforts to make life worth living for workman. Employee welfare can also be seen in a comprehensive term the various benefits and facilities offered to employees and the employer. Those generous fringe benefit provided by the employer makes life worth living for employees. According to Armstrong (2008) it refers to items or total package offered to employee over and above salary which, increase their wealth and well-being at some cost to the employer. The very logic behind providing welfare scheme is to make or create efficient, healthy, loyal and satisfied labour for the organization. The purpose of providing such facilities is to make their work life better and also to raise their standard of living. According to Nzelibe (2011) sees it as an additional compensation given to employees as a reward for organizational membership. Fresh and Seaward (1977) view correspond with the above when they said that it is something of value, apart from agreed regular monetary payment of salaries and wages given to employees. However, a little distinction has been made between welfare benefit and welfare service. Benefits are used when direct monetary compensation occurs to the individual worker like pension, leave pay and salary advance. On the other hand, services denote no direct and indispensible identifiable monetary benefits. For instance the provisions of toilet, homes, staff club, recreation facilities and cars.

In all, the words of Nzelibe and Moruku (2010) benefits and service represent a tangible gain to employees in form of monetary or non-monetary reward. Organizations provide welfare facilities to their employees to keep their motivation at high level. Welfare programmes or schemes can be classified into statutory and non-statutory welfare

schemes. The schemes are compulsory and are provided by an organization as compliance to the laws governing employee health and safety. The non-statutory differs from organization to organizations.

2.2 Employee welfare policies

Employee welfare policies play an important role in getting workers to put in their best in the services. Also it is recognized that people are the pivot on which organization depends on for effective mobilization of the efforts of every individuals in that organization. According to William and Judith (2015) motivation is the intensions of achieving a goal and is a much complex human activity. While a drive is often considered as an innate mechanism to attain a goal or satisfy need, in this view, human derives services to satisfy biological needs such as hunger. There exist satisfactory elements which motivate the workforce to work hard and help to achieve increase in performance. The needs are as follows: -

2.2.1 Fairs wages for work done

A certain reward is needed for a particular work done by an employee. When the production of goods and services increases, may be due to additional work hour, they also demand a reward towards the level of performance they put in thereof, when production increases, employee will also like their salaries to be increased as well as to cover up the gap that exist.

2.2.2 Job and economic security

Employees demands that their security be increased. The more permanent the workers perceive their work, the more their strong relationship with the job. In fact, Kuhnert (2011) found that there is strong relationship between perceived job security and health. The more permanent the workers are not minding what their position was, the greater their physical and mental well being. The assurance of job tenure and security motivates workers a great deal.

2.2.3 Administration of wages and salaries

The need to satisfy the basic needs is very relevant in developing countries especially Nigeria of this time. This is why wages and salaries with a competitively character have a large motivational element in Nigeria's organization. Wages and salaries are the best working condition employee could get exactly when the job is done. Osuala (2009) sees it as a direct reward in currency term, equipment of the employee commitment paid at a certain mature period**.**

2.3 Employee welfare program and productivity

Employee welfare program is a major or should be a major concern of employers. Prior to the labour union movements of the early 20th century, employers cared little about employee welfare program and instead thought of employee labour as something to be bought at the lowest price possible.According to Adebayo (2014) employees' welfare could be seen as the act of directing an individual behavour toward a particular end through the manipulation of incentives. Implicit in this definition is the fact that every employee has a particular need which should be satisfied. These needs are satisfied through the manipulation of incentives that have the capacity of including the employee behavour. The satisfactory of these needs affects the employee behavour in a predictable way.

Welfare programmes is a set of forces that initiate behavours and determine its form, direction, intensity and duration. The above definition of Ivancevich (1994) is in line with the view of Abbah (2014) and Ocheni, Atakpa and Nwankwo (2012) who asserted that all their forces within a person that affect his or her duration can be seen as a motivation. Thus, this welfare programmes motivates employees and as a result of this increases productivity. This therefore follows that motivated employees are willing to exert a particular level of efforts (intensity), for a certain amount of time (persistence) towards a particular goal (direction). Nwankwo, Ocheni and Atakpa (2013) conserved employee welfare as the merging force that induces or competes and maintain behavour. The important of this definition is that human behavour is motivated. This means that for an organization to achieve its goals and gets the best out of the employee; such organization must induce or motivate the employee. Cole (2002) conceived welfare as a motivational action which stimulates employee toward a deserved outcome. This definition is important in contemporary organization especially in the field of personnel management because it shows the relevance of motivational incentive vis-à-vis the achievement of organizational goal. In other words, a motivated behavour is directed towards the achievement of goals which is more often than not an improved output (productivity). Also, Nwachukwu (2004) goes further to add that welfare program is important to the organization and employee from the employer's point of view. It is anticipated that a good employee service programs will induce them to work hard and improve general employee morale. This service should be competitive in order to attract and retain quality employee. Furthermore, Mc Gregory (1960) assumes that the behavour of people is strongly influenced by their belief and as such he concluded that most managers are the theory X who assumes that employees are lazy and to be coaxed and naturally would not work but through his history theory Y

compliment theory X Mc Gregory (2000) is of the opinion that human begins needs to be motivated to attract them to the level of active and this process is called the reward system.

According to Ejiofor (1986) elaborated on the importance of working condition in an organization to include the following: -

- It helps to motivates employees to their higher performance
- It has helped to retain good employees over an extend period of time.
- It is capable of attracting personnel in a firm
- It has helped the firm to grow faster

enhanced performance level nowadays, most organization who are profit oriented and faced with competitions have adopted working conditions measures as part of their responsibility towards their employee bearing in mind the positive effect it has on the employee performance.

2.4 Employee productivity

The importance of productivity in an organization can hardly be over stated. Organizations spend millions of naira every year in order to recruit employee suited for their organization. These are people who are expected to produce according to or exceed predetermined standards. Nwachukwu (1998) defined productivity as the output resulting from a given resources input at a given time. Implicit in this definition is the fact that productivity of an employee can be measured using three (3) major variables.

- Output
- Resources committed
- Time

The encyclopedia of management defined employee productivity as the measure of how resources are managed to accomplish timely objective as stated in terms of quality. This definition connotes that of Nwachukwu (2004) but goes ahead to say that the measurement of productivity should not only be states based on output-input-time models, but should also be measured in terms of quality of the output. It is an index that measure output in relation to input. The input includes both the resources and the inducement that spur the employee into action. It is in view of the above that many scholars have asserted the motivation and productivity are two inseparables concepts. So important is the concept of motivation and efficiency that we cannot talk about employee productivity without necessary references to motivation. It is important to justify the interplay of motivation and productivity that Mc Shan and Van Glinow (2009) highlighted that:

"Motivation is of the key ingredients in employee performance and productivity. Even when people have clear work objectives, the right skill and a supportive work environment they won't get the job done without sufficient motivation to achieve those objectives. In their work Dehardt, R. B. and Denhart. J.U. (2009) post that party on motivation. They argued that a person must already pose or be able to learn right mix of skills and abilities to do a job and must be motivated to do job well. The implicit of their argument is that an employee can necessarily do job without motivation, but that with little incentives, the job will be well done. In his view, Mullins (2004) observed that people's behavours are determined by what motivated them. Their performance is a product of both ability level and motivation. He argued that motivated people take more pride in their jobs and work better. In his writing Nwachukwu (2006, 2009) was of the view that motivation can have an effect on the output of one's business and concern both quality on the quantity. Nwachukwu's position also confirms the internal psychological process whose presence or absence is interred from observed performance. The above statement suggests that motivation is a precondition for improved performance. Keltner et al (2009) however argued that motivation is not the major factor for improved employee productivity. To him although motivation is a necessary contribution for job performance, it is not only one". In the sharp contract to Kreitner's view (2002), Mullins (2004) opined that what is clearly evident is that if the managers are to improve the work of the organization, attention must be given to the level of motivation of its employee. The managers must also encourage staff to direct their effort (their driving force) towards the successful attainment of the goals of the organization.

2.5 The Impact of Employee Welfare Sustainability towards improving Labour Efficiency in selected Tertiary Institution in the South East, Nigeria

Many scholars argue that there exists somewhat a kind of relationship between labour productivity and employee welfare benefits and services. For instance, Onitiri (1983) opines that poor standards of living, bad health, lack of education, bad housing, poor transportation to and fro work, bad conditions in the work place reduce workers' productivity, low productivity and in turn reduces the capacity of the society to improve working conditions, most

especially housing, transportation, food and health facilities could substantially improve the workers productivity.The increased concern for labour productivity on the part of union and management is hinged on three factors. The first, according to Aderinto (1981) is the awareness that labour welfare cannot increase beyond the capacity generated by a given economy. Consequently, how much union can increase the welfare of their members depends largely upon the resources generated by the productivity of total work force. Secondly, the age old traditional that productivity issue is an exclusive discretion of management is fast fading out. This is so because of the widespread adoption of the principle of labour participation in management at the enterprise levels. The third reason is the labour increasing awareness of its social responsibility not only to its employees, but also to its consumer – user of labour output. Furthermore, Yesufu (1984) and Ejiofor (1986) argue that employee welfare benefits and services are capable of attracting and retaining employees, assisting employees in meeting their needs after helping in lowering unit cost of production, improving morale, increasing employee security and blunting those sharp edges of managerial autocracy. All these, according to these scholars, have a positive effect on labour motivation and productivity.

Relating labour productivity to welfare benefits, in the study carried out by the Kilby (1969) it was found out that there was relative efficacy of incentive payment schemes in inducing increased labour productivity. The study shows that Nigerian workers employed in places where the management made use of an incentive based payment system, are as productive as workers elsewhere. Similarly, Unanka (2008) believes that a worker will put in more effort and produce more goods and services if he knows that he will be paid more for his efforts. He quickly adds that this is more efficacious among junior workers in the industry. The limitation of this system is that purely financial view of productivity pays off for only a short while after which the effects of the traditional pay wear off and the workers return to their old pace of working. Consequently, one observes that a combination of welfare benefits and services could likely induce labour productivity. Thus, Oloko (1983) in a study carried out among workers in Muddy Water Company in Nigeria, using rank order correlation, finds out that welfare benefits such as pension scheme, payment of salaries and wages and welfare services like health facilities, working conditions, vacation and holiday practices motivate workers to exert effort to achieve higher productivity.

3. METHODOLOGY

The Southeast zone of Nigeria comprises the following 5 states; (Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu, and Imo) we are selecting only Federal Institutions in the five states.(ie, Federal University of Agriculture Umudike, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Alex Ekwueme University, Ndifu Alike, University of Nigeria Nsukka, Federal University of Technology, Owerri). The population of this study comprises the employees of these 5 Federal Institutions within southeast; these universities were selected based on their popularity within their locality. The population of the full-time staff in the selected universities was 7,319; hence a sample size technique was applied, with questionnaires distributed to a population of 541 employees, and 498 complete responses were retrieved. The research adopted descriptive survey research design. The method applied in gathering the data used for the answering the questions raised in this study was primary and secondary methods, the primary method was questionnaire, the questionnaire items was raised from the literature review, objective of the study, observations and perceived problems identified in the course of this research. The questionnaire format was constructed by the researcher under guidance of the experts' who subjected the instruments to practical validity.

In order to make provision for reliability of the questionnaire as a major instrument in this research study, the test-re-test reliability method was adopted by this study. The questionnaires were pre-tested by administering 30 copies of questionnaire to selected University Staff out of which 27 copies which is p=(0.9) was returned positive while 3 which is q= (0.1) was returned negative with 95% level of confidence this implies that the level of significance is 5% (0.05). The reliability of responses to the items of the instruments was analysed using Spearman Rank Order Correlation Coefficient aided with the use of SPSS 17. The reliability coefficient shows that the questionnaire yield 0.93, which indicates that the instrument is reliable. The secondary source comprises textbooks, government-publications, magazines, journals, seminars, articles/monographs, and internet which have relevant contributions to the study.

Table 1: The effect of Labour efficiency towards the sustainability of Employee welfare Descriptive Statistics

		Statistic	Std. Error	Bootstrapa			
				Bias	Std. Error	BCa 95% Confidence Interval	
						Lower	Upper
Sustainability /labour efficiency	N	498		0	0	.	.
	Range	1.00					
	Minimum	4.00					
	Maximum	5.00					
	Sum	2402.00					
	Mean	4.8233	.01711	-.0009	.0174	4.7896	4.8534
	Std. Deviation	.38180		.00004	.01491	.34792	.40894
	Variance	.146		.000	.011	.121	.167
Employee welfare	N	498		0	0	.	.
	Range	2.00					
	Minimum	3.00					
	Maximum	5.00					
	Sum	2000.00					
	Mean	4.0161	.01581	-.0002	.0154	3.9870	4.0462
	Std. Deviation	.35283		-.00132	.02200	.30746	.39065
	Variance	.124		.000	.015	.095	.153
Valid N (listwise)	N	498		0	0	.	.

a. Unless otherwise noted, bootstrap results are based on 498 bootstrap samples

Predictors: (Constant), Employee welfare

R = 0.424

R (Square) = 0.180

Employee welfare is 0.424 indicating a positive significant effect among the variables. Regression sum of squares is less than the residual sum of squares, meaning that the model explains all the variations. R (0.424) shows the Employee welfare has significant positive effect on Labour efficiency

Table 2: Correlation matrix showing the relationship between Employee welfare and Labour efficiency

		Employee Welfare	Labour Efficiency
Employee welfare	Pearson Correlation	1	.862**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	Sum of Squares and Cross-products	78.106	184.367
	Covariance	.157	.371
	N	498	498
Labour Efficiency	Pearson Correlation	.862**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	Sum of Squares and Cross-products	184.367	585.608
	Covariance	.371	1.178
	N	498	498

Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

This is the correlation matrix of Employee welfare and Labour Efficiency of selected tertiary Institution in Sotheast Nigeria , Nigeria. The result of the correlation matrix shows that Employee welfare and Labour Efficiency are significant at 0.05 levels (2-tailed). The correlation is ,r = 0.86, against the table value which is, r = 0.195 with 496 degrees of freedom (df. = N-2). The computed correlation coefficient is greater than the table value. This implies that there is a relationship between Employee welafare and Labour efficiency. This means that the Employee Efficiency in selected Federal Institution in SE Nigeria influences goal the null hypothesis and accept the alternate hypothesis, concluding that there is a positive relationship between Employee welfare and Labour Efficiency of selected Federal Institutions in Southeast, Nigeria. Hence, the coefficient of determination (r^2) is r^2 = (0.86)^2 =74%. This means that 74% of variation in Employee welfare of selected Federal Institution in South-East, Nigeria is associated with their sustainability and Labour efficiency.

Model Summary									
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.424a	.180	.178	.34606	.180	108.956	1	496	.000

4. RESEARCH FINDINGS ABD DISCUSSIONS

Employees' welfare scheme is very imperative and a 'sinequanon' to the livelihood of any organization for onward sustenance, prompt and effective productivity. On this note the study by way of descriptive and analytical studies houses the following findings and discussions which are in line with Ejiofor, (1986); Ayinde, (2014), Chukwurah et al, (2020) and HRW, (2010).

1. Inadequate information: The workers are not fully aware of information related to the welfare scheme. Onwuchekwa, said 'that what you know you can explain and what you don't know you cannot explain. Half or bare knowledge of welfare benefits has compounded the issue and as such he cannot be motivated about a benefit he is not aware of.
2. Doubtful Valence: The staff knows what he or she wants. He/she is not prepared to take any unattractive item, as he appreciates one thing or the other. Employees of the various institutions are adults. Even choice differ from one institution to another. The management has been observed to have dispensed one welfare package or the other as they perceived it. This is a peculiar case of most management bodies in the affected area of study.
3. Unnecessary Dichotomy: There is an intra-organisation inequity. The old age rift between the junior/senior staff and the academic and the non-academic staff galore has weakened the welfare programmes in these various institutions in the South East geo-political zone. This is to the extent that when bodies like ASSU is on strike the SANU or NASU will be working. No common front in the realization of welfare packages.
4. Unrealistic Assumption: The paternity attitude and action displayed by management and members of governing council towards the employees is still rearing its ugly heads. This is quite very demoding, unrealistic, and has lowered welfare scheme tremendously. The management makes it looks to the employees as if salary is part of the bulk welfare scheme. This to the extent that payment of workers' salaries on time is been applauded as a great fringe benefits.
5. Bad Management of Good Benefit: It is observed that most of the benefits are properly mismanaged during its administration by the dispensing officer. Most of the dispensers saw it as a privilege not as a right. This why you see undue influences in the allocation or dispensing of any official items.
6. Compensation: It was noticed that workers compensation programmes like educational fees, transport and leave benefits that are not properly tailored in some institutions affects employee satisfactions.
7. Physical Facilities: This is the right of the employees, but we have observed with dismay the great divergences in these tertiary institutions. A good number of these institutions lack physical infrastructures hampering on their welfare scheme and development.
8. Insecurity: Most of these institutions are beret of good security. Employees can only work freely in a conducive environment. These tertiary institutions are been used as a training ground for political tugs and actor. Good security network is part and parcel of the welfare programmes expected from the various institutions. What we see in most of these institutions instead of good welfare packages is an environment or grounds for breeding one cult or the other.

5. CONCLUSION

The study encapsulates on employee welfare programmes: panacea towards improving labour productivity and sustainability circumference within tertiary institutions in the South East, Nigeria. Hitherto, the employee welfare has been absurd. The mismanagement of employees' welfare scheme by employers of labour with the little physical infrastructure in the various institutions on ground, non equity administration of good benefits, unrealistic assumptions by the management have marred welfare programmees, development and sustainability in South East Zone. Also the attention given to compensation benefits, security and unnecessary dichotomy by even the workers is another cog in the wheel of employees coupled with inadequate information, uniformed and un-consulted dispensation of welfare package.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on this Logical Argument Harnessed In This Study The Following Recommendations Are Postulated.

1. That the workers should be fully educated and made to be aware of information related to welfare scheme. They should advance further on open door policy to all staff both academics and non-academics. This will make them to be response to welfare benefits and in pursuant of their right.
2. The intra-organisation inequity that is the old age rift between the junior/senior staff and the academic and the non-academic staff should stop. Rather what are expected of them are cooperative attitude and a pursuit of a common front in the realization of welfare packages.
3. The Management of the various institutions should advice staff and equally spear head the formation of Cooperative Society where is not existing.
4. Continue to tighten up security within and around the university community.
5. That the management should exploit training, workshop and seminars for both academic and non-academics. They should also use the university economy appropriately in equitable allocation and infrastructural development.
6. The management of these various institutions should develop adequate workers' compensation programmes like educational fees, transport allowance, leave benefits, grants fees, etc, which affects employee satisfactions and should be properly managed and dispensed.
7. Continue to extend University appointment to the younger ones including women so that the old ones who are cog in the will of governance can be checkmate.
8. To continue in their effort to reinvigorate the various health centre and clinics within their institutions. Also the various teaching hospitals should be enhanced to modern equipments.

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