

Talent Acquisition and Retention as Predictors of Teachers' Job Commitment in Secondary Schools in Bayelsa State

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Abstract

The study examined talent acquisition and retention as predictors of teachers' job commitment in secondary schools in Bayelsa State. Two research questions were raised and two hypotheses tested in the study. Correlation survey design was adopted for the study. Population of the study consisted of 3,477 respondents while 490 respondents were drawn as sample for the study using random sampling technique. Instrument adopted for collection of data was questionnaire titled "Talent Acquisition and Retention Scale" (TARS) for the dependent variables and "Teachers Job Commitment Scale" (TJCS) for the independent variable. The two questionnaires titled TARS and TJCS were face and content validated by two experts in Measurement and Evaluation. Cronbach alpha statistics was used to determine the reliability of the instrument. The index of Talent Acquisition (TA) and Talent Retention (TR) were 0.91 and 0.92 respectively while TJCS was 0.90. There were 490 copies of questionnaire administered while 472 copies which were 96.3% were retrieved. Research questions were answered using simple regression analysis while the hypotheses were tested using t-test associated with simple regression at 0.05 level of significance. The relationship of talent acquisition and talent retention with teachers' job commitment were high and positive as well as moderate and positive with values of $r=0.61$ and $r=0.47$ respectively. It was recommended that merit and competence should be considered above nepotism in the process of talent acquisition in secondary schools in Bayelsa State.

Keywords: Talent Acquisition, Retention, Teachers' Job Commitment, Secondary School, Bayelsa State.

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INTRODUCTION

The concept of teachers' job commitment is an amalgamation of three basic, strategic and independent words. The teacher is an instructor who is trained to train others. However, in this context, the teacher is a school instructor certified and trained to pass knowledge to a set of students in a classroom environment. Similarly, the service rendered by the teacher is the job which he or she performs. This means that job is a task that is performed by an individual either voluntarily or officially for meeting personal or organizational goal and objective. Commitment on the other hand is the extent to which an individual is dedicated to a course of action. Based on these definitions, teachers' job commitment which is sometimes used as job commitment refers to how dedicated a teacher is to the demands of his or her job in and outside the school environment.

Teachers' job commitment entails showing adequate knowledge and willingness to sacrifice for the attainment of the goals and objectives of an

organization. On their part, Okotoni and Akinwale (2019:7) stated that "job commitment refers to an individual's attraction and attachment to the work and the organization. It also refers to the socio-psychological bonding of an individual to his group, work, organization, its goals and values or to his occupation and profession". Teachers' job commitment is a physical, psychological and mental attachment to the demands of one's job. The commitment to one's job is important for the attainment of the goals of the organization. Similarly, as a teacher, the teachers' job commitment refers to a sense of attraction and attachment to the goals and objectives of the school. Equally, Akinwale and Okotoni (2019:1554) stated that "Job commitment of worker in all organizations has been found as one of the variables that determine organization success and survival". This means that the success of the school as a whole depends on the number of committed teachers in the school. Similarly, building a committed work force also depends on how the talents (teachers) in the school are managed.

Talent management is a combination of broad concepts which explains how individual talents are managed in any formal organizational setting. These concepts are very vital to the success of any organization. On this ground, talent management focuses on the application of management principles in utilization of talents in an organization. However, further search from literature reveal that talent management refer to the act and practice of managing existing workforce competencies in and outside an organization for the purpose of organizational goal attainment. Speaking further, Thunnissen *et al.* (2013) pointed out that talent management is a process which focuses on how organizational activities are structured for the purpose of identifying, selecting, retaining and developing the best set of workers who will contribute to the success of the goals of the organization. Talents acquisition and talent retention are critical components of the talent management principle and they are essential to the productivity and commitment of employees in any formal organization.

The choice of who to recruit into an organization is one of the major problems faced by managers and administrators. This problem exists because according to researchers the demand for superior talent far outweighs the supply (Kireru *et al.*, 2017). Every organization therefore face the challenge of who to recruit, how the recruitment should be done as well as when and where this exercise would be carried out. Talent acquisition is a major hurdle in today's work environment because of the difference in capabilities of prospective employees. An organization must therefore have an outline of the means and medium for selecting prospective workers in order to achieve expected goals and objectives.

Talents acquisition is all about determining in advance the employee needs of an organization as well as where he or she will fit into in the organization after engagement. Kireru *et al.* (2017) pointed out that human resource plans and talent placement methods are key components of talent acquisition. This means that talent acquisition is multi-faceted as it involves all plans put in place before and immediately after an employee is engaged in an organization. Series of activities take place in this process such as determining in advance the conditions that must be fulfilled for eligibility as well as what the worker will be doing when engaged. The talent acquisition process also includes determining if the worker will be transferred from a department in an organization or a similar organization as well as the department where he or she will function and the job that will be performed by him or her.

In the talent acquisition, process, the recruitment of workers from existing talent pool in or outside the organization is the first task that must be attended to and the talent pool must have expected abilities that will contribute to the future of the

organization (Ballesteros, 2010). Similarly, researchers have reported that the sources for acquiring these talented employees can be either internal or external. Talent acquisition is therefore only possible by looking at existing talent pool in and outside the organization. However, it has been suggested by scholars that the best way to create a talent pool is the internal sourcing because workers in the organization already have the knowledge of how business processes work in the organization. However, if the organization is looking at making radical changes or reforms or to renew some of its programmes and activities, external sources will be the best option.

In order to attract the best workers in the talent acquisition process, the organization must put measures in place such as organizational branding which includes developing an image that is good enough to attract the right employee no matter how scarce the needed talent is from the labour market. Talent acquisition in the school takes important factors into consideration such as the number of students expected in the school, the turnover rate as well as the willingness of the worker, experience and skills possessed by the prospective worker. All of these are required for a successful talent acquisition process.

Different organizations are developing different measures to acquire the best talent in the labour market. The scarcity of talent across all sectors of the economy has made talent acquisition a very huge task that must be given due attention if the organization must meet its goals and objectives. Srivastava and Bhatnagar (2008) noted that some organizations have switched to innovative recruitment process as a way of meeting its talent needs. This includes adopting recruitment technology as well as partnership with other organizations that are into talent pooling. This is to ensure that employees who have the drive for the success of the organization are employed. Educational Organizations such as Hamilton Country Department of Education (2020) have the practice of engaging the service of a talent acquisition manager who must be ready to perform the following functions:

- Coordinated the planning, developing, and implementing of programs, policies, and procedures for assigned areas to ensure the most effective utilization of resources to support the vision and mission of the school district.
- Creates a customer-focused climate and provides quality services and support to schools, school administrators and other stakeholders.
- Consults with the Chief of departments and/or Directors, State Department of Education, school officials, administrators, and other officials to review operations/activities, to review/resolve

- problems, to receive advice/direction, and provide recommendations.
- Interviews, screens, and recruits job applicants to fill entry-level, professional, certified, and classified job openings. Reviews applicants' background and experience for matches to specific job-related requirements.
 - Participates in recruiting events across the state and at approved out-of-state institutions.
 - Works collaboratively to coordinate activities associated with new teachers.
 - Develops, recommends, and implements budget relative to recruitment funding - including but not limited to Federal monies; monitors expenditures to ensure compliance with approved budget.
 - Screens candidates and maintains a pool of quality teacher, classified, or professional candidates. Seeks to identify candidates in hard-to-staff contents and skills, and for hard-to-staff schools or departments for HR directors as needed.
 - Works collaboratively with school administrators to assist in the evaluation process for teachers and assigned staff in accordance with district and state guidelines.
 - Evaluates effectiveness of operations and programs in assigned areas; identifies and recommends improvements or enhancement.
 - Assists with employee relations concerns and investigations.
 - Ensures compliance with district, state, and federal policies, regulations, and laws, where appropriate.
 - Develops and implements long and short term plans, goals, and objectives for assigned area.
 - Follows established procedures for ensuring assigned areas are safe.
 - Communicates through the proper channels to keep supervisor and other appropriate personnel informed of impending problems or events of unusual nature.
 - Works collaboratively with supervisor, administration, employees, students, and other stakeholders.
 - Provides back-up support to HR directors as needed.
 - Attends work and arrives to work on time.
 - Maintains confidentiality.
 - Adheres to the Teacher Code of Ethics as defined by Tennessee Law.

- Complies with accounting and financial policies and procedures, as well as other Board policies.
- Uses computers and other technology to enter and access information related to essential job functions.
- Operates a motor vehicle to conduct various work activities.
- Performs other duties as assigned (Adopted from Hamilton County Department of Education, 2020).

The engagement of the service of a talent manager is a strategy that has been adopted by some organizations in meeting their talent needs. The talent acquisition manager has the responsibility of sourcing for the right worker as well as ensuring that their functions in the organization meet with the needs of the organization. All of these strategies are put in place to ensure that organizational needs are met as outlined by the organization.

Furthermore, employees are often interested in finding an organization where they will remain for a long time as long as their organisational expectations are met and satisfied. This condition is both beneficial to both the employer as well as the employee as long as all labour agreements are met. However, as a talent management process, every employer looks for ways to ensure that their best talents are kept in the organization for a long period of time. According to Agboola and Offong (2018:264) "retention is about how an organization manages its workforce or more specifically its relationship with its workforce by attracting and enabling people to work and stay with their organizations". This does not only reduce the expenses spent on labour acquisition but also ensures that the best talent remains in the organization.

Talent retention is important in the talent management process as it helps to ensure that workers who form part of the future of the organization are not lost to other competitors. Therefore, every organization will do whatever it takes to keep the best workforce as this will serve as an advantage to the organization. Bernard (2012:290-291) identified the factors that determine retention to include:

Non-pecuniary aspects of academic work, e.g. relations with supervisors; pay and fringe benefits; intrinsic job factors; good working conditions; variety; freedom to use own initiative; seeing tangible outcomes from their jobs; autonomy; opportunities to do research and control of their research works; career prospects; collaboration and flexibility of working hours; good physical working conditions; helping people and job security; family-friendly practices; nature and tenure of contract; career breaks; citizenship; hours of work and finally and less involvement in administrative tasks".

Formal organizations do all they can to ensure that they meet most if not all of these conditions so as to be able to preserve their workforce. Some of these employees have been trained and empowered over the years and it will serve as a multiple loss if the organization does not do all it takes to keep them on the job. Employee retention has been used as one of the measures of organizational effectiveness (Paillé, 2012). Therefore, an organization is known to be effective and functioning adequately based on its ability to keep its workforce intact; especially the best workforce who are known to be the secret behind the success of the organization. There are specific workers in some organizations whose absence will lead to a downward slope in the success of the organization as a result of their unique abilities and talents and the organization will give all it takes to retain them for a long period of time.

School administrators who wish to keep the best workforce aside providing essential resources must also have a personal relationship with the workers in question. Bond between employer and the employee is required to promote talent retention (Shaikh & Zahid, 2017) and this is one aspect that formal organizations are investing into by ensuring that teams are established in the workplace and leader-followers relationship is kept as open as possible. Michael as cited Agboola and Offong (2018:264) stated that “employee retention is one of the most critical issues facing organizational managers as a result of the shortage of skilled manpower, economic growth and high employee turnover “. Therefore, organizations that cannot meet the economic needs of their employees to retain them must develop some level of social capital in order to retain their best workforce.

Talent retention is made possible by the creation of the right organizational climate. Talent retention depends on the work environment and this includes the ability to motivate, social relationship, economic satisfaction among other alternatives. These resources must be provided in the right volume in order to be able to keep the worker. Govaerts et al (2010:37) also stated that “the directive for companies in this time of “war for talent” is to reduce turnover in favour of the retention of talented employees”. Every organization with the right talent set must therefore do all it takes to retain this talented workforce in order to remain relevant in the midst of competition and meet their goals and objectives.

AIM AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The aim of the study was to investigate talent acquisition and retention as predictors of teachers’ job commitment in secondary schools in Bayelsa State. In specific terms, the objectives of the study were to:

1. Ascertain the relationship between talent acquisition and teachers’ job commitment in secondary schools in Bayelsa State.

2. Ascertain the relationship between talent retention and teachers’ job commitment in secondary schools in Bayelsa State.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following research questions were raised to guide the study:

1. What is the relationship between talent acquisition and teachers’ job commitment in secondary schools in Bayelsa State?
2. What is the relationship between talent retention and teachers’ job commitment in secondary schools in Bayelsa State?

HYPOTHESES

The following hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

1. There is no significant relationship between talent acquisition and teachers’ job commitment in secondary schools in Bayelsa State.
2. There is no significant relationship between talent retention and teachers’ job commitment in secondary schools in Bayelsa State.

METHODOLOGY

The design used for the study was correlation survey. Population of the study was 3, 477 respondents consisting of 202 principals and 3, 275 teachers in the 202 public secondary schools in Bayelsa State. The sample for the study was 490 respondents which comprised 134 principals and 356 teachers in the 202 public senior secondary schools in Bayelsa State. The sampling technique that was used is the random sampling technique as this gave all the elements equal opportunity of being selected as sample for the study. The instrument used for data collection was questionnaire. Two questionnaires were developed for the study so as to enable the researcher collect data on the independent and dependent variables of the study. The first questionnaire which was used to collect data on the independent variables of the study was a 20-items questionnaire titled “Talent Acquisition and Retention Scale” (TARS) while the second questionnaire which was used to collect data on the dependent variables of the study was a 20 items questionnaire titled “Teachers Job Commitment Scale” (TJCS). The two questionnaires were responded to by the principals and teachers respectively based on a four point modified Likert scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD) and these responses were scored 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively as their weights. The two questionnaires TARS and TJCS were face and content validated by two experts from Measurement and Evaluation in the Department of Educational Psychology, Guidance and Counseling, University of Port Harcourt. The internal consistency of the instruments namely TARS and TJCS was determined using Cronbach alpha statistics. There

were 20 respondents comprising ten principals and ten teachers in the public secondary schools in Bayelsa State who were not part of the sample selected for this study and they were administered copies of the questionnaires and their responses were used to determine the reliability of the questionnaires. The reliability index of the clusters such as Talent Acquisition (TA) and Talent Retention (TR) were 0.91 and 0.92 respectively while the reliability of the TJCS was 0.90. The researcher as well as five trained research assistants engaged in the administration of the copies of the questionnaire. The 490 copies of the questionnaire were administered accordingly but 472 copies of the

instruments were collected at the date agreed and this implied a 96.3% retrieval rate which was adequate for the study. The research questions were answered using simple regression analysis while the hypotheses were tested using t-test associated with simple regression at 0.05 level of significance.

RESULTS

Answer to Research Questions

Research Question One: What is the relationship between talent acquisition and teachers' job commitment in secondary schools in Bayelsa State?

Table-1: Simple Regression on the Relationship between Talent Acquisition and Teachers' Job Commitment in Secondary Schools in Bayelsa State

Model Summary					
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Decision
1	.612 ^a	.374	.373	9.86086	High Relationship
a. Predictors: (Constant), TalentAcquisition					

In table 1, it was revealed that the value of the Pearson Product Correlation co-efficient ($r=0.612$) and this value implied that there was a high and positive relationship between talent acquisition and teachers' job commitment in secondary schools in Bayelsa State. Similarly, the R square ($R^2=0.374$) meant that talent acquisition predicted 37.4% ($0.374*100$) of teachers' job commitment in secondary schools in Bayelsa State

while the remaining percentage score (62.6%) was predicted by other external variables outside talent acquisition.

Research Question Two: What is the relationship between talent retention and teachers' job commitment in secondary schools in Bayelsa State?

Table-2: Simple Regression on the Relationship between Talent Retention and Teachers' Job Commitment in Secondary Schools in Bayelsa State

Model Summary					
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Decision
1	.477 ^a	.227	.226	10.95557	Moderate Relationship
a. Predictors: (Constant), TalentRetention					

In table 3, it was indicated that the value of the Pearson Product Correlation co-efficient ($r=0.477$) and this value implied that there was a moderate and positive relationship between talent retention and teachers' job commitment in secondary schools in Bayelsa State. Similarly, the R² ($R^2=0.227$) meant that talent retention predicted 22.7% ($0.227*100$) of teachers' job commitment in secondary schools in

Bayelsa State while the remaining percentage score (77.3%) was predicted by other external variables outside talent retention.

Test of Hypotheses

Hypothesis Two: Talent acquisition does not significantly relate to teachers' job commitment in secondary schools in Bayelsa State.

Table 3: t-test associated with Simple Regression on the Extent Talent Acquisition Relates to Teachers' Job Commitment in Secondary Schools in Bayelsa State

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error			
1	(Constant)	22.704	1.596		14.228	.000
	TalentAcquisition	1.007	.060	.612	16.758	.000
a. Dependent Variable: TeachersJobCommitment						

Table 3 indicated that the t-value associated with the simple regression produced a value of 16.758 but the significance level (probability value was 0.000)

and this value was less than the alpha value of 0.05 and based on this, the null hypothesis was rejected indicating that talent acquisition significantly relates to

teachers' job commitment in secondary schools in Bayelsa State.

Hypothesis Two: Talent retention does not significantly relate to teachers' job commitment in secondary schools in Bayelsa State.

Table-4: t-test associated with Simple Regression on the Extent Talent Retention Relates to Teachers' Job Commitment in Secondary Schools in Bayelsa State

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	21.382	2.347		9.109	.000
	TalentRetention	1.013	.086	.477	11.759	.000

a. Dependent Variable: TeachersJobCommitment

Table 4 revealed that the t-value associated with the simple regression produced a value of 11.759 but the significance level (probability value was 0.000) and this value was less than the alpha value of 0.05 and based on this, the null hypothesis was rejected indicating that talent retention significantly relates to teachers' job commitment in secondary schools in Bayelsa State.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Talent Acquisition and Teachers' Job Commitment in Secondary Schools in Bayelsa State

The study has been able to show from the value of the Pearson Product Correlation co-efficient of $r=0.612$ that there was a high and positive relationship between talent acquisition and teachers' job commitment in secondary schools in Bayelsa State. On the same note, the R^2 ($R^2=0.374$) indicated that talent acquisition predicted 37.4% of teachers job commitment in secondary schools in Bayelsa State. This statistic was closely related to the outcome of a similar study by Kireru *et al.* (2017) which indicated that 77.6% of the respondents agreed that talent acquisition improved competitiveness while 16.4% disagreed that it does while 69.9% of the respondents agreed that talent acquisition significantly relates to superior speed in innovation as well as knowledge management. These various findings simply established the fact that a lot can be benefitted by the school if the process of talent acquisition is given the desired level of seriousness. If the practice of talent acquisition is made as transparent as possible, it has the capacity of improving on innovation which will in turn improve on the level of contentment and by implication enhance the level of job commitment even among teachers.

The problem with most schools is that the process of talent acquisition is not based on merit and as such the teachers who are engaged see no reason for dedication and commitment. Supporting this assertion, Akojiam (2019) showed from the findings of his study that some of the organizations sampled for the study preferred to hire their employees on part time basis. When the process of talent acquisition is handled with levity, the desired quality of employees may not be

acquired. The government in collaboration with school administrators therefore needs to ensure that the process of talent acquisition is improved upon. When stiff competition is allowed in the process of talent acquisition, dedication is likely to be promoted and this in turn will enhance the process of commitment in the school. School administrators need to also ensure that in the posting of acquired teachers, emphasis is placed on merit and specialization as this has the ability to improve on the level of job satisfaction and commitment.

Furthermore, when talent acquisition process is effective, a lot can be benefitted by the teacher and the school at the same time. These benefits are also of value to the teacher in the long run and hence the need for further dedication to duty. Agreeing with this opinion, Akpotu and Lebari (2014) reported from their study that that knowledge acquisition process greatly influenced the functional capability of administrative employees in the sampled institutions and knowledge acquisition had a high predictive capability for administrative employee performance. Therefore, if schools adopt a fair talent acquisition process, the process of school administration becomes effective and the attainment of the goals and objectives of the school becomes a form of internal motivation to the teacher and commitment is borne in this process.

Similarly, it was revealed in the study that the null hypothesis was rejected indicating that talent acquisition significantly relates to teachers' job commitment in secondary schools in Bayelsa State. This relates to the outcome of a similar study by Babarinde *et al.* (2017) which showed that there was no significant difference between the recruitment pattern of male and female in-service teachers. Therefore, in the process of talent acquisition, the benefits that can be derived from the process cannot be overemphasized as this can improve or reduce the commitment of the teachers in the school.

Talent Retention and Teachers' Job Commitment in Secondary Schools in Bayelsa State

In line with the data collected from the respondents used for the study, the Pearson Product

Correlation co-efficient $r=0.477$ indicated that there was a moderate and positive relationship between talent retention and teachers' job commitment in secondary schools in Bayelsa State. In the same manner, the R^2 ($R^2=0.227$) meant that talent retention predicted 22.7% of teachers' job commitment in secondary schools in Bayelsa State. Agreeing with this position, a related study by Faremi (2017) showed that there was a positive and significant relationship between teacher retention strategies and job security in private secondary schools in Osun state. The retention of teachers promotes job security which also affects the expression of the teacher towards general school activities. However, school administrators should not just focus on the retention of teachers for the purpose of keeping long service employees but should also ensure that the best hands are kept for the success of the school.

Emphasis should be laid on the retention of teachers who are able to keep up with the goals and objectives of the school. It is only when the best among the teachers are kept using available administrative tools that the teachers and the school can mutually benefit. This implies that school resources will be expended on the best employees and this is what contributes to commitment of employees in the long run. The school must ensure that no resource is spared in the retention of the best teaching force for the sustainable development of the school. Supporting this view, Ibidunni *et al.* (2016) noted that pay had significant influence on employee retention, commitment and involvement. It was also revealed that pay, work environment and promotion has positive significant relationship of $r= 0.51, 0.27$ and 0.03 with teachers' retention and commitment and involvement. School administrators must therefore be deliberate in the retention of teachers by sparing no resource that can be expended for this purpose. The teachers upon which this gesture is shown will then pay back the school through quality service delivery and work commitment.

Several researchers have revealed that most schools fail to utilize available resources in satisfying the need of their employees for promoting satisfaction and commitment. In a related study, Gberevbie (2010) showed that the service commission was behind in terms of providing adequate incentives to retain its workforce for improved performance when compared to what is obtainable in the private sector. Administrators of secondary schools especially the public ones must make deliberate effort to ensure that the needs of teachers are met so that the teachers in turn will be able to support the objectives of the school. Public school managers and administrators must also be able to enact laws that will protect the interest of quality teachers as the relationship between the teacher and the school can only progress when it is mutual.

In a related manner, the null hypothesis was rejected indicating that talent retention significantly relates to teachers job commitment in secondary schools in Bayelsa State. This was also the position of Agboola and Offong (2018) in their study as their findings also showed that a significant relationship existed between job security, remuneration, and promotion, welfare and teacher retention in private secondary schools in Akwa Ibom. On this note, it is evident that schools can benefit a lot when they manage the process of teacher retention and there should be no sacrifice that should be too big for school administrators to make for retaining quality teachers as this improves on overall educational outcome.

CONCLUSIONS

The study concludes as follows:

1. There existed a positive and significant relationship between the independent and dependent variables such as talent acquisition and talent retention on teachers' job commitment in secondary schools in Bayelsa State.
2. It was revealed that there was a high and positive relationship between talent acquisition and job commitment and a moderate positive relationship between talent retention and job commitment in secondary schools in Bayelsa State.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations were based on the findings of the study:

1. The government should ensure that merit and competence were considered above nepotism in the process of talent acquisition. Invariably, it means that the hiring or employment of teachers should be based on skills and abilities for secondary schools in Bayelsa State as this would go a great extent to ascertain the quality of service delivery and also achieve educational goals and objectives.
2. Teachers should be rewarded for their contributions to the school by both the school administrators as well as the state government since this would help to ensure that the best hands are retained in the school and therefore discourage employee from leaving the school system for greener pasture. Thus, appraisal of teachers' contributions would encourage teachers' commitment and sustain talent retention.

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