

Information and Communication Technology Training and Job Performances of Library Professionals in Academic Libraries in Rivers State: A case study of Rivers State University and University of Port Harcourt

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Abstract

The study examined information and communication technology training and job performances of library professionals in Rivers State University and University of Port Harcourt. Descriptive survey design was adopted for the study. The population of the study comprised all library professionals and para-professionals from both universities understudy. Purposive sampling was used to select 51 library staff. A structured questionnaire was used as instrument for data collection. The data was analyzed using descriptive statistics. The Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient was used to test the hypothesis. The study however found that ICT trainings significantly impact on Job performances of library professionals. The types of ICT training significant are on the use of computer/internet, OPAC, ILMS, emails, smartphones, databases and networking sites. The trainings are mostly received through conferences, workshops and personal training scheme. The study also found that there is non-frequent ICT training scheme as most schemes are held once in every two years in the academic libraries studied, and this is insufficient to guarantee effective job performances and staff productivity at all times. Therefore to keep abreast with the constantly evolving communication technologies, the study recommends a regular capacity building for at least twice a year. Also, library professionals should be encouraged to attend ICT seminars, workshops, conferences within and outside the library, and also engage in personal training scheme to develop themselves more.

Keywords: ICT, Training, Job performances, Library professionals, Academic Libraries.

1.1 Introduction

With no doubts, the real development of a nation is tied to many factors; one of such is the crucial role the library services play. Library's ability to deliver services successfully depends on how well its staff can use ICT to carry out their jobs. The adoption and use of ICT has aided in making information resources easier to access, retrieve, and utilize regardless of time or place, as well as closing the information gap between developed and developing nations. Computer and telecommunication technology were combined to produce the term "ICT". The expansion and improvement of information handling was the sole objective of this merger. ICT, which is frequently used synonymously with information technology, has grown to be a crucial part of library and information services. The integration of different housekeeping tasks, such as acquisition, processing, reference, circulation, and bibliographic services in academic libraries and documentation centers, has benefited greatly from ICT. It has significantly changed how modern libraries and information services are delivered and the job performances of library staff as well.

Job performance refers to the actions linked to the job that an employee was required to accomplish and how successfully the job was carried out (Sani & Musa, 2019). Job performance has consequently evolved into a crucial determinant of an organization's likelihood of success or failure. Job performance is simply the ability of a person to work efficiently in accordance with the demands of the position to meet the aims and objectives of the organization. The development and success of university libraries can be influenced by the performance of

librarians (George et al, 2022). It is important to realize that librarian's job performance requests that they must be adept at using ICT and its devices in order to provide services to their clients and help them satisfy their information needs. In addition to helping their own performance, librarians help their parent organization's aims and objectives by addressing the demands of their users (Basahuwa et al, 2020). Given that librarians are engaged in web-based information sourcing, retrieval, arrangement, and dissemination, it implies that library staff members should be able to autonomously operate their own systems and become experts in computers and internet info-sourcing and management. Although most library staff in academic libraries are unable to deliver effective services using ICT facilities due to lack of ICT training which results in decreased in job performances and poor user satisfaction in service delivery. Hence it is important to investigate the ICT training and job performances of library professionals in academic libraries.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The 21st century is characterized by the use of ICT almost in all spheres of human endeavor. The adoption and use of ICT however brought about efficiency and effectiveness in the areas where it is applied. It is interesting to note that the library and information science workforce is one of the beneficiaries of this advancement. Librarians who are exposed to ICT training are expected to be on their feet, especially in performance of certain library operations and services which covers selection, ordering, processing, storing, registering, taking statistic and others with the use of information technology. But previous studies and close observation revealed a decline in librarians' ICT related job effectiveness, which led to regular user complaints and, in many cases, users looking into alternative possibilities (Basahuwa et al., 2020). Therefore, the researcher wonders the following; does this imply that the majority of librarians lack the necessary ICT training? Or does it imply that their employers do not support them in receiving any kind of training? Or does it also imply that despite ICT's significance in the twenty-first century, they have not actively worked to grow themselves in this field? Based on the foregoing and other issues considered by the researcher, the study aims to evaluate the nature of ICT training for library professionals and its effects on job performances in academic libraries, especially in Rivers State University and University of Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

- i. To identify the types of ICT trainings received by library professionals in Rivers State University and University of Port Harcourt Libraries
- ii. To identify the strategies used in acquiring ICT training in Rivers State University and University of Port Harcourt Libraries.
- iii. To find out how frequent library staff receive ICT trainings in Rivers State University and University of Port Harcourt Libraries.
- iv. To establish the impacts of ICT training and job performances of library staff in the Rivers State University and University of Port Harcourt

1.4 Hypothesis

There is no significant impact between ICT training received and job performance of library professionals in the Rivers State University and University of Port Harcourt

2.0 Review of Related Literature

2.1 Academic Libraries

Academic libraries are those developed in institutions of higher learning, including universities, polytechnics, monotronics, colleges of education, colleges of technology, and other institutions that provide tertiary education, (Nnadozie, 2007). They are libraries that are a part of higher education institutions that cater to the needs of faculty, staff, and students in terms of teaching and research. Academic libraries are also referred to as special libraries that are located at educational institutions and are there to serve the demands of a specialized or homogeneous audience (Joel & Ayinla, 2015). They are mostly referred as the “hub”, “nerve”, “Blood life” and “central nerve” of institution of higher learning. In other words, they provide information support to academic programs and curricula of the institution. Hence, academic libraries are established to achieve three cardinal objectives of their parent institutions which are: Conservation of existing knowledge, Transmission of knowledge through teaching, and the creation of new knowledge by expanding the frontiers of knowledge via researches (Abubaka, 2011).

2.2 Information Communication Technology (ICT)

Information and communication technology (ICT) is without a doubt seen as a key growth area in the twenty-first century. In particular, a dynamic business environment and a highly competitive market necessitate the use of advanced ICT to increase productivity and cost effectiveness and to present high quality goods and services to their customers. According to Tech-terms (2010), ICT refers to technologies that provide access to information through telecommunication. It is similar to Information Technology but focuses primarily on communication technologies such as the internet, cell phones, wireless networks and other communication mediums. ICTs are technologies that facilitate information-related activity. Data collection, processing, storing, and presentation are some of these processes. These activities increasingly demand teamwork and communication. According to Aina et al. (2014), the word "ICT" refers to the capacity to access information through the use of telecommunication-based internet resources. It offers the capacity to quickly produce, arrange, manipulate, and access information from distant locations all over the world. A variety of technologies used to support communication and information transmission are incorporated within ICT. According to Saidu et al. (2014), ICT is the use of computer-based technology and the Internet to provide information and communication services to a variety of users. ICT is generally defined as the integration of computer networks, telephone networks, and audio-visual networks over a single cabling or link system. Using a single, unified system of cabling, signal distribution, and management, there are strong financial incentives to combine the audio-visual, building management, and telephone networks with the computer network system. This would result in significant cost savings (Asafe, 2014).

Academic libraries in Nigeria are using current ICTs to provide library services, and this work is moving along quite well. It also presents the chance to develop electronic networks for more convenient access to distant computerized information products and services. The following types were provided by Iqbal & Khan (2017) and Adebayo et al. (2018), including computers, the internet, an online public access catalogue (OPAC) and electronic databases, email, a digital library, mobile smart phones, the World Wide Web (www), video conferencing, printing technology, library software, etc.

2.3 Concept of Training

Training is a procedure that helps a person increase his productivity and effectiveness at work by enhancing and updating his knowledge, developing skills that are applicable to his job, and nurturing acceptable attitudes and behavior toward work. Training can be planned to enhance current abilities or to get someone ready

for new tasks that may require new knowledge and skills (Chand & Dheer, 2009). It is the teaching, mentoring, coaching, or development of any idea or practice in oneself or others that relates to particular objectives and aims in a specific organization. Training aims to improve one's skill, capacity, productivity, and work experience. Eze (2012) defines training as an educational program, whether public or private, that is specifically relevant to the workplace. When work performance falls short of expectations for productivity, it is a sign that training is required to provide the workers with better and more advanced knowledge and abilities to deal with the reality of the workplace on a daily basis. Being well prepared for challenges helps the staff avoid becoming overwhelmed.

The University of Massachusetts Amherst Libraries Staff Development working group study highlighted the necessity for libraries to have staff members who have extensive training in all areas of work in order to deliver top-notch service to users. In order to create a training program model that integrates the fundamental changes brought about by information technology, it is desirable to have an awareness of the refinements. The primary goal of the training is to develop LIS professionals' abilities, skills, and efficiency in the use of contemporary information technology and its implementation in their particular libraries (Chand & Dheer, 2009).

2.4 Strategies for acquiring ICT Training in Academic Libraries

Staff development of any kind was previously only seen as a luxury in many libraries, but according to Abban (2018), training is a need. Professionals need to complete further training and education in ICT for library applications after attaining professional understanding in LIS. The objective is to develop the professional's competence and effectiveness in information management (Longanathan, Sekar & Kasirao, 2015). Huang & Jao (2016) identified two strategies: off-the-job strategy and on-the-job strategy that are combined with managerial and employee training. Off-the-job strategy comprises educating staff away from the location where the acquired abilities and knowledge will be put to use (Huang & Jao, 2016; Yasin & Gomes, 2010). The strategy calls for the trainees to put aside their work obligations and focus solely on training. In contrast, on-the-job training is carried out while the trainee manages tasks at work. A manager or employee with greater expertise can serve as the instructor in this type of training. As an alternative, a company might pay a qualified instructor to deliver the training. Off-the-job training is essentially a personal training scheme (PTS), in which an individual looks to enhance his job performance by pursuing similar skills outside of the workplace. This may include informal or formal educational development. The demand for managers with the necessary ICT skills has made the library profession aware of the importance of ongoing training. University libraries are greatly impacted by these changes, therefore these advances and demands have had a substantial effect on academic librarianship.

According to Chand & Dheer (2009), lectures or talks with chalk are another approach for library personnel to receive training. The use of these traditional techniques was justified by the fact that these techniques were used to train the professional trainers. It was understood that instructing adult learners required distinct approaches and methods than instructing schoolchildren or college students. Furthermore, when the topic of ongoing staff training is brought up, many people only think of conferences; however, there are a variety of other ways to train library professionals, such as internal training programs, external training programs, academic programs, professional certifications and job shadowing, coaching and mentoring, study/reading groups, and scholarships (Ojowhoh, 2016). Halawi & Haydar (2018) so hypothesized that in order for librarians to advance technologically, they should be encouraged to attend seminars, workshops organized by organizations, computer classes, and be paired with knowledgeable supervisors.

2.5 Frequencies of ICT Training Programmes in Academic Libraries

Training is crucial for all library staff, from senior management to the newest junior. It is crucial to keep in mind that training in some capacity will always be available in a successful library system. To keep staff members informed of advancements and changes in the library profession, it should be an ongoing activity. Amoah & Akussah (2017) argue that, in this age of information overload and technological innovation, educating

human capital is essential for meeting clients' information needs. Library systems are dynamic; new concepts and directives are discussed and adopted. Olaniyan & Ojo (2008) argue that, in order to ensure the delivery of high-quality services, heads of institutions must take seriously the ongoing professional development of their library staff. As the library environment changes significantly over time, people need new skills to deal with the expanding amount of information in their lives. This is due to the fact that a library building housing substantial collections without qualified personnel can be compared to glorified warehouses (Adeniji et al, 2012). As a result, training is crucial in the library industry. A regular training program should be developed to guarantee the effectiveness of service delivery.

Therefore, Abban (2018) outlined five key justifications for the requirement of ongoing training for library staff: The introduction of ICT in libraries; the library user's smart and complex character; the enormous growth and expansion of knowledge, the era of overabundance of information, and challenging library service patterns. He added that training and development must therefore be a regular program that occurs at least twice a year and be an intrinsic element of the library management plan. A well-stocked library that is underutilized due to untrained workers stands a chance of losing ground. Libraries are reportedly dealing with new problems, competitors, demands, expectations, and the enormous rate of information proliferation, in order to enhance their services and meet the evolving information needs of the user community, libraries are now reevaluating their positions, incorporating new technologies, updating their information sources, routinely training their staff, and changing the models of communication and information delivery (Loganathan et al, 2015).

2.6 Impacts of ICT training and job performances of library staff in Academic Libraries

Igbinovia & Popoola (2016) describe job performance as a collection of employee behaviors that can be observed, measured, and evaluated; the behaviors must be in line with the objectives of the organization. A person's abilities, competencies, motivation, and dedication are just a few examples of the qualitative attributes that have an impact on how well they do their jobs. Other necessary talents include self-discipline, interpersonal relations, organizational training, and individual self-development. In particular, collection development, information organization, circulation, reference, reader's services, and information dissemination are all vital responsibilities of library staff. The potential for value-added information services and access to a wide range of digitally based information resources is greatly enhanced through ICT training. It raises staff productivity in library tasks (Yesufu cited in Ajidahun, 2007). Most people agree that it is the most significant direct method of enhancing human intelligence, job performance, and skills for productive employment. Enakrire (2019) asserts that ICT training holds the key to the success of modernizing information services from conventional method to digital method of OPAC, reference services, CAS, SDI, Visual services, Bibliographic services, and customer relation. ICT training has shifted librarians' roles from those of intermediaries to those of facilitators, and the shift from a physical to a virtual services environment (Rana, 2009). Furthermore, ICT equips academic library staff members with the knowledge, skills, and abilities they need to carry out their duties in accordance with the library's policies. Consequently, this leads to an increase in librarians' self-assurance in their skills and job satisfaction (Halawi & Haydar, 2018).

Employees in libraries can learn about the requirements of serving patrons in libraries through a variety of training programs. In the end, this has a significant impact on the quality of work produced, which raises productivity and profitability of library services. This suggests that offering library staff members a well-designed training and development program aids in their ability to increase productivity and job satisfaction. All of these improve the effectiveness of the work (Zhao et al, 2014). When properly trained and empowered, academic librarians also exhibit more engaged behavior; as a result, this engagement is associated with putting effort into the work and persevering in the face of challenges. The result is high-performance work practices, extra client services, or creative behavior of librarians who devote their physical, cognitive, and emotional resources to their work duties by being highly motivated, excited about their work, and totally engaged in it (Nawaz et al, 2014). However, it seems that when an organization provides for the needs of its staff through training, those staff

members behave more proactively and show greater commitment to their profession, which improves performance at work (Otieno et al, 2015). According to Frost (2018), ICT training improves the abilities that each person needs to do their job well and raises everyone to a level where they all possess the same abilities and knowledge.

3.0 Methodology

This study investigated information and communication technology training and job performances of library professionals in Rivers State University and University of Port Harcourt Libraries. Descriptive survey design was adopted for the study. The population of the study comprised all library professionals and para-professionals from both universities understudy. Purposive sampling was used to select 51 library staff. A Structured questionnaire entitled “ICT Training for Library Professionals in Academic Libraries “ICTTLPALQ” was used as primary instrument for data collection. A total of 51 copies of questionnaire were administered and 46 were found valid for analysis. Descriptive statistics was used for data analysis. The hypothesis was tested using Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient.

4.0 Analysis and Discussions of Findings

The respondents were asked of the various types of ICT training received in their respective libraries.

Table 1: The type of ICT training received

Variable	RSU		UNIPORT		TOTAL%
	YES%	NO%	YES%	NO%	
Computers/Internet	16(35%)	-	30(65%)	-	46(100%)
Online Public Access Catalog (OPAC)	16(35%)	-	30(65%)	-	46(100%)
Electronic Database	8(17%)	8(17%)	28(61%)	2(4%)	46(100%)
Smart-Phones	-	16(35%)	10(22%)	20(43%)	46(100%)
E-mail Communication	16(35%)	-	30(65%)	-	46(100%)
Networking sites	16(35%)	-	30(65%)	-	46(100%)
Integrated Library Management Systems Software	16(35%)	-	30(65%)	-	46(100%)

N=46

Table 1 shows the different types of Information and Communication training for library professionals in two academic libraries. According to the respondents, the training types in both universities are on the use of computers/internet (100%), OPAC (100%), Integrated Library Management Systems Software (100%), e-mails (100%), networking sites (100%) and electronic database (78%). This however corroborated with an earlier study by Iqbal & Khan (2017) on examining the ICT skills of university librarians in a developing country: a study from the University of the Punjab, Lahore, Pakistan. Hence, training on the various ICT packages will enhance adequate and effective services delivery among staff and also increase their job performances.

The respondents were asked of the strategies used in acquiring ICT training in their libraries.

Table 2: Methods used in acquiring ICT training

Variable	RSU		UNIPOINT		TOTAL%
	YES%	NO%	YES%	NO%	
Conferences	16(35%)	-	30(65%)	-	46(100%)
Workshops	16(35%)	-	30(65%)	-	46(100%)
Coaching/mentoring	10(22%)	6(13%)	12(26%)	18(39%)	46(100%)
Study groups	-	16(35%)	8(17%)	22(48%)	46(100%)
Academic programs	5(11%)	11(24%)	2(4%)	28(61%)	46(100%)
Personal Training Scheme (PTS)	8(17%)	8(17%)	16(35%)	14(30%)	46(100%)
Lectures	-	16(35%)	4(9%)	26(56%)	46(100%)
Field Visits/Demonstration	5(11%)	11(24%)	8(17%)	22(48%)	46(100%)
On-the-training or In-house-training	16(35%)	-	30(65%)	12(26%)	46(100%)
Electronic teaching media	-	16(35%)	2(4%)	28(61%)	46(100%)

N=46

Table 2 shows the methods in which library professionals receive their ICT training in the two academic libraries understudy. According to the respondents as stated in the table, ICT trainings are acquired through conferences (100%), workshops (100%), on-the-job training (100%) while 48% of the respondents engage in a personal training scheme, 13% on field visits and demonstrations in order to develop themselves on the use of ICT. This corroborates with an earlier study by Ojowhoh, (2016) on Staff development and library services in Academic Libraries in Bayelsa and Delta States. He outlined workshops, seminars, conferences as major avenues for professional continual training, though he argued that conferences and workshops have the same objectives but differ in their approach, while a conference emphasize on an in-depth discussion of a subject, workshop handles it theoretically and practically.

The respondents were asked of the duration of the ICT training programmes in their respective libraries.

Table 3: Frequency of ICT training programmes

Variable	RSU		UNIPOINT		TOTAL%
	YES%	NO%	YES%	NO%	
Once every week	-	16(35%)	-	30(65%)	46(100%)
Once every 2 weeks	-	16(35%)	-	30(65%)	46(100%)
Once every month	-	16(35%)	-	30(65%)	46(100%)
Once every 6 months	-	16(35%)	3(6%)	27(59%)	46(100%)
Once every year	-	16(35%)	6(13%)	24(52%)	46(100%)
Once every 1 & half year	4(9%)	12(26%)	10(22%)	6(13%)	46(100%)
Once every 2 years	6(13%)	10(22%)	28(61%)	2(4%)	46(100%)
Once every 3 years	10(22%)	6(13%)	30(65%)	-	46(100%)

N=46

Table 3 above shows the frequency of ICT training programmes in two academic libraries under study. According to the respondents as stated in the table, in Uniport library 6% of the respondents accepted that they receive training once every 6 months, 13% said once every 1 year, 22% said once every 1 & half year, 61% said once every 2 years and 65% said once every 3 years. In RSU library, 9% said once every 1 & half year, 13% said once every 2 years and 22% agreed once every 3 years. This indicates that library professional in both academic libraries studied have an irregular ICT training scheme as more than 70% of the respondents accepted that they receive ICT training once every 2 years and 3 years. Therefore, this frequency is not sufficient enough in order to keep abreast with the emerging communication technologies.

The respondents were asked of the impacts of ICT training and job performances of staff in their respective libraries

Table 4: Impacts of ICT training and job performances of library staff

Training received on the use of Computer/internet, OPAC, ILMS, Emails, Smartphones, Database, Networking sites enhanced:	\bar{x}	\pm	Decision
Selection of library resources	2.98	.892	Accept
Ordering of information resources	3.03	.912	Accept
Viewing of publishers' catalogue	3.57	.951	Accept
Purchasing of information resources	3.69	.959	Accept
Cataloguing and Classification	3.88	.968	Accept
Charging and discharging of information resources	2.71	.746	Accept
Keeping daily statistics of users and resources	2.79	.771	Accept
Marketing of library and information products and services	3.68	.898	Accept
Registration of library users	3.64	.952	Accept
Resource preservation	3.78	.965	Accept
CAS and SDI	3.34	.921	Accept
Communication and collaboration	3.76	.946	Accept

N=46, Decision rule: \bar{x} =2.50 and above is Significant

Table 4 above shows the impacts of ICT training and job performances of staff in the academic libraries under study. As represented in the table, the mean scores of all items are above 2.50 in line with the decision rule. This however indicates that ICT training enhances selection of library resources, ordering of information resources, registration of library users, purchasing of information resources, cataloguing and classification, keeping daily statistics of users and resources, viewing of publishers' catalogue, marketing of library and information products and services, resource preservation, Communication and collaboration, CAS and SDI. The study of Enakrire (2019) is also in corroboration with the study. Therefore, training on ICT helped in the transformation of academic library activities from conventional method to digital methods and also led to good number of system librarians who are versed in the use of computer and other devices today.

Table 5: HO: There is no significant impact between the types of ICT training received (Computer/internet, OPAC, ILMS, Emails, Smartphones, Database, Networking sites) and Job performances of library professionals in the Rivers State University and University of Port Harcourt.

Table 5: Pearson correlation of Computer/internet, OPAC, ILMS, Emails, Smartphones, Database, Networking sites and Job performances of library professionals

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Dev	r	Df	Sig	Remark
Computer/internet	46	12.01	4.64	0.942	45	0.000*	Significant
OPAC	46	11.13	4.56	0.814	45	0.000*	Significant
ILMS Software	46	12.08	4.85	0.953	45	0.000*	Significant
Emails	46	11.07	4.55	0.854	45	0.000*	Significant
Smartphones	46	10.04	4.42	0.815	45	0.000*	Significant
Database	46	12.02	4.65	0.943	45	0.000*	Significant
Networking sites	46	11.09	4.52	0.821	45	0.000*	Significant

*Significant at $p < .05$

It is assumed that there is no significant impact between the types of ICT training received (computer/internet, OPAC, ILMS, Emails, Smartphones, Database, Networking sites) and Job performances of library professionals in the Rivers State University and University of Port Harcourt. The study attempted to find out the strength of this assumption. It was found, as presented in table 5, (1a) that there is a strong relationship between training on the use of computer/internet and Job performances of library professionals significant at ($r=0.942$; $p<.05$); (1b) there is a positive relationship between training on the use of OPAC and Job performances of library professionals significant at ($r=0.814$; $p<.05$); (1c) there is a positive relationship between training on the use of ILMS Software and Job performances of library professionals significant at ($r=0.953$; $p<.05$); (1d) there is a positive relationship between training on the use of Emails and Job performances of library professionals significant at ($r=0.854$; $p<.05$); (1e) there is a positive relationship between training on the use of Smartphones and Job performances of library professionals significant at ($r=0.815$; $p<.05$); (1f) there is a positive relationship between training on the use of Databases and Job performances of library professionals significant at ($r=0.943$; $p<.05$); (1g) there is a positive relationship between training on the use of Networking sites and Job performances of library professionals significant at ($r=0.821$; $p<.05$). Hence, HO 1a, 1b, 1c, 1d, 1e, 1f, &1g is rejected. Therefore, there is significant impact between ICT training on the use of computer/internet, OPAC, ILMS, emails, smartphones, databases, networking sites and Job performances of library professionals in the Rivers State University and University of Port Harcourt.

5.0 Conclusion and recommendations

The impact of ICT training on Job performances of library professionals in academic libraries cannot be over-emphasized. Training on ICT equips librarians to discharge of library functions and services effectively in this technological era. The study however identified non-frequent ICT training scheme in the two academic libraries understudy. Most library staff depends on conferences and personal training scheme as the only avenue to acquire ICT skills. Based on these, library administrators are expected to take positive decisions that will enhance this condition and ensure that library professionals are updated with emerging communication technologies. Therefore, it is hoped that if the recommendations proffered are taken, ICT training programmes for library professionals will gradually get blended into library management culture. The study thus recommends:

- i) Policies on capacity building should be formulated. The policy should highlight the benefits of ICT training to increase staff motivation. The training should be organized at least twice a year to ensure efficiency.
- ii) Library professionals should be encouraged to attend ICT seminars, workshops, conferences within and outside the library, and also engage in personal training schemes to develop themselves more.

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