DESK REVIEW OF GENDER IN WORKFORCE DIVERSITY AND EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE OF FAITH BASED ORGANISATIONS

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Abstract:
Employee performance has been a major issue in Faith Based Organizations. Although there has been an effort to solve the problem, the major drive behind the processes in these organizations has been backed by the ‘faith’ aspect thus leaving behind other salient contributors to the performance of Faith Based Organizations. Over time, leadership in Faith Based Organizations has presumed that the available opportunities were to be filled by workers whose efforts were perceived to be more of a call than duty and whose results should be measurable. The big question has been how these organizations can deal with these changes in the workforce without undermining or contravening the religious beliefs, and cultural/behavioral orientation which may lead to attrition and decline in performance. Therefore, due to the foregoing changes in the workforce, this study is envisioned to explore the relationship between employee performance and workforce diversity that is over and above the belief that is faith orientated especially at a point where Faith Based Organizations have ventured into income generating activities that exposes them to equally compete with other competitors in business and fight for the best in the labour market without watering down the base belief of the organization. Over time, the current changes in the workforce with regards to their attitude, skills, interests as well as their relationship with other workers are beyond the control of management especially the bid to make them less impairing to the organizations. It is true that with the changing times religion alone would not be a standalone factor to qualifying employees onboard.

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1. Introduction

Faith Based Organizations just like all other organizations are highly dependent on their workforce, which is composed of individuals from different genders, races, and backgrounds (Ouma & Odero, 2019). A workforce with diverse attributes brings about several benefits in an organizational setting which include increased creativity, innovation, and problem-solving skills. However, handling (managing) a diverse workforce can be challenging, as it can lead to conflicts, misunderstandings, and communication barriers. As a result, Faith Based Organizations worldwide have embraced workforce diversity as a strategic approach to attracting and retaining top talent, improving customer satisfaction, and achieving competitive advantage. There is a significant variation in workforce diversity across different industries and regions within each country. For example, in 2020, women accounted for 47% of the global labor force, with men making up 53% (World Economic Forum, 2021). The United States recorded an increase in 2021 from 17.9% in 2020 of Fortune 500 board seats held by people of color 18.7% (Delloites, 2021).

Workforce diversity entails the differences and similarities among the workforce (Makhdoomi & Nika, 2017). In addition, workforce diversity would also include the demographic characteristics that constitute an organization’s workforce, particularly in terms of age, gender, colour, origin, race, culture, and disability (Dessler, 2011). It is a heterogeneous group of people who accept, understand, respect, and realize each other’s differences (Kundu, Bansal & Chawla, 2015). It also speaks to different people with different backgrounds and understanding who came together to work towards a common goal. Personalities differ due to backgrounds on culture, religion, age, or gender among others. It is this relationship and co-existence that brings about workforce diversity. Diversity brings about different benefits (Goethe & Colina, 2018). It is these benefits that contribute to the overall performance of the organizations. Different scholars have brought about the impact of different effects of diversity in organizations (De Saá-Pérez, et al., 2015).

According to Barney (1991), the resource view of the organizations demonstrates a positive relationship between diversity and employee performance while the social identity theory by Tajfel (1978) puts forward a negative relationship between performance and workforce diversity. Faith Based Organizations have improved immensely over the years to compose a workforce that not only shares common faith but is from different ages, and ethnic backgrounds, with different ethnic groups represented.
2. Workforce Diversity

Workforce diversity is the variation among employees in terms of their gender, age, race, religion, physical abilities, and other characteristics (Parrotta, Pozzoli & Mariola, 2019). Workforce diversity has become increasingly important in Faith Based Organizations as such non-charitable organizations seek to attract and retain top talents. In Nairobi City County, Faith Based Organizations are a major contributor to the local economy, employing a significant number of people from diverse backgrounds (Gitonga, Kamaara & Orwa, 2019). The workforce diversity thus would be measured using age, ethnic diversity, educational diversity, and gender diversity.

Age diversity refers to the presence of individuals from different age groups in a workplace. Age diversity can range from having a mix of older and younger workers to having a wider range of age groups, including baby boomers, generation X, millennials, and generation Z (Gianecchi & Zucchella, 2020). Age diversity yields several benefits in the workplace such as creativity, improved skills for problem-solving as well as enhanced knowledge sharing. Older workers may bring valuable experience and wisdom, while younger workers may bring fresh ideas and technological savvy (Smith, Peetz & Walker, 2019). Age can also help to bridge intergenerational generational gaps as such promote a culture of learning and development as well as succession planning.

Ethnic diversity relates to the case whereby individuals across various backgrounds relating to culture and beliefs work together in a workplace (Abayomi & Yusuff, 2021). Kenya has a diverse population with over 40 ethnic groups, each with its own unique culture and language. It brings different benefits to a workplace such as increased creativity, innovations, and different perspectives. Ethnicity in workplaces in Kenya is encouraged through various government policies and regulations such as Employment Act which prohibits discrimination based on ethnicity among other factors (Wambui, Kamau & Muruki, 2013).

Educational diversity refers to the range of educational backgrounds and levels of formal education among individuals in a workplace. This can include employees with varying levels of education, such as high school diplomas, vocational certificates, bachelor’s, associate’s, doctoral, and master’s degrees. Educational diversity can bring about a range of benefits to a workplace, including problem-solving, a variety of perspectives, and enhanced innovation (Ahmed, Majid & Bibi, 2020). It can also facilitate learning and development opportunities for employees as individuals can learn from each other’s unique educational experiences and backgrounds.

2.1 Gender Diversity

Gender diversity refers to the presence of individuals of different genders, typically male and female (Kyomugisha, 2018). Gender diversity is important in promoting equality and fairness in the workplace, and can also bring a range of benefits, including increased innovation, creativity, and problem-solving as well as improved decision-making and performance (Bosire & Oywer, 2020). Efforts to promote gender diversity in workplaces...
include strategies such as targeted recruitment and retention practices, inclusive policies and practices, and training and education on gender sensitivity and awareness.

A study by Lloren & Parini (2017) brings out the ever-growing reality of the existence of LGBT rights which include and are not limited to lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender, hereafter LGBT especially over the last five decades in Australia, UK, USA, and other European countries. This has prompted the need for organizations to adopt equality initiatives that embrace strategies on diversity management thus creating an environment that builds awareness and condemns discrimination against sexual orientation or gender identity.

As put by Liddle, Luzzo, Hauenstein, & Schuck (2004) workplace environment forms the backbone of any employee recruitment, productivity, stress, and commitment. Previous research findings estimate that approximately eight million people, or 3.5% of the U.S population, identify as LGBT (Gates, 2011) and 30 states have no laws protecting the employment rights of LGBT individuals (Webster, Adams, Maranto, Sawyer, & Thoroughgood, 2018). Further research has also shown that individuals who identify as LGBT face discrimination, hostility, and negative attitudes (homophobia and transphobia) in the workplace, which negatively affects their performance on the job in terms of higher absenteeism and lower productivity (Bonaventura & Biondo, 2016). In a bid to improve favorable work environment, the U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights released new standards of conduct to eliminate discrimination against LGBT employees in the workplace in the year 2017. These anti-discriminatory policies have both societal and economic benefits. For example, formal acceptance of LGBT employees in the workplace makes them feel less anxious, less threatened, and more comfortable (Liddle et al., 2004).

The said standards refer to work environments that are not limited to supporting respect, elimination, and prevention of discrimination, support, and taking a stand for LGBT individuals. Acceptance of LGBT groups would increase the pool of talent from which organizations may draw strategic benefits, and such inclusion results in an increase in diversity in different positions and professional teams within the organization (Barbulescu & Bidwell, 2013). The study by Kendall and Knapp (2020) argues that although promoters of LGBT policies enhance the talent pool and improve firm-level diversity, very little attention has been paid to whether these policies create value for firms. Compared to previous research, this study was subject to potential limitations since it considered large firms in the U.S. thus limiting the ability to generalize other firms and those outside the U.S., or not-for-profit organizations. The study suggests the need to investigate this issue in the context of different types of organizations and this study envisions the possibility of consideration of LBGT groups in Faith Based Organizations.

A study based on a case study from a national public sector organization in the UK provided an analysis of where transsexual persons went through male-to-female gender reassignment. The case was compiled via participant observation and one-on-one interviews with the key players in the process including managers, human resource staff, and colleagues as well as the individual where key issues discussed included the effects...
on trust and relationships at work, harassment, the role of trade unions, training, and other support. It explored the difficulty of gaining acceptance for a transsexual and linked it to the literature on managing diversity. The study was, however, limited to the Public Sector in the UK leaving behind gaps in the need to study the management of transsexuals for management and trade unions whilst being cautious about the extent of acceptance that can be achieved in Faith Based Organizations.

In the recent past, issues transgender has been matters of secret in the Kenyan societal setting but as more issues unfold, transgender groups have come out to speak for themselves. A transgender group would have a different gender identity from what they are typically assigned at birth. Barclay and Scott (2016) expand the argument by stressing that total disclosure of issues transgender may be uncomfortable initially, but it is important as it helps employees work through problems. Research findings by Gates (2012) bring out the deliberate act of concealing one’s transgender status following gender affirmation to be known as ‘going stealth’, and is a strategy chosen by many, but not all, trans individuals (Kendall & Knapp, 2020), further put it that the needs of transgender and the needs of LBG, heterosexual employees are different hence the need for Human Resource Practitioners to carefully consider them.

Gender is an examination and description of a person’s characteristics that may either be found to be female or masculine (McDowell, 2018). Both female and male attributes are found in any workforce. Organizational policies that embrace gender issues would endeavor to strike a balance between the two in the organization and such can be implemented during recruitment and job progression. Positive gender diversity plays an integral role in an organisation in achieving a competitive advantage over other organizations because it can attract both sexes and tap diverse skills and abilities, improving productivity.

On the contrary, psychological and physical differences between the two may affect employee performance owing to the fact that specific roles can be carried out effectively by specific genders which again demoralizes some employees while others consider it as discrimination, thus affecting their ultimate work delivery and Organizational Performance (Sekulic, Spasic, Mirkov, Cavar & Sattler, 2013). Another study on workforce gender diversity and organizational performance revealed that workgroups with a balanced number of genders tend to be more productive than when one gender dominates the group (Hoogendoorn, Oosterbeek & Van Praag, 2013). There is better performance in gender-diverse groups because conflicts are minimized. Organizations that have absorbed females in their management positions improve strategic-level management standards (Sekulic, Spasic, M Mirkov, Cavar & Sattler, 2013). Workforce diversity management practices enhance organizational performance, productivity, effectiveness, and sustained competitiveness (Munjuri & Maina, 2013). Workforce diversity management can be used to bring together people with different ideas and ways of thinking thereby improving performance.

A study by Busolo (2018) concluded that there was a significant relationship between gender diversity and employee performance in the county government of
Bomet. It was, therefore, clear that the county government embraced gender diversity which led to enhanced employee performance. Thus, the study recommended that the county governments adopt gender balance in management positions and gender inclusivity in decision-making. The county governments must also treat employees equally despite their gender, which enhances equality in the county; thus, this will influence employees’ performance. Gender balance should also be considered when the county government appoints employees to senior management positions. This will make all the employees feel like they have equal chances to be appointed to managerial positions, which will motivate them, leading to improved performance. Noting that Faith Based Organizations are keen on keeping to their beliefs, the whole idea is based on the society and communities where these workers are drawn, and with the recent though slowly increasing number of LBGT groups, there is a need to study the relationship between LBGTQ groups and performance with specific reference to Faith Based Organizations.

2.2 Employee Performance
Employee performance refers to the level of productivity, effectiveness, and efficiency demonstrated by an individual employee in their job role. It is the measure of how well an employee is able to meet the expectations and objectives set by their employer and is often evaluated through a combination of qualitative and quantitative measures such as sales figures, customer satisfaction ratings attendance records, and performance reviews. Employee performance and work diversity are closely related (Adeleke & Misati, 2019).

Some researchers have shown that workforce diversity can improve the performance of employees and overall organizational success for example, Brendl and Neck, 2018 discovered that employee performance, organization commitment, and job satisfaction in Australia can be improved by diversity. This is because diversity is associated with problem-solving skills and increased innovation benefits while making decisions in an organization (Mogambi & Ndetei, 2020). Additionally, diverse teams have been found to be more adaptable to change and to better understand the needs of diverse customer bases.

2.3 Faith Based Organizations (FBOs)
Faith Based Organizations (FBOs) have long played a role in international development, and are increasingly involved in social and environmental sustainability initiatives. According to a study by Awuoche (2015), FBOs influence the democratization process in Kenya and participate in matters that directly affect the common man in Kenya. They also provide various social, educational, healthcare, and charitable services to the communities while also promoting religious values and beliefs. Kenya has a diverse religious landscape with Christianity, Islam, and Indigenous African religions being the major faiths practiced. FBOs in Kenya are registered under the Registrar of Societies and are involved in social services, education, healthcare, community development, advocacy and social justice, and religious influence.
According to a report by World Bank, Faith Based Organizations (FBOs) are entities dedicated to specific religious identities, often including a social or moral component. The Bank recognizes its distinct strategic value given its unique attributes, including the fact that more than 80% of the world’s population claims religious affiliation. FBOs are found in every country and offer opportunities for partnership and advocacy on a broad range of key development issues.

The World Bank has sustained engagement with FBOs over the years and has recently worked to engage FBOs more strategically in an effort to foster greater operational collaboration and partnerships to address complex challenges. In many parts of Africa, for example, Christian organizations and agencies have long been involved in development work, driven by charitable impulses, evangelical zeal, and, to some extent, by complicity with the colonial machine. Such work began with mission stations that offered schools and health clinics, and expanded over time beyond education and health care to include agriculture, water supply programs, and many other projects (Zhuwao, 2017). Because faith is understood to be more powerful than governments or science, churches can become relevant entry points to the communities. Christianity and other religions also determine the behavior towards the environment in Kenya (Watson and Kochore, 2012).

3. Problem Statement

Faith Based Organizations are a crucial contributor to Kenya’s economy playing a vital role in policy development and creating employment opportunities. As the organizations continue to grow, Faith Based Organizations suffer numerous challenges in attracting and retaining top talent, increasing customer satisfaction, and achieving competitive advantage. In terms of skills, the organizations face a shortage of trained and experienced workers, with many organizations’ struggling to fill highly skilled positions such as Doctors and Engineers (Saxena, 2021).

A study by Anyango and Oluoch (2019) sought to determine the influence of gender, ethnicity, religion, and education diversity on the performance of Kisumu Law courts, Kenya. Overtime diversity has proven to be an important tool in ensuring organizational productivity however, it must be well managed to achieve performance. According to the study, gender difference as associated with performance. Adequate and proper gender inclusion fosters a conducive working condition that brings out diversity in gender to promote teamwork and hence improve the workforce thus increasing the desired yield. Gender balance in the organization was shown to improve the achievement of the organizational objectives. This is because gender diversity increases diversity innovations; creativity and change of ideas that help boost the effectiveness of most organizations. The study recommended the following:

a) That regulations and policies should be initiated in organizations that promote workforce diversity such as gender balance during recruitment, ethnic balancing,
reward system, and respect for each other’s religion in order to enhance good working relationships and the environment.
b) That managers responsible for policy implementation should ensure a good working environment and promote organizational culture because a lack of it would lead to discrimination that results in organizational conflicts and hence performance is hampered as a result of ethnic divisions.
c) That trainings can be organized touching on workplace diversity and teamwork in order to bridge any ethnic groupings which may impact the organizational performance negatively.
d) That more emphasis and attention should be put on education because lack of it means that there is a knowledge gap that needs to be filled and as such work is hampered with.
e) That owing to the different findings from the researcher, it is not automatic that research finding from a study would be adopted for implementation by other NGOs. As such workplace diversity issues are unique to specific organizations thus HR practitioner must study their organizations and develop strategies that would manage their specific diverse workforce in order to achieve optimum performance outcomes.

Of importance to note on the limitations of the study included the fact that the study was limited to only High Court in Kenya. This study only dwelt on secondary data as a means of gathering information. The study also looked at the demographic diversity variables and factored in a longitudinal research design that was time-consuming because of the large amounts of data required as well as the accuracy of the data may not be heavily relied on.

This study brings about the need for a study to establish the effect of cognitive diversity variables on the performance of the Organizations, the need for further study in sectors other than High Courts of Kenya to enable comparability, the need to consider primary and secondary data to improve on the accuracy of the data collected and the need to consider the use of cross-sectional survey as it is not costly and time-consuming because the data collected is specific and is done only once.

While this study looks at gender in Work Force Diversity and Employee Performance of Non-Governmental Organizations. The article under review is drawn from Kenya specifically looking at Gender diversity management and Employee Performance among Non-Governmental Organizations, a context that is similar to the current study topic and area of study. However, the current study desires to look at selected Faith Based Organizations.

A study by Kipsang (2022), sought to establish the workforce diversity management practices adopted by Centre for Health Solutions in Nairobi, Kenya. The researcher analyzed the relationship between workforce diversity management and employee performance at Centre for Health Solutions in Nairobi, Kenya. This groundbreaking work was published within the last 5-10 years. Since the year 2022 as the year of study, a lot has changed in relation to workforce diversity. In this period, the
writer looks at diverse aspects such as race, education, culture, gender, and age and recommends that human resource managers develop policies that support workforce diversity management.

Whilst this is true, over time organizations can have the best policies as well as implementation strategies but not achieve 100% resulting in a part of the staff team that is still left out or feels alienated. The aim of workforce diversity management is to manage the forms of identity dereferences within a given group, but still owing to the volatile nature of work and its diverse nature, looking at their perspective, experiences, and abilities. The policies in the plan should seek to promote the inclusion of individuals irrespective of their indifference. Whilst this study recommends that human resource managers should review the existing workforce diversity practices to ensure they are well aligned with the organizational strategic goals, they should leverage the diversity in employees so as to enhance their performance at the place of work and the need for NGOs to develop policies to guide workforce diversity management was paramount for further studies, especially in Faith Based Organizations.

Zhuwao, Ngirande, Ndlovu, and Setati (2019) researched on how the performance of employees in South African higher education institutions is impacted by gender diversity. The results indicated an important and direct association between gender diversity and the performance of employees. The result is based on South African higher education institution’s context which may not apply to hotels in Nairobi. Muange and Kiptoo (2020) probe educational diversity and employee performance in selected Kenyan Universities. Educational diversity exhibited a directly important influence on performance after the variables were regressed. Unlike this study which was based on universities in Kenya, this study will concentrate on Faith Based Organizations. This study concept paper seeks to explore the relationship between workforce diversity and employee performance.

3.1 Objectives of the Study
This study was guided by a general objective as well as specific objectives.

3.1.1 General Objective
The main aim of this research is to determine the influence of gender in workforce diversity on the productivity of employees in Faith Based Organizations.

3.1.2 Specific Objectives
1) To establish the effect of LBTQ groups on employee performance of Faith Based Organizations,
2) To study the relationship between male gender and employee performance of Faith Based Organizations,
3) Demonstrate the relationship between female gender and employee performance of Faith Based Organizations,
To establish the impact of transgender groups on employee performance of Faith Based Organizations,

To study the impact of intersex groups on the performance of Faith Based Organizations.

4. Theoretical Literature

There are different theories of workforce diversity management on employee performance in the workplace. This study will focus on the key theories related to the research topic. These will include the different theories on social categorization, similarity and attraction, stereotyping, and prejudicing theories.

4.1 Theory of Social Categorization

The theory of social categorization was introduced by Tajfel & Turner (1986) and it proposes that individuals tend to categorize themselves and others into groups based on observable characteristics, such as age, gender, ethnicity, and social class. These groups form the basis of social identity and can have a significant impact on behavior, attitudes, and social interaction. The theory suggests that people tend to favor their in-groups and show bias against out-groups, which can lead to intergroup conflict and discrimination (Hogg & Terry, 2000).

It also highlights the importance of recognizing the potential biases and limitations that arise from social categorization and the need for strategies to promote intergroup cooperation and understanding. Social categorization theory is concerned with how people categorize themselves and others in terms of personal and social identity and how this categorization affects group dynamics and social interactions (Brewer & Kramer, 1985). The theory suggests that social identity can have a significant impact on individual behavior, attitudes, and performance, particularly in a group context.

The theory suggests people categorize themselves based on observable characteristics such as gender, age, ethnicity and other demographic features which form the framework for understanding the role of social identity in shaping workplace dynamics and promoting diversity is an essential strategy for addressing potential biases and limitations that can arise from social categorization. Hence its relevance to this study.

4.2 Similarity/Attraction Theory

This theory was introduced by Newcomb in 1963. Similarity theory is a social psychological theory that suggests that people are attracted to other people who have similar characteristics to them. The theory posits that individuals seek out and form relationships with those who share similar attitudes, beliefs, values, and interests. This is because similarity provides a sense of familiarity, validation, and reinforcement of one’s own beliefs and self-concept (Bryne, 1971).

According to the similarity-attraction theory, individuals are more likely to form relationships with other who share similar demographic characteristics such as age,
gender, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status. This is because people tend to assume that those who share similar characteristics will also share similar attitudes and beliefs. The theory has important implications for understanding interpersonal relationship in various contexts, including romantic relationship, friendships, and workplace, interaction. In the workplace, for example, the similarity-attraction theory suggests that individuals are more likely to form relationships with co-workers who share similar demographic characteristics and work-related attitudes and values (Montoya, Horton & Kirchner, 2008). This can have both inverse and direct effects on workplace dynamics and performance. One positive side similarly can facilitate communication, collaboration and cooperation among team members, leading to increased job satisfaction and productivity while on the other hand negative side similarity can also lead to groupthink and resistance to diversity and new ideas, which can limit innovation.

4.3 Stereotyping and Prejudiced Theory
This theory was introduced by Allport (1954). The theory refers to a social psychological perspective that explains how people form attitudes and beliefs about individuals and groups based on their membership in certain categories or social groups. Stereotypes are cognitive representations that people use to categorize and simply information about social groups (Devine, 1989). Prejudice refers to the negative attitudes and emotions that people hold towards members of a particular social group, based solely on their membership in that group, according to this theory, people tend to rely on stereotype as cognitive shortcuts to make sense of complex social information (Dovidio & Gaertner, 2004). Stereotyping can lead to biased judgments’, discrimination, negative behaviors towards members of particular social groups. Prejudice can also arise as a result of intergroup conflict, perceived threats, or social norms (Dovidio, Gaertner & Kawakami, 2003). The theory of stereotyping and prejudice has been influential in understanding a wide range of social phenomena, including racism, sexism and homophobia. It has also been used to develop strategies for reducing prejudice and promoting positive intergroup relations.

5. Empirical Literature
The study was based on a desk review of gender diversity and employee performance.

5.1 Gender Diversity and Employee Performance
According to Bonaventura and Biondo (2016), examined how the financial performance of hospitality firms in USA is affected by gender diversity, using publicly traded hospitality firms a sample of 322. Using multiple regression analysis their results indicated that the performance of hospitality was important and positively affected by gender diversity. Hospitality firms in USA were the major concern of their study. The study was done in a different context. This study considered Faith Based Organisations.
Zhuwao, Ngirande, Ndlovu, and Setati (2019) researched how performance of employees in South African higher education institutions is impacted by gender diversity, using a cross-sectional research design, 258 samples were chosen using simple stratified sampling techniques. Primary data was used, a Pearson product-moment and multiple regression were used and the results indicated an important and direct association of gender diversity and the performance of employees. The result is based on South African higher education institution’s context which may not apply to Faith Based Organizations.

Mungai (2021) also examined the performance of employees in Private Christian universities in Kiambu County, Kenya by gender from a sample of 60 respondents, questionnaires were used to gather data. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze data and the results revealed important and direct correlation. Kiambu County’s private Christian universities were the main focus of this study. The context was in the universities but the current study was on Faith Based Organizations.

6. Findings and Conclusion

From the literature reviewed, there is a correlation between employee performance and gender diversity dimensions on employee performance. Gender diversity is an important aspect of work diversity.

6.1 Recommendations

That correlation between employee performance and diversity dimensions is a result of organizations’ gender diversity management. Other diversity aspects should be studied such as education diversity among the staff, recognizing social diversity among staff, age diversity management, appreciation of persons with disabilities, religious diversity management, marital status, personal experience, compensation policy, and equal employment opportunities to everybody. Faith Based Organizations should give workforce diversity a try to not only boost their visibility but also to improve their performance as well as a competitive advantage in this ever-changing, complex, and volatile business environment.

Conflict of Interest Statement

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