

Original Article

Organizational Justice and Employee Commitment: Evidence from University Of Benin

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Abstract - The aim of the study is to examine the role of organizational justice on employee commitment in Nigerian Universities. The objective of the study is to investigate the relationship between distributive justice, interactional justice and procedural justice, and employee commitment of the non-academic staff of Nigerian Universities. This study employs a survey research instrument through the administration of questionnaires to the non-academic staff of the University of Benin (UNIBEN), Edo State of Nigeria. The data for the study is analyzed using ordinary multiple regression. The results from the OLS regressions reveal that distributive justice has a positive and a significant relationship with employee commitment with a p -value < 0.05 , interactive justice has a positive and insignificant relationship with employee commitment with p -value > 0.05 and procedural justice has a positive and a significant relationship with employee commitment with p -value < 0.05 . Therefore, the study recommends that management should ensure that distributive justice is in practice in the education industry so as to enhance the commitment level of employees.

Keywords - Distributive Justice, Employment Commitment, Interactive Justice, organizational Justice, and Procedural Justice.

I. INTRODUCTION

Employee commitment is important because high levels of commitment lead to several favorable organizational outcomes (Dalal, 2005). The pursuit of a more global understanding of the means by which employee commitment develops is critical and warrants an investigation into the relationships among the variables in employee empowerment locus of control and organizational commitment (Imran, Majeed & Ayub, 2015). Adekola (2012) is of the view that an employee commitment is a positive evaluation of the organization's success goals (Adekola, 2012). Arthur (1999:670), "claims that the commitment approach of employees' development, involvement, participation, and long-term orientation are considered to be the significant means of increasing human resource productivity and positive outcomes". Moreover, "employee commitment can

improve employees' performance and raise organizational overall competitiveness and objectives if the management of the organization always engages staffs in the decision-making process with the positive contribution" (Negin, Omid & Ahmad, 2013:164). The commitment of employees leads to increased organizational performance when the employees are actively participating in various aspects of the organization (Godard & Delaney, 2000). Luthan (2005) opines that when employees are involved in decision making, staff absenteeism is reduced, there's greater organizational commitment, improved performance, reduced turnover, and greater job satisfaction.

Organizational justice is the employees' evaluation of how the organization relates with members fairly or unfairly according to the principle of fairness (Demirel & Yucel, 2013). Organizational justice is seen as a fundamental requirement for the effective functioning of organizations in terms of employee involvement decision-making process (Akanbi & Ofoegbu, 2013). In an organization that is fair and just in its procedures, policies, interactions, and distribution systems, employees of that organization give better responses to the commitment of the organization. Enhancing organizational justice brings about improved outcomes from employees. Management of academic institutions has to take actions to improve employees' job satisfaction and organizational commitment and reduce employees' turnover intention with the help of distributive and procedural justice (Elanain, 2009). Demirel and Yucel (2013:26), "are of the opinion that organizational justice is the combination of employee's attitudes to their organizations as a result of comparison of expected outcomes by employees in exchange for their contributions to their own organization with expected outcomes by the employees of other organizations". However, "organizational justice is very important that an organization gives to an employee for contributing to the organizational success" (Demirel & Yucel, 2013:27). The level of organizational justice to the employee influences their level of organizational commitment directly.



According to Imran, Majeed, and Ayub (2015:840), “employees are a true asset for any organization and every organization wants to get the maximum benefit from its resources”. They are of the view that employees can only perform well if they are satisfied with the organization and this happens if there is organizational justice. Ajala (2015:92), “adds that the presence of economic institutionalization of work environment creates some challenges encountered such as ineffectiveness, straitjacketing of workers and reduced innovation makes management look for the corollary points of sense of duty (organizational justice) as operation parameters in the workplace for greater benefits of trust and commitment of staffers”. To achieve this goal effectively it is necessary to strengthen the employee commitment. One of the main conditions of fulfilling this task is to keep the organizational commitment of workers at a higher level (Spatz, 2000). This study outcome and work attitude are related to what is being called organizational justice. Thus, this study tries to look at the role of organizational justice towards the development of commitment among employees from Nigerian Universities.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES FORMULATION

A. The Concept of Employee Commitment

Employee commitment is a business issue that needed attention in a highly competitive business environment (Demirel & Yucel, 2013). Organizational commitment anchored on increased employee tenure, low turnover rate, low training costs, improved job satisfaction, achievement of organizational goals, improved quality of product and service, organizational support, financial reward, communication, promotion prospects, and leadership styles (Salami & Omole, 2005). Demirel and Yucel (2013:28), “are of the view that employee commitment is an internalization of organizations’ objectives and goals, beliefs and values by employees and the desire of being loyal, staying for the organization, and keeping of organizations membership”.

Employee commitment is the psychological attachment of employees to their organization in the course of discharging their responsibility (Chen, 2002). Akintayo (2010:1), “adds that if employees are well satisfied and develop a high degree of satisfaction with their jobs, then they are more likely to be committed to the organization than in the case of those who are not satisfied with their jobs due to the same factors”. Negin, Omid and Ahmad (2013:165), “state that there are increasing adverse effects of employee non-commitment to decisions taken will kill the interest of employees, the organization and its effects on productivity and

performance, management of the organizations are now beginning to involve employees in decision-making”. In other words, organizational commitment can improve employees’ performance and raise organizational overall competitiveness and objectives if the management of the organization always engages staff in the decision-making process with positive contributions. More so, Qaisar, Rehman, and Sufyan (2012:248), “documented that the three dimensions of employee commitment (affective, normative and continual) are more likely to influence the performance and job satisfaction of employees”. Therefore, employee commitment that is based on affection refers to the employee’s emotional attachment to organizational goals and objectives. With respect to normative commitment, is the employee’s feeling of obligation to continue employment, while continuance commitment reflects an awareness of the costs of leaving the organization (Demirel & Yucel, 2013).

III. OVERVIEW OF ORGANISATIONAL JUSTICE

Organizational justice has been seen as a driver of employees’ commitment in the purpose of achieving the goals of the organization (Rahman, Shahzad, Mustafa, Khan & Qurashi, 2016). In the same vein, organizational justice is the issue of employees’ feelings towards the organization in the manner in which fair treatment is given to them by an organization or its agents (Shalhoop, 2003). Demirel and Yucel (2013:27), “see organizational justice as the assessment of individual employees’ on whether the organization treats them fairly or unfairly in the pursuance of the organizational goals. It the perception of gains obtained by employees from the organization in exchange for their contributions to the organization”. However, organizational justice is based on trust which the employees perceive to be fairly treated by their supervisor (Williams, Pitre & Zainuba, 2002). Gbadamosi and Nwosu (2011:206), “studied the effect of entrepreneurial intention, organizational justice, and job satisfaction on the organizational commitment of Babcock University Staff”. Simple random sampling technique was used to sample 180 employees from 4 faculties and the registry unit of the University. “They found out that job satisfaction and organizational justice and organizational commitment were positively related and entrepreneurial intentions lead to increase employees’ turnover”.

IV. DIMENSIONS OF ORGANISATIONAL JUSTICE

A. Distributive Justice

Distributional justice as a dimension of organizational justice is a factor influencing the attitudes of the employee towards organizations (McFarlin & Sweeney, 1992). That is, “distributive justice is the distribution of outcomes and resources in relation to employees’ performance and job satisfaction in the workplace” (Cropanzano & Folger, 1989:293). Moreover, organizational justice is therefore a basic requirement for the effective functioning of organizations and the personal commitment of the individuals they employ (McFarlin & Sweeney, 1992). Employee perception of organizational justice in terms of fair decision outcomes (distributive justice) is based on their level of commitment (Akanbi & Ofoegbu, 2013). Akanbi and Ofoegbu (2013) studied the role of organizational justice on organizational commitment in a multinational organization in Nigeria. The objective of the study was to examine the significant relationship between distributive justice and employee commitment. It would be revealed from the empirical evidence that distributive justice had a significant impact on the organizational commitment of employees. This, therefore, means that organizational justice in terms of distributive and employee commitment was positively related.

Also, Raza, Adnan, Nosheen, Qadir, and Rana (2013) did conduct a study on the relationship between distributive justice and organizational commitment of the employee. It would reveal from the findings that distributive justice had a significant positive effect on employee commitment. This implies that fairness in the process of allocation of rewards enhances the employee's level of commitment to the organization. In the same vein, Rahman, Shahzad, Mustafa, Khan, and Qurashi (2016:188), “studied the effects of organizational justice on organizational commitment”. “They made use of cross-sectional research design through the administration of questionnaires to a sample size of 500 employees of Abdul Wali Khan University, University of Peshawar and Hazara University in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan”. It would be revealed from the regression results that procedural justice had a significant positive effect on the organizational commitment of the employees. This means that equal distribution of resources among the employee would significantly enhance the employee’s level of commitment to the organization.

Similarly, Gichira, Were, and Orwa (2016:1), “conducted an empirical study on the relationship between perceptions of distributive justice and employee commitment in health sector non-governmental organizations in Kenya”. They made use of descriptive and correlational research designs in the study. The study administered the questionnaire to 195 employees in 17 health sectors of non-governmental organizations. It would be revealed from the empirical evidence that study a

significant relationship exists between distributive justice and employee commitment in health sector non-governmental organizations in Kenya. This, therefore, means that fairness in the distribution of resources within the employees of the health sector among the non-governmental organizations brings about a high level of employee commitment in the attainment of the goals and objectives of the organizations. Based on the review of literature, the following hypothesis was formulated to be tested: *H1: There is a significant relationship between distributive justice and employee commitment of the non-academic staff of Nigerian Universities.*

B. Interactional Justice

Interactional justice theory is the purview of the allocative decision process of organizational resources (Staley, Dastoor, Magner & Stolp, 2003). Therefore interactional justice refers to the interpersonal side of the decision-making process on the principle of fairness. Aryee, S (2002:267), “did a study on trust as a mediator of the relationship between organizational justice and work outcomes”. “The results of the study showed that a positive relationship was found between interactional justice and organizational commitment”. Demirel and Yucel (2013:26), “studied the relationship between organizational justice and organizational commitment”. The study employed a convenience sampling technique in the collection of data. Questionnaires were administered to 261 employees from two the industry and the manufacturing firms. The result showed that interactive justice, distributive justice, and procedural justice were positively related to employee commitment of the different commitment dimensions.

Fariha, Sardar, and Mozafar (2013:696), “examined the relationship between organizational justice and organizational commitment of the staff of Directorate of Youth and Sport of Chahar Mahal Va Bakhtiari and found that distributive justice, procedural justice, and interactional justice had a significant relationship with an organizational commitment of employee”. This means that interpersonal relationships that existed in the organization would significantly lead to a high level of employee commitment to the set goals of the organization. Also, Ajala (2015:92), “carried a study on the influence of organizational justice on employees' commitment in manufacturing firms in the Oyo State of Nigeria”. “The study employed a descriptive survey research design through the administration of questionnaire to two hundred and fifty (250) employees which were randomly selected from five manufacturing firms from industrial estates in Ibadan, Oyo States”. The empirical findings from the multiple regression analysis showed that a significant positive relationship exists between interactional justice and procedural justice and

organizational commitment of the employee. Based on the review of literature, the following hypothesis was formulated to be tested: *H2: There is a significant relationship between interactional justice and employee commitment of the non-academic staff of Nigerian Universities.*

C. Procedural Justice

Procedural justice is the fairness of procedures designed in the implementation of strategic decisions (Cropanzano & Greenberg, 1997). Jahangir, Akbar, and Begum (2006:21), “are of the opinion that the unjust treatment of employee or perceptions of procedural justice of the organization make the employee leave the organization”. Tepper and Taylor, (2003) state that procedural justice is a form of organizational justice that is based on the fairness of the management of the organization to make decisions relating to the allocation of resources. This shows that the organizations have to evaluate the performance of employees on the principle of fairness in their management of employees. Ding and Lin (2006) add that procedural justice is the fairness in the allocation of decision-making. However, procedural justice is the degree to which those affected by allocation decisions perceive them to have been made according to fair methods and guidelines (Niehoff & Moorman, 1993). Jahangir, Akbar, and Begum (2006) documented that procedural justice has a significant positive relationship with organizational commitment. Nazim and Shahid (2012:201), “studied the relationship between organizational justice and organizational commitment and turnover intentions. It would be documented from the study that distributive justice and procedural justice had a significant relationship with organizational commitment and turnover intentions”. “This implies that the equal distribution of resources and consistency in the procedures undergo in the decision-making process would lead to a high level of employee commitment to the organizations”.

Similarly, Rahman, Shahzad, Mustafa, Khan, and Qurashi (2016:188), “studied the effects of organizational justice on organizational commitment”. They made use of cross-sectional research design through the administration of questionnaires to a sample size of 500 employees of Abdul Wali Khan University, University of Peshawar, and Hazara University in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. It would be revealed from the regression results that procedural justice had a significant positive effect on the organizational commitment of the employees. This shows that the level of consistency and accuracy in the decision-making process significantly lead to the organizational commitment of the employees. Akoh and Amah (2016) investigated the relationship between procedural justice and employees’

commitment in the Rivers State of Nigeria. A survey questionnaire was administered to 103 employees of six (6) private hospitals registered with the state Ministry of Health. The empirical findings from the Spearman rank correlation coefficient showed that a significant positive relationship exists between procedural justice and employees’ commitment to supervisors. This in other words means that employees easily identify with supervisors that implement fair procedures than those that do not and employees evaluate their organizations’ justice climate to identify procedural injustice by comparing policies of different organizations. Based on the review of literature, the following hypothesis was formulated to be tested: *H3: There is a significant relationship between procedural justice and employee commitment of the non-academic staff of Nigerian Universities.*

V. REVIEW OF RELATED THEORY

The theory of employee commitment and organizational justice is discussed below:

A. Equity Theory

The equity theory was propounded by Adams in the year, 1965, which proposes that employees in the workplace are motivated to maintain fair and equitable relationships among themselves and to avoid those relationships that are unfair or inequitable in the course of carrying their job assignment. The theory states that individuals compare their performance and inputs with those of others and appraise whether there is fairness in the relationships in ratios. The comparative can be within the organization which is based on internal equity or based on the rating of other organizations which is tied to external equity. Equity theory has been conceptualized in three-dimensional organizational justice (distributive justice, procedural justice, and interactional justice (McDowall & Fletcher, 2004). Adams (1965) argues distributive justice is seen as a social exchange process whereby the employees bring certain inputs to an organization (education, effort, experience) in the attainment of the organizational objectives and goals and thereby rewarded in form of pay, promotion, and intrinsic satisfaction.

B. Meyer and Allen Multi-Dimension Theory

This theory is propounded by Meyer and Allen in the year, 1990. The theory states that employee commitment is based on three simultaneous behavior in the dimension of affective, normative, and continuance commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1990). This theory assumes that desire, obligation, and cost are some of the key components

of an employee's commitment. However, employees with a strong affective, normative, and continuance commitment to the organization have the mind to stay for a long time because they want to contribute positively to the growth of the organization (Jaros, 1997).

C. Side- Bet Theory

Becker's side-bet theory of 1960 shows the relationship between an employee and the organization which is based on behaviors tied to the contract of economic gains. Therefore, employees are committed to the goals and objectives of the organization because they have investments and also possess economic gain which is seen as a side-bets. Becker stressed that side bets are on the basis of time, effort, pay, benefits, and so on. The greater the investment in any of these side bets, the possibility of the employee to stay in the organization because of the threat of losing these investments, along with a perceived lack of alternatives to replace or make up for their loss, commits the person to the organization (Griffin & Hepburn, 2005). Therefore, the employees' perceived cost of leaving the organization is high, the side bets have to serve in order to increase the employee's intent to stay in the organization (Liou & Nyhan, 1994).

D. Theories Adapted for the Study

The study adopts Meyer and Allen Multi-Dimension theory which is based on the dimensions of employee commitment in an organization. According to the theory, employees must possess a strong feeling in his/her commitment to the organization as well as having the mind to stay for a long time because they want to contribute positively to the growth of the organization. Therefore, employee commitment includes increased employee tenure, low turnover rate, low training costs, improved job satisfaction, achievement of organizational goals, improved quality of product and service, organizational support, financial reward, communication, promotion prospects, and leadership styles.

VI. METHODOLOGY

A. Research Design

The study adopts a cross-sectional research survey design. The survey research design enables the researcher to provide answers to the stated research questions and objectives as stated in the study and gather information (Kerlinger, 1986). The selection of a research design is dependent on the nature and the extent of the information the researcher intends to obtain for the given study. Therefore, the population of the study was made up of the entire university non-academic staff of the University of Benin, Nigeria. The study used a simple random sampling technique to a non-

academic staff of management sciences including the Dean's office. The sample size was obtained using the exact population size. The total number of non-academic staff in the Accounting department is = 6, Banking and Finance department is 20, Business Administration is 17, Entrepreneurship is 6, and Dean's office is 21 (Dean's Office, 2017) staff bringing the total to 70. Consequently, the sample size is seventy (70).

B. Model Specification

To examine the role of organizational justice on employee commitment, an ordinary least square regression model is specified. An ordinary least square regression model is one that seeks to explain change or variation in the value of one variable called the dependent variable on the basis of changes in other variables known as the independent or explanatory variables. The model assumes that the dependent variable is a linear function of the independent variables. The multivariate regression model with an error term (ϵ_t) is specified in an econometric form in the model as represented below:

$$ECMIT_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 ORGJ_i + \epsilon_{it} \dots\dots\dots (1)$$

This is re-written in equation (2)

$$ECMIT_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 DJUS_i + \beta_2 IJUS_i + \beta_3 PJUS_i + \epsilon_{it} \dots\dots\dots (2)$$

Where

ECMIT = Employee commitment

DJUS = Distributive justice

IJUS = Interactive justice

PJUS = Procedural justice

C. The Research Instrument

The research instrument for the study is a questionnaire. The items to be generated would be based on the research questions raised for the study. In particular, the questionnaire instrument, which was administered to the selected sample representatives were divided into two (2) sections from (A-B), Section A was made up of background questions item on the representatives of the institutions. Section B consisted of five (5) questions each rated on a 5-point Likert scale. Reliability is concerned with the ability of an instrument to measure consistently. The reliability of an instrument is closely associated with its validity (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011). The internal reliability of the items would be verified by computing the Cronbach's alpha. The reliability of

data pertaining to the variables would be designated through Cronbach's Alpha coefficient which would be a value between 0 and 1 (Bayram, 2004). A Cronbach Alpha (α) value greater or equal to 0.70 was used to justify the reliability of the research instrument. The reliability tests were utilized to evaluate the validity and internal consistency of the structured questions.

The pilot survey conducted shows that six questions (6) out of the seven (7) questions structured are reliable for measuring employee commitment with a Cronbach alpha value of 0.711, four questions (4) out of the six (6) questions structured are reliable for measuring distributive justice with a Cronbach alpha value of 0.709, five questions (5) out of the seven (7) questions structured are reliable for measuring interactive justice with a Cronbach alpha value of 0.710 and five questions (5) out of the six (6) questions structured are reliable for measuring procedural justice with a Cronbach alpha value of 0.812. The Cronbach alpha value of above 7.0 justified the reliability of the question constructs for measuring the variables.

D. Methods of Data Analysis

The statistical tool that is employed in this study is ordinary least square regression (OLS). The OLS regression techniques were used to test the significant impact of the variables. The data were analyzed with the use of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 21 and EViews 8.0 econometric software.

VII. PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

The study employed ordinary least square regression technique to empirically verify the formulated hypotheses and the result is presented in table 1 below;

Table 1: OLS Regression Result

Variables	Coefficient (beta)	t-test	Sig
C	0.6123	2.7064	0.0083
DJUS	0.1790	4.1708	0.0001
IJUS	0.0814	1.8996	0.0611
PJUS	0.6780	12.6592	0.0000

Source: Author's Compilation, 2018

$R^2 = 0.744144$

Adjusted $R^2 = 0.734428$

F-statistic = 76.58932

Prob (F-stat.) = 0.000000

Durbin Watson = 1.530563

It was observed from the table that the coefficient of determination (adj. R^2) value of 0.734428 accounted for 73% of the systematic variations among the sampled opinion that were jointly explained by distributive justice, interactive justice, and procedural justice while the remaining 17% was captured by error term. The F-statistic value of 76.58932 and its associated p-value of 0.000000 showed that a significant linear relationship exists between organizational justice and employee commitment. The Durbin Watson value of 1.530563 revealed the presence of serial autocorrelation in the regression results but was irrelevant due to the nature of the data employed for the study.

More importantly, it would be revealed from OLS regressions results that distributive justice (DJUS) has a positive and significant relationship with employee commitment (ECMIT) at a 1% level of significance. This means that we were 99% confidence level that distributive justice would significantly increase the level of employee commitment. The positive coefficient of 0.1790 accounted for an 18% increase in the level of employee commitment. This in other words means the proper distribution of resources among the level of staff in the organizations would significantly lead to increased employee commitment. The significant relationship of distributive justice was because the variable passed the individual test of significance where $\beta_1 < 0.05$. Also, interactive justice (IJUS) has a positive and insignificant relationship with employee commitment (ECMIT) even at a 5% level of significance. The positive coefficient of 0.0814 accounted for an 8% increase in the level of employee commitment but was statistically insignificant. This in other words means that interactive justice was not an organizational justice dimension that would significantly influence employee commitment. The insignificant relationship of interactive justice was because the variable failed the individual test of significance where $\beta_1 > 0.05$. Interestingly, procedural justice (PJUS) has a positive and significant relationship with employee commitment (ECMIT) at a 1% level of significance. This means that we were 99% confidence level that procedural justice would significantly increase the level of employee commitment. The positive coefficient of 0.6780 accounted for a 68% increase in the level of employee commitment. This in other words means that proper procedure in resources allocation among the level of staff in the organizations would significantly lead to increased employee commitment. The significant relationship of procedural justice was because the variable passed the individual test of significance where $\beta_1 < 0.05$.

A. Discussions of Findings

The OLS regressions results showed that distributive justice has a positive and a significant relationship with employee commitment at a 1% level of significance. The finding was consistent with the findings of Gichira, Were, and Orwa (2016) that distributive justice has a significant relationship with employee commitment. The findings of Akanbi and Ofoegbu (2013) also supported the results that distributive justice had a significant impact on the organizational commitment of employees. The study, therefore, suggested that we should accept the hypothesis that there is a significant relationship between distributive justice and employee commitment of the non-academic staff of Nigerian Universities. Interactive justice has a positive and insignificant relationship with employee commitment even at a 5% level of significance. The finding was contrary to the findings of Ajala (2015) that interactional justice has a significant positive relationship with employee commitment. The study, therefore, suggested that we should reject the hypothesis that there is a significant relationship between interactive justice and employee commitment of the non-academic staff of Nigerian Universities. Procedural justice has a positive and significant relationship with employee commitment at a 1% level of significance. The finding was consistent with the findings of Khan and Qurashi (2016) that procedural justice had a significant positive effect on the organizational commitment of the employees. The findings of Shahzad, Mustafa, Khan, and Qurashi (2016) studied also support the results. The study, therefore, suggested that we should accept the hypothesis that there is a significant relationship between procedural justice and employee commitment of the non-academic staff of Nigerian Universities.

VIII. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The study examines the role of organizational justice on employee commitment in Nigerian Universities. Employee commitment is a positive evaluation of the organization's success goals. Employee commitment helps to improve employees' performance and raise organizational overall competitiveness and objectives if the management of the organization always engages staff in the decision-making process with positive contributions. Organizational justice is seen as a fundamental requirement for the effective functioning of organizations in terms of employee involvement decision-making process. Therefore, organizations need committed workers in order to face the recent economic challenges in the country and also to give them a sustainable competitive edge by being able to respond, adapt or change to keep pace with rapid technological and education advancements,

workforce diversity, organizational restructuring and the new improved ways of doing business

A. Recommendation

In line with the above subject matter, the recommendations below become absolutely necessary. Therefore the recommendations are made accordingly:

- (i) The study, therefore, recommends that management should ensure that distributive justice is in practice ~ in the educational industry so as to enhance the commitment level of employees.
- (ii) The study, therefore, recommends that management should abide by procedural justice in the allocation of resources in the education industry so as to enhance the commitment level of employees.
- (iii) The study, therefore, recommends that management should ensure that the presence of organizational justice should be visible in the organization in order to increase the commitment of employees.

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