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Full Length Research Paper

Constraints and Remedy to Quality Vocational Skills Development among Vocational Education Students in Nigeria as Perceived by Vocational Educators

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The purpose of this study is to ascertain the constraints to quality vocational skills development amongst vocational education students in Nigeria. Two research questions guided the study and 2 hypotheses were tested at .05 level of significance. The descriptive survey research design was used and the population of the study was all the vocational educators in universities and colleges of education in South-South Nigeria. 300 vocational educators were selected using simple random sampling technique. The instrument for data collection was a questionnaire, and data collected were analysed using mean and standard deviation for research questions and t-test to test the hypotheses. The paper concluded that the institutional constraints to vocational skills development include shortage of qualified vocational educators, and inadequate training facilities. Therefore, it was recommended that adequate and qualified vocational educators, and provision of adequate training facilities amongst others.

Keywords: Contraints, Quality, Vocational-Skills-Development, Vocational-Education, Student, and Nigeria.

INTRODUCTION

Vocational education has always been a notable force of development in human existence. Vocational education is significance in every facet of life ranging from agriculture, transportation, construction, production, and modernization among others. Vocational education, according to Yusuf (2006) in Osam (2013), is a form of education that seeks to prepare persons for employment in recognized occupations. This type of education provides the skills, knowledge and attitudes necessary for effective employment. Osam (2013) citing Odogwu

(2005) describes vocational education as a type of education that emphasises preparation and participation in an occupation of social value. Olaitan (2006) in Puyate (2008), defines vocational education as that aspect of education which is a skill acquisition-oriented form of training, based on application of mathematics and scientific knowledge in specific field for self actualization and development.

Banjoko (2004) also stresses that skill is a major distinguishing aspect of vocational education which

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makes it outstanding and different from the liberal arts. According to Dokunbo and Dokunbo (2013), vocational education prepares individual in acquisition of skills and job positions in skill areas. Vocational education is a driving force of human capital development and a catalyst to sustainable livelihood and economic development for developing nations such as Nigeria. Vocational education has major and significant role to play in changing a country's status from being a consumer of finished products to producer's of finished products for exportation, to enable these nations compete in the global market for the purpose of economic growth.

In this regards, the Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) accepted vocational education as part of her educational curriculum in Nigerian schools. objectives of vocational education in the National Policy on Education (NPE) of the Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN, 2004) are to:

- provide skills, knowledge and attitude in the sciences, technology and applied sciences, technology and business particularly at craft, advanced craft, and technical levels.
- ii. provide the technical knowledge and vocational skills necessary for agricultural, commercial and economic development.
- give training and impart the necessary skills to individual who shall be self-reliant economically.

Despite these notable objectives of vocational education with the sole aim of producing vocational education graduates with relevant occupational skills in their areas of specialization, some vocational education graduates are still deficient in developing vocational skills. Vocational skills development is paramount in the delivery of vocational education programmes in vocational institutions. Okeke (1991) in Ode (2002) posited that vocational education at all levels in Nigeria is un-coordinated. unplanned and inadequate. Consequently, some graduates of vocational education lacks employable skills as a result of constraints in the implementation of vocational education programme. These constraints are seen as challenges to the implementation of vocational education programme in schools.

Researchers such as Avonmike (2014), Odu (2011), Makoju (2000), Puyate (2008), Uwaifo and Uwaifo (2009), and Igberadja (2015) amongs others reported similar views as regards the constraints to the implementation of vocational education programme. According to Odu (2011), the tools in the schools' workshops are at variance with the tools in the industries where the vocational education graduates will work. In same vein, Ayonmike (2014), posited that tools and machines are short in supply, obsoletes, and non functional and cannot meet the facility requirements of vocational education programmes. Similarly, Makoju (2000) opined that constraints militating against the production of quality vocational education graduates

include: lack of training facilities, inadequate teaching staffs, and lack of textbooks. Furthermore, Nwogu and Nwanoruo (2011) are of the view that the constraints facing vocational education for quality vocational skills development include: lack of skilled manpower, acute shortage of vocational educators, inadequate training facilities and equipment. As well, Uwaifo and Uwaifo (2009), stated that the problems of vocational education in Nigeria include: inadequate physical/material resources, poor administration, poor training retraining programme for vocational educators.

According to Okoroafor (2010), some of the problems of implementing vocational education curriculum include; lack of sponsorship, inadequate infrastructural facilities for teaching vocational courses, inadequate timing for vocational education lecturers training and retraining programme, and lack of reward for excellence. Similarly, Ayonmike (2013) citing Ekpenyong (2011) posited that, there are a number of factors, which have in various proportions impeded the smooth implementation of the goals and objectives of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET). The National Board for Technical Education (NBTE, 2011), reported that the challenges of TVET sector include; low societal recognition, which translate to low enrollment and inadequate skilled workforce, obsolete instructional facility, inadequate funding, poor staffing, poor linkages with industry and general deficiency in quality.

Igberadja (2015) citing Aigbepele (2011) posited that, these challenges include; negative public attitude towards technical and vocational education; inadequate basic infrastructural facilities, workshops and laboratory; inadequate funding of vocational education; inadequate and ill-equipped vocational education staff; and irregular review of the curriculum for vocational education. Furthermore, Onwusonye (2005) in Dokunbo and Dokunbo (2013), reported that insufficient funding, lack of facilities, brain drain and inadequate number of qualified instructors and facilitators are some the factors inhibiting the implementation of vocational education programmes in most of the Nigerian universities.

Other constraints to vocational education which affects vocational education students skills development according to Haruna and Abas (1996),implementation of the vocational education curriculum in the Nigerian schools has been hindered by a lot of problems. The greatest problem is the obsolete nature of vocational education curriculum, a look at the curriculum of most vocational courses at the vocational institutions will reveal that there have been no changes for the past 20 years or more (Haruna and Abas, 1996). Haruna and Abas further reported that, since the inception of the new education system, shortages of vocational teachers has been the most serious limitation to the realization of the objectives of the vocational education.

In support, Nwoke (1990) in Haruna and Abas (1996) posited that serious shortfalls existed in the number of

professionally qualified vocational education teachers needed in the implementation of vocational education programmes in schools. In same vein, Haruna and Abas (1996) citing Ulinfun (1993) reported that the numbers of vocational education teachers in circulation was 5,593 representing 5.48% compared to a projected figure of 102,083, leaving a shortfall of 96,490 representing 94.52%. Similarly, Ulinfun and Nwaokolo (1991) in Haruna and Abas (1996) reported that of 14 critical problem were identified, of which 13 representing 65% of the vocational educators responding stated that insufficient number of vocational education teachers was their greatest single problem.

Ulinfun (1993) in Haruna and Abas (1996), noted that basic infrastructure are disturbingly lacking in our vocational institution, workshops are either empty or stocked with obsolete machines. Even in instances where equipment are present, most of them have either broken down due to lack of maintenance or completely out of use. Buttressing this assertion, Uwaifo and Uwaifo (2009) citing Oryem-Origa (2005) indicated that only 40% of Institutions of Higher Education in Nigeria have laboratory or workshop space for technical education programmes.

Omekwe (2009) in Osam (2013) argued that for the effective implementation of any education programme, adequate human and material resources must be made available to the schools. In particular, adequate number of trained teachers with different types of expertise (science, language, technology, etc.) must be recruited and posted to the schools as and when required. In addition, for effective management, academic staff must complemented by non-academic proportionately adequate numbers. Puvate (2008)reported that the constraints to the implementation of vocational education programmes include: students' attitude, lack of adequate training facilities, teachers' inadequate provision of finance, attitude. government and parental attitude.

Yahaya, Nana, and Abdulrahman (2014), the issues in the implementation of vocational education programmes that needs repositioning include: organizational problems, inadequacy of qualified and committed vocational education teachers, government discriminatory attitude in funding vocational education programme, curriculum defects, non-use of appropriate and approve teaching methods, and relevant locally developed vocational and technical education textbooks are scarce.

In support, Onwusonye (2005) in Dokunbo and Dokunbo (2013), posited that insufficient finance, lack of facilities, brain drain, staff training and retention, and staff situation are realistic and practical factors inhibiting the implementation of vocational education programme in Nigeria for the production of competent vocational education graduates. Opeoluwa (2007) indicated that only 40% of institutions of higher learning in Nigeria have laboratory or workshop spaces for vocational education programmes. Opeoluwa further stated that 60% of other

institutions do not have laboratory or workshop spaces and that this reflects the low quality of vocational education programmes in higher institutions. Miller (2011) citing Ekpenyong (1995) opined that vocational institutions are being crippled by lack of funds and inadequate infrastructures.

Some of the constraints of vocational education as stated by Uddin and Agbonghale (2015) citing Okon (2003) confirmed that there are irregular and gross under funding, governments' negative attitude to vocational education, lack of political will to address the compelling needs of vocational education curriculum reforms, inadequate infrastructure, low student enrolments and academic achievements. corruption. consumptive rather than productive attitude among others (Yakubu, 2006 in Uddin and Agboghale, 2015). In Nigeria today vocational education programmes in vocational education institutions are grossly underfunded (Uddin and Agbonghale, 2015). In addition, Akombi (2005) in Uddin and Agbonghale (2015), most vocational institutions administrators are products of general education. which brings about problems in implementation of vocational technical education policies.

Based on the various literature reviewed, this present study seek to ascertained the institutional constraints and remedy to quality vocational skills development among vocational education students in Nigeria as perceived by vocational educators.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to identify the constraints and remedy to vocational skills development among vocational education students. Specifically, the study is to identify the following:

- i. Institutional constraints to quality vocational skills development among vocational education students.
- ii. Remedy to institutional constraints to quality vocational skills development among vocational education students.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

- i. What are the institutional constraints to quality vocational skills development among vocational education students?
- ii. What can be done to remedy the institutional constraints to quality vocational skills development among vocational education students?

Hypotheses

The following Null hypotheses were tested at .05 level of significance.

i. There is no significant difference in the mean response of vocational educators from universities and

colleges of education on the institutional constraints to quality vocational skills development among vocational education students.

There is no significant difference in the mean response of vocational educators from universities and colleges of education on remedy to institutional constraints to quality vocational skills development among vocational education students.

Scope of the Study

The study was limited to vocational educators from universities and colleges of education in South-South, Nigeria. As well, it was limited in scope to identify the institutional constraints and remedy to quality vocational skills development among vocational education students.

Significance of the Study

The findings from this study will be beneficial to vocational educators, school administrators, Ministry of Education, and Ministry of Labour.

To vocational educators, school administrators, Ministry of Education, and Ministry of Labour, the study will be exposed to the various institutional constraints and remedy to quality vocational skills development among vocational education students, which will enable vocational educators, school administrators, Ministry of Education, and Ministry of Labour, to tackle the various institutional constraints. As well, this result will enable the vocational educators, school administrators, Ministry of Education, and Ministry of Labour to profer solution to the institutional constraints to quality vocational skills development among vocational education students.

Statement of the Problem

Vocational education is one of the notable means of sustaining lives and national economy. It is also a tool for economic diversification. Despite these wonderful roles of vocational education. most vocational graduates still lacks vocational skills that will enable them become employable and to occupy their right place in the world of work. This lack of vocational skills among vocational education graduates may be as a result of lack of human and material resources for the implementation of vocational education curriculum, as well the method of instruction used by vocational educators to teach education students. Similarly, vocational some researchers like Ayonmike (2014), Igberadja (2015), attributed the situation of lack of employable skills among vocational education graduates to training methods, poorly equipped libraries and workshops, inadequate qualified vocational educators, and poor provision of

consumables for practical. Hence, there is need to identify the institutional constraints and remedy to quality vocational skills development among education students.

METHODS AND PROCEDURE

The descriptive survey research design was used in this study. The researchers find this research design to be appropriate because no variable was manipulated in this study. The population of the study is all the vocational educators from universities and colleges of education in South-South Nigeria. The simple random sampling technique using simple balloting was used to select 300 vocational educators. The instrument for data collection was a 20-item questionnaire with 4-point scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD). The questionnaire developed by the researchers and was titled 'Constraints' and Remedy to Vocational Skills Development among Vocational Education Graduates' CRVSDVEG. The CRVSDVEG has 2 sections (A and B); section A is on respondents' demographic information and section B has 2 parts, part 1 is on the constraints to vocational skills development with 10 items, and part 2 is on the remedy to vocational skills development with 10 items. The CRVSDVEG questionnaire was validated by 3 lecturers. 2 lecturers from Delta State University, Abraka, and 1 lecturer from Federal College of Education (Technical), Asaba, All observed corrections and suggestions were effected before the final draft of the questionnaire was produced. To ascertain the reliability of the instrument, 20 copies of the CRVSDVEG were administered to vocational educators from Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka which is located in South-East Nigeria. Using Cronbach Alpha technique, a reliability coefficient of .69 was obtained. Data were collected by the researchers through the administration of CRVSDVEG questionnaire on the respondents by 7 research assistants who were students of Federal College of Education (Technical), Asaba. Out of the 300 copies of questionnaire administered, 220 copies of questionnaire were returned comprised of 120 vocational educators from universities while, the other 100 vocational educators are from colleges of education. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer research questions, while t-test was used to test the hypotheses at .05 level of significance. The decision point was 2.50, this implies that any mean response of 2.50 and above was regarded as 'Agree', while below 2.50 was regarded as 'Disagree'. Furthermore, when t-calculated is less than t-tabulated, the hypothesis will be accepted, but if t-calculated is greater than t-tabulated, the hypothesis will be rejected.

Table 1. Shows the mean response of vocational educators on the institutional constraints to quality vocational skills development among vocational education students

S/N	Item Statement	Vocational Educators (Universities) N=120			Vocational Educators (Colleges of Education) N=100		
		Mean	S.D	Remark	Mean	S.D	Remark
1.	Shortage of qualified vocational educators.	3.63	0.80	Agreed	3.50	0.74	Agreed
2.	Inadequate training and teaching methods	3.23	0.63	Agreed	3.05	1.12	Agreed
3.	Inadequate training facilities	3.29	0.99	Agreed	3.46	0.50	Agreed
4.	Inadequate instructional materials	3.40	0.94	Agreed	3.57	0.49	Agreed
5.	Inadequate consumable materials for practical	3.84	0.58	Agreed	3.24	0.78	Agreed
6.	Poor linkages between vocational institutions and industries	3.35	0.97	Agreed	3.17	0.53	Agreed
7.	Poor administration and supervision of vocational education	2.38	1.44	Disagreed	1.63	1.22	Disagreed
8.	Poorly equipped library	3.47	1.01	Agreed	3.11	0.68	Agreed
9.	Poorly equipped workshops	3.13	0.42	Agreed	2.98	0.34	Agreed
10.	Poor review of vocational education curriculum	2.43	1.41	Disagreed	1.99	1.25	Disagreed
Mean	Mean of Mean		3.22			2.97	

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results and discussion were presented according to the research questions and hypotheses.

Research Question 1: What are the institutional constraints to quality vocational skills development among vocational education students?

Table 1 revealed that the institutional constraints to vocational education are; Shortage of qualified vocational educators: Inadequate training and teaching methods: Inadequate training facilities; Inadequate instructional materials; Inadequate consumable materials for practical; Poorly equipped library: Poorly equipped workshops and Poor linkages between vocational institutions and industries. These findings are in line with the research findings of other researchers such as Ayonmike (2014), Dokunbo and Dokunbo (2013), Haruna and Abas (1996), Igberadja (2015) Makoju (2000), Nwogu and Nwanoruo (2011), Odu (2011), Okoroafor (2010), Opeoluwa (2007), Miller (2011), Osam (2013), NBTE (2011), Puyate (2008), Uddin and Agbonghale (2015), Uwaifo and Uwaifo (2009), and Yahaya, Nana, and Abdulrahman (2014), amongs others reported similar views as regards the constraints to the implementation of vocational education programme. According Odu(2011), the tools in the schools' workshops are at variance with the tools in the industries where the vocational education graduates will work.

Ulinfun (1993) in Haruna and Abas (1996), noted that basic infrastructure are disturbingly lacking in our vocational institution, workshops are either empty or stocked with obsolete machines. In same vein, Ayonmike (2014), reported that tools and machines are short in

supply, obsoletes and non functional and cannot meet the facility requirements of vocational education programmes. Similarly, Makoju (2000) reported lack of training facilities, inadequate teaching staffs, and lack of textbooks, Puyate (2008) reported that the constraints to the implementation of vocational education programmes include: students' attitude, lack of adequate training facilities, teachers' attitude, inadequate provision of finance, poor government and parental attitude. Furthermore, Nwogu and Nwanoruo (2011) posited lack of skilled manpower, acute shortage of vocational educators, inadequate training facilities and equipment. As well, Uwaifo and Uwaifo (2009), listed inadequate physical/material resources, poor administration, poor training and retraining programme for vocational educators. The National Board for Technical Education (NBTE, 2011), reported low societal recognition, which translate to low enrolment and inadequate skilled workforce, obsolete instructional facility, inadequate funding, poor staffing, poor linkages with industry and general deficiency in quality.

Igberadja (2015) citing Aigbepele (2011) these challenges include; negative public attitude towards technical and vocational education; inadequate basic infrastructural facilities, workshops and laboratory; inadequate funding of vocational education; inadequate and ill-equipped vocational education staff; and irregular review of the curriculum for vocational education. Furthermore, Onwusonye (2005) in Dokunbo and Dokunbo (2013), reported that insufficient funding, lack of facilities, brain drain and inadequate number of qualified instructors and facilitators are some the factors inhibiting the implementation of vocational education programmes in most of the Nigerian universities. Other constraints to

Table 2. Shows the mean response of vocational educators on what can be done to remedy the institutional constraints to quality vocational skills development among vocational education students

S/N	Item Statement	Vocat	ional Ed	lucators	Vocational Educators (Colleges of Education) N=100			
		(Univ	ersities)	N=120				
		Mean	S.D	Remark	Mean	S.D	Remark	
1.	Employment of qualified vocational educators.	3.48	0.85	Agreed	3.65	0.47	Agreed	
2.	Retraining and training of vocational educators.	3.10	1.05	Agreed	3.16	0.67	Agreed	
3.	Provision of adequate training facilities	3.66	0.64	Agreed	3.41	0.75	Agreed	
4.	Provision of well equipped library	3.51	1.00	Agreed	3.07	0.70	Agreed	
5.	Provision of well equipped workshops	3.55	0.70	Agreed	3.88	0.32	Agreed	
6.	Adequate provision of consumable materials for practical	3.73	0.67	Agreed	3.32	0.67	Agreed	
7.	Integration of competency based education and training	3.71	0.76	Agreed	3.66	0.60	Agreed	
8.	Appointment of qualified vocational educators as administrators and supervisors of vocational education	2.82	1.21	Agreed	2.92	1.09	Agreed	
9.	Improved training and teaching methods	3.35	0.97	Agreed	3.27	0.44	Agreed	
10.	Establishment of institution and industries linkages department in vocational education institutions	3.17	1.01	Agreed	3.04	0.58	Agreed	
Mear	Mean of Mean		3.41			3.34		

vocational education which affects vocational education students skills development according to Haruna and Abas (1996), the greatest problem is the obsolete nature of vocational education curriculum, a look at the curriculum of most vocational courses at the vocational institutions will reveal that there have been no changes for the past 20 years or more (Haruna and Abas, 1996). Haruna and Abas further reported that, since the inception of the new education system, shortages of vocational teachers has been the most serious limitation to the realization of the objectives of the vocational education.

In support, Nwoke (1990), Ulinfun (1993), in Haruna and Abas (1996) posited that serious shortfalls existed in the number of professionally qualified vocational education teachers needed in the implementation of vocational education programmes in schools. Similarly, Ulinfun and Nwaokolo (1991) in Haruna and Abas (1996) reported that of 14 critical problem were identified, of which 13 representing 65% of the vocational educators responding stated that insufficient number of vocational education teachers was their greatest single problem. As well, Yahaya, Nana, and Abdulrahman (2014), the issues the implementation of vocational education programmes that needs repositioning include: organizational problems, inadequacy of qualified and committed vocational education teachers, government discriminatory attitude in funding vocational education programme, curriculum defects, non-use of appropriate and approve teaching methods, and relevant locally developed vocational and technical education textbooks are scarce.

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference in the mean response of vocational educators from universities and colleges of education on the institutional constraints to quality vocational skills development among vocational education students.

Since t-calculated (2.587) is greater than t-tabulated (1.653) at .05 level of significant, the hypothesis which stated that there is no significant difference in the mean response of vocational educators from universities and colleges of education on the institutional constraints to quality vocational skills development among vocational education students was rejected. This implies that there was significant difference in the mean response of vocational educators from universities and colleges of education on the institutional constraints to quality skills development vocational among vocational education students.

Research Question 2: What can be done to remedy the institutional constraints to quality vocational skills development among vocational education students?

Table 2 revealed that the remedy to the constraints to vocational skills development are; Employment of qualified vocational educators; Retraining and training of vocational educators; Provision of adequate training facilities; Provision of well equipped library; Provision of well equipped workshops; Adequate provision of consumable materials for practical; Integration of competency based education and training; Appointment of qualified vocational educators as administrators and supervisors of vocational education; Improved training and teaching methods; and Establishment of institution and industries linkages department in vocational education institutions. These findings are in line with the research findings of other researchers such as Ayonmike (2014), Dokunbo and Dokunbo (2013), Haruna and Abas (1996), Igberadja (2015) Makoju (2000), Nwogu and

Table 3. T-test Analysis of Responses of Vocational Educators on the Constraints to Quality Vocational Skills Development among Vocational Education Students in Nigeria

Group	N	Mean	Std	Df	t-cal	t-tab	Decision
Vocational Educators (University)	120	3.22	0.47	218	2.587	1.653	Rejected
Vocational Educators (College)	100	2.97	0.65				-

N =220, df=218, p<0.05, *Rejected

Table 4. T-test Analysis of Responses of Vocational Educators on the Remedy to Constraints to Quality Vocational Skills Development among Vocational Education Students in Nigeria

Group	N	Mean	Std	Df	t-cal	t-tab	Decision
Vocational Educators (University)	120	3.41	0.30	218	.893	1.653	Accepted
Vocational Educators (College)	100	3.34	0.31				

N =220, df=218, p<0.05, *Accepted

Nwanoruo (2011), Odu (2011), Okoroafor (2010), Opeoluwa (2007), Miller (2011), Osam (2013), NBTE (2011), Puyate (2008), Uddin and Agbonghale (2015), Uwaifo and Uwaifo (2009), and Yahaya, Nana, and Abdulrahman (2014), amongs others suggested similar views as regards the remedy to constraints to the implementation of vocational education programme. suggested These researchers improved funding, provision of required human and material resources which include qualified vocational educators, training facilities, well equipped workshops, and well equipped Furthermore. the researchers suggested adequate supervision of the implementation of vocational education and training and retraining of vocational educators.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference in the mean response of vocational educators from universities and colleges of education on remedy to institutional constraints to quality vocational skills development among vocational education students.

Since t-calculated (0.893) is less than t-tabulated (1.653) at .05 level of significant, the hypothesis which stated that there is no significant difference in the mean response of vocational educators from universities and colleges of education on remedy to institutional constraints to quality vocational skills development among vocational education students was accepted. This implies that there was no significant difference in the mean response of vocational educators from universities and colleges of education on remedy to institutional constraints to quality vocational skills development among vocational education students.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this study, it was concluded that the institutional constraints to vocational skills development include shortage of qualified vocational educators, inadequate training facilities, and poor linkages between vocational institutions and industries/labour market. As well, these institutional constraints can be remedy through the employment of qualified vocational educators and provision of adequate required human and material resources for the implementation of vocational education to produce quality vocational education graduates.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

- i. Adequate and qualified vocational educators should be employed for effective implementation of vocational education curriculum.
- ii. Adequate provision of training facilities for the implementation of vocational education curriculum.
- iii. Provision of adequate instructional materials for the teaching and learning of vocational education.
- iv. Integration of competency based education and training in vocational education programme.
- v. Adequate supervision and monitoring of vocational education programme.

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