

## Attitude of Library Staff in Special Libraries in North Central Nigeria towards ICT and its Use for Service Delivery

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### Abstract

*The study investigated the library staff attitude towards the use of ICT and its use for service delivery in special libraries in the North Central Nigeria. The study was guided by four objectives and related literature were reviewed. Survey research design was adopted for the study. The population of the study was one hundred and twenty six (126) out of which a sample size of eighty six (86) were selected using purposive sampling technique. Questionnaire was used for data collection and simple percentages and mean score was used for data analyses. Finding revealed that library staff attitude towards the use of ICT in the special libraries was highly positive, the actual use of ICT for service delivery was low, several challenges are still hindering effective use of ICT for service delivery in the special libraries and suggestions to overcome the challenges were made. Necessary recommendations were made.*

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### Introduction

Advance in information and communication technology has been very rapid in the last two decade. Its influence has been very pervasive to the extent that there is hardly any field of human endeavor that has not been touched (Gary, 1993). Their increasing availability and use have created relationship between their application, competitiveness, and productivity. ICT provides opportunities for access to information by overcoming the barriers of distance and location. The use of ICT provides quality service to users. Moreover, ICT has revolutionized activities in all spheres of life especially in information service. The use of ICT in the libraries has tremendously changed the management of resources or housekeeping operations as well as the way services are delivered. The ICT's

application tool and integrated library system are largely used in housekeeping operations, like acquisition, cataloging, circulation control, serials control and reference etc. Internet has been used extensively as a resource, as well as a tool to deliver library and information needs of the users (Maxwell, 2011). ICTs are important in service delivery in all kinds of libraries including special libraries. A special library is a library that provides specialized information resources on a particular subject, serves a specialized and limited clientele, and delivers specialized services to that clientele. (Kissoky, 2015)

Libraries attached to organizations, ministries, parastatals, research institutes, law firms and business firms etc. are referred to as special libraries. The objectives of the special library in general are determined by those of the parent organizations which established it. The aim of a special library according to Modibbo, (2016) is to further the interests of its parent body by means of the followings:

- Provides information service, which enables the members of the organizations to keep track of the significant development in their field of interest.
- The librarian searches literature exhaustively and brings it to the notice of the organization.
- Provides information pin pointedly, exhaustively and promptly, thereby saving time of the clients.
- Provides inspiration and stimulation to clients by means of balanced collections and find services.

The benefits of ICT in special libraries are numerous. They include better service delivery to library users, more efficient utilization of library resources, provision of services to both local and global community as well as more effective way of fulfilling the colossal information needs emerging in the information age. Henderson (1992) and (Moruso (2000) stressed that interaction with ICT around us has influenced the information seeking behavior of users in library and information centers. According to them, the benefits that information technology accrue to the users are speedy access to information without having to wade through large volumes of papers that computers allow searching by combining different criteria, thereby leading to retrieval of specific relevant information; users can access information remotely in networked environment, time is thus saved from moving from one place to place, users can communicate with other people of similar interest with whom they share information, idea

and concern, it helps to speed up the process of document delivery from remote sources; it aids to give specialized services which give users more satisfaction, saves time used in completing routine transaction and users choice in terms of points and method of access is considerably widened. Attitude plays an important role in the utilization of ICT. The attitude of librarians towards the use of ICT in libraries affects service delivery. The term attitude is used to describe the way someone think and feels about something or someone, the way you behave towards somebody or something that shows how you think and feel (Hornby, 2015). Attitudes are inclinations and feelings, prejudices or bias, preconceived notions, ideas, fears and convictions about any specific topic. Attitude has been defined by Gagly & Chaiken (1993) as “a psychological tendency that is expressed by evaluating a particular entity with some degree of favor or disfavor”. Library staff attitude towards ICT refers to their personal opinions and beliefs about importance, impact, worth and usefulness of computer hardware, software, email, internet and other information and communication technologies in library operations, resource services and systems. Griffiths (1995) has determined that librarian's role in the application of ICT has been central as champions of the library technology. Since ICT in itself does not bring about effective library services, it is the library staff who uses ICT as a strategic resource to innovate library infrastructure, system services and resources and who assists users in effective use of ICT. Integrating ICT into library services requires positive attitude and commitment on the part of library staff to explore and exploit ICT to its fullest potential (Al-Zahrani 2000).

### **Statement of the Problem**

The importance of the use of ICT for service delivery in special libraries cannot be disputed. For special libraries to effectively carry out their task in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, their library staff must adopt the emerging technologies. Omonniwa (2001) states that in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, globalization of information and the adoption of information technology will be the hallmark of great libraries. However, attitude has been found to play an important role in the adoption of technologies by librarians. Several studies conducted in Nigeria have reported positive attitudes of librarians towards the use of ICT in libraries, but it has also been observed that the positive attitudes towards ICT by librarians have not translated to high use of ICT for service delivery in special libraries (Eguavon, 2011, Obogu, 2012 and Ejikeme, 2017). Be that as it may, no study has

investigated the attitude of library staff in special libraries in North Central Nigeria to information and communication technology and their uses in library service delivery. This study represents an attempt to close this gap. The findings of this study are expected to be useful for human resource management in libraries as well as contribute to the literature.

### **Research Questions**

1. What is the attitude of library staff towards the use of ICT for service delivery in special libraries in North- Central, Nigeria?
2. To what extent has library staff utilized ICT for service delivery in special libraries in North- Central, Nigeria?
3. What are the challenges associated with the use of ICT for service delivery in special libraries in North- Central, Nigeria?
4. What are the strategies for overcoming the challenges of using ICT for service delivery in special libraries in North- Central, Nigeria?

### **Literature Review**

In this age of globalization, the importance of the use of information and communication technology ICT in special libraries cannot be over-emphasized. This is because the use of ICT facilitates quick and easy access to a wide range of information and communication resources worldwide. In this digital age no library can function well without the use of ICT. Special libraries are set up to provide services in support of research. How well the special libraries are able to realize this objective in the digital age depends on the use of ICTs. Special libraries before now have tried to share their resources, tried to get the latest information and attempted to improve the dissemination of information services but all efforts are vain because of lack of use of information and communication technology at the time. With the use of ICT facilities now users have path to library and have a new dimension to the traditional services of the library. Odeh & Akpokurerie (2011) averred that libraries have no option but to embrace ICT in this age if they are to establish their relevance in society. The authors discussed the impact of ICT on library, a service which touches on Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC), bibliographic services, indexing services, current awareness service, user education services, selective

dissemination of information (SDI) services, document delivery services, use of ICT in reference services and a few others. Similarly, ICT enables libraries to provide current awareness service (CAS) to users by providing current periodicals, current contents of information resources, list of on-going and future seminars, conferences and workshops. There is also web-based current awareness service which libraries could download into their database. The authors also stated that many libraries now use ICT based bibliographic services in providing reference service, most of which are available online, or on CD-ROM. Circulation control is another fundamental area of library and information services in which ICT is used. The use of manual system in document delivery is not yielding the desired result and has now been replaced by ICT-based document delivery services (Odeh & Akpokurerie, 2011). Core circulation duties involve issuing and renewing resources, reservation of items, charging and discharging of library information resources, finding users who have overdue information sources. ICTs have made these tasks less laborious. The automated system handles these processes with much ease and speed. Data provided by circulation control module of the automated management system enables better management of stock; overdue notices are automatically generated and amount to be paid is immediately known (Odeh & Akpokurerie, 2011). The authors indicated that libraries with automated systems can be accessed on the internet by other libraries. They further stated that there are several ICT-based document delivery service providers worldwide; a good example of which is the British Document Supply Services (BLDSS). In the same vein, Chizoba (2011) stated that the application of ICT in serials management facilitates routine work in serials management to do with recording and checking orders, verifying payments, renewal of subscription of titles of journals, sending claim notices for serials issues not received and related activities. A great impact ICT is making in this area, according to him, is the wide accessibility to e-journals such as Agora, Hinari, EBSCOHOST and a few others.

Study by Mairaj & EL-hadi (2012) revealed availability and use of ICT resources in medical libraries in Pakistan. The ICT resources used in these medical libraries include computers, scanners, DVD barcode reader, fax machine, multi-media projectors, software and data bases, internet access, and library website. Digital subscriber's line are mostly used in this library. Uloaku (2017)

investigated the application of internet for service delivery in some special library in Kaduna state. The study revealed that the application of internet to library services is not significantly high, librarians derived satisfaction in the application of internet in the library services. Some hindrances to effective internet application include: low bandwidth, poor funding, erratic power supply, technology obsolescence and high cost of connectivity and maintenance. The study recommended adequate use of internet in the special libraries in carrying out the house keeping operations and services of the library and adequate funding. Mommoh & Emmanuel (2019) investigated ICT utilization for service delivery in special libraries in the North Central Nigeria. . The finding revealed that ICT facilities were available in special libraries but their use for service delivery was minimal. Hindrances to effective utilization of ICT in the special libraries were highlighted and recommendations were made.

Attitude plays an important role in effective utilization of ICT for service delivery in libraries. The advent of information and communication technology has changed the role of librarians in delivering library services. According to Taiwo (2008) attitude is an inclination and feeling, prejudices or bias, preconceived notions, ideas fears and convictions about any specific topic. A survey study by Eguavoen (2011) examined the attitudes of library staff to the use of ICT in Kenneth Dike library. The result of the study showed that library staff in Kenneth Dike library have a positive attitude towards the use and implementation of ICT and that Knowledge of ICT and training influenced positive attitudes toward ICT. Based on the finding it is recommended that staff of libraries be trained to allay the fears and anxiety about the use and application of ICT in their respective libraries. Sivakumaren, Jeyaprakash, Gopalakrishnan & Ceetha (2011) examined the attitude towards ICT among professionals in and around Chennai. The study found that the majority of library professionals have positive attitude on ICT and some of them were not able to use their knowledge and skills on ICT. The study recommended for ICT based program to train the library professionals. Also Obogu (2012) examined the attitude of librarians towards the use of ICT in some selected Nigerian Universities in Edo and Delta state of Nigeria. The result revealed that the librarians under study have positive attitudes towards the implementation and the use of ICT and training for librarians influences positive

attitudes towards ICT. Based on the findings some recommendations were made. Ejedafiru & Oghenetega (2013) surveyed the attitude of professional librarians towards the use of ICT in Delta state University library. They presented and analyzed data on competence levels in a range of ICT skills required, ICT facilities mostly used, choice of scholarly publication and level of anxiety and enthusiasm professional librarians had toward the use of ICT in their library. Aiyebilehim, Ikenwe, & Ikpetu (2017) surveyed the attitude of librarians towards ICT and the use of ICT for service delivery in University libraries in Edo state, Nigeria. Findings revealed that librarians have positive attitude towards ICT use. The major factor influencing the formation of the attitudes towards ICTs by librarians were found to be peer opinion and knowledge available on ICTs. The conclusion/ recommendation was that librarians have positive attitudes towards ICT and to Improve utilization of available ICT for service delivery, the attitude of librarians must be worked on through exposure and training in the use of emerging technologies. Ejikeme (2017) investigated the perceived attitude of librarians towards ICT usage in service delivery in academic libraries. The findings revealed that librarians in academic libraries are prepared to adopt the new information technologies despite their challenges. Lack of adequate trainings of librarians like their counterparts in other countries and inadequate and appropriate ICT infrastructure are the major challenges faced by the librarians in ICT usage.

### **Methodology**

Survey research designed was used for the study. The population of the study consist of one hundred and twenty six (126) library staff in fifteen (15) research libraries in North Central Nigeria. Purposive sampling technique was used in selecting eight (8) special libraries that constitute the sample for the study with a population of eight three (83) library staff.

Questionnaire was used for data collection for the study. For data analyses simple percentage and mean score of were used. The eight special libraries sampled include Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution Library, Abuja (7); National Mathematical Centre Library, Abuja (6); Raw Materials Research and Development Council Library, Abuja (9); Fisheries Research Institute Library, New Bussa (6); National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies Library, Jos(22);

National Veterinary Research Institute Library, Jos(16); Agriculture and Rural Management Training Institute Library, Ilorin(5) and Nigerian Store Product Research Institute Library, Ilorin (12).

### Data Analysis

Data analyzed in table 1 to 4 respectively in this study was collected from eight special libraries in research institutes in North Central Nigeria. For data analysis the criterion mean score of 2.5 and above was accepted while 2.4 and below were rejected.

### Response Rate

A total of 83 (100%) copies of questionnaires was administered to all the library staff in eight special libraries in the North Central Nigeria. However, 76 (92%) copies of the questionnaire was completed and returned. Therefore, the 76 copies of questionnaire completed and returned was used for the study.

**Research Question one:** What is the library staff attitude towards the use of ICT for service delivery in special libraries in the North Central Nigeria?

**Table 1:Library staff response on their attitude towards use of ICT for services delivery in the special libraries, in North Central Nigeria**

S/No	Staff attitude towards the use of ICT for service delivery	SA Freq. (%)	A Freq. (%)	D Freq. (%)	SD Freq. (%)	Mean	Decision
1	Knowing how to use computers as a librarian is a worthwhile skill.	47 (61.8)	27 (35.5)	2 (2.6)	0 (0.0)	3.6	Accepted
2	I believe in ICT because each year it offers more efficient way of carrying out library operations	23 (30.3)	43 (56.6)	8 (10.5)	2 (2.6)	3.1	Accepted
3	I think using ICT makes me more productive as a librarian	33 (43.4)	40 (52.6)	3 (3.9)	0 (0.0)	3.4	Accepted
4	I feel demoralized when only few people are recognized as being efficient in ICT in my library.	47 (61.8)	26 (34.2)	1 (1.3)	2 (2.6)	3.6	Accepted
5	I am happy that ICT will create remarkable changes in libraries.	27 (35.5)	45 (59.2)	3 (3.9)	1 (1.3)	3.3	Accepted
6	ICT usually saves me sometime	43 (56.6)	32 (42.1)	1 (1.3)	0 (0.0)	3.6	Accepted
7	I believe that tools like e-mail, forum and chat will make communication with my colleagues easier	37 (48.7)	35 (46.1)	4 (5.3)	0 (0.0)	3.4	Accepted
8	I am prepared to adopt the new information technologies despite its challenges.	29 (38.2)	39 (51.3)	7 (9.2)	1 (1.3)	3.3	Accepted
9	I have a lot of self Confidence when I use ICT as a librarian	36 (47.4)	35 (46.1)	4 (5.3)	1 (1.3)	3.4	Accepted
10	I feel bad when highly skilled ICT librarians treat my questions with levity	26 (34.2)	43 (56.6)	6 (7.9)	1 (1.3)	3.2	Accepted



In table 1 all the items were accepted because they were above the criterion mean score of 2.5. The items with the highest mean score were knowing how to use computers as a librarian is a worthwhile skill, I feel demoralized when only few people are recognized as being efficient in ICT in my library and ICT usually saves me some time, all with a mean score of 3.6 respectively. While, I believe in ICT because each year it offers more efficient way of carrying out library operations has 3.1 and therefore, higher than the criterion mean score, it is never the less the item with the lowest mean.

**Question 2:** To what extent has library staff utilized ICT for service delivery in special libraries in North Central Nigeria?

Table 2: Library staff response on extent of utilization of ICT for service delivery in the special libraries, in North Central Nigeria

S/No	Extent of utilization of ICT for services delivery in the special libraries	SA Freq. (%)	A Freq. (%)	D Freq. (%)	SD Freq. (%)	Mean	Decision
1	Cataloging and Classification	5 (6.6)	11 (14.5)	38 (50.0)	22 (28.9)	2.0	Rejected
2	Selective dissemination of information	6 (7.9)	23 (30.3)	30 (39.5)	17 (22.4)	2.2	Rejected
3	Acquisition	7 (9.2)	14 (18.4)	33 (43.4)	22 (28.9)	2.1	Rejected
4	Accessing online resources	21 (27.6)	11 (14.5)	37 (48.7)	7 (9.2)	2.6	Accepted
5	Serials control	9 (11.8)	33 (43.4)	22 (28.9)	12 (15.8)	2.5	Accepted
6	Current awareness Services	11 (14.5)	22 (28.9)	31 (40.8)	12 (15.8)	2.4	Rejected
7	Circulation Services	17 (22.4)	19 (25.0)	27 (35.5)	13 (17.1)	2.5	Accepted
8	Inter library cooperation	3 (3.9)	5 (6.6)	29 (38.2)	39 (51.3)	1.6	Rejected
9	Reference service	10 (13.2)	21 (27.6)	30 (39.5)	15 (19.7)	2.3	Rejected
10	Developing online resources	5 (6.6)	8 (10.5)	29 (38.2)	34 (44.7)	1.8	Rejected

Table 2 shows the result of ICT utilization for service delivery in special libraries under study. Accessing online resources 2.6, serials control 2.5 and circulation services 2.5 were accepted because they had the criterion of 2.5 and above. While majority of the items such as cataloging and classification have a mean score of 2.0, selective dissemination of information 2.2, acquisition 2.1, reference service 2.3, developing online resources 1.8 and inter library loan 1.6 were rejected because they did not meet the criterion of 2.5. From the analysis the use of ICT for service delivery in the special libraries North Central Nigeria is still low.

**Research Question 3:**What are the challenges associated with the use of ICT for service delivery in special libraries in the North Central Zone of Nigeria?

**Table 3:**Library staff response on challenges associated with the use of ICT for service delivery in the special libraries, in North Central Nigeria

S/No	Problems associated with utilization	SA Freq. (%)	A Freq. (%)	D Freq. (%)	SD Freq. (%)	Mean	Decision
1	Inadequate ICT facilities	48 (63.2)	24 (31.6)	2 (2.6)	2 (2.6)	3.2	Accepted
2	Erratic power supply	40 (52.6)	33 (43.4)	3 (3.9)	-	3.4	Accepted
3	Low level of ICTs skills of staff	5 (5.6)	11 (14.5)	38 (50.0)	22 (28.9)	2.0	Rejected
4	Staff resistance to ICT	7 (9.2)	14 (18.4)	33 (43.4)	22 (28.9)	2.1	Rejected
5	Lack of ICT policy	47 (61.8)	26 (34.2)	1 (1.3)	2 (2.6)	3.6	Accepted
6	Frequent changes and modification of ICTs	26 (34.2)	43 (56.6)	6 (7.9)	1 (1.3)	3.2	Accepted
7	Inadequate funds	47 (61.8)	27 (35.3)	2 (2.6)	-	3.6	Accepted
8	Inadequate ICT infrastructure (lack of internet connectivity, low bandwidth)	42 (55.3)	28 (36.8)	6 (7.9)	-	3.5	Accepted

Table 3 shows the challenges associated with the use of ICT for service delivery in special libraries under study. Majority of the items were accepted because they were above the criterion mean score of 2.5. The items with the highest scores were, lack of ICT policy and inadequate funds have mean score of 3.6 respectively. Inadequate ICT infrastructure (lack of internet connectivity and low band width) have a mean of 3.5, erratic power supply 3.4, Inadequate ICT facilities and frequent changes and modification of ICTs respectively have a mean of 3.2. Some items were rejected because they were below the criterion mean score of 2.5. Such items as staff resistance to ICT 2.1 and low level of ICT skills of staff have a mean of 2.0. The analysis shows that the challenges of using ICT in special libraries in North Central Nigeria are enormous.

**Research Question 4:** What are the strategies for effective use of ICT for service delivery in special libraries in the North Central Nigeria?

**Table 4: Library staff response on strategies for effective use of ICT for service delivery in the special libraries, in North Central Nigeria**

S/No	Strategies for ICT use for services delivery	SA Freq. (%)	A Freq. (%)	D Freq. (%)	SD Freq. (%)	Mean	Decision
1	Provision of adequate fund by the management of special libraries.	42 (55.3)	28 (36.8)	6 (7.9)	-	3.5	Accepted
2	Provision of relevant and adequate ICT facilities.	29 (38.2)	42 (55.3)	4 (5.3)	1 (1.3)	3.3	Accepted
3	Continuous training and retraining of staff.	43 (56.6)	28 (36.8)	3 (3.9)	2 (2.6)	3.5	Accepted
4	Formulation of policies for use of ICT for service delivery.	36 (47.4)	38 (50.0)	2 (2.6)	-	3.4	Accepted
5	Adequate provision of power (generator).	47 (61.8)	27 (35.5)	2 (2.6)	-	3.6	Accepted
6	Internet connectivity	33 (43.4)	40 (52.6)	3 (3.9)	-	3.4	Accepted
7	Staff willingness to acquire ICT skill.	47 (61.8)	26 (34.2)	1 (1.3)	2 (2.6)	3.6	Accepted
8	Provision of adequate bandwidth	37 (48.7)	35 (46.1)	4 (5.3)	-	3.4	Accepted

In table 4 all the items were accepted because they were above the criterion mean score of 2.5. The items with the highest mean scores were, adequate provision of power (generator) and staff willingness to acquire ICT skills with a mean score of 3.6 respectively. While provision of relevant and adequate ICT facilities have a mean score of 3.3 and therefore, higher than the criterion mean score. It is nevertheless the time with the lowest mean.

### Discussion of the Findings

An assessment of the influence of library staff attitude towards ICT and its use for service delivery in special libraries of north central Nigeria was carried out in this study. Two research questions were used for the investigation. On the extent of library staff attitude towards the use of ICT for service delivery in the special libraries in the North Central Nigeria, the respondents were found to have, generally, a positive opinion on their attitude towards the use of ICT. The findings of this study is in agreement with Ejedafiru & Oghenetega (2013), Ejikeme (2017) and Aiyebilehim, Ikenwe & Iketu (2017) who found out from their various research studies that librarians have positive attitudes towards the use ICT.

On the extent of library staff utilization of ICT for service delivery in the special libraries within the zone, the extent of ICT utilization was determined by assessing the usage of ICT for service delivery by the staff of the special libraries. From the expressed opinions of the staff, it was found that the level of ICT utilization for service delivery in the special libraries was low. The finding of the study is consistent with the study of Mommoh&Emmanuel (2019) who surveyed special libraries in the North Central Nigeria to determine the availability and use of ICT for service delivery and found that ICTS were available but the use for service delivery was minimal. The study also agreed with Uloaku (2017), who investigated the application of internet for service delivery in some special libraries in Kaduna state and found that the application of internet is not significantly high. The findings on the challenges of using ICT in special libraries in the North Central Nigeria range from lack of ICT policy, inadequate funding, inadequate ICT infrastructure, erratic power supply, and frequent changes and modification of ICTs. The finding of this study agreed with Igwebuiké & Agbo (2017) and Uloaku (2017), who found similar challenges in special libraries in Kaduna state and Abuja respectively. The finding on strategies reveals what can be done in the special libraries to overcome the challenges associated with the use of ICTs for service delivery. These include provision of adequate power (generator), staff willingness to acquire ICT skills, continuous training and retraining of staffs, formulation of ICTs policies, internet connectivity, provision of adequate bandwidth, provision of adequate funding by the management of special libraries. This finding agreed with Adebayo, Ahmed& Adeniran (2018) and Igwebuiké & Agbo (2017) who respectively made similar suggestions for effective use of ICT for service delivery in special libraries and other libraries.

### **Conclusion and Recommendation**

The result of the study revealed that library staff attitude towards the use of ICT was positive in special libraries in North Central Nigeria, but the positive attitude did not translate to high use of ICT for service delivery in the special libraries. Positive attitude did not have influence on the use of ICT for service delivery in the special libraries under study. For effective service delivery in special libraries in the North Central Nigeria, positive attitude towards the use of ICT must translate to the actual use of ICT for service delivery. ICT must be adequately used for service delivery for the survival of the special libraries in the North

Central Nigeria to achieve their objectives and make their impact on national development. For effective and efficient utilization of ICT for service delivery in special libraries in the North Central Nigeria, the challenges must be tackled. The major challenges are the responsibilities of the management of the special libraries. The following recommendations were necessary:

- Management of special libraries in the North Central Nigeria should make it a policy for library staff to utilize ICT for service delivery.
- Staff of the special libraries in the North Central Nigeria should be given ample opportunities for continuous training in the use of ICT for service delivery through sponsorship to conferences, workshops, and seminar locally, internationally and in-house. This is necessary for them to learn new technologies emerging and to keep themselves abreast of new innovations
- The organization or institutions that establish special libraries in the North Central Nigeria should ensure adequate funding to procure appropriate and relevant ICTS that will enable the staff of the special libraries to deliver their services to meet with the current global trends. This will enable the special libraries staff to keep positive attitude towards the use of ICT and use ICT for effective service delivery.

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