

EDUCATION AS A PANACEA FOR HUMAN CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA

Ugbor, Cletus Chibuike; Agodo, Theresa Chinma

Department of Educational Foundations

University of Nigeria, Nsukka

Nwafor, Alphonsus Onyeachonam

Godfrey Okoye University

Thinkers' Corner, Enugu

And

Ugwuanyi, Fredrick Nwachukwu

Department of Educational Foundations

Ebonyi State University

Abakaliki, Ebonyi Stazte

Abstract

The study examined education as a panacea for human capital development in Nigeria. Two research questions guided the study. The researchers adopted descriptive survey research design. The population of the study was all the Administrative Staff of Federal Universities in Nigeria numbering 800 comprising, Deans of Faculties, Heads of Departments, Directors of Institutes and Directors of Quality Assurance Units. Simple random sampling technique was used to draw 600 Administrative staff from 20 Federal Universities for the study. The researchers developed a questionnaire titled, "Human Capital Development and Education Questionnaire (HCDEQ)". The instrument was validated and the reliability yielded a co-efficient of 0.85 using the Cronbach Alpha method. Mean scores and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions. The findings of the study showed that, the roles of education in human capital development in Nigeria included the acquisition of skill, knowledge and other potentials for human capital growth to enlucenational development, integration of ICT into human capital in production process, development of the health sector among others. The study further revealed that, the challenges confronting, the development of human capital in Nigeria through education are, poor funding of education sector by all levels of government, high rate of brain drain, infrastructural decay in schools, and poor learning environment among others. The study recommended that adequate funding of education by the government, provision of infrastructure and adequate motivation of teachers among others, should be made to enhance human capital development in Nigeria.

Keywords: Education, Human capital, Development, Human capital development.

Introduction

Education is the hub of all the developmental strides of a nation, and such strides may be inform of economic, political and sociocultural aspects of the peoples' life. Edison (2018) defines education as, the process of facilitating learning, or the acquisition of knowledge, skills, values, beliefs and habits by individuals in a given society through storytelling, discussion, teaching, training, and directed research under the guidance of a professional known as the teacher. Edison further states that, education can take place in formal or informal settings, by experience and it has a formative effect on the ways one thinks, feels, or acts which may be considered educational. Ogbonaya (2014) sees education as a balanced wheel of the machinery that propels a nation to a sustainable growth and development. According to Webb, Kuntu Ova and Karabayeva (2018), education is a process and result of mastering systematic knowledge, skills, a necessary condition for preparing a person for life and work. Thus, the purpose of education is the formation of personality, which is ability to adapt to life through independence activity, creativity, among others. Tipalti (2018) observes that, education is the guide to light as to bring about success, as it is a process of acquiring knowledge, belief, values, skill and habits. which teaches one to be true human being and may be formal or informal in nature. Eric (2018) defines education as the united concern of a people for the right upbringing of its children and the improvement of national life. Onolabi in Addo (2010) sees education as, the deliberate systematic and sustained efforts to transmit, evoke or acquire knowledge, attitudes and values, skills and sensibilities and any learning that results from the effort, direct or indirect, intended or unintended by a professional in school.

The Federal Republic of Nigeria (2014) in her National Policy on Education states that, education is an instrument "par excellence" for national development and it is compulsory for her citizens. To this end, education is the process by which the capabilities of individuals are developed through the acquisition of knowledge, skills, right values and attitudes for the benefit of individuals and the society at large. The above definitions of education suggest that, it is a process of teaching or passing on "worthwhile values" to ensure balanced existence of individuals in the society. Harris (2018) observes that, through education, individuals can develop their potentials or capabilities for their consumption or benefit of the society in general. Thus, education encompasses the nursing and nurturing of an individual to become a full-fledged member of the society. It is a long term investment that is capable of yielding benefits that have some externalities (Rajo 2018). Okere (2018) states that, education and training are the main instrument available to government and community to prepare individuals for a rapidly changing and increasable demanding work as to improve their employability. This is why scholars of economics of education and educational planners continue to link investments in education to growth and development (Eze, 2010). The investments made by various individuals in the society and the government are meant to harness individuals' knowledge, skills, values, attitudes and other potentials formational growth and development in form of human capital development. Education is an essential input for the growth of individuals in the

society. It plays a major role in capital formation, which connects the productive part of the nation. It helps individuals to realize and harness their ability as well as performing a given function in the society for the benefit of all through human capital development (Tipalti, 2018).

Human capital is the state of knowledge, skills, habits, social, and personality attributes including creativity, embodied in the ability to perform labour activity to produce goods and services that have economic value. According to Edison (2018), the theory of human capital is closely related to the study of human resources management and business administration. The original idea of human capital can be traced to Adam Smith (1776) in his book, titled "Wealth of Nations" written in the 18th century. Smith believed that, human capital is accumulated specific to the nature of the task or skills required for the task and the human capital accumulated for the task are valuable to many firms requiring the transferable skills, which is applied to job - assignment, wage dynamics, promotion dynamics in case firms. Thus, according to the above definitions, human capital is concerned with the stock of knowledge, skill, competitiveness and attributes embedded in an individual that facilitates the creation of personal, social, educational and economic wellbeing (wealth) of nations. Becker in Edison (2018) observes that, human capital is similar to physical means of production. Backer further states that, one can invest in human capital through education, training, and medical treatment of which the output mainly depends partly on the rate of turn over or return to human capital investment. Thus, human capital is a means of production, of which additional investment yields additional output, hence, it is substituted not transferable as other factors of production like land, labour, or fixed capital.

Therefore, education and training are investments that are intimately related, and are added to the productive level of any economy. Education is an important aspect of workforce and treated as renewable part of the productive force in a nation. Operationally, human capital refers to the stock of skills, knowledge, right values and attitudes which form an important component of the productive forces of an economy for developmental purposes, be it economic, political, or socio-cultural aspects of the people's life and development.

Development as a concept has interdisciplinary approach which is usually applied to different facets of human life. Edison (2018) observes that, the concept of development has inter-disciplinary approaches and the definition depends on the angle it might be looked upon. These phases or facets might not be in the areas of political, economic, social, cultural, educational, among others. According to Seers in Meier (2018), the questions to ask about a country's development are: what has been happening to poverty? What has been happening to unemployment? What has been happening to inequality? If all three of these central problems have been growing worse, it would be strange to call the result; "development" even if per capital income has soared". The implication of the above definition is that if the three questions posed by Seers are not addressed, one cannot talk of development in a nation. Nigeria is a developing nation and if the issues are got tackled through education, Nigeria may not be heading anywhere since inequality, unemployment and low per capital

income issues are left bare. Development can therefore be defined as, a process whereby a nation makes extensive and efficient use of her tangible and intangible resources to better the living conditions of her citizens which include in areas of education, health, agriculture among others. Thus, the appropriation of the available human capital in the nation will in no small measure enhance the national development strides especially through education.

Human capital development is a panacea to the socio-economic development of a nation which comprises education, health, agriculture, labour, employment, income, empowerment, among others. The term human capital development refers to the improvement in the stock of knowledge, skills, competitiveness, values and attitudes possessed by individual or citizens of a nation which is usually attained through education and training. These attributes are essential ingredients for the developmental strides of a nation which is usually attained through education. According to Tipalti (2018), human capital essentially involves the act of training, knowledge, attainment, initiatives which are geared towards equipping individuals to survive and adapt in the environment which one is found as well as solve the immediate problems of the society around. This is essentially attained through education as it helps to refine and re-define the labour-force to be productive in line with the demands of the society. Aluko and Aluko cited in Oloarunleke, Esi and Bethel (2014) define human capital development as the ways or methods by which the competencies, potentials and capabilities of workers are reinforced to ensure efficiency on the job. By implication, it entails the process of empowering people to enhance their self-development. This is attributed to the fact that investment in humans is equivalent to all human efforts geared toward enhanced productivity through education. Going by the above definitions, human capital development is a system where by the potentials of individuals are tapped and capabilities enhanced or empowered through increased stock of professional experience, knowledge, skills, acquired abilities values and right attitude to attain increased productivity in organizations or nation. Therefore, human capital development are talents, skills, competencies and other relevant variables possessed by individuals which can be put in a better proportion for the betterment of the society as a whole. The role of human capital is usually actualized through formal education and training at higher institutions of learning.

Human capital as an important aspect of the developmental strides of a nation like Nigeria is greatly influenced by some essential factors. According to UNESCO in Olorunleke, Esi, and Bethel (2014), the factors that influence human capital development of a nation encompass government policies, the extent of globalization, level of technological advancement, socio-cultural demands and level of school enrolment. The policies put in place by government at all levels in Nigeria, determines significantly the rate at which the ability or the need to develop the skills and knowledge of the worker. Jones (2018) observes that, the establishment of enabling educational environment for the workers, determines to a greater extent their ability to upgrade their knowledge, skills in line with the current trends in the country. By this, the government be it at the federal, state or local levels, determines to an

extent the type of skill the people will have or not. If the government is sincere for the citizens to be knowledgeable or have a specific skill, the policies put in place by any of the levels of the government will be directed towards human capital development and vice versa. Secondly, the level at which nations collaborates with advanced countries influence the rate of human capital development of the country. Marthins (2017) explains that, the interaction between less developed countries and the advanced ones plays a significant role to human development effort of poor countries. This is due to the technological transfer from advanced countries to the less developed countries where the latter will be exposed to innovations and changes that characterize the new trends in the 21st century, where new skills, knowledge and other potentials are required for development.

Also, the level of technological advancement determines the level at which the human capital potentials of a nation can be developed. In addition, where internet facility such as the World Wide Web (www) is available, it implies that the skills, knowledge and competences which the people (citizens) possess will be greater than when it is not in existence. Advancement in human capital will be enhanced in the presence of computers which lead to more researches and advanced technology among others. Human capital development is directly dependent on education and training which individuals or citizens of a state is exposed to by the various policies and programmes put forward by the government of the country.

Education plays no small role to human capital development especially, the less developed country like Nigeria. Education is the process whereby individuals or citizens of a state acquire skills, knowledge, values and right attitudes, competencies which enable them to be useful to themselves and the society at large. These stocks of potentials or competences are in terms of human capital and if it will develop, a great attention should be given to the projection and implementation of policies and programmes based on education, to harness these potentials of the people for development. Education plays a significant role in the empowerment of her citizens as they acquire skills, knowledge and other competences that enable them to be useful to themselves and to the society at large, Ivan (2018) observes that, educational institutions provide the learning environment, knowledge and tools to help individuals succeed and do their best. Thus, investment in education helps to pass on knowledge, and teach new skills to the citizens of a state to enable them develop their workforce for the overall interest of the nations. Any society with a weak workforce is bound not to develop as human capital is the "engine" of any economy. If an engine breaks down, the whole system will definitely collapse. Rees and Cohn in Addo (2010) observe that, education provides the individual with skills, knowledge, competencies, technical know-how that help to develop their potentials to accelerate their productivity and income. This will enhance the Gross Domestic Product of the nation for the citizens interest. Education helps to improve the quality of employment of individual or groups in a given economy. Eric (2016) observes that, with quality education, people with high level skills, knowledge, competencies and stock of potentials are employed by the public or private sector which helps in tapping the economic resources available in the country. This role can be possible, where

education sector provides all the essential variables (inputs) necessary for human capital development of the nation. Therefore, the industrialists in private and public sectors will employ people with potentials that would help to accelerate the economic growth and development of the nation. All these are made possible through education. Education has produced the manpower that helps to sustain it. By this, the skills, knowledge, competencies and various levels and potentials of individual are infused into education sector as inputs which help to sustain education sector itself. Thus, education is self-sustaining if all the available resources are tapped through human resource management. The success of a nation's education depends on the level of human-capital development, and utilization of information technology and services. Aniekum and Ozochi cited in Iroevwo and Ochonogor (2013) explains that, education is a veritable tool for the creation, adoption and the wide spreading of knowledge economy to immense dimension that will benefit human race. Basic education with its attendant benefits, equips individual with skills, knowledge and competences that enhances the economic growth and development of a given society. The human capital of a nation is enhanced through education, the more positive impact it (education) has, the more gear their potentials or capabilities towards enhancing the development strides of the nation with the long run effort of increasing the socio-economic wellbeing of her citizens be attained.

The development of human capital through education enhances the income of the people. Chultz in Webs, Kuneuora and Karabayera (2018) observes that, improving the welfare of poor people depended not on land, technology or their efforts but rather knowledge economy. The abilities of human beings are enhanced through investments in education, which exposed them to free range of choices which leads to enhancement of their welfare. By this, investments in education improve professional experience, leads to protection, geographical mobility and information storage and retrieval. Thus, education aids the improvement in qualifications, experience, knowledge or health, thereby enhancing monetary or national income of the entire country.

The modernization and maintenance of human capital is accessed through education, as it is a continuous process. By this, Becker in Webs, Kuntuora and Karab (2018) affirms that, continuous education is the major ingredients of capital formation as it encompasses the stock of professional skills and knowledge, which are expressed in various Diplomas and Certificates obtained in various levels of a country's education sector. These Diplomas or Certificates obtained, qualifies one to be gainfully employed in terms of skills, experience and knowledge which individual obtains from schools. Thus, education helps to refine human capital to perfection to ensure higher productivity which invariably, accelerates economic growth and development of the country.

Human capital through education equally helps in the advancement of nations like Nigeria technologically. By this, education provides human beings with skills, knowledge potentials and competences to fit into the new knowledge (economy) in accordance with 21st century demands. Nelson and Phelps, Benhabi and Spiegel in Bouzekre (2015) observes that, education enhances the transmission of worthwhile

knowledge needed for the development of new ideas in technologies for advancement as the physical capital can easily be managed with quality human capital. Thus, there is a correlation between education, human capital and economic development of a nation (Bouzekre, 2015). Education helps to improve labour quality, spread of new knowledge and technology which enables labour as a factor of production to adopt new technologies in production process.

Despite these roles played by education to human capital to development, some challenges or threats tend to stifle the realization of these objectives in Nigeria. Inadequate funding is one of the problems that hamper the use of education as a tool for human capital development in Nigeria. According to Essien (2018), the national budget allocated to education sector is very meager for any meaningful development to be actualized. The United Nation's Education and Social Cultural Organization (UNESCO, 2000) emphasizes that most, governments in Nigeria, appropriates less than 2.6% of her national budget to education as against the stipulated UNESCO conventions on education which gave education 26% of her national budget. This if done, will enable institutions to hire qualified labour, procure infrastructural facilities required to train higher level manpower in the country. But with harsh economic conditions in the country, it becomes difficult if not impossible for the governments at all levels to apportion 26% of her yearly budget to education sector where other sectors suffer inadequate funds. By this, it will be very difficult to produce effective, efficient and competent human capital that will tap the nation's resources for developmental purposes. The World Bank (2010) observes that, Nigeria has found it difficult to grow and develop her economy due to myriads of challenges that beset her educational sector mostly, inadequate funds. In furtherance to above, Odi and Omofonwan cited in Oluwa Tobi and Oluranti (2011) explain that, the challenges to Nigeria education sector include; inadequate funding, instability of academic calendar, poor educational infrastructure or facilities, dilapidated classrooms, inadequate instructional materials, inadequate quality teachers, and unconducive learning environment, among others. These problems have hampered the ability of the government to produce efficient labour force that will enhance the developmental strides of the nation.

Another glaring challenge to human capital development in Nigeria is non-commitment of the government to education sector which is tantamount to high brain drain syndrome that have beset the sector. According to Isoje (2018), the ill-motivation of teachers at all levels of education has led the few intellectuals seeking for greener pastures abroad which resulted to backward trends in education sector. Furthermore, national productivity has diminished below expectation that poverty reigns supreme in the mist of plenty resources that are bound in the country.

The neglect of the health sector is another challenge to human capital development in Nigeria. The stock of human capital in Nigeria finds it very difficult to access health facilities in the country. As a result, skillful manpower that are required for higher productivity are exposed to health challenges which they are unable to cope with and this results to their untimely death. According to World Health Organization (WHO) in Oluwatobi and Oluranti (2011), the widespread of

health problems in the country is caused by shortage of skilled medical personnel that are expected to take care of the workforce at the primary level. This has resulted to drain in the level of productivity of workers, hence national development goals through education has become illusive. The above are some of the glaring challenges of the development of human capital through education in Nigeria which the study addressed.

Statement of the Problem

Quality education is a major determinant of the available human capital of a nation which spells the rate of her developmental strides. Human capital encompass the skills, knowledge, values and the actual potentials endowed on individuals that enable them to engage actively in the productive process of a nation to enhance the creation of personal, social and economic wellbeing of the people. However, most of the past studies focused on the impact of education on the political development of Nigeria. Coupled with the above, few studies were conducted on the role of education to human capital development in Nigeria. The problem of the study could be attributed to non-appreciation of the roles education plays to human capital development by the past and present governments in Nigeria as inadequate funds, poor health facilities, high brain drain syndrome among health workers, inadequate skilled manpower ,among others which education is supposed to enhance become a mirage Thus, in order to get this goal attained in Nigeria, human capital development should be given priority attention in educational policies and programmes made by governments for her citizens. It is based on this background that, the researchers investigated the study titled, education as a panacea for human capital development in Nigeria.

Purpose of the Study

The aim of the study was to investigate education as a panacea for human capital development in Nigeria. Specifically, the objectives of the study include to:

1. Investigate the roles of education in human capital development in Nigeria.
2. Find out the challenges to human capital development through education in Nigeria.

Research Question

1. What are the roles of education in human capital development in Nigeria?
2. What are the challenges to human capital development through education in Nigeria?

Methodology

The researchers adopted descriptive survey design for the study. According to Nworgu (2015), survey design refers to, the process of obtaining data on a particular features of a given population in a systematic manner that the findings are generalized to the entire population. The design was chosen as the data collected from a segment of the population will be generalized to all members of the population. The population

of the study was all the Administrative Staff of Federal Universities in Nigeria numbering 800 comprising, Deans of Faculties, Heads of Departments, Directors of Institutes and Directors of Quality Assurance Units. Simple random sampling technique was used to draw 600 Administrative staff from 20 Federal Universities. The researchers developed a questionnaire titled, "Human Capital Development and Education Questionnaire (HCDEQ)" to obtain relevant information for the study. Items 1-8 dealt with the roles of education in human capital development in Nigeria whereas, items 9-16 concerned the challenges to human capital development through education in Nigeria. The instrument was structured on a modified 4-point Likert scale which the respondents reacted to. The questionnaire was weighed as follows: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and strongly Disagree (SD)?, with 4, 3, 2, and 1 points respectively. The criterion mean was 2.50. The instrument was face validated by two experts in Educational Administration and Planning, and another in Measurement and Evaluation, all from the University of Nigeria, Nsukka. The Cronbach Alpha method was used to determine the reliability of the instrument. It yielded a reliability co-efficient of 0.85, which indicated that the instrument was reliable. A total of 600 copies of the instrument was administered and retrieved. The data was analyzed using mean scores and standard deviation. Any item with a mean of 2.50 and above was accepted value whereas item with a mean rating below 2.50 was not accepted

Results

Research Question 1: What are the roles of education to human capital development in Nigeria?

Table 1: Means and standard deviation of the Administrative Staff on the roles of education to human capital development in Nigeria

N=600

S/N	Mean(x)	Std	Decision
The role of education to human capital development.			
1. Education enables her citizens to acquire skills, knowledge, values and right attitude for individual and national development.	3.00	0.29	Agreed
2. It enhances the empowerment of her citizens.	3.00	0.29	Agreed
3. Education enables the citizens of a state to be gainfully employed either by the private or public sector	3.50	0.98	Agreed
4. It advances nations into higher technological drive.	2.65	0.75	Agreed
5. The -manpower provided by education			

	helps to tap the national resources.	3.00	0.29	Agreed
6.	Education enhances the Income of individuals in a nation.	3.00	0.29	Agreed
7.	Education helps to assess and maintain itself	3.00	0.29	Agreed
8.	Education aids the advancement of health sector through the production of qualified medical practitioners that will boost the health status of the labour force	3.50	0.98	Agreed
Grand mean: 3.05; Std: 0.32				

Table 1 shows the mean scores and standard deviation of the Administrative Staff on the roles of education in human development in Nigeria. The respondents agreed on all the items in the table with mean scores above the mean criterion of 2.50. It was deduced that, the higher the mean score, the lower the standard deviation, and vice versa. Therefore, roles of education in enhancing human capital development included, the acquisition of skills, knowledge, values and the right attitude by citizens of Nigeria for developmental purposes, empowerment of Nigerian citizens, increase in income of the workers, avenues for employment, sustenance of education sector itself, advances technologies- drive of the government, and its role in medical sector, among others. All the items are above the criterion mean of 2.50 and above. This shows the unison of the respondents to the item statements. Based on the findings in table 1 above, with a grand mean and standard deviation of 3.05 and 0.69 respectively, it is established that they are the major roles of education towards enhancing human capital development in Nigeria.

Research Question 2: what are the challenges to human capital development through education in Nigeria?

Table 2: Mean and standard deviation of Administrative Staff of Federal Universities in Nigeria on the challenges to human capital development through education in Nigeria

		N=600		
S/N		Mean (x)	Std	Decision
Challenges to human capital development in Nigeria				
9.	Inadequate funding of education sector by the government at all levels in Nigeria	3.50	0.98	Agreed
10.	High level of brain drain among intellectuals	3.00	0.29	Agreed
11.	Infrastructural decay in Universities.	3.50	1.98	Agreed
12.	Neglect of the health sector by the government	3.00	0.29	Agreed
13.	Inadequate instructional materials	2.50	0.21	Agreed

14. poor learning environment
15. Poor motivation of teachers
16. Instability of academic calendar
3.00
2.50
3.00
0.29
0.21
0.29
Agreed
Agreed
Agreed

Grand mean: 3.00; std: 0.30

Table 2 shows the mean scores and standard deviation of the Administrative Staff on the challenges to human capital development through education in Nigeria. The respondents agreed on all the items in the table with mean scores above the mean criterion of 2.50. It was deduced that, the higher the mean score, the lower the standard deviation, and vice versa. Therefore, the challenges to human capital development through education in Nigeria are, inadequate funding of education sector by the government, infrastructural decay, high level of brain drain, neglect of health sector by the governments among others. Based on the analysis on table 2 above, with a grand mean and standard deviation of 3.00 and 0.30 respectively, it is established that items 9-16 ranked positive and were above 2.50 criterion mean which symbolize that they are the challenges to human capital development through education in Nigeria.

Discussion of findings

The findings of the study showed that the major roles of education to human capital development in Nigeria include, acquisition of skills, knowledge, values and right values which enables them to function efficiently in the society, empowerment of Nigeria citizens, provision of gainful employment, sustenance of education itself, improving the quality of manpower in health sector, harnessing Nigeria natural resources for development, technological advancement of the country, enhancing the income of individuals that acquires it, and assessment of educational quality, among others. The above findings agreed with that of Ivan (2018) Addo (2010) Eric (2016), Irodokwo and Ochonjor (2013), webb, Kuntuora and Karabayora (2018), on the roles played by education in enriching human capital in form of skills, knowledge, right values and attitudes which affects positively, national growth and development in Nigeria.

Furthermore, the findings of the study showed the challenges of human capital development through education in Nigeria which include, poor funding of education, poor learning environment, brain drain among intellectuals to other countries, infrastructural decay in schools, neglect of health sector by the government, instability of academic calendar, poor motivation of teachers at all levels of education, inadequate supply of instructional materials. Their findings agreed with Essien (2018), UNESCO (2000), World Bank (2010), Oluwatobi and Oluranti (2011) Isife (2018), who x-rayed on different occasions the challenges of human capital development through education in Nigeria.

Conclusion

Education is the process by which individual acquire skills, knowledge and understanding, values and right attitudes which enables them to be functional in the society. As such, it is imperative that education should play a major role in enhancing the stock of skills, knowledge, values and allied potentials in form of human capital for the growth and development of Nigeria. But, education sector is beset by a lot of challenges in form of inadequate funds, infrastructural decay, among others to enrich human capital development in Nigeria. It is based on this premise that the study made some useful recommendations.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the researchers made the following recommendations

1. Adequate funding of education by all levels of government
2. Provision of infrastructural facilities to all higher institutions in Nigeria.
3. Learning environment should be conducive for academic purposes in all higher institutions in Nigeria.
4. Information communication technology should be integrated into schools' academic programmes.
5. Teachers of all levels should be remunerated adequately
6. The health sector should be revitalized to enhance output by the health workers.
7. Academic institutions at all levels should be provided with instructional materials.
8. Human capital development should be made a continuous process/exercise through education to update the knowledge and skills of the workers/labour force in line with the 21st century demands through seminars, conferences, workshops, among others.

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