The Influence of Diversity-Oriented Leadership on Employee's Engagement Through Strategic Internal Communication During the Covid-19 Outbreak as An Intervention Variable

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the influence of diversity-oriented leadership on employee engagement through strategic internal communication during covid-19 outbreak as an intervention variable at BPJS Ketenagakerjaan Surakarta. The respondents in this study were 61 actives employees at BPJS Ketenagakerjaan Surakarta. Statistical tools used in this study are Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) by Smart PLS application. Results signify that diversity-oriented leadership has no significant influence on employee's engagement and it has positive significant influence on strategic internal communication. Strategic internal communication has positive significant influence on employee's engagement. Diversity-oriented leadership has positive significant influence on employee's engagement through strategic internal communication during the covid-19 outbreak as an intervention variable.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Covid-19 pandemic has brought about many changes that are very influential in many aspects such as the work environment. The way everyone works is changing because of this crisis, which is accompanied by many uncertainties. This crisis poses new challenges to organizations in terms of managing work in order to remain productive. Therefore, the organization must provide a new strategic strategy while adjusting to the current situation. Furthermore, employee engagement is recognized as important for organizational effectiveness and a factor in achieving innovation and competitiveness.

According to Ruck et al (2017), employee engagement has been one of the focal constructs in organizational behavior, management and organizational communication, and public relations literature (Novianti et al, 2017; Tusa'diah et al., 2017;. The crisis's changes and consequences have had a profound impact on the workplace, particularly on how people interact with their employment and organizations in uncertain times. This is where organizations and leaders get a challenge in terms of employee engagement. In this instance, a variety of techniques must be implemented in order to keep employees engaged in the firm. One of the most crucial considerations is how internal communication is implemented within the company.

According to Welch (2007), effective internal communication is crucial for successful organizations as it affects the ability to engage employees and achieve objectives. Poor internal communication is a major concern for organizations since it results in workplace inefficiency. Strategic internal communication can help employees reduce misunderstanding in the organization. The implementation of strategic internal communication is strongly influenced by the role of leadership in the organization. The leadership style is very influential on how active employees are in their work. According to Lee et al (2020), when leaders act and communicate in an inclusive, fair and equal manner to all employees, regardless of their identities, positions, and experiences, and are open to diverse viewpoints in a crisis, employees are likely to perceive their company's

communication environment as transparent or strategic. These characteristics are characteristics of diversity-oriented leadership.

Luu et al (2019) mentioned that commitment and engagement is the outcomes of diversity-oriented leadership. This leadership behavior has a significant role in organizational effectiveness, especially during a crisis. The bond between leadership style and strategic internal communication becomes a point of view in building harmonious human resources. Badan Penyelenggara Jaminan Sosial Ketenagakerjaan, or BPJamsostek, is the largest social security agency for workers in Indonesia that focuses on social security services. BPJS Ketenagakerjaan has many branches spread across all regions in Indonesia that handle social security program services in each region. Moreover, this company has to deal with diversity along with their performance which has to provide services to many different customers in each region with different backgrounds.

The author is interested in researching BPJS Ketenagakerjaan, because based on interviews conducted with human resource stylists at BPJS Ketenagakerjaan Surakarta, it can be concluded that this company focuses on social security services throughout Indonesia and manages employees who come from various regions and different backgrounds. This is where diversity-oriented leadership is implemented. The Covid-19 crisis has had a profound influence on how internal communication runs between employees, especially when working from different places. Therefore, this study was made to identify whether diversity-oriented leadership on employee's engagement can be mediated by strategic internal communication variables by submitting a research title "The influence of diversity-oriented leadership on employee's engagement through strategic internal communication during the covid-19 outbreak as an intervention variable".

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Employee Engagement

Job engagement refers to "a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption" (Schaufeli et al., 2002, p. 74). Employee engagement has been one of the focal constructs in organizational behavior, management and organizational communication, and public relations literature (Ruck et al., 2017).

Employee engagement is a psychological state in which individuals are emotionally invested in their work. Employees will be physically, cognitively, and emotionally engaged while demonstrating their work effectiveness (Kahn in Albrecht, 2010). Employee engagement is defined by Hewitt Associates (2006) as individuals who say and speak good information about the organization, stay desire to be a successful member, and strive to continue to perform beyond the organization's minimum criteria. Employees who are engaged are not just committed to their jobs, but also enthusiastic about them.

2.2 Diversity-oriented Leadership

Diversity-oriented leadership refers to leaders who welcome and value the contributions of personnel from other backgrounds and backgrounds (Nembhard & Edmondson, 2006). When a leader recognizes that cultural preferences differ and adapts techniques, this is known as diversity-oriented leadership. As a result, diversity-focused leadership has

features such as creating diverse ideas and perspectives from people from various backgrounds.

Diverse leaders also foster group collaboration by providing feedback and clarification, encouraging employees to take part in shared decision-making, and delegating decision-making authority to subordinates (Nishii, L.H. and Mayer, 2009). Given that diversity-oriented leaders provide fair and equal support, resources and opportunities to employees from different social groups, employees are inclined to rely on these leaders and be dedicated and engaged in their work (Luu et al., 2019). Diversity-oriented leadership, according to Lee et al (2020), is a crucial incentive for employees to voluntarily and successfully exchange task-related information at work, which may aid an organization's ability to develop and implement novel and creative crisis management solutions.

2.3 Strategic Internal Communication

Strategic internal communication is the conscious and constantly reflective work with communication in the organization that supports, drives, develops and changes the strategic direction of the organization (Dahlman & Heide, 2020). Internal communication, as a central process in which employees share information, create relationships, make meanings, and construct organizational culture and values (Berger, Lance A. & Berger, 2008). Internal communication is a key area that communications managers, directors of communications, and those in high positions should focus on more. Internal communication, in other words, is a component of governance and leadership aimed at achieving a certain corporate purpose and goal (Dahlman & Heide, 2020).

Strategic internal communication is indicated as transparent internal communication. Based on Men (2014), there are three specific communication efforts should be ensured when organizations practice transparent internal communication, including accountable, participative and substantial transparency. An organization can improve ability to get employee engagement by implementing strategic internal communication.

2.4 Hypothesis Development

According to Lockwood (2007), one of the factors that influence employee engagement is the leadership style that is the presence or absence of a transformational leadership style. The views of leadership will be different when the leaders use another leadership style. Different models provide different views of leadership. Diversity leadership, however, can be a component of a leadership model or a stand-alone concept. In essence, diversity leadership pertains to individuals who excel in promoting inclusive cultures in the workplace. Based on Luu et al (2019), existing studies explored the outcomes of diversity-oriented leadership such as commitment and engagement.

Just as transformational leadership has a positive influence on employee engagement, the implementation of diversity-oriented leadership also has a positive influence on how employees are engaged. More positive the perception of diversity-oriented leadership style, the higher the employee engagement employees. On the other hand, the more negative the perception of the diversity-oriented leadership style, the more the lower the employee engagement. As we know the implementation of diversity-oriented leadership will provide

fair and equal support, resources and opportunities to employees from different backgrounds. This will support employee engagement.

H1: Diversity-oriented leadership has positive significant influence on employee's engagement

Leadership style is the important things in organization. The implementation of diversity-oriented leadership will affect the practice of internal communication in organization. As we know that leadership style based on diversity, will be openness to all backgrounds. This behavior allows employees to believe that the information and the resources in the organizations are transparent and fairly distributed (Chin, J.L., Desormeaux, L. and Sawyer, n.d.)

This is in accordance with research published in several journals to confirm the quality or cause and effect between variables that has been studied by Lee et al. (2020) researching the impact of diversity-oriented leadership during a crisis on transparent internal communication on full-time US employees across industry sector during the covid-19 outbreak. The results show the positive impact of diversity-oriented leadership during a crisis on transparent internal communication was expected. Therefore, this study assumes that organizations that use diversity-oriented leadership styles are more likely to practice strategic internal communication, particularly during a crisis situation.

H2: Diversity-oriented leadership has positive significant influence on strategic internal communication

The impact of internal communications in the formation and maintenance of employee engagement has been recognized in previous studies (Welch & Jackson, 2007). As we know, internal communication is important thing to get employee engagement. How strategic the internal communication become the key to organize people in organization. The more strategic the communication, the more chance to get high relationship between employees. The implementation of strategic internal communication will support organization to be more productive and have a good performance.

Excellent internal communication was believed to affect an organization's ability to engage its employees (Men & Bowen, 2016). This is in accordance with research published in several journals to confirm the quality or cause and effect between variables that has been studied by Balakrishnan and Masthan (2013) researching the impact of internal communication on employee engagement at Delhi International Airport. The results show there is significant positive correlation between internal communication and employee engagement.

H3: Strategic internal communication has positive significant influence on employee's engagement

Based on Lee et al (2020), signify that diversity-oriented leadership has positive significant influence on internal communication. And based on Balakrishnan and Masthan (2013), signify that internal communication has significant positive influence on employee engagement. Luu et al (2019) explored that the outcomes of diversity-oriented leadership such as commitment and engagement. Diversity-oriented leadership and transparent internal communication can influence employee's job engagement in a crisis context. When diversity-oriented leadership is implemented, it will build the strategic internal communication as well as the employee

engagement. Internal communication is essential to empowering employees.

H4: Diversity-oriented leadership has positive significant influence on employee's engagement mediated strategic internal communication during the covid-19 outbreak.
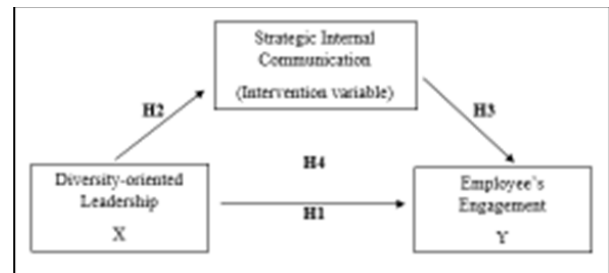

Figure 1. Research Model

3. RESEARCH METHOD

The type of research is quantitative research and uses survey research methods. The type of data used in this study is primary data. This research is survey research that uses a questionnaire to collect respondent data (Tjahjono, 2015). Data was collected through a survey by distributing questionnaires to respondents in the form of questions to respondents related to diversity-oriented leadership variables, employee engagement, and strategic internal communication which previously will be given a complete explanation. The author takes a sample using a total sampling technique or saturated sample, which means total sampling here is the researcher uses the entire population as a sample, as stated by Tjahjono (2015), "Saturated sample is a sampling technique when all members of the population are sampled".

The data analysis technique used is Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) on SmartPLS. The research was conducted on Employees at BPJS Ketenagakerjaan Surakarta. The number of samples in this study were 60 employees. There are three variables examined in this study, namely diversity-oriented leadership, employee engagement and strategic internal communication. The measurement used in this study 5 likert scale. Employee engagement variable adopted 4 items from Saks (2006). Diversity-oriented leadership variable adopted 4 items from Luu et al (2019). Strategic internal communication variable adopted 17 items from Jiang and Men (2017).

Table 1. Operational Definition of Variables

Latent Variable	Definition	Measurement
Employee engagement	Job engagement refers to "a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption" (Schaufeli *et al.* 2002)	4 items adopted from (Saks, 2006) 1. Actively and enthusiastically into the job 2. Work and sometimes lose track of time 3. Job is all consuming, I am totally into it 4. I am highly engaged in this job
Diversity-oriented Leadership	Diversity-oriented leadership refers to leaders inviting and appreciating the contributions of employees of diverse backgrounds and	4 items adopted from (Luu et al., 2019) 1. Work well with employees from different backgrounds

Latent Variable	Definition	Measurement
	characteristics (Nembhard & Edmondson, 2006)	2. Committed to a workforce representative of all segments of society
		3. Does a good job of managing people with diverse background
		4. Asks for the input of employees that belong to different demographic and expertise groups
Strategic Internal communication	Strategic internal communication is the conscious and constantly reflective work with communication in the organization that supports, drives, develops and changes the strategic direction of the organization (Dahlman & Heide, 2020)	17 items from (Jiang & Men, 2017), including three dimensions: - Information Substantiality (6 items) - Participation (5 items) - Accountability

Latent Variable	Definition	Measurement
		(6 items)

4. RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS

By respondents of BPJS Ketenagakerjaan employees which consists of 61 people. By gender, there were 36 respondents dominate with male category (60%). For the characteristics of respondents based on age, most respondents fall into the category of 26-30 years, which is as many as 25 respondents (41.7%). Then for the characteristics of respondents based on length of work most respondents fall into the category of >5 years, which is as many as 23 respondents (38.3%). As for the last education taken, most fall into the bachelor degree category, which is as many as 52 respondents (86.7%). Based on their origin, there were 39 respondents dominate from Central Java (65%). And based on the ethnic group, there were 51 respondents dominate with Javanese category (85%).

Table 2. Descriptive Statistic Analysis

Descriptive Statistics								
	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Mean @	Variance	Explanation
DOL (4)	60	8	12	20	16.25	4.06	2.835	High
EE (4)	60	7	13	20	17.40	4.35	2.786	Very High
SIC (17)	60	32	53	85	70.35	4.13	34.604	High
Valid N (listwise)	60							

Source: Output SPSS 22

The results shows that diversity-oriented leadership, employee engagement and strategic internal communication is highly perceived by employees at BPJS Ketenagakerjaan Surakarta.

4.1 Data Analysis: Outer Model (Measurement Model)

The convergent validity test can be seen in the loading factor for each indicator in the construct. The loading factor value is the correlation between the indicator item scores and the construct scores built. The loading factor value that can be used to assess convergent validity is above 0.7 for confirmatory research, and 0.6 – 0.7 for explanatory research. However, according to Chin (1998), the value of loading factor 0.5 – 0.6 is considered as good enough for early-stage research (Ghozali & Latan, 2015).

Table 3. Outer Loading before Modification

	DOL (X)	EE (Y)	SIC (Z)	Information
DOL1	0.851			Valid
DOL2	0.868			Valid
DOL3	0.794			Valid
DOL4	0.720			Valid
EE1		0.818		Valid
EE2		**0.421**		Invalid
EE3		**0.560**		Invalid
EE4		0.885		Valid
SIC1			0.636	Valid

	DOL (X)	EE (Y)	SIC (Z)	Information
SIC2			0.653	Valid
SIC3			0.635	Valid
SIC4			0.704	Valid
SIC5			0.668	Valid
SIC6			**0.580**	Invalid
SIC7			0.819	Valid
SIC8			0.797	Valid
SIC9			0.789	Valid
SIC10			0.762	Valid
SIC11			0.601	Valid
SIC12			0.762	Valid
SIC13			0.712	Valid
SIC14			**0.147**	Invalid
SIC15			0.636	Valid
SIC16			0.700	Valid
SIC17			0.755	Valid

Based on the table above, diversity-oriented leadership construct have a rule of thumbs value > 0.6. Furthermore, the Employee Engagement construct shows that all indicators other than EE2 and EE3 have a rule of thumbs value < 0.6, so the EE2 and EE3 indicator must be removed from the model. Furthermore, the Strategic Internal Communication construct shows that all indicators other than SIC6 and SIC14 have a rule of thumb value > 0.6, so the SIC6 and SIC14 indicators must be removed from the model. In this case, indicators that have a rule of thumbs value < 0.6 can be said to be invalid so that the indicator must be removed from the model so that each

indicator meets the rule of thumbs with a value > 0.6 (Chinn, 1998a).

Table 4. Modified Outer Loading

	DOL (X)	EE (Y)	SIC (Z)	Information
DOL1	0.851			Valid
DOL2	0.869			Valid
DOL3	0.796			Valid
DOL4	0.716			Valid
EE1		0.838		Valid
EE4		0.891		Valid
SIC1			0.648	Valid
SIC2			0.658	Valid
SIC3			0.637	Valid
SIC4			0.708	Valid
SIC5			0.652	Valid
SIC7			0.813	Valid
SIC8			0.795	Valid
SIC9			0.804	Valid
SIC10			0.769	Valid
SIC11			0.615	Valid
SIC12			0.771	Valid
SIC13			0.716	Valid
SIC15			0.649	Valid
SIC16			0.692	Valid
SIC17			0.756	Valid

Based on the output in table above, it shows that all indicators in each construct show a value > 0.6, which means that all indicators are declared valid.

Table 5. AVE Value

	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Diversity-oriented Leadership	**0,656**
Employee Engagement	**0,748**
Strategic Internal Communication	**0,512**

Source: Smart PLS v3 Output

The next convergent validity test is to look at the AVE value. A variable can be said to be valid if it has an AVE value >0.5 (J. F. Hair et al., 2017). Based on table above, it can be seen that the AVE value on the latent variables DOL (Diversity-oriented Leadership) (0.656), EE (Employee Engagement) (0.748), SIC (Strategic Internal Communication) (0.512) is worth > 0.50, so it can be said that the measurement model is good or valid with discriminant validity.

Table 6. Reliability Test

	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability
DOL (X)	0.824	0.884
EE (Y)	0.666	0.856
SIC (Z)	0.931	0.940

A construct or variable is said to be reliable if it shows Cronbach's Alpha value > 0.6 & Composite Reliability > 0.6 (Chinn, 1998). Based on table 4.11 above, it can be seen that the constructs DOL (0.824), EE (0.666) and SIC (0.931) or all constructs in Cronbach's Alpha have a value above 0.60 which means that the construct can be said to have a high level of good reliability. In addition, it can be seen that the constructs DOL

(0.884), EE (0.856) and SIC (0.940) or all constructs in Composite Reliability have a value above 0.60 which means that the construct can be said to have a good level of reliability.

4.2 Diversity-oriented Leadership

Testing the structural model (inner model) can be done by looking at the R-square and Path Coefficients values.

Table 7. Adjusted R Square

	R Square	R Square Adjusted
EE (Y)	0.228	0.201
SIC (Z)	0.444	0.435

Based on table above, it shows that the adjusted R-square value of Diversity-oriented Leadership toward Employee Engagement is 0.201, which means Diversity-oriented Leadership variable can explain the variance of Employee Engagement in the amount 20.1%. Adjusted R-square value of Diversity-oriented Leadership toward Strategic Internal Communication is 0.435, which means Diversity-oriented Leadership variable can explain the variance of Strategic Internal Communication in the amount 43.5%.

4.3 Hypothesis Testing

Table 8. Path Coefficient

	Original Sample	t-statistics	p-values
DOL (X) → EE (Y)	-0,060	0,323	**0,747**
DOL (X) → SIC (Z)	0,682	8,306	0,000
SIC (Z) → EE (Y)	0,506	3,310	0,001

Table 9. Specific Indirect Effect

	Original Sample	t-statistics	p-values
DOL (X) → SIC (Z) → EE (Y)	0,345	2,692	0,007

Based on bootstrapping in tables above, it can be concluded as follows:

1. Diversity-oriented leadership towards employee's engagement

Based on the test results, the original sample value is negative, which is -0.060, meaning that the direction of this test is in accordance with the proposed hypothesis. Then, the t-statistic value is 0.323 < 1.66 with p-values of 0.747 > 0.05. Thus, there are hypothesis testing criteria that are not met or H1 is not supported. That is, Diversity-oriented Leadership does not have a significant influence on Employee Engagement.

2. Diversity-oriented leadership towards strategic internal communication during crisis

Based on the test results, the original sample value is positive, which is 0.682, meaning that the direction of this test is in accordance with the proposed hypothesis. Then, the t-statistic value is 8.306 > 1.66 with p-values of 0.000 < 0.05. Thus, all hypothesis testing criteria have been met or H2 is accepted. This means that Diversity-oriented Leadership has a

positive significant influence on Strategic Internal Communication.

3. Strategic internal communication during crisis towards employee's engagement

Based on the test results, the original sample value is positive, which is 0.506, meaning that the direction of this test is in accordance with the proposed hypothesis. Then, the t-statistic value is 3.310 > 1.66 with p-values of 0.001 < 0.05. Thus, all hypothesis testing criteria have been met or H3 is accepted. This means that Strategic Internal Communication has a positive significant influence on Employee Engagement.

4. Diversity-oriented leadership towards employee's engagement mediated by strategic internal communication during crisis

Based on the test results, the original sample value is positive, which is 0.345, meaning that the direction of this test is in accordance with the proposed hypothesis. Then, the t-statistic value is 2.692 > 1.66 with p-values of 0.007 < 0.05. Thus, all hypothesis testing criteria have been met or H4 is accepted. This means that Diversity-oriented Leadership has a positive significant influence on Employee Engagement mediated by Strategic Internal Communication during crisis.

4.4 Discussion

H1: Diversity-oriented leadership has positive significant influence on employee's engagement

One of the factors that influence employee engagement is the leadership style. As we know that every style of leadership will provide different views. According to Luu et al (2019), commitment and engagement is the outcomes of diversity-oriented leadership based on existing studies. Based on the results studied by the author, it shows that the Diversity-oriented has no significant influence on Employee Engagement. Because in the actual situation, there are still several other indications of achieving a high level of employee engagement, such as organizational culture knowledge sharing, intrinsic need satisfaction and so on. Based on these it can be concluded that H1 is not supported.

H2: Diversity-oriented leadership has positive significant influence on strategic internal communication

Based on the results studied by the author, it shows that the Diversity-oriented has positive and significant influence on Strategic Internal Communication. This is in accordance to Lee, Tao, Li and Sun (2020), researching the impact of diversity-oriented leadership during a crisis on transparent internal communication on full-time US employees across industry sector during the covid-19 outbreak. The results show the positive impact of diversity-oriented leadership during a crisis on transparent internal communication was expected. Therefore, this study assumes that organizations that use diversity-oriented leadership styles are more likely to practice strategic internal communication, particularly during a crisis situation. Based on these, it can be concluded that H2 is supported.

H3: Strategic internal communication has positive significant influence on employee's engagement

Based on the results studied by the author, it shows that the strategic internal communication has positive and significant influence on employee engagement. This is in

accordance to Balakrishan and Masthan (2013) researching the impact of internal communication on employee engagement at Delhi International Airport. The results show there is significant positive correlation between internal communication and employee engagement. Based on these, it can be concluded that H3 is supported.

H4: Diversity-oriented leadership has positive significant influence on employee's engagement through strategic internal communication during the covid-19 outbreak as an intervention variable

Based on the results studied by the author, it shows that the diversity-oriented leadership has positive and significant influence on employee engagement through strategic internal communication as an intervening variable. This is accordance to Luu et al (2019), explored that the outcomes of diversity-oriented leadership such as commitment and engagement. Diversity-oriented leadership and transparent internal communication can influence employee's job engagement in a crisis context. When diversity-oriented leadership is implemented, it will build the strategic internal communication as well as the employee engagement. Internal communication is essential to empowering employees. Based on these, it can be concluded that H4 is supported.

5. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of data analysis, it can be concluded that diversity-oriented leadership has no significant influence on employee engagement. Diversity-oriented leadership has a positive and significant influence on strategic internal communication. Strategic internal communication has positive and significant influence on employee engagement. Diversity-oriented leadership has positive and significant influence on employee engagement through strategic internal communication during the covid-19 outbreak. This shows that the indirect influence of diversity-oriented leadership on employee's engagement through strategic internal communication is stronger.

The researcher realizes, there some limitation in completing this research. First, this study only uses diversity-oriented leadership variables and strategic internal communication to measure employee engagement, while there are still many variables that can be researched in order to produce better research. Second, the variables of diversity-oriented leadership chosen based on the current issues resulted to minimum references of previous research result. Third, collecting data used in this study is questionnaires which causes a lack of communication between researchers and respondents so that misunderstandings can occur and will provide answers that are not in accordance with the intent of the questions.

Based on the results of the research and discussion above, there are several things that can be considered for further research. For organizations, based on the results of data analysis that diversity-oriented leadership can support the emergence of strategic internal communication and strategic internal communication can have a positive influence on employee engagement of BPJS Ketenagakerjaan Surakarta. Therefore, BPJS Ketenagakerjaan Surakarta is expected to be able to maintain and improve the strategic internal communication that has been formed in order to realize good employee engagement which will support the company's performance to be maximal in achieving its goals. For further researchers, it would be better

to add other variables outside of this research related to the organization such as organizational culture, knowledge sharing and so on, so that the research can be even better. The further researchers can expand the range of the sample and the number of respondents, so that it can have a larger number of respondents and better results than previous studies.

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