DESIGNING A PSYCHOLOGICAL EMPOWERMENT STRUCTURAL MODEL FOR TEACHERS IN KHORAMABAD CITY

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ABSTRACT

The present study has aimed to design and examine a pattern of antecedents of psychological empowerment with self-efficacy, as the predictor, in teachers of Khoramabad city. This study is a correlational research conducted using structural equations modelling. The statistical population of this study has been composed of 10th grade teachers of Khoramabad city. 385 of these teachers were selected as the statistical sample of the study using the multi-stage cluster sampling. Research tools include Spreitzer and Mishra's Psychological Empowerment Scale, Hersey and Blanchard Leadership Style Scale, Research-made structural empowerment and Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk Hoy, and Hoy teacher self-efficacy scale. Analyses of structural equation modelling have supported the fitness of the recommended pattern with the data. The findings have shown that the among leadership styles, the relationship between the delegating (Laissez-Faire) and telling leadership styles and self-efficacy was significant, but the relationship between self-efficacy and participating and telling leadership styles was not significant. The results have also suggested that telling and participating leadership styles have direct, positive and significant effect on psychological empowerment. Moreover, indirect effects of telling and delegating leadership styles on psychological empowerment were significant with the mediation of self-efficacy. However, the results have not been indicative of a direct and significant relationship between structural empowerment and psychological empowerment.

Keywords: *Psychological Empowerment, Structural Empowerment, Leadership Style, Teachers*

INTRODUCTION

Human resource empowerment is a modern approach to intrinsic job motivation, which means releasing the intrinsic powers of employees and providing them with opportunities so that they would be able to optimally apply their talent, capabilities and competencies. Employee empowerment enables the organizations to be as flexible and responsive as they can be and improves organizational and individual performance. In this respect, it can be argued that employee empowerment is a necessity when it comes to organizational effectiveness and innovation Two scholars, Mary and Torlakson, believe that empowerment is telling employees what they have to do so that they would understand their responsibilities well enough (Savery et al. 2001). In fact, empowerment equals more responsiveness and a better sense of responsibility for the improvement of organizational performance (Greasley, 2008). In the view of theorists who see empowerment from the perspective of employees, empowerment reflects the psychological status of employees (Spreitzer, 1995). Psychological empowerment has been defined in various ways using words like self-actualization, charisma, self-belief,

enabling or granting power (Fauk et al. 2011; cited by Baroot Koob and Morovati Sharifabadi, 2014). Vaten and Cameron (1998) define empowerment as granting power to employees, to help them improve their self-confidence, overcome their sense of inability or frustration and do activities that gives them energy and intrinsic motivation (cited by Mahdavi and Piltan, 2012). Therefore, it can be said that psychological empowerment has five dimensions: competency, autonomy, effectiveness, meaningfulness and trust. Most of the studies on empowerment, especially those conducted in private organizations, have emphasized individual factors such as intrinsic motivation (Koberg et al. 1999; Kraimer et al. 1999; Liden and Graen, 1980; Sparrowe, 1994; Spreitzer, 1995; Tymon, 1988). Nonetheless, some studies, especially studies conducted in the public sector Kernaghan, 1992; Petter et al. 2002), have paid attention to democratic methods and democracy-oriented structures, i.e. another approach to empowerment called structural empowerment. Structural empowerment includes management methods and techniques which have been created for the distribution of power and responsibility in lower levels of the organization; so that individuals would be able to make work-related decisions (Pearce et al. 2003; Burke, 1986; Eylon and Bamberger, 2000; Foster-Fishman and Keys, 1997; Gruber & Trickett, 1987; Niehoff et al. 2001; Olshfski and Cunningham, 1998; Patterson et al. 2004; Quinn and Spreitzer, 1997).

Structural empowerment is a component defined by Kanter. According to his model, when an organization is structured in a way that all of its employees are provided with the same opportunities, their behaviors would be effective and the organization would have a better output (Manojlovich, 2003). Given the research literature and the different definitions that have been presented for structural empowerment, Kordnaeej, Bakhshizadeh and Fathollahi (2015) have mentioned four dimensions for it: 1- delegating authority, 2- sharing information, 3- participating in making decisions, 4- control. Some studies have shown the importance and the direct relationship between organization's structural empowerment and psychological empowerment (Jancho, 2008; Vaezi and Sabzikaran, 2010; Kordnaeej et al. 2015; Saj, 2000; Nafari and Omidfar, 2010; Miri et al. 2011; Vazifedoust et al. 2012; Samadi MiarKalaee et al. 2014; Nategh et al. 2014). These studies have led to great changes in regards with replacing traditional, concentrated and inactive structures with dynamic, active, participative and self-management organizational structures (Mihm et al. 2010). Spreitzer (1995) believes that the more successful plans and measures related to structural empowerment are, the more effective their results on the mindset of employees and their psychological status would be. Some scholars have focused on different aspects of empowerment, i.e. beliefs and emotions. Accordingly, empowerment is related to the perception of employees about their role in the organization. Any strategy or action that can affect the beliefs of individuals and reinforce their need for self-efficacy will result in empowerment (Salajegheh et al. 2013). Abdollahi (2005) has also stated that there is a positive and significant relationship between self-efficacy and psychological empowerment. Many of the human behaviors are evoked and controlled by self-efficacy mechanism. Among these mechanisms, none is as important and inclusive as the belief in personal self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977). If one believes that they cannot achieve they expected result or comes to believe that they cannot prevent and avoid unacceptable behaviors, they will be less and less motivated to work and take actions. Although there are more factors that evoke human behaviors, all of them follow their self-efficacy (Abdollahi, 2005).

Self-efficacy is the center of Bandura's social cognitive theory (Bandura, 2006). In some studies (Asghari et al. 2008; Taylor and Tashakori, 1994; cited by Kajbaf et al. 2015; Woot and Short, 1996; cited by Kajbaf et al. 2015; Royani et al. 2014; Saee, 2009), self-efficacy beliefs have been introduced more than any other motivational structure or concept as the predictor of employee empowerment. Some studies (Ghadyani, 2010; Mohammadnoor et al. 2017; Hoveyda and Behroozi, 2014; Shahmansoori and Sokoot Arani, 2015) have stated that managers' leadership styles are associated with this issue. In fact, nowadays, organizations are trying to considerably increase their productivity by optimally using all of the existing tools and facilities, including employees' self-efficacy. It seems to be that this goal won't be achieved without adopting the proper leadership styles (Shahmansoori and Sokoot Arani, 2015). Adopting the proper leadership styles will lead to emergence of a better feeling in the employees and will increase their self-efficacy. Since the manager, as the official representative of the organization, is at the top of the organization and responsible for coordination and increasing productivity, success of the organization in achieving its goals depends on effective leadership styles and management actions. Management or leadership style determines the organizational culture, atmosphere and the strategies applied in the organization (Hoveyda and Behroozi, 2014). In the beginning, empowerment is known as a management tool used based on some management activities. Watson et al. (2013) believe that participative management and participation of the employees are factors that affect psychological empowerment. The results obtained by Hassanpoor et al. (2012) have shown that there is a significant relationship between leadership style and psychological empowerment. Leadership styles are: continuous and permanent behavioral patterns that people use while working with others or through others and is perceived by others (Rezaeeyan, 2003; cited by Ganjiniya, 2012). Hersey and Blanchard have divided leadership styles into four categories: 1- telling; 2- telling; 3- participating; 4- delegating.

Given that an efficient manpower is a main index as far as the superiority of the organization is concerned, putting emphasis on effective and efficient manpower in the education industry. However, considering the previously mentioned reviews, it has become clear that, despite its importance, not much attention been paid to it and most studies have focused on the empowerment of employees of non-educational organization. The existing studies (Golini, 2010; Elyasi et al. 2014; Tavanyi Shahvardi and Mahram, 2010; Hatamnejad and Khodadadi, 2015; Rezaee Jandani et al. 2015; Kajbaf et al. 2015; Sadat Khoshooee and Bahrami, 2014) in the educational organizations focused on teachers have not included any kind of modelling. Considering the aforementioned relationships extracted from scientific studies, in this research, the overall pattern of the assumed relationships between these variables among teachers will be examined. In the present study, given the literature, structural empowerment and leadership styles have been selected as the predictors and self-efficacy as the mediator.
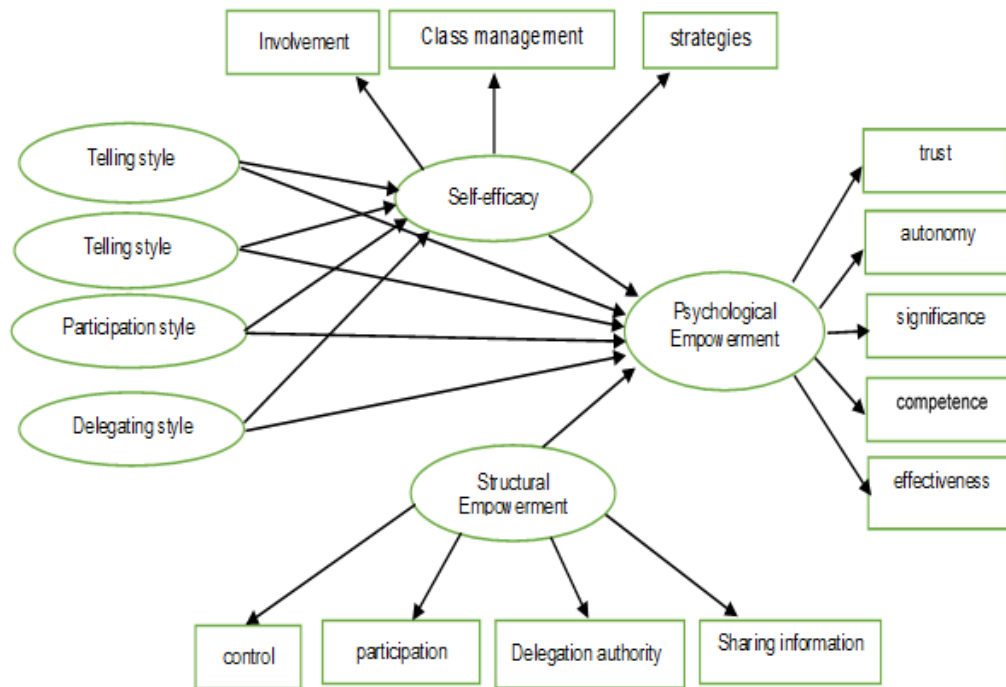
Diagram 1. The recommended structural pattern for Relationships Leadership Styles, Self-Efficacy and Structural Empowerment with Teachers Psychological Empowerment

METHODOLOGY

The design of this study was correlation through structural equation model. In this research, the statistical population were all employed high school teachers of Khorramabad city in 2018-2017 were. Using the Krejcy & Morgan table and the Cochran formula, the sample size of the study was 285 people. Therefore, in this study, considering the loss of data, the 400-person sample size was considered for the hypothesis, which was determined by multi-stage cluster method and randomly. First, from the first and second districts of Khorramabad, the district two and from the first and second grade of high school, the first grade and among the first grade high schools of second distinct, 25 schools and 16 schools were randomly selected. It should be noted that from the total number of distributed questionnaires, some of the questionnaires were not returned and some were excluded due to incompleteness. Finally, from 400 questionnaires, 385 questionnaires were analyzed. After data entry, using spss24 software, all correlation coefficients, reliability coefficients and descriptive statistics were calculated. Also, using AMOS-24 software, models for factor analysis of the questionnaires were analyzed. The SMARTPLS3 software was used to analyze the research hypotheses. The information gathering tools are as follows:

Hersey and Blanchard Leadership Style Scale: to determine managers' leadership styles, the famous questionnaire developed by Hersey and Blanchard, who were the pioneers of the situational theory. This questionnaire was designed and standardized based on this theory in the year 1986. Previously, in the study conducted by Noorbakhsh et al. (2004), the content validity of this questionnaire was confirmed by experts in the field of sport management and

the reliability coefficient of the questionnaire was calculated through Cronbach's alpha (0.79) which was indicative of an acceptable reliability.

Structural empowerment   questionnaire: to examine the structural empowerment, the structural empowerment questionnaire proposed by Kordnaeej, Bakhshizadeh and Fathollahi (2015) was used. In the present study, to determine the validity of the questionnaire, the confirmatory factor analysis method was used. The value of the obtained RMSEA coefficient was calculated to be 0.075. The factor load of each of the items was between 0.65 and 0.87 and these values were indicative of their fitness. To review the validity of the questionnaire, the Cronbach's alpha method was used. The total alpha coefficient of the scale was 0.87 and the Cronbach's alpha coefficients of the subscales were between 0.76 and 0.82.

Spritzer and Mishra's Psychological Empowerment Scale: to measure psychological empowerment, Spreitzer and Mishra's Psychological Empowerment Scale was used. In this research, to determine the validity of the questionnaire, the confirmatory factor analysis method was used. The results suggested that the values of the indexes are close to the fitness criteria and the confirmatory factor analysis pattern had an acceptable fitness. The value of the obtained RMSEA coefficient was equal to 0.072 and the value of the factor load for each item was between 0.66 and 0.84. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient of the whole scale was 0.87 and the Cronbach's alpha coefficient of the subscales lied between 0.67 and 0.86.

Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk Hoy, and Hoy teacher self-efficacy scale: to measure the sense of efficacy of the teachers, the short version of the Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk Hoy, and Hoy teacher self-efficacy scale (2001) was used. In this research, to determine the validity of the questionnaire, the confirmatory factor analysis method was used. The results suggested that the values of the indexes are close to the fitness criteria and the confirmatory factor analysis pattern had an acceptable fitness. The value of the obtained RMSEA coefficient was equal to 0.065 and the value of the factor load for each item was between 0.70 and 0.79. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient of the whole scale was 0.83 and the Cronbach's alpha coefficient of the subscales lied between 0.74 and 0.83.

FINDINGS

In this structural model, the leadership style and structural empowerment variables were considered as the predictors and the self-efficacy variable was considered as the mediator and the psychological empowerment variable was considered as the criterion variable. To analyze this model, the partial least squares estimation method was used. Some of the important presumptions which have to be reviewed in the analysis are the collinearity indexes. After reviewing these indexes, it became clear that none of the research variables has any problem in terms of the VIF index. Furthermore, given the reported results which have been presented in table 1, it becomes clear that all of the fitting index of the structural model of the predictors with the research data were of acceptable value.

Table 1. Fitting indexes of the structural model with research data

	SRMR index	d ULS	D_J 1	D_J 2	Chi-square	NFI
Saturation model	0.059	0.467	0.265	0.225	532.397	0.952
Estimated model	0.087	1.037	0.298	0.253	569.971	0.952

Given the model presented in diagram 1, the variances expressed by the predictors indicate that about 52% of the changes in the criterion variable (psychological empowerment) was expressed by the predictors, which is a considerable percentage. The structural model presented in diagram 1 illustrates the standard coefficients estimated by the partial least square estimation method predicted using standardized regression coefficients and t-statistic was used to examine the significance of these coefficients.

Diagram 2. Standard coefficients of structural pattern of leadership styles, self-efficacy and structural empowerment with psychological empowerment

Table 2. Standard coefficients of regression prediction of self-efficacy and psychological empowerment variables

	Original samples (O)	Mean sample (M)	Standard deviation	t-statistic	P Values
Structural empowerment → psychological empowerment	0.070	0.072	0.043	1.648	0.100
Self-efficacy → psychological empowerment	0.410	0.409	0.047	8.702	0.000
Delegating style → psychological empowerment	-0.047	-0.045	0.089	0.0534	0.593
Delegating style → self-efficacy	-0.288	-0.291	0.073	3.952	0.000
telling style → psychological empowerment	0.300	0.305	0.082	3.666	0.000
telling style → self-efficacy	0.204	0.202	0.068	3.011	0.003
Telling style → psychological empowerment	0.052	0.054	0.080	0.645	0.519
Telling style → self-efficacy	-0.113	-0.117	0.076	1.478	0.140
Participating style → psychological empowerment	0.160	0.159	0.064	2.488	0.013
Participating style → self-efficacy	0.118	0.114	0.070	1.669	0.096

According to the results presented in table 2, among the leadership styles, the telling style has a positive and significant effect on self-efficacy; in the sense that the standardized regression coefficient of this prediction is equal to 0.204 (P<0.01). Moreover, the effect of delegating leadership style on self-efficacy was equal to -0.288 and this effect is significant at P<0.01. However, the effect of participative and telling leadership styles on self-efficacy is not statistically significant. Additionally, by reviewing the results presented in this table, it becomes clear that the telling style and the participative style have positive and significant effects on psychological empowerment; in the sense that the value of the standardized coefficient of the prediction of the telling leadership style on the psychological empowerment variable is equal to 0.30 and the participating leadership style on the psychological empowerment variable is equal to 0.174. The effect of the telling and delegating styles on psychological empowerment and the direct effect of structural empowerment on psychological empowerment were not significant. to examine the mediating role of the self-efficacy variable in the relationship between leadership styles and psychological empowerment, the Bootstrapping test was used. The results of this test have been reported in table 3.

Table 3. Bootstrapping test for examining the mediating role of self-efficacy in the relationship between leadership style and psychological empowerment

	Original samples (O)	Mean sample (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	t-statistic	P-value
Delegating style → self-efficacy → psychological empowerment	-0.118	-0.119	0.033	3/589	0.000
telling style → self-efficacy → psychological empowerment	0.084	0.083	0.029	2.884	0.004
Telling style → self-efficacy → psychological empowerment	-0.046	-0.048	0.032	1.455	0.146
Participating style → self-efficacy → psychological empowerment	0.048	0.047	0.030	1.630	0.104

According to the table above, the self-efficacy variable plays a mediating role in the relationship between the delegating style (T=3.58; P<0.01) and telling style (T=2.88; P<0.01) and psychological empowerment. However, by reviewing the research findings presented in this table, it becomes clear that self-efficacy does not play a mediating role in the relationship between participating and telling leadership styles and psychological empowerment.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

First hypothesis: the structural model of the predictions is fitted to the data. In reviewing the first hypothesis, it was made clear that the suggest model fits the research data and 52% of the variance of the psychological empowerment variable was expressed by the leadership styles and structural empowerment variables, which is a considerable percentage. Since there is no research that has used the same exact model; thus, in reviewing this hypothesis, the studies closed to this subject have been referred to. The results of these studies have confirmed the pattern of the relationships hypothesized in this research (Jancho, 2008; Vaezi and Sabzikaran, 2010; Kordnaeej et al., 2015; Saj, 2000; Nafari and Omidfar, 2010; Miri et al., 2011; Vazifedoust et al., 2012; Samadi Miarkalaee et al., 2015; Nategh et al., 2014; Ghadyani, 2010;

Mohammadnoor et al., 2017; Hoveyda and Behroozi, 2014; Shahmansoori and Sokoot Arani, 2015; Knutson, 2007; Spreitzer, 1992; Salajegheh et al., 2013; Abdollahi, 2015; Asghari et al., 2008; Taylor and Tashakori, 1994; cited by Kajbaf et al.,Woot and Short, 1996; cited by Kajbaf et al., 2015; Royani et al., 2014; Saee, 2009).

Second hypothesis: leadership styles casually and directly affect the self-efficacy of the teachers.

Nowadays, organizations are trying to considerably increase their productivity by optimally using all of the existing tools and facilities, including employees' self-efficacy. It seems to be that this goal won't be achieved without adopting the proper leadership styles (Shahmansoori and Sokoot Arani, 2015). Adopting the proper leadership styles will lead to emergence of a better feeling in the employees and will increase their self-efficacy. Since there has never been a research with the same hypothesis; thus, in reviewing this hypothesis, the studies closed to this subject have been referred to. These results comply with the theories and studies of Delavar et al., 2015; Ghadyani, 2010; Mohammadnoor et al., 2017; Hoveyda and Behroozi, 2014; Shahmansoori and Sokoot Arani, 2015.

Third hypothesis: leadership styles casually and directly affect the psychological empowerment of the teachers.

Since the manager, as the official representative of the organization, is at the top of the organization and responsible for coordination and increasing productivity, success of the organization in achieving its goals depends on effective leadership styles and management actions (Hoveyda and Behroozi, 2014). Haslied is among people who have given rise to the discussion about the effectiveness of human resource management and leadership (Huub et al., 2006). In the beginning, empowerment is known as a management tool used based on some management activities. Knutson (2007) believe that participative management and participation of the employees are factors that affect psychological empowerment. The results obtained by Hassanpoor et al. (2012) have shown that there is a significant relationship between leadership style and psychological empowerment; thus, one of the factors that has to be taken into consideration by the managers for empowering employees is the leadership style. The results of this research have shown that the telling and participating leadership styles have positive and significant effects on psychological empowerment. These results comply with the theories and studies of Shams Moorkarani and Mirzapoor, 2011; cited by Ghanbari et al., 2015; Knutson, 2007; Hassanpoor et al., 2012; Beykzadeh Marzbani and Soori, 2007; Sheykhizadeh, 2008; Ziaee, 2008.

Fourth hypothesis: structural empowerment casually and directly affects the psychological empowerment of the teachers.

Most of the studies on empowerment, especially those conducted in private organizations, have emphasized individual factors such as intrinsic motivation (Koberg et al. 1999; Kraimer et al. 1999; Liden and Graen, 1980; Sparrowe, 1994; Spreitzer, 1995, 1996; Tymon, 1988). Nonetheless, some studies, especially studies conducted in the public sector Kernaghan, 1992; Petter et al. 2002), have paid attention to democratic methods and democracy-oriented structures, i.e. another approach to empowerment called structural empowerment. Structural empowerment includes management methods and techniques which have been created for the distribution of power and responsibility in lower levels of the organization; so that individuals would be able to make work-related decisions (Pearce et al. 2003; Burke, 1986; Eylon and

Bamberger, 2000; Foster-Fishman and Keys, 1997; Gruber & Trickett, 1987; Niehoff et al. 2001; Olshfski and Cunningham, 1998; Patterson et al. 2004; Quinn and Spreitzer, 1997). The findings of this research suggest that the casual and direct relationship between structural empowerment and psychological empowerment is not significant. This finding can create this hypothesis in one's mind that there is a possibility that the relationship between structural empowerment and psychological empowerment with the mediation of other variables and this relationship might be indirect, which in itself can be the subject of another study.

Fifth hypothesis: leadership styles casually and directly affect the psychological empowerment of the teachers with the mediation of self-efficacy.

1. Empowerment refers to creating a situation where organizations try to motivate employees to do their job by reinforcing their sense of personal self-efficacy (cited by Baharloo et al., 2014). The results of the study conducted by Abdi (2016) were indicative of a significant relationship between self-efficacy and psychological empowerment. Any strategy or action that can affect the beliefs of individuals and reinforce their need for self-efficacy will result in empowerment (Salajegheh et al. 2013). Abdollahi (2005) has also stated that there is a positive and significant relationship between self-efficacy and psychological empowerment. Many of the human behaviors are evoked and controlled by self-efficacy mechanism. Among these mechanisms, none is as important and inclusive as the belief in personal self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977). In some studies, (Asghari et al. 2008; Taylor and Tashakori, 1994; cited by Kajbaf et al. 2015;Woot and Short, 1996; cited by Kajbaf et al. 2015; Royani et al. 2014; Saee, 2009), self-efficacy beliefs have been introduced more than any other motivational structure or concept as the predictor of employee empowerment. Some studies (Ghadyani, 2010; Mohammadnoor et al. 2017; Hoveyda and Behroozi, 2014; Shahmansoori and Sokoot Arani, 2015) have stated that managers' leadership styles are associated with this issue. Nowadays, organizations are trying to considerably increase their productivity by optimally using all of the existing tools and facilities, including employees' self-efficacy. It seems to be that this goal won't be achieved without adopting the proper leadership styles (Shahmansoori and Sokoot Arani, 2015). Adopting the proper leadership styles will lead to emergence of a better feeling in the employees and will increase their self-efficacy. In the beginning, empowerment is known as a management tool used based on some management activities. Knutson (2007) believe that participative management and participation of the employees are factors that affect psychological empowerment; thus, one of the factors that has to be taken into consideration by the managers for empowering employees is the leadership style. The results of the above-mentioned researches have been indicative of the bilateral relationship between self-efficacy and leadership styles and psychological empowerment. In the present study, the results have been indicative of the significance of the coefficients of the indirect effects of the telling and delegating leadership styles on psychological empowerment through self-efficacy. Since no study has ever precisely focused on this subject, to support this result, we will only rely on the aforementioned studies.

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