

Rewards and Job Satisfaction Among Emergency Response Team Personnels

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ABSTRACT

In today's modern development era, the need for a dynamic and productive workforce is particularly important in an organization. The main thing that plays a role in forming a positive work culture is the job satisfaction obtained by employees in the organization itself. Job satisfaction is also one of the complex matters that often plagues top management in their efforts to implement policies and guidelines for working in their organization. This causes the culture and quality of work produced by employees in the organization to be inconsistent. Such matters should be given attention by all parties in the organization to catalyze the organization towards achieving its goals and aims of becoming an efficient and effective organization, not only for its citizens but also for the community and the country. This study was conducted quantitatively to figure out the rewards obtained that are believed to be related to and have an impact on job satisfaction among employees in the organization, namely the ERT personnel. Self-administered questionnaires were used as the medium for collecting study data. The results of correlation and regression analysis showed that the independent variables had a high correlation and a significant effect on the dependent variable. The results of this study will have a positive impact on the organization's efforts to increase the level of job satisfaction among employees.

Keywords: Rewards, job satisfaction, government employees, emergency response team (ERT)

INTRODUCTION

Work is an action carried out based on the needs or desires of an individual. There are also some individuals who fail to achieve the original objectives of their work due to the factor of failing to get job satisfaction; subsequently, they will experience a change in attitude towards the work done, and even in terms of work results, they will also be affected. In terms of the context of organizational development, employees are the main pillar of the rise and fall of an organization. Job satisfaction is something that every personnel member must have when carrying out their duties in all aspects of emergency response team (ERT) operations. The core services of the ERT focus on public services with the main goal of saving lives and property. Therefore, job satisfaction among ERT personnel can bring confidence and comfort while performing tasks, thus providing accurate and quality services to the public. Job satisfaction will also have a positive impact on the department and can reduce accidents in the workplace or incident areas as a result of ERT personnel who are focused and adhere to the correct operating procedure standards.

In a major rescue organization of the ERT, with the strength of employees who face various challenges in an effort to provide quality services to the public. These efforts are somewhat disrupted due to job satisfaction among ERT employees not being at its best level. The need to overcome this problem is important to ensure the job satisfaction among ERT personnel lies on the shoulders of senior management, who are able to formulate policies and implement work in the department, and then review the rewards received by officers and personnel serving in the ERT.

The job risk as ERT personnel is high in terms of injuries during operations or loss of life. These risks and challenges require high motivation and focus to achieve the actual objectives and goals that have been set. Even so, every work implementation is continuously monitored through a system of compliance with uniform operating standards that have been outlined in the ERT department's standing instructions and orders. Challenging situations in ERT operations will affect the level of job satisfaction among ERT personnel if no scrutiny is done on the rewards they receive. Rewards that are appropriate to the risks faced will raise motivation and morale in addition to increasing the level of job satisfaction among personnel serving in the ERT.

The objectives of the study are to obtain the main goals that will determine the achievement of the study. The objectives were also developed with the main focus on examining the variables that will have an impact on the organization at the end of the study. The following are the objectives of the study: to understand the relationship between reward and job satisfaction among ERT personnel, and to understand the effect of rewards on job satisfaction among ERT personnel.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Rewards

Rewards are the appreciation or benefits received by employees from the organization where they work for their performance or for the tasks they perform. Shah (2017) stated that rewards are a form of reinforcement, which is a criterion that can fulfill the needs of employees in the workplace, either externally or internally. The behavior of employees in an organization that has experienced reinforcement has the potential to be repeated. Moreover, Shah (2017) stated that rewards can be divided into two types, namely, extrinsic rewards: rewards in the form of money that are paid directly to employees, such as salaries or wages, bonuses, allowances, and compensation, and intrinsic rewards: rewards that are not in the form of money, such as awards, honors, or praise, or vacation benefits. When employees and their work are valued and rewarded, their job satisfaction and productivity will increase, and they will also be motivated to maintain or improve their good work. Praise and recognition are essential for exceptional job satisfaction. Employees will also feel more respected and valued by others for their contributions (Waqas, Bashir, Sattar, Abdullah, Hussain, Anjum, Ali, & Arshad, 2014). In today's challenging environment, every organization strives to find the right balance between employee commitment and organizational performance. The reward and recognition system has become one of the most important factors in maintaining this balance, thus making employees' self-esteem high and always enthusiastic in every job they do (Gieter & Hofmans, 2015). In addition, the role of managers is also important, as they function to always motivate employees, which will influence employee behavior and increase efficiency in the organization. Employees who

Motivated employees are an advantage for any organization, as their performance will drive the organization to achieve its goals. Among human resources, economic resources, and financial resources, human resources are the most important, as they are able to provide an organization with a highly competitive advantage compared to other organizations (Danish & Usman, 2010). Rewards play an important role in determining consistent performance in the job, and they are positively related to the motivation process experienced by employees. Danish and Usman (2010) stated that there are two factors that determine the extent to which a reward is considered attractive: the first is the amount of reward given, and the second is the person's preference to receive a certain reward. In most organizations that expect success to come from solid employee performance, providing incentives or rewards is a must. It is one of the factors that need to be taken into account in the motivation program in the organization.

Job Satisfaction

Steers and Porter (1983), and Tamrin and Raop (2015) stated that the benefits that can be obtained from job satisfaction will influence the work behavior and attitude of an employee in an organization or firm, which also affects the management of the organization and the surrounding community. Work performance that increases, levels off, or decreases is also directly related to the level of job satisfaction. In addition, Mohammad, Habib, and Alias (2011) said that job satisfaction among employees is the main thing that will influence the behavior and way of working of the individual in an organization. This shows that many studies related to job satisfaction

among employees in an organization have been carried out because there is a continuous need to formulate steps towards practicing a competitive work culture in a healthy and comfortable atmosphere.

Employees who achieve job satisfaction will be productive workers and have consistent commitment and performance towards the organization (Deraman & Isa, 2016). Job satisfaction is a feeling of harmony felt while performing a task or while experiencing the experience of performing the task. Positive values can be felt while performing work as a result of a positive perception within an employee (Hasbi, 2001). In other words, job satisfaction can be achieved by an employee, inspired by the employee's feelings of fun and happiness before, during, and after performing a task.

Job satisfaction describes the extent to which a person is satisfied, comfortable, or content with their job. It is a stable and pleasant or positive emotional state that results from the evaluation of one's work or work experience. Although it is a feeling that can be obtained as a whole about work and organization, several aspects or dimensions also influence it, including working conditions, supervisory aspects, nature of work, colleagues, rewards and benefits, and personal characteristics of the employee himself (Ali, 2016). Job satisfaction is one of the most studied variables in the field of workplace psychology and has been directly linked to leadership and job design in an organization. It can be defined as an employee's attitude towards work. It is not the same as motivation, but it is related to the attitude and internal state of an individual regarding a particular job.

Feeling satisfied with the work done is something that plays a role in influencing productivity and performance. Moreover, an employee either increases or decreases, and it needs to be given more attention by the top of an organization, to ensure the continuity of the organization and that the functioning of the organization itself is in a smooth state. The top management of the organization also needs to identify aspects that have a role in the level of job satisfaction in their organization, although in general, job satisfaction is flexible and will change according to the situation and based on different individuals (Greenberg & Baron, 2008). There is no special way or technique to satisfy all employees in an organization. More specifically, job satisfaction can be explained as the general attitude of employees towards their job. It is a pleasant feeling that results from the employee's perception of achieving the desired level of need or satisfaction (Ghazzawi, 2008).

The Relationship between Rewards and Job Satisfaction

In general, job descriptions and specifications are able to describe the rewards that will be received fairly and equally among employees in an organization to ensure that the organizational culture remains competitive and relevant. The term rewards refers to benefits that are received by employees as a result of the work they do, and it has significant elements or values with the individual's work culture, such as commitment to the organization, motivation, and job satisfaction (Jehanzeb, Rasheed, Rasheed, & Amir, 2012). In any organization, rewards play an important role in building and maintaining commitment among employees. This has ensured a high level of work performance and the necessary relevant workforce (Wang, 2004).

According to the terms of exchange between organizations and individuals, a person has joined the organization in a certain group with their own skills, desires, and goals, and expects a good work environment where they can use their skills in an effort to satisfy their desires and, at the same time, achieve their goals (Mottaz, 1988). Most organizations have made full improvements and complied with the organization's strategy with a balanced reward and recognition program for their employees. Khalid, Irshad, and Mahmood (2012) stated that a significant relationship between rewards and job satisfaction in their study; a comparison was made between academics in public and private educational institutions. The study found that academics in private educational institutions were more satisfied with the rewards received than academics in public educational institutions. Rewards also refer to all categories in the group of financial benefits, tangible service benefits, and benefits that will be received as part of the relationship between employment and the organization, and that can bring satisfaction to work (Bratton & Gold, 1994).

Framework & Hypothesis

The research framework in Figure 1 depicts the relationship between the independent variable of the study, namely rewards, and the dependent variable, namely job satisfaction, among ERT personnel.

Figure 1: Research framework between rewards and job satisfaction



Thus, the study hypothesis is that H_1 : Reward has a positive relationship with job satisfaction among ERT personnel.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The population of the study is ERT personnel in a government department. A total of 94 ERT personnel were given a self-administered questionnaire pertaining to their rewards in relation to job satisfaction. The questionnaire instruments were adapted and adopted. Job satisfaction was measured using adapted items from the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ) (Weiss, Dawis, & England, 1967) and Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS) (Spector, 1985). The instruments were reviewed to ensure suitability within the context of ERT personnel. Minor wording modifications were made to improve clarity and contextual relevance while maintaining the original constructs. Subject matter experts evaluated the adapted items to establish content validity. Moreover, a pilot study involving 30 respondents was conducted to assess reliability. Cronbach's alpha coefficients exceeded the recommended threshold of 0.70, indicating acceptable internal consistency (Nunnally, 1978).

DATA ANALYSIS

Demographic Analysis

A total of 77 questionnaires were collected among ERT personnel in a government ERT department. Demographic analysis was conducted as depicted in Table 1. The majority of the respondents were male ($n=72$; 93.5%) as compared to female ($n=5$; 6.5%) respondents. Ethnicity, all respondents were Melayu ($n=77$; 100%). Respondents stated that they were aged 31 to 40 years old, and 41 to 50 years old were 30 (39%), respectively. This was followed by those aged above 50 years old ($n=13$; 16.9%) and those aged below 30 years old ($n=4$; 5.2%). The majority of the respondents were married ($n=72$; 93.5%) as compared to single ($n=5$; 6.5%) respondents. Length of services, 37 respondents (48.1%) stated that they had served 6 to 15 years. These were followed by 16 to 25 years ($n=23$; 29.9%), above 25 years ($n=12$; 16.9%), and below 5 years ($n=4$; 5.2%). Finally, education, the majority of the respondents have a certificate ($n=70$; 90.9%) as compared to a diploma ($n=6$; 7.8%) and a degree ($n=1$; 1.3%).

Table 1: Demographic Analysis

Demographic	N	%
Gender:		
Male	72	93.5
Female	5	6.5
Ethnicity:		
Melayu	77	100.0
Age (years old):		
Below 30	4	5.2
31 to 40	30	39
41 to 50	30	39
Above 50	13	16.9
Marital Status:		
Single	5	6.5
	72	93.5

Married		
Length of Services (years):	4	5.2
Below 5	37	48.1
6-15	23	29.9
16-25	12	16.9
Above 25		
Education:	70	90.9
Certificate	6	7.8
Diploma	1	1.3
Degree		

Reliability Analysis

Table 2 depicts the reliability analysis carried out to show the extent of the reliability of the research tool (questionnaire) used, whether there is a positive relationship between the dependent and independent variables (Sekaran and Bougie, 2016). For this study, reliability analysis will be used to find out the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient, which determines the relationship between all variables. Reliability analysis is important because it will be taken into account as a basic indicator that will help researchers to improve the questionnaire if it is found to be unreliable. The independent variable of the study, namely reward, has 5 items, and the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient is 0.804. Meanwhile, the dependent variable of the study, namely job satisfaction, has 7 items, and the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient is 0.812.

Table 2: Reliability Analysis

Variables	Items	Cronbach Alpha
Rewards	5	0.804
Job Satisfaction	7	0.812

Correlation Analysis

Table 3 depicts the correlation analysis to test the relationship between independent and dependent variables. The value of the correlation coefficient will determine the strength of the relationship between the two variables. The correlation between the study variables, namely rewards and job satisfaction among ERT personnel, was analyzed. The high correlation coefficient (r) value of 0.630 indicates that there is a positive relationship between rewards and job satisfaction among the study respondents.

Table 3: Correlation Analysis between Rewards and Job Satisfaction

Variables	2
1. Rewards	1
2. Job Satisfaction	0.630**

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Regression Analysis

Table 4 depicts the regression analysis that was used to analyze the effect of rewards on job satisfaction among ERT personnel. The results of the regression analysis that was conducted showed that the R^2 coefficient value was 39.6% for the dependent variable, namely job satisfaction, which was explained by the independent variable, namely rewards. From this, it was found that 60.4% of the variance for job satisfaction was explained by other variables that were not identified and studied in this study. The simple regression model ($F=49.266$, $p<0.01$) proved to be a significant model because of the significant F ratio in predicting job satisfaction. Reward ($\beta=0.63$, $p<0.01$) was a significant variable in predicting job satisfaction among ERT personnel. From the results of this analysis, it was also found that rewards have a positive relationship with job satisfaction among ERT personnel. Based on the results of the regression analysis that has been conducted, the study hypothesis H1, namely that rewards have a positive effect on job satisfaction, is supported.

Table 4: Regression Analysis

Variables	Job Satisfaction	
	β	Sig.
Rewards	0.630	0.000
R^2	0.396	
Adj. R^2	0.388	
F-Change	49.266	
Sig. F-Change	0.000	

DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION

Objective 1: To study the relationship between rewards and job satisfaction among ERT personnel.

Based on the results of the data analysis of the study findings, there is a positive relationship between rewards and job satisfaction among ERT personnel. The results of the analysis stated that the large correlation coefficient value ($r=0.630$) also answered the research question by showing that the relationship between rewards and job satisfaction is high. The need to place rewards as the main thing in increasing job satisfaction among employees is also important. The positive relationship between the two variables in this study is also in line with the results of previous studies (Shah, 2017; Jehanzeb et al., 2012; Khalid et al., 2012; Waqas et al., 2014; Tamrin & Raop, 2015; Deraman & Isa, 2016). A good reward system will produce positive results, namely, a good level of job satisfaction among employees in the organization. The need for rewards can also be expressed based on Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory. Rewards are a need that must be met to ensure that an employee's potential increases in terms of productivity, efficiency, and focus on work. Naturally, people will feel more appreciated when the rewards offered are considered to be worth the effort they put in (Masri, Ahmad, and Rani, 2018). Moreover, satisfied employees will do positive things by performing their tasks efficiently and effectively in achieving organizational objectives. The positive relationship between rewards and job satisfaction is also supported by Herzberg's Motivation Theory, where rewards in the form of extrinsic and intrinsic rewards are important to prevent employees from being unproductive and lacking enthusiasm. A strong relationship between rewards and job satisfaction will increase or decrease employee morale in the organization. Employee morale is a determining factor in whether the employee experiences satisfaction in the work done or not. Through this study, it was found that the quality of service at the ERT department is at a good level due to the fact that the rewards received by officers and members are appropriate to their duties and responsibilities. Apart from financial rewards, intrinsic rewards such as praise, appreciation, and respect also play a role in influencing job satisfaction. A positive relationship is seen through the awarding of high appreciation to employees based on their achievements and

skills in carrying out instructions. Work skills will occur in employees who are always interested in doing a certain job, and work that is done repeatedly requires high motivation. Work motivation is born from the job satisfaction experienced by employees driven by the advantageous factors offered by the organization where they work (Waqas et al., 2014).

Objective 2: To study the effect of rewards on job satisfaction among ERT personnel.

The effect between reward and job satisfaction among ERT personnel was analyzed using regression analysis. The results of the analysis indicated that there was a positive effect of reward on job satisfaction. Priya and Eshwar (2014) stated that it has been stated that there is a significant effect between rewards and job satisfaction. In an organization, rewards have played an important role in developing and maintaining commitment among employees which guarantees work effectiveness. Adequate rewards will also make employees more enthusiastic and motivated. The effect of good rewards can be seen at the ERT department when every work implementation is always on the right track with efficient and friendly service delivery. The hygiene factor stated in Herzberg's Motivation Theory also supports the results of the analysis of the effect of rewards on job satisfaction. The hygiene factor, namely rewards, is something that will affect the employee. The rewards obtained by employees, whether high or low, will affect the level of employee discipline or employee attitude when performing a task. The results of the study analysis also stated that rewards have explained 39.6% of the effect on job satisfaction. There are 60.4% of other variables that have not yet been explored in this study to obtain contributing factors to the occurrence of job satisfaction. The question regarding the effect between rewards and job satisfaction is also answered by the data analysis, rewards are significant with job satisfaction. Rewards in the form of Financial and appreciation will affect job satisfaction in an organization. The influence of rewards on job satisfaction is very important; an organization needs to ensure that the reward system in the workplace is always at the best level to ensure employee welfare. The closest thing to supporting this finding is when the top management (ministry) has approved special incentive payments to all uniformed personnel in the Emergency response team. The special incentive payments have boosted the morale of all officers and firefighters to continue working, without recognizing the meaning of tiredness and fatigue in delivering services regardless of any type of situation. In addition, the facilities provided by the Emergency response team in terms of career advancement also have an impact on the standard of high-performance services (Zahari, Mahmud, & Baniamin, 2019).

Contributions to ERT Personnels

The results of the study provide information on the relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variables among ERT personnel. The independent variable for this study is reward, and the dependent variable is job satisfaction. From the results of the regression analysis, it was found that reward is significant for job satisfaction. Extrinsic and intrinsic rewards are a form of reinforcement that will lead to increased job satisfaction (Shah, 2017). Employees who are satisfied with their jobs will be more likely to work. This will reduce employee absenteeism and also help reduce other disciplinary problems. Every officer and member in the ERT is always instilled with the need to comply with instructions and standards when performing duties, whether in the station or at the operational location. The efficiency and work performance of officers and members can be improved based on the findings of this study, which shows that the rewards received by them are reasonable. This job satisfaction obtained can also influence low job turnover and increase the level of loyalty to work among officers and firefighters in the Emergency response team (Waqas et al., 2014). It has become an obligation for an employee to contribute time, energy, and ideas in an effort to enhance the image of the organization with outputs such as high-quality services and customer service. This is highly demanded in the Emergency response team. The existing reward system is found to be able to satisfy officers and members, and it is not impossible that it will continue to be improved in line with the increase in their duties and responsibilities to the community, nation, and country.

ERT personnel have experienced job satisfaction due to good reward factors in terms of fair pay, opportunities for promotion, benefits received, appreciation, and praise given for the work done. Job satisfaction is very important to ensure a comfortable and harmonious work environment. Work effectiveness can also be improved if each employee feels satisfied with what they do. This study has emphasized the importance of organizations to monitor job satisfaction rates based on reward variables. Employees are a very valuable asset to the organization. In the ERT, employees are an asset that has been trained based on discipline, compliance, and high

integrity. Every work movement in the department is based on a list of essential tasks, in addition to complying with other instructions from time to time. The results of the study, which show that job satisfaction can be achieved by officers and firemen, show the department's concern in ensuring that the needs of the staff are met while working under the banner of the department, is sufficient and appropriate to the risks they face while on duty. As a uniformed civil servant, officers and firefighters always feel happy and satisfied in every task they perform, as long as it achieves the goals and objectives of the task. The impact of this study on ERT personnel is in terms of their welfare in the future. The ERT personnel are aware of the importance of fulfilling job satisfaction among them. As a result, every aspect, including rewards, will be emphasized so that it will bring continuous benefits to ERT personnel in particular.

Contributions to the ERT Department

In today's modern era, organizations face several challenges due to the dynamic nature of the environment. One of them is to satisfy employees in the organization to continue to be productive and achieve the objectives and goals that have been set. To increase efficiency, effectiveness, productivity, and work commitment, job satisfaction among employees is something that needs to be ensured at an optimal level. The ERT has formulated a reasonable reward policy for officers and members who serve tirelessly, solely to achieve the Department's objectives and goals, namely, to deliver professional fire and rescue services to save lives and property for the well-being of the people. The importance of obtaining job satisfaction is also supported by a previous study conducted by Yusoff et al. (2017), stating that job satisfaction can generate emotional stability as well as reduce problems occurring in the workplace. Through this study, the top management of the ERT needs to place more emphasis on the welfare of officers and members in the Department in terms of rewards, whether extrinsic or intrinsic rewards. This statement is supported by a study conducted by Rafiq, Javed, Khan, and Ahmad (2012), stating that financial rewards alone are not able to meet the needs of an employee; opportunities such as promotions and work involvement in the workplace also play a role in increasing the level of job satisfaction. Positive study results should not be taken lightly by the department's management, research, and changes in the reward system in the department need to be done continuously. It can prevent inconsistent processes in an effort to maintain the job satisfaction of officers and firefighters. Their willingness to provide the best service is always needed; therefore, the department needs to ensure that the reward system and opportunities in the department are always improved and remain relevant to the current situation.

Overall, this study found that job satisfaction among ERT personnel is at a good level. It is also considered in recognition of the department's management, which has adopted a good reward system to the point of successfully increasing the rate of job satisfaction in the Department in general. Continuous efforts and several improvements in the existing reward system also need to be constantly reviewed by top management. The importance of job satisfaction among employees in the organization is also something that should be monitored and identified regularly and consistently. In the ERT, the method used to monitor the quality of work performance among officers and members is based on the Quality Management System MS ISO 9001:2015. Every work performance that does not achieve the set quality will be raised as an issue in the Management Review Meeting. The quality of service shown represents the level of job satisfaction among the department's staff. Top management must always be aware of using existing methods or improved methods in identifying problems related to job satisfaction among staff working in the Emergency response team. Similar findings from previous studies also reinforce the fact that job satisfaction will influence productivity, work effectiveness, and the quality of products or services offered by the organization. Therefore, the ERT department which acts as an organization with a workforce throughout the country, must always ensure good requirements in terms of rewards and welfare, thereby guaranteeing job satisfaction among its officers and members.

LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

This study has several limitations that should be acknowledged. First, the relatively small sample size may limit the statistical power and generalizability of the findings. Second, the use of a non-probability sampling strategy may introduce sampling bias and restrict representation of the broader population of emergency response personnel. Third, data were collected through self-reported questionnaires, which may be susceptible to social desirability and response bias. Fourth, the cross-sectional design captures perceptions at a single point in time and therefore does not permit causal inferences regarding the relationship between rewards and job satisfaction.

Future studies employing longitudinal designs are recommended to establish causal relationships more effectively.

Future Studies

Future studies need to establish a larger study population and sample size to obtain study results that can be generalized to the entire study organization. Job satisfaction is needed in every employee in the organization, and it is subjective in nature. The target impact of the study is for the benefit of all employees and organizations involved. The hope for future studies is to further expand the contribution of this study in accordance with the size of the population and a large study sample. In the context of this study, the study population should be further expanded to involve the ERT personnel from other locations, with a study sample size based on the latest staffing of ERT who are still serving in the department.

Moreover, the consideration also should incorporate additional organizational and psychological factors such as leadership support, organizational commitment, workplace stress, work-life balance, and employee well-being. Researchers are encouraged to employ larger and more diverse samples drawn from multiple emergency response organizations across different geographical regions. Such an approach would enhance external validity and improve the generalizability of findings. Longitudinal and mixed-method research designs may also provide deeper insights into causal relationships and contextual factors influencing job satisfaction among ERT personnel.

Conclusion

Based on the findings, the study on job satisfaction is important to an organization. This is because job satisfaction among employees will produce good and positive elements for the organization. The analyses conducted on the study findings are believed to have achieved the study objectives and answered all the questions raised. The study organization, namely the ERT personnel, needs to maintain work momentum among them. High job satisfaction leads to high work effectiveness. A good reward system must always be evaluated according to current needs. Overall, this study brings an effective approach to identifying the effectiveness of the implementation of the existing reward system. Organizations that offer quality and professional services, such as the Emergency response team, should ensure that the mainstay of the department, namely officers and firefighters, are always enthusiastic and highly motivated while on duty.

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