Learning Skills towards Academic Achievement among Working Students

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DOI: https://doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2026.10200051

Received: 08 February 2026; Accepted: 14 February 2026; Published: 24 February 2026

ABSTRACT

Good learning skills are essential for any student aiming to achieve academic success and have a major impact on their overall performance. This study aims to determine the relationship between learning skills and academic achievement among working students at Santo Tomas Davao Del Norte. Data were gathered from 311 working students using a stratified random sampling technique. This study utilized a quantitative non-experimental research design through a descriptive correlational approach. The study employed adapted instruments that were rigorously validated for accuracy and relevance. The statistical tools used in this study were mean and pearson r. Results revealed that learning skills, including time management, communication skills, IT skills, problem solving skills, teamwork skills, and self-evaluation skills, were oftentimes manifested at a high level. The academic achievement of working students, measured by their General Weighted Average (GWA), was found to be very high. A positive, weak, and statistically significant correlation was observed between learning skills and academic achievement. This implies that strong learning skills positively influence academic performance, enabling working students to effectively balance their academic and professional responsibilities. The findings suggest that enhancing learning skills can lead to improved academic outcomes for working students.

Keywords - Learning Skills, Academic Achievement, Philippines.

INTRODUCTION

Academic achievement refers to the measurable outcomes of an individual's performance within an educational context, indicating the extent to which specific academic objectives have been successfully accomplished (Sudirman et al., 2024). However, academic achievement is often influenced by a range of factors that may hinder optimal performance. These include low socioeconomic status, limited parental education, inadequate school funding, suboptimal teacher quality, insufficient family involvement, restricted access to technology, tendencies toward procrastination, poor time management skills, and difficulties in balancing multiple responsibilities (Aashiq et al., 2023)

In the United States, despite its substantial investment in education, faces persistent challenges in ensuring equitable academic achievement for all students (Irwin, 2023). While national data highlights overall trends in academic performance, significant disparities remain across different student groups, particularly along racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic lines (US Department of Education, 2022). Individuals frequently encounter elevated stress levels, diminished sleep quality, and restricted access to academic resources (Calonia et al., 2023; Ahmad et al., 2019). The significance of learning skills in addressing these challenges and enhancing academic achievement is crucial. Although existing research has investigated the overall relationship between learning skills and academic performance (Chikileva et al., 2023), further targeted studies are necessary to analyze the specific effects of these skills on the academic success of working students.

In the Philippines, working students face significant academic challenges, primarily financial difficulties related to school expenses, psychological stress due to external discouragement and lack of family support, and

additional social, teacher-related, and classroom environment issues (Balacuit & Lopio-Alas, 2022). The Davao Region, students who balance work and studies encounter various academic hurdles, including insufficient family support, poor study habits, overwhelming study loads, issues with teachers, a scarcity of learning materials, distractions from social media, challenges in peer relationships, and considerable work-related factors such as workload and scheduling. In contrast, students who do not work mainly depend on parental support to achieve academic success (Pagon & Ponce 2021).

Although previous studies have examined the overall connection between learning skills and academic performance, there is a noticeable gap in focused investigations concerning working students. This study investigates how particular learning skills—time management, organization, and self-regulated learning—affect the academic performance of working students at Santo Tomas Davao Del Norte. This study explores the connection between these skills and academic performance in this demographic, focusing on the unique challenges and situations faced by working students. The findings will offer significant insights for educators and institutions, informing the creation of focused interventions and programs aimed at improving the learning skills and academic success of working students.

Statement Of The Problem

The objective of this research was to determine the relationship between learning skills and academic achievement among working students. Specifically, it aimed to answer the following questions:

1. What is the level of learning skills in terms of:

1.1 time management;

1.2 communication skills;

1.3 information technology skills;

1.4 problem solving skills;

1.5 teamwork skills;

1.6 self-evaluation skills; and

1.7 overall comments?

2. What is the level of academic achievement in terms of General Weighted Average?

3. Is there a significant relationship between learning skills and academic achievement?

Hypothesis

The null hypothesis was tested using a 0.05 level of significance, and there was no significant relationship

between learning skills and academic achievement.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Anchored in Albert Bandura's (1977) Social Learning Theory, this study drew upon the foundational principle that learning occurs through observation, imitation, and modeling of others—particularly influential figures. A central tenet of this theory is self-efficacy, or an individual's belief in their own capabilities, which plays a critical role in shaping learning behaviors and academic performance. This theoretical framework was further supported by Amsari et al. (2024), who highlighted that students acquire knowledge and skills by observing peers and educators—a process particularly vital in structured learning environments like classrooms.

Additionally, Latorre-Cosculluela et al. (2025) emphasized the impact of collaborative learning settings, demonstrating that active peer interaction not only enhances academic achievement but also fosters the development of essential social competencies.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The conceptual framework as shown in figure 1, outlines the study variables. The independent variable, learning skills, includes the following indicators: time management, communication skills, information technology (IT) skills, problem solving skills, teamwork skills, self-evaluation skills, overall comments (Lam et al., 2012). The dependent variable was academic achievement of students in terms of General Weighted Average (GWA).

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study employed a quantitative, non-experimental, descriptive-correlational research design, integrating both descriptive and correlational approaches. Quantitative research involved collecting and analyzing numerical data to identify patterns and relationships, utilizing statistical methods essential for empirical investigations in fields like psychology and sociology (Sekar & Bhuvaneswari, 2024). Descriptive research systematically documented and interpreted the characteristics of a phenomenon, serving as a foundational tool for observation and analysis (Singh, 2024). It provided a nuanced understanding of the subject, enabling classification and in-depth examination.

The researcher employed the aforementioned designs to achieve the study's objectives. By utilizing a quantitative and descriptive research design, the study collected and analyzed numerical data to examine the relationships among variables. Specifically, the research investigated how learning skills (independent variable), encompassing time management, communication skills, information technology skills, problem-solving skills, teamwork skills, and self-evaluation skills, influenced academic achievement (dependent variable), operationalized through the General Weighted Average (GWA).

Research Subject

The respondents of this study were 311 working students selected from a total population of 1,615 students at a local college in Santo Tomas, Davao del Norte. The participants were chosen using a stratified random sampling technique.

In this method, stratified sampling was employed to divide the larger population into distinct subgroups or strata before selecting random samples from each stratum. This approach ensured adequate representation of all subgroups within the sample population. The stratified sampling technique offered several advantages over simple random sampling, particularly in improving the accuracy and reliability of results when significant differences existed among population strata (Bisht, 2024).

Research Instrument

The researchers utilized an adapted questionnaire from Lam et al. (2012) to measure the independent variable (learning skills), while academic grades served as the dependent variable. The research instrument underwent validation by both a panel of experts and an external validator to ensure its validity.

Learning Skills Questionnaire. The survey questionnaire was adapted from the research study titled "The Impact of Student Workload on Learning Experiences" (Lam et al., 2012). The questionnaire consisted of 17 items covering the following aspects: Time management (2 questions), Communication skills (2 questions), Information Technology (IT) skills (2 questions), Problem-solving skills (2 questions), Teamwork skills (2 questions), Self-evaluation skill (2 questions), and Overall Comments (5 questions). The survey utilized a 5point Likert Scale, ranging from 5 for "Very Confident," 4 for "Quite Confident," 3 for "Neutral," 2 for "Not Very Confident," and 1 for "Not Confident at All."

Academic Achievement Questionnaire. In determining the level of academic performance of students at the local college, the researcher utilized the grades given by the subject instructor to the students. These grades were based on the different outcomes performed by the students in accordance with the syllabus set by the

Commission on Higher Education. The scoring guide for the academic performance of students was categorized into five levels. The scale was as follows:

Statistical Treatment Of Data

Mean. The mean, or average, was calculated by adding all the values in a dataset together and then dividing that sum by the total number of values (Hurley & Tenny, 2023). This was used to determine the level of learning skills and academic achievement.

Pearson R. Pearson's correlation was a statistical technique to investigate the strength and direction of the relationship between two quantitative variables (McClenaghan, 2024). This was used to determine the relationship between learning skills and academic achievement.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Level of learning skills in terms of time management

The results for the learning skills in terms of time management were presented, examined, and interpreted in table 2. The overall average mean was 4.00, with a standard deviation of 0.80, described as high. This means that learning skills in terms of time management was oftentimes manifested. Moreover, the data could be gleaned that item number 1, "plan my own time to balance study, work and social activities" got the highest mean of 4.04 which was described as high. While, the item number 2, "set specific goals for my study sessions" got the lowest mean of 3.97, described as high.

The overall findings of the learning skills in terms of time management suggest that working students who effectively manage their time can balance academic responsibilities with work and personal life. They demonstrate strong planning abilities, set clear study goals, and maintain organization to meet academic requirements while handling multiple commitments.

This result conforms to Astudillo et al. (2019), which found that structured time management reduces stress and increases productivity, allowing students to fulfill both academic and work obligations successfully. Additionally, Bangquiao et al. (2023) showed that working students with good time management skills achieve better outcomes despite their busy schedules.

Level of learning skills in terms of communication skills

The results for the learning skills in terms of communication skills were presented, examined, and interpreted in Table 2. The overall average mean was 3.92, with a standard deviation of 0.78, described as high. This means that learning skills in terms of communication skills was oftentimes manifested among working students. Moreover, the data could be gleaned that item number 1, "correctly structure essays and formal reports" got the highest mean of 3.93 which was described as high. While, the item number 2, "contribute effectively to a discussion session in class" got the lowest mean of 3.91, also described as high.

The overall findings suggest that working students demonstrate strong communication competencies in academic settings. Their ability to structure formal written work slightly exceeds their classroom discussion participation, though both skills are consistently manifested at a high level. These results indicate that working students effectively transfer their professional communication experiences to academic contexts.

This result conforms to the study of Pagon and Ponce (2021), which shows that the dual demands of work and study create opportunities for students to develop versatile communication skills. Additionally, according to Abid et al. (2022), the practical communication experience gained in workplace settings provides students with transferable skills that enhance their academic performance, particularly in structured writing tasks and collaborative learning situations.

Level of learning skills in terms of information technology

The results for the learning skills in terms of information technology skills were presented, examined, and interpreted in Table 4. The overall average mean was 4.15, with a standard deviation of 0.73, described as high.

This means that information technology skills were oftentimes manifested among working students. Moreover, the data could be gleaned that item number 1, "use the internet/World Wide Web (www) to search for information effectively" got the highest mean of 4.16, described as high. While, the item number 2, "use Microsoft Office (e.g. Word/Excel/PowerPoint) effectively" got the lowest mean of 4.15, also described as high.

The overall findings suggest that working students demonstrate strong information technology competencies. Their ability to effectively use the internet for information retrieval slightly exceeds their proficiency in using Microsoft Office applications, though both skills are consistently manifested at a high level. These results indicate that working students are well-equipped to leverage digital tools in both academic and professional contexts, effectively transferring their information technology (IT) skills from the workplace to their studies.

This result conforms to the study of Erwin and Mohammed (2022), which shows that working students develop enhanced digital literacy through balancing academic and professional technology demands. Additionally, according to CIPD (2020), that workplace technology requirements significantly improve students' practical competencies in both office productivity tools and online research methodologies.

Level of learning skills in terms of problem-solving skills

The results for learning skills in terms of problem-solving skills were presented, examined, and interpreted in Table 5. The overall average mean was 3.93, with a standard deviation of 0.79, described as high. This means that problem-solving skills were oftentimes manifested among working students. Moreover, the data could be gleaned that item number 1, "I identify the components of complicated problem." got the highest mean of 3.94, described as high. While, the item number 2, "I identify possible solutions to a problem or its components" got the lowest mean of 3.93, also described as high.

The overall findings suggest that working students demonstrate strong analytical abilities in problem decomposition and solution generation. Their slightly higher proficiency in problem identification compared to solution formulation may reflect their extensive experience in recognizing workplace and academic challenges, while solution development may require more context-specific knowledge.

The results align with the study of Ocak et al. (2021), which found that working students often develop robust problem-solving skills due to their dual roles in academia and the workplace. Additionally, Sinaga et al. (2023) highlighted that such skills are further honed through practical experiences, enabling students to navigate challenges efficiently. These findings underscore the importance of fostering problem-solving abilities in educational settings to support non-traditional learners.

Level of learning skills in terms of teamwork skills

The results for learning skills in terms of teamwork skills were presented, examined, and interpreted in Table 6. The overall average mean was 3.94, with a standard deviation of 0.79, described as high. This means that teamwork skills were oftentimes manifested among working students. Moreover, the data could be gleaned that item number 1, "I work as an effective member of a team.” got the highest mean of 4.02, described as very high. Meanwhile item 2 "I lead a small team of fellow students to carry out a project." got the lowest mean of 3.85, also described as very high.

The overall findings suggest that working students demonstrate exceptionally strong teamwork competencies. Their ability to collaborate effectively with peers on group projects slightly exceeds their proficiency in contributing to team discussions and decision-making, though both skills are consistently manifested at a high level. These results indicate that working students are well-prepared to engage in collaborative activities, which are essential for both academic and professional success.

These results align with De Prada et al. (2022) and Moxie et al. (2025), confirming that workplace experience significantly boosts academic teamwork abilities. The study highlights working students' advantage in collaborative environments while identifying leadership development as a potential growth area for this population.

Level of learning skills in terms of self-evaluation skills

The results for the learning skills in terms of self-evaluation skills were presented, examined, and interpreted in Table 7. The overall average mean was 4.15, with a standard deviation of 0.71, described as high. This means that self-evaluation skills were oftentimes manifested among working students. Moreover, the data revealed that item number 2, "make plans for improving myself" received the highest mean of 4.19, described as high. Meanwhile, item number 1, "identify my own strengths and weaknesses as a learner" obtained a mean of 4.12, also described as high.

The overall findings suggest that working students possess strong self-evaluation skills, consistently applying these abilities in their academic and professional lives. The high mean scores indicate that students are particularly adept at making plans for self-improvement, which is crucial for continuous personal and professional development, implying that they are well-equipped to engage in reflective practices essential for setting realistic goals and achieving academic success.

The results align with Andrade (2019) and Awidi & Klutsey (2024), confirmed that working students develop enhanced self-evaluation capacities through managing multiple responsibilities. Recent work by Dumezweni et al. (2024) further substantiates these findings, highlighting self-assessment as a critical competency for non-traditional learners in balancing work-study commitments.

Level of learning skills in terms of overall comments

The results for the learning skills in terms of overall comments were presented, examined, and interpreted in Table 8. The overall average mean was 4.15, with a standard deviation of 0.72, described as high. This indicates that working students in terms of overall comment was oftentimes manifested among working students. Moreover, the data revealed that item number 2, "I am generally given enough time to understand the things I had to learn." received the highest mean of 4.19, described as high. Meanwhile, item number 4, "It is always easy to know the expected standard of work." obtained the lowest mean of 4.09, though still described as high.

These findings implied that working students competently balance their academic and professional responsibilities, with particularly strong perceptions of having sufficient time for learning and understanding performance expectations. The consistently high ratings across all indicators suggest that current institutional support structures effectively address the challenges faced by working students. This underscores the importance of maintaining and potentially expanding such targeted academic support systems to further facilitate successful work-study balance.

The data aligns with De Prada et al. (2022), who found that employment cultivates advanced teamwork skills, and Pedroso et al. (2023), who identified time scarcity as a critical hurdle for working learners. A meta analysis by De Guzman and Francisco (2021) further contextualizes these patterns, showing that skill development in this group mirrors workplace priorities, often favoring collaboration over individual time management. This evidence reinforces the importance of tailored academic interventions to support working students' holistic success.

Summary on the level of learning skills

The results for the learning skills across all measured competencies were presented, examined, and interpreted in Table 9. The overall average mean was 4.03, with a standard deviation of 0.72, described as high. This indicates that working students' learning skills were oftentimes manifested. Moreover, the data revealed that information technology skills, self-evaluation skills, and overall comments received the highest mean of 4.15, described as high. Meanwhile, communication skills obtained the lowest mean of 3.92, though still described as high.

The findings suggest that working students consistently demonstrate high levels of learning skills, with information technology skills, self-evaluation skills, and overall comments being the most prominent. These results suggest students have developed exceptional digital literacy, metacognitive awareness, and holistic

learning approaches - all critical for navigating both academic and professional demands. While all measured skills fell within the high range, communication abilities emerged as the most pronounced area for potential growth, indicating value in targeted interventions to enhance interpersonal and professional communication capacities.

The data aligns with Andrade (2019) highlighted the role of self-assessment in fostering metacognitive awareness and academic responsibility, supporting the strong performance in self-evaluation skills. The high score in overall comments reflects students' positive perceptions of their learning environments, echoing findings from De Guzman and Francisco (2021), who noted that structured academic support contributes to students' ability to manage dual roles effectively. In contrast, Abid et al. (2022) found that while working students often develop written communication skills, verbal and collaborative communication may lag, which may explain why communication skills, though still high, ranked lowest among the indicators. These findings reinforce the importance of targeted interventions to strengthen communication competencies while sustaining the development of digital and reflective learning skills.

Level of academic achievement

Reflected in Table 9 was the summary of the academic achievement among working students. As shown, the equivalent overall General Weighted Average (GWA) was 90.08 with a standard deviation of 3.66, qualitatively described as very high. This means that academic achievement is outstanding.

The overall findings on the level of academic achievement implied that working students possess the necessary competencies to maintain exceptional performance while effectively managing professional responsibilities, highlighting their ability to thrive in demanding environments.

According to the data collected, this aligns with the study by Pagon and Ponce (2021), which highlights that strong learning skills significantly enhance academic performance by enabling working students to effectively manage, analyze, and apply knowledge across multiple domains. Moreover, students with well developed learning skills demonstrated higher GWAs and greater academic resilience, particularly in blended learning environments.

Similarly, Suleiman et al. (2024) found that respondents with advanced learning skill competencies achieved significantly higher General Weighted Averages than those with developing skills, indicating a robust correlation between comprehensive learning abilities and academic achievement. Their research specifically noted the multiplier effect of combining teamwork (Mean=4.21) with self-evaluation skills (Mean=4.06) for optimal performance.

Correlation between learning skills and academic achievement among working students

Shown in Table 10 was the significance of the relationship between learning skills and academic achievement, with an overall calculated r-value of 0.288 and a p-value of 0.000, which was lower than the 0.05 level of significance. This implied that the variables share a positive, and statistically significant correlation. The null hypothesis was rejected, indicating that academic achievement was influenced by students' learning skills, though the effect size suggests other factors may also contribute.

These results indicate that while learning skills significantly influence academic achievement, the weak strength of the correlation suggests that other factors also play a role in determining students' academic success. This underscores the importance of a holistic approach to education that considers multiple dimensions of student development.

The findings support the statement of Bandura's Social Learning Theory (1977), which posits that observational learning and self-efficacy (e.g., self-evaluation skills) enhance academic performance. It focuses on collaborative learning environments, highlighting the link between such settings and improved academic and social outcomes. Moreover, according to Latorre-Cosculluela et al. (2025), collaborative learning fosters both academic success and social competencies. However, the modest correlation strength suggests that

external factors like workload (Pagon & Ponce, 2021) or socioeconomic status (Aashiq et al., 2023) may also play critical roles.

This result also conforms to the Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 1986), which suggests that behavioral, environmental, and personal factors influence learning and performance. Students who employ metacognitive strategies are more likely to manage their responsibilities effectively and achieve academic success. Lam et al. (2012) affirmed that metacognitive strategies (e.g., time management, problem-solving) are pivotal for working students balancing multiple demands. Conversely, Ahmad et al. (2019) noted that poor time management and procrastination can hinder achievement, underscoring the need for targeted skill-building interventions to enhance self-regulation and academic outcomes.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The major findings of the study were the following:

1. The level of learning skills among working students had an overall mean of 4.14 with a standard deviation of 0.72, with a descriptive equivalent of high. The highest indicator was teamwork skills with a mean of 4.21, while the lowest indicator was problem-solving skills with a mean of 3.97.

2. The level of academic achievement (GWA) had an overall mean of 90.08 and a standard deviation of 3.66, with a descriptive equivalent of very high.

3. The study found a positive, weak, and statistically significant correlation between learning skills and academic achievement, with an r-value of 0.288 and a p-value of <0.001. This significant result leads to the rejection of the null hypothesis, indicating that learning skills do have an impact on academic achievement, although other factors may also contribute.

CONCLUSION

1. The result of learning skills among working students revealed a high level, which was oftentimes observed. The overall findings implied that strong learning skills, particularly in teamwork and time management, enable working students to balance academic and professional demands effectively.

2. The level of academic achievement was very high, indicating that working students excel academically despite their dual roles. This suggests that their developed learning skills contribute significantly to their success.

3. The results show the significance of the association between learning skills and academic achievement, indicating a positive, weak, and statistically significant correlation. This implies that while learning skills play a role in academic success, other factors may also influence outcomes.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings, analysis, and conclusion drawn in this study, the following recommendations were summarized:

1. The Commission on Higher Education (CHED) is encouraged to establish national communication competency standards and mandate their integration across all academic disciplines. These standards should emphasize both written and oral communication as essential skills for student success in higher education and beyond. To support this, CHED may allocate funding for faculty development programs, including workshops and seminars focused on communication-centered pedagogy, inclusive feedback strategies, and classroom practices that foster student expression and engagement. In addition, CHED may support the creation of institutional communication hubs that offer hybrid coaching—both in-person and virtual—along with access to AI-powered writing assistants and speech simulation tools. These centers can provide personalized support to students, helping them strengthen their communication skills in academic and professional contexts. To ensure

accountability and continuous improvement, CHED could implement annual institutional reviews requiring schools to report on student progress in communication alongside academic outcomes. These initiatives will help embed communication development as a core element of higher education and promote more holistic student success.

2. School administrators may introduce structured yet flexible programs to strengthen students' communication competencies across disciplines. One effective approach is the integration of credit-bearing communication modules, such as mandatory first-year seminars that focus on both oral and written communication. These foundational courses ensure that students begin their academic journey with a strong emphasis on essential communication skills, which are critical for success in both academic and professional settings. In addition to foundational coursework, administrators can implement professional-aligned microcredentials—such as a "Technical Writing Certification"—to encourage students to pursue specialized communication training relevant to their career goals. To support faculty in this initiative, institutions should offer incentives like reduced teaching loads for instructors who redesign their courses to emphasize communication. These strategies not only enhance student learning outcomes but also foster a culture of communication excellence throughout the institution.

3. Instructors may adopt discipline-specific strategies that promote consistent and practical communication skill development. One effective method is incorporating low-stakes, high-frequency practice, such as weekly three-minute peer presentations guided by clear rubrics. These short, regular activities help students build confidence and fluency in communication without the pressure of high-stakes grading, while also fostering a supportive environment for peer feedback and improvement. To further enhance engagement, instructors can design scaffolded digital assignments—like video abstracts in place of traditional papers—supported by AI-assisted drafting tools. These assignments not only align with modern communication formats but also help students develop multimodal literacy. Additionally, offering flexible participation options, such as asynchronous discussion boards, ensures inclusivity for working students or those with varying schedules. Together, these strategies create a dynamic and accessible learning environment that prioritizes communication across diverse learning contexts.

4. Working students may actively leverage available resources to strengthen their communication skills despite time constraints. Engaging in peer networks—such as discipline-specific writing circles that meet virtually—can provide both accountability and collaborative learning opportunities. Additionally, digital selfimprovement tools like Otter.ai for speech analysis and Grammarly for real-time writing feedback offer accessible, on-demand support tailored to individual needs and schedules. Mentorship programs that pair students with alumni in their target professions can also be invaluable. These relationships provide career relevant communication coaching, helping students refine their skills in real-world contexts. By combining peer support, digital tools, and professional mentorship, working students can build strong communication competencies that align with both academic and career goals.

5. Future research should prioritize a deeper understanding of the challenges and solutions related to communication skill development, especially for non-traditional learners. Barrier analysis through mixed method studies can uncover how institutional policies—like rigid class schedules—may unintentionally widen communication skill gaps among working students. These insights can inform more inclusive policy design. Moreover, intervention studies comparing the effectiveness of AI tutoring systems versus human coaching can guide the development of scalable, personalized learning tools. Longitudinal tracking, in partnership with employers, can further assess how academic communication training translates into workplace success, such as promotion rates. These research directions will help institutions design evidence-based strategies that support diverse student populations.

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