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SELECTION OF GREY LITERATURE FOR ENHANCEMENT OF ACADEMIC RESEARCH IN UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES IN BENUE STATE, NIGERIA.

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Abstract
The study examined selection of grey literature for enhancement of academic research in university libraries in Benue State, Nigeria. The two purposes of the study were to find out process of selection of grey literature and challenges for enhancement of academic research in university Libraries. Two corresponding hypotheses formulated were tested at 0.05 level of significance. The study adopted descriptive survey research design. The population of the study comprised of 200 staff of university libraries under study. A self-structured questionnaire of four points rating scale titled Selection of Grey Literature for Enhancement of Academic Research in University Libraries Questionnaires (SGLEARULQ) was used as the instrument for data collection. The descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation was used for data analysis. It also adopted chi-square to test hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study revealed the processes of selection of grey literature to include finding out about new grey literature publications, monitoring new or ephemeral publications, staying in contact with the grey literature, keeping in touch with academic world among others as well as challenges of selection of grey literature. Based on the findings, the study recommended that librarians should improve on selection processes and that there should be collaboration between librarians and producers of grey literature to get rid of difficulty in search of grey literature among others.

Keywords: Grey literature, selection, processes, academic research, university libraries

Introduction

University libraries, just like other libraries are custodians of diverse information resources both in print and non-print format. Some of the information resources which are of tremendous importance acquired by university libraries particularly for research purpose are grey literature. These special information resources according Chilag and Wood in Mohammad (2014) are all categories of unconventionally published materials. Also, grey literature, according to Augur in Abdul, Mason and Kerhwar (2021) are semi-published literature which are not formally listed or priced but are nevertheless in circulation. Collectively, the term grey literature covers an extensive range of materials that cannot be found easily through conventional channels such as publishers, bookshops, but which are frequently original and usually recent.

In the context of this study, grey literature may be defined as recorded information resources in various media and formats that are unconventionally or semi-conventionally

published and not formally listed or priced or available through normal book- selling channels. For clear understanding of grey literature and distinguishing it from other types of literature, the following characteristics of grey literature captured by Omeje in Osayande and Ukpebor (2012) are adopted: They are unconventionally published, they are usually available through the conventional sources of book supply, they are not covered by secondary bibliographic services such as indexes, abstracts and bibliographies, they are difficult to find and select and they contain original information (i.e. they are primary sources of information).

In the university libraries, just like any other library, information resources are procured for use or exploitation by the patrons through the process of selection. The process is still the same with grey literature. Selection is an important process that precedes acquisition. It is the process of choosing library materials to satisfy the needs for inclusion in the library with a view to providing a balanced increase to the stock. According to Obiagwu cited by Ugah in Ochogwu (2016) selection is "a decision-making process that seeks to implement library goals and policies in collection development plans. He added that selection implies choice, choice dictated by limited book vote, inadequate storage facilities, lack of space and other problems. According to Nwalo (2003), selection is the art of choosing items to be acquired from a list of publications in every library for any university. There should be a specific policy with regards to selection of materials. The policy should specify the type and range of items to be selected (in this case, grey literature) to reflect the objectives of the parent institution. It is worthy of note, that the objectives guiding selection of books and materials must support the mission and goals of the parent body which the library services.

In selecting, every item must meet one or more of the following criteria: usefulness of the content, breadth of scope, reputation of the author, level of language used, suitability of subject for intended audience, availability and suitability of the format, evaluation by critics and reviewers among others. Also, in selecting, collection development librarian uses tools such as current sources for in-print book, current review sources, catalogs, flyers and announcement, national bibliographic, online data-bases as well as subject bibliographies. With all these elaborations therefore, selection summarily is seen as an art of choosing items to be acquired.

Selection of grey literature in university libraries has always not been without daunting challenges due to their epileptic nature. Grey literature materials do not have any special codes such as ISBN or ISSN and so cannot easily be tracked down or accessed by a large group of clientele except some concerted efforts are made. This explains the reason why it is called grey literature. Osayande and Ukpebor (2012) and Mason (2012) wrote that grey literature connotes bleakness, apathy, indifference and questionable authority to mind. Also, they are not controlled by commercial publishing interests because they are usually issued by governments, academia, pressure groups, trade unions, industries among others. Grey literature materials are publications without commercial purpose. Articles and information published on the internet do not have a commercial purpose or the mediation of a commercial publisher. Generally, they are

materials which are not obtainable through the conventional channel and not available through normal book selling channels. Again, Siegel in Towolawi (2017) examined the challenges associated with the selection of grey literature in university libraries especially electronically and described it as unreliability and instability of grey literature on the internet. Despite the fact that electronic format has increased access to grey literature, it does not go down well with its own problem as the internet has increased the unreliability of this access because they only exist in e-format. This situation is worsened by the "here today and gone tomorrow" nature of the e-content on the net. According to Mason (2012), the geographical spread of the various organizations producing grey literature also creates the challenge for selection. Their location usually requires a lot of travelling and repeated calls to the creating agencies. This could be hazardous to health as well as a strain on the libraries fund. In the course of selection, grey literature is difficult to search for and identify. Osayande (2012) commented that open source information already suffers from the problem of a low signal-to-noise ratio i.e. there a few nuggets to be shifted from large body of information. This problem is exacerbated in the grey literature domain because thousands of organizations generate literature while only a fraction of these producers and their products are of interest to the university libraries. This situation worsens daily as the availability of information from myriad internet sites increases. Even where grey literature is identified, the document can be expensive to obtain, not due to exorbitant subscription costs but rather due to poor distribution mechanism. The unsettling result is that much valuable research becomes relatively inaccessible. Also, not only staff, time and efforts are required to identify and locate grey literature but a high level of subject knowledge, professional skills and personal dedication have to be devoted to the task. Not all university libraries and librarians have these capacities, university libraries in Benue State – University Library and Information Services of Benue State University, Makurdi, FSI Library of Joseph Sarwuan Tarka University, Makurdi and Asom Bur Library of University of Mkar, Mkar (UMM) are not exceptional.

Despite all the challenges associated with the selection process, university libraries look at the invaluable importance of grey literature cutting across all areas of human endeavour above any other thing and consider their selection for inclusion into the collection a topmost priority. Grey literature publications are so important materials that libraries, especially university libraries must select for acquisition since they support and enhance academic research carried out by scholars and researchers in different criteria areas.

Enhancement of academic research entails infusing vital, must current, recent, reliable, dependable and realistic information generated from the academia, government agencies and parastatals into a research activity to help strengthen and standardize it in order to meet the demands of the time (Kanu, 2020). When these basic ingredients are incorporated into an academic enquiry or research, it is described as an improved one. By so doing, academic research is enhanced. This is only achievable when this kind of literature called grey literature finds its way into university libraries.

into or make enquiries about the unknown using a systematic approach is referred to as academic or scientific research (Emaikwu, 2019).

In view of all these, the researchers have deemed it appropriate to investigate the selection processes of this invaluable information resource (grey literature) for enhancement of academic research in university libraries in Benue State, Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

Grey literature in Nigeria and anywhere in the world has relevance and impact on research, teaching and learning in tertiary institutions and universities. This is because it is highly intellectual and significant for research and development in many subject areas. Due to its invaluable nature, it has come to constitute a section of publications ranking in importance with journals, books and serials. Grey literature materials serve as a way for organization to get results out to their target audience more quickly. They have long term value, particularly because they provide policy context and implication that may not be found in the published literature.

With all the invaluable relevance of grey literature and the position it occupies in the knowledge industries like universities, selecting this kind of resources has always been a challenge. Accessing them in university libraries electronically for selection has always been an effort in futility due to their unreliability and instability on the net. Where it does appear in e-format, its unreliability increases or worsens by "here today and gone tomorrow" nature of the e-contents. How then can grey literature be selected in university libraries for enhancement of academic research? Regrettably, the situation as it compels university libraries into being unable to select grey literature needed for academic researches for political and socio-economic purposes. Presently, the flow of grey literature into university libraries is epileptic and a mirage.

Consequently, the inability of university libraries to select grey literature either through conventional channels of distribution or electronically cascades into their inability to provide this kind of academic resources needed by researchers for their research activities. It is against, this backdrop that this study is undertaken to unravel issues on selection of grey literature for enhancement of academic research in university libraries in Benue State, Nigeria.

Research Objectives

The purpose of the study is to investigate the selection of grey literature for enhancement of academic research in university libraries in Benue State.

Specifically, objectives of this study are to:

i. Find out the processes of selection of grey literature for enhancement of academic research in university libraries in Benue State.
ii. Identity the challenges in selection of grey literature for enhancement of academic research in university libraries in Benue State.

Research Questions

i. What are the processes of selection of grey literature for enhancement of academic research in university libraries in Benue State?
ii. What are the challenges in selection of grey literature for enhancement of academic research in university Libraries in Benue State?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated for this study and tested at 0.05 level of significance.

Ho1: There are no significant processes in the selection of grey literature for enhancement of academic research in university libraries.

Ho2: There are no significant challenges in the selection of grey literature for enhancement of academic research in university libraries.

Literature Review

Libraries irrespective of types are known for the provision of information resources in different formats either print or non-print. Some information are contained in books, journals, serials or serial publications as well as grey literature publications to support learning, teaching, research and community service especially in university libraries. In the words of Weintraub (2011) grey literature refers to the publication issued by government, academic, business and industry in both print and electronic (formats but are not controlled by commercial publishing interests and where publishing is not the primary business activity of the organization. According to Mason (2012), grey literature refers to the brain's grey matter since so much of it is highly intellectual and is significant for research and development in many subject areas.

In the university libraries, there are many types of grey literature. Mason (2012) in collaboration with Alberain (1990) posited that grey literature publications are non-conventional, fugitive and often ephemeral. They may include but not necessarily limited to the following types of materials: pre-prints, preliminary progress and advanced reports, memoranda, state-of-the-art reports and market research report. Others are source books, chart-books, hand books, evaluations, consensus reports, fact sheets, briefings, transcripts, testimonies, conference proceedings, repair manuals, consumer product ratings, tourist guides and other resources that we usually carry along and consult on regular basis. Also, dissertations and theses, meeting papers or pre-prints that are given before conferences and meetings are important types of grey literature.

Grey literature is increasing in quantity because it has advantages of great speed and flexibility and allows those who write and issue it to be very concise, exact and focused. Grey literature is original, much of it is of high quality in nature, precise and communicating complex issues to a lay audience (the University of New South Wales, Home Library, 2012). Most producers describe grey products as means of communicating complex issues to lay persons for the purpose of creating public support and awareness for a particular issue. Moreso, grey literature has impact in research, reaching and learning. It is occasionally the only source of information for specific research questions

(the wiki index, April, 2012). Researchers use grey literature publication to support their research as well as identify funding properties.

Due to the invaluable importance of grey literature, university libraries make painstaking effort to select them for acquisition. The essence of selection of library materials in university libraries is to know the materials relevant to them. Selection of materials is important because of literature explosion, reduction in library budget, reduction in income of library users. Selection, according to Akpe, Ajav and Chukwuka (2019) is the process of choosing library materials to satisfy the needs for inclusion in a library with a view to providing a balanced increase to the stock. It is the art of choosing items to be captured from the list of publications in every library of any university. Good selectors should aim at satisfying existing demands, anticipating future needs by users and ensuring that good quality materials are provided, avoiding bias in selection and ensuring that the right kind of materials are provided at the right time.

Eze and Eze (2006) and Ojebode (2009) identified processes involved in selection by one person, selection meeting, selection committee and specialized groups. In selection of materials for university libraries, you must consider the aims and objectives of the institutions, the number of departments and subject areas. The number of faculty members' research and teaching needs and the number of materials required in terms of book materials. In university libraries, materials selected are meant to carter the support of the curriculum. In most university libraries, the library committee carries out the selection of library materials.

Kwaghga, Beetseh, akpe and Ajav (2019) pointed out very clearly the processes of selection of grey literature in university libraries to include the following:

- Finding out about the publication of grey literature
- Monitoring literature or ephemeral publication.
- Learning about new books.
- Scanning daily newspapers, looking for reports on conferences, seminars, workshops and symposia.
- Making contact with academic world such as universities, professional institutions and research institutes.
- Having strong sense of curiosity and willingness to ask important questions about new publications on grey literature.

To avoid haphazardness in the selection process, Ugah (2016) in Ochogwu (2016) stated that in selecting, every item must meet one or more of the following criteria.

- Usefulness of the content
- Breadth of the scope
- Reputation of the author
- Level of language used
- Suitability of subject for intended audience
- Availability and suitability of format
- Evaluation by critics and reviewers etc.

Grey literature, unlike other publications does not pass through formal publishing processes, as a result, poses challenges in its creation and in the integrity of the content. In the course of selection, Osayande and Ukpebor (2012) observed that grey literature is difficult to search for and identify to search for and identify. In their view, the only way to learn about some trade literature and unpublished conference papers is to attend the functions at which they are made available. Collection networks in university libraries must identify the event before it takes place and coordinate attendance.

A study was carried out by Beetsheh, Akpe, Ajav and Okechukwu (2019) on the challenges of selection and acquisition of grey literature in Francis Suleimanu Idachaba (FSI) library, University of Agriculture Makurdi, now JOSTUM. The purpose of the study was to investigate challenges in the selection of grey literature in FSI Library, University of Agriculture, Makurdi. Descriptive Survey research design was used for the study. The population of the study was 89 library staff which comprised both processionals from FSI library. There was no sampling because the population was small and manageable. Questionnaire was the instrument that was used for data collection. The method of data analysis used for the study was descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation. The findings of the study revealed the processes of selection of grey literature to include finding out about the publication, monitoring new literature, scanning daily newspapers, looking for reports on conferences, seminars and workshops, having contact with the academic world among others. It also found out the challenges of selection of grey literature to their time-consuming nature, their non-existence on publishers' catalogue, poor bibliographic information as well as absence of professional layout. The study recommended that university libraries should create more and proper awareness to both teachers and students on the role of grey literature. That effort should be intensified in keeping in touch with the producers of grey literature. Lastly, that there should be collaboration and negotiation between librarians and producers of grey literature resources to get rid of the difficulty in search for grey literature. The study is related with the present one because they both investigated the selection processes and challenges associated with the selection of grey literature in university libraries.

Research Methodology

This study adopted descriptive survey design. The reason for the design was because the study and its variables were descriptive in nature. The study was carried in Benue State, Nigeria. The study specifically covered three universities which were Benue State University, Makurdi, Joseph Sarwuan Tarka University, Makurdi (JOSTUM), and University of Mkar, Mkar. The Federal University of Health Science, Otukpo was not part of the universities considered because it is newly established and so very nascent. The population of the study comprised 200 library staff from libraries of Benue State University, Joseph Sarwuan Tarka University, Makurdi and University of Mkar, Mkar (UMM). There was no sampling for the study. Census method was used since the entire population was taken. The population size was small and manageable.

The instrument for data collection was a self structured questionnaire called

Selection of Grey Literature for Enhancement of Academic Research in University Libraries Questionnaire (SGLEARULQ). The instrument had eleven (11) items. It was a four-point rating scale with response mode of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD). The instrument was trial tested on thirty (30) library staff of Federal University, Lafia. The result was collated and analyzed using Cronbach Alpha Correlated coefficient to determine the reliability of the instrument. The result yielded Alpha correlated coefficient of 0.92. This was an indication that the coefficient was high and reliable to be used for the study. The researcher and three research assistants were involved in data collection that was used for the study.

Data was collected by the researchers with the aid of the three research assistants, collated and analyzed using descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation to answer the two research questions while chi-square was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. For the research questions, 2.5 was used as cut-off point for decision-making. The mean score of 2.5 and above was agreed while the mean score of below 2.5 was not agreed. For the hypotheses, the decision rule to accept or reject the hypotheses was based on p-value of 0.05. When the p-value is greater than Alpha value of 0.05, it is considered not significant and the null hypothesis is accepted. When the p-value is less than alpha value of 0.05, it is significant and the null hypothesis is accepted. When the p-value is less than alpha value of 0.05, it is significant and the null hypothesis is rejected.

Results

Research Question 1: What are the processes of selection of grey literature for enhancement of academic Research in university libraries in Benue State?

Table 1: Mean/standard deviation on processes of selection of grey literature in university libraries in Benue State

S/N	Processes of selection of grey literature	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Remarks
1	Finding out about grey literature publication	198	3.91	0.28	Agreed
2	Monitoring new literature or ephemerals publications	198	3.68	0.46	Agreed
3	Looking for reports on conferences through scanning daily newspapers	198	3.77	0.47	Agreed
4	Staying in contact to grey literature	198	3.73	0.44	Agreed
5	Having contact with academic world	198	3.78	0.40	Agreed
6	Developing a strong sense of curiosity and the desire to ask questions about new publications on grey literature	198	3.65	0.47	Agreed
	Clustered Mean/Standard Deviation		**3.37**	**0.42**	**Agreed**

Source: *Field survey, 2023*

Table 1 contains 6 items fashioned to derive information on the processes of

selection of grey literature for enhancement of academic research in university libraries in Benue State. Data revealed that all the 6 items have mean values of 3.91, 3.68, 3.77, 3.73, 3.78 and 3.65 greater than the cutoff point of 2.5, with corresponding standard deviation values of 0.28, 0.46, 0.47, 0.44, 0.40 and 0.47 respectively. This shows that respondents agreed to the following notions that; finding out about grey literature publication, monitoring new literature or ephemerals publications, looking for reports on conferences through scanning daily newspapers, staying in contact to grey literature, having contact with academic world as well as developing a strong sense of curiosity and the desire to ask questions about new publications on grey literature are the processes of selection of grey literatures for enhancement of academic research in university libraries especially in universities in Benue State.

Research Questions 2

What are the challenges of selection of grey literature in University Libraries in Benue State?

Table 2: Mean/standard deviation on the challenges of selection of grey literature in university libraries in Benue State

S/N	Challenges of selection of grey literature	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Remarks
1	Grey literature publications are difficult to search for	198	3.71	0.45	Agreed
2	Identifying and locating grey literature is time-consuming	198	3.54	0.49	Agreed
3	Publisher's catalogue showing grey literature produced over a period of time is usually non-existent	198	3.61	0.48	Agreed
4	Most grey literature publications have poor bibliographic information	198	3.39	0.55	Agreed
5	Most grey literature publications have no professional layout, hence a challenge for selection	198	3.55	0.56	Agreed
	Clustered Mean/Standard Deviation		**3.56**	**0.50**	**Agreed**

Table 2 contains 5 items fashioned to obtain information on the challenges of selection of grey literature for enhancement of academic research in university libraries in Benue State. Data revealed that all the 5 items have mean values of 3.71, 3.54, 3.61, 3.39 and 3.55 greater than the cutoff point of 2.5 with corresponding standard deviation values of 0.45, 0.49, 0.48, 0.55 and 0.56 respectively. This shows that respondents agreed to the following statements that: grey literature publications are difficult to search for, identifying and locating grey literature is time-consuming, publisher's catalogue showing grey literature produced over a period of time is usually non-existent, most grey literature publications have poor bibliographic information and most grey literature publications

have no professional layout are the challenges of selection of grey literatures for enhancement of academic research in university libraries.

Test of Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: There are no significant processes in the selection of grey literature for enhancement of academic research in University Libraries in Benue State.

Table 3: Chi-Square (x^2) test of the processes in the selection of grey literature for enhancement of academic research in university libraries

Opinions	Fo	Fe	R	Levels of Sig.	Df	x^2cal	p-value	Decision
A	17	99.0	-82.0	0.05	1	135.838[a]	0.00	Sig.
SA	181	99.0	82.0					
Total	**198**							

Table 3 reveals that x^2= 135.838[a] df = 1, and p = 0.00. Since the p-value of 0.00 is less than the set alpha value of (p < 0.05) at 1 degree of freedom, the null hypothesis which states that there are no significant processes in the selection of grey literature for enhancement of academic research in university libraries in Benue State is rejected. This implies that there are significant processes in the selection of grey literature for enhancement of academic research in university libraries in Benue State.

Hypothesis 2: There are no significant challenges in the selection of grey literature for enhancement of academic research in university libraries in Benue State.

Table 4: Chi-Square (x^2) test of the challenges in the selection of grey literature for enhancement of academic research in university libraries

Opinions	Fo	Fe	R	Levels of Sig.	Df	X^2cal	p-value	Decision
A	56	99.0	-43.0	0.05	1	37.354[a]	0.000	Sig.
SA	142	99.0	43.0					
Total	**198**							

Table 4 reveals that x^2= 37.354[a,] df =, and p = 0.00. Since the p-value of 0.00 is less than the set alpha value of (p < 0.05) at 1st degree of freedom, the null hypothesis which states that there are no significant challenges in the selection of grey literature for enhancement of academic research in university libraries in Benue State is rejected. This means that there are significant challenges in the selection of grey literature for enhancement of academic research in university libraries in Benue State.

Summary of Findings

The findings of the study are as follows:

- The study found out the processes of selection of grey literature to include: finding out about grey literature publication, monitoring new literature or ephemerals publications, looking for reports on conferences through scanning daily newspapers, staying in contact to grey literature, having contact with academic world as well as developing a strong sense of curiosity and the desire to ask questions about new publications on grey literature are the processes of selection of grey literatures for enhancement of academic research in university libraries especially in universities in Benue State.
- The study also found out that: grey literature publications are difficult to search for, identifying and locating grey literature is time-consuming, publisher's catalogue showing grey literature produced over a period of time is usually non-existent, most grey literature publications have poor bibliographic information and most grey literature publications have no professional layout are the challenges of selection of grey literatures for enhancement of academic research in university libraries.

Discussion of Findings

The following findings are presented based on the analysis of the research questions and testing of the hypotheses of the study:

The first findings of the study revealed that processes of selection of grey literature in University Libraries include finding out about grey literatures publications, monitoring new literature or ephemeral publications, scanning of daily newspapers, staying in contact to grey literature, having contact with the academic world and developing strong sense of curiosity and willingness to ask questions about new publications on grey literature. The finding of this study collaborates with Towolawi (2017) who observed that establishing contact with where grey literature publications are produced, keeping in touch with the academic word, monitoring new publications from the academic and professional conferences, liasing with organizing bodies for inaugural lecture among others are processes of selection of grey literature in university libraries for enhancement of academic research.

The second finding of the study revealed the challenges of selection of grey literature in university libraries to include difficulty in search for grey literature, non-existence of publisher's catalogue showing grey literature produced over a period of time, poor bibliographic information of most grey literature, time-consuming nature of identifying and locating grey literature and absence of professional layout for most grey literature publications. This finding agrees with Beetseh, Akpe, Ajav and Okechukwu (2018) who observed that the challenges of selection of grey literature include but not limited to tediousness in scanning daily newspapers, absence of professional format of some grey literature, difficulty in monitoring new literature and poor bibliographic information of most grey literature publications.

From the test of hypotheses, the first finding reveals the p-value to be 0.00 which is greater than the set alpha-value of 0.05. This implies that the null hypothesis which states that there are no significant processes in the selection of grey literature in university libraries for enhancement of academic research is rejected. This means that there are significant processes in the selection of grey literature in university libraries.

The result of the test of hypothesis two (2) showed the p-value of 0.00 which is less than the alpha value of 0.05 at 1st degree of freedom, then the null hypothesis which states that there are no significant challenges in the selection of grey literature is rejected. By implication, there are significant challenges in the selection of grey literature for enhancement of academic resource in university libraries in Benue State.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, the researchers conclude that university libraries should device ways of improving on the processes involved in the selection of grey literature and that drastic measures be taken in mitigating the challenges associated with selection.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made;

- That university library management, librarians and collection developers should improve on the process of selection of grey literature. This is to make sure that more efforts are intensified, leaving no stone un-turned in keeping in touch with the producers of grey literature, be it governmental bodies, ministries, agencies, commissions and parastatals. .
- That there should be more collaboration and negotiation between librarians and producers of grey literature resources to get rid of difficulty in search for grey literature. That, where possible, grey literature should be included on the publisher's catalogue so that librarians can easily know of their existence and select for acquisition. For easy identification, grey literature should be given bibliographic description by those that produce them.

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