

HRIS Practices in Private Universities of Bangladesh

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Abstract: *HRIS is usually offered as a database. It offers the manager absorbing new technologies simplify the workflow, optimize precision, stability and credibility of workforce data and to simplify the data collection process. The use of HRIS is seen on a regular basis in different organizations. In this study, an attempt has been made to show the use of HRIS in private universities of Bangladesh and also indicate how it is helping to reduce everyday critical jobs and going towards a green management system. University education in Bangladesh is getting more and more competitive every day and implementation of HRIS the process that goes around the management system is getting much simpler for the student and also the employee. The data are more accessible than before and the facilities and restrictions are more than understandable and simplified.*

Key words: *Human Resource Information System, technology, storing and systematic procedure.*

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I. Introduction

Human Resource Information System (HRIS) is defined as interrelated components working together to collect, process, store and disseminate information to support decision making, coordination, control, analysis and utilization of an organization's human resources management activities (Laudon and Laudon, 1998). The concept has three stages of development: the first stage is automatic processing of the routine information relating to the routine paperwork at the operational levels in the organization; the second stage involves detailed inquiry and report generation flexibility; the third stage is Decision Support System which facilitates decisions at higher levels in the organization. Hence, HRIS is considered as a systematic procedure for collecting, storing, maintaining and recovering data required by the organizations about their human resources, personal activities and organizational characteristics (Kovach et al., 2002). HRIS has different uses and benefits; it helps recording and analyzing the information related to the employees and the organization, and it helps in maintaining documents, such as employee handbooks, emergency evacuation procedures and safety procedure (Fletcher, 2005; and Lee, 2008). In many organizations, HRIS has been used to support their daily HRM operations (Ball, 2001; Hussain et al. 2007; and Delorme and Archand, 2010). However, HRIS should be used not only for administrative purposes but also for strategic decision-making purposes.

Human Resources (HR) are the key elements to run any organization. Its importance becomes pivotal when it is being related with a service and skilled related organizations like universities. To manage HR in an efficient manner almost all the organizations possess Human Resource Management Division, the main purpose of which is to manage HR in a more efficient way. Private universities in Bangladesh have shown a tremendous growth over the last decade showing a huge demand of skilled, knowledgeable, energetic and enthusiastic for learning personnel. But such huge demand often mismatches with inadequate supplies of such potential candidates. With the development of modern technology the world has become a global village and thus, HRM is no more a manual task to perform; rather the invention of computer based information systems made it technically sound and more efficient to manage the HR. Consequently, Human Resource Information Systems (HRISs), nowadays, is a part and parcel of HRM.

In this context, HRIS is defined as a computer based application for assembling and processing data related to the human resources. It is worth mentioning that HRIS is not limited to the computer hardware and software applications that comprise technical part of the systems it also include the people, policies, procedures and data required to manage the HR functions. It was concluded by many writers that this technology offers several benefits for both HR and Operational people. The potential advantages of HRIS are faster information processing, greater information accuracy, improved planning and program development, and enhanced employee communications. It was identified as one of the most important benefits which can be derived from HRIS is that it enables faster decision making, development, planning and administration of HR as data is much easier to store, update, classify and analyze. On the other side of the coin, the most challenging and limiting constraint of HRIS in a country like Bangladesh is its high cost of conversion from manual based HRM, inadequate training for HR people, lack of supportive infrastructure, as well as the shortage of technical know-

how. Here, we have tried to explore the current scenario of HRIS in the various aspects of HRM and expectation of HR people related to the use of HRIS in the private universities in Bangladesh. We have also tried to find out the reasons behind the mismatch between the actual & expected applications of IT-enabled HRM.



II. Background of the study

This study was assigned to us to analyze and understand about the private universities of Bangladesh. As the positive role of private Universities in the higher education in Bangladesh is now undeniable, it has been very curtail to maintain the overall organization with the aid of advanced technology. Previously the whole management was done manually but now in the current scenario we see that everything is more organized and error free, all due to the application of HRIS in the organization.

According to some researchers, implementing HRIS would reduce HR costs by automating information and reducing the number of needed HR employees. It also helps employees to control their own personal information and allows managers to access relevant information and data. Additionally, it also assists in conducting analyses, making decisions and communicating with others without referring to HR professionals (Awazuand Desouza 2003; Ball 2001). Ideally speaking, an appropriate implementation of HRIS applications would lead to less people needed to perform administrative tasks such a keeping records. Meanwhile, more time would become available so that HR managers can assist their employees by providing data on a strategic level.

III. Objectives of the study

The Objectives of the study are to:

- Explore the current situation of the applications of HRIS in Private Universities;
- Find out the reasons for moving away from traditional information system to more technology based Human Resource Information System (HRIS) and its relative importance to organizations;
- Evaluate to what extend HRISs is being practiced in recruitment & selection, training & development and in payroll system of the selected private universities;
- Explore the perceptions of HR people of Private Universities regarding the application of HRIS in recruitment & selection, training & development and in payroll system;
- Record all details of the employees including personal and professional information in their central database.

Scope of the study:

This paper describes about the importance of HRIS in the current scenario. Human Resource Information System (HRIS) is an opportunity for organizations such as private universities of Bangladesh to make the HR department administratively and strategically participative in operating the organization. It is basically an intersection of human resources and information technology through a HR software solution.

IV. Methodology

Out of a total of 95 private universities in Bangladesh only 5 (five) have been selected on a random basis to investigate the role of HRIS in HRM. Due to the scarcity of accurate primary data the study was done mostly based on secondary data.

The primary data that were collected were mostly from students who are either current or former students of the sample universities. As the information is given from personal point of view, the accuracy of this information could not be ensured. So, this paper was prepared using secondary data mostly.

Secondary data were collected from authentic sources. They are collected from University brochures, internet, newspapers, articles of journals etc. Data collection was mainly based on material study in a qualitative work.

Limitations of the study

- Firstly, limitations of time were one of the major issues which had an impact on the study.
- Secondly, we were not able to reach the HR department of the sample universities upon which the whole study was based.
- Thirdly, the major sources of primary data were the students of those private universities which we have considered as our sample data.
- Finally, there are limited study materials on the HRIS in the context of Bangladesh.

V. Literature Review

The last decade has seen a tremendous change in the HRM system of organizations and how they gather, sort, analyze the human resource data using Human Resource information system. Tannenbaum (1990) defined HRIS as a technology-based system used to acquire, store, manipulate, analyze, retrieve and distribute pertinent information regarding an organization’s human resources, consistently. As per Tannenbaum (1990), HRIS is a technology-based system used to acquire, store, manipulate, analyze, retrieve and distribute pertinent information regarding an organization’s human resources, consistently.

Targowski & Deshpande Targowski, Andrew S & Deshpande, Satish P. (2001) and others have suggested that part of the utility of an HRIS is its positive impact on traditional HR processes such as recruitment, selection, training and development. HRM starts of by the staffing practice because organization is nothing without its HR. HRM provides the rules to hire the employees. Almost all the organizations take their stars by hiring their employees, but it is always not possible that an organization get all its potential HR from the same place. Kavanagh and others suggested that HRIS is not only represented by computer based tasks or HR-related programs; rather it comprehensively involves people, structures, strategies, processes and information. In a similar vein, HIRS is believed to be a systematic process of “collecting, storing, maintaining, retrieving and validating data needed by an organization about its human resources, personnel activities, and organization unit characteristics”

HRIS provided HR professionals with new chances to help their employees prepare career plans, and strategies related to training and development. Marler (2009) points out that the integration of HRIS applications supports the implementation of HR policies and therefore achieves the organization’s strategic goals.

A recent study on Indian companies also found that HR professionals had major applications of HRIS as recruitment and selection (67.2% and 71.9%, respectively), pay roll service (67.2%), providing general information (67.2%), compensation (67.2%), performance appraisal (62.5%) and job analysis and design (62.5%) (Saharan and Jafri, 2012). Also HRIS was quite in use in corporate communication (48.2%) (Saharan and Jafri, 2012). The most popular future applications of HRIS had been predicted as training and development (72.5%), career development (60.8%) and performance appraisal/management (58.8%) (Teo, et al., 2001). There appears to be a shift towards strategic applications of HRIS.

Table 1 (a) : Frequency Distribution: HRIS Practices in Recruitment, Training and Payroll

Description	Frequency		Percentage	
	No	Yes	No	Yes
Practice of HRIS in Recruitment and Selection	7	28	20	80
Practice of HRIS in Training and Development	21	14	60	40
Practice of HRIS in Payroll	9	26	25.7	74.3

Table 1(a) specifies to what extend HRIS is being applied in Recruitment, Training and Payroll. The results reveal that the maximum application of HRIS can be observed in recruitment and selection as 28 (80%) universities out of 35 applies HRIS in recruiting and selecting their employees. 26(74.3%) universities use HRIS in their payroll system while the least use of HRIS is found in training and development of employees as only 14 (40%) universities applies HRIS technique for need assessment and train their employees

VI. Organizational Overview

HRIS has become a part and parcel of day today's life. For sound management of an entity the use of HRIS has been increasing day by day. Once it was possible to maintain only paper works for the human resources when the numbers of employees were limited to the boundary that could be managed manually. With rapid technological development, the nature of business and relations has become more complex than it was ever. Since human resources have increased in size it could not be maintained manually and cost-effectively. Thus almost every entity is now using HRIS to manage their employees and all the activities related to them including private universities.



Here for this study we have chosen 6 (six) well established private universities of Bangladesh as sample. They are

- 1) North South University (NSU)
- 2) BRAC University (BRACU)
- 3) East West University
- 4) Independent University, Bangladesh (IUB)
- 5) American International University-Bangladesh (AIUB)

Overview of North South University (NSU)

North South University (NSU), the first private university in Bangladesh, was established by NSU Foundation, which later formed North South University Trust (NSU Trust) comprising a group of philanthropists, industrialists and academics. The Government of Bangladesh approved the establishment of North South University under Private University Act (PUA) – 1992 (now replaced by PUA-2010). The University was formally inaugurated on 10 February 1993 by the then Prime Minister of Bangladesh. The honorable President of the People's Republic of Bangladesh His Excellency Md. Abdul Hamid is the Chancellor of NSU.

Overview of BRAC University (BRACU)

BRAC University (BRACU) was established in 2001. It follows a liberal arts approach to education which nurtures fresh ideas and gives new impetus to the field of tertiary education. It ensures a high quality of education and aims to meet the demands of contemporary times. Building on BRAC's experience of seeking solutions to challenges posed by extreme poverty, BRACU hopes to instill in its students a commitment to working towards national development and progress. BRACU is accredited by the University Grants Commission (UGC) and approved by the Ministry of Education, Government of Bangladesh.

Overview of East West University

East West University (EWU) was established in 1996. Its permanent campus is in Jahurul Islam City, Aftab Nagar, Dhaka. The university is accredited by the government of Bangladesh, and its curricula and programs have been approved by the University Grants Commission. As stipulated by the Private University Act, 1992, under which the university was established, the President of Bangladesh is the chancellor of the university and appoints the vice chancellor and treasurer.

Overview of Independent University, Bangladesh (IUB)

Independent University, Bangladesh (IUB), established in 1993, is a leading private university in the country with an explicit focus on Research and Global partnerships. It is a full service oriented university with a current enrollment of 5,500 students, 8900 alumni and 250 faculty members (of which 25% have PhD's mostly from North America).

Overview of American International University-Bangladesh (AIUB)

American International University- AIUB is an accredited private university located at Banani in Dhaka, Bangladesh. The university is an independent organization with its own Board of Trustees. It offers several degree programs at graduate and undergraduate levels from its four faculties. It is ranked as an International University by UNESCO which is published by UNESCO in the International University Handbook, 2006 edition.

VII. Discussions

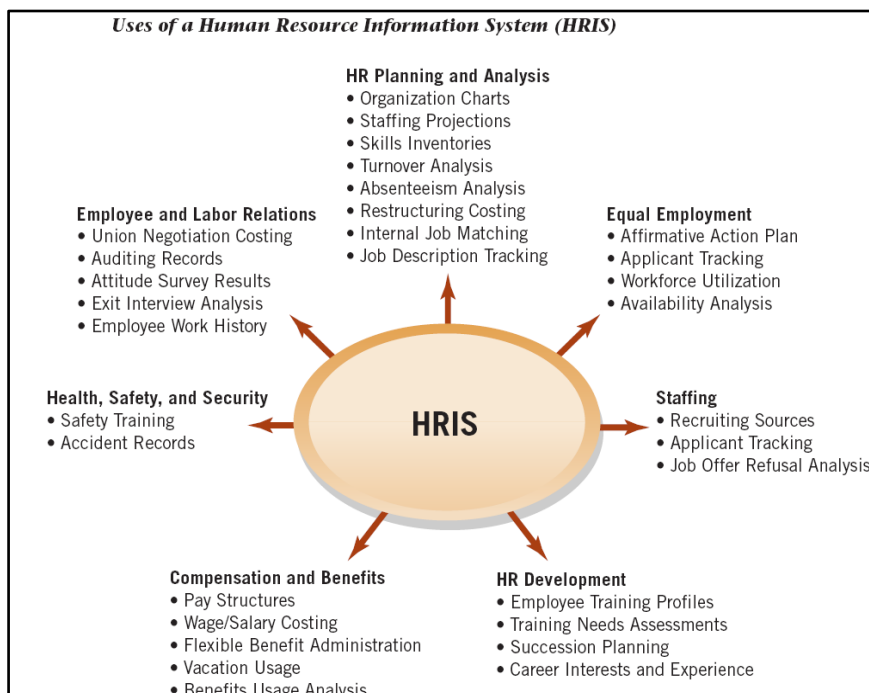
Today HRM Practice is a very essential part for any company which enables their employees to work efficiently. HRIS helps employees to understand the technology which are related to HRM. Human Resource Information System allows people to boost up their work and using technology for the effectiveness of worker .in order to make effective, HRM helps an organization by training and development of the employees.



As a private university sector needs to develop HRM and HRIS by practicing recruitment, selection, training and development, compensation, labor Law etc. all of these processes need information system which deals with HRIS. Actually HRIS is a practice by an organization which makes familiar to the employee about technology. “For A Better Tomorrow” has become the mission of the private university sector.

After studying many articles and research papers we have seen that many researchers have suggested how HRIS applications may support organizational processes. A number of the HRIS applications that have been defined by these researchers are outlined according to the HRM basic task.

It is reported that several applications for HRIS, such as clerical applications, applicant search expenditures, risk management, training management, training experiences, financial planning, turnover analysis, succession planning, flexible-benefits administration, compliance with government regulations, attendance reporting and analysis, human resource planning, accident reporting and prevention and strategic planning. In addition to data storage, the HRIS system also allows certain tasks to be completely much easier than they would be by hand, as well as reducing the amount of paper that HR departments must store. These applications are outlined below.



Staffing:

One of the main activities of HRM is staffing. Staffing is important because it provides a supply of individuals needed to fill the jobs within an organization necessary to achieve business objectives. Once HR professionals have undertaken job analysis, a job description can be prepared. Such job description is used when recruiting individuals. E-recruiting, or Internet recruiting, is one of the methods available to HR professionals that may be integrated with HRIS.



HR Development:

Human Resource Development (HRD) is the framework for helping employees develop their personal and organizational skills, knowledge, and abilities. HR Development includes such opportunities as employee training, employee career development, performance management and development, coaching, mentoring, succession planning, key employee identification, tuition assistance, and organization development. The focus of all aspects of HR Development is on developing the most superior workforce so that the organization and individual employees can accomplish their work goals in service to customers.



Compensation and Benefits:

Employee compensation refers to all forms of pay going to employees and arising from their employment. Employee benefits are not performance based rather membership based. Workers receive benefits regardless of their performance. However inadequate benefits do contribute to low satisfaction and high absenteeism in work place



Health, Safety and Security:

As defined by the World Health Organization (WHO) "occupational health deals with all aspects of health and safety in the workplace and has a strong focus on primary prevention of hazards. It basically employees organized efforts and procedures for identifying workplace hazards and reducing accidents and exposure to harmful situations and substances. It also includes training of personnel in accident prevention, accident response, emergency preparedness, and use of protective clothing and equipment.



Employee and Labor relation:

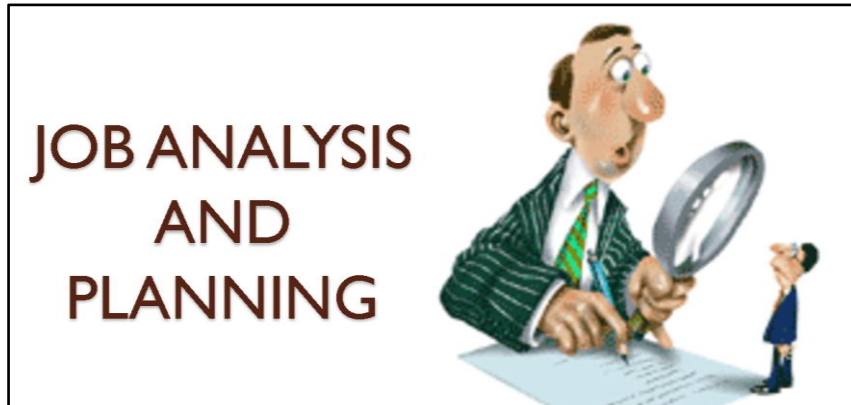
Labor Relations is the study of how employers and employees work together to create a fair workplace. Employee and Labor Relations assist general management regarding developing, maintaining and improving employee relationships via communication, performance management, processing grievances and/or disputes as well as interpreting and conveying University policies.



HR planning and analysis:

Human resource planning is a process by which an organization ensures that it has the right number and kinds of people at the right place in the right time. Human resource planning and job analysis techniques are very crucial activities for the organization. These activities aim at maintaining an apt equilibrium of employees throughout all departments of the organization.

Human Resource Management plays an important role in business. The overall goal for HR is to make sure that employees are in the right position, are in a good and safe environment, have all the rules and training needed to be capable of working, and can speak to HR when needed.



Equal Employment:

It is an employment system where employers do not engage in employment that are prohibited by law. EEO or Equal Employment Opportunity means that all peoples regardless of gender, race, color, age, marital or parental status, sexual preference, disability or religious belief have the right to be given fair consideration for a job or other job related benefits such as staff training and development.



VIII. Analysis & Findings

As we have already seen that HRIS has a huge impact in the current time. Almost all private universities apply HRIS in their regular system. From an article published back in 2013, it was seen that only 22.9 % universities studied are using HRIS in full extent while 42.9% use HRIS to some extent. In 34.3% universities there is very limited applications of HRIS. Again, the highest use of HRIS is observed in recruiting and selection in private universities which is 80%. 74.3% universities use HRIS in their payroll system while the least use of HRIS is found in training and development of employees as only 14 (40%) universities apply HRIS technique for need assessment and train their employees. The paper explored that there is a gap between expected application of HRIS and present level of use in the selected private universalities. Among the main reasons of such gap Lack of infrastructure and high cost are found vital. The other reasons are lack of expertise in this field and insufficient training of the employees. Then again this was a scenario of 2013, by this time we have seem major difference in the practice of HRIS in different organization.

Almost all the university uses the different database for its employees and students which is either record in excel sheet, SPSS or any other HRIS software to keep the data base organized and up-to-date. This up-to-date data base helps them in collecting these reports and other relevant information like extra-curricular activities & participations, learning reports, are joined together for analysis and come out with the appraisals,

incentives and promotions. HRIS supports these activities in analyzing the reports and works as a decision support system. The major functions of HRIS are as follows:

Benefiting Administration:

When regular data is updated in the system this function helps to deal with the benefit policies of employees in an organization like, perks, special allowances, insurance, profit sharing and retirement benefits. The HRIS helps in keeping track of employees who are taking part in it and are actually eligible for these benefits. Payroll Handling:

From the database management data are automated to payroll process which helps the management comply with legal and tax requirements and simplifies the process of paying their employees. The payroll functions reports can help the organization to manage one of its highest expenses -labor. It generates a multitude of reports for hourly and salaried employees. Many payroll systems include reporting templates so managers can quickly and easily find out what their payroll costs are for any given period, and can check other important facts such as headcount, vacation balances, and the employees that are the highest and lowest earners.

Here only all documents of students, faculties and office employees are kept.

Employee Record Handling:

This is a simple function where all the records of employee are kept. This function keeps the employee records from his past organization, personal details and details of current company. Here only all the documents related to the individual like offer letter, appointment letter, appraisal letter, relieving letter from the past company and many other documents are managed with exact working dates.

Here only all the results and current activities of students are recorded which further helps to provide them with the transcripts and certificates without errors. It also helps to maintain the documentation of faculties and office employees in the organization.

Recruitment:

This is a critical function to perform for HR Department, as, having good Human Resource can take a company to heights and failing to do this can take it down. HRIS system helps in organizing the recruitment activities properly like resume management, interview panel making, selection criteria, number of interview rounds and many other activities which needs to be performed as the recruitment process.

Here this includes the admission procedure of the students as well as the recruitments of the faculties and office employees in the institution.

Training:

The HR department is responsible for organizing training session for its employees. Trainers can be from within the company itself and on some occasions, may be from outside. HR sees to it that appropriate training sessions and seminars should happen frequently on time to get improved performance of employees. Sometimes these training can be of motivation, manners or behavior as good employee is the combination of everything. HRIS helps in maintaining all these records, keeping appointment filtering of employee list based on their knowledge, weakness and other criteria, through which a session can be organized and proper identification can be done for employee while managing the trainings. The pre stored data help the Universities to arrange training session for its student and employees when required.

Here the organization identifies the need of training and development in the faculties and office employees and arrange the session to overcome these needs. They also arrange workshops and training session for students which help them in future.

Appraisals & Performance Management:

This function is not only independent to HR but dependent on other functional departments. It needs score from various other departments and its people. Like students are asked to appraise their course teacher in the universities after the course was over in order to evaluate the faculties. Similarly other office members are also evaluated on the basis of their performance by the administration or HR departments. The collected reports and other relevant information like extra-curricular activities & participations, learning reports, are joined together for analysis and come out with the appraisals, incentives and promotions. HRIS supports these activities in analyzing the reports and works as a decision support system for the HR departments.

This method is used to measure the performance of students and faculties and on the basis of their performance they are appraised and given awards and benefits. These things help the institution to motivate its students and employee to perform better in future.

Attendance Record Management:

HRIS is primarily used here in an automated fashion mostly and if not, at least in a semi-automated fashion where HR keeps the record of all the employees' attendance, leaves- paid or non-paid, holidays granted or not granted one and of course timely reporting. Although there are smart machine and system now-a-days which manages attendance with a card swipe or a finger print reader, so in modern world it's not a core HR function but often at some places, especially in small organizations, it is still a function of HRs and we can say that HRIS include attendance management.

Universities like North South University uses the digital entry system where both students and teachers needed to punch their cards in order to enter the university premises. All the employee, faculties and office members use the finger print scanner for entry and exit purpose which directly get recorded in the employee data base

Grievance Handling:

Most of the HR functions where fulfilled or managed by HRIS, and except "Grievance Handling" which becomes more of the onus of higher management. As it is a HR function which comes under HR in theory but when we need to handle such things, lot of people can get involved in this; from lower level staff to VP level key people. Grievance can be of multiple natures, at multiple levels; some can be handled at HR level but some cannot be handled by HR level. So grievance handling is a function of HR Department but not in complete sense. HRIS are not able to provide much help in these cases except keeping a log file of it.

IX. Conclusion

Private University education in Bangladesh is getting more competitive with the remarkable increase in the academic level in the country. The ineluctable forces of globalization in this new millennium make this growth path more complex and challenging. Despite the relentless and continuous effort of private educational institutions, quality has not yet achieved at the desired level. After the study which was aimed to explore the role of Human Resources Information System (HRIS), it was revealed that HRIS plays an important role in recruitment and selection, training & development and payroll administration in private universities. It also explored that there is a gap between the expected and actual application of HRIS; the main reasons of which are lack of infrastructural development, high cost and insufficient training. Hence, it can be said that the eradication of the hindrances in terms of infrastructure, cost and training would enable the private universities to recruit and select right people, provide appropriate training to them and to ensure better education through providing with desired reward for performances.

X. Recommendations

- As we have seen that there is a **lack of proper infrastructure** to ensure its application, private universities should concentrate in building a proper infrastructure to overcome this lack.
- As the concept of HRIS is still new to people, and awareness should be created to overcome this problem.
- Even in this technologically advanced era there is still **lack of training** for the HR people in HRIS. So they must be provided with training and development opportunities.
- HR functions, most of which can be managed by HRIS, and except "**lack of Grievance Handling**" which becomes more of the onus of higher management as it is a complex process, should look for alternatives.

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