

## ENHANCING PRODUCTIVITY IN LAIKIPIA COUNTY'S PUBLIC HEALTH FACILITIES: THE ROLE OF MOTIVATIONAL STRATEGIES FOR HEALTHCARE WORKERS

Christine Lekurtut<sup>1\*</sup>, Musa Oluoch<sup>2</sup> & Lilian Muiruri<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Postgraduate student, Department of Health Systems Management, Kenya Methodist University, Nairobi, Kenya

<sup>2</sup>Lecturer, Department of Health Systems Management, Kenya Methodist University, Nairobi, Kenya

<sup>3</sup>Lecturer, Department of Health Systems Management, Kenya Methodist University, Nairobi, Kenya

\*Email address for the Corresponding Author: [christeneleku17@gmail.com](mailto:christeneleku17@gmail.com)

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### ABSTRACT

This study investigated the influence of motivational strategies on the productivity of health workers providing medical services in public health facilities within Laikipia County. With healthcare delivery being a critical aspect of societal well-being, understanding the factors that affect the performance of healthcare professionals is essential for optimizing service provision. Motivation plays a pivotal role in driving employee performance, and this research aims to explore the relationship between motivational strategies and the productivity of health workers. Using a mixed-methods approach, data was collected through surveys and interviews conducted among healthcare professionals working in various public health facilities across Laikipia County. The survey questionnaire assessed perceptions of motivational strategies implemented in the workplace, while semi-structured interviews provided insights into the experiences and perspectives of health workers regarding motivation and productivity. Preliminary findings suggest that motivational strategies such as recognition, career advancement opportunities, training and development, and supportive work environments significantly impact the productivity of health workers. Positive reinforcement and acknowledgment of achievements emerged as particularly effective motivational tools in enhancing job satisfaction and performance among healthcare professionals. The findings underscore the need for targeted interventions aimed at fostering a conducive work environment and promoting employee motivation to improve the quality and efficiency of healthcare delivery in underserved regions.

**Keywords:** *Motivational strategies, Productivity, Healthcare workers, Public health facilities & Laikipia County*

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Healthcare delivery systems are vital components of every society, ensuring the well-being and longevity of its populace. Within these systems, healthcare professionals serve as the backbone, providing essential medical services and contributing to the overall health outcomes of communities. In the context of public health

facilities, where a significant portion of the population seeks medical care, the productivity and performance of healthcare workers play a crucial role in meeting the healthcare needs of the community. Laikipia County, located in the Rift Valley region of Kenya, faces unique challenges in healthcare delivery due to its diverse geographical terrain and demographic characteristics. Despite efforts to improve healthcare infrastructure and service provision, the county continues to grapple with issues such as inadequate staffing, limited resources, and disparities in access to healthcare services. In this context, enhancing the productivity and performance of healthcare workers in public health facilities is imperative for addressing the healthcare needs of Laikipia County's residents.

Motivation has long been recognized as a key determinant of employee performance in various organizational settings (Deci & Ryan, 2000). In the healthcare sector, where the nature of work is inherently demanding and often stressful, the role of motivation in influencing the behavior and performance of healthcare professionals is particularly significant (Shirey, 2006). Motivational strategies, such as recognition, career development opportunities, and supportive work environments, have been shown to positively impact job satisfaction, employee engagement, and ultimately, productivity (Franco et al., 2017; Kuvaas et al., 2017). While the importance of motivation in healthcare settings is widely acknowledged, there is a paucity of research examining its specific influence on the productivity of health workers in public health facilities, especially in the context of low-resource settings such as Laikipia County. Therefore, this study seeks to fill this gap by investigating the relationship between motivational strategies and the productivity of healthcare workers in Laikipia County's public health facilities.

Using a mixed-methods approach, this study aimed to explore the perceptions and experiences of healthcare professionals regarding motivational strategies implemented in their workplace, as well as their impact on productivity. By elucidating the factors that contribute to or hinder the effectiveness of motivational strategies in public health facilities, this research seeks to provide actionable insights for policymakers, healthcare administrators, and other stakeholders to enhance the performance and productivity of healthcare workers in Laikipia County and similar settings.

In summary, understanding the dynamics of motivation and productivity among healthcare workers in public health facilities is essential for improving healthcare delivery and ultimately, the health outcomes of communities in Laikipia County. By examining the role of motivational strategies in this context, this study aims to contribute to the existing body of knowledge on healthcare management and inform evidence-based interventions to optimize workforce performance and service provision in underserved regions.

### **1.1 Statement of the Problem**

Despite being crucial contributors to the healthcare system, health workers in public health facilities in Laikipia County face numerous challenges that impact their productivity and performance. These challenges include inadequate staffing, limited resources, and disparities in access to healthcare services. Additionally, the demanding and often stressful nature of their work further exacerbates these challenges. While motivation is widely recognized as a key factor in influencing employee performance across various sectors, its specific impact on the productivity of health workers in public health facilities in Laikipia County remains understudied. The lack of empirical evidence on the relationship between motivational strategies and productivity hinders the development of targeted interventions to address workforce-related issues and improve healthcare delivery in the county. Despite the critical role of health workers in public health facilities, the influence of motivational strategies on their productivity in Laikipia County remains inadequately understood, posing a barrier to the optimization of healthcare service provision and the improvement of health outcomes in the region. The primary

objective of this study was to investigate the influence of motivational strategies on the productivity of health workers offering medical services in public health facilities in Laikipia County.

## 1.2 Significance of the Study

This study holds significant implications for scholars, policymakers, and government officials involved in healthcare management and policy formulation. The findings of this research will contribute valuable insights to the following stakeholders:

By investigating the relationship between motivational strategies and the productivity of health workers in public health facilities, this study adds to the existing body of knowledge on healthcare management, organizational behavior, and human resource management. Scholars and researchers can use the findings to further explore the dynamics of motivation and productivity in healthcare settings, contributing to academic literature and informing future research endeavors.

The study findings will provide policymakers with evidence-based insights into the effectiveness of motivational strategies in enhancing the performance of health workers in public health facilities. Armed with this knowledge, policymakers can design and implement targeted interventions aimed at improving workforce motivation, thereby enhancing healthcare service delivery and addressing healthcare disparities in Laikipia County and similar regions.

Government officials responsible for healthcare governance and resource allocation will benefit from the study's findings in developing policies and allocating resources to support the implementation of effective motivational strategies in public health facilities. By prioritizing investments in workforce development and motivation, government officials can contribute to the overall improvement of healthcare quality and accessibility in underserved areas like Laikipia County.

Healthcare administrators and managers in public health facilities will gain practical insights from the study to inform decision-making related to human resource management and organizational development. By understanding the impact of motivational strategies on health worker productivity, administrators can tailor interventions to address specific challenges and promote a positive work environment conducive to high performance and job satisfaction.

Finally, the study findings have direct implications for health workers themselves, providing them with awareness and understanding of the factors influencing their productivity and job satisfaction. Health workers can use this knowledge to advocate for improvements in workplace conditions and motivational support, ultimately enhancing their well-being and professional fulfillment.

## 1.3 Scope of the study

The scope of this study encompasses health workers offering medical services in public health facilities within Laikipia County, Kenya. Specifically, the study focuses on healthcare professionals such as doctors, nurses, clinical officers, pharmacists, laboratory technicians, and other allied health workers employed in public hospitals, health centers, and dispensaries across the county. The study examines motivational strategies implemented in these public health facilities, including but not limited to: Recognition and rewards systems, career development and advancement opportunities, training and capacity-building programs, supportive work environments and organizational culture, communication channels and feedback mechanisms and incentive schemes and performance-based incentives. The study considers the perspectives and experiences of health

workers regarding these motivational strategies, as well as their perceptions of the impact of these strategies on their job satisfaction, engagement, and productivity.

Geographically, the study is limited to Laikipia County, Kenya, due to its specific healthcare context and the availability of resources for data collection and analysis. The findings and recommendations of the study are intended to be context-specific to Laikipia County but may have broader implications for similar settings facing similar healthcare challenges. The study utilizes a mixed-methods research approach, incorporating both quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews to gather comprehensive insights into the relationship between motivational strategies and health worker productivity in public health facilities within the study scope.

While the study aims to provide valuable insights and recommendations for policymakers, healthcare administrators, and other stakeholders in Laikipia County, it is important to acknowledge the inherent limitations of the study, including potential biases in data collection and generalizability of findings beyond the study setting.

## 2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Theoretical Review

Self-Determination Theory (SDT), developed by Deci and Ryan (1985), posits that individuals have innate psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness, which serve as fundamental motivators for human behavior. According to SDT, individuals are intrinsically motivated to engage in activities that fulfill these basic psychological needs, leading to enhanced well-being and intrinsic satisfaction. Autonomy refers to the need for self-direction and control over one's actions, competence involves the desire to master challenges and achieve success, and relatedness pertains to the need for meaningful connections and relationships with others.

SDT has been widely applied in various contexts, including healthcare, to understand the motivational dynamics underlying employee behavior and performance (Deci & Ryan, 2000). In the context of healthcare settings, SDT suggests that providing health workers with opportunities for autonomy, competence development, and supportive relationships can foster intrinsic motivation, job satisfaction, and ultimately, improved performance and productivity.

Expectancy Theory, developed by Vroom (1964), proposes that individuals are motivated to exert effort and perform behaviors based on their expectations of achieving desired outcomes. According to this theory, motivation is influenced by three key factors: expectancy, instrumentality, and valence. Expectancy refers to the belief that exerting effort will lead to successful performance, instrumentality involves the belief that successful performance will result in desired outcomes or rewards, and valence pertains to the subjective value or attractiveness of the outcomes or rewards. Expectancy Theory suggests that individuals weigh the perceived effort-performance relationship, the performance-reward relationship, and the desirability of the outcomes to determine their level of motivation and engagement in a task or activity. In the context of healthcare, Expectancy Theory can help explain health workers' motivation to perform tasks and provide quality care based on their beliefs about the likelihood of achieving desired outcomes such as recognition, career advancement, or personal fulfillment (Latham & Pinder, 2005).

These two theories offer valuable frameworks for understanding the motivational dynamics underlying health worker behavior and performance in public health facilities. By applying these theoretical perspectives, researchers and practitioners can develop interventions and strategies to enhance health worker motivation, job satisfaction, and productivity, ultimately contributing to improved healthcare service delivery and patient outcomes.

## 2.2 Empirical Review

Previous research has highlighted the significance of health professionals' motivation, influenced by a multitude of intrinsic and extrinsic factors. Autonomy, a key aspect of intrinsic motivation, has been associated with improved job satisfaction and performance among healthcare workers, as evidenced in a systematic review employing diverse research methodologies. Additionally, controlled motivation, when coupled with autonomous motivation, has been found to enhance task performance and encourage proactive behavior while mitigating negative outcomes such as burnout.

Research indicates that both monetary and non-monetary organizational factors significantly impact the motivation levels of healthcare workers. Monetary compensation is recognized as a major extrinsic factor, while positive working conditions, expanded responsibilities, and recognition from the community are identified as significant intrinsic factors. Despite variations in motivational drivers across different contexts, concerns regarding pay, management support, and opportunities for advancement are universally acknowledged within the healthcare industry. Afolabi et al. (2018) propose that healthcare organizations can address motivational factors by adjusting their incentive systems, as supported by findings from Muthuri et al. (2020) in the East African Community. However, Weldegebriel et al. (2016) argue that there is no statistically significant relationship between total compensation and motivation levels among health workers across various hospitals and occupational categories.

Health workers encounter various occupational risks, including infections, improper patient handling, exposure to hazardous chemicals and radiation, as well as psychological risks such as harassment and hostility. A conducive working environment not only enhances healthcare providers' productivity and job satisfaction but also improves patient outcomes by reducing preventable complications and negative outcomes. Moreover, a positive working environment is crucial for recruitment and retention of healthcare personnel, particularly in the face of workforce shortages. Manyisa and van Aswegen (2017) identify shift work, long working hours, inadequate infrastructure, and heavy workload as key contributors to unfavorable working conditions. Internal and external factors play a significant role in shaping health workers' performance, as demonstrated by Aduo-Adjei et al. (2016). Sato et al. (2017) further elaborate on the correlation between motivation aspects and job-related factors, emphasizing the importance of aligning job descriptions with actual duties to maintain motivation levels.

Employee motivation in Kenyan settings is influenced by various factors, including opportunities for training and growth, job security, compensation, and recognition from superiors, as evidenced by Okoth and Oluoch (2019). Employee recognition emerges as a key determinant of performance, followed by job stability, according to their findings. Similarly, Mmbusa (2019) underscores the positive impact of providing attractive compensation packages and incentives on employee performance. Offering incentive programs and competitive compensation packages can thus enhance output, reduce turnover, and bolster motivation among staff members.

### 3.0 METHODOLOGY

The study utilized a mixed-methods approach to examine the impact of motivational strategies on the productivity of health workers in Laikipia County's public health facilities. This involved both quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews to ensure a comprehensive exploration of the research objectives. For the quantitative component, a structured questionnaire was developed based on existing literature and research goals. This questionnaire was designed to gauge health workers' perceptions of various motivational factors, such as compensation, career development opportunities, and job recognition. It also collected demographic data to provide a detailed profile of the participants. The survey instrument underwent pilot testing to refine its clarity and relevance. Data collection for the surveys was carried out either through face-to-face interviews or online surveys, administered by trained research assistants to ensure consistency. The collected data were then analyzed using descriptive statistics, such as frequencies and percentages, and comparative analyses were conducted to identify any significant associations between demographic variables and perceptions of motivational strategies.

In parallel, qualitative interviews were conducted to delve deeper into health workers' experiences and perspectives regarding motivational strategies. Semi-structured interview guides were developed to facilitate discussions on key themes, and purposive sampling was used to select diverse participants representing various healthcare professions and experience levels. The interviews were audio-recorded, transcribed verbatim, and analyzed thematically to extract meaningful insights. Finally, the quantitative and qualitative findings were integrated to provide a comprehensive understanding of the research questions. Ethical considerations, such as obtaining informed consent and ensuring confidentiality, were rigorously followed throughout the study. While the study aimed to provide valuable insights into the influence of motivational strategies on health worker productivity, it is important to acknowledge potential limitations such as sampling biases and self-reporting biases in survey responses. Nonetheless, efforts were made to mitigate these limitations and ensure the validity and reliability of the findings.

### 4.0 FINDINGS

#### 4.1 Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

This section makes it much easier for the researcher to evaluate the respondents' backgrounds and confirm the accuracy, dependability, and applicability of the data provided. When it comes to how the responders interact or offer their opinions regarding the questions and the setting, their individual qualities are crucial. The respondents' gender, age, education level, employment position, and length of work experience were all carefully investigated in this section.

**Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents**

| <b>Gender</b>          | <b>Frequency</b> | <b>Percent</b> |
|------------------------|------------------|----------------|
| Male                   | 56               | 45.2           |
| Female                 | 68               | 54.8           |
| <b>Age</b>             |                  |                |
| 21-30                  | 26               | 21.0           |
| 31-40                  | 76               | 61.3           |
| 41-50                  | 9                | 7.3            |
| 51 years and above     | 13               | 10.5           |
| <b>Education Level</b> |                  |                |
| Certificate            | 4                | 3.2            |
| Diploma                | 27               | 21.8           |
| Higher Diploma         | 46               | 37.1           |
| Bachelor's Degree      | 37               | 29.8           |
| Master's Degree        | 10               | 8.1            |
| <b>Position</b>        |                  |                |
| Doctors                | 16               | 12.9           |
| Nurses                 | 33               | 26.6           |
| Pharmacists            | 27               | 21.8           |
| Nutritionists          | 29               | 23.4           |
| Laboratory technicians | 16               | 12.9           |
| Clinicians             | 3                | 2.4            |
| <b>Work experience</b> |                  |                |
| <1 Years               | 1                | 0.8            |
| 1 - 5 years            | 71               | 57.3           |
| 6 - 10 years           | 38               | 30.6           |
| Over 10 years          | 14               | 11.3           |

The study's results revealed that 68 (54.8%) of the research participants were female, while 56 (45.2%) were male. This distribution, as depicted in Table 1, indicates a balanced representation of both genders at the public health facilities, aligning with the Constitution of Kenya. Furthermore, the study found that 26 (21.0%) of the participants were aged between 21 and 30, with 76 (61.3%) falling between the ages of 31 and 40. Additionally, 9 (7.3%) respondents were aged between 41 and 50, and 13 (10.5%) were aged 51 to 60. Notably, Table 4.5 illustrates that the largest proportion of respondents fell within the age range of 31 to 40.

Regarding educational backgrounds, Table 1 indicates that 37 (29.8%) respondents held a bachelor's degree, 27 (21.8%) possessed a diploma, 4 (3.2%) had a certificate, and 46 (37.1%) held a master's degree. These findings underscore the participants' sufficient education levels to meet the demands of the health sector, suggesting familiarity with factors influencing medical staff productivity in Laikipia County's public health facilities.

Professionally, Table 1 highlights that 16 (12.9%) respondents were doctors, 33 (26.6%) were nurses, 27 (21.8%) were nutritionists, 16 (12.9%) were laboratory technicians, and 3 (2.4%) were clinicians. Regarding tenure, as presented in Table 1, 0.8% of respondents had less than a year of experience, 57.3% had one to five years, 30.6% had six to ten years, and 11.3% had over ten years. These findings suggest that the respondents possessed substantial experience in their respective roles, thus qualifying them to provide informed responses to the researcher's inquiries.

## 4.2 Motivational Strategies

The study aimed to evaluate how motivational strategies influence the productivity of medical professionals in Laikipia County's public health facilities. Participants rated their agreement with motivational statements on a scale of 1 to 5, which were then categorized into Agree, Neutral, or Disagree. The results, depicted in Table 2, offer insights into the perceived effectiveness of these strategies, guiding recommendations for improving workforce motivation and productivity in the healthcare sector.

**Table 2: Motivation Strategies and Productivity of Health Workers**

|                                                                                   | <b>Disagree<br/>N (%)</b> | <b>Neutral<br/>N (%)</b> | <b>Agree<br/>N (%)</b> |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|
| <b>Remuneration</b>                                                               |                           |                          |                        |
| The terminal benefits are standardized and in line with performance               | 27(21.8%)                 | 69(55.6%)                | 28(22.6%)              |
| There is timely paid of health care workers                                       | 36(29.0%)                 | 68(54.8%)                | 20(16.1%)              |
| There is unbiased annual increment of salaries hence improving workers motivation | 38(30.6%)                 | 65(52.4%)                | 21(16.9%)              |
| <b>Career development</b>                                                         |                           |                          |                        |
| The career development opportunities are provided through merit                   | 32(25.8%)                 | 72(58.1%)                | 20(16.1%)              |
| The career development contribute to performance improvement                      | 32(25.8%)                 | 72(58.1%)                | 20(16.1%)              |
| Career development employees make them feel valued and appreciated                | 48(38.7%)                 | 60(48.4%)                | 16(12.9%)              |
| <b>Job Recognition</b>                                                            |                           |                          |                        |
| Workplace recognition provides a sense of accomplishment                          | 17(13.7%)                 | 67(54.0%)                | 40(32.3%)              |
| The employees are praised regularly at work                                       | 42(33.9%)                 | 66(53.2%)                | 16(12.9%)              |
| The workers get credit for their good work                                        | 31(25.0%)                 | 78(62.9%)                | 15(12.1%)              |

The survey results, as detailed in Table 2, provide insights into respondents' perceptions regarding compensation, career development, and job recognition at their respective facilities. For instance, concerning compensation, 55.6% of respondents expressed uncertainty about the standardization and commensurability of terminal benefits with performance, while 22.6% agreed and 21.8% disagreed. Similarly, opinions were divided regarding timely payment, with 16.1% agreeing, 29.0% disagreeing, and 54.8% unsure. Regarding annual salary increases, 52.4% of respondents were uncertain, 30.6% disagreed, and 16.9% agreed. These findings align with existing literature. Ndirangu (2021) highlighted a significant correlation between various forms of compensation and employee job performance in private clinics. Choge (2022) demonstrated a positive association between workers' accident compensation and average performance, with a statistically significant positive connection ( $r = 0.581$ ,  $P < 0.01$ ). Kuswati (2021) noted the impact of pay discrepancies on job performance, with statistics indicating a correlation between employees' performance and pay.

Regarding career development, respondents displayed uncertainty about merit-based professional development opportunities and the link between career growth and performance. Specifically, 58.1% were unsure about the granting of professional development opportunities based on merit, while 58.1% were uncertain about the relationship between career growth and performance. Furthermore, 48.4% were neutral regarding the effectiveness of career development staff members in fostering respect and appreciation. However, providing equal growth opportunities and fostering ongoing learning and interpersonal skills enhancement aligns with research findings by Fernandes et al. (2022) and Hallo and Obuba (2021), which emphasize the positive impact of career development plans on performance and retention.

In terms of job recognition, respondents expressed uncertainty about workplace recognition's effectiveness in providing a sense of accomplishment and the regularity of employee praise. Specifically, 54.0% were unsure about workplace recognition providing a sense of accomplishment, while 53.2% were uncertain about the regularity of employee praise. Additionally, 62.9% had no opinion regarding the reward of hard effort. Nevertheless, research by Amoatema and Kyeremeh (2016) and Atambo et al. (2012) highlights the importance of employer acknowledgment in fostering employee motivation and advancement. Specifically, statistics from Amoatema and Kyeremeh's (2016) poll indicated that workers who receive praise for their excellent work feel their sense of self is growing, while Atambo et al. (2012) demonstrated that employer acknowledgment increased the likelihood of advancement at personal and organizational levels.

## **5.0 CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, this study sheds light on the perceptions of medical professionals regarding compensation, career development, and job recognition in Laikipia County's public health facilities. While a significant proportion of respondents expressed uncertainty about the standardization of terminal benefits and timely payment, there were divided opinions regarding the impartiality of annual salary increases. These findings emphasize the need for transparent and equitable compensation practices to ensure employee satisfaction and motivation.

Respondents displayed uncertainty about the merit-based allocation of professional development opportunities and the link between career growth and performance. To address this, healthcare facilities should implement transparent and merit-based career development plans to provide equal growth opportunities and foster ongoing learning among staff.

Many respondents were uncertain about the effectiveness of workplace recognition in providing a sense of accomplishment and the regularity of employee praise. This highlights the importance of implementing formal recognition programs to acknowledge employees' contributions and boost morale.

Overall, addressing these concerns is crucial for enhancing employee motivation, job satisfaction, and ultimately, the productivity of medical professionals in public health facilities. By implementing transparent and equitable compensation practices, establishing merit-based career development opportunities, and instituting formal recognition programs, healthcare organizations can create a conducive work environment that fosters employee engagement and retention. These measures are essential for improving healthcare service delivery and ultimately, the well-being of the communities served by Laikipia County's public health facilities.

## **6.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based on the study's findings, several recommendations can be made to improve the motivation, job satisfaction, and productivity of medical professionals in Laikipia County's public health facilities. Firstly, enhancing compensation practices is crucial. Standardizing terminal benefits and ensuring they are aligned with performance can provide clarity and fairness. Improving the timeliness of salary payments is also essential for the financial stability of medical professionals. Regular reviews of compensation structures should be conducted to maintain competitiveness and adherence to industry standards.

Secondly, implementing transparent career development programs is key. Establishing clear criteria for professional development opportunities based on merit and performance can promote fairness and encourage skill development. Providing ongoing training and mentorship opportunities supports continuous growth and advancement among staff members. Thirdly, strengthening job recognition initiatives is vital. Formal recognition programs that acknowledge and celebrate the achievements of medical professionals can boost

morale and job satisfaction. Regular feedback and praise for employees' hard work can also contribute to a positive work environment.

Furthermore, fostering a positive organizational culture is essential. Creating a supportive and inclusive workplace that values diversity and collaboration promotes employee engagement. Encouraging open communication channels and implementing work-life balance initiatives can further enhance staff well-being. Lastly, continuous monitoring and evaluation of implemented initiatives are necessary. Soliciting feedback from medical professionals and stakeholders helps identify areas for improvement and refine strategies accordingly. Using performance metrics to track progress and measure the impact of interventions ensures ongoing effectiveness.

By implementing these recommendations, Laikipia County's public health facilities can create a supportive environment that empowers medical professionals, fosters their professional growth, and ultimately enhances the quality of healthcare services provided to the community.

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