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Formal Education and Socio-Economic Condition of Rural People in Bangladesh: A Comparative Study between Literate and Illiterate People on Raninagar Upazilla of Naogaon District

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Abstract: The study focuses only the socio-economical condition of the people who take the formal education from any institution. This paper is to explore the difference between literate and illiterate people, their socio-economic condition and their life style in society. The study represent that literate people earn more compared to the illiterate people. Social acceptance of literate respondents was found significant compared to the illiterate respondents in the study area. Formal education developed the people of social relationship, interaction of individuals, groups, institutions and organization of society. Formal education has a positive effect on health .Most of the literate people having good health but illiterate people not having good health. Illiterate people suffer from various diseases. So, it may be declared that the formal education has a positive effect on the society. In this study it is clear that the literate families were found comparatively developed than illiterate families. So, it can be boldly pronounced that there are significant effects of formal education in every sphere of human life and on society.

Keywords: *Formal Education, Socio-economic Condition, Comparative Study, Literate and Illiterate People, Bangladesh.*

1. Introduction

Education is the process by which our mind develops through formal learning at an institution like schools, colleges or universities. It is both mental and intellectual training which provides opportunities of growth and helps to meet challenges overcome obstacle to progress.^[1] Education is one of the most important forms of human capital investment.

It is the basic need for socio-economic transformation and advancement of a country. No nation can prosper without education. It is also the prime ingredient of human resource development.^[2] In Bangladesh; educational development is not adequately enough to meet the needs and challenges of the time. Education helps a man to understand what is right and what is wrong. It creates consciousness and develops awareness. It broadens out look, removes prejudice which are obstacle to social and spiritual development of human beings.^[3] The main purpose of education is to acquire knowledge. Knowledge removes the darkness. An educated man is an asset while an illiterate man is a liability to the society.^[4] Education can be given formally or informally. Many people of our country are deprived of having basic education from formal institutions. Bangladesh government and various NGOs have taken necessary steps to educate the illiterate people through non-formal education programs.^[5] There is no age limit of achieving education. Man can achieve education at any age, any time. Childhood is the proper time of acquiring education, specially the formal education.

The present study is designed to study the impact of formal education on socio-economic development of people. What sorts of changes have been brought in our society and what changes are being observed in our society through formal education is the subject matter of the present study.

2. Background of the Study

Historically and geographically Bangladesh was a part of the Indian sub-continent.^[6] Therefore, Bangladesh shares many attributes of life and culture of the sub-continent through the experience of 200 years of British rule. In earlier days, education in this region was closely associated with religion and was centered round mosques, temples, and monasteries.^[7] In those days, knowledge was regarded as sacred trust and was passed down from the teacher to his pupils. The teachers were given great respect in ancient Indian culture and mores. A very close and devotional teacher-student relationship existed at that time. A new phase of Indian education began in the 19th century under the colonial administration.^[8] There was controversy at the initial stage as to whether indigenous tradition of Indian education was to continue or the western mode of education was to be introduced. After the independence, of Bangladesh in 1971, western experts were consulted and employed to shape the educational policy of the country.^[10] International agencies such as

UNESCO, British Council, Ford Foundation, American Cultural Centre and local non-govt. organization like BRAC among many others have actively helped to improve the formal education system in this country.^[10] For most subjects at the higher level of education books were imported from the western countries. A large numbers of University academics of Bangladesh obtained postgraduate degrees and professional trainings from the western countries. The western mode of education was significantly different from those of this sub-continent which influenced the educational philosophy of this country. The country has educational exchange program with many countries such as Australia, China, UK, Japan, Malaysia, India and USA among others.^[11]

3. Statement of the Problem

Society and social environment change with the passage of time. Education is such a tool that can bring positive change. Through formal education, government of Bangladesh is trying continuously to enhance the literacy rate i.e. enrollment rate, reducing drop-out rate, increasing girl's enrollment rate etc.^[12] These initiatives have brought some positive change in society and on environment. The present study is devoted to explore the impact of the formal education on society and economy. Several researches have identified the problems and prospects of formal education but there have been little or no attempt to assess the impact of formal education on family and society in respect of income-earnings, mode of expenditure on education, health, sanitation, and family planning and so on. Similarly, little or no attempt has been made to assess its impact of formal education on physical and social environment.^[13] After completion the study we can easily compare the literate and illiterate people of their economy and social values.

4. Conceptual Frame Work

Definitions of some key concepts of the study have been discussed below.

4.1 Formal Education

As normally used, the term formal education refers to the structured educational system provided by the state for children. In most countries, the formal education system is state-supported and state-operated. In some countries, the state allows and certifies private systems which provide a comparable education.^[14] Formal education is the education which we get from different kinds of institutions like schools, colleges, Universities etc. A formal education program is the process of training and developing people in knowledge, skills, mind and character in a structured and certified programs.

5. The Present Education System of Bangladesh

The present education system of Bangladesh may be broadly divided into three major stages, viz. primary, secondary and higher education.^[15] Primary level institutions impart primary education basically. Secondary education is imparted by junior secondary/secondary and higher secondary.^[16] Degree pass, degree honors, masters and other higher-level institutions or equivalent section of other related institutions imparts higher education.^[17] The education system is operationally categorized into two streams: primary education (Grade I-V) managed by the Primary and Mass Education Division (PMED) under the helm of a Secretary; and the other system is the post- primary education which

covers all the other levels from junior secondary to higher education under the administration and supervision of the Secretary of the Ministry of Education (MOE).^[18] However both PMEI and MOE are under the direction of a Minister. The post-primary stream of education is further classified into four types in terms of curriculum general education, madrasah education, technical-vocational education and professional education.^[19]

6. Objectives of the Study

To know the socio-economic and behavioral change between literate and illiterate people.

7. Rationale of the Study

It is universally believed that education is the backbone of a nation. No nation can prosper without education. We have many educational institutions in our country compared to other Asian countries but how much the quality of education is being maintained is yet to be assessed.^[20] As this study is concerned on the impact of the formal education, it may ventilate the real situation of our formal education as well as its impact on the society and economy. This study would explore the development of education in general and its impact in particular on our society and environment. The study may be of helpful to the policy makers and future researchers. Practical recommendations of this study may bring positive and qualitative change of our formal education system in Bangladesh.

8. Research Methodology

Social survey method has been adopted to collect basic information from the field. The required data have been collected from both primary and secondary sources. For primary source, the data were collected through structured questionnaire relating to the impact of formal education from the two types of the respondents, literate and illiterate. The secondary data and information have been collected from relevant government publications including acts, ordinances and programs and from various official documents. Moreover the relevant books, journals, articles, newspapers, dissertations etc have also been used as secondary sources. Raninagar Upazila of Nagaon District has purposively been selected as a study field for the proposed study. For the suitable location of the study area, the objectives may be tested well. Two villages like Dhonopra and Kalikapur were selected on a random basis. As good as, 60 samples were drawn both from literate (30) and illiterate (30) families residing in the study area. A comparison has to be made to assess the role of formally educated and non-educated persons in respect of income-earnings, expenditure, life style and standard of living of both the sections along with their family size, structure, education of their offsprings, health, hygiene, sanitation etc. side by side the role of both the groups to be assessed in respect of changing physical and social environmental conditions. Data were also reviewed, classified, tabulated, analyzed and then evaluated. Collected data have been presented in tables. These tables are prepared in order to show percentages. The data have been analyzed and presented in an orderly and systematic ways of some statistical techniques.

9. Socio-economic Background of the Respondent

Socio-economic background plays an important role in human life. It is known to all that the man who is economically and socially well off, can enjoy life as to the expectation. But who lags behind, suffers in every sphere of life. Again the researcher wants to differentiate between literate and illiterate respondents in respect of economic and familial status so that it would be easy to understand the changing pattern of their life style. In this chapter, the family status and earning and expenditure status of the respondents has been discussed.

9.1 Family Size of the Respondents

The family size of the respondents in the study area is shown in the following table.

Table—9.1. Family Size of the Respondents

Number of family member	Literate respondents		Illiterate respondents	
	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage
01-02	6	20%	3	10%
03-04	5	16.67%	8	26.67%
05-06	13	43.33%	15	50%
07-08	3	10%	2	6.66%
More than 08	3	10%	2	6.66%
Total respondents	30	100%	30	100%

The table 9.1 shows that among the respondents, maximum families are consisted of 05—06 members. Both literate and illiterate respondents have to maintain 05—06 members' family. Only 20% literate and 10% illiterate respondents having 01—02 members which means either unmarried or a couple without child or newly married.

9.2 Family Structure

The following table reflects the family structure of the respondents in the study area.

Table—9.2 Family Structures of the Respondents

Family structure	Literate Respondents		Illiterate Respondents	
	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage
Nuclear	15	50%	14	46.67%
Joint	6	20%	7	23.33%
Extended	9	30%	9	30%
Total respondents	30	100%	30	100%

The table 9.2 shows that in literate respondents, there are 50%, 20% and 30% families residing in nuclear, joint and extended families as against 46.67%, 23.33% and 30% in illiterate respondents. The average rate of nuclear families was found more than the number of joint and extended families in the study area.

9.3 Educational Qualification

The study has categorized the respondents as literate and illiterate. Literate refers to the S.S.C and up to Masters Degree and illiterate refers to the respondents from class one to class nine.

The academic qualification of both types of the respondents has been given in the following table.

Table—9.3 Educational Levels of the Literate Respondents

Level of education	Number of literate respondents	Percentage
SSC	6	20%
HSC	12	40%
Degree	7	23.33%
Master's degree	5	16.67%
Total respondents	30	100%

The table 9.3 shows that 20%, 40%, 23.33% and 16.67% respondents having SSC, HSC, Degree and Masters' degree among the literate respondents.

9.4 Social Acceptance of the Respondents

The social acceptance of respondents has been shown in the following table.

Table—9.4 Social Acceptances of the Respondents

Parameters	No. of Literate Respondents	No. of Illiterate Respondent
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Invitation in the marriage ceremony	9	30%	8	26.67%
Membership in the social institutions	5	16.67%	07	3.33%
Participation in social leadership	6	20%	5	16.67%
Participation in the cultural functions	10	3.33%	10	33.33%
Total respondent	30	100%	30	100%

The table 9.4 shows that the percentages of social acceptance of literate respondents are 9%, 16.67%, 20% and 33.33% in respect of invitation in the marriage festivals, membership of the social institutions, social leadership and participation in the cultural functions as against 26.67%, 23.33%, 16.67% and 33.33% among the illiterate respondents. Overall social acceptance of literate respondents was found significant compared to the illiterate respondents in the study area.

9.5 Economic Status of the Respondents

Economic development is the pre-requisite of all sorts of development. In calculating the economic status of respondents, some parameters have been taken into consideration. The possession of land, farm, pond, garden etc. by respondents has been taken into account.

9.6 Land Property

Land property of the respondents is given in the following table.

Table—9.6 Land Properties of the Respondents

Amounts of land (Acres)	No. of Literate respondents		No. of Illiterate respondents	
01—02	17	56.67%	18	60%
03—04	8	26.67%	8	26.67%
05—06	4	13.33%	03	10%
06—Above	1	03.34%	1	03.34%
Total respondents	30	100%	30	100%

The table 9.6 shows that each and every respondents of both the literate and illiterate having at least one acre of landed property. The maximum number of respondents holding land between 01—02 acres while a few are holding 06 acres and above.

9.7 Income-Earning Levels

The following table shows the income-earning status of respondents

Table—9.7 Income-Earnings of Respondents

Income sources	Literate respondents Monthly average income (Including other member) (Tk.)	Illiterate respondents Monthly average income (Including other member) (Tk.)
Landed	5,500	3,000
Business	1,500	4000
Service	7,500	No income
Total	14,500	7,000

The table 9.7 shows that literate respondents draw a monthly average Tk. 14,500 while illiterate respondents draw Tk. 7,000 per month. The table also shows that average monthly income from business of a literate respondent is Tk. 1,500 as against Tk. 4,000 of an illiterate respondent. Business includes grocery and stationary shops. No illiterate respondent has found in the study area having income from service.

9.8 The Expenditure Status

The table shows the average monthly expenditure of the respondents in the study area. Ideally a five members' family have the following average monthly expenditure.

Table—9.8 Family Expenditure of the Respondents

Heads of the expenditure	Monthly average expenditure literate respondents (Tk.)	Monthly average expenditure illiterate respondents (Tk.)
Fooding purpose	4,500	4,500
Clothing	1,250	9,50
Education	2,500	2,300
Health care	5,50	570
Others	5,50	350
Total	9,350	8,670
Total respondents	30 (100%)	30 (100%)

The table 9.8 shows that total monthly average expenditure of literate respondents is Tk. 9,350 as against Tk. 8,670 of the illiterate respondents.

- Other heads of expenditure include expenditure of social festival, marriage ceremony, home repairing, recreation, hospitality etc.

9.9 Surplus amount of the Respondents

Surplus amount of respondents is shown in the following table.

Table—9.9 Amount of Surplus (Monthly)

Surplus amount (Tk.)	No. Literate Respondents	No. of Illiterate respondents
5,00-1000	7	6
1,001-1,500	6	4
1,501-2,000	4	00
2001-2500	3	00
2501-3, 000	2	00
3001-Above	1	00

The table 9.9 shows that both of the literate and illiterate respondents have surplus. Maximum surplus amount was found between 5, 00/-—1,000/- in literate and illiterate respondents under the study.

9. 10 Income Deficit of the Respondents

The table shows the income deficit of respondents in the study area.

Table—9.10 Income Deficit of the Respondents (Monthly)

Deficit	No. of literate respondents		No. of Illiterate respondents	
Having deficit	7	23.33%	20	66.67%
Having no deficit	23	76.67%	10	33.33%
Total respondents	30	100%	30	100%

The table 9.10 shows that 23.33% literate and 66.67% illiterate respondents have income deficit in the study area.

9.11 Deficit amount of the Respondents

Deficit amount of respondents is shown in the following table

Table—9.11 Amount of Deficit (Monthly)

Deficit amount (Tk.)	No. of Literate respondents	No. of Illiterate respondents
5,00-1,000	4	8
1001-1500	2	6
1501-2000	1	4
2001-Above	1	2

The table 9.11 shows that both of the literate and illiterate respondents have deficit. But maximum deficit was found between Tk.5,00 and Tk.1,000. Maximum illiterate respondents have income deficit in the study area.

10. The Impact of Formal Education on Society

Formal education developed the people of social relationship, interaction of individuals, groups, institutions and organization of society.

10.1 Social Leadership in Social Organizations

The table shows the social leadership of the respondents

Table—10.1 Social Leadership of the Respondents

Organizations	Literate Respondent	Percentage	Illiterate Respondent	Percent-age
Primary School	6	20%	2	6.67%
High school	3	10%	00	00%
College	03	10%	00	00%
Madrasha	04	13.33%	2	6.67%
Club	05	16.67%	3	10%
Mosque	7	23.33%	00	00%
Not involved	2	6.66%	23	76.67%
Total Respondent	30	100%	30	100%

The table 10.1 shows that only 23.34% illiterate respondents having social leadership in various organizations on the other hand 93.34% literate respondents having involvement in social organizations under the study. So, it may be declared that the formal education has a positive effect on the society.

10.2 Education of Wives of the Respondents

The academic qualification of wives of both types of respondents has been given in the following table.

Table—10.2 Education Levels of Wives of the Respondents

Level of Education	Number of Wives of Literate Respondents	Percentage	Number of Wives of Illiterate Respondents	Percentage
M.A/ M.S.S/M.Sc/ M. Com	2	6.66%	00	00%
B.A/ B.S.S/ B. Sc/B.Com	4	13.33%	00	00%
H.S.C	6	20%	00	00%
S.S.C	8	26.67%	3	10%
Below S.S.C	10	33.33%	27	90%
Total	30	100%	30	100%

The table 10.2 shows that only 10% wives of the illiterate respondents having the S.S.C level of education whereas 90% wives of the literate respondents having S.S.C, H.S.C, Degree and Masters Degree level of education.

10.3 Health Conditions of Respondents

It is said that health is wealth. Health is also a basic component of human welfare. Serious health problems cause individual suffering and create psychological and material burdens for families and societies. Traditionally, economic development has been studied as a factor affecting public health. Economists have recently demonstrated that a healthy population, with low mortality among children and adults and a reasonably high birthrate, will in the long run contain enough middle-aged adults to promote economic growth. The table below has been given to show the health condition of the respondents.

Table—10.3 Health Conditions of the Respondents

Type of respondents	Good Health	Percentage	Ill health	Percentage	Total respondents
Literate Respondents	25	83.33%	7	23.33%	30 100%
Illiterate Respondents	5	16.67.33%	23	76.67%	30 100%

The table 10.3 shows that 83.33% literate respondents having good health and 16.67% having ill health on the other hand 23.33% and 76.67% of the illiterate respondents respectively. So, it may be said that formal education has a positive effect on health. Good health refers to the sound condition of the body.

On the other hand ill health refers to the sickness of the respondents. Ill health also refers to the respondents who are suffering b various diseases.

10.4 Hygiene Conditions of the Respondents

The word hygiene is commonly associated with cleanliness. A broad definition of hygiene behavior ‘Would’ include a wide range of behaviors that promote health, from wearing a seat-belt while driving and eating a healthy diet to washing hands after defection.

Table—10.4 Hygiene Conditions of the Respondents

Type of respondents	No. of respondents having awareness of hygiene	Percentage	No. of respondents not having awareness of hygiene	Percentage	Total respondents	
Literate Respondents	23	76.67%	4	13.33%	30	100%
Illiterate Respondents	7	23.33%	26	86.67%	30	100%

The table 10.4 shows that 76.67% literate respondents having awareness on cleanliness whereas 13.33% of illiterate respondents under the study. Respondents were asked ‘yes’ ‘no’ question on hygiene. Considering the answers, they are classified ‘conscious’ and ‘unconscious’ i.e. aware and not aware about hygiene.

10.5 Sanitation Conditions of the Respondents

Pure drinking water and use of sanitary latrine are considered as the sanitation in this study. How many respondents use sanitary latrines and drink pure water from tube well has looked into account in the study. The situation of use of tube well for pure drinking water, situation of using sanitary latrines and washing hands after defections have been shown in the following table.

Table—10.5 Sanitation Conditions of the Respondents

Type of Respondents	Number of Respondents	Use of Tube well water	Percentage	Use of sanitary latrines	Percentage	Washing hands after defections %
Literate respondents	30	22	73.33%	30	100%	30 100%
Illiterate Respondents	30	14	46.67%	16	53.33%	17 56.67%

The table 10.5 shows that 73.33%, 100% and 100% literate respondents having tube wells for drinking water, sanitary latrines and habit of washing hands after defections as against 46.67%, 53.33% and 56.67% illiterate respondents respectively.

10.6 Family Planning Systems of the Respondents

In modern society it is needless to say that every family consists of only two children and getting the family planning system to keep family small. The table below shows the family planning system of the respondents.

Table—10.6 Family Planning Systems of the Respondents

Category of Respondents	No. of Respondents taken family planning %		No. of Respondents not taken family planning %		Permanent %		Impermanent %	
Literate	30	100%	00	00%	03	10%	27	90%
Illiterate	20	66.67%	10	33.33%	6	20%	24	80%

The table 10.6 shows that 100% literate and 66.67% illiterate respondents have taken family planning system under the study. So, the in regards of the family planning both respondents are aware and it is observed that all of the respondents are inspired to take the family planning system under the study. For limitations of the program of the government, some respondents could not take the system easily.

11. Impact of Formal Education on Social Interaction Process

Social Interaction refers to the process of dealing with other people. It depends on personality. Personality is a social product. What a man thinks, talks or acts, even what he fantasies or dreams result from the kinds of experiences which he has had with other people throughout his life.

11.1 Knowledge about Dowry, Laws and Punishment

The table below shows the knowledge of the respondents in respect of dowry, laws and its punishment.

Table—11.1 Knowledge about Dowry, Law and Punishment

Type of respondents	Having Knowledge	Percentage	Not having knowledge.	Percentage
Literate Respondents	30	100%	00	00%
Illiterate Respondents	20	66.67%	10	33.33%

The table 11.1 shows that 100% literate respondents having knowledge about dowry laws and punishment as against 66.67% of the illiterate respondents respectively under the study.

11.2 Attitude Condition Conditions of the Respondents

The term attitude is now a day being applied in a technical to an enduring acquired predisposition to react a characteristic way, usually favorable or unfavorable, towards a given type of person, object situation or ideal.

Table—11.2 Attitude Conditions of the Respondents

Type of Attitude	No. of literate respondents	Percentage	No. of illiterate respondents	Percentage
Very polite	5	16.67%	2	6.67%
Polite	16	53.33%	10	33.33%
Rude	7	23.33%	12	40%
Very rude	2	6.66%	6	20%
Total respondents	30	100%	30	100%

The table 11.2 shows that among the literate respondents, 16.67%, 53.33%, 23.33% and 6.66% were found very polite, polite rude and very rude whereas 6.67%, 33.33%, 40% and 20% among the illiterate respondents respectively.

11.3 Attitude Condition of the Respondents towards Social Values

The table below shows the attitude towards social values of the respondents.

Table—11.3 Attitude Conditions of the Respondents towards Social Values

Attitude condition	Literate respondents	Percentage	Illiterate respondents	Percentage
Positive attitude	22	73.33%	12	40%
Negative attitude	8	26.67%	18	60%
Total respondent	30	100%	30	100%

The table 11.3 shows that 73.33% literate respondents having positive attitude towards social values as against 40% of the illiterate respondents respectively under the study.

12. Recommendations

Although Bangladesh is still wrestling with problems of illiteracy and numeric for masses of its population, it can not afford to neglect the need for Formal education and development of skilled environmental management. Although general education, even functional literacy may increase social awareness, specific policies for Formal education, including a delivery program that touches the school curriculum at all levels, as well as mobilizing resources in non-formal and informal education programs is over due. As a major training resource, a leading sector in fostering in research to understand the environment, and a catalyst for new ways of thinking about sustainable development and the ecology of the modern state of Bangladesh universities have a key role to play. Although some universities offer specialized for education courses at undergraduate levels, many are lacking in resources. Government education policy has addressed the Formal educational challenges facing the nation, but education and sectarian policies and plans do not give sufficient weight to problems of ecological sustainability. The following recommendations seek to address this gap.

1. The government of Bangladesh should develop a strategic approach to Formal education and establish a policy framework to support requirements for sustainable development.
2. Effective policies will enable delivery of Formal education that is tailored to the educational level and the life context of participants, local issues and integrates traditional wisdom. It will enables participants to 'learn by doing' in their own environment.
3. Existing Formal education curricula for primary and secondary schools needs to be upgraded to clearly indicate the priority issues.
4. In addition to integration of Formal education into the compulsory curriculum school curriculum, lifelong education needs to be encouraged to enable government institutions and the private sector to constantly update knowledge and skills.
5. All sectarian policies, programs and projects should include Formal education as well as integral component.
6. Integrate Formal education into existing government training programs.
7. To facilitate partnership with NGO's, the government needs to simplify and minimize rules and regulations and establish transparent procedures.
8. Education programs should be designed to facilitate the participation of competent local NGO's and CBO's (Community Based Organizations) and not just be biased towards major players.

13. Conclusion

Bangladesh presents unique challenges to the search for ecological sustainable development with a very high population density, a still high population growth rate and limited natural resources. Issues of development and conservation take an added significance for the country. A significant program of formal education and development of local expertise is needed for massive changes in behavior with respect to the formal education. The formal education system provides a ready framework for reaching a large part of the existing population and can help make future generations conscious of the importance of environmental conservation. Practical approaches that involve the students in solving local environmental problems have more influence, develop skills and give reinforce to the idea that people can make a difference. Primary school education is the main focus of attention because of the inherent flexibility in curricula enabling infusion of environment into existing subjects and the higher level of enrollment in primary schools compared to secondary schools. In Bangladesh NGO's and

universities with environmental education departments play a significant role in teachers training and providing materials for formal and non-formal educations.

It is clear that graduates from the environmental disciplines should have a significant role the environmentally sustainable development of Bangladesh. Therefore, the government of Bangladesh, national and international organizations should take the initiative to involve formal education in the challenges of sustainable national development as well as global sustainability. The study has proved that the formal education has a positive impact on socio-economic issues in Bangladesh context. Literate respondent enjoying better life including modern equipment than the illiterate respondents and it has been achieved possible for formal education system. The study has successfully done on the basis of the impact measurement on the socio-economic factors of both literate and illiterate respondents.

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