

Political Governance and E-governance in Nepalese Perspectives

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Abstract

Nowadays the environment has been governed by e-government and governance activities for the efficient delivery of service to the public. But Nepal's government has introduced e-government in most of the offices but the government service continues to be ineffective. Therefore, the study aims at analyzing the role of political governance in Nepal's practice of e-governance. This study has followed the descriptive and correlational design. As bureaucrats and business personalities were taken into account 390 Method-based samples were collected. Data was obtained using 5 Point Likert Scale Questionnaire. Data were analyzed using mean value, t-value, F-value, correlation matrix and model regression. The alpha value of Cornbach was measured to see the reliability, the VIF test to check the multicollinearity and the Kolmogorov - Smirnova test has been done for normality test. The study's key finding is that if the government enforces the provisions already made in the prevailing Science and Technology Act such as enhancing IT and language literacy, building effective infrastructure and implementing laws, rules and policies that are permissible, then only e-governance can be effective.

Keywords; *Political governance, E governance, ICT, Democratic governance, Public administration*

Introduction

Governance research is typically associated with the idea of democracy and how government and civil society come to a decision to meet their needs. Governance is generally described as the exercise by political leaders of power or authority for the well-being of people or subjects within their country. It is the dynamic mechanism by which some sectors of society are gaining influence and enforcing and promulgating public policies that directly impact human and institutional interactions and economic and social growth. The most about governance is proper and efficient resource utilization. Peters (2012) concluded in the same line that governance could be the basis of the significant political theory that could be applicable to

the growth of contemporary political science. The researcher clarified that governance could encourage the political science discipline to recapture some of its origins by concentrating more specifically on how the public sector should provide guidance and power for society and the economy.

Similarly, Kooiman, (1999) clarified that interactive or social-political governance was one form of governance. This viewpoint on governance was taken as its core theme by the various ways of social-political interactions in which different types of distinctions were made, for example between self, 'co' and hierarchical governance; between orders of governance. These practices will look like institutional meta-governance which deals with the governance principles. Swyngedouw (2012) concluded the supposed globalisation-related concepts. The globalization ideology was similar, promoting the rise of more authoritarian or at least autocratic forms of government. Nurunnabi (2016) concluded that the root causes of private university bad governance were the considerable political power and discretion exercised by the boards of trustees; lack of implementation of the Private University Act; and lack of stakeholder cooperation. The State's economic power had become impotent after the board of trustees actually enjoyed political influence. The lack of cooperation by the board of trustees of the institutional oligarchy (professors and academics) and market forces (represented by students) created the paradox of governance and, subsequently, the decoupling of formal policies and real practice. Keping (2018) clarified that the governance had made reference to the collection of institutions and actors drawn from but also outside government. So long as the people had understood the influence exerted by a public or private entity, it was possible to become a center of power at a particular stage. Researcher also revealed that democratic governance mainly deals with a fair judiciary, stable legal system and inclusive public institutions.

There were three major democratic movements carried out in the political history of Nepal. As a result of these democratic movements, at different times different national and local elections were held which helped to strengthen the democracy and good governance in Nepal. Since through democratic movement, good governance slowly developed in Nepal too. Good governance has evolved in three consecutive phases in Nepal: from 1951-1990, from 1990-2006 and from 2006 to present-day. These democratic practice and good governance movements were gradually institutionalized, and continued in Nepal. But still Nepal has not been able to launch effective e- governance system. E-governance has been launched by land reform office, custom office, tax office and so much but has not been able to efficiently discharge service to the people. In the same line Maharjan (2015) explained that e-government was the form of e-business in governance and referred to the processes and structures needed to deliver electronic services to the public (citizens and businesses), collaborated with business partners and to conduct electronic transactions within an organizational entity. The governments around the world were recognizing the value of e-governance. The properly designed and implemented, e-governance could improve efficiency in the delivery of government services, simplify compliance with government regulations, strengthen citizen participation and trust in government, and yield cost savings for citizens, businesses and the government itself. Numerous problems faced the initiatives in least developed countries like lack of infrastructure, low tele-density, lack of political engagement and vision, bureaucratic inefficiency, and administrative corruption. Nepali citizen's experience about various government services on the basis of frequency of use, perception of the level of corruption, inefficiency, harassment or difficulty encountered and their understanding about the priority for improving the service through IT /e-governance. This will also to some degree expose the difference between interpretation and actual experience.

Studies focusing on governance and efficiency have been performed in various Nepalese industrial sectors but no full aggregate review has been carried out.

Similarly, the findings on the basis of structured primary data in understanding the belief of stakeholders in ICT, success factors for effective e-governance, timelines, service model, payment mode, etc. in the Nepali context also requires to be looked into comprehensively. It is essential to identify the effect of various e-governance factors in the various context effect e-governance in Nepal. Thus, the proposed study aims to see the influence of political governance on E-governance in Nepal.

Literature Review

E-governance Developments in Nepal

E-governance project initiation began in final e-government master plan (eGMP) consulting study released on Nov, 2006 in collaborative initiation involving High Level Commission for Information Technology (HLCIT), National Information and Technology Center (NITC), Ministry of Environment Science and Technology (MoEST), Ministry of Industry and Commerce (MoIC), Ministry of Administration (MoGA) and of Finance (MoF). Korea IT Industry Promotion Agency (KIPA) carried out EGMP, which laid the foundations for e-Government transformation.

The Government of Nepal (GoN) prepared a 2006 e-Government Master Plan to develop e-governance vision, strategy, and structure in Nepal (Pariyar, 2007). This master plan centered primarily on eight sectors: Government Enterprise Architecture (GEA) & Nepal's Interoperability System for E-Governance (NeGIF), Establishment of an Integrated Government Data Center (GIDC), National ID, Land Records Information Management System (LRIMS), Smart Driving License, District Broadband Internet Access, Human Resource Creation in IT, Public Service Commission (PSC) Electronic Application System (HLCIT, 2006). The project has provided support and financing from the Asian Development

Bank. To improve e-governance capability, Nepal's government has updated and put new policies and regulations into effect to further strengthen the implementation of e-governance in Nepal. The various regulatory policies established which are depicted in Table 1.

Table 1. E-governance Regulatory Policy Development in Nepal.

Act/Policies/Regulations	Year
National Communication Policy	1992
Telecommunication Regulations	1997
Telecommunication Act	1997
Copyright Act,	2000
IT Policy in Nepal.	2000
Electronic Transaction & Digital Signature Act	2000
Telecommunications Policy	2004
National Strategy Paper on ICT (National Planning Commission)	2002
Electronic Transactions Act and Digital Signature Act	2008
Cyber Law	2007
New IT policy in Nepal	2010

Private organizations have played a crucial role in designing the programs and e-governance practices facilitated by ICT. The major private sector interventions included the implementation of telephone and internet infrastructure, Internet service providers (ISPs) 21 in total, six VSATs (Very Small Aperture Terminal), eight service providers for radio paging and some 35 software developing companies. The private organizations' technical contributions paved the way for many small and critical initiatives to improve practices in e-governance.

Table 2. Computer Applications Specific to Main Functional Areas

Functional Areas
Financial Controller General Office (FCGO)
Inland Revenue Department (IRD)
Election Commission
Custom Offices
Department of Health – HMIS
Department of Land Information & Archives
Immigration Office at Airport
E--Approval application at MOGA
General Post Office
Company Registration
Nepal Police

Table 3. Representing Applications Development of Existing Systems

Representing Applications
Vehicle Registration (G2C) - Name transfer, Blue Book renewal Pollution checking, driving license exam and issuance
Registration of Cottage and Small Industries (G2B)
E-Approval - Document Management System (G2G)
E-Procurement (G2B)
Company Registration (G2B)
E-Postal service (G2C)
Government Accounting system -Disbursement centers (G2G)
Personnel Management System (Civil Service Records) (G2G)
E-HMIS (Ministry of Health) (G2G)
Revenue (G2B)

(Source; Telephone penetration rate in Nepal, MIS report 2018/19, Nepal Telecommunication Authority)

Empirical Reviews

Diverse studies have been conducted in the area of e-governance activities in the local and international context. Many of the research in the least developed countries indicated improving the e-government system for implementing effective e-governance. This section overviewed some of the most important research findings.

Table 4. Summary of Major Literature Review (Before 2000)

Year	Authors	Concluding Remarks
1996	Guttmann and Thompson	Accountability had strengthened the credibility of the Government. Governance also provided accounting and accountability which could better be enhanced by e-governance.
1999	Ferguson	Electronic governance included new leadership styles, new ways to negotiate and determine strategies and plans, new ways to access education, new ways to listen to people, and new ways to coordinate and distribute information and services.
1999	Kooiman	An interactive or social-political as the form of governance.

Table 5. Review in between 2000-2010.

Year	Authors	Concluding Remarks
2000	EzGov	E-governance is a way to provide people with more convenient access to government information and services, to improve the

		quality of the services and to provide greater opportunities to participate in democratic institutions and process.
2001	Avenue and Surrey	The replacement of manual and paper-based processes with electronic processes in government administration would generate electronic records as evidence in policy-making, casework and service delivery areas.
2001	Heeks	The three main contributions of e-governance were improving government processes; connecting citizens and; and building external interactions.
2002	Teicher, et al.	E-governance had contributed to better functioning of democracy by online provision of government information, otherwise unavailable through online debates.
2002	Ribot	The accountability had improved the government's legitimacy. Governance had included accountancy and transparency which could be best enhanced through e-governance.
2002	Nzongola-Ntalaja	The political governance had guaranteed the order and cohesion of the society.
2002	DiMaio, et al.	E-government had become the transformation of public-sector internal and external relationships through internet-enabled operations and information and communication technologies to optimize government services delivery, constituency participation and internal government processes.
2002	Capogna, Figus and Mustica	In the face of high technical and methodological skills to move in digital systems, the strong social emotional skills to sustain the cognitive, emotional, and relational loads that glide in real virtual environment.
2003	Gupta and Jana	Nepali citizens had experienced about various government services on the basis of frequency of use, perception over the level of corruption, inefficiency, harassment or difficulty encountered. These problems could be solved through e-governance practices.
2003	Islam	The countries which had better information flows as measured by both indicators had better quality governance.
2004	Mahapatra and Perumal	E-government initiatives had the direct impact on the citizens and in which the citizens derived benefit through direct transactions with the governmental services.
2004	Rotberg	Governance is good when it allocates and manages resources to respond to collective problems and when a state efficiently provides quality public goods to its citizens.
2005	Saxena	E-governance initiatives in most countries promised a more citizen-centric government and reduced operational cost.
2005	Cheema	Good governance promotes gender equality, sustains the environment, enables citizens to exercise personal freedom, and

		it also provides tools to reduce poverty, deprivation, fear, and violence free environment.
2005	Khan	Good governance was no longer limited to adopting efficient methods offered by ICT, but also had included all citizens who had access to the technology.
2006	Mimicopoulos	Efficiency, transparency, and participation were accepted as three essential dimensions. Efficiency had become government's ability to establish predictability in the institutional and policy environment
2006	Afonso, et al.	Efficiency had helped to prioritize government services to attune them with citizen needs
2006	Kyj	ICT was the potent mean to dispense information in times, when there was instability and political uncertainty.
2007	Pratt, Gill and Spelthann	Technologies had underplayed the continuing importance of the social and economic embeddedness of production, and of the situated co-constitution of technologies, people and places.
2008	Pathak et al.	The e-governance initiatives could help in weeding out corruption and also in fostering so under government-citizen relationships in developing countries.
2008	Kalsi, et al.	The states rated high on good governance were the ones with good e-governance initiatives and good policies for implementing e-governance projects in place.
2009	Albert	The problems of less effectiveness and implementation of e-governance could be solved by dismantling of the secret State, the democratization of the concept of national security, and the integration of the e-democracy processes within broader constitutional structures and debates of African states.

Table 6. Review of 2010 onwards.

Year	Authors	Concluding Remarks
2010	Gokmen	The use of information communication technology had facilitated to enhance access, transparency efficiency and quality of public administration.
2011	Keane and Velde	The institutional arrangements and international agreements consolidated and created for global economic governance were facing new challenges and opportunities.
2011	Rabaiah and Vandijck	E-government had become the global phenomenon.
2011	Singh, Chander and Kumar	People had to face corruption and harassment. The e-governance had increased the transparency and efficiency.

2012	Mistry	The reduction of the discretionary power of bureaucrats, enforced consequences, and the demand for accountability had enabled equal access to information and public goods and services that could result in a bridging of the economic divide in a developing country such as India.
2012	Swyngedouw	The rhetoric of globalization was paralleled and facilitates the emergence of more authoritarian or at least autocratic forms of governance.
2012	Peters	The governance could be the foundation of the significant political theory which could be important for developing contemporary political science.
2012	Gisselquist	The good governance had become the part of the vernacular of the large range of development institutions and other actors within the international arena.
2013	Banday and Masood	The collaboration, participation, and empowerment had attracted governments to use in governance for bringing together agencies, citizens, agencies work and information.
2013	Wimmer and Catherine	The good governance could make easy the political and economic institutions changes and evidence- based strategies about how to positively influence the change.
2014	John	E-administration applied to any of the numbers of processes that had turned what is paper processing in the conventional office into electronic processing to create the paperless bureau. E-governance had helped boost efficiency and productivity.
2014	Radu and Polkowski	
2014	Sarkar and Das	The policy framework had proposed to establish the Centralized Digital Forensic Facility (CDFF) for enabling digital forensic services across all digital forensic units of the State.
2015	Baniamin	E-governance was gaining popularity as the tool for improved public service delivery in developing countries.
2015	Kalsi and Kiran	The power of information and communication technology ICT and e-governance services would lead to decrease the problems of delay, poor public service, and infrastructure in government offices.
2015	Maharjan	E-government was the form of e-business in governance and referred to the processes and structures needed to deliver electronic services to the public.
2016	Thilakasiri	The technology had played the significant role in reforming public administration and the process of the government owned institutions.
2016	Nurunnabi	The root causes of the poor governance of private universities were the substantial political power and

		autonomy held by boards of trustees; a lack of enforcement of Private University Act; and the lack of coordination among stakeholders.
2017	Dahal	Good governance gradually developed in Nepal after each democratic movement.
2017	Masuki, Bhebhe and Khumalo	There were ICT policies that were meant to serve as ICT strategies for the country but none of them had been put to test. The challenges arose from lack of interpersonal and fully fledged computer users, absence of goodwill of politicians and bureaucrats, inadequately functioning e-government infrastructure and implementation capacity, constantly changing political environment, failure ICT policies, lack of legal framework etc., could be changed by enchanting awareness program and proper training, strengthening mobile government, ensuring website information in major languages.
2017	Irfan	According to neoliberal thought, good governance requires freeing the market from state control and regulation; reducing government expenditures for social services like education and health care; maintaining roads, bridges, the water supply, and so forth.
2018	Halperin	The governance had referred to the set of institutions and actors that were drawn from but also beyond the government.
2018	Keping	The developments in economic governance had included reinforced coordination and surveillance of both fiscal and macroeconomic policies and the setting-up of the framework for the management of financial crises.
2018	Zoppe	E-governance had helped to increase productivity and competitiveness at the national level.
2019	Nagle	The sustainability disclosure and performance of firms could be boosted by the consideration of ESG (Environmental-Social-Governance) results.
2019	Taliento, Favino and Netti	

Most research concentrate on e-governance practices and not on the relationship between political governance and e-governance but this study concentrated on analysing the effect of political governance on e-governance practices.

Research design

The study had adopted descriptive and correlational research design as it intended to present facts concerning the nature and status of e-governance situation. The descriptive research also

concerned the relationships and practices that has existed, believed and processed that were ongoing. Correlation design is used to see the relationship between political governance and e-governance. The data was collected using the questionnaire and checklist. Questionnaire and check list covered political governance as the areas of good governance and level of corruption, level of inefficiency, level of abuse and level of difficulty experienced as the fields of e-governance and political governance were considered the major variables for the research. The research considered factors leading to good governance, performance indicators, policy structure, and goals on e-governance, pain and abuse. The mean was used to test the e-governance status in practice and the correlation matrix and regression models were used to determine the degree of impact of independent variables on dependent variable. All concerned persons related to business organizations and government agencies; in particular all bureaucrats and business personalities are regarded as population. They were chosen as population because they engage directly or indirectly in Nepal's e-governance activities. Therefore, they can provide more detailed knowledge than lay people in general. Sampling methods used to pick samples is purposeful and convenient. For further study 393 samples were taken. According to Cochran's suggestion (1963), sample size is measured taking into account the significance level of 95 percent, and the proportion of positive and negative response is fifty percent, then the sample size was reported at 385. And the sample size is assumed to be appropriate for further study. The data were collected using semi-structured self-administered questionnaire using convenience and purposeful sampling process. The respondents were politicians and business figures active in governmental and public bodies. The questionnaire on the 5-point Likert scale was used to collect the respondents' responses in between strongly agree to strongly disagree. The rating scale has also been used to gather data and find out about stakeholder understanding of the most influential aspects of political governance. Version 20 of the SPSS was used as the statistical

software for tabulation, processing of results and data analysis. The study aimed to determine the extent of e-governance activities. Mean was used for this purpose. Also, the t-test and F-test were used to learn the difference of opinion between different groups between respondents. The ranking was also made based on estimates of the mean percentage. It had been used to define the fundamental components of corporate governance and to develop the concept of strategic system regression. The alpha value of the Cronbach was calculated to assess the data reliability. The study of the reliability evaluated the quality inside. To check multicollinearity the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) was determined. The existence of multicollinearity could adversely affect the effects of regression, and the Kolmogorov Smirnova test was performed in order to determine the normality of the distributed data.

Test of reliability and validity

The political governance practices in Nepal were shown in Table 7. The study found that teamwork and citizen co-operation would help to improve the stability and progress of society. Citizen collaboration (QPG5; First Ranked) may be regulating the failure in the e-governance program. The respondents gave political issue second priority. The political stability and credibility of the political parties was the primary factor for e-governance implementation. The preparing, coordinating, leading and controlling of the e-governance operation (QPG3; Third Ranked) are the critical functions.

Table 7. Political Governance (PG) Practices in Nepal

SN	Questions	SDA	DA	N	A	SA	MS	R	SMS
QPG1	Government should make short term as well as long term strategies for the implementation of e-governance.	0	10	151	165	67	3.7354	IV	3.29
QPG2	The challenges of e-governance are the main cause of failure to deliver e-governance in a better way.	128	181	51	22	11	2.0000	V	

QPG3	Every e-governance activity commences with planning and is followed by organizing, leading and controlling.	0	5	48	272	68	4.0254	III
QPG4	The political parties' reliability and the stability of government is foremost factor for implementation of e-governance.	0	0	40	264	89	4.1247	II
QPG5	The failure of various e-governance applications can be controlled with citizen partnership leading to success and prosperity of society (social audit).	0	0	14	192	187	4.4402	I
QPG6	The professional audit procedures such as auditing of designing, developing, implementing, training, maintenance of government to citizens application are	251	118	23	1	0	1.4249	VI

mandatory in
Nepal.

The study further suggested from QPG1 and QPG2 that the government's formulation of the strategy would make sense to enforce e-governance effectively and efficiently. The respondents accorded less weight to the auditing process. The summated mean score was 3.29. This had suggested that the methods of e-governance in Nepal is above average since its summated mean score is above average.

Relationship between political governance and e-governance practices

This section presents the association between political government and e-governance.

Table 8. Relationship between e-governance practices and political governance, economic governance and social governance

	EGP	PG
EGP	1	0.659 (0.000)
PG		1

The political governance was found responsible for the activities of e-governance.

Developing and enforcing policies and controlling them is important for introducing e-governance in less developed countries such as Nepal. It's because there's widespread corruption, so the bureaucrats don't like enforcing these practices that increase good governance and minimize corruption. Therefore, the linear regression model was used to examine the effect of political governance on e-governance.

Effect of political governance on e-governance practices.

To examine the effect of political governance on e-governance OLS regression was used. Some assumption of OLS regression has been proved for running regression models.

Test of multicollinearity

VIF quantifies the extent of correlation between one predictor and the other predictors in a model. It has been used for diagnosing multicollinearity.

Table 9. Test of multicollinearity regressing e-governance and political governance practices

Model	Unstandardized Coefficient		Standardized Coefficient	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
Constant	1.247	.188		6.645	.000		
Political governance	.267	.068	.312	.342	.000	.394	1.562

According to statistics theory, if the VIF value is below 5, it is presumed that such independent variables are not strongly correlated. This implies multicollinearity does not exist. The independent variable has less than 5 VIF value when analyzing the results. So, there was no multicollinearity with e-governance, democratic governance was regressed.

Test of Normality

The Regression model has several important hypotheses. One of the main conclusions from these is data normality. Burns and Burns (2008) contended that the normality of the collected data is necessary for the independent variables to provide a valid estimate of dependent variables. Seehan, *et.al.*, (2007) argued that measuring data normality is crucial to measuring the hypotheses using regression model. Data normality can be tested by scattered plot and histograms, and measuring Kolmogorov-Smirnova. Data normality was tested in this analysis using the Kolmogorov- Smirnova test. The test results are set out in Table 7.

Table 10. Test of Normality using Kolmogorov-Smirnova Test

	Kolmogorov- Smirnov Statistic	Sig
Political governance	.075	.065

Table 10 shows that all variables are insignificant at a point of 5 per cent. It acknowledges thesis on null hypothesis. It means normal distribution of data. Therefore, it is assumed that the data is normally distributed and that parametric testing can be used in the normally distributed data.

Effect of political governance on e-governance

Table 11. Effect of PG on EG

Variables	Coefficient	t-value	P-value	F-value
Constant	2.482	2.109		
PG	0.267	1.998	0.000	93.70

DV: EG

The value of the beta coefficient, p-value, t-value and F-value is explained in Table 11. The E-Governance Practices (EGP) with, Political Governance (PG), has been regressed. The SPSS version 20 was used with dependent variable to predict the independent variables. To determine the effect of independent variables on e-governance activities, the bivariate linear regression analysis was performed. The produced result expressed in the model was as follows; $Y = 2.482 + 0.267PG + u$

(0.000)

The model was found to be relevant at five per cent level of significance. The t-value greater than two and significant F-statistic indicated the significance of the model. The 0.267 beta coefficient for political governance showed that one percent improvement in political governance has led to a change in e-governance practices by 0.267 percent. It shows that the development of policies, rules and enforcement of them in practice can leverage to the e-governance practices in Nepal.

Discussions and Conclusions

The study notes that information technology and connectivity is a possible resource for achieving good governance. The principal areas of e-governance are democratic governance. This result conforms to Nzongola-Ntalaja; 2012. This is so because democratic government ensures a society's order and cohesion. Consequently, they established bases for implementing e-governance in any climate. Political governance will enforce e-governance practices on the people and organizations.

In terms of applying e-governance Nepal is still in its infancy. This study found that the major obstacles to introduce e-governance are the computer illiteracy, lack of standard HR, language and political issues. Then the government should introduce programs in computer activity in the development of technological manpower and knowledge in the general public otherwise implementation of e-governance remains ineffective. Government shall simplify the e-governance implementation procedures and processes through the review of relevant regulations, policy documents and plans. This result is consistent with Halperin's findings; 2018 and Nzongola- Ntalaja; 2002. It could be so because the public needs easy access to public services. E-practices provide the public with easy access to basic service, such as health, defence, judiciary and education. Public administration in general relates strongly to e-governance. This result is consistent with John's findings; 2014 and Zoppe; 2018. The results are similar as each country needs the society's unity and order to incorporate e-governance.

Implications

Policy Implications

Nepal has been suffering from the problem of corruption and inefficiency since long ago, particularly in the civil service sector. By using the information and communication technologies and successfully implementing e-governance, corruption and inefficiency problems can be minimized. This research identified key e-governance domains.

Policymakers should build e-governance policies taking those factors into consideration.

Policymakers should establish policies that recognize e-police, e-administration, and e-education to reach out to people who are found to be the prominent factors in service delivery in Nepal's deprived areas.

Managerial Implications

Nepal's government should formulate a strategy and take decisions considering the study's findings to make e-government more successful, which is prioritized by Nepal's prevalent Science and Technology Act. Government has launched e-government initiatives in most government offices but the general people's concerns are about poor delivery of services. The government will therefore take decisions based on the results of the study and develop the e-government services.

Future Research Implications

Future researchers will expand their study areas to make a study more robust and find more concrete outcomes. Future researchers should assign large numbers of samples, and validate this study's findings. This study may be the landmark in bringing the further work forward. Future researchers should concentrate on the provisions of the Science and Technology Act while conducting research and help make the discharge of public services more effective through e-government.

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