



Factors Influencing Multicultural Team effectiveness in Nepalese Financial Institutions of Kathmandu Valley

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Abstract

The effective management of multicultural teams is crucial for fostering a harmonious and productive work environment in Nepalese financial institutions, particularly within the Kathmandu Valley. This study investigates the dimensions influencing multicultural team effectiveness, including working environment, communication quality, superior's support, remuneration, and cultural intelligence. Employing descriptive and causal comparative research designs, the study utilized convenience sampling to gather primary data from 418 respondents across 17 commercial banks. A structured questionnaire was administered, and Cronbach's alpha was employed to assess reliability. The analysis revealed that working environment, communication quality, superior's support, and cultural intelligence has positive and significant impact on multicultural team effectiveness. However, remuneration has negative and insignificant influence on the multicultural team effectiveness. The study concludes that improvements in working environment, communication quality, superior's support, remuneration, and cultural intelligence were associated with enhanced team performance. The findings highlight the necessity for financial institutions to implement strategies that promote effective management of multicultural teams. Recommendations include providing meditation sessions to alleviate work-related stress, fostering an inclusive culture through team-building activities, and offering training on cultural sensitivity and communication styles. This research adds to the existing literature by providing empirical evidence on the factors influencing multicultural team effectiveness in Nepalese financial institutions and outlining practical management strategies.

Keywords: Communication quality, cultural intelligence, multicultural teams, remuneration, supervisory support, working environment

Introduction

In an increasingly globalized world, the dynamics of workplace interactions are continually evolving, particularly within multicultural teams. These teams, composed of individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds, ethnicities, and experiences, present unique opportunities and challenges. As organizations strive for greater creativity and innovation, the effective management of multicultural teams becomes paramount. Multicultural teams can foster rich environments where diverse perspectives enhance problem-solving and decision-making ([Munjuri & Maina, 2013](#)). However, managing such diversity requires a nuanced understanding of cultural differences, effective communication strategies, and inclusive practices to ensure team cohesion and productivity.

Workforce diversity is crucial for organizational success and team performance in today's fast-changing global workplace. Understanding diversity's complex dynamics and performance effects is crucial as organizations grow increasingly multicultural and integrated. Workforce diversity presents both possibilities and problems, according to the study. [Utoğlu \(2015\)](#) demonstrated that demographic diversity enhanced team performance in a global military context, whereas cultural diversity posed challenges that standard operating procedures could potentially surmount. Diversity affects organizational cohesion and efficiency in Kenyan financial institutions, according to [Otiye et al. \(2015\)](#). Including [Gitonga et al. \(2016\)](#), workforce diversity factors including age, gender, work experience, and culture might hurt telecommunication enterprises' image and competitiveness. Workforce diversity has also been linked to team success in manufacturing, notably in drive, teamwork, and task skills ([Ugwu, 2016](#)). Despite the obstacles of multiculturalism, [Gyebi \(2018\)](#) found that well-designed organizational initiatives may turn diversity into a competitive advantage. Recent research by [Jain and Pareek \(2019\)](#) suggests that organizations that manage cultural diversity might obtain competitive benefits in innovation, problem-solving, and adaptation. This difficulty in managing worker diversity while retaining team effectiveness warrants more study, specifically how diversity aspects affect organizational success.

The context of multicultural team management is especially relevant in countries like Nepal, which has undergone significant societal transformations influenced by its diverse ethnic, linguistic, and cultural composition. Historically, Nepal has navigated various models of society, each with distinct approaches to cultural integration and management. The hierarchical, plural society prior to 1950 recognized cultural differences but often devalued them, whereas the subsequent mono-cultural phase from 1961 to 1990 aimed to erase such differences entirely in the name of nation-building ([Pradhan, 2007](#)). Since the restoration of democracy in 1990, Nepal has transitioned toward a non-hierarchical, multicultural society that increasingly acknowledges and values diversity ([Dangol, 2022](#)). This shift reflects broader global trends emphasizing multiculturalism and the recognition of human rights, impacting not only social norms but also workplace dynamics, particularly in financial institutions.

In the financial sector, the successful management of multicultural teams is crucial for enhancing employee performance and organizational effectiveness. Research indicates that workforce diversity factors such as gender, age, education, and ethnicity are positively correlated with employee performance ([Ghimire et al., 2023](#)). The financial industry,

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characterized by its reliance on collaborative efforts, must leverage the unique insights and skills of its multicultural workforce to remain competitive. However, challenges such as communication barriers, cultural misunderstandings, and differing decision-making styles can hinder team effectiveness if not adequately addressed ([Cox, 1994](#)). For instance, language differences can lead to misinterpretations, while varying cultural norms may result in conflicts or inefficiencies in teamwork.

As organizations increasingly embrace diversity, the ability to manage and leverage cultural differences has emerged as a critical competitive advantage. Multicultural teams, defined as groups of at least three individuals from various national cultures ([Loth, 2009](#)), fundamentally differ from traditional workgroups in their collaborative dynamics and shared responsibilities ([Cohen & Bailey, 1997](#); [Bengtsson et al., 2020](#)). While these teams offer distinct benefits, they also encounter specific challenges that can impact their performance. Research conducted by Moon (2013) indicates that cultural diversity significantly influences team performance over time, with teams that possess higher cultural intelligence demonstrating incremental improvements in their effectiveness. This complexity is further illustrated across various sectors, as recent studies reveal how multicultural teams navigate challenges, including subtle discrimination and communication barriers (Regmi et al., 2009; Paudel et al., 2020). The overall effectiveness of these teams relies on several key factors, including the working environment ([Chand & Sethi, 1997](#)), communication quality ([Clampitt & Downs, 1993](#)), support from leadership (Roberson & Park, 2007), and levels of cultural intelligence (Ely & Thomas, 2001). Modern organizations are increasingly recognizing that the successful management of multicultural teams extends beyond mere demographic diversity; it requires creating an environment that values and leverages cultural differences to enhance creativity, problem-solving capabilities, and overall organizational performance ([Halverson & Tirmizi, 2008](#); [Ghimire et al., 2023](#)).

To navigate these challenges, it is imperative for organizations to implement effective management practices that enhance communication quality, provide supportive leadership, and promote cultural intelligence among team members. Research suggests that supportive work environments and effective communication are critical determinants of multicultural team success ([Munjuri & Maina, 2013](#)). Furthermore, cultural intelligence and the ability to relate and work effectively across cultures emerges as a significant factor influencing team dynamics and performance ([Ely & Thomas, 2001](#)). By fostering an inclusive atmosphere that values diverse perspectives and encourages open communication, financial institutions can enhance the effectiveness of their multicultural teams.

Despite the theoretical frameworks and empirical studies available, there is a notable gap in research focusing on the effective management of multicultural teams within the context of Nepalese financial institutions. The complexity of Nepal's socio-cultural landscape necessitates a tailored approach to understanding how best to manage workforce diversity in this sector. This study aims to fill this gap by exploring the determinants of effective multicultural team management and examining the relationships between key factors such as working environment, communication quality, supervisory support, remuneration, and cultural intelligence.

Literature Review

Cultural Dimensions Theory

Hofstede's cultural dimensions theory ([Żemojtel-Piotrowska & Piotrowski, 2023](#)) provides vital insights into the elements that influence efficient multicultural team management. Understanding Hofstede's aspects, such as individuality vs. collectivism and power distance, allows managers to better negotiate their workforce's different cultural backgrounds, which is critical for creating a healthy working environment. Key variables that determine effective management include communication quality, outstanding support, pay, and cultural intelligence. For instance, tailoring high-quality communication to the cultural preferences of team members can enhance cooperation and avoid misunderstandings, while supportive leadership can empower individuals from diverse backgrounds. Furthermore, cultural intelligence helps managers tailor their plans to the particular demands of a heterogeneous workforce, resulting in increased team performance ([Brewer & Venaik, 2011](#)). Thus, the interaction of these variables, multicultural team effectiveness, emphasizing the importance of culturally informed management practices in achieving organizational success.

[Omotayo \(2020\)](#) investigated the impact of diversity management on organisational performance in the banking business, focussing on certain chosen deposit money institutions in Lagos. The study used a survey research approach, and data were obtained from 192 workers of five chosen deposit money institutions in the Lagos metropolitan, Southwest Nigeria. Smart PLS (3.0) was used in the analysis. All of the variables investigated under the independent variable exhibit positive path coefficients as factors influencing employee commitment, sales growth, service quality, and employee desire to quit. It is advised that deposit money institutions in Nigeria use diversity inclusion management to improve organisational performance.

[Elama \(2021\)](#) examined the role of multicultural workforce on employee satisfaction in Nigerian Pan African Banks. Five Nigerian Pan-African Banks constitutes complete enumeration of the population surveyed through the administration of likert-type questionnaire to 180 staff of the groups, out of which 113 responses were returned. The study showed that multicultural diversity significantly plays a positive role on employee satisfaction in Nigerian Pan-African Banks. A one unit increase in Multicultural Diversity in work-team results to about seven-point increase in employee satisfaction. However, the study showed that motivation plays not as significant role in employee satisfaction. One point increase in motivation of employees in a work-team of Nigerian banks brings about approximately 3 points increase in employee satisfaction.

[Smith \(2022\)](#) analyzed the impact of a multicultural workforce on construction production. The research's epistemological orientation used hybrid philosophies (interpretivism and post-positivism) to conduct a deductive and cross-sectional survey to gather primary quantitative data using a closed-ended structured questionnaire. Census and convenience sample approaches were used to target Ghana's construction workers and their perspectives on the phenomena under research. The t-test analysis of 11 variables sourced from existing literature revealed that the null hypothesis for the study was not rejected, and all factors

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(with the exception of high training costs and inadequate gender diversity management) were confirmed as negative effects of the multicultural workforce on construction productivity.

[Dongol \(2022\)](#) explored how workforce diversity affects employee performance in Nepalese commercial banks. This research employed a self-administered survey to get varied perspectives on workforce diversity among bank workers. There are 27 commercial banks in operation, with 20 serving as sample banks. Overall, 125 questionnaires were issued to workers, and 99 questionnaires were returned, resulting in a 79.2% sample size of respondents for the research. The research found that all four workforce diversity indicators are positively connected with employee performance in a commercial bank. Thus, the bank must manage workforce diversity to improve employee performance.

[Hussein \(2022\)](#) investigated the effects of cultural diversity on project management communication in the UAE's IT industry. The study used an exploratory research methodology, with data gathered from 100 project managers and project team members working in the UAE's IT industry using a survey questionnaire. The study's findings were consistent with prior research, which found that having a varied workforce, whether assessed by age, gender, and ethnicity, had a beneficial influence on an organization's performance.

[Morris \(2023\)](#) explored management's role in managing cultural diversity in the workplace. In today's competitive business world, cultural diversity has a substantial influence on a company's profitability. According to the results, cultural diversity may improve a business's performance by introducing creativity, innovation, and other good factors. It does, however, have several downsides that may be resolved by proper management. Management should develop appropriate ways to foster tolerance, acceptance, and respect for cultural diversity.

[Jackson \(2023\)](#) examined the influence of individual traits such as cultural sensitivity, adaptability, cohesiveness, and cultural variety on multicultural team performance. Furthermore, the researcher examined the moderating influence of being a team member or team leader on the aforementioned correlations. To test theories, data were gathered from 415 members of multicultural teams, including 304 team members and 111 leaders. The data supported a beneficial association between cultural sensitivity, adaptation, cohesiveness, and team performance. Cultural diversity did not have a substantial effect on team performance. The research also found that leaders and members had differing perspectives on the elements that impact team effectiveness.

[Tamang and Tamang \(2024\)](#) assessed the influence of workforce diversity on employee performance at Standard Chartered Bank Nepal Limited. The study was quantitative in nature and used a cross-sectional research approach. Data were gathered from 200 bankers using a primary survey. The data demonstrated that gender, ethnicity, and education diversity had no significant influence on employee performance, implying that despite having a varied workforce in terms of gender, ethnicity, and education, Standard Chartered workers perform similarly. Rather, age and experience were shown to have a strong beneficial influence on employee performance, indicating that having a broad age group and experience in the organization leads to improved employee performance.

In light of the prior study works, a further conceptual framework has been formulated.

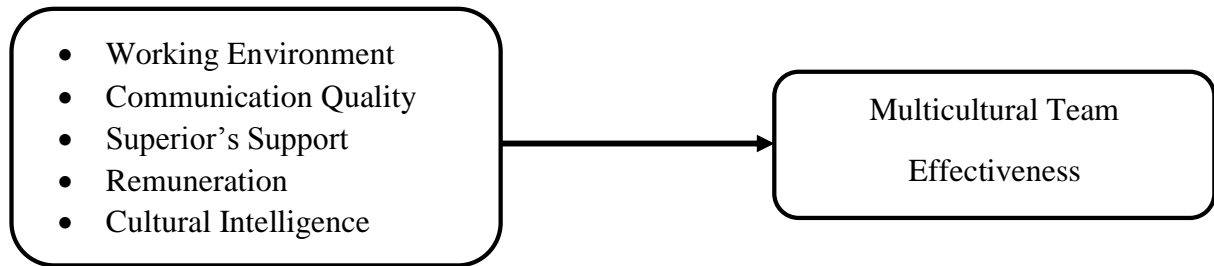


Figure 1: *Research Framework*

Research hypothesis

This study aims to examine the effective management of multicultural teams within Nepalese financial institutions in the Kathmandu Valley. Based on various models, the following hypotheses were developed:

- H1: There is significant relationship between working environment and multicultural team effectiveness.
- H2: There is significant relationship between communication quality and multicultural team effectiveness.
- H3: There is significant relationship between superior's support and multicultural team effectiveness.
- H4: There is significant relationship between remuneration and multicultural team effectiveness.
- H5: There is significant relationship between cultural intelligence and multicultural team effectiveness

Research Method

The quantitative approach and deductive reasoning were employed in this study. Descriptive, relational, and causal research designs were implemented in this investigation. In order to identify the fundamental characteristics of the variables under investigation, a descriptive research design is implemented. A structured questionnaire was developed, consisting of two sections: the first section collected demographic information (gender, age, educational level, and position), while the second section used a five-point Likert scale to assess respondents' opinions on various factors influencing multicultural team effectiveness, including working environment, communication quality, superior support, remuneration, and cultural intelligence. Data were primarily collected through convenience sampling, targeting 418 employees from various banking organizations.

The data collection process took place between May and June 2024, with the researcher distributing 450 questionnaires and successfully gathering 418 responses. To maximize

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participation, questionnaires were distributed both in-person and via a digital format using Google Forms. The analysis involved correlation and regression techniques to explore relationships among the identified variables, enabling a comprehensive understanding of factors influencing to multicultural team effectiveness.

The model

The model for this study to calculate multiple linear regressions is given by the equation below.

$$\text{MTE} = \beta + \beta_1 \text{WE} + \beta_2 \text{CQ} + \beta_3 \text{SS} + \beta_4 \text{RT} + \beta_5 \text{CI} + e$$

Where,

MTE = Multicultural Team Effectiveness

β = Constant

$\beta_1, \beta_2, \beta_3, \beta_4$ and β_5 = Constant for respective variables

WE = Working Environment

CQ = Communication quality

SS = Superior's Support

RT = Remuneration

CI = Cultural Intelligence

Validity and reliability

Since the questionnaires used in this study contain likert-scale questions, (smith, 2008) the Cronbach's alpha is an appropriate method for testing reliability. This tool is useful to measure the reliability and consistency of the subscales. If Cronbach's alpha is higher than 0.8 up to nearly 1, the scale is usually good, between 0.7 and 0.8 is acceptable. A researcher also suggests that Cronbach's alpha higher than 0.6 is acceptable in the situation that the researched concept is new or new to responding people in the research context.

Table 1: *Test of reliability*

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	No. of items
Working environment	0.708	5
Communication quality	0.715	5
Superior's support	0.619	5
Remuneration	0.639	5
Cultural intelligence	0.809	5
Multicultural team effectiveness	0.73	5
Overall	0.925	30

The above table 1 depicted that overall reliability test shows that the Cronbach's alpha is 0.925 which is well over 0.70 and nearly 1 which is usually good. The highest Cronbach's alpha was of cultural intelligence (0.809) and the lowest was of superior's support (0.619). This reliability of the study is confirmed because all the variables' Cronbach's alpha was at the fit level of 0.60 and above.

Results

Table 2 presents the demographic profile of respondents, providing insights into the performance of multicultural teams in Nepalese financial institutions. The sample shows a male predominance of 56.7% over females 43.3%, raising concerns about gender inclusion and representation.

Table 2: *Demographic information of respondents*

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Female	181	43.3
Male	237	56.7
Total	418	100
Age		
Below 25 yrs old	99	23.7
26-35 years old	195	46.7
36-45 years old	118	28.2
Above 45 years old	6	1.4
Total	418	100
Qualification		
Undergraduate	11	2.6
Graduate	185	44.3
Master or above	222	53.1
Total	418	100
Position		
Assistant	161	38.5
Junior officer	139	33.3
Officer	103	24.6
Manager	15	3.6
Total	160	100

Note: Field survey, 2024

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The majority of respondents (46.7%) are between the ages of 26 and 35, indicating that the workforce is young and versatile. However, with only 1.4% over 45, there is an obvious need for more experienced voices to guide and mentor the younger workers. Educational qualifications are strong, with over half (53.1%) holding master's degrees, which improves critical thinking and collaboration. Similarly, the majority of respondents hold entry-level positions (38.5% as assistants and 33.3% as junior officers), indicating that they may require assistance in navigating cultural differences efficiently.

Table 3 illustrates the correlation analysis of the examined variables. The correlation analysis is performed on the whole sample. Correlation analysis identifies the link between the variables being examined. The research provides a correlation analysis among various factors of multicultural team performance.

Table 3: *Pearson's correlation among variables*

Variables	WE	CQ	SS	RT	CI	MTE
WE	1					
CQ	.710**	1				
SS	.541**	.668**	1			
RT	.610**	.612**	.771**	1		
CI	.637**	.571**	.470**	.590**	1	
MTE	.712**	.734**	.608**	.592**	.662**	1

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Note: Authors own computation

The correlation analysis revealed that MTE demonstrated consistently strong positive relationships with all other variables in the study, with all correlations being statistically significant at $p < 0.01$ level. MTE exhibited its strongest correlations with CQ and WE, suggesting that effective management of multicultural teams within Nepalese financial institutions. Likewise SS, RT and CI has positive and significant relations with the multicultural team effectiveness in the Nepalese financial organizations.

Table 4 summarizes the multiple linear regression model. The r square value is the proportion of dependent variable variance explained by independent factors. The r square score in this research is 0.666, indicating that independent factors explain 66.6 percent of dependent variable variability. Which means that 66.6 percent of multicultural team success is described by working environment, communication quality, superior support, compensation, and cultural intelligence, and 33.4 percent by elements not included in this research.

Table 4: *Model summary*

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square Estimate
1	.816a	0.666	.662 .34142

Note: Authors own computation

The adjusted r square score in this research is 0.662, meaning that extra factors and five independent variables explain 66.2 percent of dependent variable fluctuations. Similarly, the study's standard error of estimate is 0.34142, or 34.14 percent likelihood of model accuracy.

The coefficients of the multiple linear regression analysis have been shown in the Table 5. Based on the output, independent variables working environment, communication quality, superior's support, and cultural intelligence have significant impact on the dependent variable, i.e. Multicultural team effectiveness because the p-value of those independent variables is less than 0.05. On the other hand, the variables like remuneration is not significantly impact multicultural team effectiveness because the p-value of those independent variables is more than 0.05.

Table 5: *Impact of Effective Management of Multicultural Team*

Variables	Unstandardized Coefficient		t	sig	Tolerance	VIF
	Std. error	B				
(Constant)	0.209	.129 1.618	1.618	0.107		
Working Environment	0.247	.044 5.583	5.583	0.000	.400	2.503
Communication Quality	0.337	.050 6.807	6.807	0.000	.373	2.679
Superior Support	0.153	.045 3.425	3.425	0.001	.339	2.953
Remuneration	-0.043	.051 -.858	-0.858	0.392	.326	3.065
Cultural Intelligence	0.241	.036 6.753	6.753	0.000	.517	1.935

Note: Authors own computation

Similarly, all the independent variables in the study have positive relationship with the multicultural team effectiveness. The Table 18 show that communication quality has the highest positive impact on the independent variable which is 0.337 followed by working environment (0.247), working environment (0.247) cultural intelligence (0.241) and superior support (0.153) on the multicultural team effectiveness.

VIF of this Table is shows that all independent variables are less than 5 (i.e. working environment, communication quality, superior's support, remuneration, cultural intelligence) which is 2.503, 2.679, 2.953, 3.065 and 1.935 which indicates that this data is fit for the coefficient. VIF value less than 5 indicates that there is no problem of multicollinearity. Hence, all independent variables can be used for fitting model for regression analysis.

Based on the SPSS output shown in Table 5 multiple linear regression equation for this study is:

$$MTE = \beta + \beta_1 WE + \beta_2 CQ + \beta_3 SS + \beta_4 RT + \beta_5 CI + e$$

$$= 0.209 + 0.247 * WE + 0.337 * CQ + 0.153 * SS - 0.043 * RT + 0.241 * CI + \epsilon_i$$

The table 6 of regression analysis yielded an F-value of 164.214 with a significance level of .000.

Table 6: ANOVA

Model	F	Significance
Regression	164.214	.000beta

Note: Authors own computation

The significance value ($p < .001$) confirms that the observed results are highly unlikely to have occurred by chance, suggesting that the independent variables included in the regression model have a strong and statistically significant effect on the dependent variable.

Discussion

This study advances our understanding of multicultural team effectiveness in financial institutions, particularly within the emerging economy context of Nepal, by identifying key determinants that significantly influence team performance. The findings reveal that communication quality emerges as the most crucial factor, supporting previous research emphasizing the fundamental role of clear communication channels in diverse team settings ([Munjuri & Maina, 2013](#); [Hussein, 2022](#)). The significant impact of working environment aligns with earlier studies highlighting the importance of creating inclusive organizational spaces that accommodate cultural differences ([Chand, 1997](#); [Morris, 2023](#)).

Similarly, the strong influence of cultural intelligence reinforces [Earley and Ang's \(2003\)](#) theoretical framework, suggesting that the ability to navigate cultural nuances significantly enhances team effectiveness, particularly in multicultural contexts. Superior support's positive impact validates [Jackson's \(2023\)](#) findings on the critical role of leadership in fostering team cohesion and performance. Interestingly, while remuneration showed no significant impact, this finding aligns with recent research by [Tamang and Tamang \(2024\)](#), suggesting a shift in workforce priorities within Nepalese financial institutions. These results extend [Dongol's \(2022\)](#) work by demonstrating that effective multicultural team management requires a comprehensive approach integrating both structural and human elements. The findings are particularly relevant in the context of Nepal's evolving organizational landscape, where traditional hierarchical structures are transitioning towards more inclusive models ([Pradhan, 2007](#); [Dangol, 2022](#)), and contribute to the broader literature on diversity management in emerging economies ([Omotayo, 2020](#); [Elama, 2021](#)).

Conclusion

This study makes significant theoretical and practical contributions to understanding multicultural team effectiveness in financial institutions, particularly within emerging economies. The findings underscore that successful management of multicultural teams requires a multifaceted approach, emphasizing the critical roles of communication quality, working environment, cultural intelligence, and superior support in fostering team effectiveness. While traditional management approaches often emphasize remuneration as a

key driver of performance, our findings suggest that non-monetary factors play a more crucial role in multicultural team dynamics within the Nepalese banking sector. These insights extend existing theoretical frameworks by demonstrating how cultural intelligence and communication interact with organizational support systems to enhance team performance. For practitioners, particularly in emerging economies transitioning from traditional hierarchical structures to more inclusive models, this research provides evidence-based guidance for developing effective multicultural team management strategies.

Recommendation

The study also highlights the need for financial institutions to invest in creating inclusive work environments and developing cultural intelligence capabilities among their workforce. Future research could explore these relationships in different cultural contexts and industries, particularly examining how digital transformation and remote work affect multicultural team dynamics. Additionally, longitudinal studies could provide insights into how these relationships evolve over time and across different stages of organizational development.

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