

Marketing Public Library Resources via Social Media: Insights from Users in Mysore City, Karnataka

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Abstract - The application of social media tools is a new strategy for marketing public library resources and services in the present digital environment. Several social media tools are available in the digital world to promote public library resources and services. The present study aims to examine users' perceptions of the application of social media or new tools for marketing public library resources, services, and the Karnataka Digital Public Library platform in Mysore City. The main objectives of the study are to identify the use of public library collections, the awareness of services among public library users, methods or modes to learn about the Karnataka Digital Public Library, library-user relationships, the role of social media or new media tools in marketing library products and services, and the social media platforms used to receive and reciprocate information. The study findings reveal that the majority of respondents belong to the age group below 25 years, representing 482 (58.07%). Most respondents spend more than 6 hours in the public library, accounting for 272 (32.8%). 'Works or materials (general knowledge, competitive exams, or career guidance)' and 'local, regional, and national newspapers' are the most preferred types of library collections, with a mean score of 3.42 each. The majority of respondents (mean = 3.90) are aware of the 'Reference Service' available in the public library. It was found that the majority of respondents (96.6%) learned about the "Karnataka Digital Public Library" platform through 'notice boards/bulletin boards.' Additionally, respondents indicated that 'WhatsApp groups' and 'Telegram groups' are important social media tools that help public libraries market their products and services, representing 96.1% and 90.1%, respectively. The majority of respondents use both 'WhatsApp groups' and 'Telegram groups' social media platforms to receive and reciprocate information, with a mean value of 3.94 each. The study concluded that social media tools play a significant role in helping public libraries market their products and services.

Keywords: Social Media Tools, Public Library Marketing, Karnataka Digital Public Library, Library-User Relationships, User Perceptions

I. INTRODUCTION

The concept of marketing plays a significant role in providing services to any library, particularly public libraries. A public library is one of the knowledge hubs for any community and integrates social relationships among diverse groups. There are many marketing methods applicable for promoting the use of library resources and services; however, many public libraries are not interested

in adopting the marketing culture for library resources and services. Therefore, the present study aims to examine users' perceptions of the application of social media or new tools to market public library resources, services, and the Karnataka Digital Public Library platform in Mysore City.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review indicates that there are very few studies on users' perceptions of the application of social media or new tools to market public library resources and services. Some of the reviewed literature has been used to form an outline for conducting the present study. Semode, Ejitgha, and Baro (2017) evaluated the extent of use of social networking sites and the levels of skills acquired by librarians in Nigeria. The study findings showed that Facebook, WhatsApp, LinkedIn, Twitter, Skype, and YouTube are important social media tools used by librarians. The study found that librarians have more skills in interacting with friends, searching and navigating various SNSs, and applying information ethically. Lack of time, lack of interest, poor network connectivity, and power outages are major problems faced by librarians. Mayira, Nina Olivia, and Vivian (2023) investigated the application of social media tools by the library profession to market library services at Uganda Christian University, Mukono.

The study findings showed that various social media platforms were used for marketing library services. The library users had limited awareness of existing social media platforms for the library and faced challenges such as limited computer availability. Sibiyi and Dlamini (2023) investigated the use of social media networks to market information services at the University of Zululand Library. The results revealed that social media networks provide a good platform for marketing library services. The study found that Facebook, WhatsApp, and blogs facilitate the promotion of library resources, and social media networks enhance the relationship between users and librarians. The findings also identified that librarians faced challenges, such as a lack of skills to navigate various social media networks and the posting of non-academic information. Kumara and Nikam (2012) conducted a survey to investigate the perception of young adults toward public library services. The results revealed that public library users were satisfied

with public library services. Mangla (2014) conducted a study to examine the present and future of public library services in the NCT of Delhi. The study focused on the importance of public library legislation and the key feature of free public library services. Salman, Mugwisi, and Mostert (2017) conducted both qualitative and quantitative research on the factors obstructing access to and use of urban and rural public library services in Nigeria. Kinya (2011) examined aspects of manpower, such as qualifications, distribution, and development, in the public library system in Kenya.

The study found that public library users mainly depended on website resources and services. Chukwusa (2022) identified insufficient funds and a lack of qualified librarians as problems faced by public libraries in Delta State, Nigeria. The study recommended that good public library policies and the appointment of qualified librarians could improve public library services. Demekaa, Tyonum, and Demekaa (2015) found no difference in satisfaction levels between federal and state-owned university libraries concerning borrower’s cards, reservations, loan periods, library holdings, fines, and library opening hours. Obi (2023) identified secure logins and firewalls as effective measures for preserving public library resources in library network security.

Salzano, Brazier, Hall, and Webster (2022) identified that public libraries provide various services to facilitate the integration of forced migrants into the host country. More than 60% of students borrowed books to seek information from public libraries (Mahesh & Kumari, 2018). Hider, Wakeling, Marshall, and Garner (2024) investigated the value, issues, and challenges of library services in Australian outer regional and remote public libraries.

III. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To identify the extent of use of public library collections.
2. To examine the level of awareness of services among public library users.
3. To identify the methods or modes through which users learn about the Karnataka Digital Public Library.
4. To examine the library-user relationship.
5. To identify social media or new media tools that may help public libraries market their products and services.
6. To determine how often social media platforms are used to receive and reciprocate information.

IV. METHODOLOGY

In the present study, the survey method was adopted to examine users’ perceptions of the application of social media or new tools to market public library resources, services, and the Karnataka Digital Public Library platform in Mysore city. A structured questionnaire was created for data collection, and 940 questionnaires were distributed to the users of 20 city central public libraries located in Mysore. A total of 830 completed questionnaires were

returned. The researcher visited all 20 city central libraries for data collection and personally distributed the questionnaires to the users. As mentioned, out of the 940 questionnaires distributed, 830 completed questionnaires were received, resulting in an overall response rate of 88.29%. The collected data were analyzed using appropriate statistical techniques and are interpreted in the succeeding sections of the paper.

V. RESULT AND DATA ANALYSIS

A. Educational Qualification Distribution

TABLE I EDUCATION QUALIFICATION WISE DISTRIBUTION

Sl. No.	Educational Qualification	Frequency (N=830)	Percentage (%)	Cumulative Percent (%)
1	UG	412	49.6	49.6
2	PG	414	49.9	99.5
3	PhD	4	0.5	100
Total		830	100	

Table I shows the distribution of educational qualifications of the respondents. It can be seen from the table that the highest number of public library users hold post-graduate degrees (PG) in various subject areas, representing 414 (49.9%), followed by undergraduate degrees (49.6%) and PhDs (5%).

B. Age Group Wise Distribution

The age group-wise distribution of the respondents is shown in Table II. It can be observed from the table that the highest number of respondents belong to the age group below 25 years, representing 482 (58.07%), followed by the age group 26 to 35 years (38.08%), 36 to 45 years (2.65%), and 46 years and above (0.48%).

TABLE II AGE GROUP WISE DISTRIBUTION

Sl. No.	Age Group	Frequency (N=830)	Percentage (%)	Cumulative Percent (%)
1	Below 25 Years	482	58.07	58.07
2	26 to 35 Years	322	38.80	96.87
3	36 to 45 Years	22	2.65	99.52
4	46 Years and Above	4	0.48	100
Total		830	100	

TABLE III VISIT TO PUBLIC LIBRARY

Sl. No.	Visit	Frequency (N=830)	Percentage (%)	Cumulative Percent (%)
1	Yes	100	100	100
2	No	0	0	100
Total		830	100	

C. Visit to Public Library

Table III reveals the respondents’ visits to the public library. It can be seen from Table III that all respondents intend to visit public libraries to fulfill their needs.

D. Time Spent in Library

Table IV indicates the time spent by respondents in the public libraries. It can be seen from the table that the majority of respondents spend more than 6 hours in the

public library, accounting for 272 (32.8%), followed by 4 to 6 hours (28.7%), 3 to 4 hours (24.6%), and 2 to 3 hours (8.9%). It is observed from the table that only 4.6% of respondents spend 1 to 2 hours in the public library.

TABLE IV TIME SPENT IN LIBRARY

Sl. No.	Usual Time Spent in Library	Frequency (N=830)	Percentage (%)	Cumulative Percent (%)
1	Less than one hour	4	0.5	0.5
2	1 to 2 hours	38	4.6	5.1
3	2 to 3hours	74	8.9	14
4	3 to 4 hours	204	24.6	38.6
5	4 to 6 Hours	238	28.7	67.2
6	Above 6 hours	272	32.8	100
Total		830	100	

TABLE V EXTENT OF USE OF PUBLIC LIBRARIES COLLECTIONS

Sl. No.	Public Libraries Collections	Freq.	Too Little Extent	Little Extent	To Moderate Extent	To a Great Extent	To a very Great Extent	Mean	SD
1	Reference Works / Materials (General Knowledge/Competitive Exams/Career Guidance)	F	124	60	146	342	158	3.42	1.29
		%	14.9	7.2	17.6	41.2	19		
2	Local, Regional and National Newspapers	F	128	54	132	372	144	3.42	1.28
		%	15.4	6.5	15.9	44.8	17.3		
3	Popular Magazines in Primary Language (Kannada)	F	166	68	132	338	126	3.23	1.36
		%	20	8.2	15.9	40.7	15.2		
4	Periodicals (Journals)	F	196	74	136	364	60	3.02	1.33
		%	23.6	8.9	16.4	43.9	7.2		
5	Fiction And Non-Fiction for Adults, Young Adults And Children	F	224	68	114	392	32	2.93	1.34
		%	27	8.2	13.7	47.2	3.9		
6	Government Information	F	182	68	364	142	74	2.83	1.21
		%	21.9	8.2	43.9	17.1	8.9		
7	Resources In the Primary Language Of The Local Community	F	158	66	470	74	62	2.78	1.09
		%	19	8	56.6	8.9	7.5		
8	Medicine, Engineering & Science & Technology	F	168	84	462	58	58	2.70	1.08
		%	20.2	10.1	55.7	7	7		
9	Local History Resources	F	206	102	366	94	62	2.64	1.18
		%	24.8	12.3	44.1	11.3	7.5		
10	Community Information	F	214	112	394	74	36	2.53	1.10
		%	25.8	13.5	47.5	8.9	4.3		
11	Business Information	F	242	120	372	50	46	2.44	1.13
		%	29.2	14.5	44.8	6	5.5		
12	Resources In Other Languages	F	156	448	106	88	32	2.27	1.01
		%	18.8	54	12.8	10.6	3.9		
13	Computer Games	F	830	0	0	0	0	1	0
		%	100	0	0	0	0		
14	Toys (For Children)	F	830	0	0	0	0	1	0
		%	100	0	0	0	0		
15	Games And Puzzles	F	830	0	0	0	0	1	0
		%	100	0	0	0	0		
16	Study Materials	F	830	0	0	0	0	1	0
		%	100	0	0	0	0		

E. Extent of Use of Public Libraries Collections

The extent of use of public library collections is presented in Table V. It can be seen from the table that the majority of respondents preferred “Reference Works/Materials (General Knowledge/Competitive Exams/Career Guidance)” and “Local, Regional, and National Newspapers” as the major types of library collections, each with a mean score of 3.42. It is observed from the table that “Popular Magazines in Primary Language” (Kannada) and “Periodicals (Journals)” are the next most preferred types of collections, with mean values of 3.23 and 3.02, respectively, followed by “Fiction and Non-Fiction for Adults, Young Adults, and Children”

(mean = 2.93), “Government Information” (mean = 2.83), “Resources in the Primary Language of the Local Community” (mean = 2.78), and “Medicine, Engineering, and Science & Technology” (mean = 2.70). The average number of respondents preferred “Local History Resources” (mean = 2.64), “Community Information” (mean = 2.53), “Business Information” (mean = 2.44), and “Resources in Other Languages” (mean = 2.27) as some of the least used library collections. It is found in the table that “Computer Games,” “Toys (For Children),” “Games and Puzzles,” and “Study Materials” are not used by any respondents in public libraries.

TABLE VI LEVEL OF AWARENESS OF THE SERVICES AMONG THE PUBLIC LIBRARY USERS

Sl. No.	Library Services	Freq.	Too Little Extent	Little Extent	To Moderate Extent	Toa Great Extent	To a very Great Extent	Mean	SD
1	Reference Service	F	0	54	78	594	104	3.90	0.69
		%	0	6.5	9.4	71.6	12.5		
2	Newspaper Clipping	F	0	66	84	600	80	3.84	0.70
		%	0	8	10.1	72.3	9.6		
3	Open Reference Section	F	0	92	70	570	98	3.81	0.78
		%	0	11.1	8.4	68.7	11.8		
4	New Arrival Display	F	118	64	144	124	380	3.70	1.46
		%	14.2	7.7	17.3	14.9	45.8		
5	Library OPAC or Web Search Facilities	F	142	66	122	116	384	3.64	1.53
		%	17.1	8	14.7	14	46.3		
6	Community Development Related Service	F	132	66	164	94	374	3.62	1.50
		%	15.9	8	19.8	11.3	45.1		
7	Referral Service (Guide to nearby library or other information Centres)	F	134	84	128	128	356	3.59	1.51
		%	16.1	10.1	15.4	15.4	42.9		
8	Internet Access for general public	F	142	116	84	96	392	3.58	1.58
		%	17.1	14	10.1	11.6	47.2		
9	Periodical and Magazine Section	F	148	0	94	494	94	3.47	1.24
		%	17.8	0	11.3	59.5	11.3		
10	Adult Education program	F	138	92	116	376	108	3.27	1.30
		%	16.6	11.1	14	45.3	13		
11	Career Guidance	F	154	68	422	74	112	2.91	1.20
		%	18.6	8.2	50.8	8.9	13.5		
12	Circulation (Book Lending Service) Desk	F	158	90	394	82	106	2.87	1.21
		%	19	10.8	47.5	9.9	12.8		
13	Reading Room Facilities	F	182	62	416	60	110	2.82	1.23
		%	21.9	7.5	50.1	7.2	13.3		
14	Library Web Service (OPAC/ lending and renewal/reference service/chat box etc)	F	152	420	132	68	58	2.35	1.09
		%	18.3	50.6	15.9	8.2	7		
15	Public Digital Library Access	F	186	472	84	58	30	2.13	0.96
		%	22.4	56.9	10.1	7	3.6		
16	Children’s Section	F	324	118	388	0	0	2.08	0.92
		%	39	14.2	46.7	0	0		
17	Braille Facilities for visually impaired	F	182	562	86	0	0	1.88	0.56
		%	21.9	67.7	10.4	0	0		
18	Book Bank facilities	F	830	0	0	0	0	1	0
		%	100	0	0	0	0		
19	Inter-library loan	F	830	0	0	0	0	1	0
		%	100	0	0	0	0		

F. Level of Awareness of the Services among the Public Library Users

Table VI indicates the level of awareness of services among public library users. It can be seen from the table that the majority of respondents (mean = 3.90) are well aware of the 'Reference Service' available in the public library, followed by 'Newspaper Clipping' (mean = 3.84) and 'Open Reference Section' (mean = 3.81). The next largest group of respondents has good awareness of services provided by the library, such as 'New Arrival Display' (mean = 3.70), 'Library OPAC or Web Search Facilities' (mean = 3.64), and 'Community Development Related Service' (mean = 3.62). It is observed from the table that more than the average number of respondents are aware of 'Referral Services (Guide to nearby libraries or other information centers)' (mean = 3.59), 'Internet Access for the General Public' (mean = 3.58), 'Periodical and Magazine Section' (mean = 3.47), and 'Adult Education Program' (mean = 3.27) provided by the library. The table shows that

'Career Guidance' (mean = 2.91), 'Circulation (Book Lending Service) Desk' (mean = 2.87), 'Reading Room Facilities' (mean = 2.82), 'Library Web Service (OPAC/lending and renewal/reference service/chat box, etc.)' (mean = 2.35), 'Public Digital Library Access' (mean = 2.13), and 'Children's Section' (mean = 2.08) services are known by the average number of respondents, followed by 'Braille Facilities for the Visually Impaired' (mean = 1.88). It is noted in the table that no respondents are aware of 'Book Bank Facilities' and 'Interlibrary Loan Services.'

G. Awareness of "Karnataka Digital Public Library" of Department of Public Libraries

Table VII shows the awareness of the Karnataka Digital Public Library developed by the Department of Public Libraries. It can be seen from the table that 100% of respondents are well aware of the Karnataka Digital Public Library, developed by the Department of Public Libraries in Karnataka.

TABLE VII AWARENESS OF "KARNATAKA DIGITAL PUBLIC LIBRARY" OF DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC LIBRARIES

Sl. No.	Awareness	Frequency (N=830)	Percentage (%)	Cumulative Percent (%)
1	Yes	830	100	100
2	No	0	0	100
Total		830	100	

TABLE VIII HOW TO KNOW ABOUT THE "KARNATAKA DIGITAL PUBLIC LIBRARY" PLATFORM

Sl. No.	Features	Frequency (N=830)		Percentage (%)	
		Yes	No	Yes	No
1	Notice board/bulletin boards	802	28	96.6	3.4
2	User orientation program	798	32	96.1	3.9
3	Word of mouth	786	44	94.7	5.3
4	Advertisement in newspapers/magazines	698	132	84.1	15.9
5	Through SMS (Mobile Phone)	672	158	81	19
6	E-mail notifications	648	182	78.1	21.9
7	Conference/seminars/public meetings	630	200	75.9	24.1
8	Publicity Materials: Brochures/pamphlets	610	220	73.5	26.5
9	Through Exhibitions/Book fairs	592	238	71.3	28.7
10	Poster/Signage Display	584	246	70.4	29.6
11	Department/Library website	576	254	69.4	30.6
12	Through Radio channels FM Radio Akashvani	230	600	27.7	72.3
13	Public Lectures in school/colleges/universities/general public	230	600	27.7	72.3
14	Through TV Channels: Govt. run public broadcast service (DD Chandana)Private TV channels	214	616	25.8	74.2
15	Information Literacy Programs	194	636	23.4	76.6
16	Annual Reports/Newsletter	164	666	19.8	80.2
17	Through Reading clubs	144	686	17.3	82.7

H. How to know about the "Karnataka Digital Public Library" Platform

Table VIII indicates how respondents learned about the "Karnataka Digital Public Library" platform. It can be seen

from the table that the majority of respondents (96.6%) learned about the "Karnataka Digital Public Library" platform through 'Notice boards/bulletin boards,' followed by 'User orientation program' (96.1%) and 'Word of mouth' (94.7%).

The next most common methods are ‘Advertisement in newspapers or magazines’ (84.1%), ‘Through SMS-Mobile phone’ (81%), and ‘E-mail notifications’ (78.1%). The table shows that more than 70% of respondents learned about the platform through ‘Conferences or seminars or public meetings’ (75.9%), ‘Publicity materials: Brochures or pamphlets’ (73.5%), ‘Through exhibitions or book fairs’ (71.3%), ‘Poster or signage display’ (70.4%), and the

Department or Library website (69.4%). It is observed that ‘Through radio channels’ and ‘Public lectures’ are the next most common methods, with 27.7% each. The table also shows that fewer than 26% of respondents learned about the platform through methods such as ‘Through TV channels’ (25.8%), ‘Information literacy programs’ (23.4%), ‘Annual reports/newsletters’ (19.8%), and ‘Through reading clubs’ (17.3%).

TABLE IX SOCIAL MEDIA/NEW TOOLS THAT YOU THINK WILL HELP PUBLIC LIBRARIES TO MARKET THEIR PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

Sl. No.	Social Media or New Tools	Frequency (N=830)		Percentage (%)	
		Yes	No	Yes	No
1	Whatsapp Group	798	32	96.1	3.9
2	Telegram Groups	748	82	90.1	9.9
3	YouTube Channel	638	192	76.9	23.1
4	Facebook Page	618	212	74.5	25.5
5	Instagram Page	570	260	68.7	31.3
6	LinkedIn	224	606	27.0	73
7	X (Formerly Twitter) Handle	190	640	22.9	77.1
8	Blogs	174	656	21	79
9	Online Newsletter/Advertisement	166	664	20	80

I. Social Media or New Tools that You Think will Help Public Libraries to Market Their Products and Services

‘YouTube Channel’ (76.9%), ‘Facebook Page’ (74.5%), and ‘Instagram Page’ (68.7%).

Table IX shows the respondents’ opinions about how social media or new tools help public libraries market their products and services. It can be seen from the table that the majority of respondents opined that ‘WhatsApp Group’ and ‘Telegram Groups’ are important social media tools that help public libraries market their products and services, representing 96.1% and 90.1%, respectively, followed by

It is observed from the table that 27% of respondents opined that LinkedIn helps public libraries market their products and services, followed by ‘X (formerly Twitter)’ (22.9%) and ‘Handles and Blogs’(21%).It is noted from the table that only 20% of respondents stated that ‘Online Newsletter or Advertisement’ helps public libraries market their products and services.

TABLE X HOW OFTEN SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS TO RECEIVE AND RECIPROCATE INFORMATION

Sl. No.	Tools and Techniques	Freq.	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Frequently	Always	Mean	SD
1	Whatsapp Group	F	30	2	22	708	68	3.94	0.66
		%	3.6	0.2	2.7	85.3	8.2		
2	Telegram Groups	F	36	4	12	702	76	3.94	0.72
		%	4.3	0.5	1.4	84.6	9.2		
3	YouTube Channel	F	20	6	700	28	76	3.16	0.69
		%	2.4	0.7	84.3	3.4	9.2		
4	Facebook Page	F	66	10	692	4	58	2.97	0.78
		%	8	1.2	83.4	0.5	7		
5	Blogs	F	66	6	744	4	10	2.86	0.60
		%	8	0.7	89.6	0.5	1.2		
6	Instagram Page	F	44	692	20	12	62	2.22	0.87
		%	5.3	83.4	2.4	1.4	7.5		
7	Online Newsletter/Advertisement	F	36	690	82	4	18	2.13	0.58
		%	4.3	83.1	9.9	0.5	2.2		
8	LinkedIn	F	60	690	66	0	14	2.06	0.55
		%	7.2	83.1	8	0	1.7		
9	X (Formerly Twitter) Handle	F	58	690	70	8	4	2.05	0.48
		%	7	83.1	8.4	1	0.5		

J. How often Social Media Platforms to Receive and Reciprocate Information

Table X reveals how often social media platforms receive and reciprocate information from the respondents. It can be seen from the table that the majority of respondents used both 'WhatsApp Group' and 'Telegram Groups' social media platforms to receive and reciprocate information, with a mean value of 3.94 each. It is also seen in the table that YouTube Channels (mean = 3.16), Facebook Pages (mean = 2.97), and Blogs (mean = 2.86) are the next preferred social media platforms for receiving and reciprocating information by the respondents. It is observed from the table that the average number of respondents used 'Instagram Page' (mean = 2.22), 'Online Newsletter/Advertisement' (mean = 2.13), 'LinkedIn' (mean = 2.06), and 'X (formerly Twitter) Handle' (mean = 2.05).

VI. CONCLUSION

The present study was carried out to investigate users' perceptions of the application of social media or new tools to market public library resources, services, and the Karnataka Digital Public Library platform in Mysore City. The survey results reveal that the highest number of public library users obtained a post-graduation degree (PG) in various subject areas, representing 414 (49.9%), and the majority of the respondents belong to the age group below 25 years, representing 482 (58.07%). The survey findings indicate that all respondents intend to visit public libraries to fulfill their needs, and the majority of the respondents spend more than 6 hours in the public library, accounting for 272 (32.8%). 'Works or Materials (General Knowledge, Competitive Exams, or Career Guidance)' and 'Local, Regional, and National Newspapers' were identified as the most preferred types of library collections, with a mean score of 3.42 each. The majority of the respondents (mean = 3.90) have good awareness of the 'Reference Service' available in the public library. The study also found that all respondents are well aware of the Karnataka Digital Public Library developed by the Department of Public Libraries in Karnataka. The majority of the respondents (96.6%) learned about the Karnataka Digital Public Library platform through 'notice boards/bulletin boards,' followed by 'user orientation programs' (96.1%) and 'word of mouth' (94.7%). The study findings identify that the majority of the respondents opined that 'WhatsApp Groups' and 'Telegram Groups' are important social media tools that help public libraries market their products and services, with 96.1% and

90.1% of respondents, respectively. The majority of respondents used both 'WhatsApp Groups' and 'Telegram Groups' social media platforms to receive and reciprocate information, each with a mean value of 3.94. Finally, it can be concluded that social media tools play a significant role in helping public libraries market their products and services, and all respondents are well aware of the Karnataka Digital Public Library platform.

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