

# THE EXISTENCE OF PESANTREN EDUCATION IN THE FORMATION OF SANTRI CHARACTER IN BUILDING A SOCIETY WITH CHARACTER IN TODAY'S MODERN ERA

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**Abstract.** Character is the inherent behavioral values of humans related to God Almighty, self, fellow human beings, the environment and nationality that are manifested in thoughts, attitudes, feelings, words, and actions based on religious norms, laws, manners, culture, and customs. Learning character values is not only at the cognitive level, but is able to touch on internalization, and real practice in the daily lives of students in society. The modern era or globalization is currently a period that has many challenges that can change conditions from various aspects, one of which is the clash of socio-cultural values. So that it has entered into the conversation in the realm of education, in the form of moral damage in the quality of education that occurs in Indonesia. Meanwhile, education itself really needs a foundation in the form of character education. The purpose of character education is for students to have broad spiritual intelligence, where spiritual intelligence is the most basic intelligence compared to other types of intelligence. One of the educational institutions with Islamic nuances and is a subculture of Indonesian society is pesantren. Islamic boarding schools are one of the educational institutions that are able to shape the character of students not only through intellectual intelligence but also able to have emotional and spiritual intelligence. The purpose of this study is to provide an explanation and description of how the role of pesantren education is able to contribute to shaping the character of students in the development of society in the modern era or globalization today by explaining the patterns that are instilled and the best implementation of national character education is carried out in Islamic boarding schools. This research uses a descriptive qualitative research method with an explanation and exploration and in-depth fieldwork regarding the understanding, perceptions, and experiences of individuals related to the existence of the role of pesantren education in shaping the character of students in forming a society with character in today's modern era, then the results of the interviews will be analyzed using content analysis, data reduction, data display, and drawing conclusions from the results of the interviews obtained. By knowing the role of boarding schools in taking part in shaping the character of students in preparing their character in community life, it can actually help in knowing the progress of pesantren in implementing character education through the material taught and practiced as well as the exemplary kyai, dormitory caregivers, teachers, and programs or activities provided by boarding schools to students so that good character is created and ready for the development of a society with character in today's modern era.

**Keywords:** Character Building, Community Development, Islamic Boarding School, Modern Era

## INTRODUCTION

Character is something contained in an individual that characterizes the individual's personality that can distinguish it from other people in the form of attitudes, thoughts, and actions. These characteristics are useful for living and working together, both in family, community, nation and state. In addition, character is the culmination of habits resulting from ethical choices, behaviors, and attitudes that individuals have that are excellent morals even when no one sees them. Character

includes a person's desire to do the best, concern for the welfare of others, cognition of critical thinking and the development of interpersonal and emotional skills that lead to an individual's ability to work effectively with others in any situation. Character is expected to help in solving various problems, especially in the field of education, by preparing students through planning, implementing and evaluating the existing education system effectively, efficiently, and successfully.

The era of globalization is a time of challenges that can change the conditions of various aspects of life which become a clash of socio-cultural values. The more sophisticated the technology, the greater the challenges that must be faced, as currently the Indonesian state is facing psychological problems related to personality problems such as corruption, indiscipline and like to avoid responsibility, traits that are very contrary to religious values. In addition, in today's modern era there is intense competition, both individually and in groups. The social, cultural situation of society these days is indeed very worrying. Various events in education that have begun to increasingly degrade human dignity and status, which has led to the destruction of moral values, the spread of injustice, a thin sense of solidarity, have occurred in educational institutions.

Character building of the nation's children is a major issue in family life, society and the nation. In studying various parts of people's personalities, the education system in Indonesia has serious problems with character education. The formation of a person's character is a topic that must be discussed seriously and regularly with the nation's children because they are very instrumental in determining the future direction of a nation. Thus, it is very important for each group of individuals to always cultivate a responsible psychological position, by showing unwavering enthusiasm and perseverance, refraining from various things that are not good especially in terms of giving up on difficulties, showing how self-discipline is and striving to be diligent in improving the nation's abilities.

Thus, character education is becoming increasingly urgent to be implemented in educational institutions. The onslaught of global currents without a filter from Indonesian society has resulted in people being easily carried away by the flow of freedom and individualism, which has a direct impact on the decline in the moral quality of the nation. The millennial era or the current modern era has various aspects of challenges and obstacles that require a self-defense shield from the Indonesian people to counter-attack to face these challenges and obstacles. Although it is a challenge, the progress in the modern era today must also be accepted and used in a positive influence for the nation's generation. So that with the shift in lifestyle and also the flow of information and globalization that is not filtered optimally, it causes changes in the character possessed by humans today, especially the younger generation.

Education is able to tear down the stronghold of ignorance by replacing it with a new building with better values. According to the Ministry of National Education, there are 18 pillars of personality needed by a person, namely: (1) religion; (2) honesty; (3) tolerance; (4) discipline; (5) hard work; (6) creativity; (7) independence; (8) democracy; (9) curiosity; (10) national spirit; (11) love for the country; (12) respect for success; (13) friendly/communicative; (14) love of peace; (15) love to read; (16) environmental protection; (17) social protection; (18) responsibility. The 18 pillars are expected to be the foundation in building an advanced and civilized generation.

In today's modern era, pesantren is a medium or means that has a very important role in shaping human character. A good character can be formed if a person does or undergoes a positive activity that is in his daily environment, such as learning activities that can increase one's spiritual intelligence. Pesantren is a socio-cultural and religious institution that is able to assist in shaping the character of students through curriculum management that has been previously determined. Ideally, curriculum management is a system with comprehensive, cooperative, systematic and systemic management in achieving the goals of the pesantren curriculum itself. The progress of pesantren institutions will never be separated from the application of appropriate and ideal curriculum management. That way the ideal and appropriate curriculum will have an important role in preparing learning activities in every educational institution. What is meant by the ideal curriculum is a curriculum that contains ideal guidelines regarding the ideals contained in the boarding school curriculum document, because boarding schools play a very important role as a basis for Islamic education which is needed in everyday life and the nation.

One of the goals of education is to shape the child's personality which can be achieved through the development of moral and ethical practices in accordance with one's religious beliefs. Thus, efforts that can help in realizing the goals of education are the development of religious

character in all circles, especially among adolescents. Religious character is one of the aspects of human personality that will not be able to stand alone, meaning that there is a connection with aspects of personality and must be trained to the younger generation from here on so that it will not draw the tasks of further development. Character education is currently in the quality of society has decreased. So that the presence of pesantren is an education that is able to form characters that must be implemented into formal education at all levels of national education. That way it will help in realizing the goals of national education, namely to make students become human beings who are faithful, pious, noble, and creative and capable of others.

Realizing that the importance of having character in humans, humans will be faced with three major challenges that must be faced by the nation, namely: (1) establishing a united and sovereign state; (2) nation building; (3) national character building. The essence is that in building human character, the most important element is moral education. This means that in character education is able to form a child's personality that is able to make a good human being, a true human being not only has intellectual intelligence (IQ) but also has emotional intelligence (EQ) and spiritual intelligence (SQ). Character education is very important in building strong human resources through proper education. So that educational institutions, especially pesantren, will be seen as a strategic place in shaping character (Furqon & Hidayatullah, 2010).

Pesantren is the oldest Islamic educational institution in Indonesia that has developed since the time of the spread of Islam and has contributed to the intellectual life of society. Government Regulation No. 55/2007 on boarding school education states that the purpose of boarding school education is to instill faith and piety to Allah SWT, noble morals, and boarding school traditions to develop abilities, knowledge, and skills so that they become experts in Islamic science and become Muslims who have the skills to build Islamic life in society.

Pesantren is a traditional Islamic religious institution that not only organizes religious teaching but also provides dormitories as an effort to deepen religious learning. There are many interesting things about pesantren that are not owned or obtained in other educational institutions. The development of pesantren today does not only focus on madrasah diniyyah as a non-formal institution but also formal educational institutions. Likewise, the approach to developing pesantren learning methods continues to develop along with technological advances. Technology that has touched the level of teaching in formal and non-formal education with its main elements, namely kiaiKiyai, santri, mosques, huts and books, which have become their own sub-culture. So that despite modernization or globalization, pesantren are never left behind and survive.

Pesantren is one of the unique institutions with very strong and sticky characteristics. The role taken is the effort to educate the nation's children has been passed down to the next generation. It is the pesantren that provides education during difficult times, the period of struggle against colonialism and is a center of study that continues to survive until today. Pesantren develops with a tradition that surrounds it. This is supported by the presence of kiaiKiyai as the guardian of the integrity and consistency of its stance. The character and ideology of a kiyai are integrated with the pesantren institution. In fact, pesantrens develop as Indonesia develops while supporting an inclusive religious understanding.

Pesantren as the main support in the formation of the nation's character, because the formation of religious education and character for students is very suitable to be done in schools that use a pesantren-based system. Pesantren is related to the formation of ethics, morals, and akhal which in the future will be able to make the next generation of the nation have good character. In addition, the aspect that can make the implementation of character education is the moral and character problems of the nation's generation which are increasingly concerning when viewed from the aspect of religiosity. The success of character building can be known and seen from various daily behaviors of the younger generation. These behaviors can be in the form of awareness, honesty, sincerity, simplicity, caring independence, freedom of action, accuracy, etc.

Based on the explanation of the current situation and conditions, the researcher is interested in researching the "EKISTENCY OF PESANTREN EDUCATION ON THE FORMATION OF CHARACTER OF SANTRIES IN BUILDING A CHARACTERED COMMUNITY IN THE MODERN ERA TODAY".

The formulation of the problem in this study is how the presence or existence of pesantren education in this case in the formation of the character of students to be able to become a society with character in today's modern era. As for the purpose of this study, it aims to dig deeper and also

present information about the presence and role of pesantren as a medium in shaping the character of students to be able to become a society with character in today's modern era, besides that the purpose of this study is to identify the methods and values used in the character building process, as well as analyze the impact of the characters formed on individuals and society.

### Literature Review

Character building can be seen from various literature reviews or theories, one of which is Social Cognitive Theory. Social cognitive theory is a new name for social learning theory developed by Albert Bandura. Social cognitive theory is a theory that emphasizes the idea that most human learning occurs in a social environment. By observing others, humans acquire knowledge, rules, skills, strategies, beliefs and attitudes. Individuals also look to models or examples to learn the usefulness and appropriateness of behaviors resulting from modeled behaviors, which they will then act upon according to beliefs about their abilities and the expected outcomes of their actions.

In addition, Bandura developed his theory to address how people gain control over life events through self-regulation of thoughts and actions. The basic process includes: setting goals, assessing possible outcomes of actions, evaluating progress towards goals, and self-regulation of thoughts, emotions, and actions. Bandura also explains that another distinctive characteristic of social cognitive theory is the leading role it gives to self-regulatory functions. Humans behave not just to conform to the tendencies of others. Most of their behavior is motivated and regulated by internal standards and reactions to their own actions related to self-assessment.

Bandura assumes that both behavior, the environment and internal events in the learner that can influence perception and action are a mutually influential relationship. Expectations and values influence behavior. Behavior is often evaluated, free from environmental feedback, thus changing personal impressions. Different social recognitions influence an individual's self-concept. Active contingencies can change the intensity or direction of activity. The attention process is very important in learning because new behaviors will not be obtained without the attention of the learner. So the retention process is very important so that the symbolic encoding of behavior into visual or verbal codes and storage in memory can run well. In this case, rehearsal plays an important role. Important motivational processes are external reinforcement, self-reinforcement and vicarious reinforcement.

Social cognitive theory helps in understanding the occurrence of aggression and psychological deviance and how to modify behavior. This theory emphasizes the important role of social influence, observation, and cognitive processes in shaping individual behavior and character. There are several keys in this theory namely:

1. **Observational Learning**  
Bandura states that individuals can learn through observing others whom they identify as models. In this case, this process involves attention to the model's behavior, understanding and retention of that information, the ability to reproduce that behavior, and the motivation to do so.
2. **Identification**  
Identification occurs when individuals feel related or connected to the models they observe. Thus, individuals will be more likely to imitate the model's behavior if they are able to identify themselves with the model and see the positive results of the behavior.
3. **Cognitive Processes**  
Bandura emphasized the important role of cognitive processes in social learning, including planning, consequence assessment, and self-regulation. Individuals process information from the environment using it to guide their behavior, form beliefs, and develop internal norms.
4. **Self-Reinforcement and Punishment**  
Bandura recognized the role of reinforcement and punishment, including internal ones, in shaping behavior. Individuals may give themselves positive reinforcement or punishment based on internal evaluations of their behavior.
5. **Self-Efficacy**

Self-efficacy is an individual's belief in his or her ability to succeed in carrying out a particular task. The level of self-efficacy can affect an individual's motivation, effort, and perseverance in facing challenges.

6. Symbolic Models

Individuals can also learn through symbolic models, such as characters in movies, books, or other media. The social learning process can occur without a direct encounter with the model.

Albert Bandura's theory contributes significantly to the understanding of how character and behavior are shaped through social interactions and learning experiences. This theory has been the basis for the development of educational strategies and behavioral interventions.

## RESEARCH METHOD

This research uses a descriptive qualitative research method with an explanation and exploration and in-depth fieldwork regarding the understanding, perceptions, and experiences of individuals related to the existence of the role of pesantren education in shaping the character of students in forming a society with character in today's modern era. The resource persons involved in this research are stakeholders who understand the role of pesantren in shaping santri to have a community spirit with character in today's modern era. The reason for choosing these sources is that researchers consider the answers from the sources to be able to answer the questions and objectives of this study. In addition to the selection of interviewees, researchers also chose three different categories of pesantren, namely pesantren specifically for women, in this case, Pesantren Diniyyah Putri Lampung, male-only pesantren, namely Pesantren Al-Farabi and pesantren that are devoted to memorizing the Koran, namely Pesantren Daarul Hidayah. Then the results of the interviews will be analyzed using content analysis, data reduction, data display, and drawing conclusions from the results of the interviews obtained.

## RESULT AND ANALYSIS

Character education can be said to be a system that instills character values in students, which contains components of knowledge, individual awareness, determination, and the willingness and action to implement values, both towards God Almighty himself, fellow human beings, the environment, and the nation so that a kamil person will be realized. The influence of santri culture on santri behavior is very strong, where the culture of the community environment and habits can shape the character of a child. When in pesantren, the formation of santri character has superior qualifications with the existence of fiqh, aqidah and moral materials, it will provide insight into santri knowledge not only in the cognitive realm. But also in the context of daily attitudes and actions. Pesantren has its own authority in shaping its culture, organizing an integrative and comprehensive learning and pursuit process.

Based on the results of interviews that have been conducted with informants by adjusting between the three categories of pesantren, the results show that:

### 1.1 The Role of Islamic Boarding Schools in Shaping the Character of Santri as Agents of Change in Modern Society

Islamic boarding schools as traditional Islamic educational institutions in Indonesia have a significant role in shaping the character of santri as potential agents of change in modern society. Islamic boarding schools take an important role in efforts to realize santri as agents of change for society. Some of the efforts made include integrating learning between theory and practice, as well as appreciation that can be implemented in daily activities within the boarding school environment and outside the boarding school.

In various categories of pesantren, they must have a different vision and mission even though the goals are the same. Pondok Pesantren Diniyyah Putri Lampung has a vision of realizing daughters who have the spirit of Islam and capable educators who are active and responsible for the welfare of society and water on the basis of devotion to Allah SWT, and the mission is to organize Islamic education that is able to form daughters who have



the spirit of Islam and educators who can develop themselves, independent attitudes, master science, technology and skills and can actualize them in society and explain the Islamic education system in accordance with the times. Then at Al-Farabi Islamic Boarding School, the vision is the formation of a Muslim generation that has good spirituality, noble character, knowledge, and skills. While the mission is to live and have the soul of the cottage, organize applied education, build human resources as an effort to form regeneration, carry out an effective, efficient and enjoyable educational process, provide adequate facilities and infrastructure, and create a beautiful, beautiful, clean and comfortable cottage environment for all residents. And at Daarul Hidayah Islamic Boarding School has a vision that is to produce a generation of Quran with global insight, through rabbani education; and its mission is to organize Islamic education, effective, fun and realize students who have good faith, Islam, and ihsan, creative, love the Koran and master science and technology, students who have competence so that they are able to continue to superior schools and students who are able to socialize and participate in the development of the nation and state.

Based on the exposure of the vision and mission of each boarding school, it means that they have their own efforts made to realize and shape the character of the students in each pesantren. All pesantren prepare carefully to be able to produce students who have good character in community life. The efforts are:

- a. Providing religious education or religious knowledge  
Pesantren specifically provide in-depth Islamic religious education. Santri are taught about religious values, Islamic teachings, and noble morals. This religious education is able to shape the character of santri with a strong moral foundation, allowing santri to become agents of change who bring positive values in society.
- b. Formation of Noble Morals  
Pesantren emphasizes the importance of the formation of noble morals, that santri are not only taught religious knowledge but also given character development to become responsible, honest, and noble individuals. Good morals are the main basis for all students to become agents of change who make a positive contribution to society.
- c. Social Skills Development  
Through community life in the pesantren, santri are taught to be able to live together, work together, and interact with others. This helps develop the social skills needed in modern society. The ability to communicate, leadership, and tolerance can be applied by santri as effective agents of change.
- d. Cultivation of Love for the Motherland  
Pesantren often emphasize the importance of patriotism and citizenship. Santris are taught to be able to love their country and society. This understanding becomes the foundation for santri to be able to contribute to the development of modern society with a spirit of togetherness and social responsibility.
- e. Critical Character Education  
Pesantren also create an educational environment that encourages critical thinking. Santri are taught not only to take information for granted but also to play a role in understanding, analyzing, and reflecting on various issues in society. This is what can provide a foundation for santri to become agents of change who are able to understand complex problems and find innovative solutions.

### 1.2 The Role of Pesantren in Teaching General Learning Understanding

Although pesantren focus on religious education, they also have an important role in teaching general learning understanding to their students. There are various pesantren that also include elements of general education to provide a broader knowledge foundation. The role of pesantren in teaching the understanding of general learning is:

a. Formal Education

Currently, many pesantren organize formal education programs that cover the national curriculum. So that santri are taught a variety of general subjects such as math, science, social studies, Indonesian language, etc. This is what helps students to be able to gain a basic understanding of the disciplines. Likewise, what is applied by Diniyyah Putri Lampung and Al-Farabi pesantren. The two pesantren organize formal learning activities starting from 07.00 to 15.00. In contrast to Pesantren Daarul Hidayah, which only focuses on achieving the target of memorizing the Quran, but even so they also continue to organize formal education when the students have begun to enter the final school exam process, especially grade 3 junior high school or 3 high school.

b. Language Skill Development

Pesantren often pay special attention to the development of Arabic and English language skills. This is very helpful for santri to be able to have a good character in terms of communication so that santri are able to understand religious texts and various literature and information globally. In the pesantren studied, the pesantren applies the obligation to use foreign languages, namely Arabic and English, to train the ability and also shape the character of students to be more confident.

c. Technology Education

Modern pesantren have begun to realize the importance of technology education. So that santri are taught to be able to use information and communication technology that can access various information, communicate, and develop skills that are relevant to the demands of modern society.

### 1.3 The Role of Pesantren in Teaching Leadership Values

Pesantren does not only focus on spiritual and moral aspects, but it also has an important role in teaching leadership values to its students. The role of pesantren in shaping santri leadership is:

a. Leadership Ethics Education

Pesantren provides leadership ethics education based on Islamic values. Santri are taught to be a leader who is fair, responsible, and sensitive to the needs of the community.

b. Giving Examples from Pesantren Leaders

The life of a santri every day is to engage and interact with the kiai/Kiyai, teachers, ustadz/ustadzah. So that these figures become examples of the realization of good leadership. Santri can observe and learn from the attitudes, decisions and actions of pesantren leaders to develop their understanding of leadership.

c. Leadership Training

Pesantren can organize special activities that aim to train santri leadership skills. This includes developing communication, decision-making, team leadership and negotiation skills.

d. Educating Moral-Based Leaders

Pesantren emphasizes the importance of leadership based on Islamic morals and ethics. Students are taught to lead with integrity, honesty, and a sense of responsibility,

so that the students will be able to become leaders who have a positive impact on society.

e. Consensus-Based Leadership Development

Pesantren often teach the concept of deliberation to reach consensus, which is a principle in consensus-based leadership in Islam. In addition, santri are also taught to listen to other people's opinions, respect differences, and find solutions together.

f. Strengthening the Sense of Social Responsibility

Leadership in the context of pesantren is not only directed to be self-reliant but also to have a sense of social responsibility. Santri are also taught to care about the welfare of the community and have a commitment to public service.

g. Transformational, Empathic and Fair Leadership Education

Pesantren can emphasize the type of leadership that is transformational, namely leadership that is able to motivate and inspire others to achieve higher goals, besides that effective leadership also requires the ability to understand and feel the needs and expectations of others. Pesantren can teach their students to develop empathy as an integral part of leadership. Furthermore, pesantren also provide guidance to students to be able to understand the importance of justice in everything, especially leadership. Students are taught to be leaders who always prioritize justice and partiality to all people, regardless of differences.

In every pesantren, there is an organizational management system that is managed or held by the students, through which the organization is able to help in shaping the character of students who have good leadership. Through this approach, pesantren are able to create an environment that supports the development of leadership that is responsible, moral, and oriented towards the common good. Pesantren plays an important role in forming a generation of leaders who can make a positive contribution to society.

#### 1.4 Islamic Boarding School Program to Support Soft Skill Development

Islamic boarding school programs can be designed specifically to support the development of soft skills or skills in students. This aims to ensure that students can survive using the abilities they have. There are several programs provided by Islamic boarding schools to help shape the character of students who are able to contribute to social life, namely:

a. Communication Skills Development

Islamic boarding schools have various programs that can help shape the character of students to have good character, one of which is the muhadoroh program. Muhadoroh itself is a mandatory activity given by Islamic boarding schools to students to be able to practice public speaking to help students develop public speaking skills, self-expression and persuasive abilities. This ability will be useful in everyday life and the future.

b. Time Management Skills Development

All activities and activities that take place at the Islamic boarding school have been arranged and arranged in a neat and orderly manner. Apart from that, to further develop skills in time management, Islamic boarding schools can provide training and assistance in managing time effectively. So that students are better able to appreciate time and manage their time.

#### 1.5 The role of Islamic boarding schools in forming character by involving parents

Parents are also one of the most important parts in forming the character of students. The involvement of parents will be able to increase the effectiveness of the



character formation process. Efforts made are to establish good communication with the santri's guardians, remembering that the santri live in the Islamic boarding school for 24 hours under the supervision of the Islamic boarding school, so that the caregivers and teachers at the Islamic boarding school also always communicate with the santri's guardians regarding the development of the students while they are at the Islamic boarding school. Collaboration between Islamic boarding schools and parents will create a consistent educational environment, both at Islamic boarding schools and at home.

Islamic boarding schools can also involve parents by holding parent meetings to participate in Islamic boarding school activities, not forgetting to hold special counseling for parents, which discusses the character development of students and provides suggestions to support this process. Involving parents in forming the character of students is a very crucial first step in achieving consistency between the values taught in Islamic boarding schools and those applied in the home environment. This creates a strong foundation for holistic and sustainable character development.

According to the students, education at Islamic boarding schools is a sacred prison, even though you have to be away from your parents, learning to live independently is full of tears. However, education using the Islamic boarding school pattern will provide very valuable life lessons for individual students. The culture that exists in Islamic boarding schools has its own uniqueness and characteristics, the existence of Islamic boarding schools in ancient times was not like the ones that exist today. According to Zamakhsari, Islamic boarding schools must have 5 elements, namely a hut as a place for students and kiyai to stay, a mosque, kiai, santri, and recitation of the classical Islamic book which is usually called the yellow book. However, Islamic boarding schools can also be classified based on the number of students. In the national education structure, Islamic boarding schools are a very important link in the chain. This is because Islamic boarding schools have been around for a relatively long time, but the role they have played has been influential to this day in efforts to educate the nation's life.

## CONCLUSION

Moral awareness is something that is very, very important. Apart from intellectual ability (IQ), it is also necessary to have the ability to control emotions (EQ). So, to restore moral awareness to humans, character education is needed as a path that will ultimately lead to the benefit of fellow humans, religion, nation and state. The obligation to implement character education does not only lie with the government and educational institutions, but also with the smallest levels of the family environment, which is an important role in character formation. Character education for the younger generation, all technological sophistication also plays a very important role in shaping the nation's character. So there needs to be cooperation between all elements in forming character, especially Islamic boarding schools. Even though they have different visions and missions, they still have the same goal, namely to shape the character of students so they can become people with character in the current modern era, by applying the teachings or important points from Islamic boarding school teachings such as leadership, time management, soft skills development, etc.

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