

The education sector is an essential pillar in achieving sustainable economic growth in Malaysia

Karim Salem Hussein Al-Ghalbi

Ibrahim Khalil Sultan Al Qaseer

Al-Qadisiyah University - College of Administration and Economics

Corresponding Author: Ibrahim Khalil Sultan Al Qaseer

Abstract : The interest that the world has witnessed in the aspect of investing in education, because of its great impact and the basis for progress, success, development and economic growth, and also as a result of the need for skilled human labour and the ability it provides in harnessing resources and then effectively contributing to increasing production and reducing costs, and given the importance of the subject, The most prominent concepts of investment in education and its relationship to economic growth were discussed, to improve the quality of work by investing in the education of individuals and developing their capabilities, because individuals represent a real wealth that can be distinguished between nations, and after development standards have become focused in the form of human beings. On this basis, the education sector was dealt with, and to identify its role and the extent of its contribution to sustainable economic growth.

When we look at Malaysia's experience and follow it in this field, we see that it is many efforts to invest in the education sector to improve indicators of sustainable economic growth that is largely dependent on renewable resources and to exploit this in developing human and national energies, and its transformation over the past three decades from a country that specializes in Producing primary commodities and exporting them to a country with rapid growth and knowledge-based economy, and its development of many strategic plans in the education sector and making great strides in this field and its development to advance the Malaysian economy.

INTRODUCTION: The relationship between investment in education and growth indicators is characterized by its strength, as human investment affects growth indicators by strengthening its indicators and enhancing the capabilities of its economy. In light of the shift in economic thought towards spending on education, since this spending can increase expertise and qualification and then obtain economic gains after the human element has become one of the most important productive elements that can contribute to achieving growth and development.

As the Malaysian economy started from a practical and accurate vision within the frameworks of development policy, whether at the internal or external level, based on the investment of education and careful planning of human resources, which targeted social development in the first place, in raising the level of social life, and because it is the main engine of the development process to include all its sectors and its fields.

research importance:

The study derives its importance by addressing a basic issue, which is the importance of analyzing investment in education and the impact it plays in developing and promoting sustainable economic growth as the main engine for progress and success.

The Research problem:

Does low investment in education affect sustainable economic growth, and does it constitute one of the entrances to sustainable growth through mutual influence among them?

The goal of the research:

The study seeks to identify the contents of education and how to invest in it, and to show its impact and contribution to achieving sustainable economic growth.

The Research hypothesis :

The study starts from the hypothesis that the lack of investment in education and the decline in its importance reflect negatively on sustainable economic growth.

The Research Methodology :

The study relied on the inductive approach that is based on reading and analyzing the available data and information and comparative analysis using the appropriate means of analysis, and on the deductive approach that is based on deriving concepts through theoretical comparison, which explains the impact of education on sustainable economic growth

search structure:

The study was divided into four sections, as the first topic dealt with: investment in education and sustainable economic growth - basic pillars, while the second topic dealt with: analysis of indicators of sustainable economic

growth in Malaysia for the period (2004-2019), while the third topic included: the education sector in Malaysia for the period (2004-2019), while the fourth topic dealt with: the relationship between growth indicators and investment in education in Malaysia.

The study concluded with a set of conclusions and recommendations based on the results that have been reached.

The first topic

Investing in education and sustainable economic growth – key pillars

First // Investment in education:

The educational system has a decisive impact in raising the rates of employability of young people, and is the mainstay of the economic and social structure of any society. This was confirmed by Marx and John Stuart Mill and others on the importance of human skills and experiences through various educational processes and their impact on the economy and its development. Any growth in the capabilities of individuals through education works to improve and increase their productive capabilities⁽¹⁾, in order to chart the professional and future path at various levels, and the following elements fall within this scale:

1- **Efficiency and quality of education:** The efficiency of education is based on many indicators, the most prominent of which is the indicator of educational capabilities, which in turn depends on the educational system. This is what motivates us to improve the method of teaching curricula and develop education and its contents in general to conform to the requirements of the labor market, and this is done through the following:-⁽²⁾

- A. Determining the target group of workers in education programs.
- B. Motivations of employees to participate in educational programs.
- C. The extent to which educational programs are compatible with the needs of the labor market.
- D. The degree to which employees benefiting from education programs assimilate the importance of self-development of knowledge.

2- **Duration of the study:** It shows the educational levels that the children will complete, and the amount of education they will receive, and that the duration of the study includes the amount of education based on the number of years of schooling that the child is expected to have spent when he reaches the age of eighteen due to the prevailing pattern in enrollment rates.

3- **Expenditure on education:** Expenditure on education is an important issue that attracts the attention of many developed and developing countries alike, despite the difference in spending rates among those countries in relation to their national income, which increased interest in it after the Second World War. Those funds that are included in the budgets of governments, whether they are central or local governments or other official bodies, and that the impact of these governments on spending on education is a basic impact in developing countries, but in developed countries is relatively less, and that effect varies from one country to another. Many modern models have been used for the growth of spending on education as a proxy for the investment variable in human capital.⁽³⁾

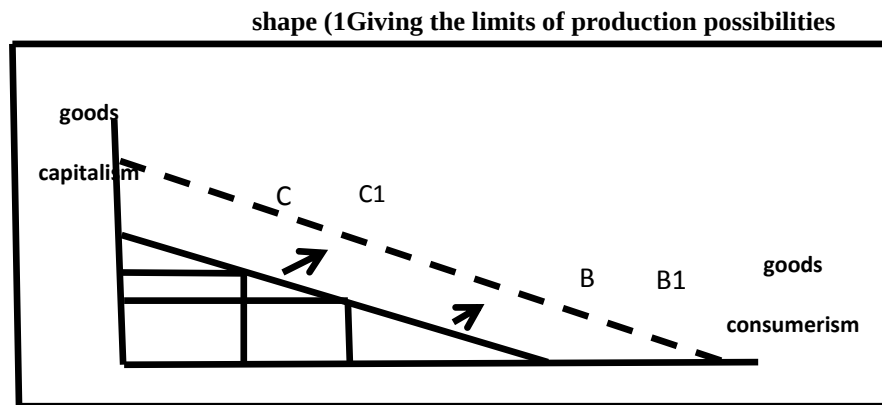
Second // The concept of sustainable economic growth and its importance:

Economic growth is of great importance for many developing and developed countries alike, because of its impact on supporting the economy, exploiting resources, increasing the level of income and contributing to overcoming and solving many economic problems. Economic growth has been defined as “the process of expanding production within a period of time.” Compared to a period that precedes it in the short and medium terms⁽⁴⁾, it is also known as “the increase that occurs in the average real per capita income over a certain period of time”⁽⁵⁾. The rate of economic growth is measured in many countries by the following equation:-⁽⁶⁾

$$\text{Economic growth rate} = \frac{\text{rate of increase in average share}}{\text{per capita real income}} - \frac{\text{rate of increase in level}}{\text{general price (or inflation rate)}}$$

Simon Kuznets has taken another direction for the concept of economic growth by achieving a sustainable increase in the average production of a worker or individual, and the need to adopt the principle of equity and support for generations when designing development plans, and this can be expressed as sustainable and sustainable policies. It can be achieved without relying on a strategy that is formulated and implemented in a sustainable manner in terms of economic, environmental and social terms, by preserving the various natural and human resources adopted by the growth process to achieve the best gains in the short and long term, which requires selection and appropriate development projects and projects.⁽⁷⁾

Economic growth can be related to economic measures aimed at increasing the production capacity of a country, as shown by the production possibilities limits curve “PPF”, and as shown in Figure (1) as follows:-



Source: Abdul-Wahhab Al-Amin and others, "Principles of Macroeconomics", Kuwait, Dar Al-Maarifa for Publishing, 1983, p. 256.

The previous figure shows that economic growth does not include a shift on the same curve to the maximum production potential (AB), i.e. a movement from point (c) to point (c1), because this movement does not represent an absolute change in the volume of production⁽⁸⁾, but rather a mere change in the total production. Economic growth is reflected in the event of a shift in the production possibilities curve to the top, as in the curve (A1B1), and this means that the shape of the new curve represents broader possibilities for production, and accordingly, sustainable economic growth can be defined as the increase and increase in the number of "added values" over the years. to achieve a sustainable developmental impact⁽⁹⁾, and that this sustainable growth rate reflects the facility's future prospects, and that the main objective of the owners of this facility, whether it is large or small, is to achieve a sustainable growth rate, and that the strategy for achieving that desired growth is through:⁽¹⁰⁾

- 1- Raising the GDP growth rate to about (10%) as a starting point.
- 2- Increasing the participation of women and youth in the labor market.
- 3- Economic empowerment and reducing poverty rates.
- 4- Raising the sectoral growth rates.

Many developmental studies conducted on some developing countries indicate that economic growth is the best way to achieve a better standard of living and to get rid of poverty, as poverty is reduced by 20-30%, through an increase in the level of income, and thus economic growth by 10%. Sustainability is of great importance and has many goals, including the following:⁽¹¹⁾

- 1- Reducing the severity of poverty and raising the standard of living.
- 2- Pushing the wheel of human progress.
- 3- Redistribution of income.
- 4- Develop the health and education sectors.
- 5- Creating job opportunities.

The role of sustainable growth is embodied in us in securing the future through the use, consumption and production of the sustainable resource that develops economic activity, as well as the productive investment in human beings by providing education and training, health care, clean workplaces, a different safety net, social support and anti-violence. In order to achieve the development goals that the sustainable economic growth process aspires to.

The second topic

(Analysis of indicators of sustainable economic growth in Malaysia for the period (2004-2019)

First: Analysis of indicators of sustainable economic growth:

The economic growth of the state is affected as a result of the development of many factors in the economy, most notably the state's gross domestic product and the average per capita share of that product. In addition, Malaysia has taken several urgent preventive measures, foremost of which are:⁽¹²⁾

- 1- Fixing the Malaysian currency against the dollar and preventing its transfer abroad.
- 2- Imposing restrictions on the flow of foreign capital to and from Malaysia.
- 3- Reducing general government spending.
- 4- Opening companies and establishments to be privatized to Malaysians without other foreign companies, with encouraging tax exemptions.

A package of sustainable economic growth indicators will be reviewed in order to show the reality of economic activity in Malaysia and the extent to which economic development standards apply to it, as follows:

1-gross domestic product (GDP):

The rapid economic growth contributed to the increase in the income of individuals with the increase in the total income over the decades. As a result of the economic policies pursued by the Malaysian government, the Malaysian gross domestic product achieved successive and significant growth, especially industrial products, which played a large and distinctive role in increasing the rates of GDP.

Table (1) shows the size of Malaysia's GDP during the period 2004-2019. As for the average per capita output, Table (15) shows that the per capita output achieved positive growth during the period 2004-2008, and what should be noted is that the per capita output achieved a negative growth during the period 2009 that amounted to (3.29%), and this decrease in the per capita ratio of output attributed to the decline in GDP due to the global crisis of 2008 and its impact on the Malaysian economy, and then the average per capita output began to achieve positive and different growth rates, and until it reached in 2019 about (12,478) thousand dollars, i.e. a positive growth rate of (2.95)%.

It is clear from this that Malaysia is on the right path to achieve its ambition, and not only relying on its past experience, but rather has focused on developing human capital to guide economic growth by owning a stock of competent resources in terms of skills, experience, talents, capabilities, intelligence and judgment to support national development and production Economic value.⁽¹³⁾

GDP index and average per capita in Malaysia for the period (2004-2019)(Table 1)

the year	GDP (billion dollars)	GDP growth rate %	Average per capita output (thousand dollars)	GDP per capita growth rate %
2004	124.75		7.720	
2005	143.53	15.14	7.974	3.28
2006	162.69	13.34	8.255	3.52
2007	193.55	18.96	8.605	4.24
2008	230.81	19.25	8.850	2.85
2009	202.26	-12.36	8.559	3.29-
2010	255.02	22.08	9.040	5.62
2011	297.95	16.84	9.372	3.67
2012	314.44	5.54	9.743	3.96
2013	323.28	2.81	10.061	3.27
2014	338.06	4.57	10.524	4.60
2015	301.36	10.85	10.912	3.69
2016	301.25	-0.03	11.244	3.04
2017	318.96	5.87	11.728	4.31
2018	358.58	12.42	12.120	3.33
2019	364.70	1.70	12.478	2.95

Source: World Bank data.

2-The structure of the structure of the Malaysian economy:

Over the past three decades, Malaysia has transformed from being a producer of primary commodities to a country with a knowledge-based economy, as many sectoral reforms have been embodied in strategic development plans for specific sectors on a long-term basis. Table (2) shows the development of basic economic sectors as a percentage of GDP. The total in Malaysia for the period (2004-2019), and it is clear that the leading sector in its contribution to the formation of the GDP is the service sector.

**Percentage of sectors' contribution to the formation of Malaysia's GDP for the period (Table 2)
(2004-2019)**

the year	Farming	construction	Services	Mining	Manufacturing
2004	8.5	2.9	57.5	7.0	31.6
2005	8	2.7	58.2	6.7	31.6
2006	7.9	3.1	52.0	8.8	30.9
2007	7.5	3.1	53.8	8.5	29.9
2008	7.5	3.1	55.2	7.9	28.9
2009	7.7	3.3	57.6	7.7	26.6
2010	7.6	3.2	53.2	9.8	25.2
2011	7.6	3.2	54.1	8.8	25.1
2012	7.3	3.5	54.6	8.4	24.9
2013	7.2	3.9	54.7	8.4	24.5
2014	7.2	4.0	54.8	8.4	24.4
2015	8.3	4.7	54.7	8.8	22.3
2016	7.6	4.8	55.4	8.6	22.3
2017	7.6	4.9	55.6	8.1	22.3
2018	7.3	4.9	56.7	7.6	22.4
2019	7.1	4.7	57.7	7.1	22.3
compound growth rate	-1.12	3.06	0.02	0.09	-2.16

Economic Planning Unit, Prime Minister's Department, The Malaysian Economy in Figures, Malaysia, 2004 - 2020, p 9.

3- Unemployment rate in the Malaysian economy:

The employment policy is one of the most important public policies concerned with the development challenges of all economies, through which it seeks to create employment positions, reduce unemployment and reach the level of full employment that contributes to achieving the process of sustainable economic growth.

Table (3) shows the development of employment levels in the Malaysian economy during the period (2004-2019), and that this development in the level of employment was accompanied by an increase in productivity, as the contribution of total productivity to the GDP reached (19.7%), through work The Malaysian government aims to improve the quality of work by putting in place strong policies and appropriate incentives to create modern job opportunities that will increase wage rates and increase productivity through the application of technology and the spread of training centers in a wide range of the country.

Unemployment rate and employment to population ratio in Malaysia for the period (2004-2019)(Table 3)

the year	Unemployment (million people) (1)	Total unemployment rate as a percentage of the total) (workforce (2)	Employment to population ratio, age group 15-24, total (3)
2004	10.8	3.5	37.76
2005	11.3	3.5	37.49
2006	11.5	3.3	37.51
2007	11.7	3.2	37.4
2008	11.6	3.3	37.23
2009	11.6	3.7	35.99
2010	11.9	3.3	35.71
2011	12.2	3.1	37.39
2012	12.5	3.0	37.46
2013	13.2	3.1	38.08
2014	13.5	2.9	38.12
2015	13.8	3.1	36.84
2016	14.2	3.4	37.14
2017	14.5	3.4	37.08
2018	14.7	3.3	37.87
2019	15.1	3.3	37.62

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on data:

- (1 & 2) Economic Planning Unit, Prime Minister's Department, The Malaysian Economy in Figures, Malaysia, 2004 - 2020, p ii.

- (3) World Bank data.

The third topic

(Education sector in Malaysia for the period (2004-2019))

The education sector received special attention in Malaysia when it gained its independence in 1957, as high funds were allocated to it at all levels, and this in turn reflects the increasing interest in investing in and developing human capital. Its gross domestic product, which in turn is the pillar and core of growth and development. The most prominent areas of interest in education in Malaysia can be monitored through the following axes:

1- Education spending:

The Malaysian government gives great attention to education and training, and this item usually gives about (20-25%) at the end of the last century from the annual general budget or its total expenditures, and this rate is one of the highest rates allocated to education in the world⁽¹⁴⁾, and that public spending On education in Malaysia, it witnessed many fluctuations. During the period (2004-2007), public spending on education witnessed a slight decrease in its total allocations. In recent years, spending on public education has shown a continuous and declining pattern throughout the period (2014-2019). That is, the additional decrease in the budget for the education sector will greatly harm the social and economic development in Malaysia, and that the increased spending rates by the Malaysian government on education were consistent with its philosophy of spreading education and reaching all segments of society, as it aimed to achieve a number of The main objectives of the educational policy, the most important of which are the following:⁽¹⁵⁾

- A. Enabling the population to benefit equally from the benefits of development and the improvement of the quality of life.
- B. Increasing capacities and opportunities to access education and strengthening the service delivery system to improve the quality of education and training.
- C. Providing educational opportunities for all citizens.
- D. The qualified human resources necessary for the sustainable development and growth process.
- E. Providing individuals with knowledge and skills and achieving peace and harmony between them.

The increase in expenditure rates led to an increase in the absorption of education, as many studies emphasized the importance of government spending on education in achieving national development and its role in promoting sustainable economic growth and deepening knowledge.

Expenditure on education and its ratio to government spending in Malaysia (Table 4)

the year	GDP (billion (dollars	Spending on education (Billion dollar)	Spending on education as a percentage of GDP
2004	124.75	6.519872	5.23
2005	143.53	6.442103	4.49
2006	162.69	6.129507	3.77
2007	193.55	6.991304	3.61
2008	230.81	9.092573	3.94
2009	202.26	8.741722	4.32
2010	255.02	12.320909	4.83
2011	297.95	16.203682	5.44
2012	314.44	16.137211	5.13
2013	323.28	19.030945	5.89
2014	338.06	16.605027	4.91

2015	301.36	13.907040	4.61
2016	301.25	13.148860	4.36
2017	318.96	13.741192	4.31
2018	358.58	15.019649	4.19
2019	364.70	14.037792	3.85

Source: World Bank data

2- Higher Education in Malaysia:

Table (5) shows the number of universities in Malaysia during 2018 and their classification on the level of return, whether they belong to the government sector or to the private sector, in addition to the classification of government-affiliated colleges in particular according to the technical standard. Higher education institutions are divided into two parts:

- Government universities, technical institutes, and public Malaysian colleges.
- Private educational institutions (not funded by the Malaysian government) are universities that are funded by people, private entities or other foreign countries, such as: private colleges, private universities, and branches of foreign universities called foreign universities on the land of Malaysia, such as the Malaysian Monash University and the University of British Nottingham, which has a branch in Malaysia.

The higher education stage has all academic disciplines available, and it has been able to gain a great international status thanks to its excellence in higher education and scientific research, as Malaysian universities dedicate their efforts to reach the highest quality of education and attract students from all over the world.

Technical colleges constitute (38.3%) of the total colleges, a percentage that reflects our great interest in the technical aspects, which are a tributary to the industrial sector in the main, which shows us the clear congruence between the axes of the plan for higher education (2007-2020), which emphasized meeting the sector's need Industrial knowledge and skill. ⁽¹⁶⁾

While private universities are superior to public universities, as the number of private universities has reached (30) universities, while public universities have reached (20), which means that private universities constitute (150%) of the total public universities. As shown in Table (5).

In addition, local universities and higher institutes work with great focus on education, which fills the country's need for a skilled workforce and according to the requirements of the labor market. The government sets modern devices and programs for the development of higher and university education.

Table (5) The number of Malaysian universities and their classification according to return for the year 2018

Number of branches of foreign universities	The number of private universities	public colleges	Technical colleges	Number of public universities
10	30	49	36	20

Minandy munusamy and Azirah hashim, 2019, internationalisation of higher education in Malaysia insights from higher education, Asia-Europe institute university of Malaysia. P23.

Table (6) shows the inputs to education in terms of the number of students and professors in Malaysian universities during the period (2004-2019). In any case, the Malaysian experience provides a model to be followed. No economy can grow unless by intensifying investment in human sectors, which has become the most important elements production process.

Inputs of higher education in Malaysia for the period (2004-2019)(Table 6)

the years	The number of professors as a percentage of females	Percentage of students enrolled in universities	The ratio of the number of students to each teacher
2004-2003	46.9	30.0345	15.5
2005-2004	48.1	27.9188	15.4
2006-2005	48.9	28.4082	15.9
2007-2006	49.7	30.0051	19.0
2008-2007	51.3	33.4395	15.1
2009-2008	49.9	35.4947	14.8
2010-2009	49.9	37.0289	14.2
2011-2010	52.9	36.1481	15.1
2012-2011	56.6	37.6123	19.5
2013-2012	53.1	39.0746	16.2
2014-2013	***	39.5086	13.9

2015-2014	52.1	45.5927	15.9
2016-2015	***	46.7621	***
2017-2016	52.8	43.7152	13.9
2018-2017	***	45.1254	13.3
2019-2018	53.8	43.0616	***

Source: World Bank data

The fourth topic

The relationship between growth indicators and investment in education in Malaysia

Interest in the education sector contributes to economic growth and disparate growth patterns around the world, although many factors contribute to economic growth.

As it is noted from Table (7) the rate of GDP growth in the Malaysian economy during the period 2004-2019, and the Malaysian economy continued to achieve positive growth rates until 2019, the GDP growth rate reached about (4.30%), and as shown in Table (7)).

While the percentage of spending on education as a percentage of GDP witnessed a noticeable increase during the period 2004-2019, due to the realization of its importance in the process of sustainable economic growth, and Table (7) illustrates this.

The relationship between economic growth indicators and investment in Malaysian education (Table 7)

the year	GDP growth rate	Year GDP growth rate Education spending as a percentage of GDP
2004	***	5.23
2005	15.14	4.49
2006	13.34	3.77
2007	18.96	3.61
2008	19.25	3.94
2009	-1.51	4.32
2010	22.08	4.83
2011	16.84	5.44
2012	5.54	5.13
2013	2.81	5.89
2014	4.57	4.91
2015	10.85	4.61
2016	-0.03	4.36
2017	5.87	4.31
2018	12.42	4.19
2019	1.70	3.85

Source: prepared by the researcher based on data from tables (15), (18), (21) and (23).

Many researches conducted around the world have indicated that education has a significant positive impact that exceeds capital. This can be seen in the Malaysian economy by analyzing the statistics on education spending as a percentage of GDP and its impact on the growth rate of GDP, although that The percentages during the period 2004 - 2019 ranged between (3.61% - 5.89%), meaning that it witnessed a relative stability in the percentage of spending on education from the GDP, as it is noted that the impact of spending on education as a percentage of the output has a positive impact on the growth of the GDP, and as It is noted that the percentage of expenditure out of the product achieved a noticeable increase during the period 2004-2019, and that the growth rate of the GDP achieved positive growth rates, except in 2009, which achieved a negative growth rate, and this is attributed to the global crisis of 2008. The graph shows the positive relationship between the percentage of spending on Education and GDP growth rate.

As all countries in general and Malaysia in particular seek to achieve high economic growth rates and an increase in domestic product through specific programs and plans aimed at increasing the contributions of the economic sectors affecting the domestic product, and spending on education is one of the most important priorities of those plans and programs, which countries aim to Through it, to achieve an increase and efficiency in the productivity of individuals, finding new innovative or locally developed technologies through which innovative products can be manufactured globally competitive, which is positively reflected on the gross domestic product and its economic growth rates. Economic innovations and inventions for a certain period before they become common to all .

The conclusions and recommendations

the conclusions:

- 1- The study indicates that the possibility of growth in the economy is through the increase in knowledge, through investment in education, as it is the first factor for sustainable economic growth.
- 2- Investment in education is based on creating new knowledge to sustain sustainable economic growth, and attention to all factors that provide incentives to create knowledge, especially the educational system.
- 3- There is a positive and moral impact of education in Malaysia as a percentage of GDP, which means that increased investment in the education sector leads to an increase in sustainable economic growth.
- 4- Expenditure on education occupies the first places in the chain of spending on necessary and vital sectors, because of its role in rehabilitating the various workforce.

The Recommendations:

- 1- Paying attention to the education sector by increasing the amounts allocated for spending on it and keeping it in line with modern developments. Therefore, the investment expenditures allocated to education for the sake of acquiring knowledge contribute to raising the rates of economic growth.
- 2- Developing levels of education through the experiences of developed and emerging countries, as education is the mainstay in developing human capabilities and plays an important impact in enabling them to compete in the fast-growing world of knowledge.
- 3- Benefiting from training and governmental support services provided by international institutions and governments, which leads to reducing unemployment rates and rehabilitating the various educational outputs whose specializations do not fit the needs of the labor market
- 4- . Increasing public spending in the education sector and establishing vocational training institutes necessary to bring about the required growth that stimulates economic growth.

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