

Beyond the Myth of the Equity-Efficiency Trade-off: A Theoretical Approach

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Abstract

Development, on the one hand, consists of the concepts such as efficiency and progress and, on the other hand, it is based on the concepts of justice and equality. In the meanwhile, these two series of concepts are extremely relying on the fundamental opposition between matter and meaning- an opposition which itself is an old-known basic distinction in all human sciences. However, regardless of the vital importance of this opposition, almost all studies conducted around the relation between justice and efficiency have been centered merely on technical concepts, which means we hardly need deeper studies with more epistemological concerns around these concepts. In the present study, we intend to show that we need to think in a new language and in a new sphere. In opposition to the present discourse of development, we proposed a new model, based on needs, and a qualitative form of social -economy, which does not remain within the limits of dominant discourse of rationality, and in the shadow of a critical- pragmatic theory and through a democratic process from below- up, helps constructing a public sphere, that will be the best ground to solve the old enigma as well as the justice- efficiency opposition.

Keywords: Development, efficiency, justice, modernity, subjectivism

Introduction

Like a lighthouse, the concept of development after the Second World War has given direction to emerging countries. Till 1970, the government had Benthamic responsibility and justice aim, development with redistribution was met. From 1970 on, there was a strong notion that market was enough by

itself for development and efficiency as a means to reach the goal (and actually the goal itself) was preferred to justice. Such market was the only means to control the society (not just allocating goods) and turned into guiding principle of individual and social action.

It seems that the best guideline of developed economy is the optimal combination between individual interaction, market and government which is under the cultural and social tradition specific to each community. (Hayami, 2007) However, because nowadays the “development” has gone beyond a socio-economic activity and turned into a concept that form our desires, it is better to look at the “development” not only as a technical field, but also as a conceptual framework. It seems that the current development discourse is wrong about the concept of justice. This Discourse in relation with many myths, has decreased justice to the objective concept of equality and homogeneity and since it was incapable of creating human equality, turned to equality in things and symptoms (and in more modern approach in equality of opportunity) and by creating a background for using these symptoms and due to the distance from reality, it has ensured peace for us (Baudrillard, 2010). We should accept that poverty and injustice, before anything else, are related to human relations. Self-prove and salvation by using objects leads to nothing. What we need is justice, not equalization of human in an economic or cultural system.

It sounds that the mystery of justice- efficiency is the result of the dominance of formal and instrumental mind.

As soon as leaving the dominant discussion of development which has understated justice as equality in face of objects and efficiency as a technical concept and lacking actual value, reason eclipse

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will end and relief will appear. In this study, we aim to show that to reconcile the seemingly conflicting concepts of efficiency -justice. We should think in another language and structure (structure differ from instrumental reason). If the technical efficiency is based on our deed end, our salvation, too, will be in it.

Iranian governors have proposed justice-based development, furthermore, the appellation of the forth decade of revolution as development and justice decade, resulted in a different reaction in academic society of country. For this reason, in this research the question has been raised that why in the theoretical literature where two criteria of growth and justice have been perceived against each other, this time development has been put beside justice?

The main purpose of this research is the theoretical analysis of the conditions to provide performance and justice at the epistemological level and try to answer this question that “what are the necessities at the theoretical level to realize justice and efficiency?”

Theoretical Views and Research History

Efficiency: efficiency is one of the significant indices that demonstrate efficiency of different economic activities and parts. In early 1900s, efficiency has been defined as “the relationship between output and applied factors in production”. In 1950, Organization of European Economic Cooperation (OUEC) gave a more precise definition and defines it as “the ratio of output to one of the production factors.”

Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) defines it as (the ratio of output to input). Fabricant says it is (the relation of output to input) (Shakeri, 2009). The important point is that most of these concepts have a technical definition of efficiency. In this sense, there is no specific difference between efficiency and exploitation. However, as European Exploitation Agency states exploitation is a thoughtful perspective that tries to improve what exist and in fact, is based on the notion that human beings can do their duties better than before. It requires continual conformity between economic activities and the variable conditions and attempts to employ modern methods (Abtahi, 2000). Cullman finds the exploitation organized by two concepts of efficiency and effectiveness. He supposes efficiency as quantitative as-

pect and divides it into technical and allocated efficiency and defines its impression to the degree of achieving the goal. In fact, efficiency shows to what extent the made attempts fulfilled the required result. In fact, efficiency is associated with the performance and providing people’s satisfaction form the attempt made. In this research, we accept the expanded definition of exploitation. In our view, the subject is the center of dentition of exploitation. In fact, exploitation is a strong faith to the real development of human.

Justice: Justice is the most prominent desire of human which has a close relationship with reality and true nature of human. In most people’s perspective, justice is the main virtue and is the source and root of all virtues and in some others’ perspective; it is not more than a mirage. Sometimes, justice is the coordination and harmony between objective creatures, sometimes it is an intrinsic harmony in God’s government, sometimes it is a valuable concept which has a relationship with reality and is far from access and sometimes, it is shown merely as a rational and logical concept.

Perlman believes that multi-meanings of the word “justice” make it to be used in various and mixed ways and mentioning all its meanings is impossible. He describes some of the irreconcilable meanings of this word as below:

Something equal is allocated to every one

Something is allocated according to their qualification

Something is allocated according to his function and production

Something is allocated according to his necessities

Something is allocated according to their rank and order

Something is allocated according to the law (Bashirie, 1995)

Anyway, the interpretation of justice and its principles is not possible without having a right and clear perspective toward similar concepts such as liberty, equality, rationality, public sphere, partnership and public service are not possible. The alleged discussion, have a systematic relationship together. However it is possible that the specification of one of them has priority and intrinsic precedence over the other. In this research, in the first place we know justice to be valid in respect to reality and interpret it in objective level as “inclusiveness”. We define inclusiveness in operational way as: the ex-

tent to which all people and groups enjoy acceptable social standards according to a collection of multi-directional results, differences among them are acceptable, and the process of achieving these results and acceptance are a process based on discussion and partnering and justly. The main point in all kinds of definition of justice is that the modern human with all of his dimensions should be in center.

In 1975, Arthur Okun presents a book under the title of “justice and efficiency, the big tradeoff”. In this book he affirms the discrepancy of these two criteria writes: in some cases where both of themes are going to be fulfilled, one of them should be sacrificed for benefit of the other. But when one of them is decreased for the benefit of other, another one should be increased (Arkirio, 2008).

A generation of economists has been trained with this perspective that in conjunction with the allocation of scarce sources, choose one between justice and efficiency and economical reason inevitably should choose one of them. Although equality and efficiency and communicative mechanism of these two kinds often determined closely, but the idea of exchanging still is seen in many economic sources.

A human science (like economics) grows, in one hand, because of internal logic of development of theoretical reasoning and the chain of discovery empirical principle and, on the other hand, because of social and environmental pressure. As the social condition changes, economists perception about rational assumptions change too. So to some extent, the reason for discrepancy between legitimacy of the concept of “the exchange of justice- efficiency” and its illegitimacy goes back to these pressures (Osberg, 1995).

Hypothesis Development and Conceptual Model

As the research progress, we review a brief history of these studies. What is clear is that the majority of studies done around the connection of justice-efficiency are emphasized over trivial and technical concepts. However the place of profound studies follows a methodological and epistemological approach around this concept and tries to study this dichotomy and duality is negligible in its historical process.

Eyvazloo (2005) in his book under the title of “Analysis of Possibility of Adaptation of Justice and Efficiency Criteria in Islam” proceed on this subject and finally concludes that in Islam and Islamic economic system two criteria of efficiency and jus-

tice are complementary. The doctrines, principles, and basic relations of Islamic economic system are organized according to economic justice and the Islamic economic system which is based on justice has efficiency too.

Sharifzadegan (2007) in an article under the title of “strategy of economic development and justice” interprets the classical and modern scientist’s ideas of justice and examines three guidelines of “preference of growth to redistribution of income”, “preference of redistribution to growth” and “strategy of growth with redistribution” and chooses the last one as the best strategy.

Alesina and Perotti (1996) showed that when the distribution of income is unjust, the derived tensions cause a huge amount of political instability. This instability debilitates investing and as a result makes the rate of growth to be low and have no efficiency in economic (Bergstrom, 1999).

Amendola (2009) in an essay under the title of “capitalism dynamism: efficiency and justice” argues that it is only in a non Walrasian and static world that justice prevent efficiency and justice is a place for exploitation in the variable and dynamic world (Amendola, 2009).

Stieglitz (1998) in his book “Distribution of income and growth with quality” does not consider the exchange of justice with efficiency as a principle and gives the miracle of the east of Asia as a proof for his claim and counts lots of failure for the government (Raghfar, 2003).

Rawls (1986) in his book “Theory of Justice” gives the priority to justice. He specifies justice in ethical not economical way and in his studies makes reconcile between these two inconsistent elements (i.e., justice and efficiency) and gives more weight to justice. Under the aegis of moral concept of justice, he illustrates his society based on two principles. The first principle defends equal liberty and opportunity, and the second principle has focused on this point that in which conditions these inequalities are justifiable.

Rodrick (1994) has adopted a political economy background in relation to inequality and development. He supported tax policy and democratic election process. He suggests that if the expenses of the government’s production service increase and people who earn little income pay relatively little expense, it will be profitable. So he prefers higher rate of tax. This preference in the democratic process leads to the ratification of higher rate of tax and low rate of stock optimality of general capital.

The more the difference between medium voter's income and min income, the more faraway the tax rate from its optimality. Consequently, the more inequality, the slower efficiency.

Hayek (1978) with an epistemological and philosophical reasoning gives the right to efficiency and liberty and believes that economic justice is nonsense and assimilates it to a mirage (Fooladvand, 2006).

Materials and Methods

The conventional scientific theories that emerged as a form of natural science and philosophical theories follow the arduous work of collecting real examples by questionnaire and other means and methods. It is an approach that is much like other sections of life in this one dimensional and multi pieces society. In this approach we have, on one hand, a knowledge that is categorized and, on the other hand, real examples that are inserted under this categorization. Such an application called theoretical specification (Canerton, 2006). In this sense, we go beyond a specific incident's framework. On the opposite, mental activities of a critical scientist, unlike a common bioregion scientist, have a social attitude, that is, it has a relation with human's genuine desires and goals. Basically, the critical approach is a Hegelian and dialectical approach that does not take into account the social phenomenon to be concrete, structural, and predetermined and rejects the method of expressing concrete truth from evidential and external point of view (Nozari, 2010). One aspect of the truth is what it should be, and its other aspect is the criticism of what exists and the Janusian aspect is the major aspect of genuine idea (Horkheimer, 1997). In the traditional approach, the social presuppositions of knowledge fulfillment have been ignored and the main factor which is the continuity and relationship between fate and culture developments is totally neglected (Ahmadi, 2004). We believe that development economy can yield human development only with the help of critical theory. To reach this goal it should be changed into a reflective theory under the aegis of methodology, that is, continually challenges the basic matters. This question, for example, that whether necessity of performance and material development leads to man's welfare and whether close him to justice or not?

The present article is analytical- descriptive from a methodological point of view and is written

in a critical theory framework. It seems that with regard to different articles such "Truth and Knowledge" the normative approach of critical theory can help us more than Positivism approach (Nozari, 2005).

Discussion and Analysis

Those such as Popper believe that human golden age is from modernism on, but it seems that behind this technical efficiency- based notion, there is a notion which is not human existential. By this approach, human mind's horizon gradually confined to physical circle. To him reality is just something material and can be valued quantitatively (Guenon, 1982).

Another major criticism to modernism is from the viewpoint of efficiency- based idea. The peak of this idea is observable in the nonsense process of technology about pictorial expression of the world. In this way, the computability of the world is judged by the size of this picture. Quantitative recognition is the result of efficiency idea which is the end of modernism and the contrast of subject- object. Through technology all humans and objects are equal in the frame of revision and picture. From technological point of view and with regard to the calculator's view, an object can be regarded to have a value till it has efficiency as reservation source. So in this sense, beneficarianism views the world to be reliable just in the realm of efficiency and through this perspective looks to everything. Thus the technological efficiency- based idea turned to the paradigm of our era. But if the technological efficiency-based idea is our dead end, our salvation too will be in it. "Wherever be a danger, saver will be there too" (Holderlin).

The Nature of Efficiency – Efficiency as Gestelle

After Marx, Heidegger is the first who discusses technology. Heidegger claims that the nature of technology is not a technological concept (Heidegger, 2007). We can also claim that efficiency is not equal with the nature of performance. Here there are two answers. One says that the technological efficiency is a means to reach a goal. The other says that efficiency is a human activity. These two definitions are related to each other, but they are not complete and exact. The gist of efficiency is not technology. Governor's discovery in efficiency-based idea is a kind of aggression which place nature in front of this improper expectation to be the

provider of energy in order to extract energy from the bottom of the earth (Zamani, 2000). This special manner of governor's discovery on new technology requires specific and new view to nature that necessitate existence of a particular relationship between human and nature- an unsafely aggressive and possessive relationship with nature.

Gestelle in German language is a framework and according to Heidegger is a paradigm or manner of discovery which its supremacy is dominated on the depth of modern technology, but by itself is not a technological concept (Introna, 2005). In the modern economy, technological efficiency-based idea is Gestelle itself. In efficiency-based approach, we experience a special manner of discovery. In this special manner of discovery, we placed as a kind of destiny; however, this destiny is not the end of man or history. We should try to find a solution. The first step is the critical question and then tries to limit the impudent claim of its generalization. The next step is an attempt to expand and enrich the efficiency discovery (Ahmadi, 1992).

As Habermas claims even if the government provide economic efficiency and ensure the ongoing development, this development will be obtainable base on priorities in which its expansion is not depend on general profits of population. This is the reason for its lack of acceptance (Canerton, 2006).

The progressive need for legitimacy has a proper relationship with the increase of application. The rare semantic resources should be replaced by monetary value resources. Undoubtedly there are expectations that do not fulfill with such compensations. In this way, there is a contradiction between open minded goals, that is, efficiency and justice and therefore what Adorno called dialectic of enlightenment happens.

The Present Situation: Efficiency against Justice

Modernism was begun with the European cultural changes in Renaissance period, a period in which we witness the advent of capitalism and suppression of Feudalism. Modernism is assisted with development in communication, whether this development is production of wealth or a move toward public justice. Human perception of him is in fact an instinct desire to everything (Berman, 2001). But postmodernism is a challenge for this modern social organization. From French postmodernist perspective, Jean Baudrillard, it is impossible to propose questions about justice in the same way as before, as if a reality is an imagination that we even

forget it too (heroux, 2007). Postmodernists' different perceptions of development and justice concepts can open a challengeable outlook in front us. Characteristics of modernism and new economic rely on grand narratives which are representative of human developments. In postmodern situation Lyotard presents two major types of modern metanarratives: theoretical grand narrative and justice grand narrative. The main idea of the theoretical grand narrative is that human life improves with knowledge. In opposite to theoretical grand narrative in which the knowledge by itself is the extreme limit, justice grand narrative evaluates knowledge because it is the base of human deliverance. In this grand narrative, the base of truth is ethics. Knowledge is no longer the target, but it helps to the target (Malpas, 2009). Nowadays grand narrative has lots its value and knowledge is no longer used for the accomplishment of human's universal goals. On the contrary, postmodern knowledge is assessed by its performance which is controlled by market. What is clear in postmodern situation is that capitalism turned into directing force of knowledge and development. In the realm of matters such as social justice, power legitimacy is based on its ability in optimality of the operation of system- i.e. efficiency. Now the question is that whether this condition leads to any results?

With regard to society's multi-division and simultaneously suppression of conventional forms of justice and identity, it is possible to present two types of probable reaction to these conditions. The first reaction belongs to Habermas, a contemporary German theorist. Habermas looks at modernism as an incomplete project. He wants to follow the goals of modernism by overcoming on multi-division of contemporary society. Universal justice is possible, but it is not fully accomplished and we should make an effort for its fulfillment. With this purpose, Habermas present the "communicative action theory", a democratic rough dimension which aims to create a public sphere that all people can discuss it in a free and equal way in order to reach a consensus about rules and laws (i.e., ethical and political affairs) that should be dominate on world's affair. But Lyotard's aim is on the opposite of this approach. He believes that Meta narratives themselves were always problematic from political point of view and argues that the best means to resist against universalism efficiency-based capitalism is the multi-division roles of language. According to Lyotard the major danger of capitalism is its ability

to diminish everything to its own order based on efficiency. Policy is an attempt to challenge and improve the society we live in, in order to change what exist. From Lyotard's point of view, this challenges and improvements linked to justice. He argues that policy requires prescription. Prescription is a kind of verbal playing which is different from denotation. Denotation describes the world, but prescription tries to change it (Malpas, 2009). Justice is not only legislation of a set of laws and following them, but it is based on the acceptance of differences between verbal playing and the fact that these are not reducible to a meta language. Being fair means that to allow others to take part in justice match, attention to their differences and allow them to speak themselves.

Struggle to remove efficiency- based paradigm: Proposing a competitor concept

In the mid-1970s, the world saw the passage from Keynes and Fordism economy toward worldwide neoliberal. Furthermore, an instrumental technocratic form of intellect protect these discussions and tries to limit rational discussion to an extent in which larger aims and available values could not be admitted. Principally, economy extracted from moral philosophy, but neoclassic orthodox paradigm, especially from 1930 on, separated morality from it. However, if it is going to be a solution for the present problems and crises, it is impossible to returns to actions before the Second World War or Keynes time. The more probable case is that there should be a new concept of economy to have more tendency to provide the basic materialistic and humanity requirements. Certainly, this requires basic reorientation of social values, for example, how different works are assessed. Accordingly, it seems that our ultimate aim should be codification of a kind of idiomatic theory under the title of "social economy" or suchlike which meanwhile having efficiency elements of economy, covers valuable matters. Thatcherism was a response on politics and economy crises in welfare government in order to organize the abilities and duties of the government and to annihilate the institutional rigidity to transfer it to post- Fordistic economy. In fact, neoliberal strategy of consumer's self- selection is applicable not only with regard to products, but also with regard to life style and a vast bulk of life customs (Harvey, 2009). Demand is a kind of social desirable result that is different from mass preferences of individuals. The concept of de-

mand entails that the relationship between individual and government – unlike neoliberal ideology – does not limit only to the economical exchanges, but the political problems should be regarded too (Sanderson, 1996). Actually, we believe that this "depoliticization" of human is the main factor in creating the one dimensional man in which the specific work of government limited to helping, controlling and modern economy modification (Marcuse, 2009). The consumerism discourse separates its anxieties from issues related to widespread social, political, and natural field which are a bed for choosing or other market reactions. It does not regard the unequal influence of market power on the formation of citizen's choice power. So, "efficiency- based consumerism discourse" faced with crisis and criticism at two levels:

- Merging it to the technical level because of excessive attention to the marketing condition and the disability in perception of real necessity of the society.
- Misuse of discourse rationality to justify ideology and the denial of political discourse connection around such results.

Here necessity is perceived as democratic negotiation around social results and is not limited to a finite and clear method of available service production. In this perspective, effectiveness in public policy needs a widespread analysis of potential structural changes and economic, political, and natural processes as well as recognition of policies which are in harmony with defined needs. But there are two problems for our suggested model:

How to determine the desirable goals?

How to evaluate the efficiency of different tools to achieve these results?

So, we need a framework in which goals are distinguished as a clear normative problem and are determined through the judgments of participants and also encompass the massive dimension that considers the role of people as citizens in the society with benefits other than commutative occasions. It does these works through a democratic process to facilitate the participation of all related beneficiaries. More important is that this model should also consider a critical framework about the ability of organizational, political, social, and economical shapes with regard to necessities and to achieve welfare results appropriate with moral concepts such as justice.

Undoubtedly, planning and thought in such a framework not only propel human in a dialectic with his needs, but also approach efficiency (in di-

chotomy of *gestelle-janus*) an step to reality of human and justice by making a distance from detailed technical efficiency and highlighting the characteristics of improvement in evaluation of goals.

At the organizational level, it is possible to ask to what extent these strategies, structures, processes and inclusive cultural characteristics can improve effective services? At the organizational level, we must accept that there is no explicit criterion for organizational function, however we should discuss and study about what affect its effectiveness, efficiency, and values and try to improve the ability and strategic capacity in variable environmental condition and in the field of unequal power.

At the service level, the question is that to what extent are these services appropriate with necessities and have the standards? At the level of policy, we should ask to what degree do these policies and existed principles let necessities to proceed in a right and efficient way? And how much mediation is necessary for coordination?

At the institutional level, we must check when involved people in a difficult condition are able to organize themselves (without the acute need to market or government' organizers) and how different aspects of the intensive institution that they are faced with can affect their effort in justice fulfillment and efficiency. When people interact, it is logical to suppose that they obtain more exact information. In most conditions, people use mental and unproved principles which they learned during a long time and this emphasize on the important role of communicative act. When people do an interaction frequently, they may learn abstracts that may be close to the best answered strategies and yield internal optimum (Gary, 2000).

However, it seems that creating confidence and adjustment of institutional principles with applied ecological systems and their expansion and gradual adjustment with each other has a basic importance in solving the difficult social conditions and subsequently attaining efficiency and justice. As Hodgson writes modern economics (under subjectivism) neglects the effect of nature's design on human's behavior and basically receives the social order as a process from up to down (Motavaseli, 2010). While human and nature are built on the bases of an interactional and dialectic relationship.

This model of "needs-based" should pay attention to effectiveness in achieving result at both political level and organizational level. Hence, evaluation has great importance in recognition that to

what extent policy was successful in achieving social desirable result. The main point is that evaluation potentially is a key element for efficiency enhancement at organizational and political levels based on the ability to fulfill necessities and promotion of citizen life. But the main problem is that how it is possible to reconstruct social and organizational relations, free from the revenue of anarchy and dominant discourse (under the role of subjectivism, positivism, and instrumental rationality). It needs a thematic democracy both in internal structures of power and external pretenders. Forster, who is affected by Habermas, believes that instrumental rationality decreases the process of policy and efficiency to an inactive and technical process, which are departed from results, policy values, and are opposite of benefits. We believe that the concept of efficiency and quality which are determined with such instrumental wisdom are not acceptable. It needs the substitution of technical wisdom with a functional and applicative one in critical discussions and citizen interaction in one hand and democratization on the other hand.

It seems that the most optimistic vision formed in floor of a local democratic approach, centered on evaluation, and is a bottom-up and thematic approach in society. Such approach can include people's interest as both citizen and consumer and furthermore can accommodate group's interest. These interests should be clear completely and proceed in debate and investigation.

Conclusion

Human mind has been involved in this vital issue that how it is possible to set an ordered society in which profit and responsibility distributed properly in order justice not depart from society nor with the excuse of creating justice, spoil adequacy and efficiency, and fade away human's liberty. However, at the same time these two concepts (justice and efficiency) fell in to material-moral opposition and its implications and turned to a great duality in human science. Maybe the advent of two great intellectual schools, i.e. Socialism and Capitalism, can be regarded as the implications of this contrast. Nonetheless, most of conducted studies around the relation of justice-efficiency have emphasized on the technical concepts and in the chronological process of this debate the place of profound studies that follow epistemological approach around this concept, has been fade down.

We believe that the main crisis of modern economical human is from efficiency-based idea point of view. In this view a thing can be regarded to have an identity till it has efficiency as the sources of stock. It is in this way that the technological efficiency-based vision turned to the paradigm and episteme of our era. Maybe it is possible to say that the main danger of Capitalism is its ability for reduction of everything to its own order based on efficiency.

In this research we showed that to reconcile the seemingly contrastive concepts of efficiency-justice, we should think in another language and another structure (a structure except simulative and instrumental wisdom). It seems that the dilemma of justice-efficiency is the product of dominance of instrumental wisdom. As soon as leaving the dominant discussion of development which has understated justice as equality in face of objects and efficiency as a technical concept and lacking actual value, reason eclipse will end and relief will be appear. At that time, production no longer enhance human's alienation, efficiency won't be a rival for justice and the fulfillment of justice won't decrease the efficiency.

Instead of the present efficiency-based development discourse, we proposed a need-based model on the basis of qualitative form of social economy which is not limited to the dominant discussion of rationality, follows a critical theory and through a democratic and communicative process helps to establish public sphere that will be the best place for fading the contrast of justice-efficiency. So, we expand the substitution concept from quality in services which entails social necessities, justice, evaluation and learning to be the bases of productivity (efficiency as discovery, not production or utility).

Real development is the inflorescence of true nature of human and his correct perception from his real necessities. In such a field and with going beyond the technological efficiency-based rationality, justice appears. Justice beyond fact-value guillotine, as ability for human communication

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