



## Emphasising Philosophy of Education For All in the Employment of Information and Communication Technology in Open Distance Learning for Sustainable National Development

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**Abstract.** The paper is hinged on the projection of Education for All (EFA) by United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) to have development possibilities, a course to educate every willing individual; by the provision of educational opportunities by the new projection of year of 2030, a possibility for every individual to have basic education. In all, due to population expansion associated social and economic developments, there has been a growing and compelling desire by many young people especially and considerable old people, across genders, to achieve tertiary education, and the problems have been that of the necessity and accessibility of such educational facilities due to their localities and their feasibilities, and brings to the fore, the demands for the general adoptability of Open Distance Learning (ODL) arrangement to meet with such objectives of EFA. The concern of this paper assessed the necessity of the employment of Information Communication Technologies (ICT) in meeting the EFA objectives through the adoption of ODL arrangement which is peculiar to tertiary education. The paper adopted the descriptive method of analysis. Hence, it considered that ODL arrangement will greatly help, if properly harnessed or adopted by all tertiary institutions to give education to those willing to be educated at any level of learning, as requested by UNESCO from all nations, living in areas distanced from the physical schooling facilities, but they should be met to assess education (teaching and learning) through the aids of efficient employment of ICT modelling, especially online studies platforms, in meeting the target populations, irrespective of their locations and social engagements. The paper concluded that, all objectives of such arrangement should be directed towards the realization of Sustainable National Development (SND) through the provision of qualitative, quantitative and assessable education in line with EFA Agenda.

**Keywords:** Education for All (EFA), Information and Communication Technology (ICT), (Open Distance Learning (ODL), Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Sustainable National Development (SND)

### 1. Introduction

With the modern and contemporary trends for educational growths in the quest for Sustainable National Development (SND), within the pragmatic relevance of ICT, educational materials and instructions have been magnanimously enriched and enriching, especially on online platforms (e-Library) than the physical libraries which we were solely used to (Isanbor & Aibinuomo 2025; Isanbor & Ojebun 2020). ICT has made learning and teaching very robust and flexible. On the basis of common understanding of national growth index, it takes education for any nation to develop properly, and the rates of development of any nation are also measured by the qualitative and quantitative education given to the people (Isanbor & Osawaru 2024; Isanbor & Ojebun 2022). For SND, through education, has been for human enlightenment, liberation and service. These perspectives of development call for all possible models of education in order to possibly achieve the global growths that are sustainable, and that which necessarily demands the contributions of everyone through education and to be educated the individuals who will indispensably and suitably contribute to national growths, as adjudicated by UNO's programme: EFA.

Problematically recognised, for example, almost all parents, student, teachers, school administrators and educational researchers have at least on some occasions, felt concerns about the Nigerian problems resulting from poor thinking and planning (Kanu & Isanbor 2021; Onwudinjo & Isanbor 2024). For instance, our current economic problems were least envisaged by our planners, why? The reason is that every Nigerian, his or her position in national developmental plans, notwithstanding, is very much in love with ostentatious living, leaving the essence of proper and integral living, and then pursuing the shadows of terminal pleasures as a result of poverty on the part of the masses and poor management of public funds on the part of the governments (Isanbor & Aibinuomo 2025; Isanbor & Ojebun 2020). Again, there is lack of education of our

people for need of patronising our industries in order to enhance quicker development.

As a matter of objective layout, the paper is concern with issues in the realization of the targeted philosophical objectives of ‘EFA’ agenda through proper employment and the impacts of ICT in ODL arrangements. It is on the demands the proper understanding of the meaning and the nature of ICT, so that, the benefits of it are fully realised, especially in educational sectors, especially for the education of out-of-school learners, due to distance learning non-compatibility and non-interventions. We have that ICT learning resources in education have grown and improved greatly following the global development measures in contemporary era, as UNESCO constantly assess the provision for global order and development. It is widely taken that the development of any nation is now determines by the extents of its ICT contents and intelligence gatherings (Dada & Ayodele 2012).

The paper projects that if the usage of ICT is maximally utilised and employed, it will improve the ODL arrangements and help to meet the objectives in which they are designed to educate the teaming individuals who desire education, by ardently assessing their relevance and placement in achieving the agenda and objectives of EFA, especially tertiary education, as they are faced with the growth and demands of contemporary human society. Hence, the followings are the objectives of Distance Education (DE) in Nigeria, according to the National Policy on Education (NPE):

- Provision of access to educational opportunities in a cost-effective manner for those who otherwise would have been deprived access.
- Provision of second chance for those who left school for one reason or the other, but who, having been mature, would want to make a re-entry into the knowledge arena.
- Provision chance for those who did not avail themselves the opportunities to go to school but who are still within the age range for Universal Basic Education (UBE) to make up for their shortcomings or to become literate and get on with life.
- Enrich knowledge base of students in regular school programmes as well as others who cannot afford to attend full-time schooling.
- Delivery of educational services in a manner that would be more learners friendly and would motivate learners to realise that learning is long-life affair.

## **2. Contextualising Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) in Educational Settings**

Through National educational policies and their meaningful and sustainable implementations, and within the employment of ICTs in ODL arrangements,

the right of development in the lives of many individuals will be duly realised in achieving Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which has metamorphosed to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (Isanbor & Aibinuomo 2025; Isanbor & Ojebun 2020). We will recognise that the employment of technology has changed and contemporarily, have been changing the ways people live, work and learn; and determine the growth of science in projecting global competitiveness for SDGs (Isanbor & Osawaru 2024; Isanbor & Ojebun 2022). The use of technology in education is one of it and one of the main challenges for education policy makers. Traditional methods of education are no longer able to meet the needs of today's learners (Kanu & Isanbor 2021; Onwudinjio & Isanbor 2024). The teaching and learning processes, like other human endeavours, involve the interaction of human beings. New technologies provide opportunities including the ability to tailor learning to the individual and doctor more efficient teaching skill for teachers.

In the contemporary times it comes with interchangeable nomenclature such as Information Technology (IT) or/ and ICT. Hence, it has been contemporarily observed that several industries, including educational organisations and institutes have taken advantage of information technology to contain costs and improve competitiveness (Brammah 2009). This indicates the growth rate that is associated with developmental applications and its indispensable acceptability. Hence, the Information Technology Association of America (ITAA) defines IT as the study, design, development, implementation, support or management of computer-based information systems, particularly software applications and computer hardware. ICT plays a significant role in helping organisations achieve profitable results and keep competitive forces in check (see, Brammah 2009). For Ebrahimi (2011), Falade & Olasedidun (2015), the definition of ICT can be substantiated as the technologies that help us record, store, process, retrieve, transfer, and receive information. These technologies include computers, the internet, broadcasting technologies such as radio and television, and telephony. In all indications, IT and ICT are dependent on each other. IT may refer to the machine and ICT to its products. And definition has brought about the consideration and application of ICT in the education, which is regarded as the largest industry in the humanity. As education is the qualitative essence of man; so ICT is making it more possible and meaningfully considered, and very much important (Isanbor & Aibinuomo 2025; Isanbor & Ojebun 2020). Technically speaking, ICT is an umbrella term that includes any communication device or application, encompassing: radio, television, cellular phone, computer and network hardware and software, satellite system and so on, for the purpose of organising, processing, communicating, assessing, presenting, storing, retrieving and simplifying information when needed and in the form needed (Nweke & Emeasoba 2013).

Hence, rapid changes in technology will ensure that ICT will proliferate in the classroom. It is predicted that there will be many benefits for both the learner and the teacher, including the promotion of shared working space and resources, better access to information, the promotion of collaborative learning and radical new ways of teaching and learning (Kanu & Isanbor 2021; Onwudinjo & Isanbor 2024). It sometimes involves the interconnectivity of many devices of operation and demands proper mastering of the techniques in employing them into effective usage (Wheeler 2000). Thereby, ICTs shift focus from teacher-centred to student-centred learning, where learners are active participants in the learning process, produce and share knowledge, and participate and learn in collaboration with others (Yusuf 2007). Thus, teachers become learning facilitators, collaborators, coaches, mentors, knowledge navigators, and co-learners and not just dispensers of knowledge. It can be deduced that ICTs are essential for contemporary educational development of any nation. Nigeria, as a nation, recognizes the pivotal roles of ICTs in the revitalization and the development of the country's education system. This recognition brought about the development of specific ICTs related policies so that the country education system could husband the potentials of ICTs.

Methodologically, it is currently relevance to posit contemporarily that, through ICT, education authentically remain the dissemination of information that is knowledgeable to positively transform the individuals and the society. It makes learning and teaching remain very effective when the desired knowledge is easily transmitted. To communicate means to share. It is by areas of shared knowledge that members of the society are constituted into corporate bodies. Consequently, effective communication depends on areas of shared knowledge (Isanbor & Osawaru 2024; Isanbor & Ojebun 2022). Effective and more efficient means of communicating educational information have been associated with ICT, especially in ODL. By communication system, it means the process by which information proceeds to the point of collection and by which it is information is transmitted back to the person or groups for which it is meant. So, let us look at the thrust of education for SND in relation to the demands of EFA, and then examine the impacts of ICT in the ODL Arrangement in formal and informal settings, and thereafter, the roles of teachers and learners in the employment of ICT in ODL study arrangement.

### **3. The Position of Education for All (EFA) for the Realization of Sustainable National Development (SND)**

In the thrust of human and societal advancement, especially in the contemporary era, there have been the conceptual and pragmatic relations of SND. Many thinkers have been philosophising that there cannot be

meaningful development without a corresponding educated humanity. This is an indispensable objective claim (Isanbor & Aibinuomo 2025; Isanbor & Ojebun 2020). Hence, the guiding principles of EFA in Nigeria is the equipping of every citizen with knowledge, skills, attitude and values as well as enable him/her derive maximum benefit from his membership of society as thus, lead a fulfilling life (Okugbe 2009: 183). Education, in whatever form, is central not only to national development but to global development. Major banes of access to education have been barriers created by age, distance in terms of space, and time (Oyeleke & Adebisi 2015: 81). This conception of their interconnectedness has remained ever relevant, judging their placements in evaluating the quantum visualization of human rights and dignity. It is only in recognition of human rights and dignity, that true human and societal advancement and growth can be said to be achieved. Education of the people reflects the characterization of SND, and this also characterises the global developmental projection of EFA.

To be meaningfully and integrally developed is to be fully human, through the recognition of education as right, we must develop our essences. For this, development becomes a right by the right to education (Kanu & Isanbor 2021; Onwudinjo & Isanbor 2024). The right to education is the right to development. By educating humanity, then, development is well defined, focussed and articulated. Any nation will develop amidst the demands of economic, political, social, intellectual, sexual, cultural and religious freedoms when the people are educated to internalise the tenets and relevance of these freedoms towards societal interests that engender communal commitment and growth (Isanbor & Osawaru 2024; Isanbor & Ojebun 2022). Hence, there is always a link to the structure of the educational system with the economic and social characters of the society in which it is located since educational systems, more often than not reflect the essential characteristics of that society (Owoseni 2011). This translates to mean that the educational value system of a particular society determines the nature and level of development she attains. And to attain an acceptable level of SND in Nigeria, for instance, the education process needs to go through a systematic realignment (Iyewuare, Emakunu & Oronsaye 2014). Hence, emphatic recognition of the interconnectedness of education and development envisages that "the issues of development have been the thrust of human and co-operate discourses toward the embrace of meaningful and effective economic and social growth and advancement" (Isanbor 2015a). This embrace of education becomes an indispensable discourse for the realization of the needed footings for SND plan.

More frankly, from the above assertions on the interpolation of education and SND, it means that; without man, no development. Every normal human person desires and seeks the working of the tools of developmental processes and dealings, that he or she has

fashions out of his or her rationality and intelligibility (Afariogun 2011). Only the employment of proper rationality and intelligibility can make developmental policies and agenda become a reality of reference and importance (Isanbor & Aibinuomo 2025; Isanbor & Ojebun 2020). With the pedagogical and epistemic convictions, it can be logically put that education is development and *vis-à-vis*. Development will be meaningfully factual when education is adequately recognised and executed. All these factors of development have been identified as the products of an educated nation that desired development through the mental and physical enlightenments of the masses.

#### **4. Education for All (EFA) and the Educational Concerns in the Employment of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs)**

Assessing the Agenda of EFA objectives and philosophy, a development policy and programme designed by UNO under the educational development plans of UNESCO, projects that education should be given to or provided for every individual, recognising it as a right that must be respected, promoted and protected by all member' states. The global commitment of EFA emerged as a reaction to increasing rate of early marriage, child labour, child trafficking, child exploitation and child-related abuses that deprive children especially girls of basic education and an insured future (Asaju, Bott & Olowu 2016). It demands that all members should design as a matter of developmental urgency, educational policies and provisions; and with all necessary invested implementations; to use the education of all citizenry to eliminate poverty, gender inequality, draughts, environmental degradations, crimes, diseases, illnesses, illiteracy, social and political stagnation and other developmental limitations.

The thrust of the philosophy of EFA envisages the reasoned and seasoned realisation of global peace and justice through adequate and holistic educational programmes and provisions for every individual, whether able or disabled, poor or rich, rural or urban, economically advantaged or disadvantaged. The philosophy of EFA is generally hinged on the education for the production of responsive and responsible citizens that will effects positively the developmental plans and objectives of any nation (Isanbor & Aibinuomo 2025; Isanbor & Ojebun 2020). Hence, the philosophy of EFA recognises the possibility of easy accessibility of education and educational incentives for some individuals in the large and convenient scale through the employment of modern social developmental sensibility of ICT by comfortable adaptability of ODL.

More straightforwardly, with modern and contemporary development within the ambience and by the efficiency of science and technology, the weighty employment and effectiveness of ICT become every household's

concern, discussion and involvement, in order to adjust or blend with the trend of current civilisation and development. There is no aspect of human endeavours which does not involve level of communication, and ICT is becoming more indispensable in this regard globally. All the activities of our lives are filled with one communication experience after another. Humanity has depended and has been depending on communication to attain the level of civilisation we have today and will continue to depend on it in order to sustain it. In and for communication, education plays a vital in a society, and there are various ways of educating people and each perspective is surrounded by complex situations.

In all aspects of educational and developmental socialisation, ICT has been greatly indispensably contemporarily. To fully understand the sociological role of formation, information, and consciousness of humanity through ICT, educators must broad-understanding of the factors that enable effectiveness of the transfer of knowledge. This is brought to reality from the employment of the tools of science and technology in which ICT is an offspring, then the whole concern in recent times is associated with it. ICT has come to the doorsteps of private homes, businesses and organisations of all kinds (Isanbor & Osawaru 2024; Isanbor & Ojebun 2022). The life of the human person as an agent of development in this epoch cannot assume contemporary meaningfulness without some form of ICT. ICT continues to permeate our daily activities throughout the year. Factually, we cannot overemphasise the quasi-affordability of it by all and sundry and the extent of its omnipresence (Braumah 2009). And this majorly concern education, because every aspect of human development is all about the acquisition of knowledge and it demands communication of ideas and information. The EFA objectives, as represented and reiterated also in Isanbor (2015a & 2015b) and analysed in line with the possible achievement of global social peace and justice, to achieve these goals, organisations, agencies, groups and associations represented at the World Education Forum in Dakar (2000), which are in line with SDGs, to be achieved in 2030 by members' states of UNO.

#### **5. The Development of Open Distance Learning (ODL) and its Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Employments**

ODL is an educational arrangement which is designed to educate individuals who cannot acquire education due to their location, nature of job, and time of study. It majorly for the adult individuals who may be regarded as "dropped-out students" in regular schooling or studying arrangement to be "dropped-in students" and acquire the education they so desired. It is a part-time programme that is designed to take care of educational demands of the populace. Due to high demand of education in contemporary human society, and the high level of human working activities and commitments in

order to meet many ends, the educational institutions and communities try to accommodate the teeming number of people who want to fall-in into acquisition of formal education. In distance education, learners in remote locations meet at a site that has cable or satellite receivers, phone lines, and video cameras. This equipment provides one or two-way audio and one or two-way video contact with course providers (Isanbor & Osawaru 2024; Isanbor & Ojebun 2022). This modality of distance learning and teaching has improved greatly more than the perception of it, especially with the improvement in information and communication technologies in contemporary scientifically revolutionary culture by human intelligibility and developmental rationality.

Contemporarily, the design of ODL and Part-time Programme becomes very fitting to meet some educational needs, especially EFA agendas. But, these, for effective delivery, require ICT, and in which both the instructors and the learners have been very acquainted with for better results. This will be through the adoption of teleconferencing, videoconferencing, operate multimedia projectors, mobile phoning, faxing, internet phoning, messaging and videoing, communication software application and the likes. With the closeness of common interests for the attainment of SND, and especially in meeting the SDGs in the educating of the global populace, this form of education is provided today by corresponding schools, open universities and distance or external department of conventional colleges and universities (Kanu & Isanbor 2021; Onwudinjo & Isanbor 2024). This has strengthen the institution of ODL in modern societies, and it has strengthen internal and cross-border friendliness in learning and social engineering and structuring, and the involvement of ICT, as the Commonwealth of Learning defines it “as a way of providing learning opportunities that is characterised by the separation of teacher and learner in time or place, or both time and place; learning that is certified in some way by an institution or agency; the use of a variety of media, including print and electronic two-way communication that allow learners and tutors to interact; the possibility of occasional face-to-face meetings; and a specialised division of labour in the production and delivery of courses. And, this brings the qualities of it as follow:

1. *It is active*, which allows the engagement in many activities;
2. *It is collaborative*, which allows team working arrangement and heterogeneous groupings;
3. *It is creative*, which help to create productive learning that leads to the development of new solutions to problems,
4. *It is integrative*, culturing the emerging avenue of theories and practices, in relating subject and subject-matters by teachers and learners, and
5. *It is evaluative*, by providing problem solving mechanism and performance diagnosis.

The philosophy for the employment of ICT in ODL arrangements is greatly on the universal objective to achieve culture of flexibility and convenience in learning, studying and teaching, thereby reducing or closing the distance between the educational instructors and the students. With the objectives and agenda of EFA, the culture of flexibility and convenience enhance the education of many people within a range of their development achievements, whether been in urban and rural settlements, assessing educational lecture materials and instructions online within a very close range of learning and teaching. Therefore, the impacts of ICT in ODL arrangements are confidently outlined as follow:

1. *To be easily readable in style*, which is in achieving of convenience and flexibility to learning, at the learner self-paced learning environment and condition, proven to be the most preferred teaching methodology;
2. *To be an innovative way of learning and teaching*, posing more challenges for the improvement of individual and institutional skills in standardisation of learning and teaching, through the adaptability of educational technological materials in ICT and the availability of software materials;
3. *Anticipating students' Problem for effective learning in creations avenues for the creation of solutions;*
4. *Achieving instructional objectives and government policy on mass education*, by creating the easiness in educating dropped-out students to be dropped-in students;
5. *Providing Inserted Questions and Model Answers, and Self- Testing Questions*, in an ICT environment, on-line tests can easily be used which instantly provides the teachers with a wide range of information associated with the learners' scores;
6. *Enhancement of teacher training and facilitation of acquisition of basic skills;*
7. *Accessing better knowledge and recent information;*
8. *Providing cross-border learning*, for the accessibility and availability of international learning model, which necessarily breaks border barrier of learning in both formal and informal settings, beyond time, location and geography.

Moreover, the assessments of teachers' roles in employment of ICT in ODL must be based on the willing of teachers to develop along the technological demands of their time. Inevitably, the use of ICT in the classroom and outside classroom learning arrangement will change the role of the learner, enabling children to exert more choice over how they approach study, requiring less direction from teachers (see, UNESCO 2012<sup>a</sup> and 2012<sup>b</sup>). Students will be able to direct their own studies to a greater extent, with the teacher acting as a guide or moderator rather than as a director. ICT world is a capacity building machine in which innovative thinking is greatly involved and skilful intelligibility is voted in order to meet up with prevailing challenges. They are to be:

1. *Informative and Technologically Literate*, in recognising the functionality of the human nature which demands that man should adjust to any of his present situations in finding meaningfulness in his essence, especially in his profession;
2. *Conceptually Adaptive*, putting into necessity the fact that ICT easily effect the assessment of conceptual adaption of learning and teaching in education, especially ODL, especially in the development of technical languages of the ICT and its applications and updating;
3. *Ready for Loss of Class Control*, recognising the condition that institutes independent learning arrangement over traditional class environment. ICT will also require a modification of the role of the teacher, who in addition to classroom teaching will have other skills and responsibilities. Many will become specialists in the use of distributed learning techniques, the design and development of shared working spaces and resources, and virtual guides for students who use electronic media.
4. *Motivated to possess Mental Strength*, the willingness on the parts of the teachers to supervise the learners through ICT models, and master the ICT supervising modalities in order to minimise difficulties in the teaching and learning processes. They should also have the mental strength in accepting and tolerating the learners' behavioural makeups that are associated with ICT indoctrinated and driven world in ODL arrangement; and
5. *Innovative and creative*, in which the teachers are required and expected to be innovative within the ICT driven educational environment, so that they will be more relevant within and outside the system. This is so because, the communication media, including the press, the cinema, radio and television, the music industry and computer networks, represent the modern forum where information is received and transmitted rapidly to a global audience, where ideas are exchanged, where attitudes are formed - and, indeed, where a new culture is being shaped.

The expectations of Learners in ICT for ODL Educational Arrangements should be that:

1. Learners are acquainted with ICT usage for contemporary applicability of the facilities;
2. Learners acquire maintenance techniques and cultures;
3. Learners develop the willingness to maximise all available utilities in relation to the employment of ICT; and
4. Learners accept that academic demands to purchase the necessary ICT materials or gadgets.

In all, these expectations demand the greatest utilisation of its necessities by employing the latest generation of audio-visual resources like the websites, videos, animated features and blogs which together with the traditional means can open up broad new vistas for dialogue, learning, social networking and acquisition of unique knowledge by learners (Adelani 2009 in Nweke

& Emeasoba 2013; Wheeler 2000). Here networked computing facilities create a distributed environment where learners can share work spaces, communicate with each other and their teachers in text form, and access a wide variety of resources from internal and external databases via web-based systems through the Internet ((UNESCO 1990, 2010 and 2012<sup>a</sup>). They should be sensitive to the developmental importance of digital communication by responding to today's cultural shifts in the area of new information technologies.

## 6. Conclusion and Recommendations

From the foregoing, this paper has explicated the employment and the impacts of ICT in ODL arrangements and demanded the proper internalisation of usage for the acquisition of the design of learning pattern in the contemporary society, ant in meeting the agendas of EFA. The contemporary society demands the growth in commitment and relevance of education, otherwise any designed system or arrangement without necessary and adequate compliance and commitment for improvement will be regarded as 'adapted'. The arrangement of ODL arrangement will be contemporarily meaningful and result-oriented with the instructors and learners totally embracing the tools of ICT and improve them in its employment in keeping abreast with the growth of human and societal development associated with the growth of science and technology and the sense of globalisation. Information in the communication system relates to events both within the organisation and to aspects of the external environment. This has a way of improving the performance and engendering the interests of the learner. It is obvious that the modern societies are ICT indoctrinated and driven, and it is highly demanding in order to maximise its potentials for the development of the human societies. The development requires cautions in order to avoid the cultures of laziness in terms of teaching, learning and studying. This is because, the ICT environment poses the easiness in the accessibility of teaching, learning and studying materials as against the initial culture of intensive interest in seeking for the materials for these same purposes.

Therefore, assessing the indispensable employment of ICT for the enhancement of ODL in achieving SND, the following recommendations are made, that:

1. The contemporary society should recognise that current trend of development cannot do well without the employment of ICT in order to maintain its integral global relevance and importance, thereby, the governmental interests should be heightened in development ICT sectors of the economies and the interconnectivity of persons and interests.
2. There is need for the human person to understand the facts of importance relating to the usage of ICT. ICT educational environment, interest and culture demand good uses of the easily accessible instructional materials in order to maximise knowledge.

3. There should be the increased development of the collective roles of the educational or institutional administrators, teachers or instructors, and learners in making the ICT world driven to find adequate relevance in the educational sector for holistic human and societal development.

4. The ODL education should be developed to afford people who are not accommodated within the conventional school system to have access to education. The employment of ICT in ODL arrangements would afford learners much better access to information more than if would have been in the ordinary sense of it.

5. The government should ensure that ICTs are not employed as a replacement for teachers and/or instructors but rather it should be seen as being supplementary to teachers' activities in learning educational practitioners and policy makers.

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