

## Overview of social services in Vietnam: Perspective - Orientation - Future development

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### Abstract:

Social services are a large, rich, diverse field of activity, which exist and develop objectively and are associated with the social process. There are currently many different concepts of the definition of the term services in general and social services in particular. Social services have emerged very early in the world and flourished in industrialized countries to meet the needs of society in the industrialization process. Over the past 100 years of its creation and development, the sector has played an increasingly important role in providing social services in the developed world. The position of social workers, as well as social workers in developed societies is very important to the community, society, families and individuals.

**Keywords:** Social Worker; Social Services, industrialization process

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Date of Submission: 15-01-2023

Date of Acceptance: 31-01-2023

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### I. Introduction: Glossary of Social Services

Social services is a concept of “duality” organically linked by the two concepts of “service” and “society”. The term “society” in the concept of “social services” is conceptualized in two directions:

The first is a service aimed at social development, distinguished from services aimed at profit, purely commercial. Thus, all service activities that contribute to social development are considered social services, it is different from service activities for pure profit purposes. In this case, the products of social services are considered to be purely non-profit goods, which are distinguished from the products of economic services for the sake of profit. Tran Hau (2010) said that services aimed at social development have the following characteristics: (1) They are social in nature, serving the common interests of individuals and communities who need socially necessary to ensure normal and safe lives that meet human needs; (2) Performed by state, market or social agencies; (3) Social service exchange is not through full market relations but is always regulated by With moral values, cultural values, human rights and social responsibilities of the state, enterprises or private; (4) All people, whether paying taxes or not, have the right to enjoy social services at the minimum level, as the service object of the supplier. That minimum amount of social services does not depend on the tax they contribute and the ability of consumers to pay; (5) Social services are essential to people, but for purely public social services, this person does not prevent or contest the right of other people to use them simultaneously. As for non-public social services (public or private services), it depends on the individual needs, the ability to pay financially in whole or in part of consumers.

The second is about social norms, which means services to ensure social values and norms. Social services support members of society in many ways, such as: proactively preventing the occurrence of risks leading to the failure to ensure social values and standards; proactively limiting the impact of risks leading to the failure to ensure social values and standards; overcoming risks and integrating the social community on the basis of social values and standards... Common types of social services, in Tran Hau's (2010) view, include: (1) Services that facilitate employment and participation of low-income people to earn income, meet minimum living needs, and maintain financial independence; (2) Social services that help vulnerable populations to be able to socially integrate and reintegrate (family, community, and society) equally; (3) Services that increase family and member bonding, making the family the safest base for everyone, especially vulnerable populations if so; Children from families who are not able to care can receive community and social help; (4) Housing services with standards that meet minimum quality of life conditions; (5) Services to help people with disabilities have the ability to be more independent and participate actively in economic activities as well as community activities; (6) Services to promote health care for all members of society; (7) Counselling and psychotherapy services for the mentally and mentally vulnerable; (8) Services to help the exposed have access to information channels and

better opportunities to make choices. Services that make it easier for individuals to reach out to mediation, advocacy, and social activities.

There are so many different concepts of social services in the world. According to the California Social Services Commission: "Social services are the service, sponsorship, and protection of children and vulnerable adults to strengthen and protect families, encourage personal accountability, and enhance independence." The South Gloucestershire Commission said that "social services are activities to help workers, activities on medical care, support and daily care for the disadvantaged in families". According to Duncan Grant (2014), "Social services" can be defined as services provided to disadvantaged, vulnerable, or "at risk" members of society with the goal of enhancing their safety and well-being, protecting others from their behavior, or improving their skills and opportunities in life. This includes many types of services (usually non-profit) provided by various State and community organizations [45]. There are also views that social services include childcare services, social housing, job search support, prevention on the margins of society, and services to serve families in times of need. Social services relate to public services and goods. It is an open concept, dependent on historical, cultural, social and economic factors of countries and regions. Thus, with different views, studies on social services can be listed in the following groups:

Group 1: Studies on social services from the perspective of service economics. Mehrotra, Vandemoortele and Delamonica (2000) define social services to help people have solid development. In this perspective, the components of social services such as medical care (maternal health care during childbirth; care and prevention of child malnutrition), basic education (primary), clean water and adequate housing will help people have the opportunity to escape poverty and move towards a better life. Hencoski and Hansell (2012) argue that the components of social services such as care and welfare for young children, providing development opportunities for young generation employment, income and food security, assistance for the elderly and disabled, social housing and services to reduce homelessness are the things that need further attention by the government in the context of global socio-economic development today.

Research on the general interest of social services in the European community, Richard Polacek (2011) points out four components of social services of interest in the community of Member States: (1) long-term medical care, (2) health and education for young children, (3) employment services and (4) social housing. Český Těšín (2011) said that for developed countries, basic social services are not only support for medical care, food security, housing for target groups... but also support for raising young children, access to information, communication with external parties to ensure human rights and interests. Social services therefore include products of public goods and even private goods (depending on the needs of the users). Santosh Mehrotra, Jan Vandemoortele and Enrique Delamonica (2000) outlined 4 causes that the state should be responsible for providing social services to people: (1) In a moral sense, the state must ensure people's access to basic health care and education programs; (2) The access to basic health care and education helps people improve their health and labor productivity, thus increasing income and reducing poverty. In other words, the provision of social services such as health and education is a useful tool that governments implement to promote the development of the economy; (3) The consensus of international organizations on the role and responsibility of the state in the provision of social services is reflected in the 1979 conferences on the Elimination of All Forms of Gender Discrimination, the 1966 Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the 1986 Declaration on the Right to Development and the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child; (4) State responsibility for the provision of social services has a historical element [45]. However, the studies of J.E. Stiglitz (1995) and Wallis J. & Dollery B (1999) pointed to the limitations of the models by which the state intervenes in the provision of social services through the supply of public goods.

Group 2: Studies on types of services and modes of organization of supply. From this perspective, the studies of Johnstone Nick and Wood Libby (2001): "Private Firms and Public Water: Realising Social and Environmental Objectives in Developing Countries", Seungho Lee (2003): "Expansion of the Private Sector in the Shanghai Water Sector",... Lin Jing (1999): "Social Transformation and Private Education in China" "Changes in Education and Private Education in China", by Mok H.H (1998): "Merging of the Public and Private Boundary: Education and the Market place in China" "Consolidating the boundary between the private and public sectors: Education and the market in China";... focusing on services such as health, education, culture, personal entertainment,... The studies also focused on clarifying the transformation in service delivery organizational models. From where the state directly provides social services to expanding private participation to varying degrees in China as well as other countries around the world in the process of economic mechanism transformation. Richard Polacek (2011) conceived that both the private and public sectors are involved in the process of providing basic social services, while Baorong Guo (2004) argued that the provision of social services is assumed by for-profit and not-for-profit organizations. Hodgkinson (1996) and Ryan (1999) argue that the dominance in the provision of basic social services by non-profit organizations tends to diminish and non-profit organizations constantly increase their attendance in the process of supplying these products. Salamon's (1999) explanation of this change is because of the change in the perception of the nature of basic

social services. Corbin (1999) argues that the purpose of providing basic social services is to ensure a minimum level of quality of life, which facilitates the enhancement of social welfare for people. However, in a society with many different groups of people, their ability to achieve the minimum quality of life is also heterogeneous, the level of social welfare of individuals by income groups is therefore also different. The supply of services to these target groups therefore also differs by the parties involved. Non-profit organizations play a role in providing basic social services to the poor and rely mainly on government resources (Grønbjerg, 2001); For-profit organizations provide services such as care for the elderly, help workers reach the labor market optimally... for the remaining target groups. In other words, organizations with different operational objectives share activities in service delivery (Richard Polacek, 2011).

Group 3: Studies on the role of the state and social partners in the provision of services. Studies by Marian F. Fatout (1995) with the work "Task Groups in the Social Services"; Prof. Y. Jorens (2007) "Social services of general interests"; Peter Davidson (2002) "Employment Assistance for Long-term Unemployment People: Time for a rethink"... emphasizes that social services are types of services that bring common benefits to the whole society. It's both a private commodity and a public commodity. The parties involved in this type of service benefit. Therefore, the role of the State in providing, operating and distributing this type of services depends not only on the capacity of Executive Management but also on the financial capacity of the national budget. Typically in developed countries, social services in health and wellness are paid by the state budget, people pay for the costs of specialized treatment, but these specialized treatment are reimbursed through "third payers"; the services in employment support, social insurance are paid by the state, the employee manager and the employee, in which the state is the main payer. However, due to the limited budget, in developing countries, social services are only relatively complete in the formal sector; while for the informal sector and the vulnerable groups, the policy mechanism and financial capacity for the implementation of these programs are still limited.

Thus, within the framework of this article, it is possible to define general social services as services that meet the needs of communities and individuals for social development, have the role of ensuring welfare and social equity, promote ethical values, human rights, for people, are activities of a socio-economic nature; provided by the State, the market or civil society, depending on the nature of the public, public or private of each type of service.

## **II. Nature of social services**

The quality of social services cannot be assessed purely by the market price as other services but is mainly considered at the level of satisfaction of the people with the quantity, structure, method, time, space, convenience, level of civilization, cultural conduct...in service provision. The effectiveness of most social services is not only considered in the ability to affect the development of the individual service beneficiaries but also in the consideration of indirect impacts on the society as a whole; not only immediate results are obtained when the service activity takes place but also a whole process is then associated with the human maturation cycle, of labor as well as healthy and harmonious social development. Taking into account the economic nature of social services as the subject of service economics, both macroeconomic and microeconomic aspects can be considered. On the macroeconomic side, social services are a component of the country's service economy that any strategic choice of growth and development must take into account. In the microeconomic aspect, every social service provider in a competitive market economy must always ask and answer the questions: What services should be created, who should they serve and how should they be provided? Therefore, social services become a component part of the service economy in generating gross national product or gross domestic product, shifting economic structure, settling labor and jobs, improving the competitiveness of the economy.

Social services with economic services: Social services have a symbiotic interaction with economic services. The symbiosis is because they participate in economic growth, restructuring the economy, solving jobs, creating development possibilities for other services. The growth results of economic services generate revenue to invest in development, scale-up and modernization of the social service sector both on the national, local and per-enterprise scale. Developing purely economic services also creates a market that addresses the output of social services such as employment, intellectual property when there are people who are healthy enough, psychologically healthy, creative, inventive and inventive. On the contrary, social services constitute an important input contributing to improving the competitiveness of purely economic services by developing qualified human resources, culture and good health care. At the same time, social services are different from economic services. The first difference is that economic services often aim to be the highest profit, but social services are not only for the sake of profit but regulated by moral and human factors; one side assesses quality by price in the market and the other side assesses by the level of satisfaction of customers and the social community in a long process.

Social services are social in nature because social services that aim to serve social development, whether as a community or as individuals, are operated effectively with the participation of diverse actors in society. The concept of "social services" itself speaks to the social nature of this type of service. Social services

affect people, so regardless of whether social services are pure, unjust or personal, moral and humanistic factors are always at the core of the structure. Escaping the moral and humanistic factors in the development of social services will distort the nature of social services, i.e. not towards the true goal of healthy and harmonious human development. Because social services are strongly inhibited by moral and human factors, the market principles applied in the development of social services are not complete, the role of the state and civil society is highly appreciated in both the organization of supply and management of services.

Social services are dominated by moral and humanistic factors - universal values of humanity, so the development of social services is increasingly concerned at the global level with the participation of international organizations and transnational NGOs. The development of social services is also directly related to ensuring basic human rights such as education, treatment, gender equality, hygiene and security.

### **III. Classification of social services**

According to the nature of social services, they can be classified into three types of social services: public social services, non-public social services, and personal social services. (1) Public social services are services that cannot be allocated by ration for use nor are they necessary to determine the frequency of use, because the consumption of one individual does not reduce the consumption of another individual. It is neither possible nor necessary to determine the rates for each person for purely social services. People often consider the purely public nature of social services in two characteristics: inalienable and undisputed. The non-exclusion is understood from the perspective of consumption when this person does not exclude other people to use it, for example, the national security service is a public service in which any citizen in the country benefits without paying. The undisputed nature, understood from a consumer perspective, of an individual's use of such goods does not prevent other persons from simultaneously using, often intangible goods, such as radio and television services. (2) Social services are not just social services that are not strictly responsive to competition and exclusion. With these services, under certain conditions, a person's use may exclude and contest another person's right to consume. These services can be rationed for use through pricing, such as education, health services, etc. (3) Personal social services are services that satisfy the needs of the individual, someone who does not consume them does not directly affect the interests of the whole society. This type of service mainly follows the market, operates on business principles and the service beneficiary must pay for the service, such as cultural services, entertainment, cinema, hiring family helpers, etc.

Classification by social service provider: According to the social service provider, it can be divided into three types of social services: state entities, private enterprise entities, democratic society entities. (1) State entities are social services provided by the state, most of which are collected by consumers indirectly through taxes or partially in the form of fees, which are purely public or non-public services. (2) A private entity is a type of service for which the State is responsible for paying service fees to consumers but does not establish a service-providing organization but authorizes the private entity to directly provide services such as a private school or a private hospital but receives funding from the government. Private from the investment of resources to develop social services with both profit and non-profit goals. These are very diverse social services in life such as beauty salons, beauty salons, performing arts, culture - entertainment, learning and treating diseases according to needs, training human resources in enterprises, hiring care for the elderly, children... (3) The subject of civil society is a service that the subject of civil society is understood to include social organizations and civil communities and belief and religious organizations...

Classification according to the financial management mechanism: According to the management mechanism, it can be divided into three types of social services: social services that do not collect money directly from users for which the State is responsible for paying fees, social services that users of services must pay in part and personal social services that consumers must pay in full: (1) Social services that do not collect money directly from users for which the State is responsible for paying fees: State services that are responsible for paying fees are purely public social services. In fact, with these services, the state does not collect money directly from users, but indirectly through the tax contribution of every citizen. (2) Social services for which the service user must pay a part: Usually, these are non-public social services, the state is responsible for supplying or authorizing the private provider to provide but still collect part of the costs. The state pays a portion of the tax revenue, a portion of the consumer revenue called fees. (3) Personal social services that consumers have to pay in full: These are services that can be provided by the state or private but still collect fees such as education and medical treatment on demand; especially high-tech entertainment services, family services, emerging services such as physiotherapy, beauty services...

Classified according to basic social services in social work: The United Nations defines Basic Social Services as: Basic social services are services activities that provide needs to people to meet the minimum needs of life (UN - Africa Spending Less on Basic Social Services). Social services are activities to meet the needs of the people. According to Maslow, people have the following basic needs:

At the World Summit for Social Development held in Copenhagen 1995, the concept of Basic Social Services was introduced by the United Nations to include: (1) Basic education: early childhood, primary education, adult literacy; (2) Basic health: including all services in: commune/ward health centres; regional polyclinics; district/hospital and health centres; and primary health care, including preventive medicine (childhood prevention, post-natal care, medical education) and public health programmes (maternal and child health, malaria, tuberculosis, basic medicines and pharmaceuticals, hygiene) and national nutrition programmes; (3) Population and family planning; (4) Social services related to disaster relief; (5) c) Water and sanitation: rural water and sanitation projects, water and sanitation projects in lakeside areas.

Resolution 15 of the 11th Central Committee of the Party on June 1, 2012 "Some issues on social policies in the period of 2012-2020" specifically identified some basic social services for the people, including: minimum education, minimum health care, minimum housing, clean water and environmental sanitation, and information and communication: "...Ensure a minimum level of basic social services for people, especially the poor, disadvantaged people and ethnic minorities." Basic social services provided to the people in order to perform the following functions: Ensuring the basic needs of the people, including living needs, social integration needs and social protection needs in the community; As the key to developing "human capital" towards a healthy and knowledgeable population in order to achieve economic independence and actively participate in the labor market; Fair implementation, ensuring everyone has the conditions to participate in the process of social development.

The concept of social services in Vietnam is based on the succession of ideas and views on social services of scientists in the world. Scientists, though, agree and argue that social services are necessary services for human development, but the consensus among scientists on this concept is not high.

Nguyen Thi Lan Huong (2010) in "Assessing the situation of social services for workers and disadvantaged groups in the policy framework of social protection" said that social services include 4 main components: (1) Services to meet basic material needs: eating, sanitation, care, housing... all vulnerable people are children Children, disabled people with working capacity must all be met for physical development; (2) Medical services: including forms of medical examination and treatment, nursing and physical as well as mental rehabilitation for disadvantaged people; (3) Educational services: schools, training classes, life skills training, forms of inclusive education Integration, integration and specialization... (4) Recreation, participation and information services: this is a type of social service that is very important for social work groups, leisure activities such as arts, sports,... to improve confidence, promote better integration with the community, improve understanding and knowledge for the disadvantaged... The understanding of social services in view of the above is limited to the vulnerable, it is not very universal. In fact, social services are services that all citizens have access to and use. However, depending on the economic conditions and the social position, the user decides to choose suppliers.

Mai Ngoc Anh (2010) in "Vocational guidance services and employment introduction for participants in the labor market in Vietnam: Situation and recommendations" said that social services include education; primary health care for the population and family planning (reproductive health, adolescent health, family planning); social services, especially disaster relief and clean water supply. For Vietnam, social services, in addition to the above contents, also include social welfare for the poor, social protection, employment services and vocational training for workers; rehab and treatment for prostitutes... However, just like Nguyen Thi Lan Huong's interpretation, listing the components of this service is not simple, and the ability to meet the minimum needs of all different target groups is impossible for every government.

Ingrid FitzGerald (2011) in research on social services for human development in Vietnam refers only to health and education issues. Setsuko Yamazaki and Hoan Son Phuoc (2011) when researching the poverty of ethnic minorities in Vietnam focused only on the access of the poor to health, education and infrastructure issues.

Mai Ngoc Cuong (2012) refers to the coordination between social protection programs and programs providing basic social services limited to health care, education, and access to clean water. Ministry of Labor, Invalids and Social Affairs - Ethnic Committee and United Nations Agency in Vietnam (2009) in the mid-term evaluation of the national target program on poverty reduction and 135II program, 2006-2008 period: social services that everyone must have access to are health care, education, housing and water, legal aid.

Within the framework of this document when it comes to basic social services in Vietnam, we use the term Basic Social Services as the system of providing services to meet basic human needs and recognized by society, including: services to meet basic needs, educational services, health services and recreational - participation - information services. (1) Services to meet basic needs: These are services to meet the needs of eating, sanitation, care, housing... All disadvantaged people, such as children, people with disabilities and working incapacity, must be able to meet this need in order to develop their physical abilities. (2) Health services: These are services of medical examination and treatment, disease prevention. Ensuring the health of all is seen as a fundamental human right in the modern world, so the right to health services cannot be left to the

dominant market but is the responsibility of the state. Medical services include forms of medical examination and treatment, nursing and physical as well as mental rehabilitation for subjects. (3) Educational services: Most countries in the world consider education to be a public service sector under the responsibility of the state, as it creates a decisive human resource for the development of the country. Moreover, if the private market provides educational services, there will be significant inequalities between the rich and the poor in the enjoyment of the common knowledge of mankind. There are basic types: schools, training courses, life skills training, inclusive, inclusive and specialized forms of education... (4) Recreation - participation - information services: This is a type of social service that is very important for the subjects of the social work group. Recreational activities such as arts, sports... improve confidence, promote better integration with the community, improve understanding and knowledge for subjects, contribute to maintaining society in order and stability for development.

#### **IV. Functions and role of social services**

##### **4.1. Functions of social services:**

**Economic function:** Social services also combine with other service sectors that make up the service sector. Business organizations are entities that provide social services with profit or not pure profit. The service provider must be able to pay, pay in full or pay a part of the cost of the services to which it is entitled.

**Political function:** In modern society, the development of social services also expresses in it the political nature of each state institution pursuing certain doctrines. In the world, there are three models of social service development associated with certain authoritarianism: right-wing, left-wing, and mixed. Proprietary models often place social services closer to economic functions, considering social services from the perspective of private goods or unjust goods. Models describing the homogeneity of economic services and social services in the public service, held by the state monopolies, supply and payment of fees, constitute an average in the consumption of services by consumers. Mixed models often artfully combine the state with the market and civil society in the development of social services, which are now popular with countries despite neoliberalism, social democracy or socialism.

**Social function:** Like any type of service, social services first have the function of serving society, serving people, contributing significantly to human resources - the leading determinant of social development. For purely social services provided by the state or social organizations, the nature of social services is most clearly shown.

**The function of social balance and regulation of the value system:** The public service tends to be abused to serve the political aims of the ruling forces to varying degrees, even in liberalized politics, the public service is deformed, no longer has public meaning as it is by its very nature. Economic services tend to maximize profits, promote enjoyment and infinite material desires, and have little interest in social responsibility. And social services are capable of balancing the extreme tendencies of public services or economic services, especially when the purpose of these services is to create the foundation for social development, human value orientation, addressing the relationship between material and spiritual needs, between tangible and intangible values, between what the market requires and what the self needs, between meeting immediate requirements and long-term development needs, between power and non-power...

##### **4.2. The role of social services:**

Social services with the role of serving human life, constantly improving the quality of life, creating an input factor to promote sustainable economic growth; Social services for development promote labor assignment, specialization, creating conditions for the production sector to increase labor productivity, while meeting the increasingly rich and diverse needs of society, of communities and individuals; Social services development also creates many jobs. attract a large number of workers, reduce the unemployment rate in the national economy; Social services contribute to the implementation of social policies, ensuring equity and social progress such as women's liberation, child care, the elderly, the disadvantaged, expanding the position of intellectual workers; Development of social services is accompanied by the formation of science - technology, education - training, culture - art, professional sports, high level... thereby promoting promoting more balanced and harmonious urbanization; Social services contribute to preserving the national cultural identity, forming new social value standards, eliminating social deviations, improving people's intellectuals, forming new people to meet the requirements of civilized and progressive social development.

#### **V. Conclusions**

In Vietnam, the seed of social services has been around very early on, on the basis of good feelings between people and people, with reciprocity and compassion. In feudal society in villages and communes, there have been models of public land that products obtained mainly to subsidize "disadvantaged" people in villages such as diseases, widows, orphans... Social services have evolved into a new applied social science that has been

formed in our country in recent years. The new social service officially has a training sector code in 2004 and has been recognized as a profession in society since 2010, when the Scheme for the Development of Social Work was approved by the Government. That means that the Ministry of Education & Training has developed a framework program for the University, College for the social service sector and the students - social workers will have the environment, work placements and affirm the important role in providing social services in the government and non-government system.

Currently, there are more than 30 universities and colleges participating in training in social services. It is estimated that at least 1,200 people annually graduate from universities and colleges in Social Work and hundreds of people graduate from secondary education in Social Work. ” However, human resources for Social Services are still lacking, our country is at the top of the region in terms of the workforce of Social Services. There's one social worker in England for every 500 people. Many countries in the world and in the region have a ratio of 1,000 people /social worker. Meanwhile, in Vietnam, 10,000 people do not have a professional social worker. Most of the social service staff in our country work according to experience, lack of knowledge and necessary skills in social services.

According to Dr. Nguyen Hai Huu - former Director of the Department of Social Protection, in our country, the number of officers and employees directly working in social protection institutions, the number of freelancers directly caring for the elderly in families and hospitals also amounts to tens of thousands; The number of collaborators working in population and child care in villages is up to 162,000 people, but most have not received basic training, they only participate in short-term training courses to improve skills and understanding of Social work. The pressing social issues under the scope of social work (poverty, the disabled, social evils, polluted living environment...) due to the lack of basic and professional training of staff involved in the implementation risks leading to the "imbalance" between economic and social development.

The objectives of the Scheme on the development of social services to become a profession in Vietnam approved by the Government are: Strive to develop the staff of social workers by 10% in each commune, ward or township with at least 1-2 persons in the title of non-professional or collaborators, with a monthly allowance equal to the common minimum salary prescribed by the State. That promises the output of graduates in Social Services.

Along with the rapid growth of the economy today, emotional social problems are also trending to flare up and remain high, such as the rich and poor, gambling, drug addiction, prostitution, or the problem of population aging... It is clear that in today's world it is essential to solve and prevent the above social problems and that it is not possible to keep on snooping, either purely empirical or rationalist as before. Social services need to be professional, people who do social services need to be trained in a formal, good way. Developed countries in the world see social services as an important part of community development, social development, and social workers as direct implementers. Well-developed social services will contribute to the development and improvement of the social security system, assisting people and communities to solve and cope with difficulties in life.

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