



**BUILDING A MODERATE MUSLIM DIVERSITY MINDSET THROUGH
DIGITAL COUNSELING**

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to identify the value of religious moderation in the content of the counselling programme 'Becoming a Muslim, Becoming Tolerant' by M. Shofi Falikul Isbach. Qualitative data was collected from articles, videos, and social media posts related to religious moderation. The findings of this study confirm that religious moderation can be integrated through non-academic activities and the use of social media. The study concludes that both approaches effectively disseminate values of tolerance and anti-radicalism to society, particularly among the younger generation.. The study underscores that the dissemination of moderate Islamic religious values can be internalised through digital counselling media.

Keywords: Religious moderation, Digital Counseling, Social Media



A. Introduction

Indonesia's rich diversity is a blessing, but it also brings challenges, especially related to intolerance and radicalism. As noted in several studies, social tensions arise when communities fail to accept differences, leading to conflicts such as the rejection of places of worship, attacks on minority groups, and other forms of violence. 498 incidents of religious violence, resulting in many casualties and property damage. Strengthening the values of Pancasila remains a key strategy to counter radicalism and intolerance (Agus et al., 2022). In sum, while Indonesia's pluralism enriches the nation, it demands constant nurturing through education, policy interventions, and active engagement of civil society to prevent division and uphold unity.

In connection with the current rampant acts of radicalism, our role as Indonesian citizens should be carried out properly. According to Suprpto, the process of harmony and social integration will be formed if there are three things, namely inclusive religious understanding, obedience to the law, and forgiveness of the past (Kementrian Agama, 2019). The Quran and hadith clearly instruct us to respect and honor each other among fellow believers or between other believers. We, as citizens who are tolerant, anti-radicalized, and love nationalism, should play an active role in preventing intolerance and radicalism. Among these roles are being moderate human beings, appreciating and respecting differences, spreading peace, establishing religious harmony, and creating peace for the unity of Indonesia.

By referring to the four indicators set by the Ministry of Religious Affairs, we can see how this content reflects the values of moderation in the context of religious diversity in Indonesia. Tolerance is a key theme in this content, which is reflected in the narratives of characters who live in harmony with followers of other religions. Through interfaith relations, we can see attitudes towards other religious adherents, willingness to dialogue, cooperate, establish places of worship, and experience interacting with other religious adherents (Kementrian Agama, 2019). Then the connection with anti-radicalization is clear when the speaker strongly rejects extreme views that are often misinterpreted as religious teachings. Radicalism is often associated with keke because radical groups can do whatever they want to achieve their goals, including terrorizing those who disagree with them. National commitment is also implied in the message of this content, which emphasizes the importance of national unity. Finally, accommodation to local culture is seen in how this content presents religious values in harmony with local customs. In short, this content successfully presents a comprehensive picture of how the values of religious moderation can be applied in daily life. Indonesia's diversity is a strength, but also a source of conflict, such as intolerance. The study shows the need for action to maintain tolerance with inclusive religious understanding and law observance to achieve social harmonization.

This qualitative study aims to explore the values of religious moderation in the content of M. Shofi Falikul Isbach's "Being Muslim, Being Tolerant" counseling. Focusing on tolerance, anti-radicalization, national commitment, and an accommodating attitude towards local culture, counseling on moderation as a method of thinking and acting is needed to become a moderate human being, to respect fellow human beings despite different beliefs, and also to find the meeting point of the two extremes in religion. On the one hand, there are extreme religious adherents who believe in the absolute truth of one interpretation of religious texts, while considering other interpreters heretical (Kementrian Agama, 2019). The primary data of this study is in the content of the counseling "Being Muslim, Being Tolerant" by M. Shofi Falikul Isbach. Religious Moderation of Islamic Religious Counseling. The secondary data of this study is using the Religious Moderation book of the Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia. In this study, it will be discussed from the perspective of using four indicators of religious moderation formulated by the Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia, namely Tolerance, Anti Radicalization, National Commitment, and Accommodation to Local Culture (Kementrian Agama, 2019). In the discussion of this content is to identify that the values of moderation can be included to encourage the formation of moderate character and moderation is very important to apply and instill the values of religious moderation and socialize to each individual to avoid extreme behavior or attitudes towards religion unilaterally, in this content is not intended to unite all religions but to respect and appreciate different beliefs. In addition, it is hoped that this content can show the role of counseling in promoting moderate values in society.

Research on religious moderation, which includes national commitment, tolerance, non-violence, and acceptance of local traditions, is an important focus in creating a harmonious religious life. In his study, Abidin emphasized that national commitment must be strengthened with a narrative of unity and equality (Abidin et al., 2020). Next, Suryani and Wahyudi highlighted the importance of tolerance in reducing exclusivism and fostering interfaith dialogue (Heni Suryani & Kambali, 2023). Professor H. Nur Kholis' research in Pekalongan Regency describes the values of religious moderation, including openness, critical thinking, awareness of self-limitation, and humanity-oriented. These values will help a person become more tolerant and respectful of differences in society. Fahmi and Hardiyanto, in their study, emphasized that religious teachings should prioritize non-violence and peaceful resolution (Hardiyanto et al., 2023). Haryanto added that acceptance of local traditions strengthens social and cultural harmony (Haryanto et al., 2023). Overall, "Being Muslim, Being Tolerant" plays an important role in promoting the value of moderation by educating the public according to the Ministry's four indicators.

Religious moderation is not only a religious discourse but also part of Indonesia's soft diplomacy strategy to build peace at the national and international levels. In the context of the digital world, the content of "Being Muslim, Being Tolerant" plays an important role in spreading the message of moderation and shaping people's understanding of tolerance at large. Through in-depth research and a systematic approach, this study can make a significant contribution in strengthening human values and reducing the potential for intolerance (Siti et al, 2021).

B. Indicators of Religious Moderation in Indonesia

The analysis of religious moderation values in the context of the content of "Being Muslim, Being Tolerant" was carried out using a theoretical framework based on four indicators of religious moderation set by the Ministry of Religious Affairs (Kemenag). The Ministry of Religious Affairs implements religious moderation activities to overcome the problems of radicalism and terrorism in Indonesia (Sumarto, 2021). These indicators include a national commitment to emphasizing the importance of acceptance of the principles of the nation as stated in the constitution, as well as awareness of an inclusive national identity. An attitude of tolerance to respect differences and diversity in society, as well as the ability to coexist with followers of other religions (Arkoun, 2001). Non-violence, by rejecting all forms of violence, both physical and verbal, as a way to resolve conflicts or differences of opinion. Acceptance of tradition, by preserving religious values and combining them with the values of local wisdom and customs to create a harmonious and peaceful society (Tapingku, 2019).

In analyzing the content, it is important to see how these moderation values are integrated and applied. National commitment can be explored through the portrayal of characters who show love for the country and active participation in social activities that promote unity. Tolerance can be shown through interactions between characters from different religious backgrounds, where they respect and learn from each other (Kementrian Agama, 2019). Non-violence can be emphasized by displaying the negative consequences of violent acts, as well as highlighting dialogue as a method of problem-solving. Acceptance of tradition can be illustrated by depicting the celebration of local traditions that involve all elements of society, regardless of religious differences. Using da'wah content that fulfills the four indicators of religious moderation can shape the character of a moderate, tolerant, and respectful society.

C. The Role of Islamic Da'wah for the Life of Modern Muslims

The role of Islamic counseling content in the lives of Muslims today is very important, especially in order to practice the values of religious moderation. Da'wah content that meets the main indicators of religious moderation promoted

by the Ministry of Religious Affairs can help Muslims understand and internalize the teachings of their religion, thus creating a harmonious and peaceful society (Kementrian Agama, 2019). Moderate da'wah is tasked with teaching mutual respect between religious communities. This is important in the context of pluralistic Indonesia, where understanding and accepting differences are essential to prevent social conflict (Yunus, 2017).

Dawah content should emphasize peaceful values and encourage people to resolve differences through dialogue and understanding rather than violence. This is in line with the teachings of Islam, which emphasizes the importance of peace and love between people (Saidurrahman, 2019). In modern life, where interfaith interaction is increasing, it is important to preach content that emphasizes tolerance. Dawah content can be a powerful educational tool by providing examples of interfaith cooperation in various aspects of life.

Dawah content should also emphasize the importance of non-violence. When addressing various social challenges, we must emphasize Islamic teachings on peace and rejection of violence to prevent people from committing extremist acts (Faiz, 2017). In delivering da'wah messages, it is necessary to respect existing local traditions so that the content of da'wah does not seem foreign or reject local cultural values. The content of da'wah based on the values of religious moderation is very relevant to the lives of modern Muslims. This allows them to live a religious life in harmony in accordance with the principles of nationality and diversity that apply in Islam (Kementrian Agama, 2019).

D. Strengthening Moderate Islamic Diversity in the Content of Digital Counseling Materials

In a digital era full of challenges and dynamics, moderate Islam is present as a guide to maintain harmony in diversity. Moderate Islam teaches a balance between faith and tolerance, and appreciates differences as part of God's grace (John, 2011). Through this digital counseling material, it is hoped that a more inclusive understanding of Islam can be built, not only strengthening faith but also encouraging an open, peaceful, and respectful attitude towards diversity (Abdurrahman, 2006). The pluralistic diversity in Indonesian society requires a foundation of values that can unite differences, strengthen harmony, and maintain national unity. In this case, tolerance is an important value in shaping the personality of a society that upholds diversity by respecting each other (Saluri, 2019). On the other hand, the value of anti-radicalism has a crucial role in strengthening the diversity of humanity-oriented Islam by upholding peace and empathy as a foundation that connects individuals (Azyumardi, 2002).

Research by Abidin et al. (2020) confirms that strengthening national commitment can be built through narratives of nationality and equality. This is in line with the spirit of moderation-based digital counseling that not only targets

aspects of individual spirituality, but also instills an inclusive and tolerant national spirit in social life. The study of Subchi et al. (2022) proved that religiosity is positively correlated with moderate attitudes, especially in the dimensions of tolerance, national commitment, and accommodation of local culture. That is, the deeper one's religious experience and appreciation, the higher the acceptance of diversity.

A multicultural counseling approach can be a key tool to contextually instill moderation values. Fernando et al. (2024) showed that multicultural counseling strengthens diversity awareness through an inclusive cultural approach. Counsellors should understand the cultural background of the counselees and support the internalization process of moderate values in their lives. Furthermore, digital literacy competence is an important pillar in designing effective guidance programs in the modern era. Suryahadikusumah & Nadya (2019) mentioned that millennial generation school counselors who are accustomed to interacting with technology have great potential to create counseling programs that are innovative and relevant to students' digital lifestyles.

Research by Mahyani et al. (2024) developed a mobile-based educational application specifically designed to strengthen moderation values among madrasah students. This application not only presents interactive materials and discussion forums, but also provides an assessment feature of moderation values, which has great potential to be developed in the form of digital counseling content. In this context, Mukhlis et al. (2024) argued that digitalization provides a great opportunity for Muslims to expand the preaching of moderate Islam. However, they also emphasized the importance of being careful in filtering digital content so as not to fall into online radicalism. Therefore, digital counseling must be equipped with critical literacy principles and humanist Islamic values.

In an effort to strengthen local values, Pajarianto et al. (2022) highlighted the importance of local wisdom such as the values of kasiuluran (kinship), tengko situru (togetherness), and karapasan (resilience) in strengthening interfaith tolerance. These values can be combined with digital content as a community-based cultural approach. Finally, Arif (2021) emphasized that moderation in religion does not mean moderating religion itself, but rather directing the way of religion towards justice, balance, and humanity. This understanding underlies the importance of internalizing moderation in value-based counseling. With the integration of all these approaches, ranging from multicultural counseling, strengthening national narratives, digital literacy, to involving local culture, the digital program "Becoming Muslim, Becoming Tolerant" can function as a strategic social and educational transformation tool. This emphasizes that the spread of religious moderation values can not only be done academically, but also through inclusive and progressive virtual spaces.

1. Tolerance Values in the Formation of Plural Islamic Diversity Character

Multicultural societies that are synonymous with pluralistic societies whether in politics, culture, or even religion, religious people tend to experience conflict due to the various interests they face. Indonesia's plurality is a treasure that the Indonesian nation should be proud of, which can encourage the development of togetherness and cooperation in conditions of diversity. However, on the other hand, it is also a challenge that must be managed properly. If not, it may become a serious threat that has the potential to cause social conflicts and even religious conflicts that will threaten the integrity of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia (Wahdah, 2019). For example, groups that are considered weak in the economic field feel excluded and marginalized because they cannot compete with economically strong religious groups. This group, in running its economy, tries to balance the strong group and incorporates supernatural values. That way, they feel strong in spiritual quality even on a small economic quantity scale (Casram, 2016). Therefore, there is a need for deterrence efforts so that behavior or actions that can trigger major conflicts among religious communities do not arise. One of the efforts that can be done is to build tolerance among religious communities. In this case, tolerance which is part of the Islamic creed and is included in the framework of the Islamic theological system should be studied in depth and applied in religious life because it is a social necessity for all religious communities and is a way to create interfaith harmony.

The data shows the uniqueness of a pluralistic Islamic society, namely the variation in religious understanding between groups, as well as different levels of tolerance. The role of Pancasila as the philosophy of state life is the starting point for preventing religious conflict in Indonesia. Formed as a vision of a tolerant, open and pluralistic attitude with the traditional formation of local wisdom values, Indonesian culture and different heroes of thought. The open nature of Pancasila is reflected in its moderate attitude, namely the firmness of the principle of the Indonesian state which is not a religious state and not a secular state. With this concept, Indonesia can fully minimize religious conflicts and build monuments of harmony and diversity so as to improve the image of religious services in global eyes. Religious conflicts occur in almost all regions, causing a diversity crisis in Indonesia to prevent religious conflicts through several ways such as inclusive education, dialogue between groups, better understanding of differences, and supporting religious freedom and pluralism in political life so that religious harmony will emerge (Fadiansyah et al., 2023).

The importance of inter-religious tolerance is the main key to maintaining the harmony of multicultural society in Indonesia. Tolerance is not only a moral discourse but a practical necessity in the life of a pluralistic state. As reflected in Pancasila, the values of moderation and openness serve as a foundation to prevent religious conflicts. According to Alwi Shihab, tolerance in Islam is an inseparable

part of religious teachings that encourage dialog and coexistence, which if applied, can reduce tensions between groups (Alwi, 1999). This shows that understanding the value of tolerance in the context of creed and society is a relevant solution to the challenges of religious diversity in Indonesia. Therefore, inclusive approaches and active engagement in diversity-based education should be strengthened to build a more harmonious society.

In addition, inter-group dialog efforts are an important strategy to overcome potential conflicts. Abdullah Saeed argues that sustained dialog can increase understanding between religious groups and promote mutual respect (Abdullah, 2016). In Indonesia, programs such as the Religious Harmony Forum (FKUB) are clear examples of how dialogue can reduce potential friction between groups. However, the success of such dialog depends on the commitment of all parties to uphold the principles of equality and mutual listening. By developing local culture-based dialog models, such as deliberation, Indonesia has a great opportunity to make diversity a productive social force and avoid the threat of disintegration.

This study confirms that tolerance, dialogue, and inclusive education are the main pillars in creating harmony amid religious pluralism in Indonesia. The findings reinforce the view that Pancasila is not only the basic philosophy of the state but also a practical framework for building harmonious diversity. In the literature review, this approach has been recognized by various scholars, including Clifford Geertz, who emphasized the importance of understanding local dynamics in managing diversity (Geertz, 1976). The novelty of this research lies in the integration of moderate theological values with local wisdom to strengthen the practice of tolerance in Indonesia, which has not been explored much in depth. In conclusion, by strengthening tolerance and dialog based on Pancasila, Indonesia can become a global example in maintaining harmony amid religious diversity.

2. Anti-Radicalism Values in Humanist Islamic Diversity Character Building

The phenomenon of radicalism is one of the conflicts in Indonesia that is difficult to eliminate. This is due to differences in religious understanding or practice. Radicalism can also occur through politics, economics, and others. Therefore, all elements starting from civilians, the government must make intensive efforts to ward off radicalism. One of the efforts to prevent radicalism is by instilling educational values of humanist religious teachings. In this context, the role of extension workers is needed to conduct counseling on the cultivation of anti-radicalism values to form a humanist religious character (Hidayati et al. 2021).

Minister of State Apparatus Empowerment and Bureaucratic Reform Regulation Number 9 of 2021 stipulates that the functional position of religious instructors is included in the religious and educational clumps (Minister of PAN &

RB Regulation No.9 of 2021). So it is the duty of religious instructors to instill the value of religious moderation. The media that can be used is digital media. By using digital media, it can reach a larger and faster audience. It is hoped that with the existence of religious instructors, people can understand and instill the value of religious moderation and form a humanist diversity character.

The Ministry of Religious Affairs has integrated radicalism into its strategic policies, one of whose goals is to improve the understanding and practice of religious teachings, ultimately resulting in the development of what is known as moderate Islam. Although not explicitly mentioned by the Ministry, this shows the Ministry's commitment to playing an active role in preventing and counteracting the spread of radicalism. It has great potential to provide counseling to the youth community on how to avoid and protect them from radicalism in the internet age. Extension materials should not only teach people about Islam, but also help them understand it correctly. Radicalism, often stemming from incorrect or narrow interpretations of religion, has developed into a problem that threatens the stability and security of societies around the world. Communities are exposed to an infinite flow of information, which includes radical narratives and propaganda spread widely through the internet and social media. Through effective outreach content, communities can be protected from radical ideologies and reinforced with principles that are opposed to extremism (Miftahul, 2023).

One of the indicators of religious moderation outlined by the Ministry of Religious Affairs, anti-radicalism (violence), is in line with the orientation to build a humanist Islamic religious character. This strategy can help spread the values of moderate Islamic teachings and avoid the personality of teenagers from the paradigm and attitude of radicalism (terrorism) in the name of Islam. Radicalism is defined as a movement or ideology that aims to change the social and political structure in Indonesia by using violence hidden behind religion. As part of the effort to prevent radicalism in society by providing the right understanding of Islam, the understanding that Islamic moderation counseling is included in the counter-radicalization category. This is in line with what Alius said that counter-radicalization strategies are aimed at the community so that they are not easily influenced by the ideology of radical groups. The goal is to increase the community's deterrence and vigilance against radicalism-terrorism. Radicalization is no longer an effort to instill Indonesian values and violent values in society through formal and non-formal education (Hidayat et al., 2020).

In addition to the importance of religious moderation metrics, it is also important to keep in mind that a focus on developing humane individual characters is essential when designing outreach content in educational development (Hidayati et al., 2021). To protect people from the influence of radicalism, as control over the content they consume becomes increasingly difficult. Therefore, by providing Islamic moderation content, it is hoped that

people can understand the meaning of Islamic teachings as a whole and can counteract understandings that are contrary to Islamic teachings, such as radicalism. In the end, it is hoped that through the counseling of Islamic moderation content, people will have the ability to protect themselves from the influence of radicalism. This confirms the content of being Islamic, being tolerant, which prioritizes religious moderation in the form of anti-radicalism indicators with the aim of forming a humanist Islamic diversity character. This finding prioritizes preventing radicalism and providing an understanding of true Islam and maintaining tolerance.

3. National Commitment Values in Nationalist Islamic Diversity Character Building

Religious fervor and nationalism are often seen as contradictory. Upholding nationalism can be perceived as lacking religion while upholding religion is often perceived as not being nationalistic. As the nation has diverse cultural roots, it becomes difficult to avoid conflicts between nationalists and religious people (Nurhadi, 2017). In addition, people's reading patterns are heavily influenced by the digital revolution. Provocative and exciting headlines are usually favored by the public. Most people immediately believe the news without verifying it. This is what causes a lot of fake news to circulate (Kementrian Agama, 2019). In this context, the relationship between nationalism and religious fervor, especially among Muslims in Indonesia, is something that needs to be considered. Especially in the context of building nationalism commitment in forming a nationalist character.

The purpose of the counseling content entitled being a tolerant Muslim is to invite Muslims to uphold religious tolerance and love for the homeland. This content emphasizes that nationalism for the Indonesian nation is a national spirit that absolutely must exist. In addition, the form of a nation is determined by each character of the nation itself. In this position, religious moderation becomes a necessity to be implemented for a better national and religious commitment (Zainun, 2020). Therefore, in this digital era, everyone needs to uphold religious moderation for the sake of the formation of a national character that not only holds fast to its religion but also has a high nationalist spirit.

National character and state defense are essential in shaping national identity and fostering nationalism commitment in Indonesia. Through effective education, good leadership, and respect for culture and history, national identity can be strengthened. Awareness of the nation, which includes an understanding of Pancasila and a sense of unity, is key to maintaining the integrity of the country. In addition, active participation in the development and mental and physical capabilities as part of state defense is indispensable. Therefore, collaboration between the government and non-governmental organizations in state defense awareness programs is crucial to creating a generation that has a strong national

identity and a deep love for the country (Faridah, 2023). The relationship between religion and nationalism in the context of nationalist religious character-building shows two complementary paradigms. On the one hand, education based on religious values can strengthen the nation's identity and morality, while on the other hand, modern and inclusive education can encourage progress and national awareness. K.H. Ahmad Dahlan emphasized the importance of integration between general and religious education to build progressive nationalism, while K.H. Hasyim Asy'ari emphasized the need to maintain traditional values and morality in education to maintain the nation's identity. Both approaches are relevant in facing the challenges of education in the modern era, where human resource development must remain rooted in the nation's religious and cultural values.

One indicator of religious moderation is the existence of a nationalist attitude, namely the willingness to accept religious practices that respect local culture and traditions that develop in society. Moderate people tend to be more open to local traditions and culture in their religious behavior, as long as it does not conflict with the basic principles of religious teachings. This non-rigid religious attitude can be seen from the willingness to accommodate religious practices that not only focus on normative truth but also pay attention to the virtues that are relevant to the life of the nation. Conversely, some groups are less accommodating to local traditions and culture, because they consider that the application of tradition in religion can pollute the purity of religion. However, this kind of religious attitude does not always reflect a person's level of moderation. A nationalist attitude in religious moderation not only includes acceptance of local traditions but is also shown through appreciation of the diversity and unity of the nation. Although an accommodating attitude towards local culture is often associated with religious moderation, this is only one of the general tendencies that cannot fully describe a person's moderation. The idea that nationalist attitudes that respect local culture are positively correlated with levels of religious moderation still requires further research to prove (Kementrian Agama, 2019).

The conclusion above confirms that religious moderation is not only centered on tolerance and openness but also plays an important role in shaping nationalist religious characters. Professor H. Nur Kholis' research provides an update on the indicators of religious moderation, namely openness, critical thinking, awareness of self-limitation (*tawadhu*), and orientation to humanity. These indicators become the foundation in creating a religious character that is in harmony with the spirit of nationalism. This approach emphasizes the importance of integration between religious teachings and national values in designing religious counseling content. By building a nationalist religious character, people are expected to not only be able to accept the diversity of local cultures, but also strengthen their commitment to national unity. Ultimately, religious moderation is a strategic step in building a nationalist religious character, which not only

prevents radicalism but also strengthens national identity through respect for tradition and social harmony

E. Conclusion

The research found that the application of religious tolerance values is urgent to strengthen peace in the midst of Indonesia's cultural diversity. The major finding of this research is that religious moderation is an effective strategy in facing the challenges of intolerance and radicalism. In detail, there are four key indicators used to support this conclusion. First, tolerance must be realized through mutual respect and cooperation between followers of different religions, so that it becomes a real practice, not just a discourse. Second, anti-radicalism efforts are identified as an important step by emphasizing inclusive education and deep religious understanding to prevent extreme thinking. Third, commitment to national values was raised as a way to strengthen solidarity among Indonesians with diverse backgrounds. Finally, accommodation of local culture is emphasized as a means to maintain social harmony by accepting and strengthening existing local traditions and identities. All these findings suggest that religious moderation not only creates a peaceful environment, but also supports national unity amidst diversity.

The implications of these findings reinforce the idea that applying a moderation approach in religion can be a valuable reference in efforts to improve education and proselytization in order to form a society that coexists harmoniously. This research provides an important basis for further research, both theoretically and practically, especially in exploring more deeply the relationship between religious moderation and national character building. However, this study has limitations, including data coverage that is limited to certain content, which causes it to not fully cover the diversity of other contexts. Thus, a suggestion for future research is to expand the analysis to various regions and diverse groups of people in order to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the moderation process. In a more practical way, it is important to expand the development of digital da'wah content that focuses on moderation so that the values of tolerance and peace can be effectively conveyed to the public.

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