The Concept of Curriculum According to Ali Ahmad Madzkur in *Manhaj at-Tarbiyah fī at-Taṣawwur al-Islāmī*

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Abstract

This study focuses on examining Madzkur's perspective on Islamic educational curriculum as articulated in Manhaj at-Tarbiyah fī at-Taṣawwur al-Islāmī. Employing a qualitative library research approach, primary data were derived from Madzkur's work, supported by secondary sources from relevant books and academic journals. Data were analyzed through reduction, categorization, interpretation, and theoretical synthesis. The findings indicate that Madzkur conceptualizes the curriculum based on taṣawwur Islāmī, comprising four interrelated components: educational objectives, integrative content, exemplary and dialogical methods, and evaluation emphasizing spiritual and moral dimensions. This curriculum framework aims to develop al-insān al-kāmil by harmonizing faith, intellect, and morality. The study recommends that Islamic educational institutions adopt Madzkur's integrative curriculum principles to foster holistic, transformative, and value-oriented education.

Keywords: Curriculum of Islamic Education; Religious and General Sciences; Islamic Worldview.

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan menelaah secara mendalam konsep kurikulum pendidikan Islam menurut Ali Ahmad Madzkur sebagaimana tertuang dalam *Manhaj at-Tarbiyah fī at-Taṣawwur al-Islāmī*. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan metode studi kepustakaan, dengan sumber data primer berupa karya Madzkur dan data sekunder dari buku serta jurnal ilmiah yang relevan. Analisis data dilakukan melalui proses reduksi, kategorisasi, interpretasi, dan sintesis teoretis. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa Madzkur merumuskan kurikulum pendidikan Islam berbasis *taṣawwur Islāmī* yang mencakup empat komponen utama, yaitu tujuan pendidikan, materi yang integratif, metode pembelajaran yang menekankan keteladanan dan dialog, serta evaluasi yang berorientasi pada dimensi spiritual dan moral. Kerangka ini bertujuan membentuk *al-insān al-kāmil* melalui harmonisasi iman, akal, dan akhlak. Penelitian ini merekomendasikan agar lembaga pendidikan Islam mengadopsi prinsip-prinsip kurikulum integratif Madzkur sebagai landasan pengembangan pendidikan Islam yang holistik, transformatif, dan berorientasi nilai.

Kata Kunci: Pandangan Dunia Islam, Kurikulum Pendidikan Islam; Ilmu Agama dan Ilmu Umum.

Introduction

The development of discourse on the Islamic education curriculum necessitates an in-depth examination of the philosophical foundations and curriculum structures proposed by classical contemporary scholars. One of the important references is the thought of Ali Ahmad Madzkur in his work *Manhaj al-Tarbiyah fī al-Taṣawwur al-Islāmī*, which formulates the foundations of the curriculum beginning from the concepts of divinity, the universe, human nature, and social life relations. However, how Madzkur explicitly formulates the concept of

curriculum its components and its relevance to contemporary Islamic education practices still requires systematic mapping as the basis for contextual and authentic curriculum development.

Several library studies examining Madzkur's thought indicate various aspects highlighted by local and regional researchers. (Nurdiyanti et al., 2022) discuss the foundational principles of Islamic educational curriculum according to Madzkur and formulate four foundational bases (divinity, the universe, human nature, and the concept of social life) as the basis for constructing an Islamic curriculum. Their study provides a comprehensive summary of the philosophical foundations but does not elaborate in detail on the structural and operational implications in contemporary curriculum design (Nurdiyanti et al., 2022). In addition, a study published in *Jurnal Ilmu Pendidikan* (Supriani et al., 2021) describes the main characteristics of Madzkur's curriculum such as the emphasis on positivity (*al-ijabiyah*) and the integration of values yet remains descriptive and insufficiently connects its findings to modern curriculum development frameworks.

On a broader theoretical level, critical studies on Islamic education and curriculum emphasize the need to recontextualize traditional values in responding to the demands of modernity and pluralism. (Sahin, 2018) highlights the importance of balancing traditional Islamic values with liberal–secular perspectives in formulating educational policy, offering a conceptual framework that situates Madzkur within wider theoretical discourse. Meanwhile, (Saada & Magadlah, 2021) discuss the paradigm of critical Islamic religious education, which requires curricula to be reflective, critical, and contextual a perspective useful for evaluating whether and how Madzkur's ideas can be formulated to meet contemporary educational needs.

From the literature review, two major gaps emerge: first, many studies summarize and describe Madzkur's foundational ideas, but few conduct a structural analysis of how the components (objectives, content, methods, evaluation, and educational services) are systematically designed according to Madzkur's framework; second, there is limited research examining the relevance and adaptability of Madzkur's ideas to contemporary Islamic education curriculum policies (including madrasa, pesantren, and general school systems integrating Islamic values). Therefore, research is needed that not only describes but also analyzes and translates Madzkur's ideas into an operational curriculum model (Yusuf & Nata, 2023).

This study offers novelty in the form of: (1) a comprehensive structural analysis of curriculum concepts in Madzkur's text elaborating objectives, content, pedagogical principles, and evaluation mechanisms; (2) an applied mapping that presents a conceptual model facilitating the adaptation of Madzkur's ideas into modern Islamic educational curricula while preserving their normative-value foundations; and (3) a theoretical dialogue between Madzkur's framework and contemporary paradigms (e.g., critical Islamic religious education). Thus, this study bridges the gap between classical contemporary texts and curriculum policy practice.

The findings of this study are expected to provide scientific and practical contributions: serving as a theoretical basis for developing value-based Islamic curricula; functioning as a guide for policymakers and curriculum developers in

madrasa, pesantren, and formal schools; and offering a reference for educator training programs to implement Madzkur's principles pedagogically. Furthermore, the resulting model may serve as a starting point for future research on the effectiveness of authentic and contextual Islamic curricula (Susilawati et al., 2024).

Method

This study employs a qualitative method with a library research approach. This approach was chosen because the object of study consists of conceptual and philosophical texts of a scholar's thought, without involving field data. Its aim is to explore, analyze, and interpret the concept of Islamic educational curriculum as formulated by Ali Ahmad Madzkur in his principal work *Manhaj at-Tarbiyah fī at-Taṣawwur al-Islāmī*. The qualitative approach enables the researcher to interpret the meanings and conceptual structures contained in the text deeply, systematically, and contextually.

Types and Sources of Data

The data in this study are divided into two categories: primary data and secondary data. Primary data were obtained from the original work of Ali Ahmad Madzkur, *Manhaj at-Tarbiyah fī at-Taṣawwur al-Islāmī* (Madkur, 2002). This book serves as the main source for exploring Madzkur's views on the nature of Islamic education, curricular principles, learning objectives, and curriculum structure.

Secondary data were gathered from supporting literature such as books, journal articles, and previous research discussing Islamic curriculum theories and Madzkur's thought. These include works by (Nurdiyanti et al., 2022; Saada & Magadlah, 2021; Sahin, 2018). Secondary data function as comparative references and reinforce the analysis of the primary text.

Data Collection Techniques

Data collection was carried out through documentation and literature analysis. The researcher thoroughly read and examined the primary source, recording key sections related to curriculum concepts such as objectives, content, methods, evaluation, and foundational principles. Relevant data were classified according to the themes of the study. Secondary literature was used to interpret and verify findings from the primary source, resulting in a comprehensive and valid understanding.

Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis employed content analysis combined with descriptive–interpretative analysis. This technique was used to identify, categorize, and interpret the conceptual meanings in Madzkur's text. The analytical steps included: (1) data reduction, selecting data relevant to the research focus; (2) data presentation, categorizing key concepts such as objectives, principles, and curriculum structure; and (3) conclusion drawing, formulating the characteristics of Madzkur's curriculum conception and its relevance to contemporary Islamic education curriculum development.

Result and Discussion
Ali Ahmad Madzkur's View on the Basic Concept of Islamic Education

The analysis of Ali Ahmad Madzkur's *Manhaj at-Tarbiyah fī at-Taṣawwur al-Islāmī* shows that the basic concept of Islamic education he proposes is rooted in *taṣawwur Islāmī*, a comprehensive Islamic worldview encompassing theological, humanistic, and social dimensions. (Madkur, 2002) emphasizes that Islamic education is not merely oriented toward intellectual development but ultimately aims to guide humans toward moral and spiritual perfection based on *tawḥīd*. Empirically, the textual examination reveals that Madzkur's framework of the Islamic education curriculum is constructed upon four principal foundations: the divine foundation (*al-asās al-ilāhī*), the cosmological foundation (*al-asās al-kawnī*), the human nature foundation (*al-asās al-insānī*), and the social foundation (*al-asās al-ijtimāʿī*). These four serve as the philosophical basis guiding the entire process of Islamic education (Khairuddin, 2021).

First, the divine foundation (*al-asās al-ilāhī*) occupies a central position in Madzkur's conception. He asserts that all educational activities must revolve around the values of *tawḥīd*. Education, in his view, is a form of worship; therefore, the curriculum must instill the awareness that all knowledge originates from Allah and must be used to serve Him. Madzkur refers to the Qur'anic principle that Allah is the source of all knowledge ("*ʿallama al-insān mā lam yaʿlam*"). Within the curriculum, this implies that all forms of knowledge religious or scientific must be integrated with spiritual values. Theoretically, this view affirms that Islamic education rejects the dichotomy between religious and worldly sciences, a separation widely criticized by contemporary Islamic education scholars (Nurdiyanti et al., 2022; Sahin, 2018).

Second, the cosmological foundation (*al-asās al-kawnī*) underscores that the universe serves as a medium of education for humankind. Nature is not merely an object of scientific exploration but also a *kauniyyah* sign reflecting God's majesty. Madzkur argues that Islamic education must encourage learners to read the signs of God through natural phenomena so that scientific activities become acts of worship. Empirically, Madzkur frequently links the educational process to research and observation, forming part of the Qur'anic command *iqra'*. Thus, Islamic education, according to Madzkur, remains open to modern scientific knowledge yet grounded in *tawḥīd*. This shows the relevance of his thought to the needs of contemporary Islamic education, particularly the necessity of integrating religion and science in the age of technology (Saada & Magadlah, 2021).

Third, the human nature foundation (*al-asās al-insānī*) represents the anthropological dimension of Islamic education. Madzkur affirms that human beings are created in a state of *fiṭrah*—possessing innate potential that is pure and balanced between physical, intellectual, and spiritual aspects. Islamic education must function to develop these potentials harmoniously. He criticizes educational systems focused solely on cognitive intelligence while neglecting morality and spirituality. Madzkur highlights value-based character education, asserting that educational success is measured not only by academic achievement but by the formation of a believing and ethical personality. This view aligns with the concept of critical Islamic religious education advanced by (Saada & Magadlah, 2021), which stresses the need for moral and spiritual awareness in forming ethical citizens within plural societies.

Fourth, the social foundation (*al-asās al-ijtimāʿī*) stems from the belief that humans are social beings responsible for their community. Madzkur asserts that Islamic education aims to create individuals who are both pious and socially constructive. Islamic education should prepare learners to become agents of social transformation capable of upholding justice, solidarity, and public welfare. Empirically, textual analysis shows that Madzkur places principles such as social justice (*al-ʿadālah al-ijtimāʿiyyah*) and cooperation (*al-taʿāwun*) as indicators of educational success (M. Tuhur et al., 2023).

Theoretically, Madzkur's concept of Islamic education forms a unified value system that integrates theological, cosmological, anthropological, and sociological dimensions within a *tawḥīdic* framework. He rejects secular models that separate moral values from science, asserting that the Islamic curriculum must be holistic, integrative, and oriented toward producing *al-insān al-kāmil*. Within this framework, Madzkur offers an integrative-transformative paradigm that unites faith, knowledge, and action within a single curriculum system. His perspective remains relevant for developing modern Islamic education curricula that focus not only on academic competence but also on character formation and civilizational development.

The Concept of the Islamic Education Curriculum

The findings from the analysis of Madzkur's *Manhaj at-Tarbiyah fī at-Taṣawwur al-Islāmī* show that his concept of the Islamic education curriculum is constructed upon integral and holistic Islamic philosophical foundations. Madzkur views the curriculum as a strategic instrument for achieving the goals of Islamic education, namely the formation of *al-insān al-kāmil* a perfect human being who is faithful, knowledgeable, and righteous in action. Empirically, the findings demonstrate that Madzkur rejects secular curriculum paradigms that focus solely on knowledge acquisition, replacing them with a curriculum model that balances spiritual (*ruḥiyyah*), intellectual (*ʿaqliyyah*), and physical (*jismiyyah*) dimensions.

According to Madkur (2002), the curriculum in Islamic perspective is not merely a list of subjects but includes all learning experiences designed to cultivate *tawḥīd* consciousness. Therefore, the structure of an Islamic curriculum must revolve around divine values and be integrated across all fields of knowledge. He asserts that all knowledge originates from Allah; thus, no dichotomy exists between religious sciences and empirical sciences. Theoretically, this concept aligns with the *unity of knowledge* paradigm advanced (Rini, 2019) and (Faruqi, 1992), which rejects the fragmentation of knowledge and advocates integrating revelation and reason (Amir & Rahman, 2023).

Empirically, Madzkur outlines four core components of the curriculum: (1) educational objectives, (2) curriculum content, (3) teaching methods, and (4) educational evaluation.

First, educational objectives. Madzkur explains that the ultimate goal of Islamic education is the formation of a *rabbānī* character. This objective encompasses intellectual, moral, and spiritual dimensions. Learning must shape a balanced human being capable of dedicating all potential to Allah. Theoretically, this reflects *tawḥīd* as

the pedagogical foundation that integrates faith, knowledge, and action (Nurdiyanti et al., 2022).

Second, curriculum content. Madzkur rejects the division of knowledge into "religious" and "worldly." He argues that all knowledge religious, social, scientific holds spiritual value when directed toward communal benefit. He categorizes curriculum content into: (1) Islamic sciences (*al-ʿulūm al-dīniyyah*), (2) humanities and social sciences (*al-ʿulūm al-insāniyyah wa al-ijtimāʿiyyah*), and (3) natural sciences and technology (*al-ʿulūm al-kawniyyah*). These domains must be integrated so that learners understand the relationship between revelation and reality. Empirically, textual analysis indicates that Madzkur positions *tazkiyat al-nafs* (self-purification) as the unifying element among all disciplines.

Third, teaching methods. Madzkur emphasizes interactive, nurturing (*tarbawī*) methods rather than rote-based teaching. Teachers function as *murabbī* (spiritual educators), not merely *muʿallim* (instructors). Learning should occur through compassion, role modeling, and consultation, following the Prophet's example. Theoretically, this reflects the concept of *taʾdīb* (education through cultivating proper conduct), which contextualizes human God knowledge relationships (Hasib, 2010).

Fourth, educational evaluation. Madzkur rejects evaluation systems that measure only cognitive achievement. Evaluation must assess moral, social, and spiritual development. It must be continuous (*mutābaʿah*) and behavior-oriented, assessing the formation of Islamic character rather than merely academic scores.

Theoretically, Madzkur positions the curriculum as a means of reconstructing humans and Islamic civilization. Knowledge must lead to social and spiritual transformation. Hence, the Islamic curriculum is not only academic but also prophetic—integrating revelation, reason, and righteous action within a *tawḥīdic* educational system.

Components of the Islamic Education Curriculum

Findings from Madzkur's *Manhaj at-Tarbiyah fī at-Taṣawwur al-Islāmī* (1990) show that his curriculum concept consists of four main components: (1) Islamic educational objectives, (2) curriculum content, (3) teaching methods, and (4) educational evaluation. These four components form an interrelated system within the integral Islamic worldview (*taṣawwur Islāmī*) aimed at shaping *al-insān al-kāmil*.

1. Objectives of Islamic Education

Empirically, the results of the textual analysis indicate that Madzkur begins his discussion of the curriculum with the aspect of educational objectives, as these objectives serve as the direction and guiding principle for all educational activities. According to him, the goals of Islamic education must aim to cultivate a well-balanced individual in terms of spiritual, intellectual, social, and physical dimensions. In his view, education should not be limited to the transfer of knowledge; rather, it should shape individuals who are *ʿābid*, *ʿālim*, and *ʿāmil*.

Theoretically, Madzkur's concept of educational objectives is rooted in the principle of *tawḥīd*, as emphasized in Qur'an Surah adh-Dhāriyāt [51]: 56 regarding

the creation of humankind for the purpose of worshiping Allah. He rejects educational objectives that merely prioritize academic achievement without strengthening moral and spiritual dimensions. Madzkur develops the idea that the curriculum must guide learners toward a balance between intellect, heart, and action an approach aligned with the concept of *al-tarbiyah al-mutakāmilah* (holistic education). This perspective is consistent with (Rini, 2019) paradigm of *ta'dīb*, which emphasizes the centrality of adab and divine consciousness as the core aims of education.

2. Curriculum Content

Empirically, Madzkur explains that the content of the Islamic curriculum encompasses all forms of learning experiences grounded in Islamic values. He rejects the dichotomy between religious sciences and general sciences. In his work, he categorizes curriculum content into three major domains:

(a) *al-'ulūm al-dīniyyah* (Islamic sciences such as Qur'an, Hadith, Creed, and Fiqh),

(b) *al-'ulūm al-insāniyyah wa al-ijtimā'iyyah* (humanities and social sciences such as history, language, and economics), and

(c) *al-'ulūm al-kawniyyah* (natural sciences and technology).

Theoretically, Madzkur proposes an integrative approach in which all fields of knowledge complement one another within the framework of *tawḥīd*. He asserts that knowledge possesses no true value if it is detached from divine orientation. This principle of knowledge integration aligns with the concept of the Islamization of knowledge developed by (Faruqi, 1992) and the notion of the *unity of knowledge* articulated by (Ida Mariana et al., 2023). Thus, curriculum content must embed spiritual and moral values within every discipline taught.

3. Teaching Methods

In the component of teaching methods, the findings of this study show that Madzkur rejects conventional instructional methods that rely heavily on memorization. He emphasizes the importance of *at-tarbiyah bi al-qudwah* (education through exemplary conduct), *at-tadrīb* (training), and *al-hiwār* (dialogue). The teacher does not merely function as a *mu'allim* (instructor), but as a *murabbi* an educator who guides the spiritual and moral development of learners.

Empirically, textual analysis of Madzkur's work indicates that effective learning methods in Islamic education are those that engage the intellect, the heart, and action simultaneously. He illustrates this through the example of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), who educated his companions through concrete role modeling, consultation, and direct experience. Theoretically, this reflects the principles of humanistic–religious education emphasized by (Sahin, 2018), which position learners as active subjects in the search for meaning rather than passive recipients of information.

In addition, Madzkur asserts that teaching methods must be contextual and oriented toward real-life situations. Learners are encouraged to understand social realities and interpret worldly phenomena through the lens of *tawḥīd*. Thus, the educational process becomes a means of cultivating self-awareness and fostering responsibility toward God and society.

4. Educational Evaluation

The final component according to Madzkur is evaluation. Empirically, textual analysis shows that he rejects an evaluation model based solely on cognitive achievement. In his view, evaluation within the Islamic curriculum must assess changes in learners' behavior, morality, and spirituality. The purpose of evaluation is not merely to measure knowledge, but to determine the extent to which education has shaped an Islamic character.

Theoretically, Madzkur's concept of evaluation aligns with the *comprehensive assessment* approach developed in contemporary Islamic education theory (Saada & Magadlah, 2021). Evaluation is carried out continuously (*mutāba'ah*), taking into account students' moral development, commitment to worship, and social responsibility. He emphasizes that the success of Islamic education is not measured by academic achievement, but by the formation of morally upright individuals.

Through these four components, Madzkur succeeds in constructing a holistic, integrative, and transformative framework for Islamic educational curriculum. These four elements complement one another in shaping an educational system oriented toward balancing spirituality, intellectuality, and morality.

The Relevance of Madzkur's Curriculum Concept to Contemporary Islamic Education

Analysis of Madzkur's *Manhaj at-Tarbiyah fī at-Taṣawwur al-Islāmī* demonstrates that his curriculum thought is highly relevant to contemporary Islamic education reform. His emphasis on *tawḥīd*, integration of knowledge, balance between spirituality and intellect, and character formation aligns with modern educational challenges such as globalization, secularization of knowledge, and technological change.

Empirical studies show that contemporary Islamic education is shifting toward integrative and holistic curriculum models (Nurdiyanti et al., 2022). Many Islamic schools and universities in Indonesia apply integrated approaches combining Islamic studies with science and technology. Theoretically, Madzkur's relevance appears in four dimensions:

1. Philosophical Foundation

Madzkur grounds his entire curriculum conception in the *taṣawwur Islāmī* (Islamic worldview), which places *tawḥīd* as its central principle. This principle is highly relevant to the challenges of modern curricula that tend to be fragmented and lack spiritual orientation. By establishing *tawḥīd* as its foundation, contemporary Islamic education can develop a system that fosters transcendental awareness amid the dominance of Western materialism and rationalism. This view aligns with (Ida Mariana et al., 2023), who asserts that Islamic education must instill *adab* as an expression of awareness of God, knowledge, and humanity.

2. Curriculum Structure

In terms of methodology, Madzkur emphasizes a *tarbawi* approach that is interactive and contextual. The teacher functions as a *murabbi* an educator who nurtures character rather than merely a transmitter of knowledge. Empirical findings (Sahin, 2018) demonstrate that pedagogical approaches fostering dialogue, reflection, and spiritual values produce more meaningful learning experiences for Muslim

students in the modern era. This indicates that Madzkur's ideas align with contemporary Islamic pedagogical directions that are humanistic and student-centered.

Furthermore, Madzkur stresses that learning methods must be grounded in exemplary conduct (*al-qudwah al-ḥasanah*) and direct experience (*at-tajrībiyyah*). Theoretically, this supports 21st-century learning models based on experiential engagement and character development, such as experiential learning and values-based education. Thus, Madzkur's approach can serve as both a philosophical and practical framework for developing Islamic pedagogy that remains adaptive to modernity without compromising its spiritual foundations.

3. Teaching Methodology

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4. Evaluation Orientation

Madzkur rejects evaluation systems that measure only cognitive achievement. According to him, assessment must encompass spiritual, moral, and social dimensions. Empirically, this perspective has been adopted within Islamic education policy in Indonesia through the use of authentic assessment and character evaluation integrated into the *Merdeka Curriculum* (Fitria et al., 2024). Madzkur's approach supports continuous (*mutāba'ah*) and transformative assessment, in which student success is measured by the maturity of their faith, character, and social contribution.

Theoretically, this relevance indicates that Madzkur's thought is not confined to the context of *the* 20th century, but is capable of addressing the reform needs of contemporary Islamic education. He emphasizes the importance of constructing a curriculum that not only produces competent workers but also shapes civilized individuals with divine orientation. This positions his curriculum conception as a bridge between the classical Islamic intellectual tradition and the demands of modernity, as articulated in the paradigm of *education for the soul and society* (Saada & Magadlah, 2021). Thus, through the synthesis of empirical and theoretical dimensions, Madzkur's ideas prove relevant for contemporary Islamic education curriculum reform. His thought provides not only a conceptual framework but also

practical direction for developing curricula that balance faith, knowledge, and action in responding to the global challenges of modern education.

Conclusion

Based on the findings and discussion, it can be concluded that the concept of the Islamic education curriculum according to Ali Ahmad Madzkur in *Manhaj at-Tarbiyah fī at-Taṣawwur al-Islāmī* is grounded in the Islamic worldview (*taṣawwur Islāmī*), which places *tawḥīd* as its fundamental principle. Madzkur emphasizes the integration of religious sciences and general sciences as a foundation for shaping *al-insān al-kāmil*, namely individuals who are faithful, intellectually competent, and of noble character.

According to Madzkur, the Islamic curriculum consists of four interrelated components objectives, content, methods, and evaluation—organized within a spiritual, intellectual, and moral framework. Education is thus understood not merely as the transmission of knowledge, but as a comprehensive process of nurturing faith, character, and intellect. Madzkur's integrative and transformative ideas remain highly relevant for contemporary Islamic curriculum development that seeks a balance between spiritual and rational dimensions.

Nevertheless, this study is limited to a conceptual and textual analysis based on library research and does not examine the practical implementation of Madzkur's curriculum ideas in educational institutions. Therefore, future studies are recommended to conduct empirical research, such as case studies or mixed-method approaches, to explore the application, effectiveness, and challenges of implementing Madzkur's curriculum framework in diverse Islamic educational contexts.

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