

**AN ANALYSIS OF RESIDENTIAL PREFERENCE IN A TRADITIONAL AFRICAN CITY:
A CASE STUDY OF ILESA, OSUN STATE NIGERIA**

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ABSTRACT

This work examines residential and environment preference in Ilesha. This preference is based on housing quality in context of type, facilities and amenities as well as the quality of residential environment especially as the two meet the desire and satisfaction of the respondents. It also examines how this issue of satisfaction forms the basis for residential preference in the study area. Furthermore, the study examines the relationship between housing quality and residential preference using the Spearman's rank correlation and "t" student distribution to test the significance of the result. Using the regression analysis, the influence of housing quality, accessibility, familiarity, safety, availability of facilities and nature of residential neighbourhood were determined on perception of residential environment. Also using the regression equation, the influence of socio-economic variables were determined on residential preference. Lastly, the study identifies how people perceive and rate their environment. The findings arrived are; (a) majority of the respondents are satisfied with their present houses and residential environment. (b) There is a strong positive correlation between housing quality and residential preference. (c) Perception of neighbourhood is largely determined by safety, availability of facilities, quality of residential environment. (d) Residential preference is not determined solely by socio-economic variables (e) the study has both theoretical and practical implications. The theoretical implication rests on the need for the development of sense of place of study while the practical implication exposes the need for preference studies before planning housing and residential areas. Finally, there is the need for involvement of housing and environment consumers in issues relating to housing policy and environmental planning so as to achieve optimality in planning.

INTRODUCTION

The first part of this study examined how the respondents of Ilesha perceived their dwelling unit and residential environment in terms of satisfaction. In this second part of the study, the residential preference of respondents in Ilesha was examined *based on housing quality* in context of type, facilities and amenities as well as the quality of residential environment. It also examines how the issue of satisfaction forms the basis for residential preference in the study area.

Housing is one of the essential needs of life. Man needs house to protect himself against element of weather. The provision of good housing therefore, has a profound effect and influence on the health, efficiency and wellbeing of any community (Onoherhoraye, 1984). The housing encompasses not only the main building, also environmental amenities such as water supply, waste disposal and neighbourhood roads. So also does it include housing facilities such as the nature of bathroom, kitchen and toilet. Housing can therefore, be seen as a complex multi-dimensional unit comprising package of goods and services to provide satisfaction for human beings.

This study examined how housing and environmental quality form the basis for residential preference of residents of Ilesha. i.e. how housing quality and environmental satisfaction forms the basis for residential preference. The study also examined the underlying factors responsible for whether people are satisfied with their present houses and residential areas.

AIM AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study examined how the respondents in the study areas perceive their dwelling unit and residential environment and how this (perception of housing unit and residential neighbourhood) form basis for their residential preference.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are

- To evaluate the degree of housing and environmental satisfaction among the residents.
- To examine the degree of relationship between housing quality and residential preference.
- To determine the relationship between residential preference and socio-economic characteristics on one hand and residential perception and environmental attribute on the other hand.

Hypotheses Tested

- That there is a relationship between housing quality and residential preference.
- That residential preference is determined by factors such as age, education, income, length of stay, rent paid, distance from place of work,
- That perception of residential neighbourhood is determined by housing quality, accessibility, familiarity, safety, availability of facilities and quality of the environment.

METHODOLOGY

DATA COLLECTION

This study uses the questionnaire to elicit information from the respondents. The questionnaire is divided four main sections. The first section (A) was concerned with information on socio-economic characteristics of the respondents such as age, sex, occupation, education income and length of stay. The second section (B) has to do with the housing quality/facility. Information is collected on the quality of houses such as the type of houses, age, construction, material and nature of facilities such as water supply, toilet, bathroom and kitchen. The third section (C) has to do with the surrounding and residential neighbourhoods. In the section, respondents are asked to rate qualities of environment on a five point scale with a rating of 1 indicating poor, 2 as fair, 3 as average, 4 as good and rating of 5 as excellent. Also in this section, respondents are told to indicate whether they are willing to change their present environment. If they wish, then they can move to Section Four (D). Section Four (D) deals with the ranking of the 15 selected residential districts. Respondents are asked to rank the neighbourhoods on the basis of their preference for living. area preferred most will be ranked I and subsequent ones in descending order of preference till the least preferred district (15). Furthermore, residential areas are ranked on the basis of housing quality, accessibility, familiarity, safety, availability of facilities and residential environment.

Fifteen (15) neighbourhoods which are identifiable by name and which are primarily residential areas are chosen. These fifteen neighbourhoods are a fair representative of the range of residential areas in Ilesha. Two hundred questionnaires were distributed on the basis of the aerial extent (size) and population of each neighbourhood as presented in Table 1

Table1: Residential Neighbourhoods & Distribution of Questionnaire

District	No. of Questionnaire
Ereja Area	10
Ishokun Area	16
G.R.A	10
Cappa	12
Imo Quarters	17
Itaofa/Ilaje	15
Okeoye/Irojo	15
Ijofi/Bolorunduro	15
Ayeso/Oke Iyin	13
Okesa Area	12
qIgbaye/Oke Esho	15
Egbe –Idi/Ijoka	12
Stadium Area	15
Araromi-Idasa	1
Ikoti-Omioko	13
Total	200

STUDY AREA

Ilesha is the capital of Ijesaland and the seat of Ilesa Local Government Area. Ilesha is one of the pre-colonial cities in the South –Western Nigeria. Some of the traditional features include the Palace, Staff of Ogedengbe and the state of First Owa (Ajibogun) at the centre of the town. Like any traditional town, the core area is characterised by traditional Yoruba housing style, housing congestion and somewhat deteriorating environment. The suburb area is characterized by modern houses with facilities. The town lies approximately between longitude 4.40” and 4.4.2” East and latitude 7.36 and 7.38” North of Equator. It is located to the North/East of Ibadan, the capital of Oyo state. The town have a beautiful scenery with projecting hills of about 40-100 metres in height above the sea level. Ilesha is drained by Oora and Asoro streams.

According to the 1952/53 Census data, Ilesha have a population of 72,029 which placed it as the 9th largest town in the former Western Region. The 1963 Census puts the population as 165,822 and the recent (2006) estimate put the population as 371,719. Strictly speaking, there is no segregation of residential areas either in context of status, tribe or religion. However, residential areas in Ilesha can be grouped on the basis of the major streets and outlets of the town called ‘Enu Odi’ and between this Enu Odi and City Centre, (Ereja), residential areas can be identified on the basis of streets.

In recent years, Ilesha has witnessed major-economic and demographic changes. These changes include the springing up of industries such as I.B.L, Ducana, Aluminum, steel and Wire Industries, the Plastic and Packaging Industries. There have also been an increase in the number and type of educational institutions. This development attracts heterogeneous mass of population and consequently there have been improvement in residential environment and quality of houses with the emergence of new ones in some cases. The major streets which also serve as the commercial lines are Okesha-Imo road, Adeti-Oshogbo Road and Ayeso-Ife Road.



DATA ANALYSIS

Analysis of housing quality is done by simple frequency distribution and percentages which are presented in tabular form. For data on residential environment the mean of individual rating for environmental quality is determined for each neighbourhood. Neighbourhoods are then ranked on this basis. The overall average is also found for the entire study area. The first hypothesis is tested, using the Spearman's rank correlation co-efficient. Spearman's rank is used here because the preference and housing are done in ordinal form. For the second and third hypothesis, the multiple regression analysis was applied.

Table 2: Housing Types

Neighbourhood	Types of Houses				Total
	Rooming Apartment	Flats	Duplexes	Bungalows	
Ereja	7	-	2	1	10
Ishokun	7	6	1	2	16
G.R.A	2	6	2	-	10
Cappa	6	4	1	1	12
Imo	6	6	2	4	17
Ilaje/Itaofa	8	4	2	1	15
Okeoye/Irojo	7	3	2	3	15
Ijofi/Bolorunduro	8	2	-	5	15
Ayeso	8	2	2	1	13
Okesha	7	5	-	-	12
Igbaye/Oke-Esho	10	1	2	2	15
Egbe-Idi/Ijoka	10	2	-	-	12
Stadium Area	8	7	-	-	10
Ikoti/Omi-Oko	7	3	1	2	13
Total	107	54	16	23	100
Percentage	53.5	27.0	6.4	11.5	100

Source: Field Work, 2015.

Four major types of houses stand out in bold relief. They are rooming apartment, flats, duplexes and bungalows. These various houses vary from one neighbourhood to another. On the whole, it was found that 107 houses are rooming apartment (53.5%), 54 houses (27.0%) are flats, 16 (8%) are duplex while 23 houses are bungalow

Table3: Types of Facilities and Amenities

Types of houses	Kitchen		Bathroom		Toilet		Power Supply		Water Supply	
	Private	Shared	Private	Shared	Private	Shared	Private	Shared	Private	Shared
Rooming	22	85	16	91	22	85	100	7	29	78
Flats	48	6	46	8	44	10	53	1	27	27
Duplex	14	2	4	2	16	0	16	0	14	2
Bungalow	8	15	9	14	8	15	23	0	3	20
Total	93	107	86	114	90	110	192	8	73	127
Percentage	46.5	53.5	43	67	45	55	96	4	36.5	63.5

Source: Fieldwork, 2015

Table 4: Types of Houses and Facilities

Neighbourhood	Types of Facilities and Amenities									
	Kitchen		Bathroom		Toilet		Power Supply		Water Supply	
	Private	Share d	Private	Share d	Private	Share d	Private	Share d	Private	Share d
Rooming	22	85	16	91	22	85	100	7	29	78
Flats	48	6	46	8	44	10	53	1	27	27
Duplex	14	2	4	2	16	0	16	0	14	2
Bungalow	8	15	9	14	8	15	23	0	3	20
Total	93	107	86	114	90	110	192	8	73	127
Percentage	46.5	53.5	43	67	45	55	96	4	36.5	63.5

Source: Fieldwork, 2015

Table5: Perception of surrounding environment

Descriptor	1 Poor		2 Fair		3 Average		4 Good		5 Excellent	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Refuse Disposal	12	6	39	19.5	66	33	49	28.5	34	17.0
Cleanliness	7	3.5	36	18.0	63	31.5	67	32.5	27	13.5
Surrounding/ Environment	10	5.0	33	16.5	75	37.5	56	28.0	26	13.5
Road Condition	7	3.5	45	21.5	79	39.5	45	22.5	26	13.0
Quality of Transport	22	11.0	33	16.5	65	32.5	53	26.5	27	13.5
Noise Level	14	7	58	29.5	59	29.5	48	24.0	21	10.5
Crime Rate	28	14	61	30.5	52	26.0	41	20.5	18	9.0
Security Measure	21	10.5	46	23.0	69	34.5	46	23.	18	9.0
Friendliness	16	8	32	16.0	57	28.5	65	32.5	30	15.0
Aesthetic Quality	11	5.5	49	24.5	52	26.0	66	33.0	22	11.0

Source: Fieldwork, 2015

Based on the type of houses, facilities and amenities available in the houses and the nature of surrounding environment, respondents were asked to rank their neighbourhoods on the basis of their preference as a residential area. Areas preferred most will be ranked first and areas preferred last will be ranked fifteen. Also they were asked to rank other environmental attributes of each residential area. Based on the rating of the surrounding environment, respondents were asked whether they are satisfied with their environment or not, i.e. whether they wish to change their present environment or not. The result shows that 175 respondents are satisfied with their present environment and as such they are unwilling to change or move out from their present neighbourhood. Only 25 respondents are willing to change their present environment, i.e. they are not satisfied with their present environment.

Table6: Preference Ranking for Residential areas

Neighbourhood	Preference Rank	Housing Quality	Accessibility Rank	Familiarity Rank	Safety Rank	Availability of Facility
Ereja Area	14	14	4	1	5	7
Ishokun	4	5	11	4	6	5
G.R.A	2	1	1	10	1	2
Cappa	3	2	3	3	4	6
Imo	1	3	2	2	2	1
Ilaje/Itaofa	10	4	8	5	15	8
Oke-Oye/Irojo	7	8	6	12	7	12
Ijofi/Bolorunduro	8	8	7	6	11	4
Ayeso	5	3.5	10	11	8	3
Okesa	6	12	5	7	10	10
Igbaye/Oke-esho	9	15	12	9	3	15
Egbe Idi/Ijoka	11	13	9	8	9	9
Stadium Area	12	6	15	15	12	14
Idasa/Ararami	13	10	14	15	13	11
Ikoti/Omi-Oko	15	10	13	14	14	13

Source: Fieldwork, 2015.

From Table 6, it is evident that the neighbourhoods most preferred are Imo (1st), G.R.A, (2nd) and Cappa (3rd). The choices of these areas are not accidental in the sense that none of the three neighbourhoods was ranked more than the 6th position in all the variables. It is only G.R.A that was ranked 10th in case of familiarity. The reason for this is that G.R.A being an area for elites in the society is not a frequently encountered area by majority of the people. The other two areas (Imo and Cappa) are areas located relatively at the outskirts of the town. They are also areas with modern houses with amenities and facilities with planned environment. The three least preferred areas- Ereja (14th), Idasa/Ararami (13th) and Ikoti/Omi-Oko (15th) are located in the core areas. For instance, Ereja area is the centre of the town. This is the centre for all the commercial activities as such it is rowdy in nature and un conducive for residential purpose. Nevertheless, it ranked 4th and 1st in terms of accessibility and familiarity respectively.

Housing Quality and Residential Preference

Table 7: Rankings for Neighbourhood Preference and Housing Quality

Residential Neighbourhood	Preference Rank	Housing Quality Rank
Ereja Area	14	14
Ishokun	4	5
G.R.A	2	1
Cappa	3	2
Imo	1	3
Ilaje/Itaofa	10	4
Oke-Oye/Irojo	5	8
Ijofi/Bolorunduro	7	8
Ayeso	8	7
Okesa	6	12
Igbaye/Oke-esho	9	15
Egbe Idi/Ijoka	11	13
Stadium Area	12	6
Idasa/Ararami	13	10
Ikoti/Omi-Oko	15	10

Source: Fieldwork, 2015.

The Spearman’s rank correlation coefficient was applied to the housing quality and preference rankings. The rs is 0.65. This showed a strong positive association between the two. The student “t” test was applied to the Spearman’s rank result for test of significance. The calculated t is 3.07 at 15-2 degrees of freedom. The table value at 95% confidence level is 2.34. The tabulated “t” value at 95% confident level is less than the calculated value. This indicates the significance of the correlation co-efficient. Therefore the hypothesis that preference for residential neighbourhood by respondent is based on housing quality is significant.

RESIDENTIAL PREFERENCE AND RESIDENTIAL ENVIRONMENT QUALITIES

The extent of which housing quality, accessibility, familiarity, safety, availability or facilities and nature of residential environment ratings affect the perception for a particular neighbourhood or how these variables jointly influence the preference for a particular neighbourhood was determined using multiple regression analysis (through computer). The regression equation is of the form $Y = a + b_1 x_1 + b_2 x_2 + b_3 x_3 + b_4 x_4 + b_5 x_5 + b_6 x_6$

Where:

Y = The dependent variable (perception) of a residential neighbourhood

a = The intercept

b1 = Partial regression co-efficient

x1 = Independent variables

$$Y = 1.16 + 0.599 x_1 - 0.499 x_2 + 0.0847 x_3 + 0.676 x_4 + 0.344 x_5 - 0.070 x_6$$

Table8: For perception of Residential Neighbourhood

Dependent Variable	B Value	Standard error	T for H0 Parameter = 0	Prob T
X1	0.599	0.451	1.329	0.2205
X2	-0.449	0.281	-1.598	0.1487
X3	0.0847	0.206	0.411	0.6916
X4	0.676	0.213	3.166	0.0133
X5	0.344	0.247	1.394	0.2008
X6	-0.070	0.349	-0.180	0.8615

Intercept = 1.16

R. square = 0.8164

Where:

X1 = Housing quality

- X2 = Accessibility
- X3 = Familiarity
- X4 = Safety
- X5 = Availability of facility
- X6 = Residential environment

These variables were measured on five points scale. i.e. respondents were told to rank these variables on five point scale. All the variables jointly account for 81.6% of the variations in neighbourhood perception. Variables with positive correlation are housing quality, familiarity, safety and availability of facilities. Of the six variables, three variables jointly contributed 74.93%. Variables four (safety) contributed 16.18%, variables five (availability of environment) contributed 6.71%. This is shown in the stepwise regression Table 9

Table9 : Summary of Stepwise Regression for Dependent Variable Y

Step	Variable Entered	Number In	Partial R ** 2	Model R ** 2	C (P)	F	Prob F
1	X5	1	0.4702	0.4702	12.0853	11.5378	0.0048
2	X4	2	0.1618	0.6320	7.0365	5.2746	0.0404
3	X6	3	0.1173	0.7493	3.9240	5.1480	0.0444

The analysis of variance was used to test the statistical significance of the joint contributions of these variables on the neighbourhood perception is shown on Table 9

Table10: Analysis of Variance

Source of Variation	Sum of Square	Degree of Freedom	Mean Square	F
Regression SSR	228.59	6	38.09	5.9
Residual SSE	51.41	8	6.45	
Total	<u>280.00</u>			

The calculated F value is 5.9 and the Table value at 95% level of significance is 3.58. The calculated F value is greater than the Table value. The contributions of the variables is significant, hypothesis is rejected. Out of three variables that entered for stepwise regression, only two are significant as shown on Table 4.6 below.

Table11: Test of Significance of Individual Contribution

Step	B. Value	Standard Error	Type II SS	F	Prob > F
X4	0.466	0.168	48.848	7.65	*0.0183
X5	0.466	0.183	19.844	3.11	00.1055
X6	0.393	0.173	32.852	5.15	*0.0444

Intercept = 1.15

*Significant at P 0.05

Another hypothesis was also tested on the extent of which age, education, occupation, income, length of stay, amount paid as rent, distance from the centre of the town and distance to place of work jointly influence the level of residential preference.

The regression equation for this is of the form: $Y = a + b_1 x_1 + b_2 x_2 + b_3 x_3 + b_4 x_4 + b_5 x_5 + b_6 x_6 + b_7 x_7 + b_8 x_8$

Where:

- Y = dependent variable (residential preference)
- a = Intercept
- b1 = Partial Regression co-efficient
- X1 = Age
- X2 = Education
- X3 = Occupation

$$\begin{aligned}
 X4 &= \text{Income} \\
 X5 &= \text{Length of stay in the town} \\
 X6 &= \text{Amount paid as rent} \\
 X7 &= \text{Distance to the centre of town} \\
 X8 &= \text{Distance to place of war} \\
 Y &= 4.57 + 0.0095 x 1 - 0.047 x 2 - 0.052 x 3 \\
 &\quad - 0.000022 x 4 - 0.008 x 5 + 0.0023 x 6 - 0.249 x 7 + 0.0299 x 8
 \end{aligned}$$

Table 12: Summary of Computer Result for Residential Preferences

Preferential Variables	B. Value	Standard Error	T for HO Parameter
X1	0.0095	0.0213	0.324
X2	-0.047	0.223	0.213
X3	-0.052	-0.156	0.331
X4	0.000022	0.000056	-0.398
X5	-0.008	0.156	-0.407
X6	0.0023	0.00711	0.252
X7	-0.249	0.299	-0.834
X8	-0.299	0.184	1.619

Intercept = 4.57
R .Square = 0.1996

All the variables jointly account for 19.96% of the variation in residential preference. This contribution is insignificant of all these variables. Variable X8 (distance to the place of work) amount to 10.93%. No other variable entered again because none met the 0.15 significance level (set by the computer) for entry into the model. The joint contribution (significance) of these (eight) variables on residential preference is tested by the analysis of variance presented on Table 4.8.

Table13: Analysis of Variance

Source of Variation	Sum of square	Degree of Freedom	Mean Square	F
Regression SSR	3.460	8	0.433	0.468
Residual SSE	<u>13.873</u>	15	0.925	
Total	17.333			

The calculated F. Value is 0.468, the table value at 95% level of significance is 2.64. The calculated F value is less than Table Value. This means that the contributions of the variables are not significant. The original hypothesis that residential preference is determined by the eight variables is rejected. In other words, the result shows that none of the eight variables contributed significantly to space preference.

FINDINGS SUMMARY CONCLUSION

From the results obtained on housing quality and residential preference, many things are revealed about housing quality, neighbourhood perception and residential preference in Ilesha. In context of housing quality and facility, it was revealed that most of the houses are rooming apartments (107 houses or 53.5%). This is a clear indication of traditional Yoruba housing pattern of “face me, I face you” style. Furthermore, it is revealed that the average age of the houses is not less than thirty years.

. Information on housing qualities revealed that most facilities are shared especially kitchen and bathroom while majority of the toilet system is pit latrine, the major source of water supply is the well, indicating acute shortage of tap water in the town. About 96% of the 200 houses surveyed have electricity. Of importance is the fact that majority of the inhabitants are satisfied with their present houses irrespective of the conditions of the houses. With regards to the surrounding and housing environment, the facility of the environment is rated as 3.1 on a five (5) point scale, indicating an average environment.

The result also shows that all the two variables used to evaluate the environment have a rating of 3 and above with the exception of the level of noise and crime rate which have rating of less than 3. It is of importance to note that most people are unwilling to change their present environment. Of the 200 respondents interviewed, only twenty-five are willing to change their present environment. This is an

indication that people are satisfied with their present environment. One emerging fact from the above analysis on housing and environmental condition is that people are conscious of their environment because the environments have meaning to them. The study also revealed that there is a strong positive relationship between housing quality and residential preference or desirability.

Finally, it was observed that perception of neighbourhood is determined to a greater extent by safety and quality of residential environment while it is determined to a less extent by availability of facilities. It was also observed that preference for a particular neighbourhood is not solely determined by socio-economic factors only.

THEORETICAL IMPLICATION OF THE STUDY

Two major issues of place attachment and environmental identity that emerged from this study form and basis of its theoretical implication. The issue of place attachment is related to that of housing satisfaction. It is because of the emotional, cultural, social and economic bond between the inhabitants and their houses, most of them are unwilling to change their houses. Even those living in the core areas where the quality of buildings erected leaves much to be desired and environmental quality are low. The second issue of environmental identity (refers to) comprise more mundane environment in which individual lives, works and moves in response to the prevalent economic and social necessities of life.

Because people have established rapport with their environment, socially, culturally and economically, they are unwilling to change such an environment. Here in lies the essence of “sense of place of study” in urban and housing policy. “Sense of place” refers to those qualities of the environment that make it identifiable, valuable and distinctive. The essence of sense of place study was revealed in this study is that people have mental images of their environment and they attribute meanings to such environment. This shapes their preference for a particular environment. In summary, the theoretical implication hinges on the fact that ‘sense of place be incorporated into housing design and environmental management.

PRACTICAL IMPLICATION OF THE STUDY

The practical implication of the study has to do with the planning of housing and residential areas. It is open secret that one of the problems in Nigerian cities is that of housing the urban dwellers. Various attempts have been made to alleviate this problem, but it still persists. Attempts were made by the government in the study area and in other urban centres to solve the problem by the establishment of Housing Estates. This idea though good, did not work partially because the housing estates were not located in areas of preference or desirable areas. For instance, in the study area, the Federal Government Housing Unit was located outside Ilaje/Ila-ofa area while the Oyo state Housing Estate is located outside Isokun area. These two areas were ranked 10th and 14th respectively. If a study or survey on people’s residential preference has been carried out prior to creation of these housing estates, the estates would have been located around Imo, G.R.A or Cappa Area that ranked first, second and third respectively. This accounts for why most of the houses remained unoccupied.

Secondly, a study like this will help in designing houses which satisfy the taste of the people. Most housing estates, even when they are properly located are not culturally suitable for living in context of design for large extended families and social ties typical of Yoruba Communities. As a result of cultural affinity of the people, modern flat houses which connote individualism as opposed to communalism is not acceptable. Studies like this on housing preference would solve the problem. Through such studies, housing styles that meet the desire, needs and aspiration of people will be provided

CONCLUSION

This work has identified the nature of housing quality and residential environment in the study area. It also identifies the degree of satisfaction of housing and environment and the basis for preference. Furthermore, the study highlights the need to incorporate people’s preference into housing and residential planning within the ambit of urban planning. The conclusion to be drawn is although studies on preferences has been dominated by increasing mathematisation or quantification, but better results have not been achieved.

There is need therefore, for an active involvement of those that are directly involved or concerned (i.e housing and environmental consumers) in issues relating to housing policy and environmental changes. This will help to achieve optimality in planning and it will also help to achieve and ensure spatial social justice, equity and equal opportunity for all environmental consumers.

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