

KNOWLEDGE ABILITY OF PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS ON SCHOOL MANAGEMENT

Cemre Bekir Mahmutlar
TRNC Ministry of Education
cemremahmutlar@gmail.com

Osman Erbulak
TRNC Ministry of Education
osmannilgun@hotmail.com

Nilgün Erbulak
TRNC Ministry of Education
erbulakosman@hotmail.com

Şenay Mahmutlar
TRNC Ministry of Education

ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to examine the views of primary school teachers working in TRNC on the effectiveness of school management processes. The study, which was conducted based on quantitative research approach, was designed according to the general survey model. The population of the study consists of primary school teachers in TRNC and the sample consists of 289 teachers working in different schools. 'Management Process Effectiveness Scale' developed by Gül (2017) was used as a data collection tool. The scale includes teachers' demographic information and their evaluations of school administrators' management processes. SPSS 25.0 software was used to analyse the data; in addition to descriptive statistics, analysis techniques such as t-test and ANOVA were used. According to the research findings, teachers' perceptions of school management processes differ significantly according to gender, professional seniority and length of service in school. Female teachers evaluated the administrative processes more positively than their male colleagues. Teachers with longer professional and institutional experience had more positive perceptions of administrative processes. No significant difference was found depending on the age variable. In general, teachers stated that school administrators fulfil basic administrative functions effectively; especially participation in decision-making processes was evaluated at a high level.

Keywords: School management, management processes, teacher views, primary education

İLKÖĞRETİM ÖĞRETMENLERİNİN OKUL YÖNETİMİ KONUSUNDAKİ BİLGİ YETERLİLİKLERİ

ÖZET

Bu araştırmanın amacı, KKTC'de görev yapan ilköğretim öğretmenlerinin okul yönetim süreçlerinin etkililiğine ilişkin görüşlerini incelemektir. Nicel araştırma yaklaşımına dayalı olarak yürütülen çalışma, genel tarama modeline göre tasarlanmıştır. Araştırmanın evrenini KKTC'deki ilköğretim öğretmenleri oluşturmakta, örneklemini ise farklı okullarda görev yapan 289 öğretmen temsil etmektedir. Veri toplama aracı olarak Gül (2017) tarafından geliştirilen "Yönetim Süreçleri Etkililiği Ölçeği" kullanılmıştır. Ölçek, öğretmenlerin demografik bilgileri ile okul yöneticilerinin yönetim süreçlerine ilişkin değerlendirmelerini içermektedir. Verilerin analizinde SPSS 25.0 programı kullanılmış; betimsel istatistiklerin yanı sıra t-testi ve ANOVA gibi analiz tekniklerinden yararlanılmıştır.

Araştırma bulgularına göre, öğretmenlerin okul yönetim süreçlerine ilişkin algıları cinsiyet, mesleki kıdem ve okuldaki hizmet süresi değişkenlerine göre anlamlı farklılık göstermektedir. Kadın öğretmenler, yönetim süreçlerini erkek meslektaşlarına kıyasla daha olumlu değerlendirmiştir. Mesleki ve kurumsal deneyimi daha uzun olan öğretmenlerin ise yönetsel süreçlere ilişkin daha olumlu algılara sahip olduğu görülmüştür. Yaş değişkenine bağlı olarak anlamlı bir farklılık saptanmamıştır. Genel olarak öğretmenler, okul yöneticilerinin temel yönetim işlevlerini etkili biçimde yerine getirdiğini belirtmiş; özellikle karar alma süreçlerine katılım yüksek düzeyde değerlendirilmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Okul yönetimi, yönetim süreçleri, öğretmen görüşleri, ilköğretim.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Problem

Effective management of schools is a fundamental element that directly affects the quality of the education system. In this process, it is critical for teachers, as well as school administrators, to have managerial knowledge and skills

in order for the school to achieve its goals. Teachers are not only individuals who carry out in-class teaching activities; they are also actors who contribute to the functioning of the school, decision-making processes and the shaping of organizational culture (Anastasiou & Garametsi, 2020). In this context, teachers' knowledge and competence regarding school management directly affects both institutional cooperation and school climate.

Existing research shows that teachers' knowledge levels regarding school management are quite variable and this can lead to various problems in administrative processes (Ugurlu, 2013; Usta & Boğa, 2021). Lack of knowledge regarding the management process limits teachers' participation in school decisions, makes it difficult for them to communicate effectively with administrators, and may cause them to remain in a passive position in the general functioning of the school (Karataş, 2016; Bayrak, Himmetoğlu & Ayduğ, 2020). In addition, such deficiencies are seen to negatively affect teachers' professional motivation and organizational commitment (Çuhadar, 2017; Sarışık et al., 2021).

On the other hand, active participation of teachers in management processes strengthens the leadership roles of school principals, increases student success and facilitates the development of a common consciousness towards the vision of the school (Bozkurt & Aslanargun, 2015; Gülcan, Kılınç & Çepni, 2012). In this context, determining the level of knowledge of teachers about the basic principles, legislation, management models and administrative processes regarding school management will be guiding in terms of both teacher education programs and in-service training activities (Arın, Tunçer & Demir, 2016).

However, it is seen that empirical studies examining the knowledge and competence of teachers working especially at the primary school level in Türkiye regarding school management are limited. This deficiency can create significant gaps in the reflection of education policies on the field and in the interaction between administrators and teachers. Therefore, this study aims to reveal the level of knowledge and competence of primary school teachers regarding school management, to determine the areas of deficiency and to examine the impact of this situation on the school management processes.

1.2. Purpose of the Research

The purpose of this research is to examine the opinions of primary school teachers working in TRNC regarding the effectiveness of school management processes. In this context, the differences between teachers' demographic characteristics (gender, age, professional service period and service period in the school they work in) and their perceptions of school management processes were tried to be revealed. The research aims to contribute to educational management processes by evaluating the administrative competencies of school administrators in the context of teacher perceptions.

1.3. Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested within the scope of the research:

- H1: Teachers' opinions on the effectiveness of school management processes differ significantly according to the gender variable.
- H2: Teachers' opinions on the effectiveness of school management processes differ significantly according to the age variable.
- H3: Teachers' opinions on the effectiveness of school management processes differ significantly according to their length of professional service.
- H4: Teachers' opinions on the effectiveness of school management processes differ significantly according to their length of service at the school they work.

1.4. Importance of the Research

The effectiveness of management processes in educational institutions is of critical importance in terms of the general functioning of the school and the quality of education and training. In this context, teachers' perceptions of school administrators are a valuable data source in terms of evaluating the reflections of management practices in the field. While the research provides educational administrators with the opportunity to review and develop their practices, it also provides field-based scientific findings that can be taken into consideration when developing educational policies. In addition, this study, which was conducted specifically for the TRNC, will contribute to the school management literature in the region.

2. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Management processes are the entirety of the basic functional structures that guide schools towards achieving goals. These processes consist of stages such as decision-making, planning, organizing, communicating, coordinating, influencing and controlling, and directly affect both the academic and administrative success of the school. Effective management processes depend not only on the individual skills of the manager, but also on the

organizational structure, cultural values and participatory leadership approach (Sertel, Karataş & Karadağ, 2021; Özdemir, 2021).

Research shows that school administrators' knowledge, attitudes and practices regarding management processes are determinants of education quality. For example, Bozkurt and Aslanargun (2015) draw attention to the role of school administrators in the implementation of curriculum, while Yıldırım and Açıl (2020) emphasize the strong relationship between the effectiveness of management processes and organizational justice. The findings of Usta and Boğa (2021) show that the administrative problems encountered by school administrators reduce the efficiency of the processes. These findings show that school management is not only a technical process but also a social and cultural process.

In the studies conducted by Çuhadar (2017) and Gülcan, Kılınç, and Çepni (2012), it is seen that teachers' opinions are an important data source in shaping administrative processes. Teachers' evaluations provide a comprehensive view of the functioning of the school and support administrators' self-evaluations of the processes (Uğurlu, 2013; Tofur & Yıldırım, 2021).

Approaches to management processes are discussed not only in Turkey but also internationally. Bandur (2012) argues that the school-based management approach creates transformation in terms of autonomy and accountability, while Agih (2015) draws attention to the role of effective control and supervision in providing quality services. Similarly, Bell (2002) emphasized that the applicability of strategic planning often remains symbolic in school management. Periotto and Wessellenns (2018) argue that knowledge management practices support the sustainability of the institutional structure.

Karataş (2016) states that school management should consider social participation as a public service; Sarışık et al. (2021) point out the problems encountered in practice based on teachers' views on the roles of school principals in the supervision processes. In this context, management processes should not be limited to administrative decision-making only; planning, implementation and evaluation stages should be addressed in a holistic manner. Similar problems and areas of development also come to the fore in studies conducted internationally. Mustoip et al. (2023) argue that school management and leadership practices should be structured in a way that supports equality and excellence in education. In this regard, school administrators need to have not only bureaucratic authority but also ethical leadership, communication skills and participatory management approach (Önder, 2025). Effective implementation of management processes in schools can be achieved not only with individual competencies but also with structural, cultural and organizational harmony. In this context, education administrators seeking teachers' opinions in decision-making and implementation processes and making the processes transparent and auditable will support the holistic development of the school.

3. METHOD

3.1. Research Model

This research was conducted based on a quantitative research approach and a general screening model was used. General screening models are studies aimed at describing specific characteristics, views or situations of individuals in a universe (Karasar, 2014). In this context, the current status of primary school teachers' knowledge and competence on school management was revealed in the study. The data used in the research was collected through a standardized measurement tool. The data obtained was analyzed with descriptive statistics and techniques that allow for the examination of relationships between variables. In this way, teachers' knowledge levels on school management were measured and it was evaluated whether they differed according to various demographic variables.

3.2. Universe and Sample

The universe of this study consists of primary school teachers working in the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC). The sample of the study consists of a total of 289 teachers working in different primary schools. The sample was selected in accordance with certain criteria due to the difficulty of reaching the entire population in terms of time and cost. Simple random sampling method was used in the study. This method is used in cases where each individual in the population has an equal probability of being selected for the sample and makes it possible to obtain generalizable results (Büyüköztürk et al., 2017). In this context, the sample of the study was created to include a sufficient number and variety of participants to be able to obtain statistically significant results.

3.3. Data Collection Tools

In order to collect data in the study, the "Management Process Effectiveness Scale" developed by Gül (2017) was used. The scale consists of a section containing demographic information of teachers and a second section evaluating the management skills of school administrators. The evaluation was made with a 5-point Likert-type

scale (1: Totally Disagree – 5: Totally Agree). High scores indicate that administrators are sufficient in management processes. During the development process of the scale, scope and face validity were ensured with expert opinions; exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses confirmed that the measurement structure was one-dimensional. Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient was determined as 0.982, and the fact that all item-total correlations were above 0.55 revealed the discriminatory power of the items. There are 35 items in the scale in total; the possible score range is between 35 and 175.

3.4. Analysis of Data

SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) 25.0 program was used to analyze the data obtained in the study. First, missing data control, outlier analysis and normality test were performed before the analysis of the data. Then, the general distribution of teachers' opinions on their knowledge and competence on school management was revealed with descriptive statistics (frequency, percentage, arithmetic mean and standard deviation). In order to determine the differences in opinions according to demographic variables, t-test for independent samples was applied in two-group comparisons, and one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was applied in more than two-group comparisons. Tukey HSD analysis, one of the post-hoc tests, was used to determine which variable created this difference between the groups with a significant difference. The significance level was accepted as $p < .05$ in all statistical analyzes (Büyüköztürk, 2017).

4. FINDINGS

Table 1. Demographic Information

Variable	Category	n	%
Gender	Male	124	42.91
	Woman	165	57.09
Age	20–25	39	13.49
	26–30	41	14.19
	31–35	68	23.53
	36–40	57	19.72
	41–45	44	15.22
	46 and above	40	13.84
Professional Service Period	1–5 years	58	20.07
	6–10 years	74	25.61
	11–15 years	70	24.22
	16–20 years	45	15.57
	21 years and above	42	14.53
Length of Service at School	Less than 1 year	28	9.69
	1–3 years	84	29.07
	4–6 years	71	24.57
	7–10 years	57	19.72
	11 years and above	49	16.96

When the data regarding the demographic characteristics of the 289 teachers who participated in the study are analyzed, it is seen that 57.09% of the participants are female and 42.91% are male. This shows that the number of female teachers is higher in the study sample. When the age distribution is examined, 23.53% of the teachers are in the 31–35 age range, 19.72% in the 36–40 age range, 15.22% in the 41–45 age range, 14.19% in the 26–30 age range, 13.84% in the 46 and above age range, and 13.49% in the 20–25 age range. When the participants' length of service in the teaching profession was examined, it was determined that 25.61% had 6–10 years, 24.22% had 11–15 years, 20.07% had 1–5 years, 15.57% had 16–20 years, and 14.53% had 21 years or more. When their length of service at the school they work at was examined, it was determined that 29.07% of the teachers had 1–3 years, 24.57% had 4–6 years, 19.72% had 7–10 years, 16.96% had 11 years or more, and 9.69% had worked at the same school for less than 1 year.

Table 2. Teachers' Views on the Effectiveness of School Management Processes According to Their Gender

Gender	n	\bar{X}	Hss	p
Woman	165	142.08	9.52	
Male	124	139.48	11.01	0.0358

According to the independent samples t-test results, a significant difference was found in the opinions of teachers regarding the effectiveness of school management processes according to their gender ($p = 0.0358$, $p < .05$). The average score of female teachers on this issue ($\bar{X} = 142.08$, $SD = 9.52$) is higher than the average score of male teachers ($\bar{X} = 139.48$, $SD = 11.01$). This finding reveals that female teachers evaluate school management processes more positively than their male colleagues.

Table 3. Teachers' Views on the Effectiveness of School Management Processes According to Their Ages

Age	n	\bar{X}	Hss	p
20–25	39	140.11	11.92	0.3489
26–30	41	140.89	10.21	
31–35	68	138.87	9.06	
36–40	56	142.53	11.04	
41–45	47	141.55	9.55	

As a result of the one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA), no statistically significant difference was found between the opinions of teachers regarding the effectiveness of school management processes according to age groups ($p = 0.3489$, $p > .05$). The average scores of the age groups are close to each other; the average of the 20–25 age group was calculated as $\bar{X} = 140.11$, the 26–30 age group as $\bar{X} = 140.89$, the 31–35 age group as $\bar{X} = 138.87$, the 36–40 age group as $\bar{X} = 142.53$ and the 41–45 age group as $\bar{X} = 141.55$. This finding shows that the evaluations of teachers regarding school management processes do not differ significantly depending on the age variable.

Table 4. Teachers Opinions on the Effectiveness of School Management Processes According to Professional Service Length

Professional Service Period	n	\bar{X}	Hss	p	Difference
1–5 years	58	132.98	7.23	0.000	11–15 years - 1–5 years; 11–15 years - 6–10 years; 16–20 years - 1–5 years; 21 years and above - 1–5 years
6–10 years	74	139.66	7.87		
11–15 years	70	144.32	7.76		
16–20 years	45	143.56	8.29		
21 years and above	42	144.57	9.47		

As a result of the one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA), a statistically significant difference was found between the opinions of teachers regarding the effectiveness of school management processes according to their professional service period ($p = 0.000$, $p < .05$). When the mean scores are examined, the evaluation score of teachers with 1–5 years of professional experience ($\bar{X} = 132.98$) is significantly lower compared to the other groups. On the other hand, the means of teachers with 6–10 years ($\bar{X} = 139.66$), 11–15 years ($\bar{X} = 144.32$), 16–20 years ($\bar{X} = 143.56$) and 21 years and above ($\bar{X} = 144.57$) are quite close to each other and higher. As a result of the Tukey HSD test, it is seen that the significant difference occurs especially between teachers with 1–5 years of experience and the groups of 11–15 years, 16–20 years and 21 years and above. In addition, a significant difference was found between the opinions of teachers with 6–10 years of experience and those with 11–15 years of experience. This finding shows that teachers make more positive evaluations of school management processes as their professional seniority increases.

Table 4. Teachers Opinions on the Effectiveness of School Management Processes According to the Length of Service at School

Length of Service at School	n	\bar{X}	Hss	p	Difference
Less than 1 year	28	130.79	5.33	0.000	Less than 1 year - 11 years and above; Less than 1 year - 1–3 years; Less than 1 year - 4–6 years; Less than 1 year - 7–10 years
1–3 years	84	141.68	6.54		
4–6 years	71	141.40	6.63		
7–10 years	57	143.53	6.52		
11 years and above	49	143.82	6.68		

As a result of the one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA), a statistically significant difference was found between the opinions of teachers regarding the effectiveness of school management processes according to their length of service at school ($p = 0.000$, $p < .05$). When the mean scores were examined, the mean evaluation of management processes of teachers who had been working for less than 1 year ($\bar{X} = 130.79$) was significantly lower than all other groups. On the other hand, the mean scores of teachers with 1–3 years ($\bar{X} = 141.68$), 4–6 years ($\bar{X} = 141.40$), 7–10 years ($\bar{X} = 143.53$) and 11 years and above ($\bar{X} = 143.82$) school experience were quite close to each other and at a high level. According to the Tukey HSD test results, a significant difference emerged especially between teachers who had been working at school for less than 1 year and all other groups. This finding shows that as teachers' tenure at school increases, they develop more positive perceptions of school management processes and become more adapted to the institutional culture.

Table 5. Teachers' Views on the Effectiveness of School Management Processes

Article	Article Text	N	Min	Max	\bar{X}	Hss
1	Uses other management processes (planning, organizing, communication, etc.) when making decisions.	289	2	5	3.98	0.48
2	Include teachers in the decision-making process.	289	2	5	4.04	0.51
3	The decisions he makes contribute to the solution of problems in the school.	289	2	5	4.03	0.47
4	It takes into account the concept of "public interest" when making decisions.	289	2	5	3.99	0.50
5	When making decisions, he/she follows rational and logical decision-making steps.	289	2	5	3.99	0.49
6	Takes the vision and mission of the school into consideration when planning.	289	2	5	4.00	0.50
7	Takes into account human and material resources affecting the school during planning.	289	2	5	4.01	0.51
8	During planning, the school's strategic goals are taken into account.	289	2	5	3.97	0.48
9	Provides opportunities for school staff to participate in the planning process.	289	2	5	4.00	0.49
10	The planning process prepares long, medium and short-term plans in line with the school's mission.	289	2	5	4.01	0.49
11	Takes into account the abilities of individuals in the distribution of work in the school.	289	2	5	4.01	0.47
12	Divides the work to be done at school into appropriate sections and units.	289	2	5	3.99	0.48
13	It clearly informs everyone about their duties and responsibilities.	289	2	5	3.98	0.49
14	Creates an environment that ensures coordination in school.	289	2	5	4.00	0.47
15	Creates a hierarchy that will make the distribution of authority and responsibilities effective in the school.	289	2	5	3.99	0.48
16	Creates a good communication environment in school.	289	2	5	4.01	0.47
17	Makes effective use of all communication tools (e-mail, telephone).	289	2	5	4.00	0.47
18	Also uses interpersonal communication (informal) channels effectively.	289	2	5	4.02	0.50
19	Establishes effective communication between the school and its environment.	289	2	5	4.01	0.48
20	It is sufficient regarding communication barriers and effectiveness of communication.	289	2	5	4.01	0.49
21	Uses in-service training activities to change and develop employee understanding.	289	2	5	4.00	0.49
22	It takes into account the individual needs of school employees as well as their institutional needs.	289	2	5	3.99	0.49
23	It instills in school staff the feeling that "this school belongs to all of us".	289	2	5	4.00	0.49
24	Uses influence rather than formal authority when directing employees to work.	289	2	5	3.98	0.48
25	Uses expert knowledge and skills when directing people.	289	2	5	4.00	0.47
26	Organizes material and human resources to achieve the school's objectives.	289	2	5	4.00	0.47
27	Takes measures to increase cooperation among school staff.	289	2	5	4.01	0.48
28	Implements written programs and procedures for school work.	289	2	5	4.00	0.49
29	Manages conflicts that may arise in the school without causing harm to the institution.	289	2	5	4.00	0.48

Article	Article Text	N	Min	Max	\bar{X}	Hss
30	It combines different areas of expertise around the aims of the school.	289	2	5	4.01	0.47
31	Uses acceptable criteria to evaluate employee success.	289	2	5	4.01	0.47
32	Conducts preliminary interviews with teachers before proceeding with the evaluation action.	289	2	5	3.99	0.50
33	Sees inspection and evaluation as a process.	289	2	5	4.00	0.50
34	Monitors whether the deficiencies identified in the evaluation have been remedied.	289	2	5	4.00	0.49
35	At the end of the inspection, it encourages teachers to do better.	289	2	5	4.01	0.48

In Table 5, teachers' opinions on the effectiveness of school management processes were evaluated on a 35-item scale. Participants scored each statement on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = I completely disagree, 5 = I completely agree). The table includes the sample size (N = 289), minimum and maximum values, arithmetic mean (\bar{X}) and standard deviation (SD) values for each item.

According to the findings, the statement with the highest level of participation of teachers was “Includes teachers in the decision-making process” (\bar{X} = 4.04). This situation shows that teachers have a positive perception that school administrators approach decision-making processes with a participatory approach. On the other hand, the statement “Uses other management processes (planning, organization, communication, etc.) when making decisions” (\bar{X} = 3.98) has the lowest mean, but still indicates a high level of participation. This situation may imply that the perception that a holistic approach is adopted among management processes is relatively weaker.

In general, it is seen that the average scores given to all items vary between 3.97 and 4.04. This narrow range shows that there is a great consistency in the opinions of teachers regarding school management processes and that the process is evaluated positively in general. The low standard deviation values also reveal that the participants share similar opinions and the data distribution is homogeneous.

These findings show that teachers' views on school administrators' effective roles in basic management processes such as decision-making, planning, organizing, communicating, coordinating, influencing and controlling are generally positive. The high averages, especially in decision-making and communication processes, emphasize the importance of democratic leadership and open communication environments.

CONCLUSION

According to the findings of this study, significant differences were found in teachers' perceptions of school management processes according to variables such as gender, professional seniority and length of service at school. Female teachers' evaluations of management processes are more positive compared to their male colleagues. This may suggest that female teachers approach managerial practices more sensitively or participatively.

When evaluated in terms of professional experience, it is understood that the most positive perceptions regarding management processes are seen in senior teachers; as the length of service increases, the evaluations regarding management processes become more positive. Especially teachers who have been on duty for a short time evaluated the effectiveness of management processes at a lower level than other groups. Similarly, the length of service in the school also had an effect on perceptions, and it was observed that teachers who have been working in the same institution for a long time expressed more positive opinions. This finding shows that institutional belonging and familiarity with the administrative functioning positively affect the perception regarding management processes.

In the analyses conducted according to the age variable, no significant difference was found in teachers' evaluations of management processes. This suggests that age is not a determining variable in such perceptions.

In general, teachers state that school administrators effectively fulfill basic management functions such as decision-making, planning, organizing, communicating, coordinating, influencing and controlling. High scores given to all scale items indicate that teachers evaluate school management processes largely positively. In particular, teacher participation in decision-making processes is seen to be prominent, indicating that democratic and participatory management approaches find a response in the field.

The following recommendations can be developed based on the research findings:

- More effective involvement of teachers in decision-making processes increases trust in administrators and supports the effectiveness of management processes. Therefore, school administrators should systematize practices that encourage teacher participation.
- Guidance programs should be prepared to help new teachers become familiar with the institutional structure and functioning so that they can evaluate management processes more positively. Such practices can improve perceptions by accelerating the adaptation process.
- Planned training activities should be included at the in-school and ministry level, especially for young and inexperienced teachers, so that they can better understand administrative processes.
- Taking into account the positive evaluations of female teachers regarding management processes, the contributions of this group to school development and management processes should be supported and disseminated.
- Although there are generally positive perceptions about management processes, a relatively low perception was found regarding the integration of decision-making processes with other management areas. Therefore, continuous professional development opportunities should be provided for school administrators in leadership, strategic planning and systematic decision-making.
- Considering that perceptions develop positively as the tenure of teachers at school increases, long-term supportive strategies that will increase teachers' institutional belonging and contribute to school culture should be adopted.

These recommendations provide a constructive roadmap for both improving the quality of management practices and improving teachers' perceptions of these processes.

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