A Study on Buyer's Behaviour towards Next Gen Home Products with Special Reference to Erode District

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Abstract

This study delves into the intricacies of buyer behavior concerning Next Gen Home Products in Erode District, India, with the aim of assessing consumer awareness and understanding of these innovative products and identifying key factors influencing purchase decisions. Employing a descriptive research design, the study utilized a sample size of 119 respondents from diverse occupational backgrounds through stratified random sampling. Statistical tools such as frequency analysis, descriptive statistics, ANOVA analysis, and correlation analysis were employed for data analysis. The findings of the study reveal that consumer awareness of Next Gen Home Products is highest for factors such as 'Comprehension of Home Systems Controlled Remotely' and 'Familiarity with Automated Environmental Control Systems,' while 'Familiarity with Intelligent Home Technology' ranks lowest. Factors significantly influencing buyer decisions include 'Endorsements from Personal Contacts' and 'Influence of Online Consumer Feedback,' followed by 'Product Design and Visual Appeal' and 'Customer Support Quality.' Notably, a positive correlation exists between consumer awareness and purchasing factors. Age, educational qualification, occupation, and gender were also found to influence consumer behavior. Based on these findings, several suggestions are proposed, including educational initiatives to enhance consumer awareness, leveraging personal contacts and online feedback, focusing on product design, improving customer support quality, emphasizing long-term savings benefits, and effectively communicating cost-effectiveness. In conclusion, this study provides valuable insights for businesses and policymakers in Erode District to align their strategies with consumer preferences in the Next Gen Home Products market. By implementing these suggestions, companies can improve their market performance and enhance the adoption of innovative home solutions in the region.

Keywords: Buyer Behavior, Next Gen Home Products, Erode District, Consumer Awareness, Purchase Decisions.

Introduction

The rapid advancement of technology has ushered in an era where homes are becoming smarter and more connected than ever before. Next Generation Home Products, often referred to as Next Gen Home Products, encompass a wide array of innovative devices and systems designed to enhance convenience, efficiency, and sustainability within our living spaces. These products range from automated environmental control systems and intelligent lighting solutions to integrated home security and Internet of Things (IoT) appliances. As technology continues to evolve, Next Gen Home Products are gaining momentum as essential elements of modern living.

Erode District, located in the southern state of Tamil Nadu, India, has witnessed a significant transformation in recent years. With its burgeoning

urbanization and increased consumer awareness, the district is no exception to the global trend towards adopting Next Gen Home Products. However, despite the growing availability and utilization of these products, there remains a critical need to understand how buyers in Erode District perceive and interact with Next Gen Home Products. This study endeavors to address this need by delving into the intricacies of buyer behavior concerning Next Gen Home Products in Erode District.

Statistics reveal a compelling narrative. According to recent data, the consumer electronics market in India, including home automation and smart home devices, is projected to grow at a CAGR of approximately 18% from 2021 to 2026. This growth signifies an increasing interest among Indian consumers in adopting Next Gen Home Products to enhance their quality of life. Furthermore, the home automation market in India is witnessing a surge in demand, with consumers showing a keen interest in smart lighting, security systems, and energy-efficient appliances. Erode District, with its dynamic urban landscape and rising consumer base, is poised to play a significant role in this evolving market.

This study sets out to explore the dynamics of buyer behavior towards Next Gen Home Products in Erode District, offering valuable insights into the factors that influence purchase decisions and the level of consumer awareness. By conducting a comprehensive analysis, this research aims to provide a deeper understanding of the preferences, perceptions, and expectations of buyers in Erode District regarding these innovative home solutions. The findings of this study hold relevance not only for businesses and manufacturers looking to cater to the local market but also for policymakers aiming to promote sustainable and technologically advanced living environments. As Erode District embraces the future of smart homes, this study seeks to illuminate the path forward for both consumers and stakeholders in the Next Gen Home Products industry.

Review of Literature

Several studies have explored the adoption and impact of smart home technologies from different angles. (Ferreira) emphasize the significance of environmental awareness in shaping individual intentions and behaviors toward smart home technologies. They found that environmental awareness moderates the effects on technology use behavior, highlighting its role in promoting sustainability in the adoption of smart homes. (Nikou) delves into the factors influencing the adoption of smart home technology, identifying perceived innovativeness, perceived newness, social influence, and attitude as determinants of intention to use. However, the perceived cost negatively affects adoption. This research provides a comprehensive understanding of the adoption determinants through both structural equation modeling and qualitative analysis.

(Pliatsikas and Economides) focus on Greek consumers' intention to use smart home technology, revealing a positive attitude towards it. Key factors influencing intention include perceived usefulness, compatibility, and ease of use. However, social influence has limited impact on adoption. Health monitoring, home security, and cost savings are key perceived benefits. (Orlov et al.) examines the relationship between user happiness and technology adoption in smart homes, highlighting the influence of different versions of smart home technologies on user satisfaction and adoption rates. Customization, training, and user-centric design are emphasized to enhance user satisfaction and adoption across different age groups. (Korneeva et al.) investigates consumer preferences for smart homes in the context of digitalization and the Internet of Things (IoT). They find a positive inclination towards smart home technologies, although concerns over cybersecurity and technology dependence are raised, especially among younger respondents. Smart grids are identified as crucial for furthering smart home adoption. (Gunasekaran and Sanjeev) aim to explore consumer preferences for home automation systems through a comparative analysis. Consumers prioritize ease of use, energy efficiency, security, and compatibility with other devices in their preferences. Regional variations in preferences are observed, emphasizing the importance of tailoring products to meet diverse consumer needs.

(Ahmed et al.) investigate the impact of the Internet of Things (IoT) on customer satisfaction in the hotel and airline industry in Egypt. The study reveals

a positive influence of IoT on customer satisfaction, with specific variables like application, security, and cost significantly impacting satisfaction. (AlHogail) addresses the role of trust in consumers' adoption of IoT technologies, introducing a trust model that guides IoT product development and marketing strategies based on consumer requirements. Trust is identified as a critical factor in overcoming consumer perceptions of risk and uncertainty associated with IoT adoption. (Chin et al.) explore the impact of AI-powered smart home devices on young consumers' needs, including convenience, support, security, monitoring, and environmental sustainability. They find that perceived usefulness, ease of use, and social presence are key motivators for users of smart home devices, with trust playing a moderating role. (Harvey et al.) investigate the automation of smart domestic products (SDPs) in connected homes, revealing how and why consumers automate these products. Popular combinations of SDPs are driven by utilitarian value-seeking, offering insights into opportunities for service innovation. (Nilashi et al.) focus on factors influencing customer purchases of smart home security systems, using text mining and clustering techniques to analyze customer reviews. The study provides insights into the factors influencing purchase decisions in the IoT market.

Research Gap

The review of literature presents a comprehensive overview of previous research related to smart home technologies, IoT, and technology adoption. However, there is a distinct research gap in understanding consumer awareness, comprehension, and purchasing behavior concerning Next Generation Home Products, particularly within a specific regional context like Erode District. While existing studies have explored various factors influencing technology adoption and consumer preferences, they do not delve into the unique characteristics, awareness levels, and decision-making processes of consumers in Erode District regarding these Next Gen Home Products. Therefore, this study aims to address this gap by providing specific insights into the awareness, understanding, and influencing factors of consumer behavior related to Next Gen Home Products in the context of Erode District.

Statement of the Problem

The problem addressed in this study arises from the growing importance of Next Gen Home Products in the consumer market, particularly in Erode District. As these products become more prevalent, it becomes essential to understand how aware and informed consumers are about them and what factors significantly impact their purchase decisions. Therefore, the study aims to investigate the extent of consumer awareness and comprehension of Next Gen Home Products in Erode District while also examining the critical factors that influence consumers' decisions when it comes to purchasing these innovative products.

The first objective focuses on evaluating the level of consumer awareness and understanding of Next Gen Home Products, indirectly addressing the problem of potential gaps in consumer knowledge in the local market. The second objective is intricately connected to the problem by seeking to identify and analyze the key factors influencing buyer decisions. By achieving these objectives, this study aims to shed light on the current state of consumer awareness and the factors that sway their buying behavior in the context of Next Gen Home Products, ultimately providing valuable insights for businesses and policymakers in Erode District.

Objectives of the Study

- To assess the level of consumer awareness and understanding of Next Gen Home Products in Erode District.
- To identify and analyze the key factors influencing buyer decisions for Next Gen Home Products in Erode District.

Methodology
Research Design

This study adopted a descriptive research design to provide a comprehensive description of buyer behavior towards Next Gen Home Products in Erode District.

Sampling Technique and Size

Stratified random sampling was utilized as the sampling technique to ensure a representative sample across different occupational categories. The

study included a sample size of 119 respondents, encompassing professionals and office staff in white-collar roles, workers in skilled trades and technical positions, employees in the service and retail sectors, and individuals from general job categories or unspecified occupations.

Data Collection Methods

Primary data was collected through structured questionnaires specifically designed to capture detailed information regarding consumer awareness, understanding of Next Gen Home Products, and the factors influencing purchase decisions. Additionally, secondary data was gathered from existing literature and records to complement and contextualize the primary data.

Data Analysis Tools

The collected data underwent a series of statistical analyses to provide a comprehensive description. Frequency analysis was employed to understand the distribution of responses, while descriptive statistics aided in determining central tendencies. ANOVA analysis was conducted to describe group differences, and correlation analysis was used to provide insights into the relationships between consumer awareness, understanding, and purchasing factors.

Results and Discussion

Table 1 Demographic Variables

Demographic Variables	Options	Frequency	Percentage	Total Percentage
Age Group	Below 25 years	24	20.2	100%
	25 to 35 years	38	31.9	
	36 to 45 years	27	22.7	
	46 to 55 years	18	15.1	
	Above 55 years	12	10.1	
Gender	Male	60	50.4	100%
	Female	59	49.6	
Educational Level	Illiterate	5	4.2	100%
	Upto School Level	35	29.4	
	Diploma/UG	45	37.8	
	PG	25	21.0	
	Ph.D	9	7.6	
Occupation	Professionals and Office Staff in White-Collar Roles	40	33.6	100%
	Workers in Skilled Trades and Technical Positions	30	25.2	
	Employees in the Service and Retail Sectors Service Industry and Retail Workers	29	24.4	
	General Job Categories or Unspecified Occupations	20	16.8	

Inference

In the demographic study outlined in Table No. 1, several key patterns emerge, highlighting the distribution of respondents across different demographic variables. Among age groups, the highest percentage (31.9%) was observed in the '25 to 35 years' category, indicating a predominant participation from this age bracket. In terms of gender, the distribution was nearly even, but males slightly edged out with a higher percentage of 50.4%, compared to females at 49.6%. Educational background revealed that most respondents (37.8%) held a Diploma/UG qualification, marking it as the most common education level among the participants. Finally, when considering occupation, 'Professionals and Office Staff in White-Collar Roles' formed the largest group, accounting for 33.6% of the respondents.

Table 2 Consumer Awareness and Understanding of Next Gen Home Products

Factors	Mean	SD
Familiarity with Intelligent Home Technology	2.75	1.31
Understanding of Appliances Integrated with IoT	2.89	1.27
Knowledge of Automated Home Systems	2.96	1.24
Insight into Energy-Saving Devices	2.87	1.29
Awareness of Devices Operated by Voice Commands	2.87	1.28
Comprehension of Home Systems Controlled Remotely	3.04	1.22
Familiarity with Advanced Home Security Systems	2.91	1.27
Understanding of the Environmental Advantages	2.97	1.28
Awareness of the Potential for Energy Efficiency	2.85	1.30
Knowledge of Advanced Lighting Systems	2.92	1.27
Familiarity with Automated Environmental Control Systems	3.00	1.25
Understanding of Integrated Home Entertainment Solutions	2.85	1.31
Awareness of Enhanced Health and Safety Measures	2.87	1.28
Knowledge of the Economic Benefits	2.92	1.25
Familiarity with State-of-the-Art Household Appliances	2.87	1.29
Understanding of Devices Connected via IoT	2.92	1.26
Awareness of Control via Mobile Applications	2.85	1.30
Knowledge of Home Products Connected to the Internet	2.87	1.28
Average Score	2.90	1.28

Inference

From Table 2, the top rankings in consumer awareness and understanding of Next Gen Home Products show 'Comprehension of Home Systems Controlled Remotely' leading with a mean score of 3.04. It's followed by 'Familiarity with Automated Environmental Control Systems' (3.00), 'Understanding of the Environmental Advantages' (2.97), 'Knowledge of Automated Home Systems' (2.96), and 'Knowledge of Advanced Lighting Systems' (2.92) in the top five. Other notable scores include 'Familiarity with Advanced Home Security Systems' (2.91) and 'Understanding of Appliances Integrated with IoT' (2.89). The lower rankings feature 'Understanding of Integrated Home Entertainment Solutions' and 'Awareness of Control via Mobile Applications', both at 2.85, with 'Familiarity with Intelligent Home Technology' at the bottom with 2.75.

Table 3 Factors Influencing Buyer Decisions for Next Gen Home Products

Factors	Mean	SD
Assessment of Cost-Effectiveness	2.50	1.23
Simplicity in Installation and Operation	2.66	1.22
Assurance of Product Longevity and Reliability	2.57	1.24
Benefits Related to Energy Conservation	2.61	1.24
Compatibility with Current Technological Setups	2.80	1.20
Perceptions of Security and Safety Features	2.76	1.23
Contribution to Environmental Preservation	2.73	1.23
Impact of Product Design and Visual Appeal	2.85	1.22
Reputation and Credibility of the Manufacturer	2.71	1.25
Endorsements from Personal Contacts	2.89	1.19
Influence of Online Consumer Feedback	2.87	1.23
Availability and Quality of Customer Support	2.83	1.24
Degree of Personalization and Control Offered	2.80	1.22
Compatibility with Other Connected Devices	2.83	1.22
Concerns Over Privacy and Data Security	2.66	1.27
Anticipated Financial Return & Savings	2.61	1.24
User Experience with Associated Mobile Applications	2.73	1.23
Perceived Savings Over the Long Term	2.62	1.24
Average Score	2.72	1.23

Inference

Table 3 reveals that the top factors influencing buyer decisions for Next Gen Home Products are led by 'Endorsements from Personal Contacts' (mean score 2.89) and 'Influence of Online Consumer Feedback' (2.87). 'Impact of Product Design and Visual Appeal' (2.85) and 'Availability and Quality of Customer Support' (2.83) follow closely. In the mid-range, factors like 'Compatibility with Other Connected Devices' and 'Degree of Personalization and Control Offered' score 2.83 and 2.80, respectively. Lower in the rankings, 'Reputation and Credibility of the Manufacturer' scores 2.71, while the least influencing factors include 'Perceived Savings Over the Long Term' (2.62) and 'Assessment of Cost-Effectiveness' at the lowest with 2.50.

Hypothesis No. 1

Null Hypothesis (H_0): There is no significant correlation between the consumer awareness and understanding of Next Gen Home Products and the factors influencing their buying decisions.

Table 4 Consumer Awareness and Understanding of Next Gen Home Products and the Factors Influencing their Buying Decisions

Correlations			
		Consumer awareness and understanding of Next Gen Home Products	Factors influencing buyer decisions for Next Gen Home Products
Consumer awareness and understanding of Next Gen Home Products	Pearson Correlation	1	0.753**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.000
	N	119	119
Factors influencing buyer decisions for Next Gen Home Products	Pearson Correlation	0.753**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	
	N	119	119
** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

Inference

Table No.4 reveals that a lack of significant correlation between consumer awareness and understanding of Next Gen Home Products and the factors influencing buying decisions. However, the strong Pearson Correlation of 0.753**, with a significance level (Sig. 2-tailed) of 0.000, clearly indicates a significant positive relationship between these two variables. This significant correlation at the 0.01 level underscores a direct and substantial link between consumer knowledge of Next Gen Home Products and their purchasing decisions, contradicting the initial hypothesis.

Hypothesis No. 2

Null Hypothesis (H_0): There is no significant association between the age group and consumer awareness and understanding of Next Gen Home Products nor with the factors influencing their purchase decisions.

Table 5 Age Group and Consumer Awareness and Understanding of Next Gen Home Products nor with the Factors Influencing their Purchase Decisions

ANOVA						
		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Consumer awareness and understanding of Next Gen Home Products	Between Groups	239.364	4	59.841	2.216	.072
	Within Groups	3077.930	114	26.999		
	Total	3317.294	118			
Factors influencing buyer decisions for Next Gen Home Products	Between Groups	640.976	4	160.244	4.257	.003
	Within Groups	4290.889	114	37.639		
	Total	4931.866	118			

Inference

Table 5 reveals that for consumer awareness and understanding of Next Gen Home Products, the Sig. value is .072, which exceeds the standard significance threshold of .05. This indicates a lack of significant association between age group and consumer awareness and understanding of these products. Conversely, the Sig. value for the factors influencing buyer decisions is .003, significantly below the .05 threshold. This suggests a strong significant association between age group and the factors influencing the purchase decisions for Next Gen Home Products. Therefore, while age group doesn't significantly impact consumer awareness and understanding, it plays a significant role in influencing buying decisions.

Hypothesis No. 3

Null Hypothesis (H_0): There is no significant association between the educational qualification and consumer awareness and understanding of Next Gen Home Products and the factors influencing their buying decisions.

Table 6 Educational Qualification and Consumer Awareness and Understanding of Next Gen Home Products nor with the Factors Influencing their Purchase Decisions

ANOVA						
		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Consumer awareness and understanding of Next Gen Home Products	Between Groups	112.723	4	28.181	1.003	.409
	Within Groups	3204.571	114	28.110		
	Total	3317.294	118			
Factors influencing buyer decisions for Next Gen Home Products	Between Groups	948.876	4	237.219	6.790	.000
	Within Groups	3982.989	114	34.939		
	Total	4931.866	118			

Inference

Table 6 reveals that the impact of educational qualification varies between the two studied aspects. For consumer awareness and understanding of Next Gen Home Products, the sig. value is .409, which is significantly higher than the standard threshold of .05. This indicates that there is no significant association between educational qualification and consumer awareness & understanding of these products. On the other hand, for the factors influencing buyer decisions, the sig. value is .000, far below the .05 threshold, denoting a very strong significant association between educational qualification and the factors influencing the purchase decisions of Next Gen Home Products. While educational qualification doesn't significantly affect consumer awareness and understanding, it has a substantial impact on influencing buying decisions.

Hypothesis No. 4

Null Hypothesis (H_0): There is no significant association between the occupation and consumer awareness & understanding of Next Gen Home Products or the factors influencing their purchase decisions.

Table 7 Occupation and Consumer Awareness and Understanding of Next Gen Home Products nor with the Factors influencing their Purchase Decisions

ANOVA						
		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Consumer awareness and understanding of Next Gen Home Products	Between Groups	215.650	3	71.88	2.665	0.051
	Within Groups	3101.644	115	26.97		
	Total	3317.294	118			
Factors influencing buyer decisions for Next Gen Home Products	Between Groups	210.793	3	70.264	1.711	0.168
	Within Groups	4721.073	115	41.052		
	Total	4931.866	118			

Inference

Table No.7 reveals that for consumer awareness and understanding, the Sig. value is exactly at 0.05. This borderline value suggests that the association between occupation and consumer awareness and understanding of these products is just at the threshold of statistical significance. It indicates a potential but not definitive influence of occupation on consumer awareness and understanding. Regarding the factors influencing buyer decisions, the Sig. value is 0.16, which is considerably above the standard significance level of 0.05. This higher value indicates that there is no significant association between occupation and the factors influencing the purchase decisions for Next Gen Home Products.

Hypothesis No. 5

Null Hypothesis (H_0): There is no significant association between the gender and consumer awareness and understanding of Next Gen Home Products nor with the factors influencing their buying decisions.

Table 8 Gender and Consumer Awareness and Understanding of Next Gen Home Products nor with the Factors Influencing their Purchase Decisions

Dimensions	Gender	N	Mean	SD	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Consumer awareness and understanding of Next Gen Home Products	Male	60	52.07	5.72	-0.23	117	.821
	Female	59	52.29	4.89			
Factors influencing buyer decisions for Next Gen Home Products	Male	60	47.38	5.36	-2.89	108.087	.005
	Female	59	50.71	7.08			

Inference

Table No.8 reveals that for consumer awareness and understanding, the Sig. (2-tailed) value is .821, indicating no significant difference between males and females in this aspect; this high value supports the null hypothesis that gender does not play a significant role in consumer awareness and understanding of these products. In contrast, when it comes to factors influencing buyer decisions, the Sig. (2-tailed) value is .005 for the gender comparison. This is significantly below the standard threshold of .05, indicating a substantial difference between males and females in this regard. The low Sig. value here suggests that gender has a significant impact on the factors influencing the buying decisions for Next Gen Home Products, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis in this dimension.

Findings and Suggestions
Findings of the Study

- Consumer awareness of Next Gen Home Products is highest for factors such as 'Comprehension of Home Systems Controlled Remotely' and 'Familiarity with Automated Environmental Control Systems,' scoring between 2.92 to 3.04, while 'Familiarity with Intelligent Home Technology' ranks lowest at 2.75.
- Factors influencing buyer decisions for Next Gen Home Products are primarily driven by 'Endorsements from Personal Contacts' and 'Influence of Online Consumer Feedback,' scoring 2.89 and 2.87, followed closely by 'Impact of Product Design and Visual Appeal' and 'Availability and Quality of Customer Support.' Conversely, 'Perceived Savings Over the Long Term' and 'Assessment of Cost-Effectiveness' have a lower impact.
- A significant positive correlation exists between consumer awareness of Next Gen Home Products and the factors influencing their buying decisions.
- Age group is not significantly associated with consumer awareness of Next Gen Home Products but does have a significant association with factors influencing purchase decisions.
- Educational qualification is not significantly linked to consumer awareness of Next Gen Home Products but exhibits a significant association with factors influencing purchase decisions.
- Occupation significantly affects consumer awareness of Next Gen Home Products but is not significantly associated with factors influencing purchase decisions.
- Gender is not significantly associated with consumer awareness of Next Gen Home Products but shows a significant association with factors influencing purchase decisions.

Suggestions

Based on the findings of the study on Buyer's Behavior towards Next Gen Home Products in Erode District, several suggestions can be made:

- To enhance consumer awareness of Next Gen Home Products, focus on educating consumers about specific aspects such as "Comprehension of Home Systems Controlled Remotely" and "Familiarity with Automated Environmental Control Systems." Providing informative materials and conducting workshops can be effective.
- Given the influence of personal contacts, businesses should encourage satisfied customers to share their positive experiences with Next Gen Home Products. Implementing referral programs and word-of-mouth marketing can be beneficial.
- Recognizing the impact of online consumer feedback, companies should actively manage their online reputation and engage with customers on digital platforms to build trust and credibility.
- As product design and visual appeal play a significant role, manufacturers should prioritize creating aesthetically pleasing and user-friendly designs to attract buyers.
- Ensure the availability and quality of customer support services, as they are crucial for buyers. Companies should invest in responsive customer service and support systems.
- To address the lower impact of perceived long-term savings, marketing efforts should emphasize the financial benefits of Next Gen Home Products over an extended period.
- Businesses should effectively communicate the cost-effectiveness of their products to address the lower influence of cost-effectiveness assessment.
- Recognizing the influence of demographic factors such as age, educational qualifications, occupation, and gender, tailor marketing strategies to connect better with potential buyers in Erode District.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study aimed to assess consumer behavior towards Next Gen Home Products in Erode District. Through the findings and suggestions derived from the study, several key insights have been obtained. First, there is a clear need to enhance consumer awareness and understanding of Next Gen Home Products by focusing on specific aspects of these products, such as home systems controlled remotely and automated environmental control systems. Educational initiatives, including workshops and informative materials, can play a pivotal role in achieving this objective. Second, the study highlights the significance of personal contacts and online consumer feedback in influencing buyer decisions. Businesses should leverage these factors by encouraging satisfied customers to share their experiences and by actively managing their online presence to build trust among potential buyers.

Lastly, demographic factors such as age, educational qualifications, occupation, and gender were found to influence consumer behavior. Tailoring marketing strategies to connect better with these demographic segments can lead to more effective outreach and engagement. In summary, the study's findings and recommendations provide valuable insights for businesses operating in the Next Gen Home Products market in Erode District. By implementing these suggestions, companies can better align their strategies with consumer preferences and improve their overall market performance.

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