



The Impact of AI on Family Communication: A Narrative Review on Children's Respect for Parents in Developing Southeast Asia

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Abstract: This study examines the impact of Artificial Intelligence (AI) on family communication, parental roles, and children's respect for parents in Southeast Asia. Using a narrative review method, we systematically analyzed peer-reviewed articles published between 2019 and 2024 from databases such as Scopus, Web of Science, and Google Scholar. The findings indicate that AI enhances connectivity within families by facilitating real-time communication and personalized parenting support. However, it also poses challenges, particularly in undermining parental authority and reducing face-to-face interactions. Socioeconomic and cultural factors significantly influence AI adoption, with higher-income families benefiting more from AI-driven parenting tools. The study highlights the need for digital literacy programs and ethical AI policies to mitigate these challenges. Future research should explore long-term effects of AI on family dynamics and develop frameworks that integrate AI with traditional parenting approaches.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence, Family Communication, Parenting, Digital Literacy, Southeast Asia

Introduction

The advancement of Artificial Intelligence (AI) has brought significant changes to human life, including family communication and parenting patterns. The use of AI in households continues to rise, with a 2024 global survey showing that 86% of students have used it for studies, while 70% of teenagers in the United States have utilized AI chatbots (Digital Education Council, 2024; Common Sense Media, 2024).

Not only children but also parents are increasingly relying on AI in parenting. As many as 80% have used AI-based chatbots, and 44% of parents in the United States use them to help children complete homework (Learner.com, 2023; Prodigy, 2024). Although AI provides convenience, there are concerns that dependence on this technology may reduce parents' emotional involvement in their children's lives (National Parents Union, 2023).

This trend presents a paradox in parent-child relationships. On one hand, AI can help improve communication efficiency and strengthen parental involvement in children's learning processes (UNESCO, 2023). Various applications such as Khan Academy Kids, Duolingo ABC, BabyTracker, and Wonder Weeks offer AI-based solutions that can support

children's development, monitor sleep patterns, and provide recommendations for parenting (UNICEF, 2021). On the other hand, increasing reliance on AI to solve problems can affect interpersonal relationships within families, particularly concerning the role of parents as the primary sources of knowledge and wisdom for their children.

AI, capable of providing quick and accurate information, has the potential to shift parental authority within families. Traditionally, parents have served as the primary guides, offering directions and solutions to the various challenges their children face. As children increasingly seek answers from AI, direct interaction with parents, which typically involves discussion and guidance, may decrease, potentially disrupting the development of children's character and moral values (Melani, 2024; Nugroho, 2022). OECD (2022) in its study on Digital Disruption in Families shows that the use of virtual assistants like Amazon Alexa and Google Home to answer children's questions can reduce the frequency of conversations between parents and children, weakening emotional bonds within the family.

In Southeast Asia, where family structures tend to be collective and parent-child relationships are strongly influenced by social norms, the adoption of AI in family communication presents unique challenges. Hastasari (2024) found that AI can shift family communication patterns from direct interaction to more transactional forms, where parents are more likely to guide children to seek solutions through AI rather than providing direct answers. Syahril et al. (2024) also highlighted that while AI can improve family connectivity through digital communication features, excessive dependence on this technology may reduce the quality of interpersonal communication, potentially leading to isolation and conflict within the family.

The concept of respect for parents has long been a pillar in Southeast Asian cultures. Respect for parents is not only a social norm but also an integral part of the development of a child's character and identity in Southeast Asian societies (Nainupu & Emiyati, 2020; Wuryaningsih & Prasetyo, 2022). In many families, the relationship between children and parents is based not only on emotional aspects but also on a social hierarchy that places parents as the primary figures of authority.

However, when children more frequently rely on AI to obtain answers rather than asking parents directly, there is a possibility that respect for parents as sources of wisdom may diminish. Nguyen et al. (2024) found that children in Vietnam, who are accustomed to using AI to search for information, tend to be more independent and more critical in assessing parental authority, thus making the role of parents as authority figures in the family more flexible.

Moreover, Kapania et al. (2022) show that AI can reinforce egalitarian communication norms in families, where children and parents have equal access to objective information sources. While this can enhance the quality of family discussions, on the other hand, children may become more skeptical of parental advice if the information they receive from AI contradicts their parents' opinions. This could potentially reduce hierarchy-based respect and shift the parent-child dynamic toward one based on competence, where respect is more based on the level of knowledge and understanding rather than the status of being a parent (UNICEF, 2021).

The development of AI in families also presents challenges in digital parenting. Putri (2021) notes that in developing countries, many parents struggle to balance the use of technology with direct interaction in parenting. On one hand, AI offers tools that can assist parents in guiding children, such as parental controls to monitor children's digital activities. On the other hand, the use of AI as the primary solution in parenting risks reducing parents' emotional involvement in their children's lives, potentially causing children to feel less in need of direct guidance from their parents (Sabah et al., 2023).

Additionally, OECD (2022) notes that there are differences in the acceptance of AI in families based on socio-economic factors. Families with higher digital literacy tend to manage the use of AI in parenting more effectively, while families with less exposure to technology often struggle to navigate AI's role in their children's lives. In the context of Southeast Asia, this difference becomes more significant due to the cultural norms and social values that still strongly influence parenting patterns within families (Hastasari, 2024).

This phenomenon raises important questions about how AI influences family communication and children's respect for their parents. Studies by UNICEF (2021), UNESCO (2023), and OECD (2022) highlight two main paradoxes. On one hand, AI can strengthen family relationships by providing tools that enhance parent-child involvement in learning and household management. On the other hand, over-reliance on AI may shift interpersonal interactions to transactional ones, where parents focus more on AI-generated data rather than the emotional needs of their children. Additionally, AI has the potential to deepen social inequalities within families. Families with better access to AI can use it to improve their children's education and health, while those with limited access will fall further behind in terms of digital literacy and technology-based communication.

This study aims to fill the gap in the literature regarding how dependence on AI to solve problems affects children's respect for their parents. Using a narrative review approach, this research will explore how AI can both strengthen and weaken parental authority, as well as examine how changes in communication and digital parenting impact interpersonal relationships within families in Southeast Asia.

Methodology

This study employs a Narrative Review method by collecting and analyzing studies that address the integration of AI into family dynamics, changes in parent-child communication, and respect for parents in the AI era based on several research questions:

- How does AI affect the quality of communication within families?
- Does the use of AI impact children's respect for their parents?
- How do cultural and socio-economic contexts shape the dynamics of family relationships influenced by AI?

The search was conducted through various journal databases such as Scopus, Web of Science, and Google Scholar. Boolean operator keywords were used in the search, including terms such as:

- "AI and family communication," "AI in parenting," "parental authority in the digital era," "AI and child respect for parents," and "AI dependency in families."
- "Artificial Intelligence" OR "AI" AND ("Parent-Child Relationship" OR "Family Communication" OR "Parental Authority") AND ("Respect for Parents" OR "Parenting Challenges") AND ("Developing Countries" OR "Southeast Asia" OR "Indonesia" OR "Malaysia" OR "Thailand" OR "Philippines" OR "Vietnam") AND ("Technology Adoption" OR "AI Dependence" OR "Digital Parenting").

Result and Discussion

AI and the Transformation of Family Communication

Changes in Family Communication Patterns

The advancement of Artificial Intelligence (AI) technology has transformed communication patterns within families, both in terms of frequency, openness, and the depth of interactions between parents and children. AI is present in various forms, such as virtual assistants (Alexa, Google Home), educational chatbots, parenting apps, and social media algorithms, all of which can influence the way families communicate on a daily basis.

According to Syahril et al. (2024), AI has the potential to enhance family communication through features that help parents and children stay connected, such as schedule reminders, recommendations for shared activities, and chatbots that support children's learning. However, the study also highlights that excessive use of AI may diminish the quality of interpersonal communication, as interactions that were once conducted face-to-face are now replaced by technological tools.

As Turkle (2017) asserts, the presence of technology in family communication often replaces meaningful conversations with more transactional interactions. In the context of AI, interactions between parents and children, which were previously based on direct dialogue, are now frequently mediated by AI, such as virtual assistants or educational chatbots. While this increases connectivity, there is a risk that interpersonal communication skills within the family may decline, as conversations become shorter and more functional, rather than emotional and in-depth.

This aligns with findings by Hastasari (2024), which show that in Southeast Asia, the adoption of AI within families has shifted communication patterns from direct interaction to platform-based interactions. Although AI can help families with time constraints remain connected, these interactions are often transactional and less emotional. For example, rather than discussing issues directly, children tend to seek answers through AI or social media, while parents use parenting apps to monitor their children without direct dialogue.

Increased Connectivity vs. Decreased Face-to-Face Interaction

Several studies show that AI enhances family connectivity, particularly in long-distance communication. Ramadhana et al. (2022) found that during the COVID-19 pandemic, families used AI through digital communication apps, child companion chatbots,

and activity-suggesting algorithms. This technology helped maintain connections despite physical limitations. However, the study warns that excessive reliance on AI may replace traditional face-to-face interactions, which are essential for family bonding.

Khomaeny & Kusumaputeri (2022) highlight how AI and the internet have changed communication patterns in Southeast Asian families. AI helps bridge generational gaps by providing shared content for both parents and children. Features like Netflix Kids or YouTube Kids recommendations create common discussion topics within families. Despite this, excessive exposure to AI can weaken social skills, especially in younger children.

The OECD (2022) report, *Digital Disruption in Families*, supports these findings, stating that AI-powered virtual assistants can improve family communication by organizing activities and reminding children of their responsibilities. However, the report also warns that as AI takes on a greater role in communication, children may become overly dependent on it for information, leading to fewer meaningful discussions with their parents.

AI as a Mediator in Parent-Child Relationships

AI is not just a communication tool but also acts as a mediator in parent-child relationships. According to UNICEF (2021), virtual assistants, educational chatbots, and child monitoring apps help streamline family communication by reminding children about tasks and organizing schedules. This is particularly useful for busy families.

However, Chung et al. (2020) found that during high-pressure situations, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, AI use sometimes increased family tensions. Parents with less AI knowledge felt a loss of control, while tech-savvy children became more independent in seeking information, reducing parental involvement in discussions.

UNESCO (2023) highlights that AI in education often shifts parents' roles from facilitators to monitors. Instead of engaging in collaborative learning, parent-child interactions may become more instructional or supervisory, changing the nature of communication within families.

Challenges and Risks in the Transformation of Family Communication

While AI has the potential to improve family communication, several challenges must be addressed. One concern is the decline in face-to-face interactions. AI can replace natural conversations, making communication more transactional and less emotional (Hastasari, 2024). Children may also rely on AI as their main source of information, reducing meaningful discussions with their parents (OECD, 2022).

Another issue is the digital literacy gap between parents and children. Differences in technological understanding can lead children to depend more on AI than their parents for guidance (Chung et al., 2020). Parents who are less digitally literate may feel a loss of control over family communication dynamics, making it harder to stay involved (UNESCO, 2023).

Privacy and data security are also major concerns. AI in family communication often collects children's data, which can pose risks if not protected by proper regulations (UNICEF, 2021). Ensuring data security is essential to safeguarding children's privacy in AI-driven interactions.

AI and the Shift in Parental Roles

AI as a New Source of Information and Authority.

AI is changing how parents provide guidance and education. Traditionally, parents were the main authority figures, but now children turn to AI for answers and advice (Koenarso & Ayuningtyas, 2024). AI also introduces new ways for parents to monitor their children through digital apps that track online activity, sleep, and emotions. While this enhances supervision, it can weaken emotional bonds by replacing trust-based interactions with technology-driven surveillance (Newman et al., 2021).

AI has made children more independent in learning, reducing their reliance on parents. Many children trust AI responses more than parental advice, and AI-based parental controls enforce discipline more objectively. However, this can also decrease parents' emotional involvement in raising their children (Bavelier et al., 2019). AI chatbots provide parenting advice and emotional support, helping parents manage stress. While beneficial, over-dependence on AI recommendations may lead parents to overlook the importance of personal and context-driven parenting approaches (Inkster et al., 2023; Entenberg et al., 2023).

AI and Digital Surveillance: Strengthening or Weakening Parent-Child Relationships?

AI allows parents to monitor their children's activities more than ever. It can help reduce screen time, track social media use, and control content access (Glassman et al., 2021). While AI strengthens parental supervision, excessive monitoring can lead to resistance. Children who feel overly watched may lose trust in their parents, seeing AI surveillance as a lack of understanding rather than protection (Bajwa et al., 2024).

The OECD (2022) highlights a paradox in AI-assisted parenting. While AI helps parents discipline children by analyzing behavior and suggesting strategies, it can also weaken parental authority. Tech-savvy children may trust AI more than their parents, reducing parental influence.

Challenges in Adjusting Parenting Patterns in the AI Era

AI brings both benefits and challenges to parenting. One challenge is the shift in discipline patterns. AI provides structured tools like task reminders and digital access controls, but over-reliance on AI can make discipline more algorithmic and reduce parents' role in teaching moral values (Glassman et al., 2021).

Another issue is the digital literacy gap between parents and children. Children often adapt to AI faster than their parents, creating a divide where they become more independent and rely less on parental guidance (Newman et al., 2021).

Excessive dependence on AI for decision-making is also concerning. Parents who rely too much on AI may lose sensitivity to their children's emotional needs. Some parents "delegate" parenting to AI, using educational chatbots for learning instead of direct interaction. This weakens the parent-child bond, making it crucial for parents to stay engaged despite AI's convenience (UNESCO, 2023).

Implications for Parents in Developing Countries

In Southeast Asia, AI adoption in parenting comes with unique challenges. Parents in Indonesia are beginning to use AI in education but struggle to understand how it works and how to use it effectively (Koenarso & Ayuningtyas, 2024).

Limited access to quality AI widens gaps in parenting. Many parents lack digital literacy, making them overly dependent on AI without fully understanding its impact. Socio-economic disparities further increase this divide, as wealthier families have better access to AI-based education, while lower-income families struggle to benefit from it (OECD, 2022).

AI and Children's Respect for Parents

Shift in Authority: AI as a New Source of Knowledge

In many traditional cultures, parents are the primary source of knowledge and wisdom for their children. However, with the emergence of AI, children now have direct access to information without relying on their parents. This has caused a shift in the dynamics of respect within families, particularly in developing countries in Southeast Asia.

According to Nguyen et al. (2024), the use of AI in families has created a more egalitarian communication pattern between parents and children. AI provides children with instant, data-driven answers, which are often considered more credible than parental advice. The study found that children in major cities in Vietnam increasingly rely on AI rather than asking their parents about various topics, from homework to everyday decisions.

This finding is supported by Pei et al. (2023), who found that Southeast Asian culture traditionally emphasizes respect for parents. However, with AI, children become more independent in accessing information, causing the role of parents as authority figures to shift. In some cases, children even question their parents' decisions if they contradict the information provided by AI.

AI vs. Parents: Who Is Trusted More?

This shift raises an important question: Do children respect AI more than their parents? According to Kapania et al. (2022), a study in India shows that AI is increasingly seen as a primary source of authority over parents. Children and teenagers growing up with AI tend to trust the information provided by algorithms more than the advice from their parents. This also extends to education, where AI is regarded as a more objective learning source compared to the traditional methods taught by parents.

A similar phenomenon is found in research by Alrusaini & Beyari (2022), which shows that AI is more effective in disciplining children compared to traditional methods applied by parents. In some cases, children are more obedient to the limitations set by AI—such as screen time reminders or social media restrictions—than when the same rules are enforced directly by their parents.

According to McKenzie et al. (2019), children in some families in Thailand are beginning to play the role of "cultural brokers" within their families, helping their parents understand AI. This results in a change in family power structures, where children who are

more technologically literate have more control over decision-making compared to their parents.

Social Implications: Does AI Weaken or Strengthen Respect for Parents?

These changes raise a critical question: Does AI weaken children's respect for their parents, or does it create a new form of respect?

UNICEF (2021) notes that AI can shift the way respect is framed in the family, from authority-based respect to competence-based respect. Children who are more accustomed to using AI in their daily lives may no longer respect their parents solely due to family hierarchy but more because of the skills and knowledge their parents possess.

Meanwhile, OECD (2022) emphasizes that excessive use of AI in parenting can reduce parental involvement in children's lives, leading to a decline in emotional bonds within the family. As interactions are increasingly mediated by AI, children may begin to view their parents as less relevant in the decision-making process.

On the other hand, UNESCO (2023) highlights that AI can also be used as a tool to strengthen family communication if used wisely. For example, in families that use AI as an educational tool that supports joint discussions and learning, AI can actually enhance positive interactions between parents and children.

Challenges and Strategies to Maintain Parental Authority

Maintaining parental authority in the age of AI presents several challenges that need to be addressed. One major issue is children's increasing dependence on AI for decision-making. As they grow accustomed to seeking solutions from technology rather than consulting their parents, family communication may weaken (Nguyen et al., 2024). To counter this, parents must actively engage in their children's decision-making processes and build trust to ensure they remain a key source of guidance.

Another challenge is the lack of parental understanding of AI. When parents struggle to grasp how AI functions, they risk losing authority within the family (McKenzie et al., 2019). This makes digital literacy education essential, enabling parents to stay relevant in guiding their children and maintaining their influence in family dynamics.

AI also brings a shift in the concept of respect within families. Traditionally, respect for parents has been rooted in authority, but with AI, it may transition to being based on competence (Pei et al., 2023). To maintain respect, parents must balance their authority with a more collaborative and adaptable approach, ensuring they remain valued figures in their children's lives.

Cultural and Social Factors in AI Parenting

Cultural Influence on AI Adoption in Parenting

Culture shapes how AI is used in parenting. In Southeast Asia, where family hierarchy and collectivism are strong, AI adoption can be challenging. In countries like Indonesia and Malaysia, where parental authority and face-to-face interaction are valued, AI parenting faces resistance, particularly from older generations. However, AI can also help bridge communication gaps in families spread across different regions.

According to Bajwa et al. (2024), AI's impact on family structures depends on how it is integrated. In Vietnam and Thailand, where direct parenting is prioritized, AI is seen as a support tool rather than a replacement. However, in societies more open to modern parenting styles, AI is more widely used for childcare and household management.

Socio-Economic Barriers in AI Parenting

Access to AI in parenting is unequal due to economic differences. Wealthier families adopt AI tools more easily, while those in rural areas with limited digital infrastructure struggle. Wijayanti et al. (2024) note that in Indonesia, this gap leads to disparities in technology-based parenting and education.

A study by OECD (2022) confirms that AI parenting is more common among the middle and upper classes in developing countries, while lower-income families rely on traditional methods. UNESCO (2023) also highlights gender inequality, where women—who are primarily responsible for childcare—have less access to AI, increasing their workload.

AI and Changing Gender Roles in Parenting

AI parenting also affects gender roles. In digitally literate families, AI helps balance parenting duties between mothers and fathers. However, in many Southeast Asian cultures, AI often reinforces traditional roles, with mothers taking the lead in technology-based parenting.

According to Bajwa et al. (2024), tech-savvy fathers in modern families tend to engage more in parenting due to their familiarity with AI. In contrast, in families with limited digital knowledge, mothers remain the primary caregivers but struggle to use AI effectively.

Strategies to Address AI Parenting Inequalities

To address inequalities in AI parenting, global organizations emphasize the importance of digital literacy, affordability, and gender inclusion. Governments and educational institutions should provide AI training for parents, especially in underserved communities, to ensure responsible AI use and awareness of its impact on family dynamics. Ensuring that AI is both affordable and culturally relevant is another crucial step. Policies should make AI technology accessible to all income groups, and AI parenting tools should be designed to align with local cultural values to encourage widespread acceptance.

Encouraging greater father involvement in AI parenting is also necessary to balance caregiving responsibilities. Parenting programs should include men in digital parenting education, while gender-awareness campaigns can help promote shared responsibilities in raising children with AI support.

Brynjolfsson and McAfee (2014) caution that the rapid expansion of AI lacks sufficient regulation, raising concerns about privacy, parental control, and ethical considerations. Without proper guidelines, AI could weaken parental influence and widen the gap between tech-savvy children and their families.

Conclusion

Summary of Key Findings

This narrative review has explored how Artificial Intelligence (AI) affects family communication, parental roles, and children's respect for parents, particularly in the context of developing countries in Southeast Asia. Based on the literature review, several key findings can be summarized as follows:

1. AI has transformed family communication patterns, enhancing connectivity but reducing face-to-face interaction.
 - AI, in the form of virtual assistants, educational chatbots, and monitoring apps, has increased the frequency of parent-child communication.
 - However, AI also reduces the emotional depth of communication, as interpersonal interactions are increasingly replaced by automated responses from AI systems (Syahril et al., 2024; Hastasari, 2024; Ramadhana et al., 2022).
2. The role of parents in parenting has shifted due to AI, from the primary authority figure to a facilitator of technology.
 - AI provides solutions in parenting decision-making, child monitoring, and educational recommendations.
 - However, reliance on AI for disciplining and guiding children can weaken parental authority, as children tend to trust the information and rules provided by AI more than those given by their parents (Koenarso & Ayuningtyas, 2024; Bajwa et al., 2024).
3. Children's respect for their parents has increasingly shifted from hierarchy-based authority to competence-based authority.
 - AI has made children more independent in acquiring information, leading them to question their parents' decisions (Nguyen et al., 2024; Pei et al., 2023).
 - Some children are even more obedient to AI than to their parents in terms of rules and discipline, especially when AI is used in technology-based parental control (Alrusaini & Beyari, 2022).
 - Parents who lack sufficient understanding of AI often lose control within the family, while children who are more tech-savvy act as "cultural brokers" in household decision-making (McKenzie et al., 2019).
4. Cultural norms and socio-economic disparities play an important role in the acceptance of AI in parenting.
 - Families in Southeast Asia with strong collectivist values and hierarchies tend to find it more difficult to accept AI in parenting compared to families with more flexible values (Syukur et al., 2024; Bajwa et al., 2024).
 - Differences in access to AI technology create disparities in AI-based parenting patterns, where wealthier families are more likely to benefit from AI in enhancing their children's education (Wijayanti et al., 2024; OECD, 2022).
 - AI can also reinforce or challenge gender roles in the family, depending on how the technology is adopted (Khoodoruth et al., 2024).

Gaps in Research

Although the existing literature has provided valuable insights into the impact of AI in parenting, there are several research gaps that need to be addressed in future studies:

1. Lack of longitudinal studies on the long-term effects of AI on family communication.
 - Most existing studies focus on the short-term effects of AI on family communication.
 - Longitudinal research is needed to observe how parent-child relationships evolve over time with the presence of AI.
2. Limited studies measuring children's respect for parents directly.
 - Most current studies rely on qualitative approaches, such as interviews or social trend analyses.
 - Quantitative studies with psychological scales are needed to measure changes in children's respect for their parents as a result of AI.
3. Lack of research comparing the impact of AI in families from different cultural backgrounds.
 - Most studies on AI and parenting focus on developed countries.
 - Further studies are needed in developing countries in Southeast Asia, considering cultural factors and social norms.
4. Limited research on how AI can be utilized to strengthen parental authority rather than replace it.
 - Most research highlights how AI diminishes parental authority, but few explore ways in which AI can support the role of parents.
 - There is a need for AI-based parenting models designed to strengthen parent-child relationships rather than replace them.

Recommendations for Future Research

Based on the research gaps outlined above, here are some recommendations for future studies:

1. Develop longitudinal studies on the long-term changes in family communication caused by AI.
2. Create psychological measurement tools to assess the impact of AI on children's respect for their parents.
3. Conduct cross-cultural studies on AI in parenting in developing countries.
4. Develop AI-based parenting models that support parental authority without diminishing emotional closeness in the family.

Implications for AI Parenting Policies and Practices

To optimize the benefits of AI in parenting and mitigate its negative impacts, several policies and practical recommendations should be considered:

1. Increasing Digital Literacy for Parents
 - Governments and educational organizations must develop digital literacy programs for parents, particularly in communities with limited access to AI technology.
 - These programs should include training on how to use AI responsibly in parenting and the social and psychological impacts of AI on children.

2. Developing Ethical AI Parenting Policies
 - Regulations are needed to protect the privacy and security of children's data collected by AI systems.
 - AI parenting must be designed with cultural values and social norms in each country in mind.
3. Encouraging Balanced Parenting Models Between AI and Human Interaction
 - Parents need to be encouraged to use AI as a supportive tool, not as a replacement for face-to-face interactions.
 - AI should be used to enhance parental involvement in educating children, rather than replacing the role of parents.

AI has brought significant transformation to parenting, creating both opportunities and challenges in family communication, parental roles, and children's respect for parents. To maximize AI's benefits within families, a more strategic approach to regulation, education, and the adoption of AI-based parenting technology is required.

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