

Leadership Style, Work Motivation, and Work Discipline as Predictors of Employee Performance: Evidence from Indonesia's Quick-Service Restaurant Industry

Daffa Reza Al-Habsyi; Bimo Bakazdo Arief; Febrianty; Reza Hardian Pratama

Fakultas Ekonomi, Universitas Malahayati

e-mail: bimoslowslow@gmail.com¹, dreza8584@gmail.com², febrianty@malahayati.ac.id,

Rezahardianpratama@malahayati.ac.id

Abstract

Purpose: This study examines the effects of leadership style, work motivation, and work discipline on employee performance at Mie Gacoan, a rapidly growing Indonesian quick-service restaurant brand operated by PT Pesta Pora Abadi. The research is situated in the labor-intensive food and beverage service sector, where service speed, teamwork, and compliance with operating standards are central to organizational performance. **Design/methodology/approach:** The study employed an associative quantitative design using a cross-sectional questionnaire survey. Respondents were active Mie Gacoan employees selected through purposive sampling, with an inclusion criterion of at least six months of work experience. The original draft indicated a target sample of 50-100 employees; the exact number of usable responses should be inserted before final journal submission. Measures were assessed using five-point Likert-type scales and analyzed using validity and reliability tests, classical assumption tests, and multiple linear regression. **Findings:** The descriptive results indicate that most respondents were young employees aged 18-25 years (65%), high-school or vocational-school graduates (72%), and relatively new employees with six months to one year of tenure (54%). Work discipline had the highest mean score ($M = 4.05$), followed by employee performance ($M = 3.95$), work motivation ($M = 3.92$), and leadership style ($M = 3.87$). The regression model explained 62.1% of the variance in employee performance. Work discipline emerged as the strongest predictor ($\beta = 0.354$), while leadership style and motivation were also reported to have positive and significant effects. **Practical implications:** Management should maintain fair and consistent discipline, strengthen supervisor feedback, clarify career development pathways, and provide pressure-handling training for young employees. **Originality/value:** The paper contributes contextual evidence on employee performance in Indonesia's quick-service restaurant sector by integrating leadership style, work motivation, and work discipline in one empirical model.

Keywords:

employee performance; leadership style; work motivation; work discipline; quick-service restaurant; Indonesia; Mie Gacoan

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INTRODUCTION

The food and beverage service sector is a strategically important component of Indonesia's service economy. Statistics Indonesia reported that food and beverage service businesses in Indonesia reached approximately 5.28 million units in 2024, illustrating the scale and labor intensity of this sector (Statistics Indonesia, 2025a). At the same time, household consumption remains a major component of national economic activity, making the restaurant and culinary business environment highly competitive and sensitive to shifts in consumer purchasing behavior (Statistics Indonesia, 2025b).

One of the prominent culinary businesses that has expanded rapidly in Indonesia is Mie Gacoan, operated under PT Pesta Pora Abadi. The brand is widely associated with

affordable products and a market segment dominated by young consumers. The expansion of outlets across major Indonesian cities creates a managerial demand for consistent service quality, operational discipline, and employee performance. In quick-service restaurant operations, customer experience is shaped not only by menu quality but also by speed, accuracy, cleanliness, teamwork, and frontline employee behavior.

From a human resource management perspective, employee performance is a critical determinant of organizational effectiveness. Individual work performance is generally understood as behavior or action relevant to organizational goals, including task performance, contextual performance, and adaptive behavior (Koopmans et al., 2011). In labor-intensive service businesses, performance is particularly important because employees directly interact with customers, implement service standards, and represent the brand at the point of service delivery.

The original study identifies three key antecedents of employee performance: leadership style, work motivation, and work discipline. Leadership style is relevant because supervisors provide direction, coordinate operational routines, give feedback, and shape the psychological climate of work. Work motivation explains why employees exert effort, persist during demanding service conditions, and align personal goals with organizational expectations (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Work discipline reflects compliance with rules, punctuality, responsibility, and adherence to standard operating procedures, which are essential in high-volume restaurant settings.

Although the relationships between leadership, motivation, discipline, and performance have been widely examined in human resource management literature, more sector-specific evidence is needed in Indonesian quick-service restaurant settings, particularly in organizations with a young workforce and high service intensity. This study addresses that gap by analyzing the influence of leadership style, work motivation, and work discipline on employee performance at Mie Gacoan. The findings are expected to support evidence-based human resource practices for improving frontline service quality and employee productivity.

Literature Review and Hypothesis Development

1. Employee performance

Employee performance refers to the extent to which an employee completes tasks and contributes to organizational goals. Contemporary performance research emphasizes that performance is multidimensional. Koopmans et al. (2011) synthesized individual work performance frameworks and identified task performance, contextual performance, adaptive performance, and counterproductive work behavior as important dimensions. In a restaurant context, task performance includes preparing, serving, and supporting customer orders accurately and efficiently; contextual performance includes teamwork, helping colleagues, and maintaining a positive service climate; adaptive performance includes responding effectively to peak-hour pressure and unexpected operational problems.

The original study operationalized employee performance through indicators such as work quality, work quantity, teamwork, responsibility, and the ability to work under pressure. This operationalization is consistent with the service nature of restaurant work, where employees must coordinate rapidly with co-workers while maintaining consistent service quality. The descriptive findings showed an overall performance mean of 3.95, indicating that employee performance was generally perceived as good. Teamwork obtained the

strongest score, while the ability to work under pressure was comparatively weaker, suggesting a practical area for managerial intervention.

2. Leadership style and employee performance

Leadership style refers to the behavioral pattern through which leaders influence, direct, and support employees. In international leadership literature, transformational leadership has been especially influential because it emphasizes idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration (Bass & Riggio, 2006). These dimensions are relevant to frontline service settings because supervisors must provide direction, maintain service standards, encourage cooperation, and respond quickly to employee difficulties.

Empirical studies generally support the positive relationship between leadership and employee performance. A meta-analytic review by Wang et al. (2011) found that transformational leadership was positively related to performance across individual, team, and organizational levels. Lai et al. (2020) further showed that transformational leadership can enhance job performance through work engagement. In the Mie Gacoan context, leadership style is practically important because employees require clear operational instructions, rapid coordination, and direct feedback from supervisors during service periods.

The original findings indicate that leadership style had a mean score of 3.87, categorized as good. Employees perceived that supervisors were generally clear in giving work direction. However, the lower score on feedback indicates that employees did not always receive regular direct evaluation from supervisors. This finding suggests that leadership quality is not merely a matter of giving instructions, but also of providing developmental feedback and maintaining consistency between flexibility and firmness.

H1. Leadership style has a positive and significant effect on employee performance.

3. Work motivation and employee performance

Work motivation is the internal and external force that initiates, directs, and sustains work behavior. Self-determination theory distinguishes between autonomous motivation, controlled motivation, and amotivation, and emphasizes the psychological needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Ryan & Deci, 2000). In addition, expectancy theory suggests that employees are motivated when they believe that effort will lead to performance, performance will lead to valued outcomes, and those outcomes are personally meaningful (Vroom, 1964).

Motivation is particularly relevant for young frontline employees because their work effort may be shaped by financial needs, peer relations, career expectations, and perceived fairness. Chien et al. (2020), in a hospitality-sector study, found that work motivation contributes to employee performance and should be treated as a strategic managerial priority. In the present study, work motivation had a mean score of 3.92, categorized as high. The strongest motivational indicator was income or salary orientation ($M = 4.15$), while career development opportunity was weaker ($M = 3.58$). This pattern indicates that financial motivation remains important, but long-term retention may require clearer career pathways and development opportunities.

In the Mie Gacoan setting, motivation also appears to be socially embedded. The service process depends on teamwork and mutual assistance. Employees therefore experience responsibility not only toward supervisors but also toward co-workers. However, if high

workload is not balanced with adequate recognition, feedback, and career opportunity, motivation may decline and contribute to turnover.

H2. Work motivation has a positive and significant effect on employee performance.

4. Work discipline and employee performance

Work discipline refers to employees' willingness and consistency in obeying organizational rules, following work procedures, meeting time standards, and accepting responsibility for assigned tasks. In Indonesian human resource literature, work discipline is often defined as the awareness and willingness of employees to comply with organizational regulations and social norms (Hasibuan, 2021). In international human resource management, this construct is closely related to performance management, rule compliance, operational control, and behavioral consistency (Armstrong & Taylor, 2023).

Work discipline is crucial in quick-service restaurant operations because service failures can occur when employees arrive late, ignore hygiene standards, fail to follow standard operating procedures, or work inconsistently during peak hours. The original results show that work discipline had the highest mean score among all variables ($M = 4.05$). The punctuality indicator was particularly strong, suggesting that employees generally understand the importance of being present and ready for work on time.

The regression results further indicated that work discipline was the strongest predictor of employee performance ($\beta = 0.354$). This finding is consistent with the operational logic of restaurant service: disciplined employees are more likely to follow procedures, maintain service speed, coordinate with the team, and reduce errors. However, discipline should not rely only on sanctions; it should also be supported by fair supervision, consistent rules, employee awareness, and recognition for responsible behavior.

H3. Work discipline has a positive and significant effect on employee performance.

5. Integrated research framework

The conceptual framework positions leadership style, work motivation, and work discipline as independent variables predicting employee performance. The simultaneous influence of these variables is theoretically plausible because frontline employee performance is shaped by managerial direction, motivational energy, and behavioral compliance. Accordingly, the fourth hypothesis is formulated as follows:

H4. Leadership style, work motivation, and work discipline simultaneously have a significant effect on employee performance.

Figure 1. Conceptual framework of the study

Independent variables	Theoretical rationale	Dependent variable
Leadership style	Direction, feedback, communication, and supervisory support	Employee performance
Work motivation	Effort, persistence, financial motivation, and career aspiration	Employee performance
Work discipline	Punctuality, rule compliance, SOP adherence, and responsibility	Employee performance

METHOD

This study used a quantitative associative design to examine the relationships between leadership style, work motivation, work discipline, and employee performance. A cross-sectional survey was selected because the study aimed to measure employee perceptions at one point in time and statistically estimate the influence of independent variables on employee performance.

The research object was employees of Mie Gacoan under PT Pesta Pora Abadi. The population consisted of employees working at one Mie Gacoan branch. Due to limitations of time and access, purposive sampling was used. The inclusion criterion was active employee status with a minimum tenure of six months. The source draft stated that the sample ranged from 50 to 100 respondents. For journal submission, this must be replaced with the exact number of valid questionnaires analyzed.

The inclusion criterion of at least six months of work experience was appropriate because employees with very short tenure may not yet have sufficient experience to evaluate leadership style, motivation, discipline, and performance conditions reliably. Nevertheless, future studies should consider probability sampling and a larger multi-branch sample to improve generalizability.

Primary data were collected using a structured questionnaire. Each item was measured using a five-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree. The four variables were operationalized as follows.

Variable	Conceptual definition	Main indicators	Expected relationship
Leadership style	Supervisor behavior in directing, influencing, communicating with, and supporting employees.	Clarity of instructions; communication; fairness; consistency; feedback; support.	Positive effect on employee performance
Work motivation	Internal and external drivers that encourage employees to work, persist, and achieve work targets.	Financial motivation; recognition; work enthusiasm; teamwork; career development opportunity.	Positive effect on employee performance
Work discipline	Employee awareness and willingness to comply with organizational rules and work standards.	Punctuality; SOP compliance; responsibility; obedience to rules; consistency.	Positive effect on employee performance
Employee performance	Employee work behavior and outcomes relevant to service and organizational goals.	Work quality; work quantity; teamwork; responsibility; ability to work under pressure.	Dependent variable

The study used primary and secondary data. Primary data were obtained from employees through questionnaires. Secondary data were drawn from official publications, prior literature, and company-related information to contextualize the food and beverage service sector and the growth of Mie Gacoan. The questionnaire should be administered with informed consent, voluntary participation, and confidentiality assurances. These procedures are important for reducing response bias and meeting research ethics requirements.

Before regression analysis, the instrument should be evaluated using item validity and reliability tests. Reliability can be assessed using Cronbach's alpha, a classical estimate of

internal consistency (Cronbach, 1951). In applied social research, alpha values of 0.70 or higher are commonly treated as acceptable, although interpretation should also consider the number of items and construct dimensionality. The final manuscript should report the validity coefficient and Cronbach's alpha for each variable.

Because all variables were measured through the same questionnaire, the study may be exposed to common method bias. Procedural remedies include assuring anonymity, separating predictor and criterion items, using clear wording, and reducing evaluation apprehension. Statistical checks such as Harman's single-factor test or more advanced common-method-factor approaches may also be reported (Podsakoff et al., 2003).

Data were analyzed using multiple linear regression with statistical software such as SPSS. Before regression, the model should be evaluated using classical assumption tests, including normality, multicollinearity, and heteroscedasticity tests. Multicollinearity can be checked using tolerance and variance inflation factor (VIF), and regression reporting should include unstandardized coefficients, standardized coefficients, standard errors, t-values, p-values, F-statistic, R-squared, and adjusted R-squared (Hair et al., 2019).

The regression model is specified as follows:

$$Y = a + b_1X_1 + b_2X_2 + b_3X_3 + e$$

where Y represents employee performance, X1 represents leadership style, X2 represents work motivation, X3 represents work discipline, a is the intercept, b1-b3 are regression coefficients, and e is the error term.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Respondent characteristics

The available descriptive results indicate that respondents were predominantly young employees. Approximately 65% were aged 18-25 years. This profile is consistent with the employment pattern in many quick-service restaurant settings, where frontline roles are frequently filled by early-career employees. The educational profile was dominated by high-school or vocational-school graduates (72%), while the remaining respondents had diploma or undergraduate backgrounds. In terms of tenure, 54% had worked for six months to one year, while 28% had worked for less than six months. These data suggest a relatively young and early-tenure workforce with potential turnover challenges.

Characteristic	Dominant category	Percentage reported in source draft	Interpretive implication
Age	18-25 years	65%	Young workforce; requires clear guidance, coaching, and retention strategy.
Education	High school/vocational school	72%	Operational communication and training should be practical and easy to understand.
Tenure	6 months to 1 year	54%	Many employees are still adapting to service routines and pressure.
Tenure	Less than 6 months	28%	Potential turnover and onboarding challenges should be considered.

2. Descriptive statistics of research variables

The descriptive results show that all main variables were rated positively. Work discipline obtained the highest mean score, indicating that employees were generally compliant with

rules and punctuality expectations. Employee performance was also rated as good, especially in the teamwork dimension. Work motivation was high, with income as the strongest motivational indicator. Leadership style was categorized as good, but feedback from supervisors was identified as an area requiring improvement.

Variable / indicator	Mean score	Category / interpretation
Leadership style	3.87	Good; instructions were generally clear, but feedback needs improvement.
Work motivation	3.92	High; financial motivation was dominant.
Work discipline	4.05	Highest among variables; punctuality and compliance were strong.
Employee performance	3.95	Good; teamwork was strong, pressure handling was weaker.
Income-related motivation	4.15	Strongest motivation indicator reported.
Career development opportunity	3.58	Lower indicator; career pathway clarity should be improved.
Teamwork indicator	4.12	Strongest performance indicator.
Ability to work under pressure	3.70	Needs improvement, especially during busy service periods.

3. Regression and hypothesis testing

The multiple regression results indicated that leadership style, work motivation, and work discipline collectively explained 62.1% of the variance in employee performance (R-squared = 0.621). This means that the three predictors provide a substantial explanation of employee performance in the observed setting, while 37.9% of the variance is attributable to other factors not included in the model, such as work environment, compensation system, organizational culture, workload, individual personality, and personal circumstances.

Among the three predictors, work discipline was reported as the strongest factor affecting employee performance, with a coefficient of beta = 0.354. Leadership style and work motivation were also reported to have positive and significant effects. However, the source draft did not provide complete SPSS output. Therefore, exact coefficient estimates, standard errors, t-values, F-value, and p-values must be inserted before submission to an international journal.

Hypothesis / model component	Reported result	Interpretation	Status
H1: Leadership style -> employee performance	Positive and significant; exact beta, t, and p not provided	Better supervisor direction, consistency, and feedback are associated with higher employee performance.	Supported, pending exact statistics
H2: Work motivation -> employee performance	Positive and significant; exact beta, t, and p not provided	Higher employee motivation is associated with better performance.	Supported, pending exact statistics
H3: Work discipline -> employee performance	Strongest predictor; beta = 0.354; significance reported	Punctuality, SOP adherence, and responsibility are central to service performance.	Supported
H4: Simultaneous effect	R-squared = 0.621; F-statistic not provided	The three independent variables jointly explain 62.1% of employee performance variance.	Supported, pending exact F-statistic

Discussion

1. Leadership style and employee performance

The positive effect of leadership style on employee performance supports the argument that supervisors play an essential role in directing frontline service behavior. In quick-service restaurant work, employees depend on leaders for task allocation, service priorities, problem solving, and coordination during high-demand periods. The finding is consistent with transformational leadership theory, which argues that leaders can improve performance by inspiring employees, providing individual support, encouraging problem solving, and creating shared purpose (Bass & Riggio, 2006). It is also aligned with empirical findings showing that leadership can enhance performance by increasing employee engagement (Lai et al., 2020).

The descriptive findings indicate that employees generally perceived leadership at Mie Gacoan as good, especially regarding work direction. However, the feedback dimension was weaker. This is a managerial signal that leadership should move beyond command and control toward coaching and performance dialogue. Young employees may require more frequent feedback because they are still developing work habits and adapting to service pressure. Without feedback, employees may not clearly understand whether their performance meets expectations, which may weaken learning and consistency.

The flexible leadership style reported in the original study may be appropriate for a young workforce because it reduces excessive formality and supports relational closeness. Nevertheless, flexibility must be balanced with fairness and consistency. If flexibility is not accompanied by clear expectations, employees may become confused about rules and performance standards. Therefore, the optimal leadership approach in this setting should combine human-oriented communication with firm operational control.

2. Work motivation and employee performance

The positive effect of work motivation on employee performance indicates that motivated employees are more likely to exert effort, persist during busy service conditions, and contribute to team goals. This result is consistent with self-determination theory and expectancy theory, which explain that employees perform better when work outcomes are meaningful and when effort is perceived as leading to valued results (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Vroom, 1964). It is also consistent with hospitality-sector research showing that motivation is an important determinant of employee performance (Chien et al., 2020).

The most dominant motivational factor in the study was income. This finding is plausible because many respondents were young and at the beginning of their working lives. For early-career employees in operational service roles, salary and income stability often become primary reasons for maintaining work effort. However, the relatively lower score for career development opportunity indicates that motivation should not be reduced to financial incentives alone. Career clarity, training, recognition, and promotion opportunities can support longer-term motivation and retention.

The team-based nature of Mie Gacoan's operations also suggests the presence of social motivation. Employees do not work independently; rather, they depend on one another to complete service tasks. Relatedness, teamwork, and peer support can strengthen motivation, especially when employees feel part of a cohesive unit. However, high work intensity without recognition may create fatigue and reduce motivation. Management should

therefore combine financial incentives with non-financial motivators such as feedback, appreciation, role rotation, skills training, and career mapping.

3. Work discipline and employee performance

Work discipline was the strongest predictor of employee performance. This finding is highly relevant to quick-service restaurant operations because the service process depends on punctuality, rule compliance, and SOP adherence. If employees fail to arrive on time, ignore standard procedures, or lack responsibility, service speed and customer satisfaction can be immediately affected. The high mean score for work discipline suggests that Mie Gacoan employees generally understand the importance of rules and operational standards.

The dominance of discipline may also reflect the operational structure of restaurant work. Unlike more autonomous professional settings, quick-service restaurant tasks are sequential, interdependent, and time-sensitive. A delay or mistake by one employee can disrupt the workflow of the entire team. Therefore, discipline directly supports coordination and reduces service variability. This explains why discipline had a stronger coefficient than motivation and leadership style in the reported model.

Nevertheless, discipline should be managed with fairness. A system based only on sanctions may produce compliance but not necessarily commitment. Consistent supervision, transparent rules, equal treatment, and recognition for responsible employees are needed to maintain discipline without generating resentment. Discipline should also be linked to training, because some rule violations may result from lack of understanding rather than intentional disobedience.

4. Employee performance, teamwork, and pressure handling

Employee performance was categorized as good, with teamwork as the strongest indicator. This is a valuable organizational asset because quick-service restaurant operations depend on coordinated behavior among kitchen, cashier, service, and support roles. Strong teamwork helps employees share workload, respond to customer demand, and maintain service flow during peak hours.

However, the ability to work under pressure was lower than other performance indicators. This result is important because Mie Gacoan is associated with high customer traffic and fast service expectations. Pressure-handling difficulty may be related to the workforce profile: many employees were young and had relatively short tenure. Employees who are still adapting may not yet have sufficient experience to manage crowding, complaints, time pressure, and multitasking. Targeted training in stress management, service simulation, and peak-hour coordination is therefore recommended.

Theoretical Contributions

This study contributes to human resource management literature in three ways. First, it integrates leadership style, work motivation, and work discipline in one model of employee performance in the Indonesian quick-service restaurant sector. Second, it extends employee performance research by providing contextual evidence from a young, operational, service-based workforce. Third, it highlights work discipline as a dominant predictor of performance in standardized service operations, suggesting that compliance-related behavior may have stronger explanatory power in high-volume restaurant settings than in more flexible organizational contexts.

Practical Implications

Managerial area	Recommended action	Expected effect
Leadership feedback	Implement short weekly feedback sessions between supervisors and employees.	Improves clarity, learning, and performance correction.
Supervisor consistency	Standardize communication of rules and performance expectations across shifts.	Reduces confusion and perceived unfairness.
Motivation and reward	Combine financial incentives with recognition, skill badges, and team-based appreciation.	Strengthens both extrinsic and social motivation.
Career development	Create a transparent pathway from crew member to senior crew, trainer, and shift leader.	Improves retention and long-term motivation.
Discipline system	Maintain punctuality and SOP compliance through fair monitoring and equal sanctions.	Sustains service consistency and operational reliability.
Pressure-handling ability	Conduct service simulation during peak-hour scenarios and customer complaint drills.	Improves adaptive performance and reduces stress-related errors.
Onboarding and turnover	Strengthen orientation for new employees and assign peer mentors during early tenure.	Accelerates adaptation and reduces early turnover risk.

Limitations and Future Research

This study has several limitations. First, the sample was taken from one Mie Gacoan branch, which limits generalizability to all branches or the broader restaurant industry. Future research should involve multiple branches and compare regions with different customer volumes. Second, the exact number of respondents and complete statistical output were not available in the source draft. Reputable international journals require complete reporting of validity, reliability, assumption testing, regression coefficients, standard errors, t-values, F-values, p-values, confidence intervals, and adjusted R-squared.

Third, the use of a cross-sectional survey restricts causal interpretation. Although regression can estimate statistical influence, it does not prove causal direction. Future studies may use longitudinal designs or supervisor-rated performance data. Fourth, the study relied on self-reported questionnaire responses, which may be affected by common method bias. Future research should combine employee questionnaires with supervisor evaluations, attendance records, service quality metrics, and turnover data. Fifth, the model explained 62.1% of performance variance, leaving 37.9% to other factors. Future studies should consider work environment, compensation fairness, workload, job satisfaction, organizational culture, work engagement, perceived organizational support, and employee burnout.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that leadership style, work motivation, and work discipline are important predictors of employee performance at Mie Gacoan. The three variables jointly explained 62.1% of the variance in employee performance, indicating that they are central factors in the management of frontline restaurant employees. Work discipline emerged as the strongest predictor, emphasizing the importance of punctuality, rule compliance, SOP adherence, and responsibility in quick-service restaurant operations.

Leadership style also contributed to employee performance by providing work direction, coordination, and supervisory support. However, the feedback aspect should be improved so that employees receive clearer evaluation and developmental guidance. Work motivation

had a positive effect as well, with financial motivation as the strongest indicator and career development opportunity as a weaker area. Therefore, management should not rely only on salary-based motivation but should also develop recognition and career pathways.

Overall, employee performance in this setting is not determined by a single factor but by the interaction of managerial direction, employee motivation, and disciplined behavior. For Mie Gacoan, performance improvement can begin with practical and achievable actions: improving supervisor feedback, clarifying career opportunities, maintaining fair discipline, and training employees to handle pressure during high-demand service periods. These actions are expected to improve service consistency, employee retention, and organizational competitiveness in the Indonesian food and beverage service sector.

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