

The Impact of Patronage and Political Support on the Determination of Priority Issues and Vision-Mission: A Case Study of the 2024 Yogyakarta Mayoral Election

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Abstract

Every five years, the routine of local executive elections is inevitably intertwined with patronage and political support. Who the candidate is and who backs them often wields more power than their track record and ideas. It's no secret that the political cost of such candidacies is substantial, not just in terms of finances but also in the endorsements that play a significant role in securing votes. Unfortunately, both endorsers and those behind the candidates typically expect reciprocal benefits, whether it be securing positions or projects. This can lead to a biased formulation of priority issues and visions from the outset. Therefore, this study aims to analyze the extent to which patronage and political support influence the determination of priority issues and visions in the 2024 Yogyakarta mayoral election. Using a qualitative approach, this research will describe the internal political dynamics of political parties and interest groups in determining the policy direction of mayoral candidates. Data will be collected through document analysis through the news and social media of each candidate pair or representatives of each candidate pair, then it will be analyzed by the Miles and Huberman theory. It is hoped that this research will provide a deeper understanding of the political decision-making process at the local level and its implications for public participation.

Keywords: patronage, political support, priority issues, vision mission, mayoral election

1. Introduction

The political landscape of Yogyakarta City has undergone notable dynamics in recent years. As a city rich in historical values and a strategic center for culture and education, Yogyakarta plays a significant role in national political dynamics [1]. However, behind its peaceful appearance and deeply rooted democratic culture, numerous challenges and dynamics impact the political process in this city. One of the biggest challenges is the increasing influence of high political costs, which restricts access for potential leaders. Additionally, the emerging trend of public figures and entrepreneurs as candidates for local leadership has sparked discussions—what, exactly, are they seeking on the political stage? Furthermore, with the increasing impact of national politics on regional politics, Yogyakarta's policies are not immune to biases that could disadvantage local residents [2]. The 2024 Yogyakarta City election reflects all these dynamics, where various political interests clash, and its outcome will set the future direction of the city.

As one of Indonesia's oldest cities, with a long history of politics and governance, Yogyakarta has a unique political character. The city's political traditions are heavily influenced by local values and Javanese culture, particularly with the continued presence of the Yogyakarta Sultanate, which plays a role in regional governance through the Governor of the Special Region of Yogyakarta, traditionally held by the Sultan [3]. Amid strong traditional values, however, the influence of modernity and electoral democracy is growing, especially in local leadership and parliamentary elections.

Politics in Yogyakarta has significantly evolved with the increasing contestation of political parties in elections. Known as a base for Muhammadiyah, one of Indonesia's largest Islamic organizations, the city is also a meeting ground for diverse political ideologies. In recent years, competition among political parties in Yogyakarta has intensified, with major parties such as the Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle (PDIP), National Mandate Party (PAN), and Golkar Party vying for dominance. This phenomenon

shows that Yogyakarta is not just a cultural city but also an active and dynamic political arena. However, a key issue that has emerged in this development is the high cost of politics, which poses a major barrier for potential candidates who may possess the necessary capabilities and integrity but lack adequate financial resources [4].

The high political costs in local elections represent one of the major challenges in Yogyakarta, similar to other regions in Indonesia. A candidate aspiring to participate in elections faces the reality that political campaigns require substantial funds, not only for public engagement and outreach but also to gain political party support. Indonesia's party-centric political system leaves independent candidates with very limited opportunities [5]. Consequently, candidates must have close ties with political parties and the financial means to make significant contributions. The high costs limit access for middle- to lower-class citizens who may have promising visions and missions for Yogyakarta but lack the resources to compete. As a result, candidates with substantial financial backing, such as entrepreneurs, public figures, or established public figures with significant capital, have a better chance of competing.

This phenomenon raises concerns that politics in Yogyakarta is increasingly distancing itself from its founding idealism, which prioritizes public interest. In many cases, candidates who spend heavily on campaigns tend to prioritize personal interests or those of financially supportive groups. Consequently, high-cost politics risks disadvantaging the broader public, as the best candidates do not always have equal access to compete and win [6].

In recent years, the rise of public figures and entrepreneurs entering politics has gained attention across Indonesia, including in Yogyakarta. Figures previously known in entertainment, media, academia, or business are now moving to the political stage. This trend is occurring not only at the national level but also locally, as seen in elections for local leadership and legislative positions in Yogyakarta. What are they truly seeking in politics? Answers to this question vary. For some public figures, entering politics may be motivated by their popularity, viewed as a crucial asset for garnering votes. In modern politics, popularity is often a primary factor considered by political parties when selecting candidates. While they may lack experience or competency in governance, high popularity can be a shortcut to gaining public support. For entrepreneurs, joining politics is often seen as a way to expand their influence and business networks. Politics offers access to strategic policies that can impact economic sectors, giving entrepreneurs in politics opportunities to shape policy directions for their own or their group's benefit [7].

However, this trend also raises critical questions: does the presence of public figures and entrepreneurs in politics truly benefit society? Or is it merely a means to expand their power? The concern that politics is becoming a platform for self-promotion and wealth accumulation has intensified alongside this trend.

The involvement of public figures and entrepreneurs in politics, both locally and nationally, introduces potential biases in policy-making. Nationally, we have seen how politics influenced by personal and group interests can lead to unfair policies that do not serve the public interest. A clear example of potential policy bias is when economic policies disproportionately favor large corporations over small communities [8]. In Yogyakarta, this could become a threat if local politics becomes dominated by groups with significant capital. Policies might prioritize investors or entrepreneurs over local community interests, especially regarding business permits, land use, or infrastructure development. If politics is dominated by individuals with personal or group agendas, there is a substantial risk that policies will no longer be based on social justice and public welfare but rather benefit specific groups with greater access to power [9].

The 2024 Yogyakarta City election will be a critical arena for observing how these political dynamics unfold. Like many other regions in Indonesia, the 2024 election will serve as a battleground for diverse political, economic, and social interests. With candidates from various backgrounds—including senior politicians, academics, public figures, and entrepreneurs—this contest is expected to be highly

competitive [10]. On one hand, there is hope that the 2024 election will yield leaders capable of bringing positive change to Yogyakarta. On the other, the significant challenge is ensuring that the political process remains fair, transparent, and oriented toward the public interest, rather than benefiting elite groups, political parties, or individuals with substantial capital.

In the context of the 2024 Yogyakarta election, issues such as waste management, vigilantism, and school enrollment processes will serve as real tests for the candidates. Yogyakarta's voters expect not only campaign promises but also concrete solutions to these issues. Therefore, candidates must demonstrate their capacity to implement data-driven and technology-based policies that can address technical issues effectively. For example, in waste management, candidates proposing sustainable management plans that involve modern waste processing technology and cross-sector collaboration will likely gain public trust. Similarly, on issues like vigilantism and school enrollment, the public needs leaders who can enforce the law fairly and design a more inclusive and transparent education system.

The leader emerging from this election must be able to meet technocratic challenges while maintaining political legitimacy in the eyes of the community. This means the election process should not be merely a competition of popularity or financial strength but rather a forum for candidates to articulate their vision for tackling the city's fundamental problems. Otherwise, Yogyakarta risks becoming trapped in political dynamics that prioritize short-term interests without bringing real improvements to the quality of life for its residents.

2. Method

This research focuses on the 2024 Yogyakarta Mayoral Election, specifically examining the impact of patronage relationships and political support on setting priority issues and the vision-mission statements of candidate pairs. This case was chosen due to Yogyakarta's relevance as a city with distinctive political dynamics, where patronage relationships between political parties, interest groups, and local figures play a significant role in shaping policy directions. The analysis aims to provide insights into how local political forces operate within the democratic processes at the regional level.

This study employs a qualitative approach, aiming to depict the internal dynamics of political parties and interest groups in determining policy direction for mayoral candidates in Yogyakarta's 2024 election. A qualitative approach was selected as it allows for an in-depth understanding of the decision-making processes and the influence of patronage relationships in local politics, particularly in the context of regional elections.

Data for this research will be collected through document analysis, including news reports, social media, and official sources from the candidate pairs or their representatives. Data collection will focus on how political parties, interest groups, and patronage networks play roles in determining the candidates' priority issues and vision-mission statements. The collected data will be analyzed using the framework developed by Miles and Huberman (1994) [11], known as the interactive model of data analysis. This model includes three main stages:

- a. **Data Reduction:** In this stage, collected data will be selected, simplified, and focused on information relevant to the research objectives. Gathering data from various sources will provide a more comprehensive understanding of how political parties and interest groups influence policy formulation.
- b. **Data Display:** Following data reduction, the information will be presented in narratives, tables, or graphs to facilitate understanding of patterns and relationships among political actors. This data presentation will help identify the role and influence of patronage and political support in the campaigns of Yogyakarta's mayoral candidates.
- c. **Conclusion Drawing and Verification:** Based on the displayed data, the researcher will identify key patterns indicating how political patronage and support from interest groups impact the

determination of priority issues and vision-mission statements of the candidate pairs. The conclusions will then be verified by re-examining the data to ensure accuracy.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Profile and Background of the Candidate Pair for Mayor and Deputy Mayor

3.1.1. Heroe – Supena

Mayor Candidate

Heroe Poerwadi, born on January 17, 1966, is a politician and former journalist who has served as Deputy Mayor of Yogyakarta since 2017. Heroe studied at Gadjah Mada University (UGM) for his BA and MA degrees in communication. He began his career as a journalist in several media such as Editor Magazine and SCTV, and became a lecturer at the Indonesian Communication Academy. His experience in the media and communication fields led him to become a media and political consultant before entering politics [12]. In 2017, he was appointed as Deputy Mayor of Yogyakarta, and previously served as the Mayor's Expert Staff [13]. During his tenure, Heroe focused on government transparency and community involvement in policy-making. Heroe also served as Chair of PMI Yogyakarta, but was caught up in the controversy over alleged corruption cases in the organization [14]. For wealth data, he last reported his wealth in 2021, Heroe has assets worth IDR. 5.8 billion [15].

Deputy Mayor Candidate

Sri Widya Supena, who is usually called Pena, was born in Blora on March 31, 1984. She completed her D-3 studies at Yogyakarta State University and was active in the Student Executive Board (BEM). Pena then pursued a career in the business world, becoming a commissioner at PT. Gawe Becik Nadah Anugrah, and was successful in digital marketing for MSMEs [16]. Pena successfully marketed local products such as Garut Tuber Cereal and Jogokariyan batik caps through digital platforms, helping local MSMEs grow rapidly in a wider market. As a politician from Nasdem, Pena continues to push digital.

3.1.2. Hasto – Wawan

Mayor Candidate

Dr. (HC) dr. Hasto Wardoyo, Sp. OG(K), was born in Kulon Progo on July 30, 1964. He is a doctor, health entrepreneur, and politician. Hasto completed his medical education at Gadjah Mada University (UGM) in 1989 and earned a specialist degree in 2000. He began his medical career as Head of a Community Health Center in East Kalimantan and then joined Dr. Sardjito General Hospital. Hasto served as Regent of Kulon Progo for two terms (2011-2019) and is known for his "Bela & Beli Kulonprogo" policy which boosted the local economy [17]. In 2019, he was appointed as Head of the BKKBN and continued to promote the family planning program [18]. Despite criticism for some of his policies, such as the recommendation to have one daughter, Hasto is still known for his innovations in health and the local economy [19]. In the 2024 Pilkada, Hasto resigned from his position as Head of BKKBN to run for Mayor of Yogyakarta [20]. His wealth was last reported at Rp 5.62 billion.

Deputy Mayor Candidate

Wawan Harmawan, born in Yogyakarta on September 1, 1965, is an entrepreneur and Deputy Chairman of the DIY Chamber of Commerce and Industry [21]. Experienced in the business sector, especially MSMEs, Wawan encourages local economic growth through digitalization initiatives. He is active as an academic and often gives entrepreneurship lectures. Wawan is running in the 2024 Pilkada as a Candidate for Deputy Mayor of Yogyakarta with Hasto Wardoyo. Known for his dedication to advancing MSMEs and vocational education [22], he has the ambition to make Yogyakarta more competitive by focusing on innovation and job creation [23].

3.1.3. Afnan – Singgih

Mayor Candidate

Drs. Muhammad Afnan Hadikusumo was born in Yogyakarta on February 6, 1967 and grew up in the Kauman area, a Muhammadiyah stronghold. He completed his education at Muhammadiyah Ngupasan Elementary School, JHS 8 Yogyakarta, and SHS Muhammadiyah 1 Yogyakarta before continuing

his education at Gadjah Mada University. Afnan began his political career as a member of the DIY DPRD for the 2004–2009 period from PAN, then was elected as a member of the DPD RI for two terms (2009–2019). In the 2024 Pilkada, Afnan was nominated by Golkar as a candidate for Mayor of Yogyakarta [24]. So far, Afnan has been known to consistently fight for the interests of the DIY people, especially through his two elections as a member of the DPD RI [25]. He is also known as the author of three books on regional development. Throughout his tenure, he has been free from major controversies. At the end of 2022, Afnan reported his wealth at IDR 8.69 billion [26]

Deputy Mayor Candidate

Singgih Raharjo was born in Gunungkidul on May 14, 1965. He studied at Indonesia Islamic University Yogyakarta and Curtin University, Australia. His career as a civil servant includes strategic positions in the Special Region of Yogyakarta, including as Head of the Tourism Office and Acting Mayor of Yogyakarta in 2023-2024. Singgih reported wealth of IDR 3.2 billion as of December 31, 2022. Singgih played a key role in the fields of education, culture, and tourism in the Special Region of Yogyakarta, as well as maintaining the stability of the city government while serving as Acting Mayor [27]. However, he was caught in a controversy. Singgih was reportedly involved in the issue of "pork barrel politics" while serving as Acting Mayor, but there has been no further clarification [28].

3.2. Vision, Mission, Partisanship, and Issue Priorities

3.2.1. Heroe – Supena

Vision: Realizing a Superior, Competitive, Comfortable and Sustainable City of Yogyakarta Based on Special Values

Mission:

1. Realizing a Superior City of Yogyakarta through the realization of Healthy, Smart and Inclusive Human Resources
2. Realizing a Competitive City of Yogyakarta through the realization of an international standard economy, service center and creative economy
3. Realizing Reliable Governance
4. Realizing a Comfortable and Sustainable City of Yogyakarta through the realization of comfortable development supported by adequate infrastructure

Issue Partisanship and Priority:

1. Partisanship for Inclusive Human Resources: Heroe Poerwadi prioritizes intelligent and inclusive human resources, reflecting attention to education, health, and the involvement of all community groups.
2. Creative Economy and International Standards: Focus on the creative economy and strengthening competitiveness in the international market shows a bias towards the tourism sector and local business innovation.
3. Reliable Governance: Issues of governance are a priority to ensure a professional and clean bureaucracy.
4. Sustainable Development and Infrastructure: Management of comfortable and sustainable city development, including city infrastructure, prioritizes sustainability and citizen comfort.

3.2.2. Hasto - Wawan

Vision: Building a Just, Prosperous, Sustainable and Civilized Society

Mission:

1. Increasing productive, quality and individual human development
2. Ensuring access to health for the people and environmental preservation

3. Realizing social justice and strengthening the economic capacity of the people that is inclusive and creative
4. Building Regional Economic Independence based on local resource potential
5. Loyal to the Mandate of the People's Suffrage (Ampera), Pancasila, the 1945 Constitution, upholding the law to guarantee the rights of the people, and implementing clean regional governance free from corruption, and civilized
6. Strengthening the struggle to achieve the goals of the Special Region of Yogyakarta

Issues' Partisanship and Priority:

1. Human Development and Health: Hasto emphasizes improving the quality of life through equitable access to health and the development of productive people.
2. Inclusive Economy and Local Potential: Partisanship for the people's economy can be seen from its mission to strengthen the economy based on local potential and the creative economy, while ensuring social justice.
3. Clean and Anti-Corruption Government: Focus on a government that is free from corruption and upholds civility and law.
4. Environmental Conservation: Commitment to a sustainable environment is one of the main points in its program.

3.2.3. Afnan – Singgih

Vision: Together with all citizens, realizing a cleaner, more advanced, prosperous and cultured Yogyakarta City.

Mission:

1. Improving the quality of human resources through access to character and cultured education, quality health services, and creating an inclusive and tolerant society for all.
2. Encouraging economic growth in the community through the development of a sustainable tourism ecosystem, empowering MSMEs and strengthening the creative economy as a motor of innovation and local competitiveness in the global market.
3. Arranging an inclusive, clean, modern city ecosystem that makes its citizens happy with the support of infrastructure and digital technology to support economic growth.
4. Realizing a fast, clean, accountable, transparent government that serves citizens proactively, interactively, and provides solutions.
5. Increase the quantity and quality of waste management and clean water infrastructure
6. Increase the preservation, protection, development and utilization of noble culture
7. Encourage cultural innovation, digital literacy, public spaces and creative hubs for the younger generation

Issue Priorities and Priorities:

1. Human Resources Development and Character Education: Focusing on improving character education and quality health shows a commitment to human development and social welfare.
2. Tourism and MSME-Based Economy: Strengthening the local economy through sustainable tourism and empowering MSMEs shows attention to the micro economy and local communities.
3. Inclusive Development with Digital Technology: Modernization of cities that are inclusive and friendly to digital technology is a priority, with infrastructure as a support.
4. Cultural Preservation and Innovation: Support for local culture and innovation for the younger generation shows the importance of a balance between preserving traditions and new cultural innovations [29].

3.3. Analysis of Patronage and Political Support

The analysis of patronage and political support in shaping the vision, mission, and priority issues of the three candidate pairs in the 2024 Yogyakarta Regional Election offers deeper insights into how these candidates base their policies on the social and political support they receive. Political patronage involves not only traditional constituent bases but also how these candidates build coalitions and strategies to attract voters with the priority issues they champion.

The first candidate pair emphasizes a vision for Yogyakarta as a competitive, comfortable, and sustainable city rooted in local values. Their mission centers on improving human resources, promoting the creative economy, ensuring reliable governance, and fostering sustainable, livable development. Heroe Poerwadi, as the incumbent, draws significant support from a solid political network within the Yogyakarta city government. His experience as Deputy Mayor since 2017 has given him direct access to the bureaucracy and communities involved in urban development. Heroe's primary patronage stems from the urban middle class, who have benefited from a more transparent and proactive administration, particularly in addressing urban issues such as waste management, spatial planning, and creative economy policies. Meanwhile, Sri Widya Supena, a young politician and entrepreneur from Nasdem, brings support from MSMEs and the digital community, particularly those linked to the creative economy and local business innovation. Sri Widya has successfully marketed local products through digital platforms, attracting support from small- to medium-sized businesses interested in technology-based economic policies.

This pair is highly focused on the creative economy and enhancing Yogyakarta's competitiveness on an international level. Heroe and Sri Widya recognize the significant potential of the tourism and service sectors in Yogyakarta, seeking to develop an inclusive economy by involving youth and MSMEs in the modern business ecosystem [30]. They also emphasize inclusive human resource development, which includes improving healthcare and education for all community members. Patronage from small business owners, MSMEs, and creative economy players forms a crucial political base for this campaign, reflecting a priority on economic development that leverages digital technology and innovation.

The second candidate pair, Hasto and Wawan, envisions a fair, prosperous, sustainable, and cultured society. Their mission focuses on quality human development with strong character, equitable healthcare access, an inclusive economy, and clean governance free from corruption. Hasto Wardoyo, who has a strong patronage base in Kulon Progo, developed support through the successful "Bela & Beli Kulonprogo" program, which boosted the local economy by promoting the purchase of local products. This has earned Hasto solid support from farmers, local workers, and small business owners in the region. In the Yogyakarta context, Hasto seeks to transfer his successful experience from Kulon Progo, emphasizing local potential-based economic empowerment. His running mate, Wawan Harmawan, a businessman and Deputy Chair of Kadin DIY, has patronage from larger businesses and the formal economic sector in Yogyakarta. Support from Kadin strengthens Hasto's position to develop a more self-reliant regional economy, focusing on sectors involving technology development and MSMEs.

The Hasto-Wawan pair prioritizes productive human development and more equitable healthcare access, with a commitment to social justice. Within Yogyakarta's unique political landscape, Hasto aims to strengthen local capacities by upholding traditional values and regional economic potential. In terms of political patronage, this pair receives support from farming communities, informal sector workers, and also mid- to large-sized business owners interested in stronger economic growth rooted in local resources. Their patronage base is broad, encompassing diverse economic groups.

The third candidate pair envisions a clean, progressive, prosperous, and culturally rich Yogyakarta. Their mission emphasizes enhancing human resource quality through accessible character-based education and quality healthcare services, economic growth via sustainable tourism development and MSME empowerment, and urban modernization through digital infrastructure and technology support. Afnan Hadikusumo, who comes from a strong Muhammadiyah background in Yogyakarta, benefits from substantial patronage within this religious organization. Muhammadiyah has a significant influence on education, healthcare, and culture in Yogyakarta, enabling Afnan to leverage this network to strengthen his support base. Meanwhile, Singgih Raharjo, a former high-ranking official in DIY, has extensive bureaucratic connections. As a former Head of the Tourism Office and Acting Mayor of Yogyakarta, Singgih receives support from civil servants and the tourism and cultural community. His experience in tourism serves as a key asset for this pair, aiming to develop Yogyakarta into a cleaner and more modern city with sustainable tourism.

This pair places a strong focus on sustainable tourism and the creative economy, supported by digital technology. Afnan and Singgih aim to transform Yogyakarta into a tech-friendly city, where digital infrastructure is a key driver of economic growth. Additionally, they are committed to enhancing quality education and character-based healthcare, ensuring social welfare for all community members. Support from Muhammadiyah religious groups, bureaucratic circles, and tourism stakeholders provides this pair with a powerful base for building a modern city while preserving local culture and traditions.

From the analysis of political patronage and support for vision, mission, and priority issues, it is evident that all three candidate pairs promote agendas centered on economic development, human resource empowerment, and improved governance. Heroe and Sri Widya tend to rely on patronage from the creative economy community and MSMEs, focusing on technology-based modernization. Their focus is on developing inclusive human resources, an internationally competitive creative economy, and reliable governance. Hasto and Wawan, on the other hand, derive patronage from farmers, workers, and entrepreneurs who support a local economy, with a strong commitment to clean governance. Hasto Wardoyo emphasizes social justice, human development, healthcare, a local potential-based economy, and clean, dignified governance. Meanwhile, Afnan and Singgih draw substantial support from the Muhammadiyah community and bureaucracy, focusing on tourism and culture as economic drivers. This pair is more oriented toward MSME empowerment, technology-driven urban modernization, and cultural preservation and innovation.

4. Conclusion

This study reveals interesting dynamics in the 2024 Yogyakarta Regional Election, where political patronage and support from various interest groups significantly influence the prioritization of issues and the vision-mission of the candidates. Key findings of this research are as follows:

- a. Diverse Candidate Backgrounds: The 2024 Yogyakarta election showcases a range of candidate backgrounds, from experienced politicians to businesspeople and academics.
- b. Political Patronage: Each candidate pair has a unique support base, ranging from religious groups to business communities and bureaucracy, which directly influences the issues emphasized in their vision-mission.
- c. Focus on Economic and Human Resource Development: Most candidate pairs prioritize economic growth, particularly through tourism development and MSMEs, along with human resource quality enhancement.
- d. Role of Technology and Innovation: Technology and innovation issues are prominent, reflecting efforts to make Yogyakarta a more modern and competitive city.

- e. Connection with Local Values: All candidates strive to align their vision-mission with Yogyakarta's local values, such as its unique cultural heritage and Javanese traditions.
- f. Dynamic Local Politics: The 2024 Yogyakarta election demonstrates that local politics are heavily influenced by the dynamics of group and individual interests.
- g. Critical Role of the Public: The public plays a crucial role in selecting leaders who meet their expectations and needs.
- h. Importance of Transparency: Political decision-making processes need to be more transparent to ensure that public interests are represented.

Political patronage and support from various interest groups are key factors in shaping policy directions at the local level. However, the public has the power to change these dynamics by electing leaders genuinely committed to promoting public welfare. Recommendations include:

- a. Strengthening Public Participation: More effective mechanisms are needed to involve the public in political decision-making processes.
- b. Transparency of Information: Information about candidates and their programs should be presented openly and made easily accessible to the public.
- c. Enhanced Oversight: Effective oversight mechanisms are essential to prevent corruption and abuse of power.

5. Conflict of Interest

The authors need to declare that there is no conflict of interest related to the writing or publication of this article.

6. Acknowledgement

Thanks to D3 Pembangunan Masyarakat Desa, Sekolah Tinggi Pembangunan Masyarakat Desa "APMD", as authors affiliation.

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