Enhancing Intuition through *Tazkiyatun Nafs*: A Pathway to Preventing Unethical Conduct

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Abstrak: This study aims to comprehensively explore the multifaceted nature of Tazkiyatun Nafs as a pathway to enhance intuition and prevent unethical behavior. Through a meticulous examination of the transformative potential inherent in Tazkiyatun Nafs, this research endeavors to shed light on how this spiritual practice can assist individuals in recognizing and overcoming negative inclinations that manifest within their own beings. The methodology employed in this study is a literature review, specifically adopting a library research design. The primary sources of data for this research consist of reputable scholarly books and journals. The findings of this study reveal the pivotal role of intuition in the acquisition of knowledge, serving as a complementary faculty to rational and sensory capacities, thereby forming a comprehensive wellspring of human understanding. Through intuition, individuals possess an inherent ability to safeguard themselves from various perils, independent of conscious deliberation. The cultivation of a robust intuition can be achieved through the practice of Tazkiyatun Nafs, a process of self-purification aimed at alleviating the afflictions of the heart that contaminate the essence of the soul

Keywords: Intuition; Soul purification; Tazkiyatun Nafs; Sufism.

Introduction

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The utilization of empirical tools and knowledge derived from natural and social phenomena constitutes a fundamental pillar in the advancement of scientific knowledge. However, the acquisition of knowledge through intuition also possesses substantial significance. Intuitive knowledge often emerges inadvertently, akin to fragments of latent knowledge stored within our memory. Although seemingly inconsequential in isolation, these fragments assume pivotal roles in the facilitation of accurate decision-making processes and the cultivation of appropriate behavioral patterns (Chudnoff, 2013).

Within this scholarly discourse, it is imperative to acknowledge the pivotal role assumed by *Tazkiyatun Nafs*, the spiritual concept of soul purification within the Islamic tradition, in the augmentation of intuition and the prevention of unethical conduct. *Tazkiyatun Nafs* encompasses a conscious endeavor aimed at purging and purifying the soul from negative inclinations, including impulsive tendencies capable of exerting influences upon unethical behavior. By bolstering intuition through the practice of *Tazkiyatun Nafs*, individuals gain the capacity to cultivate profound discernment regarding matters of moral rectitude and transgression, while concurrently developing the ability to recognize and avert enticements that may engender unethical behavior.

The ubiquity of unethical conduct across diverse facets of society underscores the exigency for efficacious preventive measures. Conventional approaches often prioritize the imposition of external regulations and penalties, yet inadvertently overlook the underlying

determinants that engender unethical behaviors. By delving into the realm of Tazkiyatun Nafs, one can ascertain an internal mechanism of considerable potency in preventing unethical conduct. Tazkiyatun Nafs impels individuals towards engaging in self-reflection, self-discipline, and self-improvement, thereby fostering a profound sense of moral responsibility and integrity. Through the cultivation of a purified soul via the tenets of Tazkiyatun Nafs, individuals acquire the intrinsic fortitude and lucidity required to withstand temptations of an unethical nature, thus enabling them to make choices that align with ethical principles. The present study endeavors to illuminate how Tazkiyatun Nafs serves as a transformative pathway towards the prevention of unethical conduct, by comprehensively addressing its underlying psychological and spiritual dimensions.

This paper seeks to explore the multifaceted concept of *Tazkiyatun Nafs* as a pathway for augmenting intuition and averting unethical behavior. By meticulously examining the transformative potential of *Tazkiyatun Nafs*, this study aims to elucidate how this spiritual practice can aid individuals in recognizing and triumphing over negative inclinations that manifest within themselves. Furthermore, it endeavors to delineate the subsequent implications, namely the heightened moral awareness and the capacity to render ethical decisions that ensue from this process. Through fostering a more profound comprehension of *Tazkiyatun Nafs'* role in fortifying intuition, this research endeavors to impart valuable insights that contribute to the development of a holistic approach to the prevention of unethical conduct and the cultivation of ethical behavior within the sphere of everyday life.

Literature Reviews

Numerous extensive studies have been conducted on *Tazkiyatun Nafs* within the contexts of Sufism, psychology, and general religious studies. The concept of *Tazkiyatun Nafs* holds a central position in the pursuit of purifying the soul and heart, guiding individuals on their journey towards attaining divine contentment. Among the noteworthy previous research is Hartati's (2018) study, which emphasizes that *Tazkiyatun Nafs* can aid individuals in reducing excessive sexual tendencies prior to marriage. *Tazkiyatun Nafs* is a methodical and sustained process of self-development aimed at optimizing one's potential by continuously purifying the soul, suppressing negative inclinations, and fostering virtuous qualities in order to draw closer to Allah.

Another study by Musrifah (2019) highlights the relevance of Al-Ghazali's thoughts on *Tazkiyatun Nafs* in the context of Islamic education. Firstly, the purity of the soul (*Tazkiyatun Nafs*) is considered fundamental and indispensable for students to acquire beneficial knowledge, as knowledge emanates from the Most Holy Allah. Secondly, a sound and purified soul resulting from *Tazkiyatun Nafs* is pivotal to the success of students in the rapidly evolving millennial era driven by information technology.

Furthermore, a study by Arifin et al. (2022) illustrates Imam Al-Ghazali's viewpoint that *Tazkiyatun Nafs* is an endeavor to enhance morality and cultivate the soul with Islamic values. Similarly, Ibn Qayyim al-Jauziyah perceives *Tazkiyatun Nafs* as a means of self-purification through the cultivation of righteous servitude (*ubudiyah*) and discipline (ta'dib). Both scholars share a mutual understanding of *Tazkiyah* as a pathway to draw closer to the Almighty Allah, underscoring the significance of integrating *ta'dib* through educational exemplification. However, they differ in their application of the *Tazkiyatun Nafs*

methodology. Imam Al-Ghazali emphasizes three aspects: *Tathahhur* (purification), *Tahaqquq* (realization), and *Takhalluk* (character development), while Ibn Qayyim al-Jauziyyah focuses on three distinct aspects: Al-Ilm (knowledge), *Riyadhah* (spiritual training), and *Takhalluk* (character development).

These previous studies collectively emphasize the vital role of *Tazkiyatun Nafs* as an essential process in Islam that practitioners must undertake to cleanse their souls and hearts from actions or behaviors that create distance between individuals and Allah. *Tazkiyatun Nafs* stands as a core teaching in Sufi practices, believed to assist individuals in distancing themselves from factors that may contaminate the heart.

Methods

This research employs a literature review method as its research approach, specifically adopting a library research design. The chosen approach involves the meticulous analysis of textual materials and information that are highly relevant to the field of study. The primary sources of data for this research consist of scholarly books and journals. The data collection process entails identifying discourse from diverse sources, including books, papers, articles, magazines, journals, websites, and other pertinent information associated with the research topic. The collected data encompasses various forms such as notes, transcripts, books, and other relevant materials that directly align with the research focus.

During the data analysis phase, a hermeneutic approach is employed, which serves as a method of comprehension that revolves around interpreting objects possessing profound meaning (meaning-full form) to attain an objective understanding (Bleicher, 1980). Expert statements are critically examined and interpreted within the context of the research problem under investigation.

The data analysis proceeds through several stages, including data reduction aimed at mitigating the complexity of the amassed data, data display to visually present the findings, and drawing conclusions based on a comprehensive understanding of the materials scrutinized. Through the application of hermeneutics and rigorous analysis, this research aims to delve into a profound comprehension of the concept of *Tazkiyatun Nafs* and its consequential impact on enhancing intuition and preventing unethical behavior.

Results and Discussion

Intuition as a Source of Knowledge

Intuition can be characterized as a form of knowledge that pertains to unknown phenomena (Myers, 2002). Interestingly, individuals often remain oblivious to the fact that they possess such knowledge. Day (2006) proposes that intuition encompasses a non-linear and non-empirical process of acquiring and interpreting information in order to address inquiries (Day, 2006). Butler (2003) asserts that intuition entails an amalgamation of physical processes that facilitate an individual's survival, operating unconsciously and serving as indicators of past and future events.

One noteworthy aspect of intuition is its capacity to receive information or knowledge independent of the senses. In other words, the acquisition of information through intuition does not rely on the senses, memory, experience, emotions, or other cognitive processes. Intuition serves as a manifestation of data derived from the "heart"

(Jung, 2003). Here, data originating from the "heart" refers to emotional states or reactions to previous experiences, or it may be based on emotional forms and self-estimations that influence how an individual will feel about a particular matter after making a decision (Jung, 2003).

Ibn Sina refers to intuition as al-ḥads/al-qudsī (sacred intuition) (Ibn Sina, 1982). In contrast to rational knowledge, intuitive recognition is also known as ḥuḍūrī due to the presence of the object of investigation within the soul of the researcher, thereby merging the two entities into a single entity (Thabathabai, 2002). Consequently, the relationship between subject and object is bridged, eliminating any gaps or distances between them. Through the unity achieved in the mode of intuitive knowledge between the subject (al-'alim) and the object (al-ma'lum), individuals can directly and intimately apprehend the object under scrutiny without the need for conceptualizations or representations (Thabathabai, 2002). In his works, such as Nihāyah al-Ḥikmah and Bidāyah al-Ḥikmah, Thabathabai extensively delves into various metaphysical issues and explores intuitive methods of knowledge acquisition. These discussions encompass ḥuḍūrī knowledge, badīhī knowledge, the theory of the unity of the subject and object of knowledge, mental existence, emanation, the world of similitudes, and knowledge of God (Thabathabai, 2002).

Thus, intuition can complement rational and sensory knowledge, serving as a unified source of knowledge for humanity. It provides additional insights that offer a different perspective, bringing individuals closer to the object of inquiry than through the realms of reason or the senses.

Perilous Conduct Pollutes the Soul

Much like the physical body that can exist in a state of health or sickness, so too does the heart follow this paradigm. Physical well-being signifies the seamless functioning of all bodily organs in fulfilling their respective roles. Conversely, physical ailment occurs when these organs fail to discharge their duties effectively, resulting in a deterioration of their specific functions and capabilities. Consequently, the body is deemed to be in a diseased condition, leading to discomfort and a challenging existence.

Likewise, the heart, when in a state of well-being, encompasses the entirety of human qualities and emotions. It possesses impeccable and authentic knowledge of the Divine (makrifatullah), harbors serenity in truth and faith, and remains untainted by any form of malevolence or bestial desires (Shirazi, 2009). The life of the soul lies in knowledge, while its demise lies in ignorance. The malady of the soul surfaces when it becomes engulfed in doubt, whereas its vitality emanates from unwavering faith. The dormancy of the soul occurs when it lacks direction and purpose, and its awakening transpires through self-awareness. The ensuing discourse presents several ailments that afflict the soul:

Gluttony and Carnal Desires

The wellspring of calamity originates from the indulgence in gluttony, which subsequently branches out into carnal desires. Notably, Adam fell victim to this misfortune, culminating in his expulsion from paradise (Al-Ghazali, 2014). For instance, when an individual succumbs to overeating, they become disinclined to engage in acts of piety. Excessive food intake necessitates various activities, including the quest for sustenance, culinary preparations, handwashing, mouth rinsing, and frequent visits to the lavatory.

Similarly, when it comes to carnal desires, failing to guard against them may lead one down the treacherous path of adultery.

Verbal Calamities

The perils associated with speech are profound, and the sole recourse for avoiding them is silence. Common manifestations of detrimental speech encompass engaging in futile discussions, redundantly expounding upon trivial matters, entangling oneself in baseless arguments or acts of disobedience, partaking in verbal altercations or quarrels concerning matters proscribed by Sharia law, indulging in insults, curses, excessive singing or poetic recitation, excessive jesting, disparaging or mocking others, divulging secrets, uttering falsehoods, sowing discord, and more (Al-Ghazali, 2014).

Anger and Envy

Anger, at its core, comprises a fervent energy that surges forth from within the human being. This phenomenon exhibits three gradations. First, there exists the abandonment of anger when one either loses the capacity for anger or lacks the fortitude to manifest it when warranted. Second, a moderate disposition entails being stern towards disbelievers while concurrently displaying compassion towards fellow Muslims. Third, the realm of excessive anger unfolds when its intensity exceeds rational bounds, rendering one incapable of exercising restraint or heeding the precepts of Sharia law (Al-Ghazali, 2014). Envy, on the other hand, arises from jealousy, which stems from anger. Envy materializes when one begrudges the sight of Allah's blessings upon others, longing for those blessings to be eradicated from their recipients (Al-Ghazali, 2014).

The Worldly Life and its Entanglements

The world assumes an adversarial stance towards Allah, His beloved followers, and even His adversaries. Its enmity towards Allah becomes apparent as it erects barriers on the path of His devoted servants. The world's hostility towards Allah's beloved ones emanates from its propensity to adorn them with its trappings, ensnaring them with its allure and charm. Furthermore, the world's enmity towards Allah's adversaries lies in its cunning and deceptive enticements, as it ensnares and shackles them, making them captive to its influence (Al-Ghazali, 2014).

The Craving for Wealth and Insatiable Greed

Wealth, at times, may serve as a means to fortify one's spiritual journey and enable the performance of virtuous deeds. It can be utilized in the pursuit of the Hereafter. However, if wealth is squandered in indulgence or employed to perpetrate disobedience and satisfy carnal desires, it assumes a blameworthy character. Wealth can be likened to a venomous snake that conceals its own antidote. Its value lies in its potential to heal, while its harm lies in its toxicity. Possessing wealth and successfully shielding oneself from its perils while benefiting from its remedies renders it commendable. Nonetheless, should one fail to exercise control, the seed of greed takes root (Al-Ghazali, 2014).

The Lure of Status and Ostentation

Innately, the heart inclines towards the pursuit of status, with only the truly righteous able to forsake its allure. The primary motivation for seeking status is the desire for fame, a trait deemed reprehensible, save for those whom Allah has bestowed honor

upon to propagate His religion (Al-Ghazali, 2014). The human soul derives pleasure from accolades, for they evoke a sense of perfection, an aspiration intrinsic to the soul. Conversely, criticism is unwelcome, as it elicits feelings of inadequacy, an aversion the human soul harbors towards any perceived deficiency.

Arrogance and Self-Importance

Arrogance manifests as an internal quality within the human soul, fueled by a prideful perception of oneself, with its outward display mirroring this internal disposition. Conversely, self-conceit (ujub) represents an inner arrogance arising from an individual's illusory belief in possessing superior knowledge or virtue (Al-Ghazali, 2014). Arrogance towards fellow human beings materializes in commanding them to serve and submit, tantamount to rivaling the magnificence of Allah, for no entity is deserving of obedience except Allah.

Distrust in Divine Decree

Distrust in Divine decree stems from a lack of faith in Allah's wisdom and the belief that one's own plans and desires supersede the divine will. It reflects a failure to recognize the comprehensive knowledge and perfect wisdom of Allah in orchestrating every aspect of existence. Trust in Divine decree requires acknowledging that everything that transpires, whether perceived as favorable or unfavorable, transpires by the will of Allah and is ultimately for the benefit of His creation. It entails embracing the concept of predestination while simultaneously exerting effort and utilizing one's free will to make righteous choices (Al-Ghazali, 2014).

Negligence in the Remembrance of Allah

The remembrance of Allah serves as a means of nourishing the soul and establishing a profound connection with the Divine. Negligence in this regard denotes a lack of attentiveness and mindfulness towards invoking the name of Allah and engaging in acts of worship. It encompasses moments when the heart remains heedless and fails to immerse itself in the remembrance of Allah, thereby diminishing the spiritual vitality of the individual. Diligent remembrance of Allah, on the other hand, engenders tranquility, spiritual elevation, and a heightened awareness of His presence (Al-Ghazali, 2014).

Lack of Sincerity in Intentions

Sincerity of intentions is paramount in the realm of worship and righteous deeds. A deficiency in sincerity arises when one's actions are tainted by ulterior motives, seeking recognition or praise from others, or striving to attain worldly gains rather than seeking the pleasure of Allah alone. Sincerity necessitates aligning one's intentions solely with the pursuit of Allah's pleasure, devoid of any desire for personal gain or acclaim. The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) emphasized the importance of pure intentions, stating that actions are judged according to the intentions behind them (Al-Bukhari, 2017).

The Pursuit of Forbidden Knowledge

Knowledge is undoubtedly a valuable asset, but its pursuit must adhere to the boundaries set by Islamic teachings. The pursuit of forbidden knowledge encompasses engaging in disciplines or activities that contravene the principles of Shariah, whether it be involvement in occult practices, seeking knowledge of black magic, or indulging in illicit,

misleading ideologies. True knowledge is that which is beneficial, upright, and aligned with the teachings of Islam. The pursuit of forbidden knowledge poses a threat to the purity of the soul, leading to deviation from the straight path and spiritual detriment (Al-Ghazali, 2014).

Thus, the soul, frequently afflicted by these maladies of the heart, succumbs to contamination and engenders reprehensible conduct, ultimately distancing itself from Allah and exposing itself to potential harm or peril. Recognizing and rectifying the diseases of the heart are essential endeavors in spiritual growth and establishing a closer connection with Allah. By addressing these ailments and adopting the prescribed remedies, one can attain purification of the soul, moral elevation, and ultimately draw nearer to the Divine presence.

Discussions

Tazkiyatun Nafs, derived from the Arabic language, comprises two words: "tazkiyah" and "nafs." Linguistically, "tazkiyah" connotes purity, purification, or cleansing (Tamrin, 2010). It originates from the Arabic ism mashdar, denoting purification. Synonymous with this term is "thahara," signifying purity and cleanliness. Thahara is employed to describe the purification of tangible entities, such as the body and impurities. Conversely, tazkiyah pertains to the purification of intangible aspects, such as the mind, dispelling delusions, impure thoughts, evil desires, and various afflictions (Taufik, 2011).

Meanwhile, the term "nafs" encompasses diverse meanings. According to Armstrong (1996), it signifies ego, self, and soul. Nafs represents the distinct dimension of human existence, interposed between the "ruh" (spirit), characterized as light, and the "jism" (body), associated with darkness. Spiritual struggle (mujahadah) is undertaken to combat the base inclinations of the nafs, which create distance between the heart and Allah. Additionally, the nafs encompasses the realm of imagination. Although Allah exists within us, we are unable to perceive Allah. Sufism aims to elevate the lower self (alnafs al-ammarah) to a higher state (alnafs al-kamilah) and attain the perception of Allah's presence everywhere.

The soul is an immaterial entity that resides within the human body, governing all human actions. It comes into existence through the fusion with the physical form and becomes non-operational upon separation from the body (Rahmaniyah, 2010). Imam al-Ghazali posits that human beings encompass two components: the visible body and the invisible soul. The term "nafs" refers to the concealed human soul, comprising four aspects: the heart, spirit, soul, and intellect (Taufik, 2011).

In the pursuit of knowledge, the purification of the soul constitutes the fundamental and underlying factor. Within the realm of Sufism, *Tazkiyatun Nafs* assumes an essential role. Al-Ghazali (2014) regards the purification of the soul as a process of takhalli (eliminating blameworthy traits) and subsequent *tahalli* (cultivating praiseworthy qualities). *Tazkiyatun Nafs* involves purifying the soul from its bestial inclinations and reprehensible traits, replacing them with divine virtues (*rabbaniah*).

The process of *Tazkiyatun Nafs* encompasses several stages aimed at the purification and enlightenment of the soul:

Takhalliyat al-nafs, also referred to as takhalliyat al-sīr, entails the essential step of purging the soul from blameworthy traits and eliminating any thoughts that divert one's

attention from the remembrance and mindfulness of Allah. It involves a conscious effort to empty the soul from negative influences and distractions that hinder spiritual growth.

Following the process of emptying the soul, *Tahalliyat alnafs* focuses on filling the purified soul with virtuous qualities. It entails cultivating and nurturing positive attributes such as kindness, compassion, humility, and patience. By replacing blameworthy traits with praiseworthy characteristics, the soul becomes enriched and aligned with the higher principles and values of Islam.

Tajalliyat signifies the profound experience of divine manifestation and illumination within the purified soul. It refers to the unveiling of the veils that separate individuals from Allah, allowing His divine light and greatness to permeate the innermost depths of the soul. Through this unveiling, the soul becomes receptive to divine guidance, wisdom, and blessings, leading to righteous behavior and noble conduct in every aspect of life. The process of tajalliyat necessitates unwavering dedication, self-discipline, and continuous spiritual training, known as mujahadah and riyadlah (Rahmaniyah, 2010; Taufik, 2011).

The ultimate goal of *Tazkiyatun Nafs* is to attain *ma'rifah*, a profound knowledge and understanding of Allah. Through the purification of the soul, one can achieve a heightened spiritual awareness and a deep connection with the Divine. Moreover, soul purification enables the heart and soul to serve as conduits for divine inspiration and a means to uncover the underlying essence and truth of all things. It transcends mere rational and intellectual pursuits, allowing individuals to experience profound spiritual enlightenment and divine knowledge that surpasses the limits of human understanding. This is as indicated in the Qur'an:

"And those who strive for Us - We will surely guide them to Our ways. And indeed, Allah is with the doers of good." (Quran, Al-Ankabut: 69).

"O you who have believed, fear Allah and believe in His Messenger; He will [then] give you a double portion of His mercy and make for you a light by which you will walk and forgive you; and Allah is Forgiving and Merciful." (al- Hadid: 28).

These verses highlight the importance of striving in the path of Allah and placing faith in Him and His Messenger. Those who engage in this spiritual struggle will be guided by Allah and bestowed with His mercy. They will be granted divine illumination to navigate their journey and will receive forgiveness from Allah, who is forgiving and merciful.

The process of soul purification and the attainment of *ma'rifah* (knowledge of Allah) holds profound significance within the domain of spirituality. The purification of the soul extends beyond being a mere personal journey; it carries wider implications for individuals and society at large. A purified soul assumes the role of an illuminating beacon, radiating virtues and inspiring others to embark on their own transformative paths of spiritual

growth. A purified soul becomes a wellspring of tranquility and inner peace, equipping individuals with the resilience and grace necessary to navigate life's challenges. It nurtures a profound sense of self-awareness and introspection, enabling individuals to recognize their own imperfections and continuously strive towards self-improvement (Nurulhaq, 2021).

In addition to its personal benefits, the purification of the soul contributes to the betterment of society as a whole. A society composed of individuals with purified souls is characterized by compassion, justice, and harmonious coexistence. Such an environment fosters genuine care for one another, ethical conduct, and collective efforts towards the advancement of the common good. Therefore, *Tazkiyatun Nafs* holds the key to personal growth, spiritual enlightenment, and the establishment of a virtuous society. It is a lifelong journey that demands unwavering dedication, profound self-reflection, and a sincere yearning for spiritual elevation. Through this transformative process, individuals strive to align their thoughts, actions, and intentions with the divine will, thereby transforming themselves into vessels of divine grace and mercy (Sabuding, 2014).

Tazkiyatun Nafs represents a profound spiritual pursuit encompassing the purification and enlightenment of the soul. It involves the relinquishment of blameworthy traits and the cultivation of virtuous qualities, while concurrently experiencing the divine manifestation within one's being. Through this transformative journey, individuals seek to attain ma'rifah and establish a deep and profound connection with Allah. Ultimately, the purification of the soul reverberates far beyond the individual, contributing to personal growth, societal harmony, and the fulfillment of a higher spiritual purpose.

Conclusion

Intuition plays a pivotal role in the acquisition of knowledge, serving as a complement to rational and sensory faculties, thereby forming a comprehensive source of human understanding. Through intuition, individuals possess an innate ability to safeguard themselves from diverse perils, independent of conscious deliberation. Developing a robust intuition can be achieved through the practice of *Tazkiyatun Nafs*, a process of self-purification aimed at alleviating the afflictions of the heart that contaminate the soul. This transformative journey encompasses three essential stages: *takhalli* (the eradication of blameworthy traits), *tahalli* (the cultivation of virtuous qualities), and *tajalli* (the reception of divine illumination, manifesting as guidance and blessings from Allah, fostering consistent virtuous conduct in daily life).

Soul purification assumes an additional role of profound significance, as an enlightened heart and soul emerge as wellsprings of inspiration and conduits for the revelation of the underlying realities of all existence. It becomes a conduit for experiencing transcendental and divine knowledge (ma'rifat) that eludes the grasp of rational and intellectual faculties. Undoubtedly, a heightened engagement in mujahadah (striving) and riyadhah (spiritual training) within the pursuit of Tazkiyatun Nafs fortifies one's proximity to Allah. Consequently, individuals become liberated from the maladies of the heart and blameworthy behavior, being directly guided by Allah, thereby abstaining from injurious actions and treating others with kindness and respect.

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