

Are Social Dimensions Crucial for Sustainability?: A Conceptual Overview

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Abstract:

➤ Purpose:

The objective of the present chapter is to understand the concept of social dimensions, its scope and necessity from modern organization point of view. Attempts have been made to discuss the importance of developing sustainability from social dimensions point of view, in the organizations, influence of sustainability on modern business. Efforts have also been made to know the global aspects of social dimensions of sustainability and also contemporary issues in C.S.R to understand it's significance for meeting the future orientation in the modern era of business.

➤ Design/Methodology/Style:

Based on rich organizational experience, the researcher has tried to explore that whether there is any significance of social dimensions in sustainability in the organizations. The researcher has reviewed 25 studies on the issue and made his efforts to find out the significance of social dimensions of sustainability in the organizations.

➤ Findings

The findings revealed that, the social dimensions are essentials for sustainability in the organizations. Various social dimensions were discussed such as poverty reduction, societal investment, supportive communities, individuals and governments collision towards environmental sustainability. Certain aspects such as cooperation, transparency, openness, accessibility were also taken into consideration. Human health, labor, democratic participation, resiliency, biological and cultural diversity, equity, and ethics were elaborated. In addition to the above, business, politics, geography, forestry, urban & regional planning and corporate social responsibility were also touched. Important aspects such as human health, local environment, public economic situation and quality of life were discussed in detail. The importance of miscellaneous issues such as pertinency of the environment, social and governance was noticed. Further, issues concerning human well-being such as hunger and poverty, health, academic achievement, equal access to energy supply, sustainable cities, peace and justice were also discussed.

➤ Originality/Value

This study has tried to check out the relation between social dimensions and sustainability from organizational point of view. Besides, this study adds to scholars' to understand which kind of influence the social dimensions have on the organization. This conceptual study demonstrated that many social dimensions of sustainability have not been touched in the reviewed studies which provides a basis for application of this issue in future.

Keywords: Sustainability, Social Dimensions, Social Investment, Government, Transparency, Openness, Resiliency, Biological and Cultural Diversity.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Sustainability relates to the method of addressing current demands without jeopardising future generations' ability to meet their own needs. It entails managing resources in a way that considers environmental, social, and economic

considerations in order to maintain long-term fitness and stability. Sustainability has three major pillars such as Environmental sustainability involves conserving natural resources, eliminating pollution, and maintaining ecosystems to sustain life in the future. Practices include employing renewable energy, decreasing waste, and encouraging

biodiversity. Social sustainability aims to create equitable societies by enhancing quality of life, eliminating income disparities and poverty, and providing access to resources such as education, healthcare, and safe working conditions. Economic sustainability: This pillar prioritises approaches that promote long-term growth while minimising negative environmental and social repercussions. Sustainable economic practices encourage responsible consumption, equitable salaries, and community economic development. These pillars are inextricably linked, and genuine sustainability frequently necessitates striking a balance between them to develop resilient systems that benefit both current and future generations.

II. THEORETICAL ASPECTS OF EMPLOYEE GOSSIPS AND ORGANIZATIONAL FUNCTIONAL ACTIVITIES

The necessity of sustainability can be understood that by adopting sustainable practices, societies can protect resources, promote well-being, and foster stability in the face of environmental, social, and economic pressures. Here are key reasons sustainability is essential:

- **Environmental Preservation:** Natural resources such as clean air, water, fertile soil, and biodiversity are finite. Unsustainable practices like deforestation, pollution, and overuse of resources degrade ecosystems, leading to species extinction, climate change, and depletion of essential resources. Sustainability aims to protect and regenerate these resources, ensuring that ecosystems remain resilient and can support life over time.
- **Mitigating Climate Change:** The impact of climate change poses one of the most serious risks to humanity's civilisation driven by greenhouse gas emissions from activities like fossil fuel burning, deforestation, and industrial agriculture. Sustainable practices, such as renewable energy, reforestation, and carbon-neutral technologies, help reduce emissions, slowing global warming and minimizing its impacts on communities, economies, and ecosystems.
- **Supporting Economic Stability:** Sustainability promotes economic resilience by encouraging resource-efficient practices, reducing dependency on finite resources, and fostering innovation. Sustainable economies are less vulnerable to resource shortages and price volatility, enabling businesses and governments to plan more effectively for the future. For example, shifting toward circular economy models—where waste is minimized and resources are reused—reduces reliance on new resources and promotes long-term stability.
- **Social Equity and Well-being:** Social sustainability focuses on creating equitable societies where everyone has access to basic needs such as education, healthcare, and clean water. Additionally, sustainability efforts promote fair labor practices, ethical sourcing, and the well-being of communities, fostering a more just and inclusive society.
- **Protecting Future Generations:** Sustainability ensures that future generations inherit a world where they can thrive. Unsustainable practices threaten to leave future

generations with depleted resources, greater economic instability, and severe environmental challenges. By adopting sustainable practices, societies safeguard the prospects of those who come after us, ensuring that they can live in a stable and healthy environment.

Therefore, sustainability is ultimately necessary to build a world where natural resources are preserved, communities are healthy and resilient, and economies can adapt to changing conditions. Through sustainable practices, humanity can work towards a future that is equitable, viable, and prosperous for all.

III. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

According to Torjman's (2000) research, social dimension of sustainable development focusses primarily on poverty reduction, societal investment, and the formation of safe and supportive communities. Sustainable development offers direction on potential methods. These goals should be accomplished by utilizing a variety of resources. Multisectoral solutions are the most effective way to address complex issues. However, it is important to emphasize that these suggestions represent an interpretation of the social characteristic of sustainable growth. There isn't a single accurate interpretation of this term or a "right" answer. One perspective as viewed via a multifaceted lens is represented by these proposals. Hasna (2007) stated in his research that economic studies have effective mobility and access increase incomes for both individuals and metropolitan areas. However, public and transportation policies have not provided a sufficiently wide definition of sustainability. The primary focus of sustainability policy has been on environmental concerns, which critical. However, the activities of individuals and governments collide with policies aimed at environmental sustainability. As a result, in certain cases, environmental sustainability can be reduced to little more than a declaration of intentions to undermined by behavior of individuals and governments. This is primarily because true sustainability must be acceptable. If people and governments fail to follow policies aimed at achieving environmental sustainability, their goals remain unmet. In their research, Benaim *et al.* (2008) discussed perspectives on what this means for the social realm. This study identifies and eliminates barriers that hinder people's capacity to satisfy their needs, based on the socially feasible standards offered in the FSSD framework. The researchers examined the social structure processes and utilised a systems thinking approach to evaluate how an organisation may minimise barriers by actively organising its operations. This research listed cooperation, transparency, openness, accessibility, and involvement as key features of publicly sustainable development. An introduction was created to encourage representation and examination of organisational processes in relation to these qualities and individuals' fundamental needs. Dempsey, *et al.* (2011) in their study seen that sustainable development is a frequently used word that has had a growing impact on UK planning, housing, and urban policy in recent years. Discussions concerning sustainability are no longer limited to environmental concerns, but now include economic and social issues. However, while the concept of a social

dimension to sustainability is commonly understood, it is not well defined or agreed upon. This study tries to solve this difference by delving deeply into and defining the idea of social sustainability in the urban environment. The correlation between urban form and community sustainability is investigated, and two key elements of social sustainability are defined and thoroughly discussed: equitable access and community sustainability. Hemani, *et al.* (2012) in their research mentioned that notwithstanding the enormous development demands and increasing urbanisation that Indian cities confront, the social dimension, which is a key component of sustainable growth, has largely been disregarded. Today, Indian cities have lost their pre-industrial socio-physical shape and have become a patchwork of traditional, informal, and newly designed neighbourhoods. The former two are in despair, while the latter are emerging rich enclaves that account for a significant portion of urban growth. The country's GDP has increased by 9%, yet poverty and social marginalisation have become more severe. The study examines the relationship between various aspects of urban form and social sustainability in the context of India's rapidly urbanising cities. Using available secondary data, the study expands our understanding of social sustainability, its characteristics, and potential connections to urban forms. The material is also cross-referenced with a comparison atlas that uses various scaled maps. According to a study by Bacon *et al.* (2012), any discussion of sustainable agriculture must take into account the fact that agricultural systems are a part of larger social-ecological processes. Institutions, such as governance agreements, rural household and community standards, local groups, marketplaces, and agricultural ministries, to name a few, generate the conditions that support sustainable food systems, much as climatic profiles will affect the future viability of crops. We suggest a dual focus on institutions that could support diversified farming systems (DFS) and on a wide range of criteria, such as human health, labor, democratic participation, resiliency, biological and cultural diversity, equity, and ethics, to assess social outcomes because discussions of agricultural sustainability frequently ignore the full range of social dimensions. In a study on social dimensions, UNRISD (2013) noted several important new topics pertaining to the study and discussion of the social forces behind sustainable development. It gives special emphasis to topics that are currently receiving more attention yet have frequently been overlooked in national and international development policy circles. These pertain to tactics that centre macroeconomic policy and "development" around employment rather than growth, shift the focus from safety nets to social policies that address universal social protection and redistribution, address one of the main gaps in development policy, which is paid and unpaid care work, emphasize equality of opportunity as well as equality of outcome, acknowledge the necessity of green economy shifts that are equitable and environmentally friendly while also being mindful of unequal social effects, support complementary or alternative models of "social and solidarity" economies and "food sovereignty and support social regulation models linked to corporate responsibility. According to Dugarova's (2014) research article, according to the Bali Communiqué of the High-Level Panel, March 28, 2013, sustainable development is inherently "people-centered

and planet-sensitive," driven by the principles of social justice and equal rights, made possible by proactive governments and efficient institutions, and moulded by the involvement of empowered populations. Development must provide social, cultural, and political accomplishments like a sense of security, dignity, and the capacity to be a part of a community through recognition and representation, as well as material well-being like access to the goods and services required for a decent living, good health, and education. The environmental resources required to maintain life, health, and well-being are inextricably linked to all of these. Szczuka (2015) in his research mentioned that sustainable development is an important component of current business strategy. This method encourages corporate engagement while offering social, environmental, and economic benefits. Sustainable guidelines recommend investigating natural resources to suit human needs while promoting corporate activity and progress. Social responsibility for business aims to support sustainable development. Companies can use it to identify best practices for managing both human units involved in processes and those impacted by them. CSR affects both the company community and external stakeholders. The enterprise idea impacts relationships with staff members, confidence, voluntary actions, personal progress, and timely remuneration based on qualifications. This study aims to distinguish across the best practices used by activity firms for stakeholders that are internal and external. Responsible management connections are evaluated based on their alignment with standards. In the report, E.S.C. (2016) examined the demographic and social trends that are now occurring in the Asia-Pacific area and how the 2030 Agenda requires that these trends be addressed. It also emphasised the crucial steps that must be taken in the social dimension in order to accomplish sustainable development in a way that is integrated and balanced. In order to give the secretariat direction for its upcoming work in the field of social development, the Committee on Social Development has been asked to examine the concerns and suggestions in this document. According to Nugraheni *et al.* (2019), there is still a lack of social sustainability discourse in debates about sustainable tourism development. It is necessary to investigate some fields, including business, politics, geography, forestry, urban and regional planning, and corporate social responsibility. In order to achieve the goals of sustainable tourism models, this paper came to the conclusion that social sustainability in tourism is a state and a process that pertains to how communities, individuals, governments, and tourism societies coexist. It also takes into account the physical boundaries of the tourist destination as well as the planet Earth overall. In the view of Ikram *et al.* (2020), this is the first time that an integrated social sustainability model with social sustainability criteria that take the pandemic and COVID-19 into account has been developed. The study's findings can assist firms in determining which policies and initiatives are best for promoting corporate sustainability while taking stakeholders and social sustainability into account. As far as management implications go, we envision sustainable development allowing businesses to engage staff, incorporate audits, and optimize procedures and resource allocation. If social sustainability is not included as part of corporate social

sustainability at all levels of the company, it can be disruptive, dynamic, and difficult to understand. According to Shekhar and Jena's (2021) research, the paper outlined the growing importance of sustainability and the social aspects of sustainable logistics acknowledged globally. Several social elements of sustainability in logistics, including those related to employment, human health, the local environment, the general public's economic situation, and quality of life were identified. The difficulties and problems that arose prior to the adoption of sustainable logistics techniques have now been examined, along with the potential advantages from a social standpoint. Multifaceted actions are essential for a sustainable future, according to research by Ali & Drolet (2021). In the areas of water and environmental sustainability, the social and related to technology nexus calls for creative governance approaches and solutions. This is evident from social development reports in many parts of the world. Stakeholder and community participation, action research with participation, and integrated techniques are common in discussions of sustainable development. The sustainable development has been improved across disciplines with emergence of sustainability. Knowledge for Sustainable Development equal treatment for all people, the dissemination of a peaceful and nonviolent ideology.

Santander *et al.* (2022). According to their findings, recycling networks offer a possible solution to waste-related environmental challenges. Disposal networks must prioritise sustainability in their operations. Since its inception in the early 1990s, some authors have proposed expanding the Triple Bottom Line model to include further dimensions. Recent studies suggest that a sustainable system should consider not just economic, environmental, and social issues, but also technologically, a political issue, and moral indicators. Recent studies have indicated that in order for a system to be sustainable, it should examine not only the economic, environmental, and social dimensions, but also technological and political factors, as well as the sustainability indicators used to evaluate them. However, social, technological, and political components of recycling networks have yet to be defined in order to be used in developing and evaluating their impact. A comprehensive literature review was conducted to better understand how these social, political, and technological elements should be considered in the sustainability assessment of a potential recycling network. A total of 160 journal articles were selected and assessed. Information was acquired about the problem at hand, the recycling domain, the methodologies used, and the social, technological, and political aspects under consideration. A collection of social, political, and technological indicators for investigating the key cycling infrastructure concerns (design and planning, decision-making and outcome evaluation, provider selection, price, and coordination) is then offered. The fundamental contribution of this work is to provide insight for future research on how to address social, political, and technological challenges while accounting for the most common problems faced in a recycling network. Simultaneously, these findings have led to the identification of research gaps. This study serves as a foundation for future research aimed at comprehensively evaluating sustainable recycling networks.

In their study, Hogrefe and Joschko (2023) found that the social aspect of corporate sustainability has drawn more scholarly attention, particularly in the past 20 years. As a result, the subject of research is expanding and changing in various ways, but it is now lacking a systematic overview. Through a scoping assessment of the pertinent literature, the current research aims to address this gap. After a thorough database search, 53 papers in all were found to be worthy of evaluation. The following significant findings from the study add to the scholarly conversation: a summary of the conceptual framework, definitions, and industry/region-specific coverage of research on corporate social sustainability; (2) a review and discussion of the concept's essential components; and (3) the identification and discussion of gaps and opportunities for methodically advancing the field of study. The findings point to the necessity of combining theoretical and empirical research, particularly with more robust theoretical and conceptual debates derived from empirical studies.

Moreira & Niinimäki (2022) in their research found that between sweatshops, charges of chemical pollution and use of endangered animal's leather, the textile industry has been under scrutiny. Fashion brands have had to answer for unfair wages and inhumane working conditions, while the industry more broadly has been identified as a threat to the success of the global agenda on sustainable development. Considering the strategic importance of this industry, this letter proposes further research on the textile industry and its negative impacts on the planet and society through the lens of social sustainability. This creative and diverse industry has the potential to assist on other fronts like education, health, biological and cultural conservation. This letter begins with a brief overview of the environmental and social significance of global textile industry, and the definition of social sustainability. We then examine how social sustainability has been addressed in academic literature about the textile industry and conclude with opportunities for future research. This Strategy talks the principles and issues associated with the social component of sustainable development & pertinency of the Environment, Social, and Governance (ESG) framework in this context, according to Chaterjee's (2023) policy report. A few G20 nations have been at the forefront of adopting ESG and ESG-like initiatives, but there are significant differences between the two. This Short emphasised that there is no one definition of ESG or the social dimension of sustainable development. ESG could be an effective instrument for integrating components of the future of work, skill development, learning, and the goal to produce "positive and improved jobs." The Brief also advises that the G20 form an advisory committee to explore themes. In his study, Hellberg (2023) investigated what social sustainability might or might not entail for South African water governance. It has discovered that equity is the primary idea for capturing social dimensions of water governance, and social sustainability is not a term that is specifically utilised in this context. The research has also highlighted two interconnected pressures between ideas of community and society and between equitable access and meeting fundamental needs by delving deeper into the significance of social and equity issues in South African water administration. A communal

focus is prevalent, which has specific implications for governance, even if these tensions are pertinent to the South African setting as well as the broader concept of social sustainability. The community may appear to be a "natural" or self-evident setting for local engagement and democracy. However, it is also possible to view the community as socially constructed and as a concept that might perpetuate notions of racial classifications and separateness, regardless of its intended usage. According to this viewpoint, the focus on "community" might be viewed as the antithesis of "society" and indicative of the post-apartheid state's evolution, which has included the failure to establish the Rainbow Nation anticipated before the democratic transition. Filipowicz (2023) stated in his study that complexity of social aspect of sustainable development makes it challenging one. In overall, social component addresses issues concerning human well-being such as hunger and poverty, health, academic achievement, equal access to energy supply, sustainable cities, peace, and justice. Indicators representing social dimension found presented in both separated and aggregated measures of sustainable development. The eight SGDs noticed tied to social concerns and social foundations found essential for Doughnut model. The combined measures of environmentally conscious growth addressed social factors, necessitating a subjective appraisal of the importance of individual indicators. As a result, national income levels influence social dimension assessments; thus, international comparisons must be approached with caution, including the selection of feasible welfare policy mechanisms to meet core themes.

Massuça (2023) in his research given data on indicators used to assess social sustainability from 1999 to the beginning of 2022, emphasizing trends in the topics covered and shifts in focus. By accumulating and systematizing a comprehensive set of social sustainability indicators, found contributed significantly to future construction of a system of evaluation that would include social sustainability components underlying a wider viewpoint on agribusiness sustainability. "At this very early stage of the research, it was observed that social sustainability indicators are undergoing major transformation, growing in interest, growing in need, and growing in novelty: in accordance with the need for a more holistic view," Massuça *et al.* (2023) wrote in their research article. In order to demonstrate that there is a continuous change in emphasis, with aspects like community involvement and working conditions gaining traction, they discovered, enumerated, and categorized a significant number of social sustainability indicators that were discussed in the chosen literature. Additionally, it is now clear that a large number of indicators that were not previously considered to be "primarily" social have significant ramifications for evaluating the social pillar of sustainability. However, there is a considerable interaction between certain "clearly" social indicators and the other two conventional elements of sustainability (environmental and economic). In their study, Frantz *et al.* (2024) found that many communities are attempting to improve the sustainability of their social, economic, and physical systems. The psychological and behavioral components of social systems, such as norms, attitudes, and individual conduct, are rarely monitored, in

contrast to the economic and physical systems, which are often assessed (e.g., money and energy). Evaluating a potentially scalable method to gauge how sustainability initiatives affect these factors in a community that participates in comprehensive sustainability programming was the aim of this study. Data from an online survey measuring pro-environmental attitudes and actions in two Ohio towns: Oberlin, a community actively working to improve environmental sustainability on a holistic level. Strong proof that programs led to the intended changes in attitudes, norms, and individual actions was not offered by the survey results. Two exceptions were attitudes about recycling and the use of LED bulbs. It was observed that evaluating the behavioral and psychological aspects of sustainability presents unique difficulties. Inadequate statistical power and ceiling effects were encountered. It's possible that even a comprehensive community-wide effort will have difficulty changing norms and attitudes.

IV. RESEARCH GAP

For a thorough literature assessment, previous research books and a number of databases have been consulted. There is a tone of research on the various aspects related to social dimensions and what is importance of studying social dimensions and it's influence on organizations in India. There is not a lot of work on this issue. Therefore, there is gap in research. Accordingly, the very topic has been selected for knowing the importance of social dimensions of sustainability from organizational point of view.

V. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The primary goal of the study was to know the importance of social dimensions of sustainability in the organizations.

A. Objectives of the Study

Accordingly, following objectives have been formulated:

To Study Importance of Social Dimensions of Sustainability in the Organizations.

B. Research Design

Research design is to be called the blue print for a study which basically comprises of various techniques regarding which and how required information is collected by using an appropriate method of investigation efficiently. Since, the study is conceptual in nature, so the methodology used in the study is based on reviewing various research studies, articles, dissertations (Published/unpublished), text books by various authors in different geographical areas. Accordingly, interpretations have been drawn and conclusion has been made.

VI. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

From the above reviewed literature, the research came across to know that social dimension of sustainable development helps in poverty reduction, societal investment,

and the formation of safe and supportive communities (Torjman, 2000). The activities of individuals and governments collide with policies aimed at environmental sustainability (Hasna (2007). The research listed cooperation, transparency, openness, accessibility, and involvement as key features of publicly sustainable development Benaim *et al.* (2008). Two key elements of social sustainability are equitable access and community sustainability (Dempsey, *et al.* 2011). Indian cities confront, the social dimension, which is a key component of sustainable growth, has largely been disregarded. Today, Indian cities have lost their pre-industrial socio-physical shape and have become a patchwork of traditional, informal, and newly designed neighbourhoods Hemani, *et al.* (2012). Human health, labor, democratic participation, resiliency, biological and cultural diversity, equity, and ethics, to assess social outcomes because discussions of agricultural sustainability frequently ignore the full range of social dimensions (Bacon *et al.* 2012). Sustainable development is necessarily, guided by values of equal rights and social justice, enabled by proactive states and well-functioning institutions, and shaped through the participation of empowered populations. (Dugarova, 2014). CSR affects both the company community and external stakeholders (Szczuka, (2015). It is necessary to investigate some fields, including business, politics, geography, forestry, urban and regional planning, and corporate social responsibility (Nugraheni *et al.* 2019). As far as management implications go, we envision sustainable development allowing businesses to engage staff, incorporate audits, and optimize procedures and resource allocation Ikram *et al.* (2020). Several social elements of sustainability in logistics, including those related to employment, human health, local environment, the general public's economic situation, and quality of life were identified and found important for organization (Shekhar and Jena, 2021). Knowledge for Sustainable Development equal treatment for all people and dissemination of a peaceful and nonviolent ideology is essential in the organizations (Ali & Drolet (2021). According to their findings, recycling networks offer a possible solution to waste to solve the problems related to environmental challenges (Santander *et al.* (2022). The necessity of combining theoretical and empirical research, particularly with more robust theoretical and conceptual debates derived from empirical studies (Hogrefe and Joschko, 2023). Charges of chemical pollution and use of endangered animal's leather, the textile industry has been under scrutiny (Moreira & Niinimäki, 2022). This Strategy talks the principles and issues associated with the social component of sustainable development & pertinency of the Environment, Social, and Governance (ESG) framework in this context, according to Chatterjee's (2023) policy report. Equity is the primary idea for capturing social dimensions of water governance, and social sustainability is not a term that is specifically utilised in this context Hellberg (2023). Social component addresses issues concerning human well-being such as hunger and poverty, health, academic achievement, equal access to energy supply, sustainable cities, peace and justice (Filipowicz, 2023). By accumulating and systematizing a comprehensive set of social sustainability indicators, found contributed significantly to future construction of a system of evaluation that would include

social sustainability components underlying a wider viewpoint on agribusiness sustainability (Massuça 2023). Relevance of future CSS research for business and CS managers would benefit significantly from that, as they ultimately have to implement it in practice. Empirical testing will flow back into and help fuel the required conceptual development of CSS (Hogrefe and Joschko, 2023). Many communities are attempting to improve the sustainability of their social, economic, and physical systems (Frantz *et al.*, 2024).

From the above findings, conclusion and discussion, it has been interpreted that Indian organizations face a dynamic and complex landscape when it comes to the social dimensions of sustainability. Incorporating social dimensions of sustainability in Indian organizations is not only a moral responsibility but also a strategic advantage. It helps build resilient communities, improves workforce morale, strengthens the organizational reputation, and aligns with national and international standards. By addressing issues like inequality, labor rights, community development, and employee well-being, Indian organizations can foster a more inclusive, sustainable, and competitive economy that benefits businesses and society alike.

Accordingly, Objective of the Study “*To Study Importance of Social Dimensions of Sustainability in Organizations*” has been achieved.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCHERS

It is recommended in order to promote sustainable logistics methods that benefit not only the social dimension but also the economic and environmental dimensions, the government should develop specific legislation. The study only provides a theoretical understanding of the social aspects of logistical sustainability.

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