Developing an Environmental Accounting Model with an Emphasis on Social Responsibility (Case Study: Iraq)

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Abstract

An environmentally friendly organization often relies on social responsibility to ultimately gain competitive advantage for organizations. These processes, with the direction of environmental social responsibility at the global level, require the participation of corporate individuals, whose planning process can adapt corporate strategy to environmental problems. In this regard, the aim of the present study is to develop an environmental accounting model with an emphasis on social responsibility in Iraq. The research method was cross-sectional in terms of libraryfield environment in terms of applied purpose, in terms of time, and in terms of research implementation method, descriptive-survey. The present study was conducted using the grounded data method. The statistical community of the research includes knowledgeable experts from the academic staff in the field of environmental accounting and managers of organizations who are proficient in this field. 11 people were selected as experts through interviews. The results obtained from the coding were categorized into the categories of intervening conditions, context, causal conditions, actions and consequences. Government regulations and legislation were categorized as intervening conditions, organizational structures and education and awareness and knowledge of managers and employees as context and background, healthy and safe society, efficient organizations and efficiency and performance as consequences, corporate

system, optimal financial reports and stakeholder confidence as strategies and environmental cost control as causal conditions.

Introduction

The purpose of environmental accounting is to compile information to assist managers in assessing performance, controlling, making decisions, being accountable, and reporting for an organization or company (Ma et al., 2020). Environmental accounting is measured based on environmental and economic concepts, criteria, and performance. To achieve this goal, changes in culture and management are needed (Gao et al., 2021), some of which are achieved through accounting and reporting (Bennett et al., 2018). Environmental accounting provides reports that assist managers in measuring performance, controlling, reporting, and being accountable. Environmental accounting is based on economic and environmental concepts, and since it uses functions that do not arise from the market (Cai et al., 2016), its use requires a change in the culture of the organization (Cooper et al., 2019). Environmental accounting reflects some of these developments in the organization and more broadly in society. By providing more systematic understanding and participation in daily work practices, it helps to set continuous development goals as a specific approach (Dewi & I Putu., 2022). The environmental performance of an organization is of great importance to internal and external stakeholders of that organization, which makes managers accountable for how it performs environmentally. Achieving an appropriate environmental performance requires that the management of that organization be accountable for creating a systematic environmental accounting method and its continuous improvement (Dong et al., 2020). Environmental accounting has received much attention in research related to organizations. This is because stakeholders have put pressure on managers to focus more on assessing environmental performance and environmental issues (Mao wt al., 2023). To achieve better environmental performance, the implementation of environmental accounting is one of the most important benefits of the organization for the social responsibility of managers (Yermolenko et al., 2024). In this way, the concept of social responsibility is very important for companies, as business units are expected to not only think about increasing their profits but also be socially responsible and useful to the society with which they interact (Odhiambo., 2015). Social responsibility is the company's considerations and response to issues beyond the economic, technical and legal constraints of the company to achieve

social benefits along with the traditional economic profit that the company seeks (Mohammed., 2018). The company must consider the interests of all stakeholders in making decisions and carrying out its activities and operations (Zhou et al., 2021). Considering the interest of stakeholders and society in general is essential for the company, companies have responsibilities to all stakeholders. Environmental uncertainty is a challenge for any company, and the lack of information regarding green accounting and the speed of environmental information are factors that limit actions. In conditions of high uncertainty, complex information can help managers improve the quality of decisions and reduce their environmental impacts and increase social responsibility. In this regard, the present study seeks to answer the question of how to develop an environmental accounting model with an emphasis on social responsibility in Iraq?

Review of theoretical foundations and research background

Wang et al. (2010) in their definition of environmental accounting emphasized the issue of reporting and providing necessary information to individuals. In their opinion, environmental accounting deals with the preparation of reports for internal use, to assist managers and to disclose environmental information to society and to financial organizations. Adediran & Alade (2015) also stated that environmental accounting is a fundamental tool for understanding the role that the environment plays in the economy. Environmental accounting, which is often called green accounting or environmental accounting, refers to the adjustment of the general accounting system in the use or depletion of natural resources. Environmental accounting is a national mass information that links the environment to the economy and has long-term consequences on planning and economic and environmental policies (Bhattacharyya., 2016). Environmental accounting is a fundamental tool that can be used to encourage groups and organizations to behave environmentally friendly. This tool, if connected to the organizational reward mechanism, will attract employee participation in environmental protection. Therefore, environmental revenues and costs resulting from various necessary functions are included in the profit and loss accounts (Che-Ahmad et al., 2017). Today, the world is facing two issues: economic development on the one hand and environmental protection on the other. Accounting information system, as an important component of the management information system, can play a significant role in helping to protect the environment by polluting manufacturing companies. Environmental costs are one

of the thousands of costs that occur in a business unit to produce goods or services. Environmental accounting provides appropriate information to management by properly disclosing how environmental assets and liabilities are presented and how the expenses spent on the environment are reflected. Environmental accounting is national mass data that links the environment to the economy and has long-term effects on economic and environmental decision-making policies, which is possible through the preparation of environmental satellite accounts. Therefore, proper environmental accounting will have a significant impact on economic development and is a prerequisite for having sustainable development (Dong et al., 2021).

Babalola (2014) defined social responsibility as a set of activities related to measuring the performance of business organizations and their role in maintaining and protecting the environment to their local communities directly or indirectly and reporting these results in a way that the community is able to evaluate the social performance of the organization. Odhiambo (2015) defines social responsibility of the organization in terms of the compatibility of the activities and also the income of the organization with the expectations and values of the society. In another definition, social responsibility is defined as a set of duties and obligations, which organizations have to maintain and care for as well as contribute to the society in which they operate. Business success through respect for ethical values, people, society and the environment is defined as social responsibility. Rounaghi (2019) defined social responsibility as actions to improve the well-being of society, beyond the interests of the company and legal requirements. Corporate social responsibility deals with the relationship between companies and society, specifically examining the effects of companies' activities on individuals and society. The concept has many applications in political and social fields. It is a familiar term for organizations, but despite this, agreement on its specific meaning and the ways in which it is applied remains, like many other social science concepts, vague. Corporate social responsibility or social responsibility of organizations is a topic of "business ethics" that deals with the role of companies in society (Qu et al., 2021). Corporate social responsibility is a set of duties and obligations that a company must fulfill in order to preserve, care for, and contribute to the society in which it operates. Corporate social responsibility is related to the company's responsibility towards society, people, and the environment in which the company operates, and this responsibility goes beyond economic and financial considerations (Ran et al., 2018). Corporate social

responsibility is defined in Huang's (2016) definition as follows: "Corporate social responsibility is activities that promote social profit and benefit and go beyond the interests of the organization and what the law requires." The demand for organizations to "act responsibly" towards society is an issue that has intensified in the final decades of the twentieth century with the increasing expansion of their influence on the axes that constitute sustainable development, namely "economy", "society" and "environment", and has led to the emergence of a concept called corporate social responsibility in the world of management (Usman et al., 2022). In a simple definition, social responsibility means that organizations are responsible to the society in which they operate; because they use its human, natural and economic resources. Contrary to the traditional view of management and business, organizations are no longer responsible only to their shareholders and should not only think about increasing the short-term profits of their shareholders (Yang et al., 2023). Thus, organizations that are also in contact with other stakeholders are expected to take their legitimate demands into account. In any business, including companies that are created to generate wealth and business, they must take one hundred percent responsibility for all their work that has a social aspect. In ordinary business, this responsibility is the responsibility of its owner and in companies, the responsibility of the board of directors and the CEO of that company. Also, the social responsibility or social obligations of the company have been divided into four aspects: environmental social responsibility, human capital, philanthropic and ethical, the most important of which is environmental social responsibility (Setiawan., 2022).

Research Method

Given that this study is based on a qualitative method and specifically uses the grounded theory strategy, sampling has also been subject to the rules of this method and has been carried out in a purposeful and theoretical manner. Sampling in the grounded theory method is snowball sampling. For this purpose, accountants and knowledgeable individuals were surveyed and the most relevant person in the aforementioned centers was identified in terms of information and knowledge in terms of position. After identification, they were asked to agree to an in-depth interview. After obtaining consent and arranging the time and place, the interviews were conducted, in the order of the time of agreement. In this research, a semi-structured interview was used in order to discover in-depth information in order to identify the indicators of the present components. In this type of interview, the questions are designed in advance and the aim is to obtain

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in-depth information from the interviewee. The reason for using a semi-structured interview was that in this method, there is a possibility of exchanging views and guiding the discussion and topic of the interview in order to achieve the research objectives, and also to explore and better understand the information, other questions can be asked. In the process of sampling the participants, the researcher analyzed the data so that the incomplete cases could be completed by receiving new information from the new participant. After conducting 11 interviews, the main and secondary factors were repeated in the previous interviews and the researcher reached saturation.

Research findings

The implementation of the grounded theory method began with conducting interviews, collecting and coding data, so that the researcher gained more skills in conducting interviews by conducting initial exploratory interviews, which was very important for the research; also, the recorded records of the interviews were named and stored in a database, which was organized based on the name of the interviewee, the audio file of the interview, and the date of the interviews. After storing them, the researcher listened to them and implemented them to conduct the research. In this study, the main source of data was interviews, so that the initial interviews were exploratory and descriptive, and gradually after each interview, the data obtained from the interviews were coded interview by interview, and by means of the constant comparison of data, theoretical codes emerged through open coding, and in this way, 11 interviews were coded, and concepts and subcategories and main categories emerged.

In the first stage, the main and subcategories were categorized according to the initial codes, which were presented in the form of three coding stages. The conceptual structure of the present study model was based on the findings from the analysis of the interviews, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Developing an environmental accounting model with an emphasis on social responsibility in Iraq

Initial codes	Subcategory	Main category
Uniformity in observing laws. Establishing	Environment	Organizational
preventive laws. Observing environmental	al laws and	Structures
issues. Enforcing environmental laws. Creating	regulations	
laws and regulations to protect the environment.		

Table 1. Developing an environmental accounting model with an emphasis on social responsibility in Iraq

Initial codes	Subcategory	Main category
Environmentally friendly technologies. Use of	Technology	
modern and efficient equipment. Renovation of	compatibility	
machinery.		
Increasing public trust. Achieving the My Good	Assurance	Healthy and
City model. Increasing loyal customers.		Safe Society
Consumption pattern standards. Public opinion.	Social	
Culture building in society. Environmental	acceptance	
social education. Consumer use of low-polluting		
goods. Concerns of stakeholders about		
environmental issues.	34	
Increasing the quality of life of the community.	Healthy	
Community health. Cleanliness and beauty of	communities	- \
the environment. Community satisfaction.		\
Community support for the environment.		6.1
Increasing life expectancy across generations.		
Encouragement and improvement of business by	Government	Government
the government. Allocating appropriate budget	encourageme	regulations
for procurement and equipment of necessary	nt and	and legislation
systems from the government. Providing tax	support	7 /
incentives to non-polluting organizations.		
Providing facilities to non-polluting		
organizations.	5	
Government oversight. Government	Government	
policymaking. Government performance.	monitoring	
Reducing government spending.	and	
acily in	evaluation	
Economic decision-making policies.	Government	
International pollution reduction strategies.	policies	
Macro-environmental policy-making.		
Greater oversight of quality control. No use of	Increasing	Controlling
non-biodegradable materials. Efficiency of	product	environmental
production. Reducing the organization's	quality	costs
production costs.		

Table 1. Developing an environmental accounting model with an emphasis on social responsibility in Iraq

Initial codes	Subcategory	Main category
Tracking environmental costs. Reducing	Reducing	
environmental costs. Environmental opportunity	production	
costs. Prioritizing environmental costs.	costs	
Excess of benefits over costs. Optimal use of	Reducing	
resources. Production ideas to reduce pollution.	emissions	
Transformation in production.		
Correct pricing of products. Correct costing.	Correct	
Cost management. Reduction of poor quality	costing	
products. Reduction of the cost price of	1.	
products.		
Company advertising for being environmentally	Organization	Efficient
friendly. International exchange of	al efficiency	Organizations
environmental information. More investment		\
opportunities internationally.		2.1
Healthy geographical environment of the	Company	
company. Environmental satisfaction. Healthy	health	. F 1
organizational environment. Job improvement.		
Awareness of organizational employees.	Individual	Awareness
Training of managers. Organizational culture.	training and	and
Holding conferences for organizational training.	awareness	Knowledge of
Training of employees and managers.		Managers and
Inefficiency of employees. Lack of expertise of	Employee	Employees
employees. Inattention of employees to the	expertise and	
production of products.	skills	
Review of internal control systems. Increasing	Healthy	Corporate
social responsibility.	systems	System
Alignment of managers with environmental	Proper	
plans. The presence of efficient managers. The	management	
presence of expert managers.		
Correct decision-making by managers. Optimal	Optimum	
management. Attention of managers to	decision-	
environmental issues. Decision-making by	making	
managers.		

Table 1. Developing an environmental accounting model with an emphasis on social responsibility in Iraq

Initial codes	Subcategory	Main category
Managers' responsibility. Increasing managers'	Responsibilit	
ability. Managers' accountability. Not hiding	y	
costs by managers.		
The existence of social accounting reports.	Increase	Optimized
Creating new social accounting methods.	social	Financial
Changes in social environmental accounting	responsibility	Reporting
methods.	reporting	
Using online systems for financial reports.	Increase	
Implementing environmental audit activities.	optimal	
Existence of inspections for reporting	accounting	
environmental activities. Eliminating reporting	reports	
activities without added value. Transparency of		- 1
environmental accounting.		\
Organizational performance assessment.	Accountabilit	Stakeholder
Environmental performance assessment.	у	Assurance
Optimal environmental performance.		· P 1
Disclosure of environmental costs. Correct	Transparency	0
disclosure of information. Disclosure of		
environmental activities in financial reports.		7 /
Transparency.		: /
Increasing shareholder wealth. Increasing the	Trust	
share price. Increasing shareholder trust in the	5	
company. Stakeholder satisfaction. More	10	
reliable profits. Attracting shareholders.		
Shareholders' decision-making.	.10	
Increasing customer satisfaction. Increasing the	Increase	Optimized
quality level of products and services. Increasing	customer	Financial
the quality of services. Increasing sales and	satisfaction	Reporting
profitability. Earning more profits. Selling more		
products. Quality of products and services.		
Selling products. More diverse products.		
Competitive market. Competitive power.	Competition	
Competitive advantage. Business growth.	and Business	

Table 1. Developing an environmental accounting model with an emphasis on social responsibility in Iraq

Initial codes	Subcategory	Main category
Competitive power.	Growth	
Company success. Sustainable organizations.	Company	
Increasing production. Sustainable development.	Success	

Since the aim of the present study was to develop an environmental accounting model with an emphasis on social responsibility in Iraq, the paradigmatic model is shown in Figure 1.

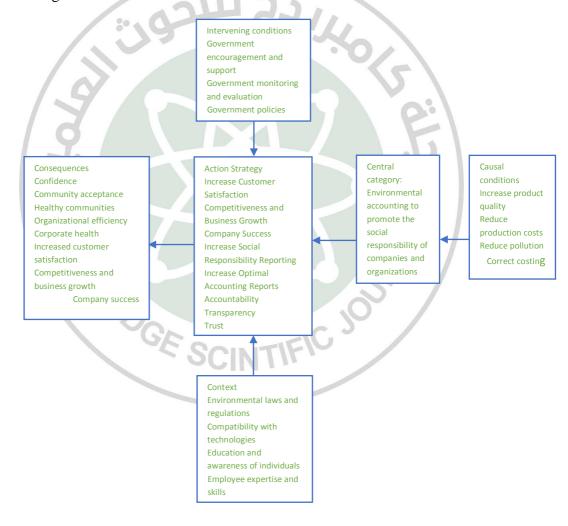


Figure 1. Paradigmatic model of environmental accounting with emphasis on social responsibility in Iraq

Categories of Intervening Conditions

Based on the results of the secondary coding of the research, government regulations and legislation were classified as the main category, and government encouragement and support, government monitoring and evaluation, and government policies were classified as subcategories as categories of intervening conditions.

Table 2. Categories of Intervening Conditions

Initial codes	Subcategory	Main category
Encouragement and improvement of	Government	Government
business by the government. Allocating	encouragement and	regulations
appropriate budget for procurement and	support	and legislation
equipment of necessary systems from the	V	
government. Giving tax incentives to non-		0.1
polluting organizations. Giving facilities to		
non-polluting organizations.		· P 1
Government supervision. Government	Government	6
policy-making. Government performance.	monitoring and	.
Reducing government costs.	evaluation	4 1
Economic decision-making policies.	Government	
International strategies for reducing	policies	
pollution. Macro-environmental policy-	,0	
making.	-1C 3	

Context and background categories

Based on secondary coding, organizational structures, and training, awareness, and knowledge of managers and employees were categorized into main categories and environmental laws and regulations, adaptation to technologies, training and awareness of individuals, and employee expertise and skills under the heading of context conditions categories.

Table 3. Context conditions categories

Initial codes	Subcategory	Main category
Uniformity in observing the laws.	Environmental	Organizational
Establishing preventive laws. Observing	laws and	Structures
environmental issues. Enforcing	regulations	
environmental laws. Creating laws and		
regulations for environmental protection.		
Environmentally friendly technologies.	Compatibility with	
Using modern and efficient equipment.	technologies	
Renovating machinery.		
Awareness of organizational staff.	Employee training	Awareness and
Training managers. Organizational	and awareness	Knowledge of
culture. Holding conferences for	221.	Managers and
organizational training. Training		Employees
employees and managers.	.0/	
Inefficiency of employees. Lack of	Employee expertise	F
expertise of employees. Inattention of	and skills	
employees to the production of products.		6.1

Outcome categories

Based on secondary coding, healthy and safe society, efficient organizations, and efficiency and performance were categorized as main categories and public trust, culture building in society, healthy society, organizational growth, healthy organizational environment, product quality, competitiveness, and organizational sustainability were categorized as subcategories and as outcome categories.

Table 4. Outcome categories

Initial codes	Subcategory	Main category
Increasing public trust. Achieving the My	Confidence	Healthy and
Good City model. Increasing loyal customers.	1C. 3	Safe Society
Consumption pattern standards. Public	Community	
opinion. Building culture in society.	Acceptance	
Environmental social education. Consumers'		
use of low-polluting goods. Concerns of		
stakeholders about environmental issues.		
Increasing the quality of life of the community.	Healthy	
Community health. Cleanliness and beauty of	Communities	
the environment. Community satisfaction.		
Community support for the environment.		

Increasing life expectancy in generations.		
Company advertising for environmental	Organizational	Healthy and
friendliness. International exchange of	Effectiveness	Safe Society
environmental information. More investment		-
opportunities at the international level.		
Healthy geographical environment of the	Corporate	
company. Environmental satisfaction. Healthy	Health	
organizational environment. Job improvement.		
Increasing customer satisfaction. Increasing the	Increasing	Efficiency and
quality level of products and services.	Customer	performance
Increasing the quality of services. Increasing	Satisfaction	
sales and profitability. Earning more profits.		
Selling more products. Quality of products and	. 0/	
services. Selling products. More diverse		
products.		0:/
Competitive market. Competitive power.	Competition	
Competitive advantage. Business growth.	and Business	JU I
Competitive power.	Growth	5
Company success. Sustainable organizations.	Company	
Increasing production. Sustainable	Success	1
development.		τ /

The categories of strategies were categorized based on secondary codings: corporate system, optimal financial reporting, and stakeholder confidence in the main categories, and organizational systems, managerial efficiency, optimal management, management ability, social trends, changes in accounting reports, performance evaluation, transparency, and shareholder trust in the subcategories and under the heading of strategy categories.

Table 5. Strategy categories

Initial codes	Subcategory	Main category
Review of internal control systems.	Increasing customer	Corporate
Increasing social responsibility.	satisfaction	system
Alignment of managers with	Competition and	
environmental plans. The presence of	business growth	

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efficient managers. The presence of		
expert managers.		
Correct decision-making by managers.	Company success	
Optimal management. Attention of		
managers to environmental issues.		
Decision-making by managers.		
Managers' responsibility. Increasing	Increasing customer	
managers' ability. Managers'	satisfaction	
accountability. Not hiding costs by		
managers.		
Existence of social accounting reports.	Increasing social	Optimized
Creation of new social accounting	responsibility	Financial
methods. Changes in social	reporting	Reporting
environmental accounting methods.	.00/	
Use of online systems for financial	Increasing optimal	F
reports. Implementation of	accounting reports	
environmental audit activities.		0.1
Existence of inspection for reporting		
environmental activities. Elimination of		·h 1
reporting activities without added		6
value. Transparency of environmental		
accounting.		7 1
Organizational performance	Accountability	Stakeholder
assessment. Environmental		Assurance
performance assessment. Optimal		
environmental performance.		
Disclosure of environmental costs.	Transparency	
Correct disclosure of information.	NITIFIC	
Disclosure of environmental activities	411.	
in financial reports. Transparency.		
Increasing shareholder wealth.	Trust	
Increasing the third day. Increasing		
shareholder trust in the company.		
Stakeholder satisfaction. More reliable		
profits. Attracting shareholders.		
Shareholders' decision-making.		

The categories of causal conditions

Based on secondary coding, environmental cost control was categorized in the main category and product quality control, production cost reduction, optimal production, and optimal management were categorized in the subcategory and under the title of causal conditions.

Table 6. Categories of causal conditions

Initial codes	Subcategory	Main category
More monitoring of quality	Increasing product	Controlling
control. No use of non-	quality	environmental
biodegradable materials.	11 -	costs
Efficiency of production.	四 231,	
Reducing the organization's		
production costs.		
Tracking environmental costs.	Reducing production	(- 1
Reducing environmental costs.	costs	V
Environmental opportunity costs.		6.1
Prioritizing environmental costs.		
Increasing benefits over costs.	Reducing pollution	1.61
Optimal use of resources.		
Production ideas to reduce		
pollution. Transformation in		
production.		
Correct pricing of products.	Correct costing	S /
Correct costing. Cost		> /
management. Reducing poor	0,	
quality products. Reducing the	10.3	
cost price of products.	CINITIFIC	

Conclusion

The aim of the present study is to develop an environmental accounting model with an emphasis on social responsibility in Iraq. The results showed that greater supervision over the control of production in the organization can lead to a reduction in environmental costs, and if companies have better and higher quality products so that environmental issues can be considered in the control of production, this will undoubtedly lead to a reduction in environmental costs and

an increase in social responsibility. On the one hand, managers of organizations and companies must have more control over the quality of products in order to achieve the goals of social responsibility. If companies have integrated and unified rules that all units and all employees adhere to, it can be effective in reducing environmental costs. The application of these rules requires the cooperation of all individuals in companies, and on the other hand, managers and employees must have the necessary knowledge so that they can help increase their expertise and skills while applying the rules and regulations, and in this way, they can help increase social responsibility. The government can also help reduce environmental costs by monitoring companies and making policies that separate polluting companies from polluting ones, and in this way, it should consider special incentives for polluting companies. The results showed that managers are one of the main pillars in organizations that help reduce environmental costs. Managers in an organization or company must be accountable to all stakeholders or the entire society. Stakeholders demand transparency and accountability and want to know the assessment of their company's environmental performance, and it is these managers who must announce the results of the environmental assessment to stakeholders. In order to refer to the reduction of environmental costs in their actions, they need structured administrative systems and capable managers. If companies reduce pollution and reduce environmental costs and on the one hand, managers are responsible for this with their optimal management, then we will have successful and sustainable companies that will be popular in society, which will lead to greater customer satisfaction, and companies with greater commercial growth and increased sales, and on the other hand, social responsibility will increase. According to the results of the present study, the following suggestions are made, which are that the secret to the success of any organization is its managers and employees. Therefore, every organization needs capable, specialized, knowledgeable, and committed managers and employees to achieve this success. The presence of accountable managers allows organizations to have employees with greater commitment. In this regard, it is suggested that organizations organize training courses for all employees so that, while recognizing responsibility and accountability, they can also train in groups so that we can have more knowledgeable people in the organization. It is also suggested that accountants in organizations become familiar with environmental accounting methods and techniques by participating in group classes so that they can explain the need to use environmental accounting to other marketers, so that not only

managers but also other employees are familiar with and accountable for environmental issues. It is also suggested that managers and planners in organizations consider uniform rules and procedures for environmental reports and use modern environmental accounting techniques so that they can be accountable for financial statements, especially environmental reports, based on standards and rules in financial reports, and using uniform rules helps reduce emissions and increase social responsibility of organizations.

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