SOCIAL MEDIA CONSUMPTION AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF IDOL AMONG THE TEENAGERS IN SUBURBAN AREA OF YOGYAKARTA

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Article Info	Abstract
Keyword: *Community participation; A self Reliant village*	*The advancement of technology has made many people, including teenagers, use new media to access information and interact with other people. One of the new media platforms widely used by teenagers is social media. Because identity plays a significant role in the life of the youth, besides sexuality, social media is relevant to teenagers. Social media helps teenagers on their quest to define and explore who they are, one of which is by facilitating them to find idols. This research aims at illustrating the construction of idols in teenagers through the consumption of one of the social media platforms, Instagram, by employing a qualitative approach and case-study methods. The research result shows that social media consumption in suburban adolescents is low and makes them still have strong connections with the surrounding social environment. The low consumption and influence of social media also make it easy for teenagers to believe in their idol's appearance and perceive it as a complete image of the idol. Teenagers have many ways to find and 'meet' their idols. Teenagers believe in their idols' social media appearance and perceive that the contents show the natural character and personality of the idols.*

PENDAHULUAN

The advancement of technology, particularly communication, has led many people to use new media to interact with others. Social media is widely used by internet users, including in Indonesian society. People can interact, share, or gather myriads of information through social media. The attractiveness of social media has triggered tech enterprises to make applications on social media—on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, blog platforms, etc.

The youth are the generation that predominates internet and social media use. A survey conducted by UNICEF, in collaboration with partners such as the Ministry of Communication and Informatics of the Republic of Indonesia and Harvard University, has reported that the internet users in Indonesia who are kids and teenagers are estimated to reach the number of 30 million. In urban areas, only 13 percent of kids and teenagers are not using the Internet. Furthermore, almost all of the respondents are internet users in the Special Region of Yogyakarta, Jakarta, and Banten. UNICEF has also unveiled that teenagers use social media for personal needs, namely for connecting with friends (old and new friends) and leisure (Kompas, 2014).

Based on Regis et al. (2016) research, the basic difference from adolescents who live in urban and suburban areas is seen from the activities used for entertainment. Urban adolescents tend to spend time with sedentary activities: watching television, playing games, and consuming social media. Different things are shown by teenagers in suburban areas who tend to entertain themselves more through physical activities such as playing in the field, working with their parents, and others. This causes lower social media exposure in suburban adolescents. However, that does not mean they do not access social media. This is what I want to discuss in this paper.

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Considering that most of the studies on social media have been conducted on users in big cities, we endeavor to study the social media use of teenagers living on the fringe of a big city to see how they find and construct idols through social media consumption. Our research subjects are teenagers studying in the Junior High School (SMP) of Kanisius Pakem in the rural area of the Special Region of Yogyakarta.

Social media appeals to the young generation because they have shifted the perception of the youth, redefined their experience of space and time, and enabled the faraway events, places, and people to enter their daily awareness (Osgerby in Sutanto, 2014). The importance of social media as a means to access information lies in the assumption that identity plays a significant role in the youth's life, besides sexuality. During the teenage years, an individual is on a quest to define and explore who she is and one of the references to seek identity is social media (Kapidzic and Herring, 2011).

We choose Instagram because it is one of the social media platforms with significant growth in the number of users since 2014. The Instagram apps that allow users to share their visual content are the most appealing to the youth. The Senior Director of Indonesian TNS Office Hansal Savla (in Prayogo, 2016) has stated that based on the most updated data of Connected Life, Indonesia has the fourth most active Instagram users in the Asia Pacific (54% of the total number of internet users). The growth is encouraged by the advancement of mobile technology and the smartphone camera. The users want to capture and share their moments with other people. They want to share it instantly, describe their experience, and feel proud. The Instagram apps offer the users a faster, effortless, and more visually engaging way of sharing their moments (Prayogo, 2016).

One of the studies on adolescents and Instagram was written by Lenny Bernadeta (2017), which discussed the self-actualization of Generation Y through Instagram. The study results show that Generation Y tends to show self-actualization individually and in groups. In addition, Generation Y shows a positive image and hopes that the public will also judge them positively. These findings indicate a gap with the research that the authors did. In this study, the authors conducted data mining on generation Z and paid attention to the consumption process of Instagram social media, especially the behavior of idolizing someone.

The importance of interaction and capturing valuable life-moment through Instagram has made many people selective in choosing or sharing important content. Engaging content and information tend to attract Instagram users. In most cases, many people become famous on Instagram apps because the information they share is attractive and favorited by many people.

This research owes to two previous studies discussing the construction of idols. Sutanto (2014) has found that through Twitter, as one of the social media platforms, the youths communicate through symbols that give vivid images. As the youths are unique individuals following their backgrounds, they produce different symbols in the image of life. Freedom, customization, speed, and entertainment are the norms of the internet generation to which they cling. Those (norms) exist in the self-presentation of the youth on Twitter. The research argues that as individuals still seek identity, the youth are attached to idols. It is undeniable because an idol is a role model, guide, and archetype in the development of the youth's life. In other words, having an idol is a natural thing for a teenager. Huang (2017) believes that an obsession with achieving particular things and the similarities of values and norms are why an individual is firmly bound to her chosen idol. In this regard, the attractiveness of the idol brings positive effects to one's individual life and becomes why the individual is loyal to the idol.

Idolizing a figure is virtually practiced by everyone. In reality, in most cases, humans idolize other humans. In other words, idols are created, e.g., through competitions. When a new idol is born, she will be the center of attention and admired by many people. Happiness, admiration, and amazement, similar to feelings when an individual falls in love, will appear when she sees the idol. Consequently, it is only natural to follow and imitate the idol's attributes and behavior. No wonder (idolization) will develop into worshipping (Universitas Bina Nusantara, 2015).

Worshipping an idol is commonly practiced by contemporary teenagers. According to Cheung and Yue (in Sheridan et al., 2007), worshipping an idol result from entertainment industry activity and mass media. The idol phenomenon becomes the product of capitalism that produces profit. However, having an idol is regarded as something important to the growth of teenagers who are still exploring their self-identity, even though there is no certainty that the idol can positively contribute to the intellectual and moral development of the teenagers because the idols usually get their popularity through their physical appearance instead of intellectual prowess.

Idols do not only relate to commodities but also become an image of the commodities themselves. The idols try to collect to center desires before eventually becoming a commodity out of and within themselves. Idols become "real," the basis of intimate feelings among the fans, although it does not depend on the "reality" (Galbraith and Karlin, 2012). Fiske (1987: 116) explains the idol phenomenon as "inevitable intertextuality," where all texts refer to each other but not to the external reality. It shows that idols are accessible through cultural products. In other words, an idol is a construction of reality.

Fiske (in Galbraith and Karlin, 2012) discusses idols by proposing an example. Most people who have a car have not been physically involved in a car chase like the ones presented on TV. However, when a car chase appears in the movies or on TV, they feel familiar with the scene. By this logic, even if an individual experiences an actual car chase, she will understand it and comprehend it with the help of the familiar image on her head, which is read intertextually. Fiske's example (in Galbraith and Karlin, 2012) illustrates the relationship between idols and their fans. Perhaps most of the fans never meet the idol, yet the images of the idol on the media are perceived as reality. Idols is a fiction that has a substantial effect/influence. Therefore the need for the idol's existence is absolute and unchanged daily. This need eventually triggers fanaticism among the fans.

Social learning theory combines the behavioral and cognitive theory developed by Albert Bandura in 1963. Bandura has shown that internal and external factors are equally important. The basic equation consists of personal factors, such as beliefs, hopes, attitude, and knowledge (cognitive), and environmental factors, e.g., resources, action consequences, physical settings, as well as attitude, such as individual actions, choices, and verbal statements that affect learning and motivation (O'Rorke, 2006).

Another important concept in social learning theory is observational learning. The solidity of this concept is well-documented in the literature. Learning without an exam is when a person obtains new behavior through observation. In this context, an individual need not go through 'trial and error learning' with differential reinforcement for every tiny response. The learning seemed to be cognitive if these new behaviors were obtained merely through observation. Bandura, unlike Skinner, believes that learning must include internal cognitive variables (Crain in O'Rorke, 2006). Observation also teaches us the response possibilities of our new behaviors. We see what happens when other people try. Bandura calls this process representative substitution. The appointing of the representative is also a cognitive process. We formulate our hopes on our result behavior without the immediate actions on our part (Crain in O'Rorke, 2006).

Symbolic-model is another model we could study. It is a non-live model like what we see on TV or read in books. Other variations of symbolic models include spoken instructions, such as when instructors or teachers explain to us things such as how to drive a car. In this context, the spoken description of the teacher combined with demonstration usually teaches us most of the things we need to know (Bandura in O'Rourke, 2006).

As explained by Bandura, there are four components of observational learning. To successfully imitate a model, we must: (1) pay attention to the model; (2) possess several alternative ways to retain what we have seen; (3) possess motoric skills needed to reproduce the behavior. If this condition did not meet, although an individual knew how to imitate the model, she probably chose not to do it. Moreover, the actual show will be controlled by; (4) strengthening contingency, most of which are representative. These four components are inseparable. The strengthening

process, in particular, affects what we attend or follow. Bandura wrote that "we often attend great, competent, and prestigious models because we have found that imitating them, instead of inferior models, brings more positive consequences" (O'Rorke, 2006).

Media plays a significant role in us being able to understand the mechanism through symbolic communication, which changes human behavior. Scholars of social learning theory have shown that behaviors are not only influenced by personal or live models but also mass-media presentations. Television and film models bring about significant influences, and one of the main implications is that television shapes human motivation and behavior every day, e.g., violence and the use of alcohol by kids. It makes us worry about how much television (ideas) are followed by teenagers and what precisely the program content they see, including advertisements (O'Rorke, 2006). Furthermore, the media also stereotypically illustrate the groups of minorities, such as women and people of color, which affects people's confidence in general. It has triggered some organizations to make campaigns on mass media to propose new accurate model types of groups of minorities and women, picturing them as educated and successful professionals. The scholars of social learning theory agree that it is an effective strategy that is hoped to encourage the social shift. Bandura and other researchers have concluded that mass media can create personal attributes and shift the existing attributes following the exposure. Exposure plays a significant role in social learning theory (O'Rorke, 2006).

METHODS

It is qualitative research focusing on the construction of idols by teenagers through the consumption of media. We employ case study methods with three principles for gathering the evidence or data, namely using two or more sources united by a set of similar facts. The use of base data, the collection of formal evidence that is different from the case study report, and the use of a set of evidence and their direct relation between the asked question, collected data, and the conclusion (Narindra, 2008: 94). The evidence is obtained through several sources. Among them are interviews—as the essential source—and direct obser-

vation in the field. The data is obtained through interviews with research subjects, namely the students of SMP (senior high school) Kanisius Pakem. During the pre-research, we spread questionnaires to the whole students of the senior high to get a general understanding of whom they idolize. We chose ten students from three grades (7th, 8th, and ninth) to be the informants. Among ten informants, six are female; four are male. They are interviewed individually, and the conversations are recorded and transcribed.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The Consumption and Learning Process on Instagram by Teenagers

Social media is a new means to communicate. They enable the user to communicate with other people from all around the globe. Social media has become a new exciting means to communicate, particularly for teenagers, the group that predominates on the Internet, according to APJI (CNNIndonesia.com, 2016). Mayfield (2008) has proposed six main characteristics of social media, namely giving (ways) to contribute and participate, freedom, two-way talk, (a way to) form communities, and connect.

In this research, the most conspicuous characteristics of Instagram are participation, freedom, and connectivity. The informants could search and gather the information they want on Instagram. Most of the informants seek information about the account as well as the daily activities of their idols. Instagram enables them not only to obtain information about their idols but also to feel close to the daily life of their idols. Besides, Instagram enables the informants to respond, comment, or connect with the content uploaded by their idols. The informants prefer Instagram to other social media platforms because Instagram has much exciting content in terms of visual appearance or information. Regarding the frequency, all research informants said they consistently access Instagram daily. The unique findings came from the duration of using gadgets and the periods of accessing Instagram. The length of time to access Instagram is 15-60 minutes. Four informants access Instagram for 30 minutes a day,

The rest have different periods. This period can be said to be a short time of using gadgets, considering

that as a junior high school teenager, the use of social media is still widely used under the full supervision of parents. In addition, not all informants have personal gadgets. They have to share the gadgets with siblings or borrow their parent's gadgets. These are the characteristics of Instagram's consumption in suburban areas.

Jung (2011) further explains that social media should be regarded as a means of communication and an intermediary in spreading or consuming popular culture products. It is the real need of the informant to consume information about their idols on Instagram. The consumption process is through observing the contents uploaded by their idols. The specially arranged content consumed by the teenagers eventually affects their attitude, either cognitively, affectively, or behaviorally. It is why social media has become a potential tool for industry, consciously or not, and social media are used to find and build relations with the market.

In social learning theory, Bandura (in O'Rorke, 2016) argues that both internal and external factors in the observation are equally significant in influencing the learning process and motivation. Furthermore, through observation, a human not only acquires a new behavior but also understands the consequences. This research shows that the observation process of the informant lies more in the quality of their accessing their idols' content than quantity. The positive content presented by their idols on Instagram can give them a positive conclusion about their idols' nature, character, and life. On the other hand, if the contents are harmful, the teenagers will construct their idols as negative figures and inappropriate to be imitated. Besides, when constructing idols, teenagers of SMP Kanisius Pakem filter the issues on the performance of their idols, such as attitude and creativity. However, only a few want to imitate their idols' appearance. The contents uploaded by the idols and seen by teenagers on Instagram influence their thinking and construction about idols. The contents will eventually affect their motivation and learning in the real world.

During observation (observational learning), an individual needs a model to observe. The model could be a living or non-living model. In this research, the observation practiced by the students of SMP Kanisius Pakem is the direct observation of non-living models, namely through the contents uploaded by their idols on social media. They try to find the account of their idol on Instagram, then consume it, observe, and learn everything shown by their idols.

Bandura (in O'Rorke, 2003) elaborates that four components can make an individual succeed in imitating the model in practicing the observation process. The first component is attention. This process requires the observer to pay attention to the model's behavior. However, the way male and female teenagers pay attention to Instagram content is different. Female teenagers observe contents related to the personal life of the diols, such as their attitude towards their fans, the success of their idols in building a career as well as family, and the personality of their idols. Shortly speaking, their attention is focused on emotional content. Meanwhile, male teenagers pay attention to the contents related to the idol's hobby and life goals. Male teenagers who want to become football players will likely pay more attention to their idols' content about football techniques.

The second component is the retention process. During this process, the observer tries to save information about things they have seen from the model to recollect it (O'Rorke, 2003). The teenagers of SMP Kanisius Pakem try to retain the information that becomes the focal attention related to their idols, to be recollected, and eventually become guidance for their real life. For example, female teenagers have standards on the cheerful personality of their idols, while male teenagers get guidance on football techniques through content uploaded by their idols on Instagram.

The third component is reproduction. The observers have motoric skills for reproducing the behavior of the models (O'Rorke, 2003). For female teenagers who, for instance, idolize KPOP artists, the observation of the Instagram contents of their idols can be used to imitate the dance choreography or to learn composing exciting songs. The male teenagers can make use of the observation to, for instance, practice the football technique shared by their idols on Instagram. The teenagers observe the rules of thumbs given by their idols and, by using their memory, attempt to

reproduce what they observe independently.

The last component is motivation. In other words, the observation and imitation process requires motivation and driving force from the observer (O'Rorke, 2003). This research shows that teenagers consume and observe their idols because they are motivated by the success obtained by their idols. The male teenagers are motivated by their wanting to be successful and skillful football players like their idols. Meanwhile, the female teenagers, besides being motivated by the success of their idols, observe them. It is because they want to have a boyfriend as handsome as their idols.

This research corroborates the arguments of social learning scholars who state that the presentation of mass media through their symbolic communication plays a role in influencing human behavior (O'Rorke, 2006). The consumption of the contents uploaded by the idols does not only affect the teenager's construction of the idol but also influences their behavior. Continuous observation of the contents uploaded by the idols makes the teenagers compare the life of the idols with their own real life. It will influence the standard of positive and negative values in real life. Eventually, the consumption will affect the construction of the idols and the way the teenagers imitate the idols' behavior to success or other positive values conveyed by them.

Concluding the Idol's Character from Social Media Uploads

A teenager, in terms of age, is an individual whose age range is between 12-21 years old, which is divided into three phases: early teenager (12-15 years old), middle teenagers (15-18 years old), and late teenagers (18-21 years old) (Monks et al., 2002: 262). Referring to the classification, the students of SMP Kanisius Pakem fall into the early teenager category, namely 12-15 years old.

Being in the transitional age between toddlers and teenagers, they undergo physical and psychological changes. Trends and modes influence the changes experienced by teenagers. During the teenage years, the consumption of individuals will be affected by the activities they do, friendship circles, and the generation's looks (Kasali, 2001: 195). An individual's emotional condition is not always stable during the early

teenage years. She is seeking self-identity because her status in life is not yet entirely clear, and the social relationship patterns have started changing. The emotional instability of the early teenage years is reflected through the character of social media use. Research on teenagers' social media use conducted by Dwi Sapta (2015) has shown that teenage social media users in Indonesia have begun to be segmented by age. During the early teenage stage (13-15 years old), the 'mood' predominates social media users, so entertainment is the main reason for early teenagers to use social media. The situation is quite different from the middle and late teenagers who position social media as the source of information.

A similar thing is also experienced by the informants of this research, namely the students of SMP Kanisius Pakem. Social media tends to be used to seek entertainment, which is supported by the statements of the informants that often do a random search through Instagram's 'explore' or YouTube's 'Recommended for You' feature. The random check enables the teenagers to find the photo or the video of the artist previously unknown to them, and between the randomly-found information, the teenagers find things they like, such as easy listening songs, exciting dance choreography, and appealing ways of interacting. However, it is not uncommon for teenagers to find their idols through other media, such as radio, television, or concerts held near where they live. For example, the sinetron (Indonesian TV series) actors/actresses or singers. After finding their idols, they seek the artists' social media accounts to follow. The random search that brings together the idols and their fans are one of the new findings, besides other findings that the process of idolizing an individual is often affected by the activity of an individual, friendship circle, and the look of the generation (Kasali, 2001: 195).

The appearance of the artist on social media gives an experience for the teenagers, making them begin imitating the artists. It is in line with the argument of Setyobroto (2003) that during the teenage years, an individual's experience will be broader in imitating habits and values of surrounding society. The learning process of an individual through her immediate surroundings will make her need a role model, in

which context it does not only from people who are physically in her immediate surroundings but also figures in the virtual world. It is also stated by teenagers who have idols. For them, the artist's appearance on social media is the most sincere appearance of the artist. Therefore, they say that the artist they idolize is affable, kind, and intimate with the fans. It is not uncommon for teenagers to imitate the artist's fashion style and dance choreography—hoping they will also be a success like their beloved artist or, at least, have a partner/boyfriend who looks like their idol.

Fiske (in Galbraith and Karlin, 2013) argues that although fans and artists never meet, the image conveyed by their idols on the media is comprehended as the reality of the idol. Regarding the reality, the informants state that they believe in the appearance of their idols on social media, from how they treat their fans, looking intimate through greetings said to their fans, acting funny on the reality show, or even through the photos and captions they uploaded, some teenagers conclude that the artist they idolize is an inspiring figure. Fiske (in Galbraith and Karlin, 2013) also states that an idol is a fiction with a natural effect or influence. Therefore, the existence of idols becomes an unchanged, absolute need in a human's daily life. This need eventually brings about fanaticism in the fans. In the case of the students of SMP Kanisius Pakem, fanaticism is not out of proportion. It is evident by the findings that they do not become instantly consumptive when seeing their idols using certain accessories. They only imitate their idols during particular occasions, for instance, when there is a family event—and they wear clothing with a similar style to their idols. They wear the combination of clothing they have—they do not buy new clothes. In the case of male students, they imitate the football techniques of their idols because they want to be a football players.

The Construction of Idol by the Teenagers Based on Gender

Teenagers, being in one of the stages of growing and identity-seeking, often use their idols as role models and examples. The informants said and stated the reason why they love certain idols. There are differences between male and female teenagers concerning the figure they idolize.

The idols of female teenagers are primarily celebrities, either Indonesian or other countries. Adin and Candra, for example, both like Korean boy bands; Rara likes Natasha Wilona (TV series actress) and Agnes Monica (singer); Lisa loves Verrel Bramastya and Bryan Domani (TV series actors). The female students idolize a figure based on their hobby. Candra, who loves dancing, says that she loves artists who can dance, such as Wanna One and Seventeen, and she frequently practices their idols' choreography. Fara, another informant, loves singing. That is why she loves Raisa and Isyana Saraswati.

For female teenagers, the attitude shown by their idols on the media is very important, because it will construct the image of the idol in their eyes. The female teenagers often state their attraction to particular idols due to the affable and intimate attitude shown by their idols to the fans. Also, the idols' perseverance and creativity become why they idolize the famous figure. The female students of SMP Kanisius Pakem tell stories about how they start being familiar with and eventually idolizing their idols. Lisa, for instance, knew and idolized Verrel Bramastya after being 'introduced' by her cousin who had previously been idolizing Verrel; Rara was acquainted to Agnes Monica from her older sibling; Caca knew Zach Harren when she listened to the radio; Candra found her idol through YouTube, but mostly because the front page of the social media has 'recommended' feature (recommended video). Regarding the imitation process, the female teenagers of SMP Kanisius Pakem say that they do not always imitate their idols, particularly in terms of appearance. For them, imitating the fashion-style of their idols is not easy considering they are not yet financially independent to consume the goods advertised by their idolized artists on social media. However, there are some teenagers brave enough to imitate the fashion-style of their idols when attending a family event, like Rara. She feels confident when imitating the fashion-style of Agnes Monica that tends to be a tomboy.

Unlike their female counterparts, male teenagers have their perspective on seeing their idols. The male informants of this research are four, and two of whom

(Aldi and Ale) like football. Other informants, Kenny and Ardi, like music. Kenny prefers rock, while Ardi fonds of dangdut. For Aldi, becoming a football player is his goal, which his parents planted on his mind since he was a kid.

Interestingly, a part of his name was taken from a famous football player in a particular era. Since he was a kid, his parents encouraged him to be a football player. Therefore he idolizes Neymar. Besides using social media to follow Neymar, he also follows the 'Your Dream Football' account that shows football tactics and tips. Unlike Alid, Ale likes Dirga Lasut (an Indonesian football player) after being introduced by his friend. Ardi loves Via Vallen and Nella Kharisma because he once went to their concert. The experience of attending the concern makes Ardi conclude that his idols are affable and close to their fans. Kenny, who loves rock music, says that becoming a celebrity means that the individual must frequently face the threat of drug abuse. Kenny realizes that as one of the processes of idolizing his idol, he must seek information about his idol. His seeking has led Kenny to find that his beloved artist has a dark side, namely them being drug addicts. That is why Kenny does not want to be too fanatic about certain artists because he does not want to fall into the abyss of the dark life as experienced by his idol. Kenny also admits that it is not uncommon for artists to use their profession to escape their life problems.

CONCLUSION

This research shows that teenagers have many ways of finding or 'encountering' their idols. They find and are connected to their idols not only by random search on Instagram but also from recommendations from friends or family, listening to the radio, watching TV series, or even by paying attention to YouTube's 'Recommended for You' feature. This shows that social media consumption in suburban adolescents is low and makes them still have strong connections with the surrounding social environment. The low consumption and influence of social media also makes it easy for teenagers to believe in their idol's appearance and perceive it as a complete image of the idol.

After finding their idols on social media, the teenagers believe the appearance of their idols on social media. They believe that the content presented by their idols shows the natural character and personality of their idols. They are sure that the uploaded contents show real daily life, as idols' construction relies more on quality than quantity. The more positive the uploaded social media content, the more positive the construction of the idols on the teenagers. Conversely, when the uploaded contents are harmful, they construct their idols as negative figures who are inappropriate to imitate.

On a more profound understanding, from the gender perspective, the female and male teenagers have different perspectives when idolizing certain figures. For female teenagers, consuming idols is a matter of entertainment that is used to entertain themselves. As a result, the construction of idols is based on a personal and emotional basis. Meanwhile, the male teenagers reflect their idols to their own goals so that the construction lies more on the profession and the skills of their idols.

To summarize, the research informants want to have the same profession as their idols. It is obvious in the attraction of the informants to the contents presented by their idols. The informants regard their idols as the inspirator and motivator to reach their goal to have a similar profession to their idols, such as becoming an artist.

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