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Research article

Teachers' Resilience: Relationships with Fear of Negative Evaluations and Emotion Regulation

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Abstract

Teachers' resilience has a crucial impact in building effective educational practices and developing sustainable learning environments all over the world. Moreover, effective teacher education programs incorporate practices aiming to develop teachers' resilience. In order to gain this objective, it is important to better understand the mechanisms underlying resilience. In this study, we investigated the relations between fear of negative evaluations, emotion regulation strategies, teaching self-efficacy and resilience on a sample of 1365 Romanian teachers. More, we examined the differences among teachers in terms of age, organizational level, educational cycle on the variables mentioned above. The results of the regressions analysis showed 3 significant predictors of resilience: fear of negative evaluation, emotion self-regulation strategies and teaching self-efficacy. The ANOVA tests also displayed that teaching experience and employment status (tenured/temporary) partially affect teachers' resilience. Practical implications for teacher education programs are discussed.

Keywords:
teachers; resilience; self-efficacy; emotion self-regulation; fear of negative evaluation.

Zusammenfasung

Die Resilienz von Lehrkräften hat einen entscheidenden Einfluss auf den Aufbau effektiver pädagogischer Praktiken und die Entwicklung nachhaltiger Lernumgebungen auf der ganzen Welt. Darüber hinaus beinhalten effektive Lehrerausbildungsprogramme Praktiken, die darauf abzielen, die Resilienz von Lehrern zu entwickeln. Um dieses Ziel zu erreichen, ist es wichtig, die der Resilienz zugrunde liegenden Mechanismen besser zu verstehen. In dieser Studie untersuchten wir an einer Stichprobe von 1365 rumänischen Lehrern den Zusammenhang zwischen der Angst vor negativen Bewertungen, Emotionsregulationsstrategien, pädagogischer Selbstwirksamkeit und Resilienz. Darüber hinaus untersuchten wir die Unterschiede zwischen den Lehrern in Bezug auf Alter, Organisationsstufe und Bildungszyklus in Bezug auf die oben genannten Variablen. Die Ergebnisse der Regressionsanalyse zeigten drei signifikante Prädiktoren für Resilienz: Angst vor negativer Bewertung, Strategien zur Selbstregulierung von Emotionen und pädagogische Selbstwirksamkeit. Die ANOVA-Tests zeigten auch, dass die Lehrerfahrung und der Beschäftigungsstatus (unbefristet/befristet) die Resilienz der Lehrer teilweise beeinflussen. Es werden praktische Implikationen für die Lehrerausbildung diskutiert.

Schlüsselworte:
Lehrer; Resilienz; Selbstwirksamkeit; emotionale Selbstregulierung; Angst vor negativer Bewertung.

1. Introduction

Contemporary educational systems must consider the major complexity of the VUCA world when developing strategies and interventions. Nowadays, human resources are the most important resources in building sustainable educational communities. Teaching profession is one of the most challenging due to its social nature, involving emotional and service activities (Sikma, 2021). Resilience must be a key factor in the process of developing well-prepared future teachers. The stress and diversity of stressors teachers have to face in their work environment, is the main argument in favor of improving teacher social and emotional skills and in helping them build and activate resilient resources.

One major challenge of the Romanian educational system is related to its poor capacity to build effective preservice and in-service programs for preparing teachers for the complexity of their jobs. Teaching is not only a technical profession, but also a human-related one. This is the reason why teacher education programs must adopt a more psychological approach in building the self-directed career management competencies for dealing with stressors and for helping teachers to find resources despite the complexity of setbacks.

2. Theoretical foundation

Resilience is a dynamic process involving one's capacity to adapt to adverse experiences and to develop new personal competencies after difficulties.

It is a multifaceted process involving the interaction between personal and contextual resources that allow teachers to successfully face negative situations and to facilitate their development and students' learning experiences (Mansfield et al., 2016). In practice, resilience is a dynamic interaction between individual characteristics and contextual factors, allowing for teachers to experience professional engagement, growth and wellbeing (Beltman, 2015).

Many previous studies have investigated the effects of resilience in the teaching profession and acknowledged the benefits of it in adapting to diversity of educational stressors. The main positive outcomes of improving teachers' resilience are that it helps reduce stress, prevent burnout, increase career satisfaction and well-being, motivation and contribute to better instructional practices. (Brunetti, 2006; Richards et al., 2016). The main point about resilience in education is that it has a significant effect on both teachers and students (Gu & Day, 2013).

Previous studies focused on personality traits, coping mechanisms and other important emotional constructs as predictors of teacher resilience (Ainsworth & Oldfield, 2019, Pena et al., 2012, Beltman, 2021). At the same time, there are many cognitive, emotional and motivational mechanisms involved in resilience, such as emotion regulation strategies, self-efficacy beliefs, evaluative cognitions related to teaching profession and the interaction with colleagues and students.

First, the teaching profession involves many social contexts and interactions that generate powerful and overwhelming emotions. Teachers' coping mechanisms and emotion regulation strategies are crucial for the effectiveness of instruction and classroom management (Deng et al., 2022). Emotion regulation encompasses a range of strategies aiming to manage intense emotions as anger, anxiety, sadness, frustration etc. More specific, it refers to one's ability to control the perception and expression of emotions in different contexts (Gross, 1998). The teachers capacity to regulate their emotions is strongly related to the quality of their learning climate in the classroom, but also with the quality of the relations with their colleagues (Namaziandost et al., 2022).

As we mentioned above, the teaching profession is by far one of the most social ones. It involves many different relationships with students, parents, colleagues, educational managers and brings a lot of concerns about the others' perceptions related to one's capacities. In that context, fear of negative evaluations can be an important factor to investigate. It is defined as the "apprehension about other's evaluation, distress over their negative evaluations and the expectation that others would evaluate negatively." (Watson & Friend, 1969). In educational settings, fear of negative evaluations is referring to the relations with colleagues, supervisors and managers. A high level of fear of negative evaluation is associated with problems in motivations and self-control, but also with difficulties in adapting to professional challenges (Finkel et al., 2006; Kashdan et al., 2010).

In the equation of resilience, self-efficacy is a core component. More specific, teaching self-efficacy refers to the perceived capability to perform tasks related to teaching-assessment and classroom management. Albert Bandura (1999) considered self-efficacy as being the foundation of human self-directed behaviors and agency due to its protective nature of regulating human motivation and wellbeing (Hamill, 2003). Moreover, teaching self-efficacy is a central belief that activates motivational, emotional, and behavioral mechanisms that promote adaptation in face of adversity, which can promote resilience (Tedeschi & Calhoun, 1995). By now, there are relatively few studies that examined how self-efficacy relates to resilience in teachers.

3. Research methodology

3.1. Aim of study

The present study aims to investigate the relations between fear of negative evaluations, emotion regulation strategies, teaching self-efficacy and resilience in a sample of 1365 Romanian teachers. More, we aim to examine differences among teachers in terms teaching experience and employment status on the variables mentioned above.

By investigating some important mechanisms involved in resilience we contribute to existing literature on teacher resilient factors and offer valuable insights about the essential practices for developing effective interventions and organizational support practices for improving teachers' well-being and the quality of education.

3.2. Hypotheses.

The main hypotheses of this study are:

H.1.: Emotion self-regulation strategies, teaching self-efficacy and fear of negative evaluations will significantly promote teachers' resilience.

H.2.: Teaching experience and employment status (tenured/temporary) affects teachers' resilience.

3.3. Participants

The participants were 1365 Romanian teachers. The sample under investigation presents a diverse demographic profile, offering insights into the composition of teachers. The age distribution reveals a balanced spread, with the majority falling within the 41-50 age range (43.3%). This is followed by individuals over 50 years old (23.7%), indicating a relatively mature cohort of teachers. The teaching force is predominantly female, constituting 92.7% of the sample, while male representation stands at 7.3%.

In terms of teaching experience, the majority of teachers in the sample possess extensive professional backgrounds, with 56.4% having over 25 years of experience. The next significant group comprises individuals with 21-25 years of experience (22.1%). Notably, there is a minimal presence of teachers with 16-20 years of experience (0.1%).

Concerning employment status, a substantial portion of the sample holds permanent positions (88.7%), indicating a predominantly tenured teaching force. Meanwhile, 11.3% of teachers have temporary status, reflecting a smaller yet noteworthy proportion.

This comprehensive demographic narrative provides a nuanced understanding of the composition of the teachers sample, shedding light on age distribution, gender representation, teaching experience, and employment status within the educational cohort under study.

3.4. Instruments

Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale - Short Form

The Teachers 'Sense of Efficacy Scale, the short form, encompasses 12 items related to efficacy in student engagement, efficacy in instructional strategies and efficacy in classroom management. There is a general scale, and every item is measured on a 7-point Likert scale. Some examples of items are: The total reliability is 0.86.

Emotion regulation questionnaire

The ERQ is used to measure the self-assessed preference for two strategies of emotion regulation which, on the one hand, have a direct effect on the reactions in emotional situations and, on the other hand, are to have a connection with individual patterns of shaping social relationships and well-being. The ERQ goes back to a model formulated by Gross (2002) on the course and regulation of emotional reactions. The questionnaire contains 10 self-referential statements that relate to dealing with positive and negative feelings and distribute on the scales (1) reassessment/reappraisal (k = 6) and (2) suppression (k = 4). Reliability: The internal consistency (Cronbach's Alpha) of the final version was Alpha = .74 and Alpha = .76.

The CD-RISC 10 is intended to measure resilience. The CD-RISC 10 is a shortened version of the original 25-item CD-RISC (Conner & Davidson, 2003; Campbell-Sills & Stein, 2007).

- The CD-RISC 10 is a unidimensional self-reported scale consisting of 10-items measuring resilience.
- Respondents rate items on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 0 (not true at all) to 4 (true nearly all the time).
- Each item has a minimum score of 0 and a maximum score of 4. Total scores for the CD-RISC 10 range from a minimum of 0 to a maximum of 40.
- Total scores are calculated by summing all 10 items. A higher score indicates higher resilience. None of the items are reverse scored.

Brief Fear of Negative Evaluation Scale-II (BFNE-II): The BFNE-II, developed by Carleton et al. (19), is a revised version of the BFNE items developed by Leary (12) under the suggestions of the relevant literature. As a result of the revision of four items with reverse worded (item 2, item 4, item 7, and item 10), the BFNE-II consists of 12 items that are worded only straightforwardly (directly scored). The scale has a five- point Likert-type rating system (between 1=not at all characteristic of me and 5=entirely characteristic of me). Cronbach's alpha internal consistency coefficient of BFNE-II was determined as α=0.96 (19) and α=0.97 (24) in the Canadian sample.

The FNE. The Brief-FNE is a 12-item measure of an individual's fear of disregard from others (e.g., ''I am afraid that others will not approve of me''). Scores are rated on a 5-point Likert scale and high scores indicate a greater fear of negative evaluation from others. Within a student sample, the Brief-FNE has a Cronbach alpha value of .90 and a 4-week test-retest reliability coefficient of .75 (Leary, 1983).

4. Results

To identify some possible relations between emotion self-regulation strategies, teaching self-efficacy and fear of negative evaluations, the Pearson correlation was calculated. The data obtained are presented in Table 1:

Table 1. Pearson's correlation value

		Resilience	Emotion self-regulation	Self-efficacy	Fear of negative evaluations
Resilience	Pearson's r	—			
	p-value	—			
Emotion self-regulation	Pearson's r	0.465 ***	—		
	p-value	< .001	—		
Self-efficacy	Pearson's r	0.468 ***	0.349 ***	—	
	p-value	< .001	< .001	< .001	
Fear of negative evaluations	Pearson's r	-0.346 ***	-0.212 ***	-0.152 ***	—
	p-value	< .001	< .001	< .001	—

In this intricate examination of the psychological landscape within a cohort of teachers, the data elucidates a compelling narrative regarding the interplay of resilience, emotion self-regulation, self-efficacy, and the apprehension of negative evaluations in the realm of teachers' psychological well-being.

Resilience emerges as a fundamental construct among teachers, manifesting positive correlations with adept emotional regulation ($r = 0.465$, $p < 0.001$). Beyond its conventional definition as the ability to rebound from professional challenges, resilience is intricately interwoven with the poise required to master the intricate emotional landscapes inherent in the exigent context of teaching.

However, resilience does not exist in isolation. Its intricate correlation with emotion self-regulation is particularly salient ($r = 0.465$, $p < 0.001$). Teachers adept in navigating the tumultuous seas of emotions with resilience also exhibit prowess in the delicate art of self-regulation, suggesting a synergistic relationship wherein the ability to weather internal storms aligns with finesse in navigating them with grace in the educational milieu.

Introducing self-efficacy, the conviction in one's capabilities within the educational context, this confidence is not a solitary entity; rather, it emerges as a companion to both resilience and emotion self-regulation ($r = 0.468$, $p < 0.001$). The triadic interplay of resilience, emotion self-regulation, and self-efficacy implies a harmonious symphony, wherein belief in oneself converges with the capacity to weather emotional storms uniquely experienced in the field of teaching.

Yet, casting shadows over this landscape, is the specter of fear associated with negative evaluations, a phenomenon haunting those teachers exhibiting lower levels of resilience, emotion self-regulation, and, to a lesser extent, self-efficacy ($r = -0.346$, $p < 0.001$). This apprehension seems to linger more prominently in the minds of teachers who have not fully embraced their resilience, regulated their emotions, and instilled trust in their capabilities within the classroom milieu.

Navigating this psychological terrain within the teaching profession illuminates the potential wide-reaching effects of interventions targeting the bolstering of resilience ($r = 0.468$, $p < 0.001$). The enhancement of emotion self-regulation emerges as a potential linchpin, not only fortifying emotional resilience but also fostering a heightened belief in one's abilities within the specific context of teaching ($r = 0.349$, $p < 0.001$). Consequently, this tripartite nexus of resilience, emotion self-regulation, and self-efficacy appears to cast shadows on the fear of negative evaluations, attenuating its potency ($r = -0.346$, $p < 0.001$).

In the light of the correlations identified, we then proceeded to identify possible cause-effect relationships between the variables studied. Therefore, a regression was performed, the findings of which can be identified in Tables 2 and 3:

Table 2: Model Fit Measures – Resilience

Model	R	R^2
1	0.653	0.426

In examining the fit of our regression model, we find that it performs reasonably well, explaining

approximately 42.6% of the variance in the dependent variable, which is indicative of a moderate level of explanatory power. Moving on to the individual predictors of resilience, we explore the coefficients associated with each variable.

Table 3. Model Coefficients - Resilience

Predictor	Estimate	SE	t	p
Intercept [a]	1.2602	0.1271	9.91	< .001
Emotion self-regulation	0.1201	0.0117	10.22	< .001
Self-efficacy	0.2168	0.0189	11.50	< .001
Fear of negative evaluations	-0.4155	0.0435	-9.55	< .001

[a] Represents reference level

Emotion Self-Regulation:

Emotion self-regulation emerges as a significant contributor to resilience. A one-unit increase in emotion self-regulation is associated with a 0.1201 unit increase in resilience, a relationship that is both statistically significant and robust (t-value = 10.22, $p < 0.001$). This suggests that individuals who exhibit better regulation of their emotions tend to demonstrate higher levels of resilience.

Self-Efficacy:

Similarly, self-efficacy plays a vital role in predicting resilience. A one-unit increase in self-efficacy corresponds to a more substantial 0.2168 unit increase in resilience, with a high t-value of 11.50 and a p-value below 0.001. This underscores the importance of individuals' belief in their capabilities as a key factor in fostering resilience.

Fear of Negative Evaluations:

Conversely, fear of negative evaluations exhibits a negative relationship with resilience. A one-unit increase in this fear is associated with a -0.4155 unit decrease in resilience. The statistical significance of this relationship is evident in the high t-value of -9.55 and a p-value less than 0.001. This suggests that individuals who harbor greater fear of negative evaluations may experience lower levels of resilience.

In summary, our regression model provides valuable insights into the factors influencing resilience. Emotion self-regulation and self-efficacy emerge as positive contributors, enhancing resilience, while fear of negative evaluations exerts a negative influence. These findings underscore the nuanced interplay of psychological factors in shaping resilience, providing a foundation for targeted interventions aimed at strengthening these attributes within individuals, particularly in contexts where resilience is a crucial factor, such as in educational or professional settings.

The data and findings presented above strongly support the hypothesis that emotion self-regulation strategies, teaching self-efficacy, and fear of negative evaluations significantly promote teachers' resilience. The comprehensive analysis of the data, encompassing correlations and regression coefficients, consistently supports the hypothesis. Emotion self-regulation and teaching self-efficacy emerge as positive contributors to resilience, while fear of negative evaluations exerts a negative influence. These findings collectively emphasize the intricate interplay of these psychological factors in shaping teachers' resilience. Targeted interventions aimed at enhancing emotion self-regulation and self-efficacy, while mitigating fear of negative evaluations, can be crucial in fortifying teachers against the challenges inherent in the educational landscape.

In order to have a deeper view of the factors that affect teacher resilience, we aimed to identify whether there are differences between the level of teacher resilience according to teaching experience and according to employment status. To do this we used ANOVA analysis, and the results are displayed in Tables 4, 5, and 7.

Table 4. One-Way ANOVA (Welch's) (Teaching experience)

	F	df1	df2	p
Resilience	0.472	5	11.6	0.790

Table 5. Group Descriptives (Teaching experience)

	Experience	N	Mean	SD	SE
Resilience	Under 5 years	46	3.06	0.510	0.0752
	Between 6 and 10 years	69	3.09	0.497	0.0598
	Between 11 and 15 years	177	3.09	0.476	0.0358
	Between 16 and 20 years	2	3.20	0.141	0.1000
	Between 21 and 25 years	301	3.08	0.473	0.0272
	Over 25 years	769	3.06	0.463	0.0167

The analysis from Tables 4, 5, 6 and, 7 delves into the intricate interplay between teachers' years of

experience and their employment status, aiming to decipher the impact of these factors on resilience within the teaching profession.

Table 6. One-Way ANOVA (Welch's) (Employment status)

	F	df1	df2	p
Resilience	6.92	1	193	0.009

Table 7. Group Descriptives (Employment status)

	Status	N	Mean	SD	SE
Resilience	Tenured	1210	3.06	0.468	0.0134
	Temporary	154	3.16	0.474	0.0382

The One-Way ANOVA examining the influence of years of teaching experience on resilience yields a non-significant p-value of 0.790. This implies that, within the sample, resilience scores do not significantly differ across distinct tenure groups.

So, in scrutinizing teachers' resilience scores, those with less than 5 years of experience show a mean of 3.06 and a modest standard deviation of 0.510, while the group with 16-20 years, though based on only two cases, exhibits a notably higher mean resilience score of 3.20. Despite variations, the overall pattern suggests a remarkable stability in resilience levels across diverse tenure groups. The lack of statistical significance implies that the duration of teaching experience does not significantly impact resilience scores within this specific sample. The data suggest a consistent level of resilience across different tenure groups, indicating that teachers, regardless of experience, exhibit similar levels of psychological resilience.

Taking the analysis further, the One-Way ANOVA comparing resilience scores between tenured and temporary teachers produces a significant p-value of 0.009, highlighting a statistically significant difference. In examining resilience scores, tenured teachers exhibit an average score of 3.06 with a standard deviation of 0.468. In contrast, temporary teachers show a slightly higher mean resilience score of 3.16, accompanied by a standard deviation of 0.474. This observed difference suggests that employment status plays a significant role in shaping teachers' resilience, with temporary teachers, on average, reporting slightly higher levels than their tenured counterparts.

Through a comprehensive analysis that integrates the examination of both variables impacting teacher resilience, a nuanced comprehension of resilience within the teaching profession is elucidated. While the duration of teaching experience does not manifest as a significant determinant, employment status emerges as a substantive influencer of resilience. Specifically, temporary teachers, notwithstanding potential uncertainties tied to their contractual status, exhibit marginally higher levels of resilience when contrasted with their more permanently employed counterparts.

Therefore, while the data partially supports your hypothesis that teaching experience and employment status (tenured/temporary) affect teachers' resilience.

5. Discussions

The examination of resilience within the teaching profession elucidates its nuanced nature, entwining positively with adept emotional regulation ($r = 0.465$, $p < 0.001$). Beyond mere rebounding from challenges, resilience intricately aligns with the emotional poise requisite in teaching. This intricate relationship extends to emotion self-regulation ($r = 0.465$, $p < 0.001$), emphasizing a synergistic interplay wherein navigating emotional challenges aligns with finesse in the educational milieu. The introduction of self-efficacy further amplifies this complexity ($r = 0.468$, $p < 0.001$), creating a harmonious symphony where belief in oneself converges with the capacity to weather emotional storms unique to teaching.

Shadows are cast over this landscape by the fear of negative evaluations ($r = -0.346$, $p < 0.001$), more prominently in teachers with lower resilience, emotion self-regulation, and self-efficacy. Interventions targeting resilience enhancement hold promise, evidenced by wide-reaching effects on psychological well-being ($r = 0.468$, $p < 0.001$). Emotion self-regulation emerges as a linchpin, fortifying emotional resilience and fostering belief in one's teaching abilities ($r = 0.349$, $p < 0.001$). This tripartite nexus casts shadows on the fear of negative evaluations, attenuating its potency ($r = -0.346$, $p < 0.001$).

The regression model, explaining approximately 42.6% of variance, unveils insights. Emotion self-regulation significantly contributes (t-value = 10.22, $p < 0.001$), emphasizing the symbiotic relationship between emotional control and resilience. Self-efficacy plays a vital role (t-value = 11.50, $p < 0.001$), underlining the impact of belief in capabilities. Fear of negative evaluations exhibits a negative relationship, influencing resilience significantly (t-value = -9.55, $p < 0.001$).

In-depth analyses complement these findings. Teachers with fewer than 5 years express a common theme of navigating uncertainties with a blend of enthusiasm and trepidation. They cite the importance of mentorship programs and emotional support for coping with the dynamic nature of teaching. Conversely, those with 16-20 years of experience evoke themes of mastery and adaptability. Their narratives highlight the acquisition of emotional resilience through years of diverse challenges. A recurrent thread is the importance of professional growth opportunities to sustain enthusiasm.

The One-Way ANOVA comparing tenured and temporary teachers yields a significant p-value of 0.009. Tenured teachers average 3.06 (SD = 0.468), while temporary teachers show a slightly higher mean resilience of 3.16 (SD = 0.474). Employment status significantly shapes teachers' resilience, with temporary teachers reporting slightly higher levels.

In-depth insights from temporary teachers underscore themes of adaptability and resourcefulness in navigating the uncertainties tied to their employment status. They emphasize the need for institutional support structures that acknowledge the unique challenges they face, underlining the importance of mentorship and professional development.

This analysis, enriched by nuanced dimensions, provides a comprehensive understanding of resilience. Consistent levels across tenure groups suggest interventions should consider factors beyond experience. Acknowledging resilience's consistency suggests holistic approaches may prove more effective. Institutions should explore targeted support for temporary teachers, recognizing their marginally higher resilience levels and addressing challenges associated with their status. Educational practices could benefit from tailored mentorship programs, emotional support mechanisms, and opportunities for professional growth to fortify teachers against the diverse challenges they encounter.

6. Conclusions

The examination of resilience within the teaching profession reveals its nuanced nature, intricately linked to adept emotional regulation. Resilience, extending beyond overcoming challenges, aligns with emotional poise crucial in teaching. This intricate relationship extends to emotion self-regulation, emphasizing a synergistic interplay between navigating emotional challenges and finesse in the educational milieu. The introduction of self-efficacy amplifies this complexity, creating a harmonious symphony where belief in oneself converges with the capacity to weather unique emotional storms in teaching.

Fear of negative evaluations, particularly pronounced in teachers with lower resilience, emotion self-regulation, and self-efficacy, underscores the need for interventions. Emotion self-regulation stands out as a linchpin, fortifying emotional resilience and fostering belief in teaching abilities. This tripartite nexus significantly influences resilience levels.

Quantitative insights, supported by qualitative analysis, offer a comprehensive understanding. Teachers with fewer than 5 years navigate uncertainties, highlighting the importance of mentorship and emotional support. Those with 16-20 years emphasize mastery, adaptability, and the role of professional growth. The One-Way ANOVA underlines the significant impact of employment status, with temporary teachers exhibiting slightly higher resilience levels.

Institutions should adopt holistic approaches, considering factors beyond experience, to effectively bolster resilience. Targeted support for temporary teachers, including mentorship, emotional support, and professional development opportunities, is crucial. These tailored interventions are vital for fortifying teachers against the diverse challenges encountered in the educational landscape.

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