



## Migration: A Historical and Theoretical Perspective

\*Ms Panchali Das

\*\* Dr. Samit Chowdhury

*\*PhD Scholar, Department of Management, Assam Don Bosco University, Guwahati, Assam  
Email- connect.panchalidas@gmail.com*

*\*\* Associate Professor & HOD, Department of Management, Assam Don Bosco University, Guwahati, Assam  
Email- samit.choudhury@gmail.com*

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### Abstract

**Purpose:** This research gives a review of migration theories, tracking their historical growth and investigating the many economic, social, and political elements that drives the mobility of the people. The study's goal is to combine numerous theoretical viewpoints from different disciplines in order to better comprehend the complexities of migration. Also highlighting the impact on migration due to climate change.

**Methodology:** The research takes a qualitative chronological approach to reviewing existing important migration ideas, starting with Ravenstein's Laws of Migration (1885) and moving to current opinions from international institutions such as the World Bank and the United Nations. The analysis draws on economics, sociology, anthropology, and political science along with the emerging migration taking place due to climate change.

**Findings:** The study analyses major advancements in migration theory, indicating how our knowledge of migration has broadened beyond simply economic reasons to encompass a variety of social, cultural, and political aspects. It emphasizes the importance of historical context in producing migration theories, as well as the ideas' ongoing relevance in current conversations about global migration and climate change.

**Objectives:** To conceptualize the historical and theoretical determinants of migration findings of existing ideas.

**Research limitations:** The study is essentially a literature analysis and does not include practical data or case studies, its relevance to specific migration circumstances may be limited.

**Practical Implications:** This study provides important insights for researchers, politicians, and practitioners working to design successful migration policies. It emphasizes the necessity to analyze numerous variables impacting migration, and the

significance of adjusting theoretical frameworks to present world realities.

**Originality:** The work stands out by giving a complete historical analysis of migration ideas, including viewpoints from other disciplines, and emphasizing the growth of thinking in the field of migration studies. Also understand its impact due to climate change.

**Keywords:** Migration, Ravenstein's Laws, international migration, economic migration, social networks, Policy, global development, migration and climate change.

### I. Introduction

Academics have been intrigued for a long time by the research of individuals' transitions from one place to another. Studying the reasons, methods, and consequences of migration has led to the development of various interdisciplinary concepts. The paper depicts the importance of migration theories and tracks their history from the late nineteenth century to the present. The review is chronologically ordered and shows how migration has been understood and conceived in various historical settings. The study aims is to provide a complete account of migration ideas' history from the late nineteenth century to the present, using a multidisciplinary approach that includes economics, sociology, anthropology, and political science etc.

The objective is to examine the intricate economic, social, and political factors driving migration, and explore how these elements intertwine in different situations. The study brings together past and present viewpoints, drawing on knowledge from international institutions like the World Bank and the United Nations, to enhance understanding of migration patterns and their impacts, offering useful guidance for academics, policymakers, and professionals crafting successful migration strategies. The cooperation among relocation and environmental change is turning out to be



progressively clear as the world faces more serious and continuous environment related occasions. As environmental change speeds up, it is adjusting natural circumstances and open potential doors for opportunities, driving individuals to move both inside and across public lines. The direct effects of climate change, such as extreme weather, rising sea levels, and droughts, frequently force people to flee their homes, so this migration is not always voluntary. Climate change and migration are linked to a variety of environmental, social, economic, and political factors, making the connection intricate and multifaceted.

## II. Methodology

The study's methodology involves a systematic approach to examining migration theories over time. Initially, key migration theories are

carefully selected, covering a broad historical range from the late 19th century to contemporary period. These theories are arranged in order of time to emphasize the development of ideas about migration. The research highlights important theories and theorists in different fields like economics, sociology, anthropology, political science etc to understand the complexity of migration. Every theory is scrutinized to reveal the economic, social, and political forces that influence migration, focusing on the way these components intersect in various situations. Through the incorporation of various disciplinary viewpoints, the research offers a thorough examination of migration, ending with a combination of insights from historical and contemporary worldwide viewpoints, encompassing recent inputs from global entities such as the World Bank and the United Nations. Global issues like migration and climate change are blended.

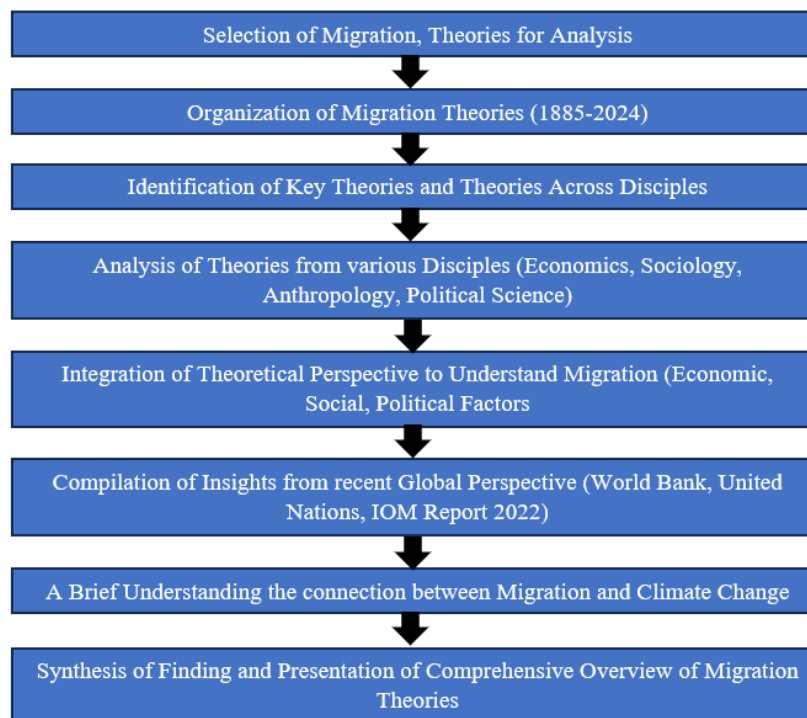


Figure 1: Flowchart of Employed Methodology showing the Chronological Review and Multidisciplinary Analysis of Migration Theories

Source: from Review of Literature

## III. Review & Findings

### 3.1 Ravenstein's Laws of Migration (1885)

Ernest George Ravenstein, widely regarded as the first migration theorist, established the framework for migration studies with his "Laws of Migration" in 1885. Using census data from England and Wales, Ravenstein determined that migration is

driven by both push and pull variables. He highlighted numerous major characteristics, including the prevalence of short-distance migration, the propensity for migration to proceed in stages (from rural regions to cities, then to bigger urban cities), and the importance of economic and social possibilities as primary motivators. Ravenstein also



observed that women are more inclined to relocate towards shorter distances, but males are more likely to go vast and long distances, mostly globally. His study stressed the importance of cities as key destinations owing to economic possibilities and improved living circumstances.

### 3.2 Lee's Push and Pull Theory (1966)

Lee (1966) expanded on Ravenstein's work with the Push and Pull hypothesis, which investigated

the elements that influence migration. Lee noted that migration is caused by both push and pull causes. Lee also developed the notion of intervening barriers, such as distance, cost, and personal circumstances, which might impact a person's decision to move. His thesis highlighted the complexities of migration decisions, considering both the possible rewards and obstacles of shifting.

Push Factors	Pull Factors	Obstacles Take Place
Economic- poverty, lack of good wages jobs	Job Opportunities (High salary, better lifestyle)	Cost of travel, expenses and relocation.
Environment- natural calamities	Better living lifestyle (good healthcare and education)	Transport accessibility and distance in Geography
Political- conflict, war	Stable and Safer Environment	Legal immigration laws and policies barriers.
Population- scarcity of resources, over population	Availability of resources, land and opportunities.	Cost and expense in higher side.
Social- traditional culture, society judgement, discrimination.	Modern lifestyle, social family opportunities, no cultural difference.	Adapting the urban societal pressure.

Figure 2: Table on Lee's Push and Pull Factors  
Source: from Review of Literature

### 3.3 Massey et al. Theories of International Migration (1993)

In the beginning of the nineties, Massey and colleagues performed a thorough examination and evaluation of numerous theories of international migration. Their research addressed the economic, social, and political aspects that influence migration. They emphasized the importance of economic opportunity, improved living circumstances, and escape from adversity as significant motivators for migration. Massey et al. also explored the importance of social networks and political situations in enabling or impeding migration, which contributed to a better understanding of the intricacies of international migration.

### 3.4 Peter Kok's Definition of Migration (1997-1999)

Peter Kok's work in the Southern African Journal of Demography provided a sophisticated definition of migration, with a special emphasis on internal migration. Kok defined migration as persons or groups crossing the boundary of a given geographical unit and changing residence. His concept recognized the various meanings of migration, ranging from the movement of people over a certain distance to a narrower definition requiring a change in residency.

### 3.5 Skeldon's Global Perspective on Migration (1997)

Skeldon (1997) broadened our knowledge of migration by examining its global aspects. He described migration as the movement of individuals from one location to another, which includes many types of mobility such as temporary and permanent movements, internal and international migration, and voluntary and coerced migration. Skeldon's approach emphasized migration's global connection and development ramifications.

### 3.6 Borjas on Migration in Economics (1999)

Borjas (1999) defined migration as the transfer of labour and human capital from one region or country to another, motivated by disparities in economic prospects, pay, and living conditions. His research focused on the economic incentives for migration and the role of labour markets in affecting migration patterns.

### 3.7 Brettell on Migration in Anthropology (2008)

Brettell (2008) used an anthropological approach to migration, focusing on the cultural, social, and family networks involved. He addressed migrants' living experiences, cultural traditions, and adaptations to new contexts. This viewpoint emphasized the social aspects of migration, such as identity, community, and the difficulties of integrating into new communities.



### **3.8 King's Theories and Typologies of Migration (2012)**

King (2012) gave a wide survey of migration ideas, defining migration as the permanent or semi-permanent change of location of people or groups. He separated migration from other modes of transportation, including nomadism, commuting, and tourism. King's study contributes to a better understanding of what characterizes migration and its different manifestations.

### **3.9 Castles, Miller, and De Hass on the Age of Migration (2014)**

Castles, Miller, and De Hass (2014) defined migration as the process of relocating across an international boundary or inside a state. They included the migration of refugees, displaced people, economic migrants, and those traveling for other reasons, such as family reunion. Their study focused on the variety of migration experiences and the complex factors driving migration in the modern world.

### **3.10 Martin and Taylor's Migration Hump Theory (2017)**

Martin and Taylor (2017) proposed the "Migration Hump" theory, which explains the link between economic progress and migratory trends. According to their argument, when a country's economy grows, migration increases because individuals have more means to relocate and seek better chances overseas. However, as development progresses and local conditions improve, the incentives for movement diminish, resulting in a drop in outmigration. This approach offered a more sophisticated view of the link between economic development and migratory movements.

### **3.11 Recent Perspectives from World Bank and United Nations (2021-2024)**

In recent years, agencies such as the World Bank and the United Nations have underlined migration's substantial contributions to human development, shared prosperity, and poverty reduction. The World Bank (2021) emphasized the need of controlling migration's sources and consequences so that origin and destination nations may share benefits. The United Nations (2023) defines migration as the movement of individuals across political or administrative borders, generally with the intention of living temporarily or permanently in a new region. These viewpoints highlight the continuous significance of migration in global development and policy discussions (World Bank, 2021; United Nations, 2023).

### **3.12 International Organization for Migration (IOM) Report 2022**

According to the IOM's World Migration Report 2022, approximately 281 million people migrated from other countries in 2020, accounting for 3.6% of the world's population. The review features what the Coronavirus pandemic has altogether meant for movement, guiding out the extreme disturbances in portability due toward line terminations and lockdown measures. This present circumstance upset travellers' versatility; however it additionally deteriorated their weaknesses by uplifting financial unsteadiness and confining their capacity to get to fundamental administrations, demolishing the current social and monetary issues looked by transient gatherings.

## **IV. Migration and Climate Change - A Brief Understanding the Emerging Change**

Global issues like migration and climate change are intertwined and have attracted more attention in recent years. Environmental change, through its bunch influences on ecological circumstances, has turned into a critical driver of human relocation. As natural corruption, outrageous climate occasions, and moving rural examples become more predominant, they are compelling populaces to move looking for better day to day environments. Below is the connection between environmental change and relocation, the instruments through which environmental change impacts movement, and the complex consequences for strategy and practice (World Migration Report 2024).

### **4.1 Migration as forced displacement.**

Research by Mc Leman and Smit (2006) centers around the connection between natural corruption and constrained removal. They argue that changes in the environment, such as desertification, deforestation, and soil erosion, result in the gradual depletion of natural resources, making it harder for people to make ends meet. Therefore, people who gets impacted through this might be compelled to relocate, frequently moving from rustic regions to metropolitan at equivalent course of time. Mc Leman and Smit (2006) note that such movements can compound metropolitan congestion, strain foundation, and increment the gamble of social pressures in getting regions.

### **4.2 Migration as a result of climate change**

A few investigations play featured the part of environmental change as a driver of movement. Black et al. (2011) claim that climate change increases existing environmental, social, economic, and political changes, which in turn acts as an indirect driver of migration. The authors emphasize that





migration frequently occurs as a result of a combination of push and pull factors, Lee's Push and Pull theories. Climate change points to push factors, which include decreasing agricultural productivity, scarcity of water, and rising sea levels. People are forced to leave their homes as a result of these environmental stressors, particularly in regions that are heavily dependent on natural resources like South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa.

#### **4.3 Relocation as a Method of Adaptation**

While relocation is in many cases seen if all else fails for those impacted by environmental change, it can likewise be a versatile procedure. Adger et al. (2014) contend that movement can act as a type of transformation to natural changes, permitting people and networks to differentiate their pay sources, decrease their openness to environment dangers, and access new open doors. According to Adger et al. (2014), migration to urban areas or overseas, for instance, can provide alternative sources of income in areas where agricultural productivity is decreasing as a result of shifting rainfall patterns, thereby contributing to the development of climate resilience. However, the authors warn that the use of relocation as a transformation strategy carries risks because it may result in a lack of social personality, interpersonal organizations, and spot-based information.

#### **4.4 Policy Responses to Migration Caused by the Climate**

At last, the strategy reactions to environment incited relocation are a vital area of concentration. Gemenne (2011) argues that comprehensive policies that address the underlying causes of migration, including climate change, are required. Gemenne argues that migration ought to be incorporated into both national and international strategies for adapting to climate change, with an emphasis on making vulnerable populations more resilient. This includes supporting sustainable livelihoods, expanding access to education and healthcare, and investing in climate-resilient infrastructure. Additionally, due to the fact that current systems fail to address the requirements of environment-affected migrants sufficiently, the creator demands that environmental-affected migrants be recognized under global regulation.

### **V. Significance of Tracing Migration Theories**

This research is especially useful since it combines a variety of views, providing a comprehensive understanding of migration. It

highlights the relevance of economic, social, and political elements in driving migration movements and their consideration in policymaking. Furthermore, the report emphasizes the continuous importance of migration in global development, as evidenced by recent contributions from the World Bank and the United Nations.

Overall, this approach is critical for scholars, policymakers, and practitioners who want to understand migration patterns and the ramifications for countries throughout the world. It lays a solid framework for future study and gives critical insights for building effective migration policy in an increasingly linked world. While relocation can act as a versatile methodology, it additionally presents critical social and financial difficulties for both sending and getting networks. Comprehensive policy responses that support the resilience of affected populations and mitigate the effects of climate change are necessary to address these challenges. As environmental change keeps on strengthening, understanding and dealing with the movement it causes will be fundamental to guaranteeing human security and manageable advancement in the a very long time to come.

### **VI. Theoretical framework for comprehending the concept of Migration**

The study of migration ideas begins with Ravenstein's Laws (1885), where short-distance movement and economic incentives were seen as key drivers. Lee's Push and Pull Theory (1966) expanded on this by recognizing intervening barriers, emphasizing the complexity of migratory decisions. As migration studies evolved, Massey et al. (1993) explored the social, economic, and political forces shaping international migration, while Peter Kok (1997-1999) focused on internal migration and changes in residence.

Skeldon (1997) extended the scope to global migration, and Borjas (1999) focused on the economic disparities influencing migration patterns. Brettell (2008), using an anthropological lens, highlighted the role of culture and social networks, while King (2012) distinguished migration from other forms of mobility like tourism. Castles, Miller, and De Hass (2014) emphasized migration's diverse global patterns, followed by Martin and Taylor's Migration Hump Theory (2017), which linked economic development to shifts in migration trends.

Recent insights from international bodies, including the World Bank (2021) and the United Nations (2023), underscore migration's role in human development, particularly in the face of global challenges like climate change. Climate-induced



migration is becoming a critical area of focus, as environmental degradation, rising sea levels, and extreme weather events force communities to relocate, further complicating global mobility patterns. The IOM's 2022 report examines the COVID-19 pandemic's disruptions to migration, noting highlighted vulnerabilities among migrants,

many of whom are already affected by climate-driven displacement.

This inclusion of climate change migration emphasizes that environmental factors are now increasingly recognized alongside economic and social variables, marking a new frontier in migration studies in the 21st century.

### Factors in Migration

SI no	Authors/Research	Year	Factors	Observation
1	E. G. Ravenstein (Law of Migration)	1885	Shorts Distance Migration Economic possibilities as primary motivators Gender and their inclination towards migration.	Push and Pull variables source considered in his theory.
2	E.S. Lee (Push and Pull Theory)	1966	Expanded on Ravenstein work on Push and Pull hypothesis. Elements that influence migration Developed the notion of intervening barriers	Impact a person's decision to move.
3	Massey et al	1993	The aspects of economic, social and political that influence migration Significant motivators of migration Importance of social & political networks for migration	Theories of International Migration.
4	Peter Kok	1997-1999	Emphasis on internal migration Concept of various meanings of migration	Definition of Migration with concepts
5	R. Skeldon	1997	Broadened about migration on global aspects Types of Mobility Global connections and developments of migration	A global perspective towards Migration
6	G. J. Borjas	1999	Transfer of labour and human capital one place to another. Incentives and role of labour markets in affecting migration patterns.	Research focused on role of economic migration.
7	C. B. Brettle	2008	Approached to migration focused on cultural, social and family networks. A lifestyle of a migrant.	An anthropological approach to migration.
8	R. King	2012	Survey of migration ideas Permanent or semi-permanent migration	Theories and Topologies of Migration.
9	S. Castles, M. J. Miller and H De Hass	2014	Relocation inside a state, different state or international Variety of migration experiences. Migration in the modern world.	Age of Migration process
10	P. L. Martin and J. E. Taylor	2017	The link between economic progress and migratory trends on relocation.	Migration Hump Theory
11	World Bank and United Nation	2021-2024	Human development, migration sources and consequences, its origin.	Migration as contributors
12	International Organization for Migration Report	2022	On world's population. Affects during coronavirus in migration. Travellers/Migrants circumstances	Economic, Social, Environmental, Population and Political
13	International Organization for Migration Report	2024	Current global scenario Relation between migration & climate change.	Migration and Climate Change, its inter-relation



	(Migration and Climate Change)		Instruments of climate change and its impact. Global strategy and practices	
14	R. Mc Leman and B Smit	2006	The connection between natural environmental corruption and constrained removal.	Migration as forced displacement due to climate change
15	Black et al	2011	Climate change increases existing environmental, social, economic and political changes.	Drivers of migration due to climate change.
16	Adger et al	2014	Impact of migration due to environmental changes. Migration to urban regions, its sources and benefits.	Migration as a method of Adaption due to climate change.
17	F. Gemenne	2011	Underlying causes of migration/relocation. International and national strategies for adapting to climate change.	Policies responses to Migration caused by climate change.

Figure 3: Factors of Migration in Tabular Form  
 Source: from Review of Literature

**THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK PROGRESSION ON  
 MIGRATION THEORIES**

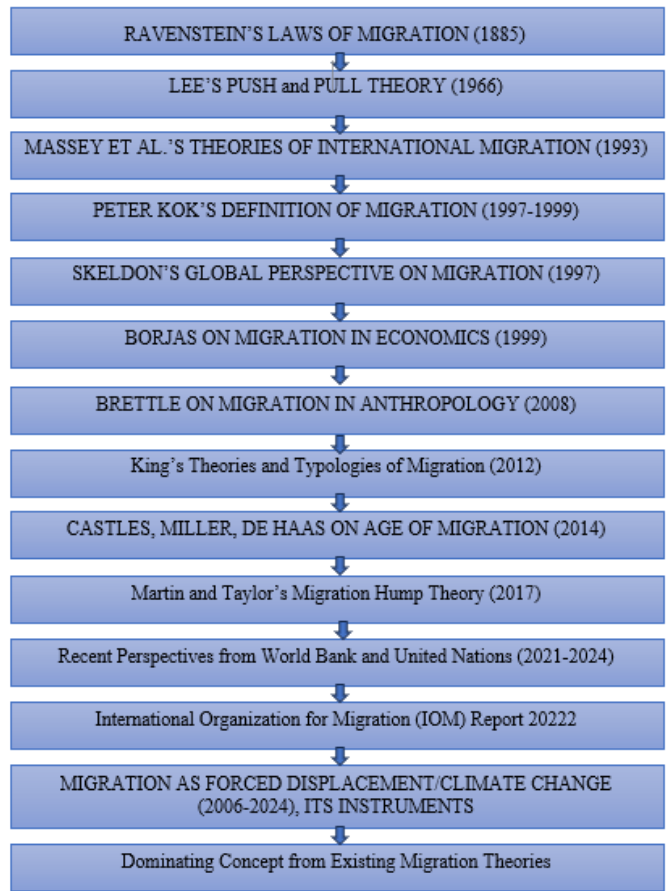


Figure 4: Flowchart of Theoretical framework of Various Migration Theories  
 Source: from Review of Literature



## VII. Paradigm Shift from Traditional Theories to Climate Change and Migration

Networked Migration in the Digital Age—Earlier migration theories concentrated on push-pull causes, economic differences, and social networks, but today's main paradigm is digital connectedness and virtual networks. Digital technologies are altering migratory patterns, impacting decision-making, communication, and integration. Social networking platforms, digital labour marketplaces, and remittance applications are facilitating worldwide connections, allowing migrants to stay connected with their home country while exploring new prospects. This paradigm indicates a transition away from simply economic and physical mobility and toward a network-based digital migration process in which virtual and real environments converge. However, climate change is also taking a huge role in migration. In 21<sup>st</sup> century, due to rise of sea levels, extreme drought, heavy emission of Chlorofluorocarbons, which is making a residence area not sustainable for civilization. For better lifestyle and opportunities people migrate from urban to “Mega Cities”. Millions are displaced, straining resources and infrastructure globally.

## VIII. Future Scope of Study

In spite of the developing acknowledgment of the connection between environmental change and relocation, the worldwide reaction has been divided and to a great extent in urbanization, unemployment, resources and climate change which give opportunities for future research in the area of sustainable development and its goals. The study on urbanization will focus on creating smarter and balanced cities along with population growth and sustainability. The driving instruments are good healthcare facilities, education, infrastructure and broaden culture society etc. along with the use of latest technologies in their lifestyle. Also, social equity will gain huge attention to the rapidly growing “cities” and “Mega cities” in urban strategy, planning and infrastructure.

Due to artificial intelligence and the rise of tech economy, a major group of population is being attracted/relocating for its sources and lifestyle. Scholars can explore its impact and consequences on ongoing trends in the market, its policies and adaptability.

Long term sustainability is very crucial. Over exploiting of resources, has led to future scope and study in resource management into sustainable

consumption of strategies and policies which also affects its economic, social and environmental development.

Climate change will always remain attached with the study on migration strategies. Developing solution and strategies to these global challenges will be a critical approach towards development by practicing and putting resources into foundation for reducing future catastrophe risk.

## IX. Conclusion

Migration research has changed greatly since Ravenstein's basic rules, with modern models including economic, social, and political aspects. This research examined the historical evolution of migration ideas, highlighting major contributions from several fields. Migration is still a complicated and diverse phenomenon, affected by a variety of causes that continue to determine human mobility in the modern world. Migration theories and understandings will evolve in response to changing global situations, needing continual research and adaptation of existing frameworks. The connection among movement and environmental change is complicated and complex, including a scope of ecological, social, and monetary elements. Environmental change goes about as both an immediate and circuitous driver of relocation by intensifying natural corruption, expanding weakness, and lessening the capacity of population to support their livelihoods. Complete arrangement reactions that help to strength the impacted population and relieve the impacts of environmental change are important to address these difficulties. Understanding and dealing with environmental change will be crucial to ensuring human security and manageable development for a very long time to come as it continues to accelerate preparing future experts to address global challenges in policy, human adaption and sustainability.

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