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Factors Contributing to the Adoption of Institutional Repositories in Universities in South-West Nigeria: Perspectives of Library Staff

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Abstract

Institutional repository (IR) has the potential of increasing the visibility, prestige, ranking and public value of researchers and universities. Despite the potential benefits associated with the establishment of institutional repositories (IRs) by universities, observations have showed that it is as if most universities in Nigeria have not keyed into this laudable innovation. The study therefore examined from the library staff point of view, the factors that could contribute to the adoption of IRs in Universities in South-West Nigeria. Descriptive survey research design was adopted and the population consisted of 32 library staff in seven universities in South-West Nigeria. The total enumeration method was used and the questionnaire was the data collection method used. Results showed that most of the respondents (86.7%) had high level of awareness and also majority had a favourable perception of IR. Most of the respondents also acknowledged that IR is easy to use and also very useful. Majority of the library staff also identified licensing agreement, deposit and withdrawal services and issues relating to copyright and intellectual property as factors that could influence adoption of IR. It was recommended that capacity workshops should be organised to educate relevant stakeholders on issues of IR adoption.

Keywords: Institutional repositories, library staff, Universities, Nigeria

Introduction

Universities as institutions of higher learning place emphasis on research as one of their core functions apart from teaching and community services. A key criterion that is used to measure the quality of a university is the quality and quantity of research output. A university that falters in the production of brilliant researches that can be applied in moving the society forward socio-economically and technologically, has lost its relevance. It is therefore essential that in expanding the frontiers of knowledge and imparting the society positively, adequate attention should be placed on the intellectual output emanating from the ivory towers. The situation where the totality of the research output emanating from a particular university cannot

be ascertained will make it very difficult to evaluate the university output and could also impede the collation and onward transmission of the researches that can benefit different segments of the society to the parties concerned. This reveals the need for the establishment of institutional repositories (IRs) in universities.

Lynch (2003), expressed that a university institutional repository is a collection of services that a university proffers to its own members intended for the management, organisation and diffusion of digital works produced by these members. An Institutional Repository (IR) could thus be viewed as a digital archive that provides the platform where the universities can archive their intellectual output. The IRs could include theses, dissertations, projects, course notes, seminar papers, conference proceedings, administrative documents, learning objects and other forms of grey literature. According to Bhardwaj (2014), an institutional repository is a means to ensure that the published work of scholars is available to the academic community.

Omeluzor (2014) stated that both institutions and contributors benefit from IR. Institutions benefit from IR as it; serves as tangible indicators of an institution's quality, thus increasing its visibility, prestige, and public value; Increases the ranking of an institution both at local and international level; enhances learning, online teaching and research especially in higher institution of learning; and presents an institution's intellectual capital to a whole lot of scholars (Crow, 2002; Sharma, Meichieo & Saha, 2008; and Murray, 2008). Other benefits to the institutions as expressed by the authors are that IR; provides a central component in reforming scholarly communication by stimulating innovation in a disaggregated publishing structure; provides immediate and valuable complement to the existing scholarly publishing model, while stimulating innovation that evolve and improve overtime; and enhances resource sharing and provides long-term solution. All these are the benefits that universities as higher institutions can derive from IRs.

The contributors will also benefit from IR, as they are likely to enjoy access to articles without hindrance and charges, open access to a wider audience of researchers, increased impact of researchers' work, easy accessibility to research work and creation of further research approaches, self-archiving and increased citation to published scholarly work among others (Dhanavandan & Tamizhchelvan, 2013). This implies that apart from universities, faculty members and other contributors to the institutional repository have a lot to gain. Arising from this is the fact that a successful IR comes from the combination of different stakeholders.

Management as well as faculty members have their role and responsibilities in ensuring the development of IR. The need for institutional repository has come to limelight and cannot be overemphasised.

It must be noted that often, repository managers are library staff in many institutions, as the library is in a strong position to draw relevant people together with strong service links to both the academic community and fellow service providers (White, 2009). Corroborating the prominent role that librarians play in the establishment of IRs, Dhanavandan & Tamizhchelvan (2013), reported from their study conducted on attitude and awareness of institutional repositories by faculty members that most of the respondents appreciated the role of the library. They expressed that library professionals supported and coordinated the design and the archival activities of the institutional repositories. This shows that staff of libraries are major actors in the establishment of IRs and their views should be treated with all seriousness.

Universities in Nigeria have started to heed the call made by the National Universities Commission in 2007, which encouraged academic libraries to provide access to both print and electronic resources especially those generated within the university in order to increase access to information resources and visibility of their institutions as a measure of prestige and recognition internationally. This is because the idea of an Institutional Repository is a current theme in tertiary institutions that have seen it as a necessity for making available their institutional resources, thereby increasing their visibility and better performance in the ongoing web ranking of world universities in particular.

Even though the idea of IR is beginning to gain ground in Nigerian universities, Aghwotu & Ebire (2016) expressed that few universities have been able to establish repository in order to provide information resources for member of staff and students to use for teaching, learning and research work. This shows that some factors might still be hindering the establishment of IRs in Nigerian universities. The factors that could influence the adoption of IRs include issues like awareness, perception and availability of funds on the part of the individuals who are directly responsible for the establishment of IR in the institution. Another factor lies in the perception of the innovation (IR), as regards it perceived ease of use and usefulness. While the last factor focuses on the management and ethical concerns associated with IR like management policy, submissions, restrictions, copyright and preservation issues.

It would be very difficult for researchers and academics to utilise IRs if those who are supposed to be aware of the benefits associated with the use of IRs are not. It is only when the individuals responsible for the establishment of IR are aware that they can sensitise others. Perception is another factor that could hinder adoption of IR. Though the management of universities might be aware of IR, their perception might not be favourable towards adopting it. Lack of funds is another major problem experienced by developing countries institutions in their effort to establish IRs. Repositories cannot be sustained without long-term infusions of funds. Furthermore, the rate at which IR is perceived useful and easy to use could influence its adoption. In addition it could be very difficult to for IR to be established if the view of the stakeholders is that copyright violation might be experienced. It is against this backdrop that this study from the library staff point of view is set to empirically investigate how these factors could contribute to the adoption of IR in Nigerian universities.

Statement of the problem

Despite the potential benefits associated with the use of institutional repositories (IRs) by universities, observations have shown that most universities in Nigeria have not keyed in into this laudable innovation. This could be as a result of some factors like low level of awareness and unfavourable perception of IRs on the part of the management of universities, coupled with the availability of funds. Other factors include the perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness of IRs and management view on policy, submissions and restrictions and issues of copyright and preservation. It is also essential to note that quite a number of studies on IRs that have been conducted centred on the perception and use of IRs by faculty members, but only very few have sought the opinion of library staff who are saddled with the responsibility of establishing IRs in most universities, perhaps none from the Nigerian context. It is based on this that this study considers the factors contributing to the adoption of IRs in Nigerian universities from the perspectives of the library staff.

Research questions

The following research questions will guide the study;

1. What is the level of awareness and perception of institutional repositories by library staff saddled with the responsibility of establishing IRs in the universities?
2. How available are the funds to establish IRs in the universities?

3. What is the library staff view of the perceived ease of use and usefulness of IRs?
4. What are the management and ethical issues that could influence the adoption of IRs in the universities?
5. What are the perceived benefits of IR adoption in the universities?

Literature review

Awareness is a critical factor in the utilisation of any information product. In this light, Yang & Li (2015) expressed that for the adoption of IR to be successful and serve its full potential, it is imperative that its constituents be aware of its existence. The library staff form a critical mass in the adoption of IR and their awareness is of much importance as it could lead to the establishment of IR. It is after IR has been established that the awareness of users will come to play. However, it seems as if there is a dearth of literature on specifically library staff awareness of IR. But literature is replete with studies focusing on users especially faculty members, which often at times include librarians. These studies however provide valuable insights on awareness of IR by the stakeholders.

Kim (2011) investigated the perceptions of faculty members from 17 Carnegie doctorate granting universities in the United States regarding institutional repositories. Results showed that about (60%) of the respondents indicated that they were unaware of their universities IRs. Dutta and Paul (2014) studied selected science and technology faculty members of the University of Calcutta, India. They reported that most of the respondents noted that their awareness of IR was less satisfactory as they only became aware of IR through the Internet. On the contrary the study by Dhanavandan & Tamizhchelvan (2013) on the attitudes and awareness of institutional repositories and open access publishing by 200 faculty members in Annamalai University, though 160 completed the questionnaire. The respondents included assistant professor, associate professor and professor and results showed that 150 (93.75%) indicated that they were aware, 6 (3.75%) were not aware and 4 (2.50%) said they had no opinion. In the Nigerian context, Aghwotu & Ebiere (2016) also examined the awareness and attitude of lecturers towards establishing IR in Niger Delta University, Bayelsa State Nigeria and reported that (90%) of the respondents stated that they were aware of IR.

Apart from awareness, the perception of IR is critical to its adoption and onward utilisation. Oguz & Assefa (2014) conducted a study on the faculty members' perceptions

towards institutional repository at regional university in the South-eastern U.S.A. The questionnaire which was the research instrument was delivered to 500 respondents online via surveymonkey.com. Findings revealed that little over half of the respondents had a favourable or positive perception towards the IR. Results from the study of Dutta & Paul (2014) also showed that majority of the faculty reported a positive favourable perception regarding IR. In a recent study, Ukwoma & Dike (2017) studied 491 academics' attitudes towards the utilisation of IRs in five Nigerian universities with IRs according to OpenDOAR. They reported that the fact that academics disagreed with the negative statements in the null hypotheses showed that they had a positive attitude towards submission of their publications.

Moreover, regardless of the attitude and perception of those saddled with the responsibility of establishing IR and the users in universities, funding is a determining factor. This is because even if the users have the right attitude and display a favourable perception towards the utilization of IR for academic activities, but there are no funds to set up, then it makes no difference. Studies have established that in developing countries like Nigeria, funding of IR is an issue. Christian (2008) conducted a study in University of Lagos and the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA) and reported that majority of the respondents (49.2%) strongly agreed, while (21.5%) agreed that inadequate funding was indeed a challenge facing the establishment of IRs in Nigeria. Similarly, Ivwighreghweta (2012) carried out a study in six universities in Nigeria where the opinions of 300 researchers and policy makers were sampled. Results showed that 150 (50%) and (47%) agreed and strongly agreed that funding was the major problem confronting the establishment of IRs in most Nigerian universities.

However, for the institutions who have the required funds to establish IRs, it is very necessary to take cognisance of factors like perceived ease of use and usefulness. This is because these two factors could determine if eventually the IRs will be used or not. Carter & Belanger (2005) indicated that perceived ease of use is predicted to influence perceived usefulness, because the easier a system is to use, the more useful it can be. This underscores the fact that those saddled with the responsibility of establishing IR need to perceive IR as easy to use, before such can be established within the institution. Literature is quite replete with the perceived usefulness of IRs. It has been established that IRs help to capture the intellectual capital of the institution, provide better service to contributors, expose the institution's intellectual output to

researchers around the world and also assist to increase the library's role as a viable partner in the research enterprise among others.

In addition, it would be very difficult to establish a functional IR without considering management and ethical issues which seem to have always been the concern of stakeholders. Shedding a light on one of the issues, John-Okeke (2008) noted that understanding copyright issues is a key to building a successful institutional repository. If these issues are not properly managed, they could constitute a clog in the wheel in the establishment of IRs. Eke (2011) viewed legal aspects of IRs as a challenge. Likewise, Musa, Musa & Aliyu (2014) also raised the concern of issues relating to copyright. If these ethical issues are not well ironed out, the perceived benefits of IRs to universities which include exposure of researches (Cullen & Chawner, 2008), increasing the reputation and recognition of the higher institution (Pinfield, 2002) and the preservation of the entire scholarly knowledge of the institution (Lynch, 2003), will not be realised.

Methodology

The descriptive survey research design was used the study and the population consisted of selected library staff of seven universities in South West Nigeria that have adopted and in the process of adopting electronic institutional repositories. These staff were selected because they were directly involved in the adoption process and would be able to provide the information needed. According to the data collected from the university libraries of these institutions, the total number of library staff who are directly involved in the adoption process is 32 (Table 3.1).

Table 1 Population of the study

S/N	Universities	Selected Staff
1.	University of Ibadan	7
2.	Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta	6
3.	Obafemi Awolowo University	5
4.	Federal University of Technology, Akure	5

5.	Covenant University	4
6.	University of Lagos	3
7.	Redeemer University	2
	Total	32

Source: Preliminary investigations from the universities

The total enumeration method was used for this study. This technique was adopted because the population size was manageable by the researcher who had the capability to manage and collect data within the specific time. The questionnaire was the data collection instrument and analysis was done with the use of descriptive statistics of frequency counts and percentages for the research questions and correlation and regression analysis for the hypotheses.

Results and discussion

A total of thirty two (32) copies of the questionnaire were administered for this research. Thirty (30) were duly filled and returned for analysis. This translated to 93.7% response rate. The analyses and interpretation of the data collected with content analysis result are presented below.

Demographic characteristics of respondents

Table 2 presented data on the demographic variables of the respondents and findings showed that most of the respondents 18 (60.0%) had master degrees, while only 2 (6.7%) had PhDs. Majority of the respondents 16 (53.3%) were of the female gender, as 14 (46.7%) were males. In addition, a higher percentage of the respondents came from the University of Ibadan 7 (23.3%), as the least 2 (6.7%) came from Redeemers University. Results also revealed that majority of the respondents 7 (23.4%) were Librarian II, while 1 (3.3%) was an Automation Officer and another individual with the same percentage as a Senior Library Officer.

Table 2 Demographic characteristics of respondents

Demographic characteristics	Frequency	%
Highest Educational Qualification		
First degree	7	23.3
Master degree	18	60.0
Phd In View	3	10.0
PhD	2	6.7
Total	30	100.0
Gender		
Male	14	46.7
Female	16	53.3
Total	30	100.0
Name of Institutions		
University of Ibadan	7	23.3
Obafemi Awolowo University	5	16.7
University of Lagos	3	10.0
Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta	5	16.7
Federal University of Technology, Akure	4	13.3
Redeemers University, Ede	2	6.7
Covenant University	4	13.3
Total	30	100.0
Designation		
Librarian I	6	20.0
Librarian II	7	23.4
System Analyst	6	20.0
Senior Librarian	3	10.0
Senior Library Officer	1	3.3
Network Engineer	3	10.0
Senior Technical Officer	3	10.0
Automation Officer	1	3.3
Total	30	100.0

Answers to research questions

Research question one: What is the level of awareness and perception of institutional repositories by library staff saddled with the responsibility of establishing IRs in the universities?

Table 4.3 revealed that majority of the respondents had a high level of awareness when it comes to the issue of IR, as 15 (50.0%) noted that they had a very high level of IR awareness and 11 (36.7%) indicated that their own awareness level was high. This indicates that the library staff are in line with the present age and the trends in the provision of open access publications. With

this level of awareness it is expected that they would advocate for the establishment and the continued sustenance of IRs in their various institutions. Thereby, acknowledging the submission of Yang & Li (2015) who stated that awareness of IR by the relevant stakeholders, library staff inclusive will lead to the adoption and success of IR.

On the perception of IR by the respondents, majority of them 17 (56.7%) averred that IR technology fits into the academic system, 15 (50.0%) noted that institutions who have adopted the IR concept had more prestige and public value than those that have not and 14 (46.7%) strongly agreed that implementing an IR improves the lifespan of any institution's output. It can be deduced that most of the respondents had a favourable and positive perception of IR. Thus, most of the library staff positively favoured the adoption of IRs in their various universities. Results from the study of Dutta & Paul (2014) also showed that majority of the faculty reported a positive favourable perception regarding IR. In a recent study, Ukwoma & Dike (2017) studied academics' attitudes towards the utilisation of IRs in five Nigerian universities with IRs and they discovered that most of them were ready to deposit their works in the IR.

Table 3 Awareness and perception of IR by the library staff in the selected universities

Statement	Very High		High		Moderate		Low		Mean	Std. Dev.
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%		
What is your level of awareness of IR?	11	36.7	15	50.0	3	10.1	1	3.3	3.33	.711
Perception of IR	SA		A		D		SD		Mean	Std. Dev.
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%		
IR is not certainly compulsory for your institution. Although it might be helpful adopting and using it	4	13.3	13	43.3	9	30.0	4	13.3	2.56	.897
Implementing an IR improves the lifespan of any institution's output to be visible	14	46.7	15	50.0	1	3.3	0	0	3.43	.568
Implementing an IR improves the lifespan of any institution's output	14	46.7	16	53.3	0	0	0	0	3.46	.507
Implementing an IR aids proper monitoring and assessment of my institution's research output.	13	43.3	15	50.0	1	3.3	1	3.3	3.33	.711
I think IR is a technology that fits into the academic system	17	56.7	13	43.3	0	0	0	0	3.56	.504
Institutions who have adopted the IR concept have more prestige and public value than those that have not	15	50.0	12	40.0	2	6.7	1	3.3	3.36	.764
Having an IR is a status symbol in academic environment	14	46.7	10	33.3	5	16.7	1	3.3	3.23	.858
Weighted Average Mean									3.27	.687

Research question two: How available are the funds to establish IRs in the universities?

Table 4 indicated that a very high number of the respondents 28 (93.3%) were of the opinion that funds that can be used to start up and sustain IR were available in their various institutions. This shows that funding may not necessarily be a challenge but the commitment needed to see to it that IR is established, maintained and sustained in the universities. This is however in contrast to the findings of Christian (2008) who conducted a study in University of Lagos and the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA) and reported that majority of the respondents agreed that inadequate funding was indeed a challenge facing the establishment of IRs in Nigeria. Ivwighreghweta (2012) who carried out a study in six universities in Nigeria where the opinions of 300 researchers and policy makers were sampled was also discovered that funding was identified by most of the respondents as the major problem confronting the establishment of IRs in most Nigerian universities.

Table 4 Availability of funds to establish IR in the selected universities

Statements	Yes		No	
	F	%	F	5
Do you have the funds to start up IR in your institution?	28	93.3	2	6.7
Do you have the funds to sustain IR in your institution?	28	93.3	2	6.7

Research question three: What is library staff view of the perceived ease of use and usefulness of IRs?

Table 5 revealed that on the perceived ease of use of IR, majority of the library staff 19 (63.3%) agreed that IR is user friendly, while respondents of the same number and percentage also noted that accessing IR is easy and straight forward. On the other hand, 17 (56.7%) strongly agreed that IR enables researchers to have access to and use scholarly publications. Additionally, the same number of respondents also acknowledged that implementing IR increases the institutional research output. This implies that majority of the library staff perceived IR to be easy to use and as well useful. This justifies the expression of Carter & Belanger (2005) who indicated that perceived ease of use is predicted to influence perceived usefulness, because the easier a system is to use, the more useful it can be.

Table 5 Perceived ease of use and usefulness of IRs

Items	SA		A		D		SD		Mean	Std. Dev.
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%		
Perceived Ease of Use										
IR is user-friendly	10	33.3	19	63.3	1	3.3	0	0	3.30	.534
Accessing IR is easy and straight forward	10	33.3	19	63.3	1	3.3	0	0	3.30	.534
Overall I believe that IR is easy to use	12	40.0	17	56.7	1	3.3	0	0	3.36	.556
Learning to use IR for research is easy	10	33.3	19	63.3	1	3.3	0	0	3.30	.534
Perceived usefulness										
IR enables researchers to get access and use scholarly publications	17	56.7	12	40.0	1	3.3	0	0	3.53	.571
Implementing IR increases the institutional research output display	17	56.7	11	36.7	2	6.7	0	0	3.50	.629
Using IR increases institution's visibility	15	50.0	14	46.7	1	3.3	0	0	3.46	.571
Weighted Average Mean									3.39	.561

Research question four: What are the management and ethical issues that could influence the adoption of IRs in the universities?

Table 6 showed that the most prominent management and ethical issues that could influence the adoption of IRs include licensing agreement, deposit and withdrawal services and issues relating to copyright and intellectual property as indicated by 20 (66.7%), 18 (60%) and 17 (56.7%) of the respondents respectively. This confirms the point made by John-Okeke (2008) who noted that understanding copyright issues is important in building a successful institutional repository. This fact was further reaffirmed by Musa et al (2014) who raised the concern of issues relating to copyright. Eke (2011) also posited that legal aspects of IRs could be also a challenge.

Table 6 Management and ethical issues that could influence the adoption of IRs

Items	SA		A		D		SD		Mean	Std. Dev.
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%		
There is security issue	4	13.3	19	63.3	6	20.0	1	3.3	2.86	.681
Technological changes is a problem	4	13.3	17	56.7	8	26.7	1	3.3	2.80	.714
Access control and rights management: to restrict access	6	20.0	17	56.7	5	16.7	2	6.7	2.90	.803

to the information when open access is premature or not desirable is not certain										
Copyright and intellectual property are concern for researchers	10	33.3	17	56.7	3	10.0	0	0	3.23	.626
Preserving e-prints is an issue	2	6.7	19	63.3	8	26.7	1	3.3	2.73	.639
Licensing agreement is an issue	5	16.7	20	66.7	4	13.3	1	3.3	3.06	.583
Documents formats and types is a concern	1	3.3	17	56.7	11	36.7	1	3.3	2.60	.621
Content management is a problem	3	10.0	17	56.7	9	30.0	1	3.3	2.73	.691
Deposit and withdrawal services are issues	5	16.7	18	60.0	6	20.0	1	3.3	2.90	.711
Internet connections is a concern	7	23.3	18	60.0	4	13.3	1	3.3	3.03	.718
Advocacy and promotion are major concern	2	6.7	18	60.0	10	33.3	0	0	2.73	.583
Weighted Average Mean									2.87	.670

Research question five: What are the perceived benefits of IR adoption in the universities?

Results from table 7 revealed that most of the library staff had the perception that adoption of IR is very beneficial. Majority of them 18 (60.0%) agreed that IR makes research output of the university visible as well as benefit researchers and all in the academic community. In addition, 17 (56.7%) of the respondents also agreed that the adoption of IR will increase the public image and value of the university. This agrees with Dhanavandan & Tamizhchelvan, (2013) who observed that the benefits associated with the use of IR include open access to a wider audience of researchers, increased impact of researcher’s work, easy accessibility to research work and creation of further research approaches, self-archiving and increased citation to published scholarly work among others.

Table 7 Perceived benefits of IR adoption

Benefits	SA		A		D		SD		Mean	S.D
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%		
Adoption and implementation of an IR for my university is very important	16	53.3	14	16.7	-	-	-	-	3.53	.507
The establishment of IR will:	17	56.7	13	43.3	-	-	-	-	3.56	.504
Provide access to research output	18	60.0	12	40.0	-	-	-	-	3.60	.498
Make research output more visible	17	56.7	11	36.7	2		-	-	3.50	.621
Enhance the prestige of my university	17	56.7	11	36.7	2	6.7	-	-	3.50	.621
Increase the public value of my university	14	46.7	16	53.3	-	-	-	-	3.46	.507
Aids research monitoring and assessment	15	50.0	15	50.0	-	-	-	-	3.50	.508
Aids monitoring of research outputs by funders	18	60.0	12	40.0	-	-	-	-	3.60	.498
Benefits researchers and academics in Nigeria immensely	16	53.3	14	46.7	-	-	-	-	3.53	.507
Preserve research outputs	19	63.3	11	36.7	-	-	-	-	3.63	.490
Capture the intellectual capital of my university										
Weighted Average mean									3.54	.527

Conclusion and recommendations

The library staff who are saddled with the responsibility of the establishment of IRs in universities have the necessary awareness of what IRs are and how they can contribute to the academic activities of the universities. The opinions of these individuals as highlighted in the study revealed that regardless of the money spent on establishing IRs, the benefits far outweighs the demerits. For academics and other researchers who may have had the view that using IR may not be so easy, the library staff who are directly involved in issues of IR in most universities noted that such a fear should not be entertained as they indicated that IR is easy to use. In order to encourage other stakeholders, especially faculty members to support the IR innovation, issues like licensing agreement, deposit and withdrawal services and issues relating to copyright and intellectual property should be properly spelt out. It is therefore recommended that series of conferences and capacity building workshops should be organised by the universities in collaboration with the university libraries to educate and enlighten stakeholders in Nigerian

universities on issues pertaining to how IRs can run successfully for the benefits of all in the universities.

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