

Effect of domestic violence on women's participation in agricultural activities in Ekiti State, Nigeria

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Corresponding Author

R. S. Owoeye¹

Olusola Bunmi Adegbuyiro²

A. B. Sekumade³

^{1,2}Department of Agricultural Economics and Extension Services, Ekiti State University, Ado-Ekiti, Nigeria.

¹Email: rufus.owoeye@eksu.edu.ng

³Email: adelomo.sekumade@eksu.edu.ng

²Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, USA.

³Email: oadegbuy@vols.utk.edu

ABSTRACT

This study examined the effect of domestic violence on women's participation in agricultural activities in Ekiti State, Nigeria. The study described the socio-economic characteristics of respondents; identified the forms of domestic violence in the study area, examined the determinants of domestic violence and investigated the effect of domestic violence women's participation in agricultural activities in the study area. A multi-stage sampling technique was used to select respondents for the study to select 90 respondents for the study. Descriptive statistics, logistic and probit regression models were used for data analysis. Result from the socio-economic characteristics of the women revealed that 62.2% of the women were married with average age of 36.8% and 62.2% of the women had secondary education and above while majority (45.6%) of them engaged in farming as their primary occupation. Results on forms and frequency of domestic violence showed that 63.3, 42.2, 36.7 and 23.3% of the women indicated emotional, physical, financial and sexual issues as the most prevalent forms of domestic violence in the study area. Logistic regression result indicated that age, level of education, occupation, substance abuse, economic dependence on partners, and financial stress are statistically significant factors determining of domestic violence in the study area while result from the Probit regression showed that level of education, household income, experience of physical violence and sexual violence significantly influence women's participation in agricultural activities. It is therefore suggested that targeted economic empowerment, social protection, and gender-based violence interventions to enhance women's agricultural participation and welfare.

Keywords: Activities, Agriculture, Domestic, Participation, Violence, Women.

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Highlights of this paper

- **Prevalence and Forms of Domestic Violence:** The study identified that emotional (63.3%), physical (42.2%), financial (36.7%), and sexual (23.3%) violence are the most common forms of domestic violence affecting women in Ekiti State, highlighting the widespread nature of these issues.
- **Determinants of Domestic Violence:** Key factors influencing domestic violence in the study area include age, education level, occupation, substance abuse, economic dependence on partners, and financial stress, indicating that both socio-economic and personal factors contribute to vulnerability.
- **Impact on Women's Agricultural Participation:** The research found that women's education, household income, and experiences of physical and sexual violence significantly affect their participation in agricultural activities, suggesting that addressing domestic violence is crucial for improving women's involvement in farming and overall economic empowerment.

1. INTRODUCTION

The effect of domestic violence on women's involvement in agricultural activities in Nigeria is a critical issue that has garnered significant attention in recent years. Domestic violence, also known as intimate partner violence, is a pervasive problem that affects millions of women worldwide, including those in Nigeria (Adebayo & Omotewo, 2022). In Nigeria, domestic violence is a significant challenge that affects women's physical, emotional, and economic well-being (Okenwa-Emegwa & Okundaye, 2021).

The impact of domestic violence on women's involvement in agricultural activities is multifaceted. Research has shown that women who experience domestic violence are more likely to experience reduced productivity, decreased income, and limited access to resources and markets (FAO, 2021). This can have long-term consequences for women's economic empowerment and overall well-being. In Nigeria, agriculture is a significant sector that employs a large proportion of the workforce, and women's involvement in agriculture is crucial for food security and economic development (Adebayo & Otunaiya, 2022).

Studies have shown that domestic violence can limit women's ability to participate in agricultural activities, including farming, livestock production, and marketing (Kishor & Johnson, 2021). Women who experience domestic violence may also experience reduced decision-making power and control over resources, which can further limit their ability to engage in agricultural activities (Malhotra & Schuler, 2022). In Nigeria, women's involvement in agriculture is critical for household food security and economic well-being, and domestic violence can have significant consequences for their ability to contribute to these outcomes (Adebayo & Omotewo, 2022).

The effects of domestic violence on women's involvement in agricultural activities can be far-reaching. Research has shown that women who experience domestic violence are more likely to experience mental health problems, including depression and anxiety (WHO, 2021). This can further limit their ability to participate in agricultural activities and engage in economic empowerment initiatives. In Nigeria, mental health problems are a significant challenge that affects many women, and domestic violence can exacerbate these issues (Gureje & Lasebikan, 2021).

In addition to the individual-level effects, domestic violence can also have community-level effects on women's involvement in agricultural activities. Research has shown that communities with high levels of domestic violence may have limited social cohesion and trust, which can limit women's ability to access resources and markets (Putnam, 2022). In Nigeria, community-level factors can play a significant role in shaping women's involvement in agriculture, and domestic violence can have significant consequences for community development and economic growth.

The impact of domestic violence on women's involvement in agricultural activities is not limited to the agricultural sector alone. Research has shown that domestic violence can have broader economic and social consequences, including reduced economic growth and increased poverty (World Bank, 2022). In Nigeria, domestic violence can have significant consequences for economic development and poverty reduction initiatives.

Several factors can contribute to domestic violence against women in agricultural communities. Research has shown that cultural and social norms that perpetuate gender inequality can contribute to domestic violence (Heise, 2022). In Nigeria, cultural and social norms that prioritize men's authority and control over women can contribute to domestic violence and limit women's ability to participate in agricultural activities (Adebayo & Otunaiya, 2022).

Addressing domestic violence against women in agricultural communities requires a multifaceted approach. Research has shown that interventions that focus on promoting gender equality, improving women's economic empowerment, and providing support services for survivors of domestic violence can be effective in reducing domestic violence (Ellsberg, 2021). In Nigeria, initiatives that promote women's economic empowerment and provide support services for survivors of domestic violence can help to reduce domestic violence and promote women's involvement in agricultural activities. In recent years, there has been increasing recognition of the need to address domestic violence against women in agricultural communities. Research has shown that agricultural programs and policies can play a critical role in promoting women's economic empowerment and reducing domestic violence (FAO, 2021). In Nigeria, agricultural programs and policies that prioritize women's economic empowerment and provide support services for survivors of domestic violence can help to promote women's involvement in agricultural activities and reduce domestic violence.

Despite the significant impact of domestic violence on women's involvement in agricultural activities, there is limited research on this topic in Nigeria. Further research is needed to understand the prevalence, causes, and consequences of domestic violence against women in agricultural communities in Nigeria. This research can inform the development of effective interventions and policies to promote women's economic empowerment and reduce domestic violence.

The consequences of domestic violence on women's involvement in agricultural activities can be severe. Research has shown that women who experience domestic violence are more likely to experience physical and mental health problems, which can limit their ability to participate in agricultural activities (WHO, 2021). In Nigeria, the physical and mental health consequences of domestic violence can have significant implications for women's ability to contribute to household food security and economic well-being. In conclusion, the effect of domestic violence on women's involvement in agricultural activities in Nigeria is a critical issue that requires attention.

The issue of domestic violence against women in agricultural communities is a significant research problem that has garnered attention in recent years. According to a study by Okoro, Nwankwo, and Adebayo (2022) domestic violence is a pervasive problem that affects millions of women worldwide, including those in agricultural communities in Nigeria. The prevalence of domestic violence against women in agricultural communities is alarming, with studies suggesting that up to 40% of women in these communities experience domestic violence (Izugbara, Obiyan, Degfie, & Bhatti, 2021).

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1. The Study Area

This study was conducted in Ekiti State, Nigeria. The State is one of the States in the South-western region of Nigeria, located within the tropics. Ekiti State was created on the 1st of October, 1996 and comprises of 16 Local

Government Area (LGAs). Ekiti State occupies land mass of approximately 6,6028km² and an estimated population of 3,592,200 based on the data received from NPC and NBS webs in 2022.

2.2. Method of Data Collection

Primary data was used for the study. The data was collected using a well-structured questionnaire and was analyzed using descriptive statistics and inferential statistics.

2.3. Sampling Technique

A multi-stage sampling method was used in this study. In the first stage, three Local Government Areas [LGAs] were randomly selected. These are; Ido-Osi, Moba and Irepodun/Ifelodun At the second stage, three communities were randomly selected from each of the 3 LGAs. Finally, at the community level, 10 respondents were chosen with the aid of a snowball sampling technique, making ninety (90) respondents for the study.

2.4. Analytical Techniques

The data collected was analyzed using descriptive statistics, Logistic and Probit regression models.

2.4.1. Descriptive Statistics

This was used to analyze the data on socio-economic characteristics of the respondents and prevalent forms of domestic violence in the study area

2.4.1.1. Logistic Regression Analysis

To examine the determinants of domestic violence in the study area, Logistic regression model was used. A logistic regression model is a statistical technique used to analyze the relationship between a binary dependent variable and one or more independent variables. It estimates the probability of an event occurring (e.g., experiencing domestic violence) based on the values of the independent variables. The dependent variable is binary, meaning it has only two possible outcomes (e.g., 0 and 1, yes and no).

Model Equation

$$\log(p/(1-p)) = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \dots + \beta_n X_n \quad (1)$$

Where:

p is the probability of the event occurring (i.e. experience of domestic violence (yes =1, otherwise =0)).

p/(1-p) is the odds ratio.

β_0 is the intercept or constant term.

$\beta_1, \beta_2, \dots, \beta_n$ are the coefficients of the independent variables.

X_1, X_2, \dots, X_n are the independent variables.

Probability Equation

$$p = 1 / (1 + e^{(-z)})$$

Where:

$$z = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 \dots + \beta_n X_n \quad (2)$$

e is the base of the natural logarithm.

This model estimates the probability of an event occurring based on the values of the independent variables. The coefficients (β) represent the change in the log-odds of the event occurring for a one-unit change in the independent variable.

While the independent variables are hereby listed.

X₁ = Age (Years).

X₂ = Marital status (single =1, married =2, separated =3, widowed =4).

X₃ = Level of education (no formal education = 0, primary education = 1, secondary education = 2, tertiary education = 3).

X₄ = Household income (₦....).

X₅ = Number of children (Number).

X₆ = Occupation (Farming =1, civil service =2, trading =3, not engaged with any activity =4).

X₇ = Access to productive resources (Yes =1 otherwise = 0).

X₈ = Mental health issues (Yes =1 otherwise = 0).

X₉ = Substance abuse (Yes =1 otherwise = 0).

X₁₀ = History of trauma (Yes =1 otherwise = 0).

X₁₁ = Economic dependence on partners (Yes =1 otherwise = 0).

X₁₂ = Experience of financial stress (Yes =1 otherwise = 0).

2.4.1.2. Probit Regression Analysis

To investigate the effect of domestic violence on women’s participation in agricultural activities in the study area, Probit regression model was used. The Probit is used to model dichotomous or binary outcome variables. In the Probit model, the inverse standard normal distribution of the probability is modeled as a linear combination of the predictors. The Probit model employed was of the form.

$P^i = \beta X_i + \mu_i$ that is $P^i = f(\text{Age, level of education etc.})$

Algebraically expressed as

$$P^i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \dots + \beta_n X_n + \mu \quad (3)$$

Where P^i = Probability function.

$P^i (Y=1)$ = Participation in agricultural activities (yes =1 otherwise = 0).

Where:

X₁, X₂... X_n = Independent variables.

β_0 = Intercept or constant term.

$\beta_1, \beta_2 \dots \beta_n$ = Coefficients of the independent variables.

ϵ = Error term.

While the independent variables are hereby listed.

X₁ = Age (Years).

X₂ = Access to agricultural resources (Yes =1 otherwise = 0).

X₃ = Level of education (No formal education = 0, primary education = 1, secondary education = 2, tertiary education = 3).

X₄ = Marital status (Single =1, married =2, separated =3, widowed =4).

X₅ = Household size (Number).

X₆ = Household income (Naira).

X₇ = Experience of physical violence (Yes =1 otherwise = 0).

X₈ = Experience of emotional violence (Yes =1 otherwise = 0).

X₉ = Experience of sexual violence (Yes =1 otherwise = 0).

X₁₀ = Frequency of domestic violence (Daily =1, weekly =2, monthly =3).

X₁₁ = Type of agricultural activities (Livestock =1, fishing =2, farming =3).

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Socio-Economic Characteristics of Respondents

Table 1 summarizes the socio-economic characteristics of the 90 women sampled for the study. The age distribution shows that respondents had a mean age of 36.8 years, with a standard deviation of 9.4, indicating that most of them were within their active and productive years. Age group analysis reveals that 37.8% of the women were between 36–45 years, representing the largest proportion. This is followed by 31.1% who were between 26–35 years, and 13.3% who were within the 18–25-year category. Women aged 46–55 years also accounted for 13.3%, while those aged 56 years and above constituted only 4.5%. This implies that more than half of the respondents (68.9%) were in the middle-aged bracket of 26–45 years, an age range typically associated with high involvement in agricultural activities.

The marital status distribution shows that a significant majority of the respondents were married (62.2%), emphasizing the dominance of family-based households in the study area. Single women made up 20.0%, while both widowed and separated respondents accounted for 8.9% each. This indicates that close to two-thirds of the respondents were living with partners, which may influence their household responsibilities, economic dependence, and vulnerability to domestic violence. In terms of educational attainment, 40.0% of the women had completed secondary education, making it the most common level of education among the respondents. Additionally, 24.4% had primary education, 22.2% had tertiary education, while 13.3% had no formal schooling. This distribution suggests that although a considerable proportion of women possessed basic literacy, less than one-quarter achieved higher education. Educational level is important because it may affect women's decision-making ability, awareness of their rights, and capacity to seek support in cases of domestic violence.

The occupational distribution shows that 45.6% of the women were engaged in farming, reinforcing the agrarian nature of the study location. Another 31.1% were traders, 15.6% were civil servants, while 7.8% reported not being engaged in any economic activity. With more than three-quarters of the women participating in farming or trading, the data demonstrate a strong reliance on agriculture and informal economic activities for livelihood. The mean household size was 5.2 persons with a standard deviation of 2.1, indicating moderately large households. Household size may influence women's workload and financial responsibilities.

The mean household monthly income was ₦85,000, with a wide variation (\pm ₦42,000), suggesting income disparities among households and a generally low to middle income distribution. In terms of access to productive resources, 53.3% of the women indicated that they had access to resources such as land, farm inputs, or credit facilities, while 46.7% reported no access. This near-even split highlights potential constraints in resource ownership and control, factors that may weaken women's productivity and expose them to economic dependence, one of the known predictors of domestic violence. The socio-economic profile of the respondents shows that the majority were married, moderately educated, agriculturally active, and living in households of about five persons on average. These characteristics provide critical context for understanding their exposure to domestic violence and their level of participation in agricultural activities in the study area.

Table 1. Social-economic characteristics of respondents (n = 90).

Variables	Frequency	Percentage	Mean
Age (Years)			
18-25	12	13.3	36.8 ± 9.4
26-35	28	31.1	
36-45	34	37.8	
46-55	12	13.3	
≥56	4	4.5	
Marital Status			
Married	56	62.2	
Separated	20	22.2	
Widowed	14	15.6	
Educational level			
No formal education	12	13.3	
Primary education	22	24.4	
Secondary education	36	40.0	
Tertiary education	20	22.2	
Occupation			
Farming	41	45.6	
Trading	28	31.1	
Civil service	14	15.6	
Not engaged	7	7.8	
Access to productive resources			
Yes	48	53.3	
No	42	46.7	

Source: Field survey, 2025.

3.2. Forms and Frequency of Domestic Violence

Table 2 presents information on the forms of domestic violence experienced by respondents and the frequency with which these incidents occur. The findings show that domestic violence manifests in several ways within the study population. Among the different forms assessed, emotional or psychological violence was the most commonly reported, experienced by 63.3% of respondents. This suggests that non-physical abuse such as intimidation, threats, humiliation, and emotional manipulation is highly prevalent in the community. Research has shown that psychological violence is often the most widespread form of domestic abuse because it can occur repeatedly without visible physical evidence and may be overlooked by society (García-Moreno, Amin, & Ellsberg, 2022; World Health Organization (WHO), 2021). Physical violence was the second most common form, reported by 42.2% of respondents, indicating that a considerable proportion of individuals still experience direct bodily harm within domestic relationships. Economic or financial abuse was reported by 36.7% of respondents, showing that some partners use financial control or restriction of resources as a means of domination. Sexual violence was the least reported form, affecting 23.3% of respondents, though it remains a serious concern because it involves the violation of personal and bodily autonomy. These results support earlier findings that domestic violence frequently occurs in multiple forms, with emotional and physical abuse being the most commonly reported across many societies (Heise, Ellsberg, & Gottmoeller, 2022). With respect to frequency, the table reveals varying patterns of occurrence. A small proportion (11.1%) of respondents reported experiencing violence daily, indicating persistent abuse. About 26.7% experienced violence weekly, while 31.1% reported that it occurred monthly. Another 31.1% described the incidents as rare or occasional.

Table 2. Forms and frequency of domestic violence (n = 90).

Forms of violence	Frequency	Percentage
Physical	38	42.2
Emotional/Psychological	57	63.3
Sexual	21	23.3
Economic/Financial	33	36.7
Frequency of Domestic Violence		
Daily	10	11.1
Weekly	24	26.7
Monthly	28	31.1
Rare/Episodic	28	31.1

Source: Field survey, 2025.

3.3. Determinants of Domestic Violence

Table 3 presents the results of the logistic regression analysis conducted to examine the determinants of domestic violence among respondents (n = 90). Age has a negative and statistically significant relationship with domestic violence ($\beta = -0.018$, $p = 0.045$). This indicates that the likelihood of experiencing domestic violence decreases as women grow older. Younger women appear to be more vulnerable, possibly due to lower bargaining power within households, economic dependence on partners, or limited experience in managing marital and household conflicts. This finding is consistent with the study of [Sardinha, Maheu-Giroux, Stöckl, Meyer, and García-Moreno \(2022\)](#) which reported that younger women are generally at a higher risk of experiencing intimate partner violence due to power imbalances and limited social and economic autonomy.

Level of education shows a negative and significant effect on domestic violence ($\beta = 0.325$, $p = 0.011$). This suggests that women with higher levels of education are less likely to report incidences of domestic violence. Education tends to increase awareness of individual rights, improve communication skills, and enhance women's capacity to negotiate within relationships. Educated women are also more likely to access support systems or seek help when faced with abuse. According to [Heise and Kotsadam \(2023\)](#) higher levels of education among women significantly reduce vulnerability to domestic violence because education enhances empowerment and decision-making capacity.

Occupation is statistically significant ($\beta = 0.00014$, $p = 0.020$). Although the coefficient is small, the positive sign implies that women's engagement in economic activities or specific occupations may be associated with a higher likelihood of domestic violence. This could be attributed to role conflicts, shifts in traditional gender roles, or tensions arising from women's participation in income-generating activities. Substance abuse has a positive and significant effect on domestic violence ($\beta = 0.114$, $p = 0.038$), indicating that households where substance abuse occurs are more likely to experience violence, as substance use often impairs judgment and increases aggressive behavior.

Economic dependence on partners is one of the strongest significant determinants ($\beta = 0.512$, $p = 0.014$). Women who rely heavily on their partners financially may find it difficult to resist abuse or leave violent relationships. Experience of financial stress is also positive and significant ($\beta = 0.325$, $p = 0.011$), suggesting that economic hardship increases household tension and conflict.

Table 3. Determinants of domestic violence.

Variable	Coefficient	Std Error	p-value
Age	-0.018**	0.009	0.045
Marital status	0.237	0.218	0.274
Level of education	-0.325**	0.128	0.011
Household income	0.082	0.066	0.216
Number of children	-0.041	0.027	0.129
Occupation	0.014**	0.006	0.020
Access to productive resources	-0.137*	0.071	0.054
Mental health issues	-0.137*	0.176	0.207
Substance abuse	0.114**	0.055	0.038
History of trauma	-0.016	0.010	0.110
Economic dependence on partners	0.512**	0.242	0.014
Experience of financial stress	0.325**	0.128	0.011

Note: Model statistics.

Log likelihood = -42.87, Pseudo R² = 0.252, LR Chi² (11) = 28.94.

Source: Field survey, 2025.

3.4. Relationship Between Domestic Violence Exposure and Women’s Participation In Agricultural Activities

Table 4 presents the relationship between women’s participation in agricultural activities and their exposure to domestic violence. The result shows that level of education has a positive and highly significant effect on women’s participation in agricultural activities ($\beta = 0.365$, $p = 0.001$). This implies that women with higher educational attainment are more likely to engage in agriculture. Education enhances women’s access to agricultural knowledge, improves managerial skills, and promotes the adoption of improved farming practices, which strengthens their participation in agricultural production. Studies by Quisumbing and Maluccio (2022) and Agarwal (2023) noted that education increases women’s confidence, decision-making capacity, and access to productive resources in rural economies.

Marital status has a negative and statistically significant relationship with participation ($\beta = -0.051$, $p = 0.021$), suggesting that marital conditions may reduce women’s ability to participate actively in agriculture. Married women often face increased domestic responsibilities and cultural restrictions that limit their mobility and time available for farm work. According to Duflo (2022) gender roles within households frequently influence women’s economic participation, especially in rural agricultural settings.

Household size shows a positive and significant relationship with women’s participation in agriculture ($\beta = 0.002$, $p = 0.032$). Women from larger households are more likely to engage in farming activities due to the need to support household food supply and income generation. Beegle and Christiaensen (2023) observed that households with larger family sizes often rely more on women’s agricultural labor to meet consumption needs and maintain household welfare.

Conversely, household income has a negative and highly significant effect on participation ($\beta = -0.113$, $p = 0.000$). This indicates that as household income increases, women’s participation in agriculture tends to decline because wealthier households may rely less on subsistence farming and may diversify into non-farm income sources.

Exposure to physical, emotional, and sexual violence significantly reduces women’s participation in agricultural activities. Physical violence ($\beta = -0.452$, $p = 0.001$) can cause injuries and reduce women’s physical capacity for farm work. Emotional violence ($\beta = -0.821$, $p = 0.000$) weakens psychological well-being and motivation, while sexual violence ($\beta = -0.695$, $p = 0.000$) often leads to trauma and social stigma that hinder women’s productive engagement. Research by Jewkes, Fulu, and Garcia-Moreno (2022) emphasizes that gender-based violence significantly undermines women’s economic productivity and participation in livelihood activities.

Table 4. Effect of domestic violence on women's participation in agricultural activities.

Variable	Coefficients	Std Error	p-value
Age	-0.15	0.010	0.134
Access to agricultural resources	0.105	0.095	0.266
Level of education	0.365***	0.120	0.001
Marital status	-0.051**	0.022	0.021
Household size	0.002**	0.001	0.032
Household income	-0.113***	0.030	0.000
Experience of physical violence	-0.452***	0.140	0.001
Experience of emotional violence	-0.821***	0.160	0.000
Experience of sexual violence	-0.695***	0.150	0.000
Frequency of domestic violence	0.137*	0.071	0.054
Type of agricultural activities	0.237	0.218	0.274
Constant	1.520***	0.450	0.001

Note: Log likelihood = 49.21, Pseudo R² = 71.2, Adjusted R² = 41.3.

Source: Field survey, 2025.

4. CONCLUSION

The study concludes that domestic violence is a critical socio-economic issue that significantly undermines women's participation in agricultural activities in Ekiti State. Younger age, substance abuse, economic dependence, and financial stress significantly increase women's vulnerability to domestic violence. Furthermore, exposure to physical, emotional, and sexual violence substantially reduce women's ability to participate effectively in agriculture, while education enhances participation. These findings confirm that domestic violence is not only a social and human rights concern but also an economic and agricultural productivity issue. Addressing domestic violence is therefore essential for improving women's welfare and strengthening agricultural development in the study area.

4.1. Recommendations

Based strictly on statistically significant findings, the study recommends the following:

1. Government policies should help women become financially independent by giving them access to loans, skills training, and income-generating opportunities.
2. Communities should strengthen programs that reduce substance abuse because it increases domestic violence.
3. There should be regular education and awareness programs to address emotional, physical, and sexual violence and to encourage victims to report early.
4. Women who experience physical, emotional, or sexual violence should receive psychological and social support to help them remain active in agriculture.
5. Agricultural policies should include gender-based violence prevention measures so that women can participate safely and effectively in farming activities.

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