

Development of a Teacher–Parent Collaborative Learning Model through Musical Drama for Enhancing Early Childhood Creativity

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Abstract: Early childhood education plays a crucial role in fostering children’s creativity during the formative years. However, learning activities that systematically integrate teacher–parent collaboration with arts-based approaches remain limited in early childhood education settings. This study aimed to develop a collaborative learning module involving teachers and parents through musical drama to enhance early childhood creativity at Pelangi Kasih Kindergarten. The study employed a research and development (R&D) design consisting of needs analysis, product design, development, expert validation, practicality testing, and limited effectiveness testing. The module was validated by a material expert and a media expert, followed by practicality tests involving teachers and parents and an effectiveness test with kindergarten children. Data were collected using validation sheets, practicality questionnaires, and creativity assessment instruments and analyzed descriptively. The results indicate that the developed module demonstrated high validity, reflecting strong alignment between learning objectives, early childhood developmental characteristics, and musical drama activities. Practicality testing showed that the module was easy to implement, flexible, and clearly structured, supporting effective teacher–parent collaboration in both school and home learning contexts. Effectiveness testing revealed a meaningful improvement in children’s creativity, particularly in fluency of ideas, originality, imaginative expression, and expressive movement during role-play activities. This study contributes to early childhood education by offering a systematically designed and empirically tested collaborative musical drama learning model that integrates arts-based learning with structured school–family partnerships.

Keywords: early childhood education; collaborative learning; musical drama; teacher–parent partnership; creativity; inclusive.

INTRODUCTION

Early childhood education (ECE) constitutes a strategic foundation for developing the quality of human resources, as it takes place during the golden age a period of rapid brain and psychosocial development that critically influences children’s future growth. During this stage, children require well-planned, meaningful, and contextual learning experiences to support the optimal development of cognitive, language, social-emotional, moral, physical-motor, and artistic domains. Recent empirical evidence confirms that the quality of early learning experiences significantly affects children’s creativity, social competence, and learning readiness at later educational stages (Fleer, 2021; OECD, 2021; Pramling Samuelsson et al., 2022).

One of the key developmental outcomes emphasized in ECE is children’s creativity. Creativity refers to children’s capacity to generate original ideas, expressions, or products through imagination, exploration, and the meaningful interpretation of experiences. Contemporary studies consistently show that creativity does not develop spontaneously, but rather emerges from learning environments that are stimulating, emotionally secure, and supportive of experimentation and self-expression (Beghetto & Kaufman, 2021; Fiori et al., 2022; Runco & Acar, 2023). Creative children tend to display curiosity, confidence, independence, and early problem-solving abilities, which are essential for lifelong learning.

Within early childhood learning contexts, the development of creativity is closely related to the pedagogical approaches employed by teachers. Collaborative learning positions children as active learners who construct knowledge through social interaction, cooperation, and shared responsibility. This approach aligns with young children’s

developmental characteristics, as learning occurs most effectively through play-based and socially meaningful experiences. Research has demonstrated that collaborative learning enhances children's engagement, social skills, and creative expression in early childhood settings (Cheng & Tsai, 2020; Gillies, 2021; Pyle et al., 2020). Theoretically, collaborative learning is grounded in social constructivist perspectives, which emphasize knowledge construction through interaction and dialogue, thereby supporting holistic and co-constructive learning processes (Fleer, 2021).

In addition to teachers' pedagogical practices, parental involvement plays a critical role in supporting children's learning and creativity. Positive school–family partnerships have been shown to significantly influence children's engagement, social-emotional development, and creative potential (Boonk et al., 2020; Jeynes, 2022). Sustained and well-structured teacher–parent collaboration helps create consistent learning environments between home and school, strengthening children's motivation and creative experiences (Sheridan et al., 2020; Kim et al., 2023). Such partnerships are characterized by two-way communication, trust, and shared responsibility for children's development (Garbacz et al., 2021; Murray et al., 2022).

Despite its recognized importance, empirical evidence indicates that teacher–parent collaboration in ECE remains limited and insufficiently integrated into instructional design. Collaboration is often restricted to administrative communication rather than active parental involvement as pedagogical partners (Garbacz et al., 2021; Kim et al., 2023). This limitation weakens the continuity of creative stimulation between home and school and reduces the effectiveness of efforts to foster children's creativity.

One learning approach with strong potential to integrate collaborative learning while stimulating creativity is musical drama. Musical drama is an arts-based learning approach that combines drama, music, movement, and emotional expression. Arts-based pedagogies have been widely recognized for their effectiveness in fostering imagination, self-expression, and creativity in early childhood education (Wright, 2020; Lindqvist & Nilsson, 2021). Empirical studies further show that participation in drama and creative storytelling activities positively influences creativity, language development, self-confidence, and social skills among young children (Nicolopoulou et al., 2022; Edwards, 2021).

Moreover, musical drama provides an authentic context for teacher–parent collaboration. Parents can be actively involved in story development, rehearsals, prop creation, and supporting children throughout the learning process. Such collaborative practices not only strengthen school–family relationships but also establish a coherent learning ecosystem that supports children's creative development (Sheridan et al., 2020; Kim et al., 2023; Murray et al., 2022). However, the systematic development of musical drama as a collaborative learning model involving both teachers and parents particularly within a research and development (R&D) framework remains limited in early childhood education research.

Based on a preliminary study conducted at Pelangi Kasih Kindergarten, creativity-oriented activities such as drawing, coloring, and role-playing have been implemented. Nevertheless, these activities have not yet been organized within a structured collaborative learning model that actively and sustainably involves parents, resulting in suboptimal development of children's creativity due to limited instructional strategies, learning resources, and pedagogical communication between teachers and parents.

Therefore, this study addresses a clear research gap: the lack of empirically tested, R&D-based collaborative learning models that integrate musical drama and systematic teacher–parent collaboration in early childhood education. This study aims to develop and evaluate a teacher–parent collaborative learning model through musical drama that is valid, practical, and effective in enhancing early childhood creativity, while simultaneously strengthening school–family synergy as a unified learning environment.

METHOD

This study employed a Research and Development (R&D) approach aimed at producing a learning product in the form of a collaborative learning module for teachers and parents through musical drama, as well as testing its feasibility, practicality, and effectiveness in enhancing early childhood creativity. The R&D approach was selected because it allows researchers to systematically and continuously integrate the processes of designing, developing, implementing, and evaluating learning products (Kim et al., 2020; McKenney & Reeves, 2021). The development model used was ADDIE (Analyze, Design, Develop, Implement, Evaluate) because this model is flexible, systematic, and widely applied in the development of early childhood education practice-based learning tools (Branch & Kopcha, 2020; Trust & Pektas, 2023).

The study was conducted at TK Pelangi Kasih, Klaten Selatan District, Klaten Regency. The research subjects consisted of 17 early childhood students, classroom teachers, and parents directly involved in the collaborative musical drama learning activities. Involving teachers and parents as active partners aligns with the school–family partnership approach in early childhood education. It should be noted that the relatively small sample size and the absence of a comparison or control group limit the generalizability of effectiveness claims. Therefore, the effectiveness results are interpreted as preliminary evidence within the context of product development rather than causal inference (McKenney & Reeves, 2021). The research procedures followed the stages of the ADDIE model as follows.

- (1) **Analyze:** The analysis stage included an analysis of learning needs, child characteristics, and the context of teacher–parent collaboration. Data were collected through initial observations, interviews with teachers and parents, and documentation studies. This analysis aimed to identify developmental needs related to children’s creativity and determine the characteristics of musical drama learning suitable for early childhood contexts (Fleer, 2021; Pyle et al., 2020).
- (2) **Design:** At the design stage, the researcher developed the structure of the collaborative learning module, musical drama scenarios, the roles of teachers and parents, and instruments for assessing children’s creativity. The learning design was developed based on principles of arts-based and collaborative learning that support early childhood creativity (Lindqvist & Nilsson, 2021; Wright, 2020).
- (3) **Develop:** The development stage involved compiling the musical drama module, supporting media, and observation instruments for children’s creativity. The developed product was validated by early childhood education experts, arts experts, and music experts to assess content feasibility, language appropriateness, and usability. Expert validation was also used to examine the content validity of the creativity assessment indicators, ensuring alignment with theoretical constructs of creativity (Branch & Kopcha, 2020; Trust & Pektas, 2023).
- (4) **Implement:** The revised module was implemented through limited trials and field trials. Implementation activities included musical drama rehearsals, active collaboration between teachers and parents, and guided creative and performance activities for children.

Observations were conducted during implementation to document children’s engagement and creative behaviors (Nicolopoulou et al., 2022; Edwards, 2021).

- (5) Evaluate: The evaluation stage focused on assessing the practicality and effectiveness of the developed module. Evaluation was conducted through analysis of creativity observation results, teacher and parent feedback questionnaires, and reflective notes on the learning process. Both formative and summative evaluations were applied to ensure that the learning module effectively supported early childhood creativity development (Fiori et al., 2022; Runco & Acar, 2023).

Data collection techniques included observation, interviews, and questionnaires. Observation instruments were used to assess children’s creativity based on four indicators: fluency, flexibility, originality, and elaboration. The creativity observation instrument was developed based on established creativity frameworks and underwent expert judgment to ensure content validity. Instrument reliability was examined through inter-rater agreement between observers, indicating acceptable consistency in scoring children’s creative behaviors (Beghetto & Kaufman, 2021; Fan et al., 2024). Data were analyzed descriptively using quantitative and qualitative approaches to describe the feasibility, practicality, and effectiveness of the developed learning module.

Ethical considerations were carefully addressed throughout the research process. Written informed consent was obtained from parents prior to children’s participation, and verbal assent was sought from children in developmentally appropriate ways. Participation was voluntary, and all data were anonymized to protect the confidentiality and well-being of the participants, in accordance with ethical standards for early childhood educational research (McKenney & Reeves, 2021).

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Finding(s)

This study is a Research and Development (R&D) aimed at producing a collaborative learning module for teachers and parents through musical drama to enhance early childhood creativity at TK Pelangi Kasih. The product development process was carried out through stages including needs analysis, product design, initial product development, expert validation, practicality testing, and limited effectiveness testing.

The developed product consists of: (1) objectives and indicators of early childhood creativity, (2) a musical drama activity scenario, (3) guidance for teacher and parent roles in collaborative learning, and (4) instruments for assessing children’s creativity. Upon completion, a series of tests were conducted to evaluate the feasibility, practicality, and effectiveness of the product.

Product Validation Results (Content and Media Experts)

Product validation was conducted by two validators, consisting of one early childhood education (PAUD) content expert and one learning media expert. Assessment was carried out using a 5-point Likert scale questionnaire, ranging from very invalid to very valid.

The content expert evaluated aspects such as the appropriateness of the material to early childhood characteristics, clarity of learning objectives, relevance of musical drama activities, integration of teacher–parent collaboration, and completeness of module content. Overall, the content expert’s assessment indicated that the collaborative musical drama learning module demonstrated strong alignment with early childhood developmental

principles and effectively integrated collaborative roles for teachers and parents. The summary is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Content Expert Validation Results

Assessed Aspect	Average Score	Percentage	Category
Material appropriateness for PAUD	4.50	90.0%	Very Valid
Clarity of learning objectives	4.40	88.0%	Very Valid
Feasibility of musical drama activities	4.60	92.0%	Very Valid
Integration of teacher–parent collaboration	4.35	87.0%	Very Valid
Completeness and systematic presentation of material	4.40	88.0%	Very Valid
Average	4.45	89.0%	Very Valid

The media expert assessed aspects including module appearance, text readability, language use, layout, and ease of use. The results are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2. Media Expert Validation Results

Assessed Aspect	Average Score	Percentage	Category
Module appearance and design	4.35	87.0%	Very Valid
Language clarity	4.40	88.0%	Very Valid
Systematic presentation	4.30	86.0%	Very Valid
Ease of use	4.45	89.0%	Very Valid
Average	4.38	87.6%	Very Valid

These validation results indicate that the collaborative musical drama learning module meets high content and media feasibility standards and is suitable for implementation in early childhood education settings.

Practicality Test Results (Teachers and Parents)

Practicality testing aimed to determine the ease of use and acceptance of the product by users. The subjects included two kindergarten teachers and ten parents. Teachers assessed the ease of implementing the module in daily classroom activities. The summary of teacher assessments is presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Teacher Practicality Test Results

Assessed Aspect	Average Score	Percentage	Category
Ease of implementation	4.55	91.0%	Very Practical
Clarity of usage instructions	4.50	90.0%	Very Practical
Suitability for PAUD learning	4.60	92.0%	Very Practical
Flexibility of use	4.45	89.0%	Very Practical
Average	4.52	90.4%	Very Practical

Parents assessed the ease of guiding children and clarity of their roles in musical drama activities at home and in school. The results are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Parent Practicality Test Results

Assessed Aspect	Average Score	Percentage	Category
Ease of guiding children	4.40	88.0%	Very Practical
Clarity of parental role	4.35	87.0%	Very Practical
Usefulness of activities	4.50	90.0%	Very Practical
Attractiveness of musical drama activities	4.40	88.0%	Very Practical
Average	4.41	88.2%	Very Practical

The high practicality ratings from both teachers and parents suggest that the module is user-friendly, flexible, and feasible for collaborative implementation across school and home learning environments.

Effectiveness Test Results (Children’s Creativity)

Effectiveness testing was conducted with 15 children in Group B to examine the improvement of creativity after participating in collaborative musical drama learning. Creativity assessment included fluency of ideas, flexibility, originality, and expression. The results are shown in Table 5.

Table 5. Children’s Creativity Effectiveness Test Results

Measurement Stage	Average Score	Category
Before learning	62.4	Moderate
After learning	82.6	High
Improvement	20.2	-

In addition to descriptive comparisons, the observed gain score of 20.2 points indicates a substantial improvement in children’s creativity levels. Based on the pre- and post-implementation mean scores, the magnitude of improvement can be interpreted as a large practical effect in the context of early childhood educational interventions, even though no inferential statistical testing was conducted due to the developmental nature of the R&D design and the absence of a control group.

To complement the quantitative findings, qualitative observations during implementation revealed noticeable changes in children’s creative behaviors. Children demonstrated greater initiative in expressing ideas, increased confidence in role-playing and musical expression, more flexible use of movement and dialogue, and higher levels of engagement during collaborative performances. Several children who were initially hesitant became more willing to improvise roles, suggest story variations, and express emotions through voice and movement. These behavioral indicators support the numerical improvement observed in creativity scores. While the effectiveness findings rely primarily on descriptive analysis, this approach is consistent with the exploratory and product-oriented objectives of R&D research, which emphasize developmental feasibility and practical impact rather than causal generalization.

Based on the research results, it can be summarized that: (1) the collaborative learning module for teachers and parents through musical drama was declared highly valid by content and media experts; (2) the module demonstrated very high practicality according to teacher and parent assessments; (3) implementation of the module was associated with a meaningful improvement in early childhood creativity, supported by both quantitative gains and qualitative behavioral observations; and (4) overall, the developed product meets the criteria of being feasible, practical, and effective for use in early childhood education, particularly within collaborative teacher–parent learning contexts.

Discussion

Enhancement of Children's Creativity: Evidence of the Effectiveness of Musical Drama Intervention

The effectiveness test results (an increase in the average creativity score from 62.4 to 82.6; an average gain of 20.2 points, with N-gain approaching a high category) indicate that a collaboratively designed musical drama intervention involving teachers and parents positively impacted the creative capacity of early childhood students. These findings align with evidence that arts- and drama-based play experiences enhance children's creative thinking, expression, and improvisation skills (Nicolopoulou, McDowell, & Brockmeyer, 2022; Wright, 2020). Musical drama, which integrates narrative, music, movement, and role-play, provides a platform for children to practice fluency, flexibility, originality, and elaboration creativity indicators used in this study as described in literature on performing arts in early childhood education (Lindqvist & Nilsson, 2021; Edwards, 2021).

The significant improvement is theoretically consistent with social constructivist views, which posit that learning occurs through rich social interactions (e.g., shared role-play), enabling children to co-construct creative meaning (Fleer, 2021; Pyle, DeLuca, & Danniels, 2020). Moreover, these results support meta-analytic findings indicating a positive relationship between parental involvement and children's creativity and learning outcomes (Fan, Feng, & Zhang, 2024; Jeynes, 2022). Rather than merely indicating score increases, these findings suggest that musical drama functions as a mediating learning context that transforms social interaction into creative meaning-making processes, thereby extending existing arts-based creativity research into collaborative, family-inclusive settings.

The Role of Teacher–Parent Collaboration in Strengthening the Learning Process

The quality of collaboration design including joint planning, role distribution, and regular communication (e.g., scheduled meetings and WhatsApp groups) appears to be a determinant of successful implementation. Practicality findings (high practicality scores from teachers and parents) suggest that a systematic collaboration model facilitates both home- and school-based rehearsals, ensuring continuity of creative stimulation. This aligns with literature emphasizing structured school–family partnerships as essential for reinforcing children's learning experiences (Sheridan et al., 2020; Kim et al., 2023; Murray, McFarland-Piazza, & Harrison, 2022). Garbacz et al. (2021) and Gillies (2021) similarly underscore that two-way communication and ongoing support enhance the effectiveness of participatory early childhood interventions.

Additionally, active parental involvement such as guiding rehearsals, creating simple costumes, and providing supervision enriches the child's learning practice context, a mechanism shown to be effective in family engagement studies (Fan et al., 2024; Jeynes, 2022). The collaborative model also reduces teachers' preparation burden and increases family engagement, thus extending and sustaining the program's impact (Murray et al., 2022; Sheridan et al., 2020).

However, it is important to acknowledge that such collaboration presupposes a relatively supportive family context. Variations in parental availability, work schedules, and confidence in engaging with arts-based activities may influence the consistency and intensity of collaboration, which warrants careful consideration in broader implementation.

Module Validity and Practicality: Design Aspects Supporting Scalability

Expert validation indicated that the module achieved a “very valid” rating for both content and media aspects. This finding is consistent with principles of effective instructional design: alignment of material with child development, clarity of objectives, and user-friendly layout (Cheng & Tsai, 2020; Trust & Pektas, 2023). Content validity is critical to ensure that musical drama activities indeed stimulate the targeted creativity indicators (Beghetto & Kaufman, 2021; Fiori, Antonietti, & Cortesi, 2022).

High practicality ratings from teachers and parents (average score > 4.3 on a 1–5 scale) indicate that the module was designed with local context in mind: simple material, familiar music, low-cost costumes and props, and easy-to-follow instructions. Early childhood pedagogy literature emphasizes that interventions which are flexible and easy to implement are more likely to be widely adopted (Pyle et al., 2020; Edwards, 2021; OECD, 2021). Nonetheless, scalability beyond the research setting may be constrained by contextual factors such as limited school resources, varying levels of teacher expertise in drama-based pedagogy, and institutional support for sustained family engagement. These factors should be addressed through adaptive implementation strategies rather than assuming uniform applicability.

Mechanisms of Change: How Musical Drama Fosters Creativity

Observations of children during rehearsals and performances revealed increased spontaneity of ideas, movement variety, improvisation of dialogue, and emotional expression. Mechanistically, musical drama facilitates several psychological processes relevant to creativity: (1) providing space for idea exploration and experimentation (fluency and flexibility), (2) offering a collaborative social context for feedback and co-creation (originality through interaction), and (3) encouraging elaboration via enriched role details and props. These findings align with theoretical and empirical arguments in studies of arts and child creativity (Runco & Acar, 2023; Beghetto & Kaufman, 2021; Nicolopoulou et al., 2022).

Furthermore, the integration of music and movement enhances children’s affective and cognitive engagement, which strengthens retention and transfer of creative learning (Wright, 2020; Lindqvist & Nilsson, 2021). Studies on movement-based interventions similarly report positive effects on children’s motor creativity and expression, paralleling the outcomes of this musical drama program (Pesce et al., 2022). Despite these benefits, implementing musical drama requires careful classroom management and time allocation. Teachers may experience increased workload during preparation and coordination phases, highlighting the importance of administrative support and shared responsibility with parents to prevent intervention fatigue.

Comparison with Previous Studies and Novel Contributions

Compared to prior research, this study emphasizes the combination of two aspects: (1) musical drama as an integrated arts learning medium, and (2) formal teacher–parent collaboration as part of intervention design. While some studies have investigated drama or embodied storytime (Bernstein et al., 2024; Dargue et al., 2024) or parental involvement separately (Fan et al., 2024; Jeynes, 2022), few have examined an R&D-integrated model systematically combining both to measure children’s creativity.

This integrative focus extends existing literature by positioning parents not merely as supporters but as active co-designers of creative learning experiences. Therefore, this study provides practical contributions by presenting a validated and replicable module in early childhood contexts, and theoretical contributions by clarifying collaborative mechanisms that enhance creativity (Nicolopoulou et al., 2022; Lindqvist & Nilsson, 2021).

Limitations and Implications for Future Research

Several limitations should be noted. First, the effectiveness test sample was relatively small ($n = 15-17$) and context-specific to a single kindergarten, so generalization should be cautious; further studies with larger samples and controlled designs (e.g., randomized controlled trials) are recommended to strengthen causal evidence (Runco & Acar, 2023; OECD, 2021). Second, the long-term effects have not been assessed follow-up research measuring the sustainability of creativity gains months after intervention is strongly advised (Fiori et al., 2022; Fan et al., 2024). Third, although validation and practicality data indicate reliability, scale evaluation and cultural adaptation may be needed if replicated in different contexts (Prämling Samuelsson et al., 2022; Lindqvist & Nilsson, 2021).

Practical Implications for Early Childhood Education Policy and Practice

The study supports several practical recommendations: (1) integrating musical drama activities into early childhood arts curricula to stimulate creativity; (2) designing clear teacher–parent collaboration protocols (planning, regular communication, and home rehearsal guidance) to ensure continuity of stimulation; and (3) providing brief teacher training and practical parent guidance to facilitate sustainable implementation. Local education policy and teacher training programs may consider this module as a cost-effective, family-inclusive intervention model (Sheridan et al., 2020; Murray et al., 2022; Fan et al., 2024). At the policy level, flexibility in parental participation models is recommended to accommodate diverse family circumstances, thereby increasing equity and feasibility of implementation.

Overall, the findings reinforce evidence that arts-based learning specifically musical drama collaboratively designed by teachers and parents is a feasible, practical, and effective strategy to enhance early childhood creativity. The intervention integrates social constructivist and play-based learning theories with contemporary empirical evidence, contributing meaningfully to early childhood education research and practice (Beghetto & Kaufman, 2021; Nicolopoulou et al., 2022; Fan et al., 2024).

CONCLUSION

This study developed a collaborative learning module for teachers and parents through musical drama, designed to enhance early childhood creativity at TK Pelangi Kasih. The findings indicate that the developed module achieved a very high level of feasibility based on validation by content and media experts, demonstrating its suitability as a learning tool in early childhood education contexts.

In addition to being feasible, the module was also found to be highly practical according to practicality tests conducted with teachers and parents. The clarity of instructions, ease of implementation, and alignment of musical drama activities with early childhood characteristics allowed the module to be applied collaboratively in both school and home settings. Furthermore, effectiveness testing revealed an increase in early childhood creativity following the implementation of collaborative musical drama learning, particularly in children's abilities to express themselves, use imagination, and actively participate in arts-based learning activities. These findings should be interpreted as evidence

of promising instructional potential rather than definitive causal impact, given the exploratory nature and developmental focus of the study.

The novelty of this study lies in the development of a systematically designed and empirically tested teacher–parent collaborative learning model through musical drama, which integrates arts-based learning with structured school–family partnership within a single instructional framework. This integration moves beyond incidental parental involvement by positioning parents as active pedagogical partners in creative learning processes, thereby extending existing research on arts-based and collaborative learning in early childhood education.

Nonetheless, this study has certain limitations, including a relatively small sample size, research conducted in only one educational setting, and short-term measurement of creativity outcomes. These limitations imply that the results should be generalized cautiously and understood within the specific contextual and developmental setting of the participants. Therefore, future research is recommended to test this model in broader early childhood education contexts using more robust research designs, such as quasi-experimental or controlled trials, and to conduct longitudinal studies to examine the sustainability of creativity development over time.

From a practical and policy perspective, the findings suggest several concrete implications. Early childhood educators and school leaders are encouraged to integrate musical drama into arts-based curricula as a structured medium for creativity development. Education policymakers may consider promoting teacher–parent collaborative learning models through professional development programs and school-family partnership policies. Additionally, teacher education institutions are advised to incorporate training on collaborative arts-based pedagogy to prepare future educators for implementing family-inclusive creative learning models effectively.

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