



Leading with Prophetic Integrity: Strengthening Islamic Education through Shiddiq, Amanah, and Fathanah

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.52627/managere.v7i2.868>

Article History:

Received: June 2025

Accepted: July 2025

Published: August 2025

Keywords:

Prophetic Leadership, Islamic Values, Madrasah Education, Shiddiq, Amanah, Fathanah

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Abstract :

This research aims to explore the implementation of the prophetic values of shiddiq (honesty), amanah (responsibility), and fathanah (wisdom) in the leadership of Islamic education in madrasahs in Indonesia. Using a qualitative approach with an intrinsic case study design, data were collected through in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and documentation, and analyzed using Miles and Huberman's interactive model. The results of the study show that the value of *shiddiq* is realized through budget transparency, consistency of actions, and open policy delivery, which strengthens trust and fosters an honest work culture. The value of *the mandate* is realized through systematic supervision, competency-based task distribution, open reporting, and collective deliberation, resulting in a credible and accountable work system. Meanwhile, *Fathanah* is reflected in data-driven strategic decision-making, participatory dialogue, and wise responses to crises, which increase organizational efficiency and participation. These three values contribute significantly to building ethical, transformative, and benefit-oriented leadership. This research strengthens the position of prophetic leadership as a strategic framework in contemporary Islamic education governance, while offering an applicative model for the development of competencies of madrasah heads.

INTRODUCTION

The leadership of Islamic education occupies a strategic position in determining the direction, culture, and quality of the institution (Karim et al., 2025; Said & Sharif, 2023; Zahraini et al., 2022). From the perspective of Islamic leadership theory, madrasah heads have a dual responsibility: maintaining moral integrity while managing the organization professionally (Beisenbayev et al., 2024; Suddahazai, 2023; Umar et al., 2021). The prophetic leadership theory developed from the values exemplified by the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) emphasizes that a true leader must internalize *Shiddiq* (To be honest, trust (responsibility), *Tabligh* (communicative), and *Fathanah* (wisdom) (M. H. Dewantoro & Susilo, 2025; Hadiyani et al., 2021; Kalsum et al., 2025). These values are not only seen as ethical teachings but also as a managerial framework that can strengthen institutional governance. In *the context of good governance*, Prophetic values-based leadership offers the principles of transparency, accountability, fairness, and wisdom as the foundation of decision-making (Tatar et al., 2024; Wahyuni-TD et al., 2021; Zerbian & de Luis Romero, 2023). Thus, the leadership of Islamic education is not only administrative, but also normative and transformative in nature. This theory offers a conceptual framework that suggests prophetic leadership can serve as an ideal model for integrating religious ethics with modern managerial practices.

Several researchers with diverse focuses have conducted studies on prophetic leadership in Islamic education. Dewantoro (2025) emphasised that prophetic leadership in Muhammadiyah schools in Yogyakarta is rooted in the integration of values *such as shiddiq, amanah, tabligh, and Fathanah* in educational practice, which has been proven to result in transformative governance and increased participation among school residents. Meanwhile, other studies have developed an *authentic leadership* model for madrasah heads (Rayyes, 2023). The model emphasizes the importance of moral example, strategic collaboration, and strengthening the *Professional Learning Community* (PLC) in response to management changes. On the other hand, prophetic values are also actualized in the realm of non-educational professionals (Haddade et al., 2024; Maruf et al., 2023; Rahmawaty & Narsa, 2022). These findings demonstrate that the *Shiddiq, Amanah, and Fathanah* serve as the foundation for integrity and accountability in work.

Although several studies have addressed prophetic leadership in education, most studies still emphasise conceptual or normative aspects rather than contextual practices that occur in the field. As a result, there is a research gap in understanding how the values of *shiddiq, amanah, and fathanah* are truly embodied in the policies, behaviors, and culture of madrasah organizations. Additionally, previous research has provided limited insight into the subjective dynamics of education leaders and staff in internalising these values. Thus, there is a need for an in-depth qualitative study that highlights the actual practice of prophetic leadership in madrasas, especially in Indonesia, to address the requirement for a leadership model that is contextual, applicable, and transformative.

The novelty of this research lies in its approach that focuses on the empirical exploration of prophetic leadership practices in madrasas through qualitative case studies. In contrast to previous research that emphasized more conceptualization of models or theoretical generalizations, this study contextually reveals how the values of *shiddiq, amanah, and fathanah* are actualized in the policies, behaviors, and culture of madrasah organizations. This approach enables a new understanding of the relationship between prophetic values and the governance of Islamic education, not only as a moral ideal, but also as a strategic instrument of management. In addition, this study integrates a constructivist perspective with a triangulation method to ensure the validity of the findings, so that the results are not only academically relevant but also practical for the development of madrasah leadership. The unique contribution of this research lies in its ability to construct an applicative framework for prophetic leadership that can serve as a model for developing the competence of madrasah heads in Indonesia.

This research aims to explore the implementation of prophetic values, especially *shiddiq, amanah, and fathanah*, in the leadership of Islamic education in madrasas. The research focus is directed at how these values are embodied in organizational policies, behaviors, and culture, with an emphasis on the subjective experiences of madrasah heads, teachers, and staff. Through the design of an intrinsic case study, this research aims to provide an in-depth understanding of the dynamics of prophetic leadership within the socio-cultural context of Indonesia. A qualitative approach was employed to explore the meaning constructed by educational actors regarding prophetic leadership practices, while the validity of the data was maintained through the triangulation of sources and techniques. Thus, this research not only provides an empirical description of Islamic leadership practices but also makes a theoretical contribution to enriching the discourse on prophetic leadership. Furthermore, the research findings are expected to serve as a practical reference for the development of Islamic education leadership policies and training that are oriented towards the prophetic values.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research employs a qualitative design with an intrinsic case study approach to explore in depth the implementation of prophetic values, specifically shiddiq, amanah, and fathanah, in Islamic educational leadership (Doyle et al., 2020; Morgan, 2024; Singh et al., 2021). This design was chosen because it enables researchers to understand the leadership practices of madrasah heads in a contextualized manner, as a complex and dynamic social reality. The focus of the research is on how these values are embodied in policies, behaviors, and organizational culture in madrasas. The research was conducted on several madrasas in Tulungagung Regency, East Java, which were selected purposively based on their leadership reputation and strong implementation of Islamic values. This type of research is a qualitative case study because it aims to uncover the meaning, experience, and perception of informants towards prophetic values actualized in leadership (Dunwoodie et al., 2023; Hendren et al., 2023; Mulisa, 2022). This approach is based on the constructivist paradigm, which posits that subjective understanding serves as the basis for examining social reality and values.

Data was collected through in-depth interviews, participatory observations, and institutional policy documentation. This method was chosen because it effectively captured the depth of meaning and actual context of the implementation of prophetic values in madrasah leadership (Bazen et al., 2021; Missier, 2025; Mwita, 2024). The researcher plays the role of both the main instrument and a participatory observer, maintaining a critical and ethical distance during field interactions. The research subjects consisted of madrasah heads, senior teachers, and administrative staff selected through purposive sampling techniques. The research location is in three madrasas in Central Java Province that are known for integrating Islamic values into institutional management. The study was conducted over three months, involving the observation of routine activities and repeated interviews. The validity of the data is maintained through triangulation of sources and techniques, as well as member checking to ensure the suitability of data interpretation by informants.

The data analysis technique used in this study is the Miles and Huberman interactive model, which includes three main stages: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion/verification (Chai et al., 2021; Leko et al., 2021; Vaismoradi et al., 2013). The analysis begins by identifying the main themes of the interview transcripts and field notes, then reduces the relevant information to the focus of the research. Furthermore, data are presented in the form of a matrix and thematic narrative to organize the relationship between prophetic values and leadership practice. The process of concluding is carried out iteratively and reflectively, referring to the pattern of findings and triangulation across informants. This technique was chosen because it allows for an in-depth exploration of the complexities of meaning and social practices, while also reinforcing credibility through confirmation between data. With this approach, the interpretation of results not only describes leadership practices but also constructs a new theoretical understanding of the integration of Islamic values in education management.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

Implementation of Shiddiq Values in Islamic Education Leadership

Shiddiq, as one of the core values in prophetic leadership, refers to honesty and integrity that are the basis of a leader's behavior. In the context of Islamic educational leadership, this value requires leaders to convey information accurately, make decisions based on truth, and serve as a moral example for their institutional environment. Honesty

is not only a matter of personal ethics, but it is the foundation of credibility and trust in building a healthy organizational culture. The application of shiddiq values in leadership practice will impact the entire ecosystem of schools or madrasas, encompassing governance, policy-making, and communication patterns among principals, teachers, staff, and students. This theme highlights the importance of honesty in the daily behavior of Islamic education leaders, as well as its contribution to the institution's vision of integrity and responsibility.

Several informants, who are the heads of madrasas, shared their views on the importance of honesty in leadership. As said by a madrasah head, "When we lead, the most important thing is honesty. If the leader has manipulated data or promises, then the staff will follow along." This aligns with what other informants expressed: we always strive to convey information transparently, especially regarding the budget. If it is open, the teachers are more trusting and cooperative." This statement affirms that honesty is not only a moral demand but also an effective managerial tool in building trust and cooperation.

From the interview above, the value of shiddiq is manifested in the form of policy transparency and consistency of leaders' speeches. Both informants described honesty as not only a personal matter, but also as the key to the management of Islamic educational institutions. Through open communication and consistent behavior, leaders build credibility that makes it easier for them to execute programs and strategic decision-making. Honesty is also seen as a preventive effort against internal conflicts and abuse of authority. Thus, the value of shiddiq plays a crucial role in creating a healthy and trustworthy organisational climate, in line with the principles of Islamic management that prioritise the value of truth above all else. Departing from this, the form of implementation of the shiddiq value found is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. The Form of Implementation of Shiddiq Values and Their Impact

Forms of Implementation of Shiddiq Values	Impact on the Institution
Transparency in the use of the BOS budget	Increase trust and participation of teachers/staff
Communicating policy openly	Avoiding misunderstandings and preventing internal conflicts
Consistency between speech and action	Fostering exemplary and building an honest work culture
Fair enforcement of discipline	Increase trust in the integrity of the leader

Table 2 shows that the implementation of *the Shiddiq* value is realized through four key practices: transparency in the use of the BOS budget, open policy delivery, consistency between speech and action, and the enforcement of fair discipline. Budget transparency serves as an accountability mechanism that strengthens the trust and participation of teachers/staff, while minimizing information asymmetry. Open policy communication helps suppress the potential for misunderstandings and internal conflicts, making work coordination more efficient. Consistency of words and actions presents an ethical example that fosters a culture of honest work and strengthens leadership legitimacy. Meanwhile, justly enforced discipline affirms the principle of procedural equality, enhances the perception of leaders' integrity, and reinforces compliance, based on fairness, not fear. Overall, the combination of these four practices forms a credible, cohesive, and quality-oriented institutional governance ecosystem. The overarching message is that *Siddiq's* values are not just moral norms, but institutional architectures that encourage trust, collaboration, and the sustainability of performance.

Building on this, this study demonstrates that the concept of shiddiq plays a central role in the behavior of prophetic leadership in Islamic educational institutions. The application of honesty, in the form of transparency, consistency, and fairness, not only strengthens the integrity of leaders but also encourages the formation of a healthy organisational culture. Madrasah heads who implement these values have succeeded in creating a harmonious, participatory, and Islamic values-oriented work environment. This contributes to increasing internal trust and the effectiveness of institutions in achieving educational goals. Thus, the value of shiddiq is not only a reflection of personal ethics but also an operational foundation in the management of Islamic education, possessing high transformative power.

Actualization of Trust Values in Leadership Responsibilities

Trust is the core character in prophetic leadership, which means taking responsibility for every authority exercised. In Islamic education leadership, the mandate extends beyond the management of physical and financial assets to encompass commitment to the institution's vision, human resource development, and the pursuit of justice in policy implementation. A trustworthy leader will demonstrate integrity in managing authority by being honest, consistent, and trustworthy to all parties in educational institutions. This value is the foundation for building a credible work system and maintaining the dignity of leadership as a form of worship. This theme examines how the real form of trust values is carried out by the leaders of madrasahs or Islamic schools, and the extent to which its implementation can create a culture of collective responsibility that affects the quality of institutional management.

The value of trust is a fundamental principle upheld by the informants of this research. One of the madrasah heads revealed, "I always remind myself that this position is not private property. I have to be accountable for every policy I take, not only to humans, but also to God." While another informant said, "If we have been given trust, we must hold it well. The mandate is tested not when everyone agrees, but when we have to make difficult decisions." This reflects a deep awareness of trust as the main spirit in carrying out the function of spiritually and organizationally responsible leadership.

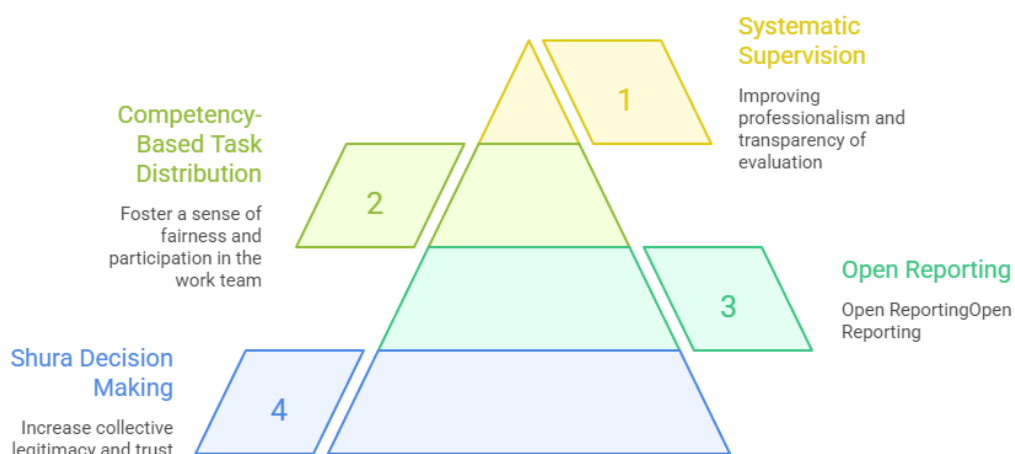


Figure 1. Form of Actualization of Trust Value and Its Impact

The above interview demonstrates that Islamic education leaders understand the value of trust both spiritually and operationally. Leaders play not only an administrative role, but also a moral and theological one. The commitment to maintaining trust extends not only to program implementation but also to making difficult, fair, and targeted decisions. This demonstrates that authentic leadership is about prioritizing institutional interests over personal or group interests, rather than prioritizing power. Trust becomes the foundation of fair decision-making and strengthens internal accountability, as decisions are based on responsibility rather than popularity. Therefore, this value is very strategic in forming a consistent, trusted, and respected leader. Through this, the form of actualization of the trust value found is presented in Figure 1.

In Figure 1, it can be seen that the actualization of *the Amanah value* is realized through four main strategies that complement each other. At the top of the pyramid, *Systematic Supervision* emphasizes increased professionalism and transparency of evaluation, emphasizing the importance of accountability in every work process. Under it, *Competency-Based Task Distribution* ensures a division of tasks based on competencies, which encourages a sense of fairness and team participation. Furthermore, *Open Reporting* strengthens the culture of openness through transparent reporting, allowing each party to objectively monitor developments and work results. At its core, *Shura Decision Making* prioritizes collective decision-making, thereby increasing legitimacy and trust among members. This sequence demonstrates that implementing *the Amanah* values requires not only supervision and transparency, but also fairness in task distribution and collaboration in decision-making. The implication is that institutions that adopt these four elements will build integrity, trust, and sustainability of organizational performance as a whole.

From these findings, it is evident that the actualization of trust values in prophetic leadership is not only moral but also highly practical in the life of the organization. Leaders who uphold the mandate show high responsibility for every policy, asset management, and work relations in the madrasah. Transparency, collective involvement, and fairness in task distribution are manifestations of these values in a managerial context. This results in a mutually trusting, efficient, and professional working atmosphere. The value of trust that is applied consistently encourages madrasahs to become trusted institutions and have resilience to internal conflicts. Thus, prophetic leadership that relies on trust can strengthen the credibility of Islamic educational institutions and bring them closer to the ideals of blessings and benefits.

Reflection on Fathanah Values in Strategic Decision Making

Fathanah in prophetic leadership is interpreted as intelligence, wisdom, and acumen in decision-making. In the context of Islamic educational leadership, this value reflects a leader's ability to analyse situations, formulate effective strategies, and solve problems wisely. The intelligence in question is not limited to the intellectual aspect, but also includes the emotional and spiritual dimensions in responding to institutional challenges. A good leader can see opportunities from limitations and make decisions that are not only rational but also beneficial. This theme explores how madrasah leaders actualise the value of fathanah in executing managerial functions, particularly in designing policies that have a significant impact on the quality of education and the sustainability of the institution.

Madrasah heads who display the character of *Fathanah* tend to have an analytical and participatory approach to decision-making. For example, when faced with a case of declining student interest in religious activities, the head of the madrasah did not immediately sanction, but held a dialogue forum with BK students and teachers to explore the root of the problem. Then, the program is prepared using a more creative method and by the students' interests. In other madrasahs, when faced with budget cuts, the principal and his team prioritised activities based on deliberation and data-driven needs. Decisions are not taken authoritatively, but through careful consideration and adaptive strategies. These practices demonstrate that a good leader can integrate intellectual, emotional, and spiritual intelligence within a unified, productive, and solution-oriented policy framework. Departing from this, the form of implementation of the *fathanah* value found is presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Form of Implementation of Fathanah Values

Form of Implementation of Fathanah Values	Impact on the Institution
Conduct a needs analysis before making a policy	Policies become more targeted and readily accepted by all parties
Prioritize based on valid data	Increased program implementation efficiency and budget utilization
Establish a dialogue forum before making important decisions	Increase participation and a sense of belonging for all school residents
Calm down before acting in an emergency	More stable decisions and minimize the risk of conflict

Table 3 illustrates that the implementation of *Fathanah values* in educational institutions is reflected through four forms of strategic actions that support one another. First, conducting a needs analysis before making a policy ensures that each policy is relevant, on target, and accepted by all parties, thereby reducing internal resistance. Second, preparing priorities based on valid data increases program efficiency and optimizes budget utilization, emphasizing the role of data as a rational basis for decision-making. Third, establishing a dialogue forum before making important decisions encourages active participation, fosters a sense of belonging, and enhances the cohesion among school residents. Ultimately, the ability to remain calm in emergencies enables stable decision-making and reduces the risk of conflict, reflecting the emotional maturity of the leader. Overall, the application of *Fathanah* values not only shapes effective policies but also fosters an inclusive, responsive, and adaptive work environment that addresses challenges, thereby strengthening the sustainability and credibility of the institution.

Discussion

The results of this study indicate that prophetic values, particularly *shiddiq*, *amanah*, and *fathanah*, play a crucial role in shaping ethical and practical leadership patterns in Islamic educational institutions. These findings align with the research focus on exploring how these values are actualised in the managerial context of madrasah heads. The implementation of these values not only strengthens the personal credibility of leaders but also encourages the creation of healthy, participatory, and blessing-oriented institutional governance. The relevance of these findings is extreme in the context of the ethical and governance challenges facing contemporary Islamic education. Therefore, this discussion will thematically elaborate on the relationship between the findings and prophetic leadership theory, as well as the previous literature, in order to strengthen the scientific and practical contributions of this study.

The findings show that budget transparency, open policy delivery, and consistency between speech and actions are tangible forms of value implementation, as noted by *Shiddiq*. This aligns with the principles of prophetic leadership, which place honesty as a moral and functional foundation. According to Lansing et al. (2023), *Shiddiq* is the main element that fosters public trust in leaders. This view is reinforced by the theory of Islamic leadership ethics proposed by Kiliçoğlu & Kiliçoğlu (2021), which emphasises the importance of moral consistency and transparency in establishing leadership legitimacy. Research by Islam et al. (2024) indicates that the honesty of leaders has a significant impact on staff loyalty and a productive work environment. A study by Hasanah et al. (2021) also found that transparency in education policymaking strengthens collaboration between staff and prevents internal conflicts. Meanwhile, Hubbart (2024) reminds that inconsistency in leadership will lower trust and create collective resistance. Thus, the value of *shiddiq* is proven not only as a normative value, but also as a strategic instrument in the governance of Islamic education.

The findings demonstrate that trust is fostered through systematic supervision, task division based on competencies, open reporting, and deliberative decision-making. Theoretically, *Trust* in Al-Ghazali's perspective is not only a moral obligation, but also a key indicator of trust in Islamic leadership. A leader who maintains trust means being able to manage resources responsibly and fairly. Research by Bentzen (2023) emphasises that trust-based leadership increases organisational efficiency and reduces the potential for abuse of authority. Meanwhile, a study by This et al. (2022) states that an open supervisory and reporting system establishes a professional and mutually respectful work culture. Research by Yang et al. (2023) confirms that fairness in task distribution is a key indicator of team trust and efficiency.

Value *Fathanah* is reflected in the ability of madrasah heads to conduct needs analyses, compile data-based priorities, build dialogue into decision-making, and maintain calm in crises. In prophetic leadership theory, *Fathanah* embodies comprehensive intelligence, encompassing intellectual, emotional, and spiritual aspects. According to Ibn Khaldun, the intelligence of a leader is not only related to the ability to think quickly, but also to being wise and contextual. Research by Weingart et al. (2021) proves that education policies formulated through needs analysis and public participation are more acceptable and effective in their implementation. A study by Rahmawaty & Narsa (2022) shows that school principals who are skilled in making crucial decisions tend to be able to maintain organisational stability under challenging situations. A study by Hadiyani et al. (2021) underlines that data literacy and social dynamics are important elements in creating sustainable education policies. The value of *fathanah* thus becomes an adaptive instrument that is urgently needed in facing complex challenges in the world of education.

This research contributes to the development of applicable guidelines for leaders of Islamic educational institutions in building leadership based on the values of the Prophet. Transparency, accountability, and strategic wisdom are managerial approaches that have been proven to be effective in increasing organizational participation, trust, and efficiency. These results can serve as a model for training madrasah heads and the formulation of policies based on Islamic values. Theoretically, this research expands the understanding of the implementation of prophetic values in the context of contemporary leadership. By examining the integration between moral and managerial values, this study contributes to strengthening the prophetic leadership framework as a systemic, rather than just normative, approach.

This research confirms that the values of *shiddiq*, *amanah*, and *fathanah* do not solely function as moral principles in Islamic teachings but also serve as an essential institutional foundation in educational leadership. These three values have proven to form a work environment based on honesty, fairness, collaboration, and a mature strategy for facing various organisational challenges. The implementation of *shiddiq* values encourages openness and transparency, *while trust* fosters a sense of responsibility and accountability, and *fathanah* strengthens analytical skills and informed decision-making. These findings suggest that the internalization of these values contributes significantly to strengthening a positive work culture and the sustainability of educational institutions. For further research, it is recommended to integrate a quantitative approach to measure the concrete impact of applying these values on indicators of educational quality and organisational performance, as well as involving a wider range of stakeholders to obtain a comprehensive and measurable perspective.

CONCLUSION

This research confirms that the prophetic values of *shiddiq*, *amanah*, and *fathanah* play a strategic role in shaping ethical and effective leadership in Islamic educational institutions. The implementation of *shiddiq* values is reflected in transparency, consistency, and fairness, which strengthens integrity and builds trust between institutional citizens. The value of trust is actualized through a supervisory system, competency-based task distribution, open reporting, and deliberation, creating a credible and accountable work ecosystem. Meanwhile, *Fathanah* is realized through intelligence in analyzing needs, prioritizing, and making wise and participatory decisions. These three values are integrated to strengthen institutional governance that is inclusive, integrity, and welfare-oriented. These findings confirm that leadership in Islamic education based on prophetic values is not only normatively relevant but also applicable in responding to contemporary managerial challenges. Further research can expand the approach by quantitatively measuring the impact of these values on an institutional scale.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The authors would like to express their deepest gratitude to the heads, teachers, and administrative staff of the madrasahs in Tulungagung and Central Java who warmly welcomed the research process and generously shared their valuable experiences. Their openness and cooperation were crucial in providing meaningful insights into the practice of prophetic leadership in Islamic education. Special appreciation is extended to Universitas Islam Negeri Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah for its academic guidance and institutional support throughout this study.

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