

Socio – Economic context of working women employees in Readymade Garment Industry in Salem District

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ABSTRACT

In India Tamil Nadu is one of the largest garment exporter and sometimes referred to as Textile valley of India. Garments industry is considered as the back bone of the country's economy while it plays great role for many people socio-economic wellbeing at the back door. This paper is an endeavor to describe the context of the women employees from two perspectives. One is social perspective and the other is economic perspective. The analysis is based on the survey of 51 women workers of 3 readymade garment industrial units located in different parts of Salem District. We found that women are doing work on an average 8 hours/day in the garment industry but they receive average salary below 5000/- per month. It is notable that they maintain a very critical life managing hardly for their own and family expenses. So minimum wage should be fixed by the government for their better standard of living. This paper suggestions measures for improving the prevailing socio-economic facilities, to a great extent, to achieve women workers' satisfaction at the maximum level.

IndexTerms - Women Employees, Garments Sector, Socio-Economic Context, Satisfaction, Life Changes.

I. INTRODUCTION:

INDIAN GARMENT INDUSTRY

An Indian sub continent is the second largest manufacturer of garments after china being the global leader in garment production. India is known for its high quality garments for all category peoples and most of the garment manufacturers are in small and medium scale industry. Indian clothing has been growing progressively over the past few years, this has been possible owing to the Indian peoples becoming more fashion conscious, and hence there is more consumption which has improved worldwide demand of garments by the rest of the world. India is second largest producer of garment in the world. In 2021 the Indian clothing sector is expected to raise to a size of US\$ 223 billion. Garments industry accounts for almost 24% of the world spindle capacity and 8% of global rotor capacity. This industry provides direct employment to over 45 million people. The Indian garment industry is set for strong growth, supported by strong domestic consumption as well as export demand.

Indian clothing sector has an advantage to manufacture and export the fashionable clothes for all range of peoples at economical rates due to lower labour rates. Nowadays by the way of technological advancement and use of sophisticate machinery it has enabled the manufacturers to attain good quality and well designed garments. India's garment industry has been rapidly developing in last few years. Exports

have been increasing as there is a boost in orders from global buyers accompanied by a rise investment in the garment sector of the country. The garment industry is main consequence to the Indian economy as it contribute substantially to India's export earning, it is estimate and analyzed that one out of every households in the country depends on this sector either directly or indirectly for its livelihoods³.

WOMEN IN GARMENT INDUSTRY:

In clothing sector the women's are play a vital role. This is not by chance, but the consequences of discriminatory practices from begin to end. Women are desirable in the garment industry because employers take improvement of cultural stereotypes to which women are often grateful to adhere that portrays women as passive and flexible. Productive, reproductive and domestic responsibilities such as cleaning, cooking and childcare constrain women's ability to seek other types of employments. They just do not have the time or opportunity to improve their working context, or even talk out about the abuses they face on a daily basis, making them the ideal employees in management's eyes. In garment industry the women employees getting more empowerment of society as well as family that is enhancing women employees self confidence level and garment women employees are economically supported for our family.

Social Status of Women in India

The status of Indian women has been undergoing drastic changes from era to era. It has degenerated from that of a deity to devadasi, from the pious to the impious and from virtue to vice. It has been rightly said that the status and position of women in society is the best way to understand a civilization, its progress and its shortcomings. Great strides have been made in ensuring equality for women in Indian society. However, contradictions and gaps in protecting certain basic rights of women continue to exist. The government has actively – both through law and policy sought to improve the status of women. But for stray regional variations, religious, caste and class-based differences have a definitive impact on women in India.

Crucial in transforming the social status of women are protective and preventive legislations seeking to better the status of women. The early reforms sought to tackle different social practices such as child marriage, sati and remarriage of widows through legislation.

Economic Status of Women in India:

The economic status of women in the country has undergone many changes. The liberalization and globalization phase had a serious impact on women workers. While new work arenas such as information technology and biotechnology have absorbed more and more women, there has also been a marked increase in the presence of women in the unorganized and informal sector. Nearly 93% of women workers in India are in unorganized and informal employment and their numbers are steadily rising. Globalization and the removal of trade restrictions have impacted domestic industry and small farmers. This in turn has adversely impacted low paid women workers. The feminization of poverty is a growing concern as the number of female interstate migrant workers within the country is rapidly growing. Over the past 15 years, women's paid employment has increased throughout the world. The reasons for this increase include market liberalization causing lower wages and a greater need in a household for more than one wage earner, lower birth rates, urbanization, and greater education among women.

Now a day, the number of women employees has increased. So, women's contribution towards the income of the family and nation has also increased. During the 1970's the decade of the international Women's Year, efforts to promote the status of working women received greater attention from the Government. Actually, there is no exact measurement for women's contribution in economic activity. The majority of the women employees are in the informal sector. As every family has to face various challenges like inflation and deflation, women have to go to any work to meet the economic problems of the family. In addition to that some of the women go to work to increase their standard of living and also to improve their

³ Webmaster (2015), "*Indian Garment Industry*", retrieved from www.indianmirror.com on 14.04.2018 at 2.02 pm.

social status. Now a day, women go to work in order to earn supplemental incomes. It leads to increase in income-generating employment and empowerment of women and removes the bias against women. There is a support for the equal participation of women along with men in the social, economic and political processes of national development⁴.

GARMENT INDUSTRIES IN TAMIL NADU

The textile industry plays a significant role in the Indian economy by providing direct employment to an estimated 35 million people, and thereby contributing 4% of GDP and 35% of Gross Export Earnings. The textile sector contributes to 14% of the manufacturing sector. The city of Tirupur, in Tamil Nadu is the largest garment exporter in India and sometimes referred to as Textile valley of India. In 2004, the export turnover from the town was more than \$1 billion. Some 7,000 garment units in the town provide employment opportunity to 1 million people. 56% of India's total knitwear exports come from Tirupur.

GARMENT INDUSTRIES IN SALEM:

In Tamil Nadu Salem is the 5th largest city located in the central part of the southernmost state of India. It almost completely surrounded by hills. Salem is one of the major textile centers in our country and divided into 4 Revenue Divisions (Attur, Mettur, Salem and Sankari) and 9 Taluks. Salem is also the capital of Salem district whose other major locations are, Mettur, Omalur and Attur. Gorgeous silks and gossamer cottons from the handlooms of Salem are well known to the ladies, the High Court Dhoties are to assuage the men folk. Salem is one of the main textile processing hubs of Tamil Nadu famous for its Readymade Garments Manufacturing and Exporting the Readymade Garments to various European Countries, USA, Canada and Australia, and also a leading city in garments exports. There are numerous Exporters functioning in the city engaged in exporting of garments.

Salem District



Recently our weavers have entered the Textiles Export Market in a highway and the Government of India has selected Salem City to be notified as a Textile Export Zone.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM:

⁴ Nazneen jahan chowdhury, Hafij ullah, MD. (2010). *“Socio-Economic Conditions of Female Garment Workers in Chittagong Metropolitan Area–An Empirical Study”*. Volume– V, Issue– 02, Pp. 53 – 70.

This present study entitles as “Socio – Economic context of working women employees in Readymade Garment Industry in Salem District”. This research will try to understand economical and social problems of Readymade Garment Industry women workers.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY:

1. To understand the socio economic pattern of women Readymade garment workers.
2. To analyze the relationship between women socio economic condition and their nature of employment.
3. To limelight on their view toward the facilities which are offered by the firm.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

Chowdhury (2010)⁵ in this study suggests that the standard of living of the women garment workers is still in unstable condition and they are not free from the brutal circle of poverty and face extreme difficulties in obtaining their basic needs for survival even. This paper recommends measures for civilizing the current socio-economic facilities, to an enormous level, to accomplish women employees’ contentment at the highest level.

Sikdar et al., (2014)⁶ this article depicts the socio-economic circumstances of women garment employees. We originate that majorities of women are disadvantaged and economically poverty suffering categories women folk. However, mostly, the condition of women garment employees is very frustrating because of basically low wage and salary, poor working environment, limited housing facilities, lack of medical facilities, low level incentives and so on.

Nazrul Islam (2014)⁷ in this article suggests that housing, water and sanitation conditions, medical facilities and first aid treatment, wages, social status, adaptation of cultural values and norms, attachment with labor unions, ownership arrangement, leave with pay and overtime are significantly related to the socio-economic status of the garments workers of Bangladesh. This study recommends that the measures for improving the socio-economic status of the women workers are related to the improvement of their housing conditions, education, health and sanitation, and the favorable service rules for the women workers.

Mala (2016)⁸ this study aims to identifying the major issues related to socio economic profile of women construction labourers, by analyzing the job satisfaction levels, wages, their economic status by finding out their savings, loans and also examining the status of these women in social ladder and recommending measures for mitigation of the problems.

Mustafa et al., (2016)⁹ in their study emphasized that participation in this income generating sector their life and status in the society got upgraded. Employment opportunities of women in RMG sector upgrade the women workers, both socially and economically. The garment industry has led to significant changes in the socio- economic condition, livelihood pattern of working women. Women involvements in decision making, buying and selling, food selection, children education etc. are crucial for their empowerment.

⁵ Nazneen jahan chowdhury, Hafij ullah, MD. (2010). “*Socio-Economic Conditions of Female Garment Workers in Chittagong Metropolitan Area–An Empirical Study*”. Volume– V, Issue– 02, Pp. 53 – 70.

⁶ Mehedi Hasan Sikdar, MD. Sujahangir Kabir Sarkar, MD. Sumaiya Sadeka. (2014). “Socio-Economic Conditions of the Female Garment Workers in the Capital City of Bangladesh”. International Journal of Humanities and Social Science, Volume – 4, Issue – 3, Pp. 173 - 179 .

⁷ Nazrul Islam, Muntaquimul Bari Chowdhuri, Abu Sayef MD. (2012). “*Socio-Economic Factors Of Readymade Garments Workers In Bangladesh*”. D.U. Journal of Marketing, Volume - 15, Pp. 305 – 325.

⁸ Mala, P. (2016). “*Socio-Economic profile of women working in textile units of Tiruppur district in Tamil Nadu*”. International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research and Development, Volume -3; Issue - 1, Pp. 304-308.

⁹ Afsana Mustafa, Serajul Islam, M, Saiful Islam , Mahfuja Khatun. (2016). “*Impact of RMG Sector on Livelihood Change of Women Employees of Bangladesh*”. Social and Economic Geography, Volume - 2, Issue - 1, Pp. 1-10.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research is “systematized effort to gain new knowledge”. Research is a logical and systematic search for new and valuable information on a particular topic. It is an examination of finding solutions to social problems through objective and systematic analysis. It is an exploration of knowledge which is a discovery of hidden truths.

RESEARCH DESIGN

The research design refers to the overall strategy that you choose to integrate the different components of the study in a rational and logical way, thereby ensuring you will effectively address the research problem; it constitutes the blue print for the collection, measurement and analysis of data. In this research it has designed as descriptive in nature. The questionnaire has designed to collect data from 3 different readymade garment company women employees in Salem. The sample for this study was 51 and convenience sampling method was used.

DATA COLLECTION

The reliability and validity of any research is based on the systematic method of data collection and analysis. In this study both Primary and Secondary data were used.

PRIMARY DATA

Primary data is the data collected by the researcher themselves, i.e.

Data can be collecting through surveys / questionnaires for specific intention on a particular topic collecting information by observation and discussion for the research study.

SECONDARY DATA

Secondary data sources are already exists some were like previous research, official statistics, government reports, web information etc., it can save time instead of spending more time. In calculation of social and economic considering secondary data is essential.

DATA ANALYSIS

Analysis of data is a process of inspecting, cleaning, transforming, and modeling data with the goal of discovering useful information, suggesting conclusions, and supporting decision-making. The course of evaluating data by means of logical and reasonable reasoning to study every part of the information provided. Statistics as of different sources is reviewed, gathered, and then analyzed to shape several class of judgment or winding up. There are mixtures of clear information investigation process, a number of which contain data taking out, content analytics, dealing brainpower, and facts visualizations. For this the analysis tools such as Descriptive Analysis, ANOVA, and Henry Garret Ranking Technique can be considered for the reliability and accuracy of the results.

DESCRIPTION OF DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF THE RESPONDENTS

Table No: 1.1

Profile	Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
Age	Below 20 years	1	1.97
	21 – 30	10	19.61
	31 – 40	22	43.13
	Above 40	18	35.29
Total		51	100
Profile	Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
Marital Status	Single	8	15.68
	Married	20	39.22
	Widow	10	19.60
	Divorced	7	13.73
	Separated	6	11.77

Total		51	100
Profile	Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
Education	Illiterate	17	33.33
	Schooling	26	50.99
	Diploma	0	0
	Graduate	8	15.68
	Post graduate	0	0
Total		51	100
Profile	Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
Income	Below 5000	25	49.02
	5001 – 7500	22	43.13
	7500 – 10000	4	7.85
	Above 10001	0	0
Total		51	100
Profile	Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
Family Size	Single	0	0
	Two members	8	15.69
	Three members	10	19.60
	Four members	15	29.41
	More than four members	18	35.30
Total		51	100
Profile	Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
Household Income	Below 10,000	18	35.30
	10001-15,000	31	60.78
	15,001-20,000	2	3.92
	Above 20,000	0	0
Total		51	100
Profile	Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
Work Nature	Machine Operator	2	3.92
	Cutting Master	7	13.73
	Tailor	12	23.52
	Sewing Helper	5	9.80
	Cutting Helper	7	13.73
	Checker	7	13.73
	Finishing Helper	5	9.80
	Ironer	6	11.77
Total		51	100
Profile	Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
Experience	Below – 5 years	22	43.13
	6 – 10 years	21	41.18
	11 – 15 years	8	15.69
	16 – 20 years	0	0
	Above 20 years	0	0
Total		51	100
Profile	Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
Choosing this Firm	Lack of education	7	13.72
	Interest in this field	0	0
	Family financial problem	44	86.28
	Other (If any).....	0	0
Total		51	100
Profile	Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
Working Hours	8 hours	34	66.67
	9 – 10 hours	17	33.33

	11 – 12 hours	0	0
	13 – 14 hours	0	0
	Total	51	100

Source: Primary Data

Interpretation:

The above table shows that 43.13% of the women employee's falls in the age group of 31-40 years, 35.29% were above 40 years, 19.61% were 21-30 years, and only 1.97% samples of respondents were in the age group of Below 20 years. Thus it can be interpreted that maximum number of readymade garment women employees belongs to the age group of 31-40 years.

Table shows that 39.22% of the respondents are married, 19.60% of the respondents are widows, 15.68 of the respondents are single, 13.73% of the respondents are Divorced and 11.77% of the respondents are Separated. Thus it can be stated that most of the readymade garment women employees were married.

Regarding the members educational qualification, the distribution shows that 50.99% of the respondents were completed school level, 33.33% of the respondents were Illiterate, and 15.68% of the respondents were finished Graduate and none of the respondents are not completed Diploma and Post graduate level education. Hence it can be interpreted that more number of readymade garment women employees had completed only school level education.

Regarding the Monthly income (in Rs) the distribution shows that 49.02% of the respondent's monthly income is below 5000, 43.13% of the respondent's monthly income is 5001-7500 and 7.85% of the respondent's monthly income is 7500 – 10000, none of the respondents are not getting Above 10001 level monthly income. Therefore it is interpreted that maximum of the respondents monthly income is only below 5000.

Regarding the member's family size, the table shows that 35.30% of the respondents have More than four members, 29.41% of the respondents having four members, 19.60% of the respondent's family size is three members and 15.69% of the respondents having two members, 0% of the respondents having the single member family size. Thus it can be interpreted that more number of the readymade garment women employees has a family size of more than four members.

Regarding the Household Income (in Rs) in the distribution shows that 60.78% of the respondents Household Income are 10001-15000, 35.30% of the respondents household income is Below 10,000, 3.92% of the respondents household income 15,001-20,000 and none of the respondents household income is Above 20,000. Thus it can be stated that most of the readymade garment women employees household income level only 10001-15000.

Regarding the respondents work nature, the table shows that 23.52% of the respondents work nature is tailor, 13.73% of the respondents are Cutting Master, Cutting Helper & Checker , 11.77% of the respondents are Ironer, 9.80% of the respondents are Sewing Helper & Finishing Helper and 3.92% of the respondents are Machine Operator. Hence it can be interpreted that more number of readymade garment women employees are Tailor.

Regarding the readymade garment women employees Experience, 43.13% of the respondents have below – 5 years, 41.18% of the respondents having 6 – 10 years, 15.69% of the respondents having 11 – 15 years and 0% of the respondents having the 16 – 20 years & Above 20 years. Thus it can be stated that most of the readymade garment women employees having only below – 5 years.

Regarding the readymade garment women employees choosing this Firm, majority 86% of the respondents are working in this firm for Family financial problem, 13.72% of the respondents were Lack of education and 0% of the respondents were Interest in this field & Other (If any). Thus it can be stated

that most of the readymade garment women employees choosing this Firm only reason for Family financial problem.

Further it shows that 66.67% of the respondents are working in 8 hours, 33.33% of the respondents are working in 9 - 10 hours and 0% of the respondents were 11 – 12 hours & 13 – 14 hours. Thus it can be stated that most of the readymade garment women employees working time is 8 hours per day.

VARIANCE BETWEEN RESPONDENTS EXPERIENCE AND SATISFACTION LEVEL ABOUT THE FACILITIES PROVIDED BY THE FIRM.

Null Hypothesis (H₀): There is no significant difference between Age of the readymade garment women employees and satisfaction level of facilities provided by the firm.

Null Hypothesis (H₀): There is no significant difference between Experience of the readymade garment women employees and satisfaction level of facilities provided by the firm.

Null Hypothesis (H₀): There is no significant difference between Work Nature of the readymade garment women employees and satisfaction level of facilities provided by the firm.

Table No: 1.2
Age of the Respondents

S.No	Factors	Variance	Sum of Square	Df	Mean Square	F	P Value	Remarks
1	Age	Between Groups	7.322	6	.814	1.358	.239	NS
		Within Groups			23.958			

Experience of the Respondents

S.No	Factors	Variance	Sum of Square	Df	Mean Square	F	P Value	Remarks
1	Experience	Between Groups	4.538	6	.504	.936	.505	NS
		Within Groups			21.542			

Work Nature of the Respondents

S.No	Factors	Variance	Sum of Square	Df	Mean Square	F	P Value	Remarks
1	Work Nature	Between Groups	63.341	6	7.038	1.816	.095	NS
		Within Groups			154.979			

Source: primary data

Interpretation:

Since the P value (0.239) is greater than (0.05), the null hypothesis is accepted at 5% level of significance. Hence, it concludes that there is no significant difference between employees Age towards facilities provided to the firm.

Since the P value (0.505) is greater than (0.05), the null hypothesis is accepted at 5% level of significance. Hence, it concludes that there is no significant difference between employees Experience towards facilities provided to the firm.

Since the P value (0.095) is greater than (0.05), the null hypothesis is accepted at 5% level of significance. Hence, it concludes that there is no significant difference between employees work nature towards facilities provided to the firm.

GARRET RANKING TECHNIQUE

This technique was used to rank the preference of the respondents on different aspects of the study. The order of merit given by the respondents was covered into ranks.

Table No: 1.3

S. No	Factors	Total	Garret score	Rank
1	Medical Facilities and First Aid Treatment	3540/51	69.41	II
2	Discrimination in wages	3420/51	67.05	III
3	Leave with Pay and Overtime	2475/51	48.52	IV
4	Insurance Arrangement	1640/51	32.15	V
5	Water and Sanitation Facilities	3735/51	73.23	I

Source: Primary Data

Interpretation:

The above table reveals that ranking of factors according to Women Employees satisfaction level about fringe benefits. **“Water and Sanitation Facilities”** was ranked **first** by the selected sample respondents with the total score of 3735 and the Garret score of 73.23. **“Medical Facilities and First Aid Treatment”** was ranked **second** by the selected sample respondents with the total score of 3540 and the Garret score of 69.41. **“Discrimination in wages”** was ranked **third** by the selected sample respondents with the total score of 3420 and the Garret score of 67.05.

FINDINGS:

1. It is found that out of 51 readymade garment women employees 43.13% of the women employee's falls in the age group of 31-40 years. This group woman's having lot of commitment towards the standard of living and children's education and other responsibilities only 31-40 years.
2. It is found that 39.22% of the women employees are married, 19.60% of the respondents are widows, 15.68 of the respondents are single, 13.73% of the respondents are Divorced and 11.77% of the respondents are Separated. Thus it can be stated that most of the readymade garment women employees were married.
3. The respondents educational qualification distribution shows that 50.99% of the respondents were completed school level, 33.33% of the respondents were Illiterate, and 15.68% of the respondents were finished Graduate and none of the respondents are not completed Diploma and Post graduate

level education. Hence it can be interpreted that more number of readymade garment women employees had completed only school level education.

4. Regarding the Monthly income (in Rs) the distribution shows that 49.02% of the respondent's monthly income is below 5000, 43.13% of the respondent's monthly income is 5001-7500 and 7.85% of the respondent's monthly income is 7500 – 10000, none of the respondents are not getting Above 10001leve monthly income. Therefore it is interpreted that maximum of the respondents monthly income is only below 5000.
5. India is a benchmark for the rest of the world. Especially in the family system. Since the readymade garment women employees having 35.30% of the respondents have More than four members in a family.
6. It is inferred that 60.78% of the respondents Household Income are 10001-15000, so most of the readymade garment women employees are working in this industry based on our family financial problem.
7. Based on the respondents work nature, it is interpret that 23.52% of the respondents work nature is tailor, 13.73% of the respondents are Cutting Master, Cutting Helper & Checker, 11.77% of the respondents are Ironer, 9.80% of the respondents are Sewing Helper & Finishing Helper and 3.92% of the respondents are Machine Operator. Hence it can be interpreted that more number of readymade garment women employees are Tailor.
8. It is found that out of 51 readymade garment women employees Experience, 43.13% of the respondents have below – 5 years, 41.18% of the respondents having 6 – 10 years, 15.69% of the respondents having 11 – 15 years and 0% of the respondents having the 16 – 20 years & Above 20 years. Thus it can be stated that most of the readymade garment women employees having only below – 5 years. The main reason for workers unable to continue this industry is lack of salary and affecting the health conditions.
9. Thus it can be stated that most 86% of the readymade garment women employees choosing this Firm only reason for Family financial problem and remains 13.72% of the respondents were Lack of education.
10. Further it shows that 66.67% of the respondents are working in 8 hours, 33.33% of the respondents are working in 9 - 10 hours. Thus it can be stated that most of the readymade garment women employees working time is 8 hours per day.
11. Analysis of variance interpreted that women employees Age, experience and work nature are no significantly differed than others with in the category towards facilities provided by the firm. Hence there is no significant difference between members Age, experience and work nature about facilities provided by the firm.
12. The ranking of factors according to Women Employees satisfaction level about fringe benefits. “Water and Sanitation Facilities” was ranked first by the selected sample respondents with the total score of 3735 and the Garret score of 73.23. “Medical Facilities and First Aid Treatment” was ranked second by the selected sample respondents with the total score of 3540 and the Garret score of 69.41. “Discrimination in wages” was ranked third by the selected sample respondents with the total score of 3420and the Garret score of 67.05.

SUGGESTIONS:

- ✓ Working hours should be minimized because this will be creating more problems in their families and health.
- ✓ To provide housing facilities by the respective owner.

- ✓ To raise the present salary and require to ensure the minimum salary for them.
- ✓ To establish a objective based bonus system as well as other additional benefits such as incentives, leaves, health benefit and so on.
- ✓ To avoid pollution in the working place and require making sure proper medical facilities.

CONCLUSION:

Women are an essential part of every economy. All round development and harmonious development of a nation would be possible only when women are considered as co-partners in progress with men. Empowerment of women is essential to bind the women employees in the main tributary of economic growth. The readymade garment sector in India contributes more than 60 percent of the national income and 80 percent of the readymade garment employees are women. Due to participation in this income generating region their life and standing position in the society got upgraded. But still majorities of women are disadvantaged and economically poverty suffering categories women folk. However, mostly, the condition of readymade garment women employees is very exasperating because of mainly low salary, lack of housing facilities, lack of medical facilities, high work load, poor insurance arrangements and so on.

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