

The Impact of Entrepreneurship Programs On the Economic Empowerment of Rural Women in Vidarbha, Maharashtra

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Abstract - Women entrepreneurs are playing a significant role in today's society and are now a significant component of the global economic community. For long-term economic growth and social advancement, women's participation in entrepreneurship is crucial. Despite playing a significant part in Indian society, women's entrepreneurial potential has not yet been fully realized because of their inferior social position. Rural women entrepreneurs have even more low social status than urban one. The goal of the current study is to strengthen rural women by creating industrial facilities based on the local expertise.

Thus, the study focuses on impact of EDP on rural women status. It also focuses on the reasons why women choose to become entrepreneurs. 90 women aged 16 to 40 were chosen for the study in Vidarbha, Maharashtra. All of them had a skill-upgrading programme created with the existing skills of rural women in account. Self-made questionnaire, survey was used to gather primary data. Comparative analysis had been done to find out impact of Entrepreneurship development program (EDP) on rural women entrepreneurs. Analysis of their skills, income, savings, freedom of mobility, appreciation from family and of personal profile had been done. Results were displayed in the form of tables, bar graphs. The study's main objective is to empower rural women by creating a EDP for rural women

Keywords - Women, Entrepreneurs, Impact, Empowerment.

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INTRODUCTION

In India, a sizable share of the workforce is employed in the unorganized sector. Low socioeconomic status women workers are one of the most marginalized groups in the nation's informal sector as a result of the uneven working circumstances. The National Policy for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (2015) states that entrepreneurship education may contribute to the empowerment of women. To impart skill and knowledge to women, the government has created programmes like the Skill Enhancement Awareness Campaign Schemes under the Directorate General of Employment and Training. About 10,000 training service providers are expected to be created as a result of this programme, and 12.6 lakh women have already benefited from it. Other than this, 1,41,907 women are annually trained by 1134 women-only wings in ITIs and 402 women-only ITIs. There is additional vocational education training programmes for women being operated by ten Regional Vocational Training Institutes (RVITs) across the country. The government has proposed 8 new Regional Vocational Training Institutes (Swaniti

initiative, 2015).

Malyadri (2014) estimates that women make up close to 50% of the world's population. Thus, more effectively leveraging promising resources is necessary for women's economic and educational engagement at the local, regional, national, and international levels. It is now vital to understand how women's startups impact the development of the national economy. Women who engage in diverse entrepreneurial activities increase their influence in relevant social, financial, philosophical, and other realms. This is evident from the significant contributions made by female business entrepreneurs across all economic sectors in industrialized countries including Canada, the British Isles, Europe, Australia, and the Americas.

i. Entrepreneurship by Women

A woman entrepreneur is someone who decides to start and take risks to build a company enterprise and manages it in the face of obstacles and instability with the aim of establishing self-

employment, revenue, and progress. She recognizes opportunities and accumulates the resources required to seize them. She seems to be naturally good at business. A woman entrepreneur is defined as "any woman or group of women who develop, imitate, or adapt an economic activity," according to Sudha (2007). Menani and Manish (2014) claim that women are currently launching small enterprises twice as frequently as men. The turn of the last century is to blame for the better social and cultural conditions that women presently enjoy.

A women-owned and -controlled business is one in which possess at least a 51% financial interest in the company's capital and who employ at least 51% women, according to the Indian government. Despite the fact that women make up around 50% of the population in India, men still dominate business today. Because of women's work, autonomy, business deals, and the creation of numerous economic sectors, society and the government increasingly recognize the liberation of women.

Female entrepreneurs in India face a number of socioeconomic challenges relating to attitude, support, and organization. Actually, these are the main elements that have an impact on how successful women business owners are. Because of the socio-cultural duties they bear, women carry an excessive load. A crucial resource for beginning a firm, financing is difficult to come by for female business owners. Today, there are several policies and programmes in place to support women who work for themselves. Many state and federal agencies, non-governmental organizations, and other groups are trying to support women starting their own enterprises. (Manisha 2013)

ii. Indian Women Entrepreneurs

Women and men in the development period should be treated equally, according to Mallikarjun and Paramanand (2013). However, due to years of slavery and servitude, Indian women have remained the victims. Women have long been underestimated in India. Women make up almost half of the world's population. They have, however, made a comparatively small contribution to national economies. Despite making up an equal portion of the labor force, they aren't currently heavily active in the mainstream of the development process. Women make up a distinct demographic with a total population of 495.74 million, or 48.3% of the entire country, according to the 2001 Census.

Over the past 20 years, there have apparently been significant changes in the way that women are perceived in a large number of rising nations, according to Phurailatpam (2007). Women are discovering who they are and trying to find their place in all fields of study. In today's constantly evolving environment, there is a greater requirement than ever for corporate advancement abilities. Numerous new

business opportunities exist in a number of different sectors, including the laptop, electrical, healthcare, agribusiness, food science, and apparel industries. From this point on, women's wealth creation in these fields might be viewed as a way for women to grow economically for themselves.

In today's constantly evolving environment, it is more important than ever to have the ability to learn new skills. Many new business prospects exist in a number of different sectors, including computing, technology, healthcare, agriculture, plant biotechnology, and apparel. Therefore, women's entrepreneurialism in a variety of fields could be considered as a way for them to develop economically.

iii. Women's Role in the Growth of Entrepreneurship

The development of every country's industrial base depends on micro level businesses. Women can be successful as microbusiness entrepreneurs because of their personalities and temperaments. According to Gurusamy et al. (2012), the development of female entrepreneurship is one of the most important issues on which the nations of the globe have been working recently as a part of holistic human capital development. All governments are aware that equal opportunity and involvement for all gender and religious groups are necessary for an economy to expand purposefully. Furthermore, it is acknowledged that the expansion of the entrepreneurial sector is one of the crucial components for sustained industrialization.

Microbusinesses are starting up more regularly in growing regions thanks to small town reserves. The erosion of local craftsmanship and design has drawn a lot of attention to entrepreneurship. Women are naturally strong, which can support them in building successful businesses. Vinesh (2014) asserts that there is evidence to imply that nations with a disproportionately higher share of enterprises in their population have advanced far more swiftly than those with a lower share.

In India, women make up roughly 48% of the population, but just 34% of them work in the private sector. The 2007 Human Development Report places India 96th out of 137 nations in terms of gender-related accomplishment. In terms of gender empowerment criteria, which assess how much women contribute to a country's political and economic life, India is ranked 110th out of 166 nations.

iv. Vidarbha's history in Maharashtra

The region called Vidarbha, which is also a proposed state in the Centre of the nation, is comprised of the Amravati and Nagpur divisions of the Indian state of Maharashtra. Vidarbha is divided into 11 districts and 2 divisions. In Nagpur, both the business

and medical sectors are thriving. Amravati's fabric and film distributors are well-known. Yavatmal, which is known for producing cotton, exports it.

Vidarbha was a part of the area referred to as the Central Provinces and Berar during the British occupation. Baker (1979) claims that the 1903 merger of Berar (which includes Vidarbha), a wealthy region with a surplus of income, with the revenue-deficient Central Provinces was done in order to settle the administrative problems with the British administration. Beginning in 1903, the newly created province enabled the administration the leeway to "grow the bureaucracy, found institutions, construct public works, and develop Nagpur in accordance with its role as the capital." The Berar revenue-payers were furious as a result, and they asked that their division be separated from the province. In 1938, the legislatures of the Central Provinces and Berar adopted a resolution mandating Berar's removal from the province. In light of Vidarbha's separation as a separate state in 1955, the States Reorganization Commission also made a constructive suggestion. (Kumar 2013) Vidarbha, Marathwada, and Western Maharashtra, which includes the Konkan, make up the three primary areas of Maharashtra, which was established in 1960. These three regions have had different histories before coming together to become the state of Maharashtra.

v. Governmental Programs to Build Skills

The government has acknowledged the value of skill development and is providing a framework to address the issue with the aforementioned eleventh five-year strategy. The National Skill Development Mission was launched in 2010 following the first national skill development policy's creation in 2009. According to the 12th Five Year Strategy, in the former, manpower acquisition programmes were mostly administered by the government and had a poor relationship to industry requirements. It has advocated for the development of an environment that would encourage private investment in collaborations among the general public for skill-training programmes (Sujata, 2015).

To fulfil the demand for trained workers, the Indian government therefore started a number of skill development projects throughout India.

vi. Need for the Study

In an effort to boost economic production, the National Policy on Skill Development (2015) highlights the importance of expanded female labor sector participation. A nation's growth and success are determined by its resources in terms of people, land, and money.

Deprivation has a negative impact on skill development, claim Sanghi and Sarija (2015). As a result, skilled labor can contribute to ending poverty.

Women with the necessary abilities may run businesses of any size, from microbusinesses to massive enterprises. It is commonly known that women's entrepreneurship contributes to women's empowerment and that it raises women's standards of living and self-esteem in developing nations. By identifying skill-based entrepreneurial units in the targeted area and investigating the effects of female management of enterprises on women's empowerment, the current study seeks to enhance rural women.

vii. The study's limitations.

- One of the study's flaws is that it only included 90 rural women as participants.
- The investigation will only cover the Vidarbha region of Maharashtra.
- Women who have skills in stitching, needlework, knitting, quilting, printmaking, toy making, crocheting, and coloring will only be considered for this course.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The study's objectives have been listed here due to the subject matter's generality.

- To assess rural women's circumstances in specific economic sectors.
- To identify the skills that women in the target population have.
- To increase the expertise and understanding of the targeted rural women in regards to fibre.
- To improve the general awareness of the manufacturing performance and cost requirements of the sector.
- To establish innovative organizations utilizing resources from the mentioned industries.
- To investigate the impact of entrepreneurship on the emancipation of women.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Area Selection

The present study is carried out in the Vidarbha, Madhya Pradesh. The 11 districts that make up Maharashtra's Vidarbha region are Yavatmal, Akola, Amravati, Wardha, Buldhana, Washim, Nagpur, Chandrapur, Bhandara, Gadchiroli, and Gondia. Both the industrial and agricultural sectors of this

region have remained underdeveloped due to a variety of factors. The study focused on three districts namely Amravati, Buldana, Akola. Five villages were selected at random from each of these districts for the study.

Sample Selection

Women who were willing to participate and who possessed any skill sets were chosen as samples. Skills in the production of textiles or the apparel and accessory industry, such as sewing, embroidery, needlework, quilting, crocheting, varnishing, or printing, are desired for the suggested inquiry. In the target area, women's consensual contributions were welcomed.

The following criteria were used to determine which women were selected for this study:

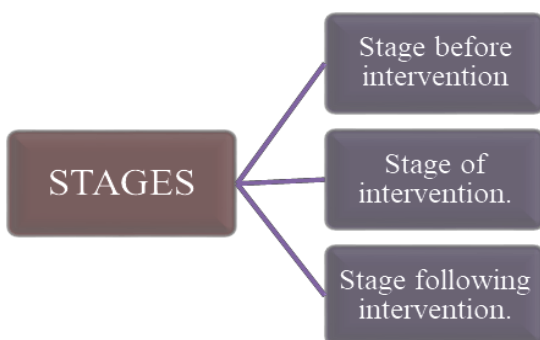
- Women who reside in rural areas were chosen for the study.
- The study's participants were women between the ages of 16 and 40.
- It was desirable to select women for the current study who had an interest in and a working understanding of textiles and clothes, such as those who had done patchwork, weaving, coloring, or printmaking.
- Women who wished to improve their skills and were interested in the study were chosen. The sample's preparation and enthusiasm were assessed using a questionnaire that was self-created.

Sample Size

90 women from the target region were chosen in total. 30 ladies were selected from each district that was chosen. A small group of 5 to 10 women from one village participated in the economic endeavours. In total, 15 villages were picked for this investigation.

Method.

Research was conducted in 3 stages



1. Stage before Intervention

Women's empowerment standing was evaluated prior to assistance. For this, particular areas of the chosen sample's empowerment, such as their salary, coefficient of determination, decision-making ability, respect from their families, and unrestricted physical movement for work, were evaluated. These variables were evaluated using a self-created questionnaire.

2. Stage of Intervention: Based on their range of abilities, the sample women were recruited for additional training. Also After the poll, soft toys were picked for production based on consumer demand. After skill development and manufacturing standard concerns, mass manufacturing was implemented. After being produced in massive quantities, the products were sold. Women were selected and taught in side-by-side selling.

3. Stage after Intervention: After the business units were established, their stability was assessed. Impact of Entrepreneurship Program was assessed in this stage.

RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

The demographic details of women entrepreneurs in Vidarbha, Maharashtra were analyzed and evaluated in this part. Age group, academic qualification, matrimonial designation, existence of near or far relatives with prior industry knowledge are the subjects of data collection.

1. Age. Women entrepreneurs aged between 36 and 40 are more prevalent than women entrepreneurs aged 26 to 30 years, according to the table.

Table 1 analysis of age of sample taken

Age Of Women Entrepreneurs	Frequency
16-20	6
21-25	9
26-30	14
31-35	28
36-40	33

2. Education. Most women entrepreneurs in sample are reasonably uneducated, with the majority of women having an intermediate(HSC) and the remaining 25% having matriculation certificates. 10% of women have graduation degree, (8%) are illiterate and 3% hold post-graduation degree.

Table 2 Analysis of educational qualification of the sample

Education Level	Frequency
Illiterate	7
Below Matriculation	9
Matriculation	22
Intermediate	38
Graduate	10
Postgraduate	4
Total	90

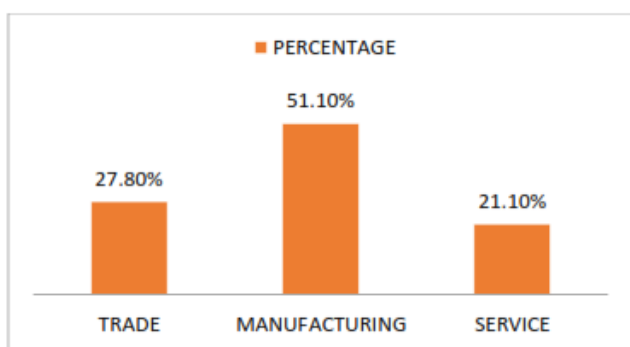
3. Marital status. 78.8% of respondents in Vidarbha, Maharashtra, are married, compared to 11.1% who are single and 5.5% who have divorced. The poll shows that a woman's husband's support is the main factor encouraging her to pursue this line of work.

Table 3 analysis of marital status of sample taken.

Marital Status	Frequency
Single	10
Married	71
Divorced	5
Widow	4
Total	90

4. Analysis of Business Profile of the Sample.

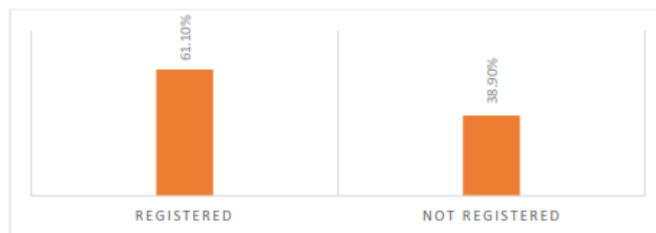
25 (27.8%) of the 90 female entrepreneurs surveyed have a trading company, or 51.1%, work in manufacturing. In the Vidarbha region, the majority of female entrepreneurs (51.1%) work in the manufacturing sector. The nature of the women entrepreneurs' businesses is depicted in the graph.



Graph 1 shows analysis of type of business of

sample taken.

Results show that 53% of respondents certify that their company venture is registered, compared to 47% who still need to register their business.



Graph 2 analysis of status of registration

Analysis of pretest conducted before training.

Table 4 Result of pretest

S. No.	Rating scale	Level of ability	Frequency
1	'1'	Has knowledge of and interest in skill.	9
2	'2'	Is taught the techniques but is unable to create anything.	40
3	'3'	Possess 8-10 objects that can be prepared with the chosen talents.	22
4	'4'	Requires additional skill training for a week in order to produce work of the highest caliber.	10
5	'5'	Has a high level of skill in producing goods of high quality	9

Analysis of training program provided. 61.1 percent of the respondents had quarterly training, 8.9 percent had annual training, no one had flexible time training. 18.9% of respondents had monthly training, 11.1% had weekly training, and 5.5% had daily training. 24.4% of those polled are in strong agreement with the idea of mandatory training. Detailed analysis is shown in table below.

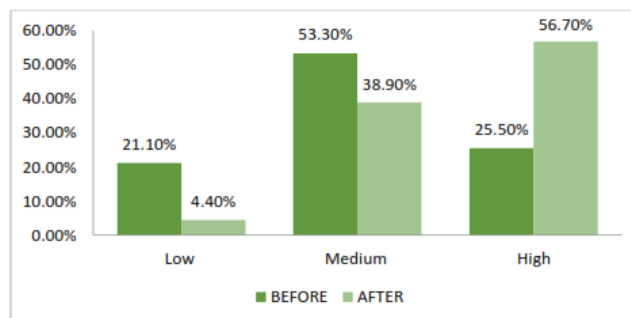
Table 5 Analysis of training program provided

	Frequency	Percentage
Training Time duration		
Weekly	10	11.1%
Monthly	17	18.9%
Quarterly	55	61.1%
Yearly-	8	8.9%
Reason for motive undergoing training		
Capacity building	27	30%
Motivation Development	8	8.9%
Career Advancement	47	52.2%
Knowledge regarding government schemes and incentives	08	8.9%
The purpose of training was served fulfilled?		
strongly agree	22	24.4%
Agree	44	48.9%
Uncertain	11	12.2%
Disagree	8	8.9%
Strongly disagree	5	5.5%
Grand total	90	100%

Analysis of Effect On Empowerment

Comparative analysis of self-confidence of rural entrepreneurs before and after EDP.

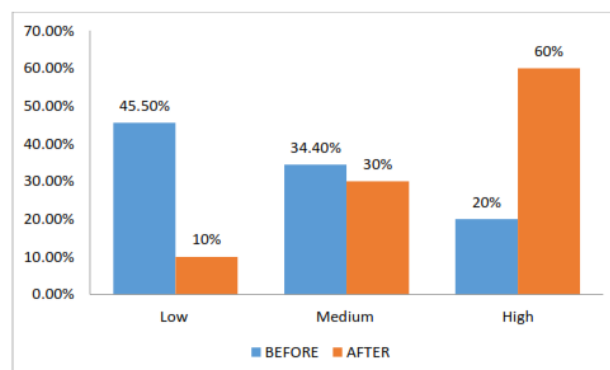
More than half (53.3%) of the respondents had a medium level of self-confidence prior to becoming entrepreneurs, whereas this number dropped to 38.9% after they joined an entrepreneurship development programme. 21.1% had a low level of confidence prior to starting their own businesses, but this number declined to 4.4% after joining an incubator.



Graph 4 comparative analysis of sample's confidence before and after EDP

Comparative analysis of self-confidence of rural entrepreneurs before and after EDP.

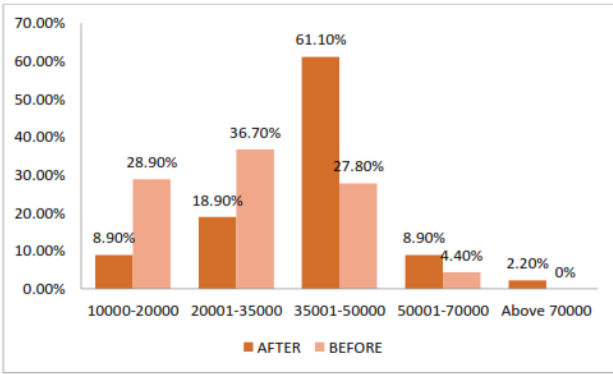
Most of the respondents had a low level of problem-solving skills before, but that level went up to a high level after they had EDP. For example, 34.4% of respondents had medium level problems before and 30% after becoming an entrepreneur. 45.5% (n=41) of them had low-level before - but only 10% of sample had low level ability after EDP.



Graph 5 comparative analysis of ability to solve problems before and after EDP

Comparative analysis of salary before and after EDP.

The majority of respondents, that 36.7% (n=33) of respondents make between Rs.20, 001 and Rs.35, 000 per month before. However, after EDP, 61.1% make 35000-50000 per month. Before no one makes above 70000 per month but after EDP, 2 of them said their earnings were above Rs. 70000.



Graph 6 analysis of salary before and after EDP

Comparative analysis of savings before and after EDP.

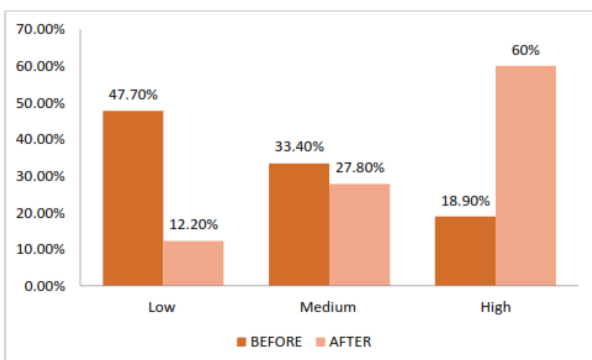
61.1% (n=55) of respondents save less than 10000, after that 27.8% of the sample save between Rs 10,000 and Rs 25,000 per month before EDP. But after 62.2% made savings between Rs. 25001-40000. Now they have higher levels of savings.



Graph 7 Comparative analysis of savings before and after EDP.

Comparative analysis of freedom of mobility before and after EDP.

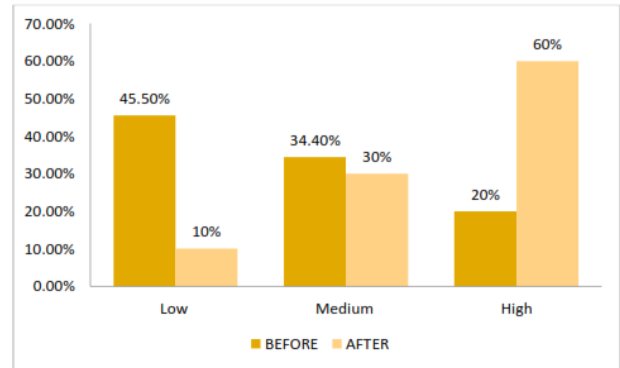
The majority of respondents, or 47.7% % (n= 43), had low level freedom of mobility before. However, 60% (n= 54) now have higher-level freedom of mobility



Graph 8 Comparative analysis of freedom of mobility before and after EDP.

Comparative analysis of social status before and after EDP.

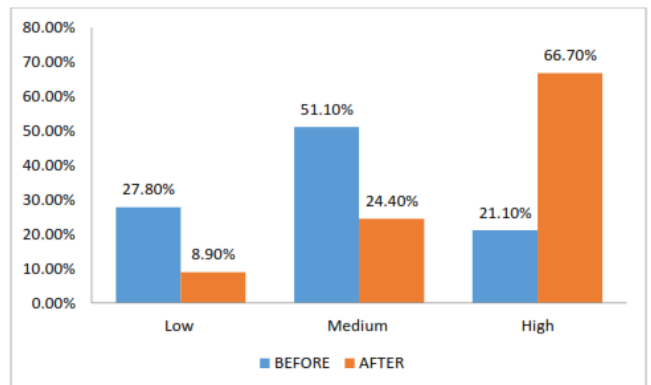
45.5% of them had low social status before. But after their social status has also improved. 60 % of them believed that their status has improved from low to high level.



Graph 9 Comparative analysis of social status before and after EDP.

Comparative analysis of appreciation from family before and after EDP.

46% of them received medium level appreciation from family which in now after EDP has got better. 66.7% of them now received high level of appreciation from family which is great moral support for anyone to start business



Graph 10 Comparative analysis of appreciation from family before and after EDP.

CONCLUSION

The study seeks to evaluate primary data on female entrepreneurs in micro firms in Vidarbha's three districts. This study reveals that the majority of female entrepreneurs run manufacturing companies. There are more women who own businesses in the 36–40 age range. Higher education levels among women at matriculation and in high school are

associated with more entrepreneurial activity. Registered women business owners outperform unregistered women company owners in terms of performance. Majority of sample took part in skill-development training programmes. Soft toys were produced in very good quality after training programs. Local and regional markets were where women entrepreneurs offered their products. It is discovered that women entrepreneurs' sense of empowerment prior to establishing their enterprises is low. The graph level, however, increases to a high level once EDP has launched. Women entrepreneurs' businesses perform poorly because they are unaware of the government's entrepreneurship development programmes and plans. Overall, it has been determined that entrepreneurship development programmes are the best way to improve family welfare and have greatly decreased poverty.

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