THE INFLUENCE OF MATERNAL EMPLOYMENT ON CHILDREN'S LONG RUN ACHIEVEMENT: CASE OF IZMIR

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Abstract

This paper aims to investigate the influence of having a housewife mother on children's future achievement. This issue has been previously discussed; but lack of data has meant that it was impossible to reach definitive conclusions. For this, a unique dataset about district of Izmir is used. Current income of the individuals is used as a proxy for their achievement. The results show that having a housewife mother decreases the long run achievement, and its negative influence is higher for sons than daughters. Moreover it is shown that female children tend to take mothers as role models, and daughters tend to follow their housewife mother's roles. This research also reveals that men whose mother was a housewife are 14% more likely to prefer a wife in this role.

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I) Introduction

Success, which is commonly seen as an internal talent within an individual, is indeed also influenced by many external factors including the behaviour of parents during childhood. Although the father is an important figure, the role of the mother in child's development is indisputable. Perhaps the most influential role model for the child in life is mother. In this respect the influence of the occupation of a mother, especially, whether the mother is in employment or not becomes an important factor for analysis. The main concern is that maternal employment obviously restricts the amount of time devoted to raising children. However, in the development of human capital it is not clear whether the amount of time spent, or the quality of time matters more. The aim of this paper is to answer two particular questions. The first is whether having a housewife mother has any influence on the long run achievement of children. The second is concerned with intergenerational attitude of this issue. The paper considers whether, for men, a housewife mother leads to a preference for a wife also in this role. It also considers whether a daughter of a housewife mother also prefers this role also for herself.

There is a huge literature about the influence of maternal employment on children's achievement, especially on school success[1], however little research has investigated the long run effects. This is mostly because it is very difficult to find information about mother's occupation of adults in household surveys unless she is still resident with the family. This paper aims to fill this gap with a unique dataset exclusively for the Izmir area. In this survey, there is the question about the occupation of a mother, regardless of whether living in the household or not. Detailed information about the data set is given in the data section of this paper. I am aware of the fact that as the data set covers only the Izmir region it would be difficult to generalize the results. However, Izmir is the third city in Turkey, with almost 4 million inhabitants and also known to be one of the most modern. Children of Izmir are among the most successful students of Turkey in university entrance exam[2]. Therefore, the results provided may not exactly reflect the average for the whole country and may be a bit underestimated with respect to the average of Turkey.

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[1] See literature review section

[2] In Turkey there is a central university entrance exam which is highly competitive. In order to be able to enter a university a student should get a very high score from the field he/she chooses. Every year approximately 1.5 million students enter to this exam and only for 10000 get a place in a university and for very good universities the student has to be in the first 1000 students.

There have long been debates about maternal employment in Turkey. Moreover, Turkey shows a particularly different trend than many other countries regarding female labour force participation (FLFP). Over the last 50 years, Turkey's FLFP has been decreasing[3], due to a number of reasons such as economic crises and urbanization, but Goksel (2010) claims that it is also due to the increase in conservatism. In her work she uses the 2006 Household Structure Survey (2006 HSS), in which, the individuals are asked directly whether they think it is appropriate that women work or not. 63% of all men who oppose women working justify their belief on the ground that "The woman's main duty is to take care of the children and do the domestic work". Considering this belief, it is important to ask whether maternal employment would really influence the attainment of their children negatively, or not.

The next question this paper asks is whether this belief is bequeathed to the next generation. For this, it is ascertained whether males with housewife mothers also preferred their wives to be housewives, and also, whether women with housewife mothers prefer this role for themselves.

The outline of this paper is as follows: The next section is devoted to the literature review. In section 3, I give a brief explanation of the data, and in section 4, I describe the methodology. Section 5 presents the estimation results, while section 6, the final section, concludes.

II) Literature Review

The early literature about the influence of maternal employment on children's achievement was by mainly physiologists and sociologists. In spite of the wide range of studies, there is no definitive answer regarding the influence of maternal employment on children's academic achievement. Some find positive effects (Sewell and Shah, 1968a, 1968b), some find no effect (Gottfried, 1991; Gottfried and Bathurst, 1988), while some find negative effects (Bloom-Feshbach *et al*, 1982). Beyer (1995) claims that such studies have not focused enough on the importance of parenting styles as mediating variables. She emphasizes the lack of influence of maternal employment on the achievement of children. Instead what is important is whether the parents meet the child's needs for warmth, attention, fostering of cognitive growth, etc. This position is plausible, but difficult to test empirically with the available Turkish data, and for long run implications. Beyer emphasizes the importance of the quantity and quality of time spent with children, the quality of child care given to the children

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[3] Fernandez and Fogli (2005)

of working mothers, etc. However, it shows that the influence of having a working mother may not be necessarily negative, on condition that she gives sufficient and necessary attention to her child, but as this paper focuses on the achievement of adults, it is difficult to trace the exact amount of time they spent with their mothers as children. Instead, the housewife dummy is interacted with the education of the mother, assuming that the time spent with educated mothers would be of a higher quality.

Likewise, Hoffman (1961) claims that, rather than the employment status of the mother, the important element is whether she enjoys working or not. He argues that the working mother who enjoys working feels more guilty, and uses milder discipline, and tends to avoid inconveniencing child with household tasks. The working mother with a more negative attitude to work on the other hand, seems less involved with the child in general and is more demanding on the child. This is an important finding, but not possible to confirm with existing data. However, it provides evidence for the fact that in fact what is important is not the employment status of mothers, but how they treat their children.

The early work of economists on this issue mainly concentrated on the influence of parental education on achievement of the children[4], and it is concluded that the education level of parents is one of the most important factors in explaining the child's success in school. However, more highly educated women are more likely to be in employment, therefore determining the influence of working mother on a child's success is not straightforward.

Afterwards, time spent with children became an important topic to discuss about. While Behrman and Rosenzweig (2002) showed that parent's time with children is important for developing a child's human capital, Guryan, Hurst, and Kearney (2008) provide evidence that educated women spend more time with their children than less educated women, despite higher employment rates and higher cost of time. Moreover, Datcher-Loury (1988) claims that well-educated mothers' time spent with their children increase child schooling, while less-educated mothers' time spent appear to be ineffective. Furthermore, the results of Gould and Simhon (2011) show that parental education has a very strong impact on human capital of children, and the size of the impact depends on the amount of time a child spends with each parent. As a result, all studies show that time spent with children is an important factor that determines their success, and some studies also show that it is the quality rather than the

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[4] See Haveman and Wolfe(1995) for a literature review of all the work done on the determinants of children's attainment (in all diciplines) before 1995 and see Lindhal (2008) for the empirical work done on the influence of parent's education in children's schooling afterwards.

quantity of time that matters. Moreover more educated women spent more time with their children and there is a high correlation with the education level of a mother and the success of the child. If it is the case that better educated women tend to work more, there is a probability that maternal employment would not be so distortional. Haveman and Wolfe (1995) explain the influence of the mother's absence due to employment as potentially reducing child control, guidance and monitoring. However, a working mother may also be associated with increased parental income that may offset the reduction in child care time.

III) Data

This paper uses a specific data set from the Izmir region, prepared by the Turkish Statistical Institute for a specific survey carried out by Izmir University of Economics in cooperation with the Izmir Commerce Centre, the Izmir branch of the Turkish Statistical Institute and the Turkish Labour Institute. Its aim was to investigate the labour market situation of Izmir and to understand the main problems of labour market and reasons of unemployment and suggest possible policy implications. The reason for choosing this data set is the inclusion of a question about the occupation of the mother. Usually general household surveys; do not contain this information unless the mother is still in the household. Izmir is the third city in Turkey and well known for its students' success in university entrance exams. So in general it might be claimed that the children of Izmir are relatively more successful than the average for Turkey as a whole. For this reason it is interesting to analyze the determinants in the success of this city, and identify the role that mother's occupation plays in it. Table 1 gives summary statistics of the data set.

IV) Methodology

This paper addresses two different questions. For this reason two seperate models are formed. The first aim of the paper is to investigate whether or not having a housewife mother influences the success of the child. The logarithmic income of grown up children is used as a proxy for success. Accordingly, the following OLS regression is run for the whole sample.

$$LogIncome_i = \alpha_0 + \alpha_1 X_i + \alpha_2 H_i + \alpha_3 M_i + \varepsilon_i \tag{1}$$

where X is a vector of individual and household characteristics, H is a dummy that takes value one if the individual's mother was a housewife, M is a dummy that takes value one if the individual is a male, and ε is the error term. Previous literature[5] proves that there is a

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[5] Tansel (2005),Ilkkaracan and Selim (2007)

gender gap between males and females in Turkey. Both for this reason and because there might be different effects of a housewife mother for males and females, the above regression is run separately for males and females.

$$LogIncome_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_i + \beta_2 H_i + u_i \qquad (2)$$

where X is a vector of individual and household characteristics, H is a dummy that takes value one if the individual's mother was a housewife, and u is the error term.

Table 1- Summary Statistics

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation
Sex	0.4810	0.4997
Age	40.0447	13.0450
Migrated more than 5 years ago	0.5020	0.5000
Migrated within 2-5 years	0.0629	0.2429
Migrated less than 2 years ago	0.0241	0.1533
Education	1.9278	1.2676
Education of Mother	0.6468	0.8785
Education of Father	1.0539	1.0450
Single	0.2252	0.4178
Married	0.7100	0.4538
Divorced	0.0366	0.1877
Widow	0.0282	0.1655
Children between 0-7 years	0.3480	0.6159
Children between 8-15 years	0.4307	0.7075
LogHusbandIncome	4.1565	4.5317

The second aim is to address the issue of whether men whose mothers were housewives, prefer their wives to be housewives. For this, a probit regression is run. The dependent variable is a dummy that takes the value one if the wife of the man is a housewife and zero otherwise. Using this dummy as the dependant variable the following probit regression is run.

$$HW_i = \delta_0 + \delta_1 X_i + \delta_2 HML_i + v_i \qquad (3)$$

where X is a vector of individual and household characteristics, HML is a dummy that takes value one if the male's mother was a housewife and v is the error term.

A final aim was to identify the connection, if any, between housewife mothers and their daughters' preferred roles. The regression is same as in (3). However, in this case instead of a dummy for male's mother being a housewife, there is a dummy for her own mother.

$$HW_i = \varphi_0 + \varphi_1 X_i + \varphi_2 HM_i + \mu_i \qquad (4)$$

where *X* is a vector of individual and household characteristics, *HM* is a dummy that takes value one if the female's mother was a housewife and μ is the error term. The results are presented in the next section

V) Results

The regression results for the pooled data (Table 2) once more prove the wage gap between genders with males earning more than double those of females. Only those who migrated to Izmir within the last two years receive lower wages, but with time this gap disappears. The first column of the results in tables 2 to 4 shows the results of the regression for which the occupation of neither mother nor father is controlled. In the second column, the occupation of the father is controlled while in the third and forth, both are controlled. There are six occupational dummies, which are unskilled, worker, service sector worker, professional, self-employed and clerk. As there is no information about the household income, occupation dummies are used as a proxy. The influence of having a housewife mother is always negative and significant, even though it decreases its effect when we control for both mother's and father's occupation.

In order to check whether having an educated housewife mother would have any positive influence on the success, housewife mother dummy is interacted with the education of the mother, but this reveals no significant result.

In the pooled data, the only other variable that is significant is the dummy for single people, who earn significantly less than their married counterparts. The causality here is not very clear. It might be that because they are younger and in the beginning of their career they earn less. Another possibility is that they are unable to marry because of their low income.

Table 3 presents the results for only females. Women who recently migrated to Izmir earn significantly less than Izmir-born ones, while interestingly, women who moved to Izmir more than 5 years ago earn more than the native ones. High educated women earn more, as expected and those who had a housewife mother earn less. The income of divorced women is higher than the married ones. There are two possible explanations for this. Either they get divorced as they earn more than their husbands, creating problems within the household, or their income is high because of child maintenance payments from ex-husbands. Lastly,

number of children has a negative influence on the income level of females, as expected. Also, children under 7 years old have a greater negative effect than older children.

Table 2 – OLS Results for Pooled Data

	I	II	III	IV
Sex	2.7941	2.7847	2.7841	2.7837
	$(0.0942)^{***}$	$(0.0941)^{***}$	$(0.0941)^{***}$	$(0.0941)^{***}$
Age	0.3895	0.3903	0.3865	0.3862
	$(0.0250)^{***}$	$(0.0250)^{***}$	$(0.0250)^{***}$	$(0.0251)^{***}$
Age^2	-0.0050	-0.0050	-0.0050	-0.0050
	$(0.0003)^{***}$	$(0.0003)^{***}$	$(0.0003)^{***}$	$(0.0003)^{***}$
Migrated more than 5 years ago	-0.0166	-0.0227	-0.0271	-0.0308
	(0.0976)	(0.0975)	(0.0976)	(0.0978)
Migrated within 2-5 years	0.2929	0.2732	0.2731	0.2751
	(0.2579)	(0.2590)	(0.2592)	(0.2590)
Migrated less than 2 years ago	-1.5789	-1.5246	-1.5271	-1.5256
	$(0.3599)^{***}$	$(0.3616)^{***}$	$(0.3613)^{***}$	$(0.3613)^{***}$
Education	0.3159	0.3445	0.3433	0.3438
	$(0.0464)^{***}$	$(0.0475)^{***}$	$(0.0475)^{***}$	$(0.0475)^{***}$
Housewife mother	-0.6430	-0.5340	-0.4882	-0.4297
	$(0.1281)^{***}$	$(0.0743)^{***}$	$(0.1797)^{***}$	$(0.2056)^{**}$
Education of Mother	-0.0344	-0.0378	-0.0392	0.0250
	(0.0743)	(0.0742)	(0.0758)	(0.1586)
Education of Father	0.0477	0.1079	0.0727	0.0728
	(0.0617)	(0.0670)	(0.0648)	(0.0648)
Single	-0.3644	-0.3408	-0.3448	-0.3413
	$(0.1675)^{**}$	$(0.1674)^{**}$	$(0.1680)^{**}$	$(0.1679)^{**}$
Divorced	0.1472	0.2165	0.2124	0.2131
	(0.2530)	(0.2536)	(0.2530)	(0.2530)
Widow	0.1700	0.1840	0.1970	0.1974
	(0.1806)	(0.1796)	(0.1799)	(0.1799)
Children between 0-7 years	0.0115	0.0063	0.0040	0.0034
	(0.0929)	(0.0928)	(0.0930)	(0.0930)
Children between 8-15 years	0.0076	0.0057	0.0051	0.0058
	(0.0759)	(0.0758)	(0.0760)	(0.0760)
Education x Housewife mother				-0.0752
				(0.1616)
Father Occupation Dummies	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Mother Occupation Dummies	No	No	Yes	Yes
Constant	-5.5880	-5.5719	-5.6716	-5.7221
	$(0.5506)^{***}$	$(0.5822)^{***}$	$(0.5941)^{***}$	$(0.5980)^{***}$
N	6562	6562	6562	6562
R^2	0.1883	0.1914	0.1914	0.1914

Note: *, **, *** indicate statistical significance at the 10, 5 and 1%, respectively. Figures in parentheses are robust standard errors.

Table 3- OLS Results for Females

	I	II	III	IV
Age	0.2523	0.2523	0.2496	0.2489
	(0.0258)***	(0.0259)***	(0.0258)***	(0.0259)***
Age^2	-0.0033	-0.0032	-0.0032	-0.0032
	(0.0003)***	(0.0003)***	(0.0003)***	(0.0003)***
Migrated more than 5 years ago	0.3280	0.3294	0.3406	0.3378
	(0.1048)***	(0.1046)***	(0.1046)***	(0.1047)***
Migrated within 2-5 years	0.0983	0.1103	0.0735	0.0747
	(0.2883)	(0.2885)	(0.2887)	(0.2888)
Migrated less than 2 years ago	-0.7170	-0.7052	-0.6866	-0.6868
	(0.3614)**	(0.3628)*	(0.3623)*	(0.3627)*
Education	0.4455	0.4775	0.4744	0.4758
	(0.0555)***	(0.0574)***	(0.0574)***	(0.0575)***
Housewife mother	-0.3302	-0.2548	-0.4218	-0.3507
	(0.1352)**	(0.1417)*	(0.1934)**	(0.2060)*
Education of Mother	0.1243	0.1282	0.1219	0.2005
	(0.0877)	(0.0876)	(0.0892)	(0.1971)
Education of Father	0.0104	0.0813	0.0523	0.0521
	(0.0703)	(0.0753)	(0.0731)	(0.0731)
Single	0.2089	0.2344	0.2460	0.2487
	(0.1904)	(0.1907)	(0.1913)	(0.1913)
Divorced	0.7608	0.7918	0.7787	0.7785
	(0.2802)***	(0.2816)***	(0.2787)***	(0.2790)***
Widow	0.1764	0.1793	0.1759	0.1750
	(0.1701)	(0.1696)	(0.1699)	(0.1701)
Children between 0-7 years	-0.3364	-0.3346	-0.3473	-0.3491
	(0.0916)***	(0.0918)***	(0.0918)***	(0.0917)***
Children between 8-15 years	-0.2057	-0.1983	-0.2024	-0.2015
	(0.0806)**	(0.0809)**	(0.0809)**	(0.0809)**
Education x Housewife mother				-0.0924
				(0.2035)
Father Occupation Dummies	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Mother Occupation Dummies	No	No	Yes	Yes
Constant	-3.9390	-4.0834	-3.9154	-3.9711
	(0.5751)***	(0.6241)***	(0.6326)***	(0.6339)***
N	3406	3406	3406	3406
R^2	0.0990	0.1028	0.1046	0.1914

Note: *, **, *** indicate statistical significance at the 10, 5 and 1%, respectively. Figures in parentheses are robust standard errors.

The OLS regressions for males are presented in Table 4. The income of the males that migrated to Izmir within the last 2 years is much less than the native ones and this negative effect is higher for males than for females. The variable "education" becomes significant only when we control for father's occupation. While education is a very important determinant of

female's income, its effect is much less for males. Also, for males, the negative effect of having a housewife mother is highly significant, and much stronger than it is for females. Its significance disappears only when the interaction of mother's education and housewife dummy is used. Surprisingly, enough mother's level of education has a negative influence on male's income. Lastly, single and divorced men earn less than their married counterparts.

This paper also considers the intergenerational effects of housewife mothers, aiming to identify if the mothers role as a housewife is reflected in her daughter's preferences. It also investigates whether men with housewife mothers prefer this role in their wives. In Table 5, the results are presented as the marginal effects of the probit model.

The results show the probability of being a housewife is negatively affected by the husband's income, age, and education level, and positively affected by being migrant resident in Izmir for five years or more, having children under 7, and having a housewife mother or mother-in-law. Females with housewife mothers have 25% greater chance of becoming housewives themselves. Moreover, men whose mothers were housewives are 14% more likely to prefer a wife in this role.

VI) Conclusion

This paper analyzed two different issues. The first is the influence of having a working mother on long run achievement of the children, for which, a unique dataset from district of Izmir is used. Current income of the individuals is used as a proxy for their achievement. The regression is run both for the pooled data set and for males and females separately. It is a known fact that there is a wage gap between genders in Turkey, confirmed once more in this paper. Men earn more 2.5 times of women. The influence of housewife mother is highly significant and negative for all factors, but its influence is much higher for men than for women.

The literature it is often points out that the quality of time parents spend with children is important in child care. However, no indication of this was found in this research.

Another factor that is analyzed in this paper is whether this issue has any intergenerational aspect, or not. Two different analyses address this question. In the first case it was found that men with housewife mothers are 14% more likely to marry wives in this role.

Correspondingly, it was found that females with housewife mothers are 25% more likely to become housewives themselves.

Table 4- OLS Results for Males

	I	II	III	IV
Age	0.4932 (0.0442)***	0.4964 (0.0441)***	0.4928 (0.0445)***	0.4929 (0.0445)***
Age^2	-0.0065 (0.0005)***	-0.0066 (0.0005)***	-0.0065 (0.0005)***	-0.0065 (0.0005)***
Migrated more than 5 years ago	-0.2606 (0.1660)	-0.2651 (0.1659)	-0.2756 (0.1661)*	-0.2851 (0.1667)*
Migrated within 2-5 years	0.6063 (0.4336)	0.5253 (0.4385)	0.5428 (0.4406)	0.5481 (0.4399)
Migrated less than 2 years ago	-2.4570 (0.6374)***	-2.3724 (0.6374)***	-2.3955 (0.6402)***	-2.3895 (0.6399)***
Education	0.1226 (0.0756)*	0.1558 (0.0769)**	0.1558 (0.0771)**	0.1556 (0.0771)**
Housewife mother	-0.9279 (0.2204)***	-0.7774 (0.2274)***	-0.6044 (0.3049)**	-0.4868 (0.3591)
Education of Mother	-0.2691 (0.1164)**	-0.2836 (0.1169)**	-0.2791 (0.1200)**	-0.1510 (0.2468)
Education of Father	0.1438 (0.0989)	0.1954 (0.1086)*	0.1597 (0.1045)	0.1602 (0.1046)
Single	-1.0486 (0.2847)***	-1.0154 (0.2842)***	-1.0067 (0.2857)***	-0.9975 (0.2861)***
Divorced	-1.5292 (0.4874)***	-1.3681 (0.4926)***	-1.3862 (0.4930)***	-1.3816 (0.4931)***
Widow	-1.2925 (0.9827)	-1.3208 (0.9756)	-1.2729 (0.9812)	-1.2573 (0.9784)
Children between 0-7 years	0.2079 (0.1600)	0.1825 (0.1595)	0.1880 (0.1599)	0.1881 (0.1599)
Children between 8-15 years	0.1846 (0.1273)	0.1766 (0.1266)	0.1760 (0.1273)	0.1773 (0.1273)
Education x Housewife mother				-0.1495 (0.2492)
Father Occupation Dummies	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Mother Occupation Dummies	No	No	Yes	Yes
Constant	-3.9910 (0.9950)***	-3.3094 (1.0308)***	-35844 (1.0574)***	-3.6957 (1.0713)***
N	3156	3156	3156	3406
R^2	0.1078	0.1135	0.1136	0.1137

Note: *, **, *** indicate statistical significance at the 10, 5 and 1%, respectively. Figures in parentheses are robust standard errors.

In Turkey many women drop out of the labour force once they give birth, due to many factors such as the expense of child care institutions, non-flexible working hours or the general belief that children should be raised by their mothers. This study shows that though in the short run it seems beneficial for the children, the long run effects are not as expected.

Table 5 – Probit Results

	I	II
LogHusbandIncome	-0.0061	-0.0052
	(0.0020)***	(0.0020)***
Age	-0.0312	-0.0330
	(0.0069)***	(0.0069)***
Age^2	0.0004	0.0004
	(0.0001)***	(0.0001)***
Migrated more than 5 years ago	0.0757	0.0659
	(0.0189)***	(0.0188)***
Migrated within 2-5 years	-0.0690	-0.0537
	(0.0516)	(0.0497)
Migrated less than 2 years ago	0.0466	0.0430
	(0.0563)	(0.0564)
Education	-0.0524	-0.0543
	(0.0090)***	(0.0089)***
Housewife mother-in-law	0.1399	
	(0.0215)***	
Housewife mother		0.2517
		(0.0312)***
Education of Mother	-0.0076	-0.0021
	(0.0144)	(0.0144)
Education of Father	-0.0083	-0.0083
	(0.0122)	(0.0121)
Children between 0-7 years	0.0856	0.0931
	(0.0185)***	(0.0184)***
Children between 8-15 years	0.0220	0.0271
	(0.0142)	(0.0141)*
N	1983	1983
Pseudo R^2	0.1043	0.1223

Note: *, **, *** indicate statistical significance at the 10, 5 and 1%, respectively. Figures in parentheses are robust standard errors.

The Turkish female labour force participation is showing a decreasing trend. In a previous paper (Goksel 2010), I claimed that social norms and conservatism also play an important role in this decline. A widespread belief in Turkey is that the main duty of women is to look after the children and do the housework. However, this paper shows that this may actually disadvantage children, because those whose mothers remain at home tend to be less successful in their future life.

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