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Foreign Direct Investment, Diaspora Remittances, and Youth Unemployment in Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

The current state of sectoral performance reveals that Nigeria's productivity framework is inherently weak in delivering the desired socioeconomic outcomes in terms of employment generation. This study examined the impact of foreign direct investment and diaspora remittances on youth unemployment in Nigeria from 1986 to 2022. This study employed the autoregressive distributed lag (ADL) approach to achieve its objectives. The dependent variable of this study is youth unemployment, while the independent variables are foreign direct investment, remittances, inflation, and real gross domestic product. The data for these variables were sourced from the Central Bank of Nigeria Statistical Bulletin and the National Bureau of Statistics. The key results indicate that all variables are negatively correlated with youth unemployment, although foreign direct investment and inflation exhibit a significant relationship with youth unemployment at the 0.05 significance level. This study recommended, among other things, the need for the Nigerian government to attract foreign direct investment by improving the ease of doing business and promoting economic growth through infrastructure provision, which will also enhance FDI attraction in Nigeria.

Keywords: Foreign direct investment, diaspora remittances, youth, unemployment

INTRODUCTION

Unemployment is the state in which someone actively looks for a job but is unsuccessful. A critical indicator of the state of the economy is unemployment (anonymous). A decrease in the labor force, technical advancements, and geographic immobility are some of the causes of unemployment (Lima et al., 2021; Moses Kayode, 2023). The consequences of unemployment include a decrease in overall economic expenditure and a fluctuating workforce (Bosch & Esteban-Pretel, 2015; Byrialsen & Raza, 2018). Nigeria's unemployment rate increased to 4.2% in Q2 2023, and it has been rising since 2000. While the gross domestic product increased from 6.7% in 2006 to 9.5% in 2010, the unemployment rate rose from 12.3% to 21.4% during the same period. Unemployment during employment rates peaked at 29% before the economic downturn (NBS, 2023). According to additional data from the National Bureau of Statistics, the economy added 422,133 net jobs during the first and third quarters of 2016, and 3.7 million new workers joined the labor force during that time.

A remittance is a transfer of funds from a foreign nation to the recipient's home country or native country. Given the size of the amounts involved, remittances are increasingly acknowledged as a significant factor in a nation's development and progress (Fayissa & Nsiah, 2010; Sobiech, 2019). Remittances from the diaspora play a substantial role in fostering innovation, entrepreneurship, economic livelihood, and community development initiatives. In the diaspora, 22.6% of all Nigerian emigrants reside in the United States. Per capita, the Nigerian diaspora in the United States sends \$22,107 to Nigeria. A PwC Research Center poll found that most Nigerians had expressed interest in leaving the country within the next seven years.

Foreign direct investment is defined as net inflows of capital used to acquire a long-term management stake (10 percent or more of voting shares) in a company that operates in an economy different from the investor's own (Art Ridgeway, 2004; Duce & España, 2003). The balance of payments also represents the sum of short-term capital, other long-term capital, earnings reinvested, and equity capital. More significantly, foreign direct investment (FDI) can provide critically needed capital, as well as new technology and intangibles such as marketing networks and administrative and organizational skills (Borensztein et al., 1998; Khan et al., 2023). Although they may be linked to economic prosperity, foreign direct investment flows do not directly influence growth. Foreign direct investment and diaspora remittances are examples of inflows that, when utilized to their full potential for productive purposes, can reduce unemployment in the home countries (Owolabi-Merus, 2015; Worku R. Urgaia, 2017). Consequently, this study examined the impact of diaspora remittances and foreign direct investment on unemployment in Nigeria between 1986 and 2022.

The goal of this study is to identify additional strategies for reducing Nigeria's rising youth unemployment, which is projected to reach 40.6% by 2023. Nigeria's GDP is expected to experience substantial growth, and living standards will be elevated if each adult adolescent is employed and productive (Adeyemi-Kayode et al., 2021; Ukangwa et al., 2023). The number of job applicants increases in proportion to the number of open employment opportunities driven by a rapidly growing population. Both underemployment and unemployment affect a sizable portion of Nigeria's youth (Adeniji et al., 2005; Darkwah & Verter, 2014). Social instability and frustration among young people may emerge from this. The Nigerian government would struggle to create enough jobs at the current rate of population growth. Economic diversification, initiatives to boost trade and finance flows, and the establishment of a supportive business environment to encourage job creation in the formal sector are, therefore, all necessary components of a multifaceted strategy to address Nigeria's unemployment problems (Olubusoye et al., 2023; Shadare & Sikirulahi Tunde, 2012). The focus of this study is on international financial flows, with a particular emphasis on Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) and diaspora remittances.

Nevertheless, the Federal Government has implemented a variety of job creation policies to reduce Nigeria's unemployment rate by supporting existing businesses, encouraging start-ups, and fostering an efficient workforce. The National Directorate of Employment, the National Youth Service Corps Scheme, vocation and technical education programs, the Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency of Nigeria, the National Open Apprenticeship Scheme, Youth Enterprise with Innovation in Nigeria (YouWIN), the N-power scheme, the presidential youth empowerment scheme (P-YES), the national social investment program (NSIP) integrated into the national economic recovery and growth plan (ERGP) 2017-2020, and the national economic empowerment development strategy (NEEDS I and II, 2003 and 2007, respectively) are examples of such policies. However, as the issue persists, these admirable efforts have all had varying results.

Foreign direct investment (FDI) is said to have the potential to benefit developing countries, such as Nigeria, by promoting domestic competition, transferring technology, reducing youth unemployment, increasing local investment, and creating other positive externalities (Ayanwale, 2017). According to the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development's (UNCTAD) 2021 World Investment Report, Nigeria receives more foreign direct investment (FDI) than any other country in the Economic Community of West African states. Furthermore, Nigeria is the recipient of the most tremendous amount of foreign direct investment (FDI) in Africa. Foreign direct investment in Nigeria reached \$2.39 billion in 2020, representing a 3.48% increase from 2019. In 2019, Nigeria received \$2.31 billion in foreign direct investment, representing a 197.34% increase from the previous year. Consequently, Nigeria had a 3.5% increase in foreign direct investment (FDI), rising from \$2.31 billion in 2019

to \$2.39 billion in 2020. In September 2022, foreign direct investment (FDI) in Nigeria increased by 725.7 USD million.

An indicator of labor force status, unemployment is the state in which individuals who are competent and willing to work are unable to secure employment (Alenda-Demoutiez & Mügge, 2020; Brandolini et al., 2006). Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) refers to investments made by individuals or businesses from one country into operations in another, either through expansion or acquisition. According to Olayiwola (2019), FDI is different from portfolio investments in that it refers to the creation of assets by foreign-incorporated businesses. However, remittances—money provided by migrants to support family members back home—often outweigh aid and foreign direct investment as instruments of development (Adams, 2006; IMF, 2009).

The study is founded on several fundamental economic theories that elucidate the dynamics of investment behavior and unemployment. A.W. Phillips developed the Phillips Curve Hypothesis, which states that there is a negative correlation between the rate of unemployment and the rate of increase in money earnings. Using data from the UK, Phillips demonstrated that low unemployment leads to rapid wage increases as firms compete for a limited labor supply. In contrast, high unemployment causes wage rates to rise slowly due to low labor demand. Business activity cycles have an impact on this relationship, whereas a drop in economic activity leads to layoffs due to opposition to wage cuts, rising economic activity increases labor demand and wages.

Additionally, the study makes use of John Dunning's Eclectic Paradigm Theory, which uses the Ownership, Location, and Internalization (OLI) framework to assess the appeal of foreign direct investment (FDI). Businesses consider their distinct assets, the advantages of their location, including labor and infrastructure costs, and whether internalizing activities is more cost-effective than outsourcing. This theory emphasizes how FDI can promote job creation, even while it does not take into consideration host nation competition or firmspecific constraints. Under the laissez-faire premise that free markets self-correct, the Classical Theory of Unemployment further supports the study by claiming that external distortions, such as minimum wage legislation, are the only source of actual unemployment (Global Development and Environmental Institution, 1997). The Keynesian Theory, which attributes unemployment to price and wage rigidities, particularly during recessions, challenges this viewpoint. Keynesians contend that in the short term when there are more job seekers than available positions, labor market disequilibrium occurs due to slow wage adjustments. Instead of being the outcome of voluntary unemployment, this mismatch represents a lack of demand for products and services, which leads to involuntary unemployment. When taken as a whole, these theories provide a comprehensive framework for understanding how economic activity and labor market conditions influence investment and unemployment.

The relationship between unemployment, foreign direct investment (FDI), and diaspora remittances has been the subject of numerous empirical studies. According to Okeke (2021), there is a unidirectional causal relationship between international remittances and lower unemployment in Nigeria. Fiscal planning around remittance inflows is recommended by Ihedinma and Opara (2020), who found that remittances can exacerbate unemployment unless the presence of dependents mitigates their impact. According to Nayyrazeb (2014), FDI considerably lowers unemployment in Pakistan. According to Inekwe (2013), foreign direct investment (FDI) increases employment in manufacturing but not in services in Nigeria. In a similar vein, Shaar, Hussain, and Halim (2012) discovered a negative correlation between Malaysian unemployment and foreign direct investment. Mpanju (2012) attested to the beneficial contribution of FDI to Tanzania's job growth.

The empirical literature under evaluation encompasses a range of studies on remittances, foreign direct investment (FDI), and their impact on labor outcomes and unemployment in various countries and time periods. Okeke (2021) discovered a

unidirectional causal relationship between remittances and unemployment in Nigeria. According to Ihedinma and Opara (2020), remittances have a positive impact on unemployment, suggesting that fiscal planning should account for these inflows. Urama et al. (2016) and Okeke, Utomi, and Ezenekwe (2019) demonstrated that remittances boost private investment but do not alleviate unemployment. Remittances decreased the likelihood of self-employment by 28.4%, according to Salman (2016). Meanwhile, Evans and Ramos (2015) found that the labor supply in Haiti was more responsive to remittance inflows for men than for women. In Kogi State, remittances have improved household livelihoods, according to Otupuru (2014).

Regarding FDI, Nayyrazeb (2014) noted that it helps lower unemployment in Pakistan. Similar findings were made by Shaar and Halim (2012) in Malaysia and Mpanju (2012) in Tanzania, who discovered that FDI had a negative correlation with unemployment and a positive correlation with job creation. These studies, however, were frequently limited to private investment or specific subgroups, or they focused on either FDI or remittances. By integrating the effects of FDI and remittances on youth unemployment in Nigeria with current data and context, the current study expands on previous findings. Empirical research has yielded conflicting results; some studies have found that FDI and remittances reduce unemployment in Nigeria, while others have found the opposite. This study is justified because it applies the Phillips' Curve Hypothesis in a novel way to Nigerian youth unemployment. This area has not been considered by other studies that have concentrated on overall unemployment. To provide policy-relevant insights for addressing Nigeria's employment challenges, this study aims to assess the precise impact of FDI and diaspora remittances on youth unemployment.

Research Questions

The following research questions were addressed in order to further this investigation.

- 1. How does foreign direct investment affect Nigeria's youth unemployment rate?
- 2. What effect do remittances from the diaspora have on youth unemployment in Nigeria?

Research Hypotheses

The following is the formulation of the research hypothesis for this study:

- 1. H0: Foreign direct investment has no discernible effect on youth unemployment in Nigeria.
 - H1: Foreign direct investment significantly affects Nigeria's youth unemployment rate.
- 2. H0: Remittances from the diaspora have no discernible effect on youth unemployment in Nigeria.
 - H1: Youth unemployment in Nigeria is significantly impacted by diaspora remittances

METHOD

This research is based on the Keynesian theory of unemployment, which examines the connection between unemployment and investment. According to Keynes, investment is an exogenous variable that can be used to stimulate economic expansion. According to the Keynesian perspective, demand for investments can boost economic expansion. Therefore, through multiplier effects on aggregate demand, it is anticipated that an increase in investment demand will result in an increase in employment and profitability. According to Keynes (1930), investment demand so raises aggregate demand, which exacerbates an increase in output that is dependent on spending multipliers. The economy is prone to volatility, and it is possible for supply and demand to reach a balance that does not result in

full employment (Keynes, 1930). By boosting income and purchasing power, this demand for investment through remittances and foreign direct investment will ultimately lead to the creation of jobs.

The Keynesian theory of unemployment is stated as follows: E = C + I + G + NX (1)

Where

E = Employment

C = Consumption Expenditure

I = Investment

G = Government Expenditure

NX = Net Export

Empirical Model Specification

To address the study's goal of determining how FDI and diaspora remittances affect youth unemployment, equation 2 above was broken down to account for FDI and foreign remittance inflows, as well as several control variables that impact the unemployment rate in the Nigerian economy. Equation 3.1 is thus used to generate the model's functional form by the theoretical framework.

$$YUNEMPt = \beta 0 + \beta 1FDI + \beta 2RIF + \beta 3INF + \beta 4RGDP + \mu 1$$
 (2)

Where YUNEMPt = Youth Unemployment Rate at time t. (% of the total labor force), FDI = Foreign Direct Investment, RIF = Remittance Inflow, INF = Inflation Rate, RGDP = Real Gross Domestic Product, μ = Disturbance term/error term, β 0 = Constant term and β 1 β 2 β 3 β 4 are parameters to be estimated.

Forging ahead, we econometrically re-specify equation 3.2, reflecting the generalized ARDL (p, q) model;

Where the variables are as defined, $\alpha_0 = \text{constant}$, ϕ_j , λ_k are the parameters, p is the dependent variable's lag length, q is the independent variable's maximum lag (s), t is the time, j & k are the initial/starting lags, and μ_t is the error term (white noise).

For equation 3, we also apply the ARDL bounds test method (i.e., ARDL (p, q)). This method compares the alternative to the null hypothesis, which holds that there is no cointegration. Here, the alternative hypothesis suggests that the variables have long-term equilibrium relationships or cointegration.

Here, we compare the alternative that at least one long-run coefficient is not equal to zero with the null hypothesis that all long-run coefficients are jointly equal to zero. This is stated as follows:

$$H_{-}(0): \beta_{-}(1) = \delta_{-}1=0$$
 (4)

$$H_1: \beta_1 \neq [\delta] \quad (1) \neq 0$$

If the null hypothesis (that is, the absence of cointegration) cannot be rejected, we can only estimate the short-run model, which is the ARDL (p, q) model. If we have data that contradicts the null hypothesis (i.e., cointegration), we can estimate both the short-run and long-run models, which are the error correction model (ECM) or ARDL long-run form.

Generally speaking, the results of the limits test show whether the variables in the model have long-term dynamics. A straightforward linear transformation is used to derive this dynamic error correction model (ECM) from the ARDL model (Banerjee, Dolado, Galbraith, and Hendry, 1993). In other words, the ECM preserves long-term information while integrating short-term dynamics and long-term equilibrium.

Apriori Expectation

This study anticipates that the predictor variables, FDI, RIFINF, and RGDP, will have positive, negative, and positive relationships with the dependent variable (unemployment rate) based on theories and empirical research. Consequently, it is expressed mathematically as:

The above signifies a negative relationship and movement of exogenous variables on the youth unemployment rate.

Estimation Technique and Procedures

The auto-redistributed lag model was used to estimate the models in this investigation. In any case, false regression may arise from the straightforward use of ARDL without considering the descriptive and time-series characteristics of the pertinent data. It is well recognized that an OLS regression with data misalignment and non-stationary time series seldom ever produces relevant economic policy. Therefore, it is necessary to perform the unit root test, co-integration test, and Granger causality test and possibly estimate error correction models.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Unit Root Test

The ADF results comprising of the t- t-statistics and 5% critical value as originally generated are represented in Table 2

Table 1. Unit root (ADF test)

Variables	Adf test at level	Adf test at 1st Difference	5% critical values	Order of integration	Remarks
YUNEMP	-0.480402	-4.025103	-3.612199	I(1)	Stationary
FDI	-3.912988		-3.523623	I(0)	Stationary
RIF	-1.656462	-6.476198	-3.526609	I(1)	Stationary
INF	-4.130094		-3.526609	I(0)	Stationary
GDP	-4.197465		-3.523623	I(0)	Stationary

Source: EViews 12.

Decision Rule: Accept H0 unless the ADF test value exceeds the 5% critical value. According to the results above, the ADF test values for the unemployment rate (UNEMP) and remittance inflow (RIF) are higher than their respective critical levels at 5%. As a result, we

determine that UNEMP and RIF are stationary at the first difference and reject H0. Additionally, the inflation rate (INF), real GDP (RGDP), and foreign direct investment (FDI) all have ADF test results above their critical values of 5%, respectively. As a result, we determine that FDI, INF, and RGDP are stationary at level form after rejecting H0. This suggests that the model's variables are represented as zeros and ones of a certain order.

Test for Co-integration

The autoregressive distributed lag Bound co-integration approach is deemed valuable in determining whether a long-term link exists between the variables of the model, given that the series is integrated of order zero and one, which is 1(0) and 1(1).

ARDL Bound Co-integration Test

The link among the variables was estimated using the ARDL approach, which was devised by Pesaran et al. (2001). The following reasoning justifies this method: first, ARDL can be used whether the series is stationary at its level value (I = 0), after the first difference (I = 1), or both. The null hypothesis (H0) states that the variables do not co-integrate. Co-integration between the variables is the alternative hypothesis (H1). The outcome confirms that there is proof of the variables' co-integration. This is because, at all significant levels, the F-Statistics value (6.45) is higher than the lower and upper critical boundaries. As a result, the null hypothesis that there was no co-integration was rejected.

Table 2. Provides a summary and presentation of the outcome

Table 2: ARDL Bounds Test				
F-Statistics = 6.45				
Critical Value Bounds				
Significance levels	I(0) Bounds	I(1) Bounds		
10%	1.9	3.01		
5%	2.26	3.48		

Source: EViews 12.

Given that the limits test revealed the existence of long-term relationships between the variables, we proceed to estimate the error correction form of the ARDL model to determine the long-term coefficients of the model's variables. The positive outcomes of the cointegration and unit root tests drove the estimation.

Table 3. displays the ARDL outcome of this investigation

Dependent Variable: YUNEMP				
Variable	Coefficient	Std. error	t-statistics	p-values
FDI	-0.689008	0.197718	-3.485835	0.0095
RIF	-0.327868	0.072163	-4.543454	0.0005
INF	-0.007101	0.032430	-2.175648	0.0031
RGDP	-0.335008	0.210732	-1.589737	0.1342
ECT(-1)	-0.171742	0.063850	-2.702949	0.0107
$R^2 = 0.708$	Adj.R ² =0.686			D.W= 1.95
C EET: 40				

Source: EViews 12.

Foreign direct investment (FDI) has a long-run coefficient of -0.68, indicating that, when all other factors are held constant, a one percent increase in FDI will result in a 0.68

percent decrease in the youth unemployment rate. The remittance inflow (RIF) is -0.32, indicating that if all else remains equal, the youth unemployment rate will decrease by approximately 0.32 percentage points for every 1% increase in RIF. The coefficient of inflation rate (INF) is -0.007, meaning that, when all other factors are held equal, an average increase of one percent in the inflation rate results in a 0.007 percent point drop in the youth unemployment rate. The RGDP coefficient is -0.33, meaning that, under normal circumstances, Nigeria's unemployment rate falls by roughly 0.33 percentage points with every 1% increase in RGDP. The pace of adjustment towards long-run equilibrium is measured by the coefficient of ECT (-0.17) in Table 4, which has the predicted negative sign and is significant at the 5 percent level. The ECT coefficient shows a feedback of 17.1% of the disequilibrium from the prior year. This also illustrates how quickly the youth unemployment rate (YUNEMP) returns to long-term equilibrium of 17.1% in a year after short-term disequilibrium due to changes in FDI, remittance inflow (RIF), inflation rate (INF), and RGDP.

The multiple coefficients of determination (R2) is 0.70, or 70.8%, according to the regression table. This indicates that fluctuations in FDI, RIF, INF, and RGDP account for roughly 70.8% of the volatility in the youth unemployment rate (YUMEMP). The multiple coefficients of determination that has been modified to account for the degrees of freedom related to the sum of squares is known as the adjusted R2. The stated Adjusted R2 is 0.68, or 68.6%. This suggests that changes in the explanatory factors collectively account for approximately 68.6% of the variation in the dependent variable, the youth unemployment rate (YUNEMP). The calculated D-W for each model is 1.95, as indicated by the empirical Durbin-Watson (D-W) test results. Given that the D.W. statistics are near 2, this suggests that there is either no autocorrelation with a first-order scheme or no indication of autocorrelation in the models in question.

Diagnostic Test/ Heteroscedasticity Test

Table 4. Heteroscedasticity Test:

F- Statistics	0.548936	Prob f (17,13)	0.8774
Obs* R-squared	12.95408	Prob. Chi-square (17)	0.7393

Source: EViews12

The preceding result indicates that we reject H0 and infer that the variance of the regression errors is constant because the Obs* R square of the probability chi-square is more than 0.05, or 0.7393.

According to the long-term coefficients, there is a negative and substantial correlation between FDI and the youth unemployment rate. This suggests that for every unit change in FDI inflows, the youth unemployment rate in the Nigerian economy decreases by 0.68 percentage points. This indicates that FDI can lower Nigeria's unemployment rate by creating jobs in the country. This result contradicts some of the existing research (Saucedo et al., 2020; Bogliaccini & Egan, 2017), but it also supports other findings (Onimisi, 2014; Netrja, 2013). This result suggests that foreign direct investment (FDI) supplied the capital base that the Nigerian economy used to boost production, increase labor demand, and ultimately raise wages and employment.

Remittances and youth unemployment are negatively and significantly correlated, with the hypothesis that over the study period, a unit increase in Diaspora remittances results in a 0.32 decrease in unemployment. Remittances promote entrepreneurship and the growth of small businesses. Migrants commonly use remittances to start or expand enterprises in their home countries. In addition to creating job opportunities, this fosters an entrepreneurial spirit within the community (International Organization for Migration, 2019). A 2005 study conducted in El Salvador by Orozco found that remittance-receiving households are more

likely than non-remittance-receiving households to be involved in entrepreneurial activities. In summary, remittances significantly contribute to youth unemployment. They make it easier for households to earn more money, which encourages spending on healthcare and education. Additionally, remittances support business and skill development. These findings emphasize how important it is to recognize and make use of remittances as a powerful tool for lowering unemployment in developing nations.

Unemployment and the RGDP coefficient were significantly and negatively correlated. The unemployment rate falls by 0.33% for every unit change in RGDP. This suggests that one important and favorable factor influencing unemployment in Nigeria is RGDP. Since unemployment should naturally decline as the economy grows, this outcome is equally expected a priori. This may be explained by the fact that rising RGDPs imply rising production and the requirement for additional workers to maintain higher rates of economic expansion. This result was consistent with that of Mathew & Johnson (2014), who contend that employment in the Nigerian economy is influenced by real GDP. Similarly, there was a substantial and negative correlation between the unemployment rate and the inflation rate. Since it reflects the theoretical relationship that states that worker layoffs will result from rising production costs due to inflation, this negative link is expected a priori. In economies like Nigeria, where unemployment is high, and trade unionism or worker protection is weak because there is available labor that may be a plausible substitute for the labor presently employed, this theoretical foundation is even more evident.

CONCLUSION

This study aims to examine the impact of FDI and diaspora remittances on youth unemployment in Nigeria between 1981 and 2022. The ARDL approach was employed to investigate the long-term associations between the variables. Thus, results show that FDI, remittance inflow, and youth unemployment in Nigeria have a negative long-term connection. It implies that FDI and remittances from the diaspora may decrease youth employment, ultimately creating jobs. This suggests that remittances and foreign direct investment significantly contribute to Nigeria's youth unemployment rate. Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) facilitates the transfer of technology, which increases domestic production and has a beneficial effect on job creation. As businesses expand, remittances directed toward productive endeavors, rather than just Consumption, also increase employment. Thus, this study concludes that FDI and remittances are important factors that influence youth unemployment in Nigeria. Based on the study's findings, particularly in relation to its goals, the following suggestions are made: The government should work to create a businessfriendly climate, particularly by providing basic infrastructure, ensuring the safety of people and property, and lowering multiple taxes, to draw in the necessary foreign direct investment (FDI) into Nigeria and reduce the rising rates of youth unemployment and restlessness; To promote a free flow of remittances into Nigeria, it is also advised that Nigeria strengthen and expand her bilateral economic ties with the nations that get the most significant remittance influx.

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