CHAPTER 2
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

This chapter contains a review of selected literature related to Automobile industry and associated studies are also presented to define the nature of the problem.

This study also highlights on the review of different literature on this topic. the study is divided into three different parts i.e. Review of research papers Review of books and Review of unpublished literature & different reports.

William B Dodds (1991) investigated the effects of the extrinsic cues of price, brand and store information on consumer perception of product quality. They found that price had a positive effect on perceived quality but a negative effect on perceived value and respondents’ willingness to buy.

Samson Itamer (1992) has observed that purchase decisions are determined on the basis of both absolute attributes of the alternatives and their relative positions within the particular choice set under consideration. He has further suggested that consumers are less likely to choose alternatives that were selected by other consumers for reasons that do not apply to them and that consumers are less likely to choose alternatives that are offered with unneeded features or premium even when these features do not reduce the value of the product in any way.

Rao (2002) examined the relationship between the amount of explicit information and brand perceptions and the effect on perceptions of brand image (conjured by the brand name alone) though other sources of information use were available. Twelve brands of automobile models (cars) were chosen as stimuli in the study.

Mandeep Kaur and Sandhu (2006) attempted to find out the important features which a customer considers while going for the purchase of a new car. The study covers the owners of passenger cars living in the major cities of the State of Punjab and the Union Territory of Chandigarh. The respondents perceive that safety
and comfort are the most important features of the passenger car followed by luxuriousness. So the manufacturers must design the product giving maximum weightage to these factors.

Chidambaram and Alfread (2007) postulates that there are certain factors which influence the brand preferences of the customers. Within this framework, the study reveals that customers give more importance to fuel efficiency than other factors. They believe that the brand name tells them something about product quality, utility, technology and they prefer to purchase the Passenger cars which offer high fuel efficiency, good quality, technology, durability and reasonable price. Satya Sundaram (2008) analyzed how the competition makes the automobile manufacturer to launch at least one new model or a variant of the model every year. This survey also pointed out that diesel cars are becoming popular in India and the announcement of reductions in excise duties by the government has helped to some extent to boost the demand. Clement Sudhakar and Venkatapathy (2009) studied the influence of peer group in the purchase of car with reference to Coimbatore District. It was also found that the influence of friends is higher for the purchase of small sized and mid sized cars.

As noted by NMCC (2006), competitiveness of manufacturing sector is a very broad multi-dimensional concept that embraces numerous aspects such as price, quality, productivity, efficiency and macro-economic environment. The OECD definition of competitiveness, which is most widely quoted, also considers employment and sustainability, while being exposed to international competition, as features pertaining to competitiveness. There are numerous studies on auto industry in India, published by industry associations, consultancy organisations, research bodies and peer-reviewed journals. In this section, various studies on the Indian auto industry are reviewed, under different heads pertaining to competitiveness, namely, global comparisons, policy environment and evolution of the Indian auto industry, productivity, aspects related to supply-chain and industrial structure and technology and other aspects.
2.2 Global Comparisons

The Investment Information and Credit Rating Agency of India (ICRA, 2003) studies the competitiveness of the Indian auto industry, by global comparisons of microenvironment, policies and cost structure. This has a detailed account on the evolution of the global auto industry. The United States was the first major player from 1900 to 1960, after which Japan took its place as the cost-efficient leader. Cost efficiency being the only real means in as mature an industry as automobiles to retain or improve market share, global auto manufacturers have been sourcing from the developing countries. India and China have emerged as favourite destinations for the first-tier OEMs since late 1980s. There are only a few dominant Indian OEMs, while the number of OEMs is very large in China (122 car manufacturers and 120 motorcycle manufacturers).

According to this study, the major advantage of the Indian economy is educated and skilled workforce with knowledge of English. Our disadvantages include poor infrastructure, complicated tax structure, inflexible labour laws, inter-state policy differences and inconsistencies. The drivers of Chinese economic growth are FDI, labour productivity growth, which was 1.5 times higher than that in India in the last decade, and domestic demand. Fiscal pressure is mounting on the Chinese government, while India is in a better state. Based on comparisons of cost composition to pinpoint the areas in which the Indian auto industry is at a disadvantage, this study recommends a VAT regime, speedy procedures, and imports duty cuts on raw materials, common testing and design facility, labour reforms, upgradation of design and engineering capabilities and brand building.

ICRA (2004) analyses the implications of the India-ASEAN5 Free Trade Agreements for the Indian automotive industry. ASEAN economies are globally more integrated than India. The current size of Indian and ASEAN market for automobiles is more or less the same but the Indian market has a larger growth potential than the ASEAN market due to the low level of penetration. The labour cost is low in India but the stringent labour regulations erode this advantage. The level of infrastructure is better in India than Indonesia and the Philippines but worse than that in other ASEAN countries. The financial and banking sector is better in India than in the ASEAN countries. The study notes that there is a huge excess capacity in ASEAN countries, in
comparison with that in India, which will help them to tackle the excess demand that may arise in future. The study finds a 20-30 per cent cost disadvantage for Indian companies on account of taxation and infrastructure and 5-20 per cent labour cost advantage over comparable ASEAN-member-based companies. Similar findings are noted in a study by the

Automotive Component Manufacturers Association of India (ACMA, 2004), particularly in comparison with Thailand.

ICRA (2004) analyses the impact of Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA) with MERCOSUR on the automobile sector in India. This study finds a significant threat of imports in sub-compact and compact cars and certain auto-components. There is huge excess capacity and intense competition in MERCOSUR countries, propelling them to look for export opportunities. This is true especially of Brazil, which has a well developed auto-component sector with huge economies of scale. Further, weak currency in all MERCOSUR countries provides a natural tariff barrier. In addition, MERCOSUR countries have an equitable arrangement within themselves to have a balanced trade, with fair level of exports and imports. The Indian auto industry could gain from this PTA with MERCOSUR only if it is assured of the balanced trade, as MERCOSUR countries practice among themselves.

ICRA (2005) studies the possible impact of FTA with South Africa on the Indian automobile industry. The study finds that there are a few policies in South Africa that indirectly subsidize the auto industry, unlike India, in terms of financial grants. Hence it is suggested that India could minimize losses only if it goes for inclusion of certain auto components, which involve huge logistic costs of imports, creating a natural protection (for example, stampings, glass, seats, plastics and tyres) and those in which India enjoys economies of scale and is cost-competitive (e.g. castings and forgings) in this FTA. If South Africa is ready to discontinue the schemes such as Motor Industry Development Programme (MIDP), India could include all automotive components in this FTA. There should be a minimum local content of 60 per cent and the agreement should not be trade balancing as India will not gain much in that case.
2.3 Policy Environment and Evolution of Indian Auto Industry

In this section, studies on the policy environment pertaining to the Indian auto industry and its evolution over the years have been reviewed.

Pingle (2000) reviews the policy framework of India’s automobile industry and its impact on its growth. While the ties between bureaucrats and the managers of state-owned enterprises played a positive role especially since the late 1980s, ties between politicians and industrialists and between politicians and labour leaders have impeded the growth. The first phase of 1940s and 1950s was characterized by socialist ideology and vested interests, resulting in protection to the domestic auto industry and entry barriers for foreign firms. There was a good relationship between politicians and industrialists in this phase, but bureaucrats played little role. Development of ancillaries segment as recommended by the L.K. Jha Committee report in 1960 was a major event that took place towards the end of this phase. During the second phase of rules, regulations and politics, many political developments and economic problems affected the auto industry, especially passenger cars segment, in the 1960s and 1970s. Though politicians picked winners and losers mainly by licensing production, this situation changed with oil crises and other related political and macro-economic constraints.

The third phase starting in the early 1980s was characterised by delicensing, liberalisation and opening up of FDI in the auto sector. These policies resulted in the establishment of new LCV manufacturers (for example, Swaraj Mazda, DCM Toyota) and passenger car manufacturers. All these developments led to structural changes in the Indian auto industry. Pingle argues that state intervention and ownership need not imply poor results and performance, as demonstrated by Maruti Udyog Limited (MUL). Further, the no contractual relations between bureaucrats and MUL dictated most of the policies in the 1980s, which were biased towards passenger cars and MUL in particular.

However, D’Costa (2002) argues that MUL’s success is not particularly attributable to the support from bureaucrats. Rather, any firm that is as good as MUL in terms of scale economies, first-comer advantage, affordability, product novelty, consumer choice, financing schemes and extensive servicing networks would have performed as well, even in the absence of bureaucratic support. D’Costa has other
criticisms about Pingle (2000). The major shortcoming of Pingle’s study is that it ignores the issues related to sectorspecific technologies and regional differences across the country.

Piplai (2001) examines the effects of liberalisation on the Indian vehicle industry, in terms of production, marketing, export, technology tie-up, product upgradation and profitability. Till the 1940s, the Indian auto industry was non-existent, since automobile were imported from General Motors and Ford. In early 1940s, Hindustan Motors and Premier Auto started, by importing know-how from General Motors and Fiat respectively. Since the 1950s, a few other companies entered the market for two-wheelers and commercial vehicles. However, most of them either imported or indigenously produced auto-components, till the mid-1950s, when India had launched import substitution programme, thereby resulting in a distinctly separate auto-component sector.

Due to the high degree of regulation and protection in the 1970s and 1980s, the reforms in the early 1990s had led to a boom in the auto industry till 1996, but the response of the industry in terms of massive expansion of capacities and entry of multinationals led to an acute over-capacity. Intense competition had led to price wars and aggressive cost-cutting measures including layoffs and large-scale retrenchment. While Indian companies started focusing on the price-sensitive commercially used vehicles, foreign companies continued utilizing their expertise on technology-intensive vehicles for individual and corporate uses. Thus, Piplai concludes that vehicle industry has not gained much from the reforms, other than being trusted upon a high degree of unsustainable competition.

In August 2006, a Draft of Automotive Mission Plan Statement prepared in consultation with the industry was released by the Ministry of Heavy Industries and Public new investments in auto clusters. Industry players have been advised to improve their operational performance, determine their strategic posture as one among those identified in the study, improve capabilities in line with their posture and invest very rapidly in a planned manner. ACMA needs to promote India as a brand, enable sourcing from India by global customers and promote the quality and productivity efforts of the auto component firms in India.
ACMA (2006) notes that India’s joining the WP (Working Party) 29: 1998 Agreement for global harmonisation of automotive standards, coupled with the funding of National Automotive Testing and Research Infrastructure Project (NATRIP) by the Government of India, has increased prospects of the Indian auto industry rising up to global standards in the near future, in all aspects.

Narayanan (1998) analyses the effects of deregulation policy on technology acquisition and competitiveness in the Indian automobile industry during the 1980s and finds that competitiveness has depended on the ability to build technological advantages, even in an era of capacity-licensing. In a liberalised regime, this would depend on firms’ ability to bring about technological changes, as inferred from the behaviour of new firms in the sample considered. Further, vertical integration could score over subcontracting in a liberal regime. This is probably because of the entry of new foreign firms that produce technologically superior and guaranteed quality vehicles and choose to produce most of the components in-house. Narayanan (2004) analyses the determinants of growth of Indian automobile firms during three different policy regimes, namely, licensing (1980-81 to 1984-85), deregulation (1985-86 to 1990-91) and liberalisation (1991-92 to 1995-96). Unlike the prediction by Narayanan (1998), this study finds that vertical integration is detrimental for growth in a liberalised regime as it potentially limits diversification. Narayanan (2006) also finds that vertical integration plays a positive role in a regulated regime, while it is not conducive for export competitiveness in a liberal regime.

Kathuria (1995) notes that the time-bound indigenization programme for commercial vehicles in the 1980s facilitated the upgradation of vendor skills and modifying vehicles to suit local conditions, which demand functional efficiency, overloading capabilities, fuel economy, frequent changes in speed and easy repair and maintenance. Kathuria also mentions that the choice between vertical integration and subcontracting crucially depends on the policy regime: In a liberal regime, vertical integration may not work.
Productivity

Sharma (2006) analyses the performance of the Indian auto industry with respect to the productivity growth. Partial and total factor productivity of the Indian automobile industry have been calculated for the period from 1990-91 to 2003-04, using the Divisia-Tornquist index for the estimation of the total factor productivity growth. The author finds that the domestic auto industry has registered a negative and insignificant productivity growth during the last one and a half decade. Among the partial factor productivity indices only labour productivity has seen a significant improvement, while the productivity of other three inputs (capital, energy and materials) haven’t shown any significant improvement. Labour productivity has increased mainly due to the increase in the capital intensity, which has grown at a rate of 0.14 per cent per annum from 1990-91 to 2003-04.

2.4 Aspects Related to Supply Chain and Industrial Structure

In this section, the studies that examine the aspects pertaining to local and global auto supply chains as well as the structure of the Indian auto industry are reviewed. Humphrey (1999) compares the impact of globalisation on supply chain networks in the auto industry in Brazil and India. According to Humphrey, global auto industry hubs were situated in three regions, namely, North America, Western Europe and Japan. Brazil and India are examples of the countries which could develop the indigenous auto industry despite not being situated very close to any of these regions. Hence, Humphrey compares the auto industries in these two countries. This study considers auto industry as a producer-driven commodity chain, wherein global auto assemblers control the entire supply chain from components to dealerships.

While the global auto assembly majors used to produce 60-70 per cent of the value in-house till the 1980s, various phenomenal developments have started taking place since the 1980s, such as the emergence of independent dealers and rise of catalogue suppliers who supply their standard and indigenously designed components/modules to many assemblers. Brazil and India had liberalised auto investments and tariff structure since 1990. Prior to 1991, India had a much more protectionist regime than Brazil, in terms of licensing and quantitative restrictions on
both imports and domestic production. Inflows of auto FDI occurred in both the
countries since the mid-1990s. Further, Brazil and India have emerged as preferred
suppliers for global auto assemblers. When the global auto assemblers entered India
and Brazil, the phenomenon of ‘follow-source’ was also happening. Now, there are
parallel global networks of both assemblers and Tier-1 suppliers. Even Indian
component suppliers have opportunities to enter the global auto supply chains, mainly
in low technology products made to detailed drawings but the space for domestic
industry is diminishing. With the global centralization of product engineering, skill
requirements are likely to be immense in process engineering, particularly in
assemblers and Tier-1 component manufacturers.

Sutton (2000) compares the auto-component supply chains in India and China,
based on field surveys. In both these countries, the supply chain has developed very
rapidly at the level of car makers and Tier-1 suppliers, with quality levels close to
world standards, largely driven by the entry of multinational car makers. But, the
Tier-2 suppliers are still not up to the global standards. The domestic content
requirements, based on the infant industry argument, have helped the international car
makers in enhancing the production capabilities of the domestic players effectively, as
shown by increases in auto-component exports from India and China. Of the top ten
exporting firms in India and China, five and six are domestic ones, respectively.
Enhanced supply-chain capabilities have benefited the domestic auto-makers as well,
such as Mahindra and Mahindra in India, who have been able to capture a sizeable
market share with their indigenously designed and assembled MUV.

Some leading component producers in China and India strategically use highly
capitalintensive techniques such as robotics, occasionally, despite the low wages,
mainly on account of their concerns to achieve high levels of quality. This in
combination with employing high-quality workforce even at shop floor is another
strategic choice of a few leading firms in India, to promote exports. Many Tier-1
firms follow the standard Japanese work practices to improve quality and minimise
costs. Interactions between carmakers and component suppliers have also helped the
latter improve quality.
Addressing a larger question of the impact of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) on the domestic industry and economy, Tewari (2000) studies the automotive supply chain of capabilities and types of components and systems.

The automobile industry in India had been facing the problem of overcapacity by 2000 and the auto-component sector was not so developed as to be able to deliver products of world-class quality. Chinese tariff and quota policies, coupled with local content regulations protect the auto industry in China immensely. However, the Chinese auto industry suffers from fragmentation, lower quality, lack of technological upgradation and managerial skills. Consolidation and liberalisation that are happening recently in China are expected to promote its auto industry. Auto industries in the ASEAN and Korea have recovered quickly from the Asian crisis of 1998. This report concludes with some aspects that any study on auto sector should focus on, such as evaluation of the capabilities of auto-component supply chain – both large and small suppliers, strategies of OEMs, cost, delivery, dependability, quality, product development, process development, flexibility, facilities/equipment, technology, process, workforce and organisation, logistics and supply chain, research and engineering and interfaces.

ACMA (2006) presents the recent trends in the Indian auto industry as a whole and their implications for automotive supply chain in India. The market-oriented growth and domestic market, growth trends, structural trends, market shares, profitability, productivity ratios, prices, quality, dealer network and performance are analysed. Macro and micro performance of India’s vehicle exports with major markets and Indian vehicle characteristics have been outlined, along with an analysis of global demand patterns. Domestic resource costs and global comparison of prices, credit and service are the other international trade-related aspects analysed in this study. On vertical integration, the analysis leads to the conclusion that the Indian CV industry needs to learn from the international experience to get into subcontracting and buying-in. Lack of scales and high inventories had impeded the competitiveness of Indian CV firms in the 1980s.

R&D capabilities and new product ranges were the result of the challenges arising from time-bound indigenisation programme, but still Indian technology frontier remained far below global levels. Further, different firms have followed very
different strategies and hence the impacts on their technological capabilities were also very different. However, success of Indian firms despite such a wide range of strategies is partly due to the protection available to them in the domestic market. Kathuria concludes that the Indian auto industry in general, and CV industry in particular, have a lot to learn from the global auto industry, in terms of best-practice technology and vertical integration and supplier relationship. The study rightly predicted that the industry would see heightened activity and recommended that the government should ensure that the domestic firms do not lose out because of the unrestricted entry of highly competitive foreign firms.

Narayanan (1998) finds that during the 1980s, technology acquisition through imports of technology and in-house R&D efforts explains much of differences in competitiveness, as measured by changes in market share, at the firm level, in the Indian automobile industry. Based on an econometric analysis, which considers technology acquisition, skill intensity, component imports, firm size, product differentiation, age and vertical integration as the determinants of competitiveness, Narayanan finds that competitiveness has depended on the ability to build technological advantages, even in an era of capacity licensing. This is facilitated by complementing imported technology with in-house R&D efforts.

Narayanan (2004) uses two-way fixed effects estimation of the firm growth as a function of variables capturing technology, such as R&D expenditure as a proportion of sales, foreign equity participation and import of capital goods. Role of technology depends on the technological regime in which the firm operates. In a licensed regime, firms with foreign equity grow faster because of better access to resources and technology. In a deregulated regime, import of capital goods has been the technology-related variable that triggered growth. In a liberal regime, growth is positively influenced by the intra-firm technology transfer.

Narayanan (2006) analyses the determinants of export intensity of Indian automobile firms using a Tobit model, taking the variables discussed in Narayanan (1998) and Narayanan (2004) as the determinants. This study is based on the premises that there is a systematic difference in the characteristics and performance between the firms that export and those which sell in the domestic market, mainly in terms of technology acquisition, which in turn depends on the policy regime. Technology
acquisition, firm size, vertical integration, capital intensity, imports of components and policy regime are found to be the main determinants of export competitiveness, by this analysis.

The studies reviewed so far were of a wide range in terms of objectives, methodologies used and conclusions arrived at. Some of them aim at studying very specific aspects of the Indian auto industry such as global comparisons to examine the implications of FTAs, productivity, technology and supply chain, while others dwell on more general aspects such as strategies, competitiveness, evolution of the industry, structure of the industry and policy aspects pertaining to the Indian auto industry. These studies are based on field surveys, interviews, secondary data sources, econometric analysis and descriptive analysis. Their conclusions vary widely on specifics, but there is almost a consensus that the Indian auto industry has a bright future due to various factors considered, except Piprai (2001), who argues that the competition in the auto industry in India is highly unsustainable.

The studies by ICRA, ACMA and McKinsey, which focus on global comparisons and policy environment of the auto industry, are based on quite realistic and practical approach, but lack analytical and quantitative rigour. When looked from a neutral perspective, it clearly emerges that most of the findings of these studies seek some degree of protection for the auto-component sector. They are justified in some ways because of the immense protection offered to the auto-component sectors in the competing countries. However, a more analytical and quantitative approach is required to arrive at concrete conclusions on protection, because tariff barriers will be removed at some point of time in future and the industry needs to gear up to face the free trade regime.

Narayanan (1998, 2004 and 2006) studies the issues related to technology in the Indian automobile industry econometrically. These papers are based on sound econometric theories and the results have been critically analysed based on evolutionary theoretical framework. However, these studies suffer from a few common problems. First, the dataset used, which is CMIE Prowess database, does not cover all the major players in the automobile industry, including Toyota. Hence, this study could have been supplemented by an analysis on the major companies that have been left out, through field surveys, interviews or annual reports. Secondly,
considering automobile industry in isolation is not sufficient, since the auto-
component sector in India has been playing a key role in the automobile industry,
throughout the period considered in these papers.

Thirdly, vertical integration is proxied by the share of value-added in total
sales, in these papers. This may not be sufficient because vertical integration and sub-
contracting are too complex to be captured by a single variable based on value-added.
Value-added could be high, as a share of output, despite the absence of vertical
integration, because of the fact that several activities other than component-
manufacturing such as painting, assembly and welding take place within the
assemblers’ factories. Further, the conclusion by Narayanan (1998), that vertical
integration is a preferred strategy in a liberal regime, based on the premises that
foreign firms, which enter in this regime, produce technology-intensive and high-
quality products, for which they need to produce components in-house, are likely to
be misleading. This is because of the fact that these foreign firms have imported the
components and have not produced them in-house for this purpose.

Piplai (2001) studies the policy environment and its impact on the Indian
automobile industry. While Piplai appears to be justified in saying that there has been
excess capacity in the auto industry and the auto majors are facing difficulties in
aggressively marketing their products, it is probably not correct to conclude, as he has
done, that the current levels of competition resulting from liberalisation are
unsustainable. As noted in the introduction, car penetration levels are very low in
India and hence the future potential for demand is very high. This would ensure that
competition is quite sustainable as there will be enough consumers, given the rapid
economic growth that is taking place.

The quantitative analysis of productivity indices is quite rigorous in Sharma
(2006), but this study suffers from some major inadequacies that include absence of
analysis of disaggregate data and lack of consistency with the reality. For example,
the conclusion that there has been no significant improvement in productivity of
materials and energy in recent years is incorrect, since the reality is that owing to cost
pressures, firms have been increasing their productivity with respect to these inputs.

Brown et al (2010) analyzed the consumers' attitude towards European,
Japanese and the US cars. The country - of - origin plays a significant role in the
consumers' behaviour. The brand name, lower price and distributor's reputation completely have a significant impact on the sale of passengers' car.

However, the present study differs from the above, in that, the buyer behaviour in Maharashtra state is sought to be analyzed here. The scope and the area of the study are unique in nature

O’Brien (2000) examined in his study four factors – demographic, personality, source and message and product class and their effects on information handling. The product chosen for the study were cars and break-fast. It was found that factors had varying effect on information handling. Search initiation had no effect on these variables, nor did education, sex, product class or psychosocial classification, except that knowledge increased more for cars than break-fast. As demographic variables, sex and education affected search initiation. Higher educated subjects were more likely to go in search of information probably because they were more familiar with sources and benefits of such search.

Sweeney, Hausknecht, and Soutar (2000) analyzed the concept of cognitive dissonance over the entire decision-making process. In their study, they concluded that conflict “originates in the pre-purchase phase,” and “the construct is labeled apprehensions and increases over the decision process”. Cognitive conflict in the pre-purchase stage is of vital importance because these apprehensions are the source of true dissonance after the purchase is made.

The product could be of high or low involvement depending on the number of brand alternatives and the differences among them. There is a positive relationship between expectations and performance within high-involvement products. On the other hand, there is no relationship between expectations and performance in a low-involvement purchase (Sheriff and Houland, 1961) an understanding of the level of involvement is critical in determining the type of strategy the marketer should deploy.

However, Engel, Kollat, and Blackwell warned that overstatement or understatement, for that matter, could be a poor strategy and that “a negative disconfirmation of an expectancy produced an unfavorable product evaluation” (Engel, Kollat, & Blackwell, 1968).
Chris Denove, J.D. Power (Markin 1974) said, “Automobile dealers of luxury automobiles generate higher customer satisfaction scores because they provide an environment with less pressure and sell to a more sophisticated customer who feels empowered when working with these dealers.

“Cognitive conflict is a pre-decisional uncertainty, different from cognitive dissonance which is a post-decisional state” (Anderson, 1973) at this point, in the process, conflict is aroused due to substitute products that possess distinct benefits. Different attributes offered by similar products cause consumers to question which product or service will be the best to satisfy their needs.

The consumer knows he or she will not have a second chance to make a better choice (Cummings and Venkatesan, 1976) in any major purchase, it is likely that the decision will be important to the consumer.
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