

THE BROOKINGS INSTITUTION

WEBINAR

TRANSFORMING PATHWAYS IN THE GLOBAL SOUTH
FOR YOUNG WOMEN TO WORK

AN ECHIDNA GLOBAL SCHOLAR DIALOGUE

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P R O C E E D I N G S

MS. O'DONOGHUE: Welcome everyone to the second Echidna Scholars Dialogue, Transforming Pathways in the Global South for Young Women to Work.

My name is Jennifer O'Donoghue and I am a Senior Fellow and Deputy Director of the Center for Universal Education at Brookings as well as the coordinator of the Echidna Global Scholars Program

The Echidna Scholar Dialogues aims to provide an ongoing space for researchers, practitioners, policymakers, and advocates to engage in evidence-informed conversation around pressing issues related to girls' education and gender equality in the global South. In today's conversation we will focus on the links between education and the world of work. Exploring the gendered, structural, and social barriers that keep too many young women in the global South, either economically inactive or in unpaid or underpaid informal jobs.

As in all of our Echidna Scholar dialogues, we will have the opportunity to hear from global South researchers and practitioners at the forefront of the movement for gender equality in and through education who will guide us in exploring critical changes needed in tertiary education systems. Education to employer interfaces and entrepreneurial policies and practices.

Our agenda for today is as follows:

First, we will hear from three of our Echidna Alumni Scholars, Arundhuti Gupta, Mayyada Abu Jaber and Nima Tshering who will share with us their work on the ground in India, Jordan, and Bhutan respectively. Our invited guest, Shrayana Bhattacharya will then respond to these opening presentations bringing into the conversations some of what she has learned from her more than fifteen years of on the ground research. We will then move on to a Q and A session with the presenters where we will be able to go a bit deeper in response to some of your questions and after this we will move into break-out rooms where you will have a chance to meet others with common interests and share some of your own experiences, learnings, and questions. We will then return to the large group to hear the highlights of the small group discussions and close out the workshop together.

We want this session to be as engaging as possible so throughout we will use a few polls, the zoom chat, some Padlet exercises and we are also really excited to have with us today a graphic recorder, Rah Dacey Ray who will create a real time visual synthesis mapping key ideas from our conversation. And we will spotlight this work on the screen at specific moments during the session but please feel free to check in on her work in progress at any time.

And now just a few housekeeping reminders before we get started. We are recording this session and we will be posting it via the Echidna Scholars event page so please know that your participation today will be public. We ask that you please keep yourself muted until the breakout room portion of the workshop. If you want to ask a question, please use the chat. Type your question in the chat, who your question is for, etcetera. And if you want to comment on this conversation in social media which we encourage you to do please do so using the hashtag Echidna Dialogues which I believe we will paste into the chat for you. Thank you, Leah.

And now before we move on to our first presentation, we'd like to do a quick poll to get a better sense of who's in the room with us today. And so, to do that we will launch this poll now, so please let us know what region you are based in and where you are joining us from today, what your primary role is in relation to today's topic. So, are you a researcher, a policy maker, a practitioner, a student advocate funder, something else? And finally, what you are hoping to get out of today's session. So please go ahead and let us know.

And we have about 30 percent of people answering so far so we'll wait just a few more minutes -- not minutes, seconds -- to get that taken care of. Okay, we have about 60 percent, if we could get to 70 or 75 that would be great.

Okay, last chance. If you haven't responded to the poll yet, please do so now. And last moment, last moment. Okay. we'll end the call then and share out the results.

So, as we can see about half of us are -- half of you are joining us from North America, then we also have folks joining from Sub Saharan Africa, from South Asia, from the Middle East and North Africa, East Asia and the Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean, Europe, and Central Asia and

so that's great to see that we have a really diverse group from all over the globe. And in terms of primary role and relation to today's topic, seems that practitioner wins, with about 38 percent. We also have many researchers, a few policy makers and students, some advocates, and some people who -- some funders and some who put themselves in the other categories so again it's great to see that diversity in the room and what are you hoping to get out today's session?

Wonderful to see that so many people are interested to learn about the issue, connect with others and network, and also to take action on the issue. And I just realized -- I apologize -- I was not sharing the results but just speaking through them, apologies for that. But you will be able to see that, so anyway, it is just really nice to see that we have this diversity in the room with us and that will really lead us into a rich conversation.

So now on to our presentations.

Our first speaker today joined us from Bangalore, India. Arundhuti Gupta is the Founder, Trustee and CEO of Mentor Together, India's first and largest non-profit organization that provides mentorship for youth from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds.

As of 2021 Echidna Global Scholar, her research focused on the role of digital mentorship in promoting young women's workforce participation in India. Arundhuti is a World Economic Foreign Global Shaper Alumna and has served on the World Economic Forum's Global Agenda Council for India and as an International Youth Foundation Laureate Global Fellow. She holds a master's in finance from the Manchester Business School as a UK India Commonwealth Scholar and graduated as the top rank holder from Bangalore University's Bachelor of Commerce Program. Welcome Arundhuti, and over to you.

MS. GUPTA: Thank you, thank you so much, Jen. I usually wait for the presentation to come up. There, thank you, thanks so much.

So, thank you everyone for joining us today. I'd like to start by saying that of course women's economic empowerment of participation is something that is shaped by the complex inter player of many systems. Some of them within the household, some of them at the societal level, some of them

at the national, at the economy level. So, for today's conversation for the next five to seven minutes I am going to be sharing some opening court.

I am going to be focusing on one system and that is the tertiary of the core secondary education system. So, this is a system that is typically the three or four years of education that a young person is in between the ages of eighteen to twenty-two in different types of Universities, Technical Vocational Schools, Colleges, and that's the system I am going to be talking about. So, moving to the next slide.

This system of tertiary education is something that is actually a very pivotal period in the lives of young people itself and I think its captured well in the scope from a report that the World Bank had last year which said that tertiary education is the central hinge for human capital development and a fundamental requirement for young people if they are looking at employment in the global knowledge economy. And this important sets are of recorded to a tertiary education. It can be seen in the dying tertiary education enrollments globally. So, if we go to the next slide.

This shows us enrollment globally in tertiary education for the last 40 years, and, actually, if you look at it in terms of it started from a very low, almost under ten percent, five percent for women and if you see by 2020 notwithstanding the dips because of Covid, global enrollment in tertiary education is just at about 40 percent. And if you see actually the two lines which reflect for young men and young women you see that today they are roughly at five. So, enrollment wise, tertiary education is at five for young men and women.

So, if we go back to that central idea, right, that then tertiary education is the center premise or the hinge for workforce participation, if we are at parity with the former tertiary education improvements, how does the feted (phonetic) following that play out? And unfortunately, it plays with dramatic inequality. So, if we go to the next slide.

if we take just the region of for example, South Asia, only three of ten women, only three of them -- with tertiary education would be active in the workforce compared to eight of ten men. So that, and by not achieving that second part of that idea, right, that tertiary education and workforce participation by not achieving that workforce participation piece of the larger idea when actually leaving on the table

significant empowerment that comes from men over men. From having greater bargaining power, and in the household to being able to ensure that children would access higher levels of school. So, it is really like a glass half empty in terms of the promise of tertiary education and workforce participation.

So, if in terms of my work I've mentored together, Jen mentioned a little bit about it and with my colleagues I really look at then the potential of the glass half full. Which is that today we have unprecedented numbers of young people in tertiary education, particularly a million of them in India alone. So, if we look at those clear full years of education in the lives of young people, there are opportunities for us to intervene and change and then show that that trajectory post tertiary education has more equitable outcomes and our central pieces is that we look at it through 3 ways. So, if we go, move to the next slide.

Looking at skills deficits, network gaps, and distinctive gender norms. So, the opportunity to really intervene and change the course of these three things, during that period of tertiary education itself. So, let's talk about field deficits, right? So, if we move to the next slide.

Today it's fairly commonly accepted actually, world over, at least we find that experience in India, that you know, formal subject matter knowledge or for technical degree or any degree that is being, that students are in. The formal subject matter knowledge is not what makes the student work ready because of course that subject matter knowledge is evolving so much in the real world that very often it is outdated by the time a student graduates himself. So, if you look on the line, the top ten skills that say the world economic quorum says young people need are often aspects of problem solving, self-management, working with people and what we find and mentor together works with about 150 different education institutions in India, and many thousands of young people is that we find that the understanding of the skills need and newer ways of learning these skills. Mentoring apprenticeships, that is being accepted a lot and that no one is challenging that these have to be addressed. So, which is a good thing. What I add in terms of the skills deficit is that there is an urgent need to change the understanding or the definition of what are work readiness skills. Because if you see this list, it doesn't address for instance the highly gendered way aspirations vary. The very low levels of self-advocacy and beliefs that we find in young women in India, the many biases and stereotypes that have emerged in terms of caste, religion,

gender that we see in India. And I'd like to say that the fundamental responsibility of skilled development is to build at the core of good people first. Not just advertise of competent workers. So, I would say that skill development needs this urgent sort of reset in and at the level of tertiary education.

Moving on to the networks piece. What I see as the opportunity in terms of networks and what we can do with them is to actually provide young women, especially, very rich diverse networks of role models and opportunities. This entire period of adolescence is where the young woman is looking around her, seeing the opportunities, and seeing what those role models actually say. Who are the role models and what are they sort of demonstrating through their behaviors to their aspirations? So, in a country like India where our workforce participation beliefs have already been so low and forming, a young woman is seeing more examples of what is not possible rather than what is possible.

The opportunity presented is through digital networks. There is a very shaking gap in mobile phone access so young women are accessing much more mobile phones and in pleasing internet user base. What we find in our work is that it is possible to connect a young woman sitting somewhere eating curry in a hotel in Ghana, to a pioneering woman mentor many thousands of miles away where she not just knows of the mentor stories but actually actively engages with that mentor to get the support that she needs for her career plans. So, networks are what we need to work on to get that tertiary education.

And the last thing that I will speak about is restrictive gender norms. Which in India I think almost needs like a Techtronic level of shift, especially the norms that say that a woman's family role is that of a caregiver and the huge marriage mark mentality that young women face if they plan to work that reflects in this quarter of for many of our schools, nineteen, and let that sink in that she's nineteen and she says that I don't have a lot of time to actually pursue my dreams because at 20, 21 I have to get married. And what is the change that this situation overall needs? I'd say it is captured when in the quarter of one of five in credible mentors does that is on the final slide that says if we could move to that, that speaks to the actually the responsibility that we all have of challenging these gender norms, not leaving it just up to the young women, and that wall of people that I led just today said that the sanctions

on young women and in terms of challenging gender norms are much lower when we work with those that collectively enforce those norms and actually change their mindsets. So, the opportunity to actually work and for us through our work through these large champions of mentor networks that we are challenged trying to work on challenging some of these gender norms so that it is not just a journey or a fight that young women have to do alone.

So, thank you so much for joining us today and I will look forward to conversations as we move ahead with the event.

MS. O'DONOGHUE: Thank you, Arundhuti, that was really a great introduction. I know you really have much more to say but these are just quick presentations into some of the systems that need to be transformed in order to bridge that gap between women's educational attainment and their workforce participation. So, thank you for that.

I would like to encourage everyone at this point to drop any questions you have for Arundhuti into the chat, and you know for other presentations throughout the workshop today.

We will move now to our next presenter, who is Mayyada Abu Jaber who joins us from Jordan. With over 20 years of work experience in women and youth education and economic empowerment in the Middle East and North Africa, Mayyada is the CEO and Founder of World of Letters, an organization committed to bridging the social, economic and opportunity divide. Additionally, she is the founder of geonomics, a nonprofit organization in Jordan that promotes women's economic participation as well as having worked on influencing national labor laws. As of 2014 Echidna Global Scholar Mayyada researched women's economic participation in Jordan in relation to the national curriculum. She is currently completing her PhD in Interval Development Toward a Feminist Economy from the Da Vinci Institute and holds a master's degree in environmental Geology from Duke University. Welcome Mayyada.

MS. ABU JABER: Thank you very much, Jen. And I'll return my slides, okay, so I will start with the first slide, the one before this one, yea. So, this is just -- no the one before -- yea -- so this is, I am going to talk a little bit about how we reached to a feminist economy and we since striving to

reach a feminist economy. So, this is a picture of me with a couple of young girls in a farm next to the Dead Sea. And we are sitting here in a circle talking about our experiences, of their experiences of finding a job, employment, what are the challenges and so on, so I thought it was very interesting to start with this one.

You know, working on women empowerment issues is not something you wake up one day and say, look, I am going to study, I am going to start on empowering women and I'm going to start working advocacy. It's something -- it's basically an injustice that's happened in your life. So, I am a geologist, as Jenn said. I finished from Duke University, and this is a picture, actually, of Duke University, it was like in the New York Times or something. My professor here is Orrin Pilkey. He was very famous because he was advocate for nature. So, he believed nature is alive and that development protects nature, and that we should live in harmony with nature. So, my first real advocacy was with Orrin Pilkey, which was my professor, where I was a natural advocate. And I came back home, and you know, back in Jordan, I said you know, I am going to become a student of nature and I saw it working at what is known as a natural resource authority as a geologist, and because I was a geologist I wanted to go and work in the field. But the thing is, my boss and I'd say like maybe 22 years old, or 23, and my boss insisted that this is not a job for a woman. And I was among my colleagues were a majority of men, and maybe were two women back then. And he said that working the field is not for a woman. And he would remind me daily that this is not a job for a woman. Go home, you know, do what -- a job that is actually made for a woman. And when I got pregnant it gets even worse, you know, harassment and the whole thing so basically, I resigned. And so next slide.

I started working on what is known as the Active Labor Market Program, CLAP they called them. The Management Training Program. So basically, as Arundhuti said earlier, so there is a supply where everybody is coming out of the education system and then there is the private sector, which is the demand. And so, what I did is, I was -- people, just one click -- I came in in the space between the supply and demand. I did this for ten years. And, if you have visited Jordan, you know that Jordan has a very youthful population, so if you walk in the streets of Jordan, you see a lot of young people. 63 percent

of the population of Jordan is believed below the age of 30. And recently we are seeing that 47.7 percent is the unemployment of youth, out of which 64 percent unemployment for women. So, there was a big gap there, and I came in to fill that gap with, by being a service provider. So, I worked for more than like a -- so it was very easy, right? So, what does the private sector want? We go, we get the youth, train them, and link them to jobs. Some in the soft skills, we did the skills that were listed, we did technical skills in the hope that then they could get employed. The problem is, they did not get employed, specifically women.

So, for the next slide

What happened is we had worked with 4,000 women and realized that education did not meet the employment. 60 percent of the girls who actually had contracts with the private sector refused to go to these jobs and so when they were asked and the focus group of 260, they said that their choice of enduring education was their own choice. But when it came to -- and training of course -- but when it came to their endorsement into employment it was a collective decision of family. This return on investment. Should she work there or not? And it was specifically the male members of the family that made the sole decision. So, when I came back from -- so I went to Brookings Institution and started looking at the education system. What is the narrative? What is the gender bias of national curriculum? When I came back, my research was featured in this Jordan Business and on the front page, I see it says, Is the education system setting tomorrows girls up for failure? Because in my final mapping I realized that we are preparing young boys to enter into the labor market, but the young girls are getting prepared to enter into the marriage market. I can elaborate more if you know, we have questions about this. But basically, there was this big -- mindset that there was a big kind of component which was stopping girls from entering into the workforce.

So, the next slide.

So, I started since 2014 when I came back, working on the employment but this time I started looking at issues that were not the degree systems, not the opportunity barriers, not the skill gap but beyond that. And every time I spoke to different people they said, but Mayyada it's too soft. How can

you change culture, how can you change mindset, you know, this takes too long, and some wouldn't believe and maybe it's a skill gap and maybe it's a technical gap and you know, the whole discussion. But in 2018 the World Bank -- yep, you can put it -- the World Bank actually puts this report out, Understanding How Gender Norms Impact Female Employment Outcomes in Jordan, and these interesting charts.

So Jordanian, both men and women were asked, is it okay for women to work? They said 96 percent said, of course they should work, right? But they didn't work if she gets married. Then it drops to 72 percent accepting, right? And so, these are men and women. So, but what if they have kids and they have to leave their children with relatives, not even daycare centers, relatives? It went down to half of them really saying okay, maybe she can work. What if she's in the mixed workplace, so where men and women go -- 38 percent. What if she returns after 5:00 p.m.? 26 percent.

So basically, it is not desirable for the community for women to work. It is more desirable for them to sit at home and do the care work. So once this came out, we started working -- go to the next slide.

I came together with like-minded people so we're with a couple of them we decided you know what, we need to set up JoWomenomics. It was in 2017 and we said we want a feminist economy because we realized we need the Holistic approach. Right? So, we need it, and the economy, which is empathetic, which is caring, which is a humanist economy so -- and you can see the link to our website which is on the chart. So, then what did we do? We came together -- on the next slide. --

60 women and men from different sectors, from different parts of Jordan, and you can see some of them were pilots, Parliamentarians, all of us who believed in the cause, and we started working together on different levels. So, if you go to the next slide, for example, we started working with the curriculum department with the members at the Ministry of Education -- the slide with the middle -- on the grid with the --the curriculum members. And we worked with communities using religious narratives. So, we worked with the religious department, what is called the Efstat (phonetic) department. So, we got Gufte, (phonetic) which is a religious leader, to talk to young girls. We did drama -- if you can see on the

right side, in universities. We worked with the private sector, and we also worked with the agency of girls and women, but there is one thing that we had forgotten and that was -- if you go to the next slide, was actually policies. And when we looked -- I looked into the labor law policies, there was article 69. And in article 69 the Ministry of Labor restricts private sector from employing women in certain jobs. And believe it or not, geology, field geology is one of them. In addition to like, a page and a half of jobs, in addition they cannot work certain hours, in the false kind of a term of guardianship. At the same time when you look at the article 29 which talks about different -- how employees should be behaving, and you know, assaults and like violence in the workplace, there is nothing about sexual harassment. It's not mentioned, it's not defined, it's not even done, no penalties also. So now we are looking at abolishing article 69, we are looking at adding sexual harassment in article 29. So, to next slides.

So, when you come back to this slide that I had prepared in the beginning, what is the active labor market? How can you prepare a woman to enter the labor force? You have the private sector and then you have the educational system and then you have all the service providers. All this upscaling, all the soft skills, the technical skills but then also what you need? You need also -- another click -- we now have a couple of clicks here.

So, regulations, we need to work on communities, we need to work on local leaders, we need to work on policies, and we need to work on education system, and we need to work on media. It has to be a whole kind of holistic approach to work. So currently JoWomenomics reached more than 600 women and ten governments. We are working on labor law, abolishing article 69 and we work on more than 3,000 community members and we have engaged the community -- the media to help us in our campaigns as well. So, there is some of our efforts and I am happy in the session of questions, to answer your questions. Thank you.

MS. DONOGHUE: Thank you so much, Mayyada, for highlighting your incredible work promoting women's economic participation what it has meant for a holistic movement towards a feminist economy in Jordan. And as Mayyada said at the end there, I just want to remind everyone to please drop any questions that you have for her or for any of our panelists into the chat now. And without further ado,

we will move on to our third presenter today.

Our third presenter is Nima Tshering. Nima is joining us from Bhutan where he is the lead policy provider to the Royal Government of Bhutan. And he's helped shape national policy as related to health and education. As a 2014 Echidna Global Scholar, Nima's research focused on improving education quality and supporting girls transition to higher secondary school and beyond. Nima was named the Young Global Leader by the World Economic Forum, a Policy Leader Fellow by the European University Institute, and a New World Asia Global Fellow by the Asia Global Institute. He holds a master's degree in Public Administration and International Development from the Harvard Kennedy School of Government, and NEM from the University of Canterbury, and a bachelor's in electrical engineering from the University of Kansas. Welcome Nima, and over to you.

MR. TSHERING: Thank you, Jen. Mayyada, I'll wait for your slide, okay, thank you. Well then, thank you Ariana.

Imagine there a vision for the world, where for a female default entrepreneur ecosystem, where the economy future is female, where culture is female, where default is female. So, this is the focus I wanted to focus because the Covid 19 has exposed our vulnerability, how women are important to the economy. The economy's Joseph Schumpeter, back in 1942 said that creative destruction is at the heart of capitalism. Where entrepreneurs assembled in secret is something new, while destroying something old for economy dilemma sum. So, the key word here is economy dilemma sum.

Karl Marx said capitalism is unstable which will lead to its own destruction. But Joseph Schumpeter said capitalism is unstable. Because capitalism is unstable, which is why it works.

Higher work, today, our current entrepreneurial systems are built on masculine default. Male is the default. Therefore, it is the time to apply Schumpeter's theory of creative destruction positively. I mean profess the work positively to transform the entrepreneur system toward a female default entrepreneur ecosystem to harness humanity's full entrepreneurship provision. This is because women are overrepresented, and women entrepreneurs and workers are overrepresented at the base of the economy pyramid. And the disproportional representable of women at the base of the economy

pyramid and may have its roots in art, and girls and young women's limited access to quality education. But in part, in other part in masculine defaults of entrepreneurial policies, practices or in social norms. Looking at the Bhutan's gender gap data shows that girl's quality education can have the downstream implication for the economy. In Bhutan the modern education began only in 1961. And in 1970 only 2 girls were enrolled in primary school for every 100 boys.

Now while Bhutan's gender ranking for primary, secondary and from this year, even tertiary, for enrollment has reached number 1 out of 146 countries according to the latest global gender gap report by the World Economy Forum which is at par with the number one ranked, Iceland, more developed country. So, Bhutan's primary, secondary, tertiary, when you look at education data it's at par with the number one ranked Iceland. But Bhutan's gender ranking for economy participation is way below almost about to become 126 percent. So, this data might indicate that there may be a link between education attainment for girls and young women, and their position later in the economy pyramid. And we have heard from experiences of Jordan and India, presented by my colleagues, Mayyada and Arundhuti, also shed light that education attainment for girls, a quality education attainment for girls, up to the tertiary level, and young women is necessary, but not sufficient to push the women entrepreneurs and workers up the economy pyramid.

So, in good time, we tried something in terms of the economy entrepreneur policies or practices. So, Bhutan's Minister for Economy Affairs, Loknath Sharma, educate -- something called innovate first, regulate later. If I may rephrase this using the concept of creative destruction, now you destroy the default. Male default first and regulate later, kind of concept. So, he used the concept of innovate first, and regulate later. Female default entered in policy in June, last year, in June 2021 as a part of Covid 19 economy recovery strategy. So, using online business administration app, where anyone can register for business within a minute from the comfort of one's own home without having to go physically to register. Without having to physically to go to the office to register for an entrepreneurial business idea. Where the women does not have to worry about safety and also about her shoes. And it so happened that the first entrepreneur who registered in that entrepreneurial, that business that female

default was a female, named Tshewang Dema. And over one year, when you gather the data, or the last one year, from June 2021 to June this year, June 2022 the data showed that the female entrepreneur raises at a rate is much, much higher than the male entrepreneur raising rate. Yes, because we use the technology, yes, the number of male entrepreneurs also increased by 91 percent. But the number of female entrepreneurs increased by 133 percent. Which is a -- that's a big gap of almost 42 percent. So, when I look at, I know this looks like very limited data but when I look at all this data, which gives us a hope that we can really imagine a world where economy future is female if we adopt female default entrepreneur ecosystem to harness the humanities pool economy for this year. And this is the idea I like to show and discuss for that. Thank you so much.

MS. O'DONOGHUE: And thank you so much, Nima, for sharing your work on the importance of moving towards that female default and entrepreneurial system and for outlining some of the findings from your work in Bhutan. Just again, to remind everyone if you have questions or comments please put them in the chat, we have a few great questions and comments in there. And I also, now would like to ask all of you to take a few moments to share a bit about yourselves and your thoughts on the conversations so far in the event Padlet. So I am going to share my screen here, so that we can see that, and I think Leah has just put the link into the chat, but the idea here is for all of you to click on this plus sign and share with us what organization you work with -- anything that has resonated with you from the opening presentations, from these three presentations that we have heard about so far and if you have a resource, something you have read, watched, listened to, a podcast a video, an article, a book, anything at all, an info-graphic that has impacted your thinking on this topic it would be great if you could go ahead and add it here. We understand that it might take time, so this tablet will be open and available to all of you, not just now and not just during this session today, but afterwards. It is a living document and so we hope that we can continue to add to add to it together and to return throughout our conversation to this.

So great to see that we have people joining us from the Osgood Center for International Studies, from the Florida Community Partnership, from My Emotions Matter, from Education Development

Center, Statistics Portugal. Someone wrote about you know, what resonated with them was the many conditionalities of allowing women to work, also someone joining us from Kentucky as well, College of Social Work. So, we are -- also, joining us from Shalom Youth Village in Rwanda, from Win Rock from JoWomenomics. So great to see, again, this diversity of participants and where people are joining from, and people interested in seeing those eye-opening statistics on gender gaps in education and employment. I agree, they are extremely important for all of us to have our eyes opened to. So, in the interest of time, I am going to -- as I say, that is a living document so continue to add your thoughts and comments there and any resources again, that you may have. I am going to stop sharing in the meantime and we will move on, but we will come back to our Padlets in a bit. So now I would like to introduce Shrayana Bhattacharya, who is a Senior Economist at the World Bank Social Protection and Labor Unit for South Asia and prior to joining the World Bank, Shrayana works on a range of issues in the areas of urban bureaucracy and social protection and informality. She is trained in Development Economics at Delhi University and at Harvard University. Shrayana is also the author of *Desperately Seeking Shah Rukh: India's Lonely Young Women*. A recently released book based on 15 years of field research which maps the economic and personal trajectories of a diverse group of women across India. So welcome. Shrayana, and over to you, and I am here to back you up with the poll and I promise I will publish it this time.

MS. BHATTACHARYA: Yeah because -- well first, see, it's such a pleasure to be here and so fascinating listening to everyone else speak. I have a sense, Jen, based on just the geographic representation we got early on in the poll, that there might be lots of people in our audience group who don't know who this man is on the screen right now. His name is Shah Rukh Khan so maybe we can do a quick poll just to get a sense of familiarity and I can explain the context and why a Bollywood actor shows up in a conversation on women's employment. I'll come to that in a second.

MS. O'DONOGHUE: Okay we've got about two thirds answering, anyone else? Okay, sorry, go ahead.

MS. BHATTACHARYA: That's fine, anyone else want to participate answering or shall

we just move forward?

MS. O'DONOGHUE: Okay, we'll share the results there.

MS. BHATTACHARYA: Great. So, actually, 41 percent knowing Shah Rukh is more than what I anticipated. Just as background, Shah Rukh Khan, and I can see my other is smiling because he is a huge star, not only in South Asia but in the Middle East and North Africa -- parts of Western Europe as well. He is one of India's largest, biggest male actors in Hindi popular cinema, considered, you know, sort of the Indian Cary Grant, and I think that is the best way to describe him.

Fifteen years ago, in case everyone is scratching and wondering -- scratching their heads, wondering why after such a technical conversation on women's employment I am showing pictures of an Indian actor doing the dishes in a film of his and plating food for his wife, I'll come to that.

Fifteen years ago, this was in 2006 I was in my early 20's. I was a research assistant working with a feminist think tank in India. We had a survey we were supposed to do on women who were making incense sticks and garments at home, and for those of you who are aware already of the numbers that many of the other speakers presented, most women in South Asia tend to be present in self-employment and work within the home, in fact, 64 percent of manufacturing jobs for women in India are within the homes.

So, typically women are making garments, or preparing some small pieces of textiles, and usually they get what we call a piece rated wage for it. And I was sent to a slum in the state Gujarat, this is in the west of India, in the city of Ahmedabad, and I was asked to essentially do a survey of how much women were earning, their working conditions and so on. Now many of these women were members of actually the world's largest labor union for informal women workers, which is SEWA, I think many of those here who joined us would have heard of SEWA and their work. And as we started to talk about our wages and working conditions many of the women, I was speaking to essentially told me that they have been through this kind of survey before. In fact, they had been collecting data on their own wages and working conditions and they told me they were really tired of city girls from Delhi, like me, showing up and asking the same questions again and again, and they said can we just talk about

something else? So, we decided to take a break, and as an icebreaker I asked these women who their favorite actor was, because in a country as diverse as India, where there were very few things that really brought us together in common. Popular cinema is definitely one of them. I discovered that everywhere I went from the slums of Ahmedabad, I followed up with this work, with the serving domestic workers, migrant domestic workers, while moving from a state in Charkhari, which is a tribal dominated district into the cities of India. Different parts of the country and I realize everywhere I went I met women who seemed to love this actor. And one of the themes I realized, and I followed inside the granular texture of the decisions that they were making, these women, when they were thinking about their career choices. And one of the things I realized was it is really hard and to essentially divorce social norms from technical fixes when we come to women's employment. And that makes the problem really tricky.

Economists tend to talk in a very technical language, it's a language that's helpful you know, so it's a language of interventions and you see results, but a lot of the norms around what women's roles are in society, especially around care. What masculinity is supposed to do as well. Incomes of norms and the way men are supposed to behave. Those are extremely endogenous in many of these decisions, and I wanted this to start by saying that I realize that you really can't have a conversation about women's employment without actually talking about care, culture and this actor essentially allowed me to have these very tough conversations with women over fifteen years.

When you see him, you are actually doing something that Indian men don't do, and Ariana, maybe we can move to the next slide.

India factors are in the bottom five when it comes to men helping in housework, that comes from an ILO survey, and I'll show you more detailed results later. What you have right now, in front of you is essentially a graph based on time use data in India. Looking at minutes that men and women spend for a day, in different tasks, and you see this huge gap. If you look at unpaid domestic services, some women are usually self-reporting spending around 299 minutes, whereas men are spending 97 minutes. In fact, this data that shows that 66 percent of women's work is unpaid. I think you know -- our other theme, Nama -- my other -- many people talk about socialization and how there is this

idea that marriage and caregiving are a woman's primary job. And I want to (inaudible) here, a bit. So many of the women I met through this course of the 15-year research would say, well I only need to have a job when the man doesn't bring up the bread winning end of his contract. And in fact, many women would say trying to manage care, work, and home in addition to jobs outside, while some really enjoyed it, for others it was an underpaid exhausting disaster. And many of these women in fact, over the years that I followed them retreated from the field workforce because they felt that this was just -- it was too much to take on, and there were norms around safety access to jobs and they didn't have enough flexibility in their work jobs as well to be actually able to pursue our roles outside the home.

And so, I do want to highlight that while there are technical fixes, be it for use of technology, job matching, all of those, the question of justice and the roles around care are absolutely critical when we think about some of these questions and what is the role of men and women.

Would you move to the next slide, Ariana?

So of course, India is not alone when it comes to men not participating in the kitchen like Shah Rukh did in that first slide, I showed you. Which is also why all these women I spoke with love him because he is always portraying these kinds of men who are showing up in the kitchen and helping women with their housework.

This is minutes per day, if you look at the blue aspect of it it's domestic services for all final use, you notice that countries like India, Pakistan, Mali, these are minutes per day as well and these are the minutes that men spend on domestic services and you essentially find that, again, India in the bottom five when it comes to men doing housework and it comes up to be around 31 minutes according to this particular estimate from the ILO per day.

But you see this pattern in other countries as well and I am not showing you the full graph, I am showing you some other countries that are in the bottom and the distribution. Be it in Morocco, be it a factory in China or South Africa, you see this very skewed role, and this is really a very hard problem to track because women are constantly entering and exiting the workforce, with the constraint of care work on them consistently without that being renegotiated.

And I think we need to have a conversation about how that can actually be done, and I know and it's a conversation I know many feminists and economists are tired of having. Because you talk about care work, and you think this is something that's impossible to surmount. But culture conversations and justice movements need to attack it or else. So many of the technical solutions that are offered women will just not be able to access them. Simply because they are just too tied up providing energy at home.

Let's move to the next slide, Ariana.

This is another slide that shows public expenditures, the shared GDP in different countries. And you see again, I mean, countries like India, Indonesia, Mexican, South Africa, and this is less than one percent. And there is a lot that governments can do, beyond just childcare centers, thinking about the community care workers for example. Using minimum wage, countries like India, again, have not even signed the I Will Declaration for domestic workers rights There are no care minimum wage norms that even apply themselves to many care workers in several countries, and there are questions about how we treat care, and community care. And in fact, one of the policy discussions has been in there to provide universal basic in clothes to women in community for their care work, that is a critical import without risking economy which is simply not work and you know, my other mention, feminist economy. And you know one of the core principles of feminist economy is one that recognizes care as absolutely predictable to economic production. And that's a conversation that is going to be really important as we move forward.

So, I will end with just a few responses to the presentation. One I think that is really critical to think about care very carefully and I think there are lots of ways to do it, we can discuss that during the Q and A. But I do want us to recognize the challenge of transitions between employment and to education for women is not a technical challenge, it is a challenge where you are essentially fighting fairly patriarchal decision-making systems. Not only within the house, or wherein the policy sphere, in our courts, just in fact a few days ago there were front line care workers in India who were protesting because they hadn't received their wages since January, and then all these women were fired. Essentially

because they were irregular workers but because these were women who were absolutely essential, for example, to the corporate care response paresis (phonetic). And if you don't think very carefully about the community care, valuing care, and GDP and compensating women perhaps, along with investments in childcare and elderly care, I think this problem of trying to address women's employment for purely technical lens is probably going to get us nowhere. Because it is a question of care, and it is a question of justice.

And I will close with that, and then hopefully we can come back to some of these themes in the Q and A later and over to Jenn, again. Thanks. I have a couple of extra slides, but those we can skip over, Ariana. Thanks.

MS. O'DONOGHUE: Thank you Shrayana so much for sharing that research that led to your book and for your discussion of the power of some of these non-technical aspects, that you mention that can either promote or discourage women's economic aspirations and participation. So, at this point, I would like to ask for a virtual round of applause for all four of our presenters. You know we have had some comment in the chat about really how great these presentations have been and with you know, so much information and really the breadth of experience that all of you are bringing to the conversation today.

So I am actually thinking of making an executive decision and sort of skip the group -- big group Q and A and that we move into the breakout rooms and provide that space to have a more of the conversation since we've you know, spent some good time hearing from all of you and listening with what should have all of our participants to have an opportunity to engage more closely with each of you in conversation and there has been some great comments in the chat around -- and questions around, you know, what is the role of men in this and how to really engage men effectively into this conversation. Mayyada, I know that is something you have been working on in particular. Nima and Arundhuti as well, what is the impact of Covid. I think Shayanna's challenge to us all at the end to think of you know, if we don't deal with the whole issue of care and the care economy will we be able to really resolve some of these other issues about getting women meaningfully and into the workplace.

So -- would love to take these questions with us into the breakout rooms. So, what we are going to do today, is have three breakout rooms, and you will be able to choose which breakout room you are going to. They will be facilitated by our Echidna Scholars, so we will have one breakout room with Arundhuti that will focus you know, more around her work and people who are interested in particularly in understanding importance opportunity as Arundhuti mentioned it of tertiary education.

A second breakout room will be facilitated by Mayyada and people who are interested in engaging more around this question around the interfaces of education and employment and thinking about this move to the feminist economy and what is then sort of involved in that in Jordan, and then a third breakout room with Nima to think more about a female default entrepreneurial system and what will that look like and what does that require and of course, in all of these again to return to some of these questions that people are putting in the chat around you know, how do we make this cultural shift happen.

So, Ariana, I believe, are we ready for our breakout rooms?

SPEAKER: I have just opened them up and we should be able to choose now, please let me know now if you are having trouble or if you don't see the option.

SPEAKER: and Jen, this is Katie, and would you like to see what Rah Dacey Ray has been working on?

MS. O'DONOGHUE: Oh yeah, that would be great if you want to pin that, that would be great, sorry I forgot about that part. Yeah, I think, Ariana, people are not seeing the options of where to choose.

SPEAKER: Okay, let me retry that.

MS. O'DONOGHUE: Okay, Katie, do we have screen? Along with the graphic recording?

SPEAKER: yes, I am -- Rah Dacey, if you could turn your video on that would be great and then I can spotlight you. Okay.

SPEAKER: So, can you give me access to share my screen?

MS. O'DONOGHUE: So, thank you Rah Dacey. So, we can see there some of the ideas

and concepts that are coming out of the conversation so far. I am wondering are we having -- are we able to get into the breakout rooms?

SPEAKER: I already opened them, and you should be able to choose that spot option that came up so if you are still having trouble let me try to restart them, but it should be fixed right now.

MS. O'DONOGHUE: Okay, it does like maybe a few people have joined, okay, so and some people are asking in the chat which group they want to be joined in so Claudia we will make sure you get into the tertiary education room. And if anyone else is unable to join, we can put it in the chat and we can help with that movement as well.

SPEAKER: Yes, so when you are ready, please move into a breakout room, whichever you choose, once again our duty will be to chart fiduciary education. Nima will be talking about the female defaults and Mayyada will be talking about the interface between education and employment. Okay. I see a lot of people have still been joined, so we will look at them for one more minute. And I am supposed to be in Mayyada's group so I will go there now, so if anyone has any issues, please direct them to Jen in the main room.

MS. O'DONOGHUE: I will be in the main room so anyone who hasn't joined a breakout room yet and wants to put in the chat which room they would like to go to. Okay. There is still a few people -- here, and Radeshay, did you want to go to one of the rooms, correct?

Okay is there anyone else here who is in the main room who would like to be assigned to a breakout room, we still have a few people left, so we maybe we will just move people.

SPEAKER: Jen, I am going to go to a room to? and okay.

MS. O'DONOGHUE: Thanks, Arundhuti.

SPEAKER: Jen I am also going to be joining Arundhuti's breakout room.

MS. O'DONOGHUE: Well, I'm --

SPEAKER: Jen, I can stay behind, I can, you can go and join the conversations and I can meet people and help with the breakout rooms.

MS. O'DONOGHUE: Okay, okay thank you.

SPEAKER: Mervin, can I invite you to join any of the breakout rooms? I can help you get there. If you are able.

SPEAKER: Lisa, thank you for joining us. We are currently in a more in-depth discussion in the breakout rooms, I am going to put the themes in the chat for you and I can help you get to your room of choice. (Pause)

SPEAKER: I was going to ask, are the breakout rooms recorded? I am on the west coast, so it is super early.

SPEAKER: So, the session is being recorded, the breakout room discussions aren't as that isn't possible, but I am putting this in the chat and if you are interested in joining one of them, they are about ten more minutes of that discussion and then the rest of the session you will be able to access after the recording is available, yes.

SPEAKER: Okay, I guess the first one, the education need to employment, thank you.

MS. GUPTA: Okay, you are welcome.

SPEAKER: Natasha, welcome, we are currently in a breakroom discussion on three main areas which I am going to post in the chat for you, and I invite you to join one of them, here they go, and I can assign you to your breakout room of choice. Sorry the last one should say transformations in tertiary education.

SPEAKER: Thanks this is -- sorry I am late, I couldn't into zoom.

SPEAKER: It's impossible through our server, so my answer to that question would be great.

SPEAKER: Wonderful. And we are recording the session, not this conversation but the rest of the presentation so we will have that available after the session for anything new they may have missed.

SPEAKER: Okay, so they'll probably (inaudible)

SPEAKER: so, I'll turn it over, thank you.

MS. O'DONOGHUE: Okay. Welcome back everyone, I know it is always an abrupt

(inaudible) to be pulled out of the room, mid word so apologies to whoever was talking at the moment that the breakout room was closed. You know, I hope that all of you were able to have great conversations and really dig into some of the topics. And apologies again for the sort of technical difficulties of getting us into the rooms, but hopefully once you were there, you were able to, you know have meaningful conversations about the topics. And now I want to open the floor so that our reporters can share some of the big picture ideas that were discussed in some of the breakout rooms. And, to our graphic recorder Teradecis, so that she can help to capture some of the main ideas from groups.

So why don't we start with Arundhuti's group, and I believe that Anthony was the reporter for that group. There is a lot of background noise. We are just getting up to --

Anthony, I am going to interrupt you because people are saying that they can't hear you very well, and maybe you could type instead given the background noise, if you want to share that in the chat, I am sorry, thank you for that.

So, we will move on to Mayyada's group and I believe Ariana was the reporter for that group.

SPEAKER: yes, that was me. We had a really wonderful discussion and I think that we really all appreciated Mayyada's presentation. We talked about a lot of different things. And Mayyada asked the question, what is the best approach to start changing policies and start making transformation. Is it the economic approach or is it the social approach? And with the social approach we have to also look at you know, break down different intersectional elements to pay attention to that, the community level. And we talked about you know, the balance to that. We need to find a balance between both the economic approach and the social approach. But also, the balance between data and narrative uplift experiences when we present this topic for policy makers and also in the social sphere when we want to make those transformational changes. And Triana also jumped in and you know, added that when there is a large -- when there is larger economic growth, there is a sharp decline in women's employment and when people bring this data to policy makers, a lot of time there is a panel of men sitting in front of them, and that is not just true in India but in the United States as some people pointed out and lots of other

countries as well. And there is very strong mindsets around that decision making and the word, feminist can sometimes be too much and there needs to then sometimes be nuance ways of discussing that especially with people with strong mindsets who have power in decision making. And I'll stop there so I don't run out of time, but it was a very meaningful conversation.

MS. O'DONOGHUE: Thank you so much, Ariana, lets head over to Nima's group, talking about entrepreneurship and I believe that Boroneu (phonetic) was the reporter for that group.

So, Boroneu?

SPEAKER: Yes, I was. So, we had a very interesting conversation and definitely the time was not long enough. Actually, the question that prompted our discussion was from Mindy about to when we are thinking about this female default enterprise. What should we do to have this culture shift because it has long been male default? So, we started this conversation from hearing the perspective from Africa, then moving on to Singapore, then Europe then South Asia. So generally what came up in the discussion was that usually this kind of conversation is informal so it is very important that we start having the discussion in the policy level, but it also is important that we start working from the ground level because feminist transformation in the economy is not easy because even in like Europe there are multiple spaces where women -- with the numbers of women is higher, because of like gender based violence or violence to women. The number -- the -- it's very difficult, it's very challenging to get the outcomes and another thing that came was that it's also important that we need to figure out what is important, especially in terms of like thinking of having a female CEO then what kinds or what kinds of education or what kinds of mentorship is needed because even for the female entrepreneurs or female CEO's it's very difficult to find their position in their own organization and have that voice. And you are very interesting important perspective that needs, like for the discussion, is that Covid came out as a great opportunity for creative destruction so what else can be seen as one of the -- can be seen in the similar spotlight for those sorts of predictive discussion to have that female default in any economy or enterprise. So that was the main highlight, and I'd just like to stop there, and thank you.

MS. O'DONOGHUE: And just to check out our chat, where Anthony has been posting

some of the high-level report and what happened in the tertiary education room, the conversation around what could we have done or what do we need to do differently to change patriarchal norms and the point into the need from our peer, peer to peer networks, and role modeling for young people. Media, the role of media, and allowing for honest discussion and spaces that foster self-belief in young people by allowing them to have healthy conversations and changing patriarchal education system and introducing a gender equality curriculum as early as possible. So those were some of the pieces that came out of that conversation as well.

And now I'd like to turn to our presenters again to share with us some of their closing thoughts, from the discussion today and really I think, when we talk about a holistic change or the type of systemic change and changes you all have pointed to often we can feel sort of overwhelmed and don't know where to begin, and as one of you mentioned, I think it was Mayyada, you know, talking about culture, you know, culture is so huge so where do we begin? And if we think about you know, moving into action, moving this conversation into action, what is sort of a take-away that each of you have been doing and also from the conversation that we've had today in terms of where should we start. What should the priority be, and this is going to be a tough challenge because I am going to give each of you about one minute so really concise statement of what is the priority of taking action and moving forward with this and why don't we start with you, Mayyada?

MS. ABU JABER: For me, I have learned with all these pieces, you can't do it alone. So, I believe in the power of network and the power of working together so you need a critical mass, you need enough people together to create change. And I believe that every person's work is a piece in the puzzle. Together it creates the big picture, and I know there are a lot of impatient policy makers, and impatient, you know, all they want is change from top down, and they want it quick. But I think it is a process and I think each one of us is a small part of this puzzle that works together, and I think what is most important is to understand the cultural and to have a cultural understanding. What is the true narrative, rather than exporting, creating your own knowledge cocreation of knowledge with people themselves, with communities themselves to create change. So, like, a network and piece of puzzles together to create

change.

MS. O'DONOGHUE: Thank you Mayyada. Shrayana, what do you see as a priority for action as we move forward?

MS. BHATTACHARYA: I think we have to work with men, masculinity, working with men, men's groups, on these issues, and starting young is going to be absolutely critical. And the second is women in leadership. All studies, all evidence show when women take on decision making roles there are strong peer level effects, demonstration effects, there are a few decisions that employ and I think globally too, affirmative action through incentives. Different kinds of policies we should be thinking of, just populating more and more women in the position making decisions around the economy. I think that is going to be very critical. Just those two.

MS. O'DONOGHUE: Thank you, Shrayana.

Nima, what are you seeing as a priority for action?

MR. TSHERING: Thank you. Covid 19 has given a great opportunity. For me it is difficult to do a piece meal talk. You have to go to the men's gym (phonetic) and that is where the default matters possible. Suicide was a crime if you commit before. With the defaults reset I always say when you commit a society -- so society's problem is an indigenous problem. So, when the default is set to norm, you are a big team. The whole narrative, the social narrative changes and things move in different direction. So, I still believe that setting the default system is important for the men and for the humanity and for the economy. After Covid 19, we have shown that other half of humanity matters so I still believe that it is good for -- important for the man to have a default human system in place and that's a priority.

MS. O'DONOGHUE: Thank you Nima, and Arundhuti will wrap up with you and on your priority for where we should be working in the you know, immediate term.

MS. GUPTA: I'll definitely take over the role of culture and the soft power of movies that Shrayana spoke about because I think with all of this work that we do with young people that I have always found them always willing to discuss things and it may not always be that you have your starting from the idea, but young people are always just open and willing as long as you engage with them. So, I

think that the idea of using movies to have the people introspection about what they may have seen, what they may have internalized. Challenging that, I am using that as then, the basis for their everyday lives, right? Because like we saw that the decisions you are making about whether to do housework, whether to support your partner, whether to allow somebody in a meeting to speak up, those are every day decisions that are being influenced by so many things that are offered by subconscious and I think movies are a great way to have that conversation with young people so I am looking forward to bringing that into the mentorship program.

MS. O'DONOGHUE: A great point, thank you so much. And as we come to close, I want to invite all of you again to return to our Padlets and I am happy to see there have been some additional participation in the Padlet during our conversation and so please, everyone take a moment when you have a chance to go through and read some of the comments of the other participants. But we would love to invite you all to add to this around what ideas that you are taking for action and priorities after we move forward after today's dialogue. And also, what questions you still have, and we can see we have a few questions here already, but please you know, feel free to add in you know, this question around the care responsibilities and the impact of that on the pathways you know, the same gender equity success has for young people across economic class systems or only for girls or women at the top. This is a crucial question as several of our participant presenters talked about today. You know we need to have clarity around who, which girls, which young women are we talking about and make sure that we are reaching the most marginalized women and the value of elevating women some plan and leadership some translated into data for all, especially to policy makers. I think that for those of us who work, and work with policy makers and trying to inform policy, this is always the question about what will motivate policy makers to action and what kind of information and evidence and how can we connect them. And back to Mayyada's point around sort of feminist research too, right? And narratives and all of that and so how do we change some of those real lived experiences into types of evidence that can be compelling for policy makers. So please take a moment to share your thoughts and for action and the questions that you still have and the Padlet and again, we will be sharing this out with everyone that was

here today and everyone who registered for this conversation as well.

I also saw in the chat a few people who were saying they'd like to continue the conversation so we will be sending out in the registration we asked people willing to share their contact details and we will be sending out those contact details to people who are interested because as we mentioned at the beginning, you know, really the idea of these dialogues, is to create an ongoing conversation. We know that an hour and a half is not enough time to solve these problems that are really systemic and entrenched and require work from all of us and all of the sectors that we work in and in all of the countries that we are based out of you know, and really want to continue that conversation with all of you.

So, I just want to thank everyone for being here, also we want to do an evaluation we will putting into the chat, as well now, if you have a few moments to just answer a few questions aimed at helping us to improve these dialogues. If you don't have time now, we will be sending a link out by email as well. I want to thank Echidna, our alumni scholars, Arundhuti, Mayyada and Nima, as well as the gender equality and education team and our coms team at CUE for putting this event together. Special thanks to our guest, Shrayana Bhattacharya for being with us today and finally thank you to all of you, so much, for joining us, for bearing with us as we had some technical difficulties. As I mentioned we will be sharing everything out. The recording, the side decks, the graphic recording the Padlet, all of the materials from this event and we hope to see you again very soon. So, thank you and have a great day, a great evening, a great night, wherever you may be.

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I, Carleton J. Anderson, III do hereby certify that the forgoing electronic file when originally transmitted was reduced to text at my direction; that said transcript is a true record of the proceedings therein referenced; that I am neither counsel for, related to, nor employed by any of the parties to the action in which these proceedings were taken; and, furthermore, that I am neither a relative or employee of any attorney or counsel employed by the parties hereto, nor financially or otherwise interested in the outcome of this action.

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