

TEACHERS' PERCEPTION ON FACTORS AFFECTING EXPERIENCED TEACHER ATTRITION

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Abstract

The main aim of the study was to find out teachers' perception on factors affecting experienced teachers attrition in Hlaing Thar Yar Township, Yangon Region. The specific aim was to find out the teachers' perception on human, social, structural and psychological capital factors, and the most important factors for attrition. Quantitative and qualitative methods were used in this study. The questionnaire were developed by Mason, S., & Matas, C.P (2015). It consists of 35 items about teachers' perception on factors affecting experienced teacher attrition with two open-ended questions. Cronbach's alpha value was 0.80. The 90 Senior teachers and 201 Junior teachers were selected by using proportionate sampling method. Descriptive Statistics, Independent Samples *t*-test and One-way ANOVA were conducted to analyze the data. One to One Interviews were conducted. In this research, teachers' perception on Human Capital Factor was low (Mean=2.23, SD=0.57), perception on Social Capital Factor was low (Mean=2.48, SD=0.52), perception on Structural Capital Factor was high (Mean=2.93, SD=0.58), and perception on Positive Psychological Capital Factor was low (Mean=2.37, SD=0.62). According to overall findings, inadequate salary, excessive workloads and over unnecessary workloads were considered as the most important factors for experienced teacher attrition in the priority level.

Keyword: Experienced teacher attrition

Introduction

The loss of experienced teachers is seen as a threat to instructional quality. Even more importantly, attrition is seen as a waste of scarce resources, as replacement teachers have to be recruited and trained. Teacher training can be expensive. That investment goes to leak when the teachers trained enough leave teaching.

When we are talking about experienced teachers, we first need to know the cycle of career. In Donald's cycle, there are five stages: growth, exploration, establishment, maintenance, and decline. But, Renando (2018) generalized career cycles into three age ranges: Early stage (0-5 years in the workforce), Mid stage (6-15 years in the workforce), and Mature stage (more than 16 years in the workforce). To be able to get more sharpened picture of teacher attrition, all fields that are related with attrition push into the zone of consideration.

Significance of the Study

Education is not a single factor but it is a multi-dimensional effects. For conveniently and smoothly running the education system, strong force of qualified teachers is necessary. And then, teaching is not a short-term process, it is a long-term process.

Ultimately, the problem of teacher attrition becomes critical in light of forecasted teacher shortages. As teacher attrition rates rise up, the drain on an already diminished teaching force becomes a situation which cannot and should not be ignored. If the teaching profession is to survive, means must be devised for keeping active teachers in the field. This can only be accomplished by identifying the causes of teacher attrition.

Most of the studies are emphasized in early career ages, if so, insight concerning

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experienced teachers' attrition is sadly missing (Beaugez, 2012). To get a more obvious picture, attrition of experienced teachers is pushed into consideration. By analyzing the factors of teacher attrition, this research may be one of the contributions to policy makers and in-service teachers.

General Objective

- To study teachers' perception on factors related to experienced teacher attrition in Hlaing Thar Yar Township, Yangon Region.

Specific Objectives

- To study the teachers' perception on the human capital factor that affects experienced teacher attrition.
- To study the teachers' perception on the social capital factor that affects experienced teacher attrition.
- To study the teachers' perception on the structural capital factor that affects experienced teacher attrition.
- To study the teachers' perception on the positive psychological capital factor that affects experienced teacher attrition.
- To find out the most affecting factors on experienced teacher attrition.

Research Questions

- (1) To what extent do teachers perceive the human capital factor affect on experienced teacher attrition?
- (2) To what extent do teachers perceive the social capital factor affect on experienced teacher attrition?
- (3) To what extent do teachers perceive the structural capital factor affect on experienced teacher attrition?
- (4) To what extent do teachers perceive the positive psychological capital factor affect on experienced teacher attrition?
- (5) What are the most affecting factors on experienced teacher attrition?

Limitations of the Study

This study is concerned with senior and junior teachers' perceptions on factors affecting experienced teacher attrition and, it is concerned with teachers from Basic Education High Schools and Branch-High Schools in Hlaing Thar Yar Township, Yangon Region.

Theoretical Framework

To be formulated as the advance model of attrition, Mason, S., & Matas, C. P (2015) made a new theoretical framework based on the previous 20 researches on attrition in Australian. It has four dimensions: human capital themes, social capital themes, structural capital themes, and positive psychological capital (psycap) themes.

Human Capital Themes

In the school context, human capital is defined as "an individual's cumulative abilities, knowledge, and skills developed through formal and informal experiences". There are two factors for considering those themes. Professional Skills and Knowledge and Continuous Professional Development Opportunities are two themes.

Social Capital Themes

Social capital in a school context has been described as “a trusting climate in the school – one where teachers talked to each other, shared the same norms, and had strong agreement in their descriptions of the culture of the school”. The four themes are Gaps in Relationships, Low Social Recognition, Gender, and Family Encumbrance .

Structural Capital Themes

While human and social capital factors are generally considered ‘teacher factors’, a significant part of the literature on teacher attrition also looks at the role of context in which teachers’ work. The four themes are Salary and Other Benefits, Poor Physical Conditions, Promotion or Transfer, and Workloads

Positive Psychological Capital Themes

The inclusion of PsyCap factor in the teacher attrition theoretical model is important because it acknowledges the fact that variables that are internal to the teacher also play a part in their career path choices. They are Satisfaction, Motivation, Resilience, and Commitment.

Definition of Key terms

Key term

Teacher Attrition- Teacher attrition is the leaving of teaching, quitting teaching or moving away from the teaching fraternity to retire or to undertake other responsibilities of jobs. (Mulei, 2012)

Operational definition

Teacher Attrition – Teacher attrition refers to all the phenomena that teachers leave the teaching fraternity to be performed professional and procedural responsibilities, or to be accommodated with personal and family problems.

Methodology

Quantitative Study

Sample

There were 374 senior teachers and 746 junior teachers. According to Gay and Airaisan (2003), the required sample size is 291. In this research, proportionate stratified sampling method is used; hence, 97 (33.40% of population) senior teachers and 194 (66.60% of population) junior teachers were selected. In choosing these participants, random sampling was used. The detail demographical conditions are described in table 1.

Table 1 Demographic Information about the Respondents

Variables	Group	No of respondents
Gender	Male	19
	Female	272
Teaching Experience	1-10 years	40
	11-20years	112
	Over 21 years	139
Rank	J.T	194
	S.T	97
School Location	Urban	171
	Rural	120

Instrumentation

Teacher attrition questionnaire was developed by the researcher based on the Mason, S., & Matas, C.P (2015) theoretical framework. It framework was based on the previous 20 researches about attrition in Australian. In this questionnaire, there are two parts: demographic data and factors related to experienced teacher attrition.

Demographic data was composed of the respondents' gender, year of experience, position, degree obtained, teaching subject, and specialized subject.

To find out the attrition factors, there were 35 items with four-point Likert scaling technique that ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. In these items, item 1-6 were related to Human Capital Factor, item 7-16 were related to Social Capital Factor, item 17-28 were related to Structural Capital Factor, and item 29-35 were for Positive Psychological Factor. In developing the questionnaire, balancing the items or weighing the items were mainly emphasized. Normally, the Structural and Social factors may be caused for many reasons rather the other. That is why the items of these factors were more than the others. Open-ended questions were stated at the end of questionnaire to get a compact view.

Instrument Validity

Instrument validity was obtained from eight specialists who have sound knowledge and experience in this field from Department of Educational Theory, Yangon University of Education before testing internal consistency of the questionnaire.

Instrument Reliability

After validating the questionnaires, 40 teachers were selected to measure the reliability of the questionnaire. To measure it, Cronbach's alpha coefficient was used. Based on the pilot research, the Cronbach's alpha value was .80.

Procedure

Firstly, the relevant literature and related researches were explored and read thoroughly. Based on these related literature, theoretical framework was formulated. Questionnaire with 35 items was built under the guidance of supervisor in aligning with other previous questionnaires. Instrument validation was obtained from eight experts.

After completing this step, 40 teachers were selected to do a pilot survey. After obtaining the legal allowance, the questionnaires were distributed for data collection. One week later, the research questionnaire papers were recollected and the respondents' rate is 98%.

Data Analysis

The data obtained from the research questionnaire was analyzed with the aid of SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Science) version 24. Descriptive Statistics, Independent Samples *t*-test and One-Way ANOVA were used to interpret the factors for attrition and to examine whether any significant difference was or not according to the respondents' personal factors like gender, years of experience, school geographical location, and rank.

Qualitative Study

Qualitative methodology was used to investigate factors affecting experienced teachers attrition. The sample for one-to-one interview, six former teachers (leaver) are selected to find out the cause to attrition.

Instrumentation

For qualitative purpose, semi-structured interview guidelines and open-ended questionnaires were used. In order to explore the root cause of experienced teacher attrition, the questionnaire included two open-ended questions. To obtain deep and uncovered opinions, additional data were collected from one to one interview. Interview pattern was constructed under the guidance of supervisor.

Procedure

Interview was held by the researcher on January 9, 2019. The interviews were conducted on each participant. Note taking and recording methods were used to collect data.

Data Analysis

For data analysis, evidences from open-ended questionnaires and note taking from one-by-one interview were reloaded. The researcher read and carefully analyzed to increase the trustworthiness of the collected data.

Findings

(1) Teachers' Perception on the Human Capital Factor that affects Experienced Teacher Attrition

Respondents' rate on this factor in the strongly disagree scale as a cause to experienced teacher attrition was 20%. Disagree scale was 33.7% and Agree scale was 27.6%. And then, 17.5% of the respondents strongly agreed this factor and 1.2% was missing to response.

Findings for research question (1) were presented in Table 2.

Table 2 Mean Values and Standard Deviations of the Human Capital Factor about Experienced Teacher Attrition based on Teachers' Perception (N= 291)

No.	Human Capital Factor Items	Mean	SD
1.	Teaching experience	1.89	0.91
2.	Teacher Training	2.06	0.93
3.	Professional development program	2.02	0.85
4.	Age and health problems (e.g., pension)	2.80	1.01
5.	Adequateness of time preparation	2.20	0.90
6.	Little chance to advance career	2.40	0.96
	Overall Mean	2.23	0.57

1.00-1.49 Very Low, 1.50-2.49 Low, 2.50-3.49 High, 3.50-4.00 Very High

Hence, teacher perceived as human capital factor had **low** inclination that cause experienced teacher attrition according to the table 2. To analyze and evaluate whether the degree of teacher' perception on human capital factor grouped by gender, school location and rank, the Independent Samples *t*-test was used.

Table 3 Results of the Independent Samples *t*-test for Human Capital Factor Grouped by Gender, School Location and Rank (N= 291)

No	Groups	t	df	p	Mean Difference
1.	Gender	1.026	289	0.36(ns)	0.141
2.	School Location	-3.058	289	0.002**	-0.209
3.	Rank	-0.019	289	0.98(ns)	0.074

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$, ns=no-significance

According to this table, there was no significance difference between male and female teachers, and between senior and junior teachers on the factor of experienced teacher attrition. But, rural schools teacher's perception was significantly different from urban schools' teacher perception on Human Capital Factor. To analyze the difference among three groups of years of experience, One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used.

Table 4 The ANOVA Result for the Perception on Human Capital Factor Grouped by Years of Experience (N= 291)

Factor		Sum of Square	df	Mean Square	F	p
Human Capital	Between Groups	3.885	2	1.942	5.943	0.003*
	Within Groups	94.132	288	0.327		
	Total	98.017	290			

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$, ns=no-significance

According to table 4, there was significantly difference on the Human Capital Factor grouped by Years of experiences.

Table 5 The Result of Tukey HSD Multiple Comparison of Teachers' Perception on Human Capital Factor Grouped by Years of Experience (N= 291)

Dependent Variable	(I)	(J)	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	<i>p</i>
Human Capital Factor	5-10 years	Over 16 years	0.246*	0.102	0.045*
	11-15 years	Over 16 years	0.225*	0.072	0.006**

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$, ns=no-significance

According to table 5, 5-10 years of experienced teachers were significantly different from over 16 years of experience group. And, 11-15 years of experienced teachers were significantly different from over 16 years group.

(2) Teachers' Perception on the Social Capital Factor that affects Experienced Teacher Attrition

Respondents' rate on this factor in the strongly disagree scale as a cause to experienced teacher attrition was 16.09%. Disagree scale was 30.72% and Agree scale was 37.53%. And then, 14.7% of the respondents strongly agreed this factor and 0.96% missed to response.

Table 6 Mean Values and Standard Deviations of the Social Capital Factor about Experienced Teacher Attrition based on Teachers' Perception (N= 291)

No	Social Capital Factor Items	Mean	SD
1.	Principal's subjective administration and poor support	2.37	0.96
2.	Relationship with principal	2.25	0.93
3.	Having a decision making authority at the some extent	2.33	0.90
4.	Unsupportive colleagues with no mutual understanding	2.29	0.93
5.	Poor communication with pupils	1.99	0.88
6.	Weak of parents' interest in their children's education	2.85	0.88
7.	Little respect and recognition of community on teaching	2.59	0.89
8.	Having family problems (like child rearing, pregnancy etc.)	2.75	0.83
9.	Unable to shuttle between home and school	2.90	0.79
10.	Gender Issue in Family Encumbrance	2.37	0.96
	Overall Value	2.48	0.52

1.00-1.49 Very Low 1.50-2.49 Low 2.50-3.49 High 3.50-4.00 VeryHigh

According to table 6, Social Capital Factor had low inclination to be possible factor to experienced teacher attrition.

According to Independent Samples *t*-test, there was no significantly difference on Social Capital Factor grouped by gender, school location and rank. And then, there was no significant difference on Social Capital Factor grouped by Years of Experience according to One-Way ANOVA result.

(3) Teachers' Perception on the Structural Capital Factor that affects Experienced Teacher attrition

Respondents' rate on this factor in the strongly disagree scale as a cause to experienced teacher attrition was 7.49%. Disagree scale was 23.35% and Agree scale was 51.5%. And then, 26.43% of the respondents strongly agreed this factor and 1.09% missed to response.

Table 7 Mean values and Standard Deviations of the Structural Capital Factor about Experienced Teacher Attrition based on Teachers' Perception (N= 291)

No.	Structural Capital Factor Items	Mean	SD
1.	Inadequate salary	3.35	0.82
2.	Other benefits	3.36	0.73
3.	School physical infrastructures	2.77	0.88
4.	Teaching, technological and laboratory materials	2.78	0.88
5.	Appointing in other districts that are too far	2.94	1.91
6.	Promotion to higher ranks	2.46	0.78
7.	Transfers to other places or educational related fields	2.69	0.82
8.	Excessive workloads.	3.06	0.89
9.	Over paperwork and procedural works	3.32	0.84
10.	Having disobedient students too much	3.02	0.91
11.	Worry about students' achievement	2.57	0.98
12.	Having difficulty to control students	2.68	0.76
	Overall Value	2.93	0.58

1.00-1.49 Very Low 1.50-2.49 Low 2.50-3.49 High 3.50-4.00 Very High

Therefore, according to the table 7, Structural Capital Factor had **high** inclination on experienced teacher attrition. There was no significantly difference on this factor grouped by gender, school location and rank according to Independent Samples *t*-test.

Table 8 The ANOVA Result for the Perception on Structural Capital Factor Grouped by Years of Experience (N=291)

Factor		Sum of Square	df	Mean Square	F	p
Structural Capital	Between Groups	2.350	2	1.175	3.706	0.026*
	Within Groups	90.988	287	0.317		
	Total	93.338	289			

*p< .05, **p< .01, ***p< .001, ns=no-significance

But, there was significant difference on this factor grouped by Years of Experience according to ANOVA result as in table 8.

Table 9 The Result of Tukey HSD Multiple Comparison of Teachers' Perception on Structural Capital Factor Grouped by Years of Experience (N=291)

Dependent Variable	(I)	(J)	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	p
Structural Capital	11-15 years	Over 16 years	0.1949*	0.0716	0.019*

*p< .05, **p< .01, ***p< .001, ns=no-significance

Hence, 11-15 years of experienced teachers was significantly different from over 16 years of experienced teachers on the Structural Capital Factor.

(4) Teachers' Perception on the Positive Psychological Capital Factor that affects Experienced Teacher attrition

Respondents' rate on this factor in the strongly disagree scale as a cause to experienced teacher attrition was 19.58%. Disagree scale was 34.32% and Agree scale was 34.27%. And then, 11.04% of the respondents strongly agreed this factor and 0.79% missed to response.

According to table 10, Positive Psychological Factor had low inclination to become the root cause to experienced teacher attrition.

Table 10 Mean values and Standard Deviations of the Inclination of the Positive Psychological Capital Factor about Experienced Teacher Attrition based on Teachers' Perception (N= 291)

No.	Positive Psychological Capital Factor Items	Mean	SD
1.	Satisfaction in the workplace	2.61	0.77
2.	Rare enthusiasm in teaching	2.25	0.82
3.	Choosing the teaching profession without intrinsic motivation	2.04	0.87
4.	Resilience	2.20	0.82
5.	Commitment	1.91	0.88
6.	A tremendous wave of incentives from other professions	2.53	0.87
7.	Huge diffraction in benefits between public and private	2.85	0.86
	Overall Value	2.37	0.62

1.00-1.49 Very Low 1.50-2.49 Low 2.50-3.49 High 3.50-4.00 Very High

There were no significance difference between male and female teachers, and urban schools and rural schools, and senior and junior teachers' perception on this factor about experienced teacher attrition. And also, there was no significantly difference on the positive psychological factor grouped by Years of Experience.

(5) The Most Affecting Factors on Experienced Teacher Attrition based on Teachers' Perception

Human Capital Factor had 2.23 of 4 in mean value. Social Capital Factor had 2.48 of 4 in mean value. Structural Capital Factor has 2.93 of 4 in mean value, and Positive Psychological Capital Factor had 2.37 of 4 in mean value. Hence, Structural Capital Factor was the most affecting factor on experienced teacher attrition.

Findings from Open-ended Questions

Respondents ranked inadequate salary, excessive workloads and over necessary workloads (e.g., paperwork, procedures etc.) as in the priority level. Respondents ranked salary, reducing workloads, and having the chance for working near home as in the priority level for retention.

Findings from Interviews

The interviews focused on Human, Social, Structural and Positive Psychological Capital Factors about their perceived level of these factors' inclinations to attrition.

Human Capital Factor: Most of the teachers said that teaching experience and teacher training were enough but, some perceived that they could not be used in practice. Continuous professional development program were suitable for subject matter mastery. Some problems were inhibited to advance to career development but most of them could be overcome with negotiations. Others went for further studies to improve their skills and competences in anticipation for a better paying job.

Social Capital Factor: Some participants said that their principals had no enough management skills and could not control the school system. Some participants said that they got mutual negative competitions among colleagues rather than their support. Some respondents said that

recognition and community respect on teaching should be promoted by the State. Community respect and recognition was one of the most important causes for attrition. In gender issue, male teachers were more willing to quit out for family earnings. Long distance between home and school was not important for them. Family encumbrance problem is not quite difficult not only for females but also for males. But, it is not intended for family earnings and financial matters.

Structural Capital Factor: They commented that times had changed, the students were more difficult and teachers can no longer be expected to handle 30 or more students, like they once might have been able to do. Males are more prone to leave and transfer from profession than females. Some respondents want the pride of teaching profession rather than high salary. Other benefits were expected but they were easy if they won't have it. Matriculation exam made some teachers to worry for students' achievement. Bureaucratically, all procedures and orders should be given and performed with respect. To reduce urgent workloads, the plans, activities and procedures related with office works are not steady and cannot be predicted.

Positive Psychological Capital Factor: They have acceptable workplace and satisfy and can accept it. They showed off no serious impact of positive psychological capital factor for experienced teacher attrition. Some respondents said that there are little huge expectations for man teachers and the Government should be prepared for their family encumbrances.

Discussion

According to the findings, the overall mean value for human capital factor is 2.23. Teacher training and other professional program are somewhat enough for experienced teachers. But, age and health problem may attribute to attrition because most of the respondents are older than teachers with less years of experience and novice teachers. Rural teachers perceived human capital factor as a cause for attrition more than urban teachers. This may be possibility for training and professional development program are not reachable. 5-10 years of experienced teachers are more prone to leave than the other groups. Because they are more energized and they may face more inhibitions than the other group as in accordance with Grissmer & Kirby (1987).

The overall mean value for social capital factor is 2.48. The inclination of that factor to be a possible factor is low. In this factor, Teachers need principal expectations defined to decrease pressure and allow teachers to obtain school goals and administrative support is a key factor for teachers' decision to continue in teaching (Beaugez, 2012). In Avalos & Valenzuela (2016) s' research, degree of control and autonomy in class was a major cause for teacher satisfaction. In this research, it was not come to light.

Parents' interest and support are quite important for attrition. The rural region of targeted area is the high poverty area and so, parent interest is relatively small than urban region. Social recognition and respect on teaching is highly important for experienced teachers. Male teachers have higher mean value in that factor of declining recognition on teaching. In our targeted area, family responsibilities were less emphasized than family encumbrance. Distance between home and school was not quite being a problematic for attrition because the targeted area had only the schools that were situated in around 10 miles area. In comparison about family encumbrance, males are more prone to leave or transfer from profession. Hence, the social capital factor may contribute to experienced teacher attrition but it was not the root cause for attrition.

The overall mean value for structural capital factor was 2.93 and so, this inclination of this factor is high. Male teachers in this survey strongly agreed that salary for family

encumbrance as a root cause more than females. But, some were more proud of their decent life rather than high salary and is consistent with Karesnti & Collin (2103). And then, by the open-ended result, salary is the root cause for experienced teacher attrition in this research. Most of the participants were not far away from schools and so, housing and other temporary livings would not be needed for some. But, they thought health care and other financial support should be allowed to them. Hence, this factor may be one of the attrition factors. Workloads and over paperwork and procedural workloads seriously made experienced teacher attrition. Most of the schools were not balanced in student-teacher ratio. After adding the compulsory subjects combination, some triplets such as history, geography had lack of teachers and teachers were shared these subjects to teach. By these all issue, excessive workload put as second emphasized factor. 11-15 years of experienced teachers were mid-aged with capabilities, had huge alternatives ways to change career, and they were more experienced for family encumbrance and some were prone to higher ranks or other private sectors. Hence, structural capital factor is the most important factor to attrition.

The overall mean value for positive psychological capital factor was 2.37 and the inclination of this factor to be possible is low. Enthusiasm, intrinsic motivation, resilience and commitment were not lower because all teachers had chosen the teaching profession among the tremendous waves of other professions and jobs. This factor doesn't matter what the personal factors of participants would be. Hence, positive psychological factor was not the possible factor for experienced teacher attrition. As the root causes to experienced teacher attrition, salary, excessive workloads, and over paperwork and procedural works were mainly emphasized on the teachers' perception.

Recommendation

Based on the analyses of the survey, the following suggestions and recommendations were presented. To overcome the teaching difficulties, teachers should collaborate to perform the professional development activities. Teachers should be treated respectfully and teacher roles needed to be raised not only by teacher selves but also by the Nation Wide. Adequate salary is important for most teachers, neither it be; they could not withstand the incentives of other private and professions. Salary is the Republic Financial issue; even though salary cannot be raised for certain, other benefits should be kept in line with other departmental staffs. In schools, teacher-subject ratio, student-teacher ratio and teacher-teaching period ratio should be balanced. Office duties and procedural works should be used with the technology aided). The plans and procedures should be steady and urgent works should be minimized by the well-planned strategy and bureaucratic manners. Heads and colleagues need to build the satisfactory working environment even though the physical materials are not adequate. Community authorized personnel or organizations should be cooperated with the schools to support the schools. Parents' interest and cooperation is important and teachers should try to get it.

Need for Further Study

The followings are the needs for additional research. Further research should be done in other areas and in large especially for nation-wide. The policy makers should be added to explore the possible ways to retain teachers in further researches. It is mainly target on the senior and junior experienced teacher attrition; if so, primary experienced teachers and entry level teacher attrition should be investigate to capture the whole picture of attrition problem. School heads and

community personnel should be added to explore more reliable attrition factors. This research is based on current and former (leaver) teacher perceptions, so, further researches should be targeted more on former (leaver) teachers to get a sharp shoot.

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