

Challenges and Prospects of Teaching Home Economics in College of Education during Economic Recession Era: A Case Study of the Department of Home Economics, College of Education, Afaha Nsit

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Abstract

This paper examines the challenges and prospect of teaching home economics in College of Education Afaha Nsit. The study adopted descriptive survey design. The area of the study was Akwa Ibom State College of Education, Afaha Nsit. The population of the study was 10 lecturers. The study adopted purposive sample as the size of the respondents was of manageable size. The researchers designed a 20 item instrument on a four point rating scale to elicit information from the respondents. The instrument was validated by three experts, two from the Department of Home Economics University of Uyo and one from the Department of Measurement and Evaluation, College of Education Afaha Nsit, their comments and suggestions were used for the improvement of the final copy of the instrument. A test trial test with 12 lecturers in the Department of Home Economics, College of Education Akampa, Calabar, was used to obtain the reliability coefficient of the instrument. The data collected from the trial test was analysed using Cronbach Alpha statistical tool and a reliability coefficient of .82 was recorded. The questionnaire was distributed to the respondents and 100% return rate was possible. The data collected were analyzed using mean and the result revealed that the teaching of home economics has suffered a huge setback which includes poor funding for the college, lack of infrastructure, delay in payments of salary and other entitlements to staff, diversion of funds meant for teachers emolument to some other public activities. It was recommended that Akwa Ibom State Government should equip college of education Afaha Nsit with physical facilities, modern equipment and laboratories in the different areas of home economics. It was concluded that Akwa Ibom State College of Education Afaha Nsit should have a working relationship with industries where experts in Home economics could come in to share practical experiences with the students.

Keywords: Challenges, Economic recession, Education, Home Economics

Introduction

Home economics is one of the vocational subjects taught at both secondary and higher institutions in Nigeria and is a compulsory part of the curriculum in the secondary schools. It is taught as an integral core subject, which comprises food and nutrition, clothing and textile

and home management. The importance of exposing learners to home economics curriculum for individual and societal development has been widely acknowledged and revealed that the knowledge and skills gained with home economics make a considerable contribution to young people's personal and social development as well as prepare them for the world of works in a wide range of area. It provides learners with opportunities to develop knowledge and in both theoretical and practical aspects of livelihood (Federal Ministry of Education, 2012.) a strong background in home economics curriculums is crucial for many careers and job opportunities in today's increasingly technologically society.

In order to help the various areas and skills in home economics and to prepare Nigerian students for self-reliance, self-employment and self-independence after school, the Nigerian educational research and development council (NERDC, 2008) reviewed and reoriented its curriculum to have a broad scope that covers virtually all aspects of human daily living. According to the NERDC (2008) the reviewed upper basic home economics curriculum is built on the 9-year basic education philosophy that seeks to provide quality learning experiences and pay attention to the all-around development of the individuals. Among the aims of the curriculum is to provide students with changes in a technological, socio-economic and multi-cultural society, contemporary societal issues have been integrated in the curriculum more practical lessons are introduced, and lessons are organized in modules with specifications on a variety of instructional material including instructional technologies for teaching. It is expected that if properly implemented the curriculum would cater for a diverse range of students' abilities help the students to learn practical skills which would be useful to them in higher education or enable them get jobs in industries or other formal sectors of the economy.

The Home Economics Education programme is made up of vocations related to clothing and textiles, foods and nutrition, home management, family relationship and child development. The programme is constantly being subjected to change to meet up with the dynamic society. As it were, the world is constantly changing and individuals, families and communities are daily confronted with scientific challenges capable of affecting what should be the content of home economics education for societal advancement. Prior to this time, home economics education programme was to equip the individual with competencies to maintain family life. Presently the program is being faced with challenges for survival, unable to sustain relevance in the global economy. Home economics graduates also seem to be ill-equipped with practical skills to manage an enterprise. The entrepreneurship programme as a harmonizing programme was introduced into the universities in Nigeria to close some of these gaps. If properly implemented will definitely produce better graduates who can manage small of large scale businesses and be self-employed.

According to Meziobi (2013) entrepreneurship education is an educational process that creates in an individual the ability and skills to become self-reliant and overcome the dynamic challenges posed by the hash economy of the nation. Also Amadi (2012) in Ogbodo and Oraka (2017) see entrepreneurship skill acquisition as a process whereby a person acquires or learns a particular skill or type or behavior needed for business through training or education, Entrepreneurship education at all levels of education was a means of arresting the unfortunate phenomenon of unemployment. In line with the federal government, it is mandatory for all tertiary institutions to offer entrepreneurship at 100 and 200 levels.

Entrepreneurship skills as opined by Ayankoha (1991) are grouped into four they are: technical, business, management and personal. Technical involves skills of writing, communication, computer literacy. While occupational skills are skills such as sewing, hair dressing, laundering and baking. Business management skills include planning, goal setting, organizing controlling accounting, which are discipline, risk taking, imaginative creativity, visionary, commitment, enthusiasm, perseverance, confidence and social skills.

Skill acquisition to Awoyobi and Onyeukwu (2005) cited in Isibor (2011) is the learning and professional training acquired by an individual to enable him hold a job. Through repetition or practice in an occupation, skill becomes natural and helps the individual to function towards promoting economic development. Any government, who is able to give skills to its populace and ensures that the demand is matched with the supply, is heading towards technological development. The awareness and need for skill acquisition motivate entrepreneurial activities and lessen breakdown in the nation's monetary systems. Saleable skills acquired in the study of home economics is capable of equipping the graduate for self employment after graduating consequently, resulting to job creation. Therefore skill acquisition is necessary in the university for entrepreneurial actions.

Entrepreneurship skill acquisitions are trainings acquired by individual towards owing his or her own business. Skills acquired in the diverse areas in home economics education are the courses that student are exposed to which they can make careers from or earn a living. For instance, in the study of food and nutrition, graduates can establish and operate a restaurant, operate a day care centre, bake cakes and decorate them for sale, operate a poultry, knowledge from education will enable students to set up nursery, primary and secondary school, organize adult education classes for women with emphasis on teaching of occupational skills. In addition, students can make careers out of these home economics related courses; tie and dye, laundering work, hairdressing, manicure, pedicure, dress making, hat making, beadwork, production of drafted pattern, costume designing, dress making, tailoring, knitting/ crocheting and interior decoration. Others are fruit juice production, bread making and confectionaries. Others are poultry farming, general catering services to mention but a few.

According to Olaosebikan, (2011), the mission objectives of entrepreneurship education for the tertiary education in home economics education include:

1. Providing enriched training and teaching of high level skills in home economics vocations so that graduates from the programmes become self- reliant ; and
2. Providing the theoretical and practical knowledge in home economics occupations for enterprising economic development and stability.

Although the Akwa Ibom State Government has done a lot of sensitizations on the merit of acquisition skills yet the unemployment rate is still increasing. It is against this backdrop that the researcher wishes to look inward into the challenges students encounter in the acquisition of entrepreneurial skills in Home Economics. Some of the challenges are as follows:

The Challenge of Facilities/Infrastructure

One of the challenges under consideration in this study is the challenge emanating from the school. A very important unit in the school is the school library which is known to

be a strong determinant of purposeful education. Majority of the tertiary institutions may lack good libraries where good home economics books are stocked. The school laboratories and classrooms are expected to attain a good standard capable of having the impact expected. Nigerian power supply is epileptic and technology is about electricity, consequently facilities that need power to be functional may be underutilized. As it is, cost of fuelling generators is high and most public schools are unable to fund it. In addition, inadequate and obsolete equipment in schools are likely to have effect in skill acquisition. Due to such reasons most courses in the programme are taught theoretically. In an ideal practice, disciplines where skills are learnt would require that students should to be exposed to intensive practical work for proper skill mastery.

Students' Personal Challenge

Another challenge is the students' personal challenge. Majority of students in public universities are from middle social economic strata of the society, therefore may have difficulties with finance for purchasing learning materials. Such student may try to skip practical classes. As a result, such students will be poorly motivated to acquire the skills. In the same vein, at times students are poorly informed about the benefit of the discipline rather they will see it as stressful and expensive. Equally, some students have poor rate of class attendance, poor study habit and unserious with practical lessons, but rather they engage in rote learning to pass their examinations. They are after passing examinations to the next level without acquiring knowledge and skills. Similarly, some students are habitual late comers to lectures. Arubayi and Obanidike, (2011) noted that lateness to school is at the top of the list in the nature and frequency of students' indiscipline in schools, a habit detrimental to skill acquisition.

Home Economics Lecturers' Workload and required Competencies

Equally challenging to students are the lecturers teaching the course. Lecturers teaching home economics courses have a lot to do in the teaching of the skilled areas. Literature has it that a lot of lecturers handling practical courses do not demonstrate nor utilize modern instructional materials towards scientific teaching (Mba, 2003, Ogdodo & Oraka, 2017). Modern leaning systems are scientific innovations for instructional delivery if well utilized is able to arouse the interest of the students. They serve as aids for teachers, as well as help to attract students to learn. In the same vein, Okoro (2010) opined that a teacher cannot be said to be ready to implement a curriculum if he does not have the required competencies and the psychological impetus to deliver the lesson. A good home economics teacher must have the required strategy to impact adequate knowledge to properly train students. Thus, Uwameiye (2000) observed that the act of resorting to theoretical teaching of vocational subjects is a serious deviation from the principles of vocational and technical education which recognize the importance of workshop and laboratories to the teaching of the subject. Therefore, this is to confirm the saying that no educational system can ascend above the worth of its teachers.

Effective teaching to take place, the skillful teacher needs to use the many effective method and techniques effectively because in them his successes and failure depends. He further more emphasized that the success in the use of methods depends of the intelligent analysis of education purposes, pupil in the class and the curriculum content of the moment. A few moments reflection is sufficient to reveal that every society faces crucial issues and problems in education which have very serious Home Economics benefits that cannot be

overlooked easily for instance, the production of education as well as the acquisition of education both require the use of large quantities of scarce resources (production of education require conducive classrooms, administrative blocks, personal, librarians, laboratories of education require expenditures on tuition, books, travels, uniform, lodging etc and students time. Economic recession is generally known to be a period of decline in economic activities and is accompany by a drop in the stock market and increase in unemployment and a decline in the housing market (Chad, 2012). The National Bureau of Economy Research (NBER) defines a recession more broadly as a significant decline in economic activity spread across the economic, lasting more than a few months, normally visible in real GDP growth, real personal income, employment, industrial production and whole sale-retail sales. A recession begins when the economy reaches a peak of activity and ends when the economic reaches its trough (IMF, 2009).

From the above definitions, the recent economic crisis confronting the Nigerian governments has led to the non-payment of teachers' salary for several months with a resultant effect of teachers' demoralization, incessant strikes, protects and school closures. The reduction in government budgets for education to take care of other sectors would continue to worsen educational developments in sub-sahara region of Africa if education is not being given the required and needed attention. (Chari, 2004). There are three main types of education, namely, formal, informal and non-formal. Each of these types is discussed below, (Ladipo & Adamilekun, 2016).

Formal Education

Formal education or formal learning usually takes place in the premises of school, where a person may learn basic, academic or trade skills. Small children often attend a nursery or kindergarten but often formal education begins in elementary school and continues with secondary school. Post-secondary (or higher education) is usually at a college or University, which may grant an academic degree. It is associated with a specific or stage and is provided under the certain set of rules and regulations. The formal education is given by specially qualified teachers they are supposed to be efficient in the art of instruction. It also observes strict discipline. The student and the teacher both are aware of the facts and engage themselves in the process of education. Examples of formal education learning in a classroom school grading/Certification College, and university degrees planned education of different subjects having a proper syllabus, acquired by attending the institution (Devanshi, 2016).

Informal Education

Informal education may be a parent teaching a child how to prepare a meal or ride a bicycle. People can also get an informal education by reading many books from a library or educational websites. Informal education is when you are not studying in a school and do not use any particular learning method. In this type of education, conscious efforts are not involved. It is neither pre-planned nor deliberate. It may be learned at some market place, hotel or at home. Unlike formal education, informal education is not imparted by an institution such as school or college. Informal education is not given according to any fixe time table. There is no set curriculum required. Informal education consists of experiences and actually living in the family or community.

Example of Informal Education

Example of teaching the child at home some basics numeric characters is informal education. Someone learning his/her mother tongue, a spontaneous type of learning, if a person standing in a bank learns about opening and maintaining the account at the bank from some-one Akintoya (2008). Non-formal education: Someone (who is not in school) can learn literacy, other basic skills or job skills. Home education, individualized instruction (such as programmed learning), distance learning and computer assisted instruction are other possibilities. Non-formal education is imparted consciously and deliberately and systematically implemented. It should be organized for homogeneous groups.

Non-informal, education should be programmed to serve the needs of the International Journal of Sociology and Anthropology Research, Vol.5, No.2 pp 1-9, March 2019 –published by European Centre for Research Training and Development Uk (www.eajournals.org.) 3 print ISSN: 2059-1209, online ISSN:2059-1217 identified group. This will necessitate flexibility in the design of the curriculum and the scheme of evaluation (Oluwatobi, 2015).

Examples of Non-Information Education

Boy Scouts and girls Guides develop some sports program such as swimming comes under the non-informal education. Fitness programs, community-based adult education courses, free courses for adult education developed by some organisation. (Mbah, 2003.)

Education Funding Ideology in Nigeria

Previously, there had been educational funding ideology to determine whether education should be given free or the recipients should pay. The controversial issue here is that of deciding who benefits more from an individuals' education. Is it an individual or the society at large? If it is the society, that benefit more than the education of the citizen should be by public finance. Where is the fund to come from? If it is a matter of both the individual and the society benefiting equally, then how should the cost burden be shared between beneficiaries. This is a major problem for our rulers and the solution had often dependent on a balance between the political will of the electorates and, level of priority placed on education by each succeeding government. Collins (2012)

Causes of Economic Recession

Chad in business news daily of November 29th, 2012 gives the following as the causes of economic recession: war, high interest rates, poor fiscal power, rising in oil prices and bursting of housing thus:

1. War: In a country like Nigeria, the religious ward (Boko Haram Insurgency), tribal wars, Niger Delta restiveness, kidnapping are some of the related issues to war that affect the country's economic growth in Nigeria.
2. High Interest Rates: Most banks in Nigeria charge exorbitant interest rates of double digits (26 -27%) this discourages investment in the country especially, the foreign investors. The Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) is doing little or nothing to salvage the situation.
3. Poor Fiscal Powers: Unending poor implementation of set programmes that have to do with economic-development and even when steps are taken, corruption takes the day at the detriment of less-privilege where perpetrators go scot free.
4. Rising in Oil Price: Though this is global issue, but the Nigerian government has failed to save for the rainy days. This has also post a problem to the economy.

5. **Bursting of Housing:** Only a few Nigerians can burst of where to put their heads and even if there is any, majority live in overcrowded apartments, besides dilapidated structures with very poor social amenities.

National Bureau of Economy Research (NBER) gives inflation as the main cause of recession. Inflation refers to general rise in the prices of goods and services over a period of time. This can be said to lead to recession. Unemployment rate rises because companies lay off workers, to cut cost, when combined with inflation according to NBER, leads to economy recession, Noko (2017)

Effects of Economic Recession on Education in Nigeria

It is unfortunate that the educational system in Nigeria is not left out of the heat of the economic recession especially when government owned institutions are shielded under the guise of TSA (treasure single account), which leads to shortfalls in the payment of teachers – lecturers salaries, non-payment of annual increment and accumulated promotion arrears for many years, poor infrastructure, among other factors would definitely cause a lot of harm to the sector. Telvan (2012)

For this reason, majority of parents and stakeholders are afraid of poor quality delivery services in this sector as majority of them cannot afford their children’s school fees. Most especially those parents whose wards attend private schools are left with no option than to withdraw them to public schools. But are the public school save or better?

Shafiq (2010:p.4) opines that: “research on school quality in developing countries is challenging because formal data collection initiatives on schools are typically infrequent.” This is a fact about Nigeria because millions of children roam the streets during school hours and both government and parents give little attention because they can’t cater for the academic needs of these innocent children. Shafiq (2010)

Furthermore, it is pertinent to note that economic crisis has drastically affected the education sector. Parents/guardian and teachers have their purchasing power dropped and as a result, it has affected the purchase of books and educational materials and the exodus of learners from more expensive schools to less expensive ones since parents can no longer afford it. There is also the reduction in recruitment of teachers and other personnel needed for effective education curriculum delivery and massive where parents cannot afford payment. Poor learning environment as it is not conducive due to schools under funding. Undoubtedly, lack of funds stands out as the number one problem in teaching and learning. In view of this, most institutions are left with no option rather than to source for funds to maximize whatever has been given (Ojameruaye, 2017).

Nonetheless, due to global economic crisis, the high prices of teaching equipment and materials make them out of reach to most institutions in view of the high rate of foreign exchange brought about by the unfavourable economic situations. It is also evident that the government also suffers from the same crises as they find it difficult to release grant, payment of workers (teachers) allowances, purchase of books, subscription for journals needed for effective education curriculum delivery, staff training through workshops, conferences and seminar as well as the rate of renovation of dilapidated buildings. The rate of unemployment in Nigeria is upsetting, the pace of scientific and technological advancement is slowed down, the improvement and solution on environmental problems for the use and convenience of man becomes elusive. All these point to the economic crisis in the nation which needs to be tackled. Bamigboye, Ede & Adeyemi (2016).

Statement of the Problem

Education is the foundation of National, socio-economic and even political development quality of citizens' level of education would determine the level of national progress. Nigerian education is plagued with multidimensional problems, ranging from poor funding, misappropriation of allocated funds, dilapidated and inadequate infrastructure, none functional curricular and obsolete instructional methods.

It must be noted here that the Western Regional Government of Nigeria under Chief Obafemi Awolowo invested over 50% of its annual budget on education. This definitely explains the developmental edge the south western region of Nigeria has had over the other regions to date. Nations such as Japan, Korea and China all have histories of heavy investment into education.

It can be argued that the present administration may not be sincere in its promise of "heavy" investment into education on two levels; first, it has consistently earmarked only a paltry percentage of the annual budget to education. Secondly, education is literally placed last on the listing of the seven points on the 7-Point Agenda. Realistically, given the present state of education in Nigeria, government would do well to declare a state of emergency in the education sector.

There is the challenge of incessant strikes by teaching and non-teaching personnel in all the three tiers to education. This may perhaps not be unconnected with generalized poor working conditions and the ongoing drain of our best human resources since the 1980s to date. This paper therefore examines the challenges and prospects of economic recession on the teaching of home economics education in College of Education with the view to making recommendations that will better improve the subject for the present and future generations.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study is to examine the challenges and prospects of teaching home economics in College of Education, Afaha Nsit, in Akwa Ibom State. The study will specifically address the following.

1. Identify the challenges of economic recession on the teaching of home economics education in the study area.
2. What are the ways of improving the teaching of Home Economics in the colleges of education

Research Questions

1. What are the challenges of economic recession on the teaching of Home Economics?
2. What are the ways of improving the teaching of Home Economics in college of education?

Methodology

The study adopted descriptive survey design. The area of the study was Akwa Ibom State College of Education, Afaha Nsit, specifically, in the Department of Home Economics. The population of the study was 10 lecturers. The study adopted purposive sample as the size of the respondent was of manageable size. The researchers designed a 20 item instrument on a four point rating scale of: Strongly agree (SA =4), Agreed (A=3), Disagree (DA =2), strongly disagree (SD =1), to elicit information from the respondents. The instrument was validated by three experts, two from the Department of Home Economics University of Uyo and one from the Department of Measurement and Evaluation, College of Education Afaha Nsit, their comments and suggestions were used for the improvement of the final copy of the

instrument. A test trial test with 12 lecturers in the Department of Home Economics, College of Education Akampa, Calabar, was used to obtain the reliability coefficient of the instrument. The choice of College of Education Akampa was needful as they operate the same curriculum from the National Council of Colleges of Education, and are within the same geopolitical zone and may face the same situation and challenges as the College is also a State College. The data collected from the trial test was analysed using Cronbach Alpha statistical tool and a reliability coefficient of .82 was recorded. The questionnaire was distributed to the respondents and 100% return rate was possible. . The data collected were analyzed using mean.

Data Presentation and Findings

Data was presented based on research questions.

Research Question 1: What are the challenges of economic recession on the teaching of Home Economics?

Table 1: Challenges of economic recession on the teaching of Home Economics

S/N	Items on challenges of economic recession on the teaching of Home Economics	\bar{X}	Remarks
1	Methods utilized for Home Economics Education course are uninteresting	3.67	Agreed
2	Lecturers do not utilize modern learning facilities to teach	3.33	Agreed
3	Lecturers utilizes lecture method to teach practical courses	3.67	Agreed
4	Lecturers do not come to lectures regularly	3.67	Agreed
5	Lecturers attitude towards practical classes is not encouraging	3.33	Agreed
6	There is shortage of lectures teaching home economics educations	3.67	Agreed
7	Most lecturers teaching are not qualified in teach Home Economics Education.	3.67	Agreed
8	The time allotted for practical are inadequate	3.67	Agreed
9	No good light system to empower available facilities	3.80	Agreed
10	Facilities are not available for teaching and learning	3.40	Agreed
Grand total		3.55	

Results in Table 1, shows that all the 10 items listed have mean responses above 2.50 implying that all the respondents agreed on all the items identified as challenges of economic recession on the teaching of Home Economics.

Research Question 2 What are the ways of improving the teaching of Home Economics in the College of Education?

Table 2: improving the teaching of Home Economics in the Colleges of Education

S/N	Items for ways of improving the educational sector in the study area	\bar{X}	Remark
1	Government funding on educational section must be given a high priority	3.67	Agreed
2	Proper implementation of curriculum would cater for a diverse range of students to abilities, help the students to learn practical skills	3.40	Agreed
3	Prompt payment of lecturers' salary must be taken seriously	3.53	Agreed
4	Lecturers training and retraining should be done often in order to boost lecturers morale.	3.50	Agreed
5	Promotion of lecturers should be handled when necessary	3.50	Agreed
6	Adequate infrastructural facilities are essential for conducive learning atmosphere.	3.57	Agreed
7	Supply of adequate teaching equipment to schools should be done promptly	3.27	Agreed
8	More public awareness must be created on the importance of education to enlighten parents	3.63	Agreed
9	Adequate recruitment of qualified teachers and lecturers and other personnel needed	3.40	Agreed
10	Construction of new buildings and renovation of dilapidated structures must be considered	3.67	Agreed
Grand total		3.54	

The result in Table 2 shows that all the ten items have mean responses above 2.50 which imply that the respondents agreed on all the items identified as ways of imploring the teaching of Home Economics in the College of Education.

Discussion of Findings

The result of the analysis shows that, the irregular payment of teachers' salaries has dampened their morals which at the long run hindered their ability to effectively discharge their duties. In addition, respondents agreed that teachers' salaries have been diverted to cater for other sector of public needs. Therefore it was noted that due to budget cut, the recruitment of new teachers and lecturers has taken a downward turn which eventually created more burden for the few available teachers to handle large classes. Renovation and building of new infrastructures slowdown in pace which made learning atmosphere to be non-conducive for effective learning. The budget allocation reduction has also culminated in

inadequate supply of equipment for qualitative education. This result is in agreement with Chari (2004) indicated that “The Nigerian education sector is in dire straits and requires both public and private sector intervention, if the country is to fulfill its potential as not only a regional power house, but as a global player.”

Conclusion

The current rate of unemployment in Nigeria is alarming and there is need to address the challenges encountered by lecturers in imparting skills in Home Economics education in colleges. With these major challenges, graduates cannot be self-reliant. Be it as it may, the introduction of Home economics into school system was to close this gap and equip students with business ideas to run their own enterprise hence, Akwa Ibom State College of Education Afaha Nsit should have a working relationship with industries where experts in Home economics could come in to share practical experiences with the students.

Recommendations

1. Akwa Ibom State Government should equip college of education Afaha Nsit with physical facilities, modern equipment and laboratories in the different areas of home economics.
2. Instructor in the college should be trained, and retrained to be updated with new skills, new methodology and technology in the area of entrepreneurship and Home Economics teaching and learning.
3. The Rectors of the College should with serious drive encourage internally generated revenue in the various Departments of Home Economics as government cannot fund education in the face of the economic recession.
4. Akwa Ibom State College of Education Afaha Nsit should have a working relationship with industries where experts in Home economics could come in to share practical experiences with the students.
5. The Akwa Ibom State Government should invest on research work carried out in the field of Home Economics to open new areas for entrepreneurship education and skill acquisition. These steps will not only lead to enforcement of entrepreneurial skills among the unemployed but also make the field of home economics more interesting for the students.

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