

# The Role of Employee Engagement as a Mediation of The Relationship Between Psychological Empowerment and Human Resource Practices on Job Satisfaction

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## Abstract

This research aims to analyze the relationship between psychological empowerment and human resource practice with job satisfaction mediated by employee engagement. The respondents in this study were all educational staff at a private college in Padang City, Indonesia, which numbered as many as 130 employees using census techniques. Data collection method using a questionnaire with measurement of research variables using a survey questionnaire based on the Likert-5 scale. The data analysis model in this study was tested using SmartPLS software version 4.0.9.5. Research findings show that psychological empowerment affects employee engagement, psychological empowerment affects job satisfaction, and human resource practice affects job satisfaction. Human resource practices have no influence on employee engagement. Employee engagement have no influence on job satisfaction. Employee engagement does not mediate the relationship between psychological empowerment and job satisfaction. Employee engagement does not mediate the relationship between human resource practice and job satisfaction.

**Keywords:** job satisfaction; employee engagement; psychological empowerment; human resource practices

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## Introduction

The empowerment of human resources in an organization is very important, especially in organizations that deal directly with the public, such as higher education institutions. The achievement of good organizational performance is inseparable from the quality of quality human resources so that they can improve performance for the better and so that the quality of services provided can provide satisfaction to the general public.

Organizations engaged in the education services sector must continue to improve their performance in accordance with scientific developments and current regulatory demands, such as the university ranking policy, which is assessed annually, and the program "Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka".

A tertiary institution requires reliable and competent human resources to be able to adapt to change and develop in a sustainable manner. Higher education performance cannot be separated from the role of educators (lecturers) and educational staff in achieving organizational goals.

The success of tertiary institutions depends on the organization's efforts to empower their educational staff so that they can be professional in carrying out their duties and functions. The empowerment of educational staff carried out by tertiary institutions will have an impact on increasing job satisfaction.

Job satisfaction is a phenomenon that is the focus of educational staff so that it can influence the provisions of the directions and policies that have been set by the organization. The observation results show that one of the causes of low job satisfaction is changes in employee status and career.

Empirical research related to job satisfaction has been widely carried out before. However, a series of studies have explained the variables that affect job satisfaction in an organization, such as psychological empowerment, human resource practices, and employee engagement.

A number of research results conclude that psychological empowerment has an influence on job satisfaction (Singh & Singh, 2019; Qing et al., 2019; Maan et al., 2020, Alagarsamy et al., 2020). Another variable that can affect job satisfaction is human resource practices (Hewagama et al., 2019; Pradhan et al., 2019; Alsafadi & Altahat, 2021; Almutairi & Arabiat, 2021; Emilisa, 2023). Apart from psychological empowerment and human resource practices, there are other variables that influence job satisfaction, namely employee engagement (Alagarsamy et al., 2020; Humayon, 2022; Nguyen & Ha, 2023; Ibrahim et al., 2023).

There is still very limited previous research that considers or places the employee engagement variable as a mediator, especially between psychological empowerment and human resource practices. Generally, these previous studies used hotel and industry service sector organizations as their research objects. In other words, there is still relatively limited research on organizations in the education sector, especially in the education sector, which is managed by the private sector in the city of Padang.

## **Literature Review**

### **Job Satisfaction**

Job satisfaction (JS) is the variable studied in this study, which acts as an endogenous (Y) variable. Job satisfaction is a level of pleasant feelings obtained from evaluating one's work or work experience that reflects how a worker feels about his job and what he thinks about his job (Colquitt, et al, 2011). Meanwhile, to measure job satisfaction, there are five dimensions: the work itself, the relationship with superiors and co-workers, promotions, and salary and wages (Colquitt, et al, 2011).

### **Employee Engagement**

Employee Engagement (EE) is the variable studied in this study that acts as a mediating variable. Employee engagement is a situation when employees are involved in all organizational activities by showing positive attitudes and behaviors while working (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). Employee engagement can be seen from three indicators: enthusiasm, dedication, and absorption (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004).

### **Psychological Empowerment**

Psychological Empowerment (PE) is the variable studied in this study, which acts as the independent variable (X). Psychological empowerment is a situation where employees find an understanding of the work they do with the abilities and skills they have (Spreitzer, 1995). Psychological empowerment is influenced by four indicators, namely meaning, competence, self-determination, and influence (Spreitzer, 1995).

### **Human Resources Practice**

Human resource practice (HRP) is a series of philosophies, policies, systems, and practices that can influence the behavior, attitudes, and performance of employees as the main drivers of organizational success (Noe, et al., 2010). Human resource practices are seen through four indicators: training and development, career development, compensation and benefits, and employee performance appraisal (Delery & Doty, 1996).

## **Hypothesis Development**

### **The Effect of Psychological Empowerment on Employee Engagement**

Employees who have psychological empowerment can feel the importance of work and the ability to make decisions at work, so as to increase satisfaction and reduce pressure and stress, which in turn creates employee engagement (Ni, 2017). An empirical study conducted by Do et al. (2020), Alagarsamy et al., (2020), and Nwachukwu et al., (2022) states that psychological empowerment has a positive and significant

relationship to employee engagement. The hypothesis of this first relationship is that psychological empowerment has a positive effect on employee engagement.

### **The Effect of Human Resource Practices on Employee Engagement**

Employee engagement has become one of the most important topics in management for both scholars and practitioners. This is not surprising given the strong evidence that employee engagement is strongly related to employee attitudes, behavior, performance, and well-being (Saks, 2022). Research results from Pradhan et al., (2019), Tensay & Singh, (2020), Vuong & Sid, (2020), Djatmiko, et al., (2020), Jose et al., (2022), and (Saks, 2022) have tested the relationship between human resource practices and employee engagement, the results of which show that there is a positive and significant relationship. The hypothesis of this second relationship is that human resource practices have a positive effect on employee engagement.

### **The Effect of Psychological Empowerment on Job Satisfaction**

Psychological empowerment has a significant impact on individuals and organizations. Psychological empowerment refers to a situation when employees have an understanding of the work they are doing and the abilities and skills they have (Spreitzer, 2008). Research results from Qing et al., (2019), Maan et al., (2020), and Alagarsamy et al., (2020) stated that psychological empowerment has a positive and significant effect on job satisfaction. The hypothesis of this third relationship is that psychological empowerment has a positive effect on job satisfaction.

### **The Effect of Human Resource Practices on Job Satisfaction**

The human resources practice function includes many practices such as training and development, rewards, job analysis, recruitment

and selection, employee relations, employee empowerment, and social support. All of these human resource practices must be built to achieve high levels of worker satisfaction and performance (Dessler, 2006; Albrecht et al., 2015). The research results of Hewagama et al., (2019), Pradhan et al., (2019), Alsafadi & Altahat, (2021), and Emilisa, (2023) found that there is a significant relationship between human resource practice and job satisfaction. The hypothesis of this fourth relationship is that human resource practices have a positive effect on job satisfaction.

### **The Effect of Employee Engagement on Job Satisfaction**

Employee engagement is needed to increase productivity, performance, and job satisfaction (Brunetto et al., 2012). Empirical studies conducted by Alagarsamy et al., (2020), Noercahyo et al., (2021), Humayon, (2022), Nguyen & Ha, (2023), and Ibrahim et al., (2023) state that the relationship between empowerment and job satisfaction can have a positive and significant effect on job satisfaction. The hypothesis of this fifth relationship is that employee engagement has a positive effect on job satisfaction.

### **The Effect of Employee Engagement on the Relationship Between Psychological Empowerment and Job Satisfaction**

Employee engagement can be positively achieved in combination with psychological empowerment of employees to result in higher job satisfaction. (Choi et al., 2016). The research results of Al-Ababneh et al., (2017), LI Shuangchen, (2020), dan Alagarsamy et al., (2020) concluded that there is a relationship between psychological empowerment and job satisfaction mediated by employee engagement. The hypothesis of this sixth relationship is that employee engagement mediates the relationship between psychological empowerment and job satisfaction.

## The Effect of Employee Engagement on the Relationship Between Human Resource Practices and Job Satisfaction

Human resource practices through employee engagement are expected to increase employee energy levels, which in turn increase morale and motivation and generate feelings of satisfaction (Pradhan et al., 2019). The results of research by Pradhan et al., (2019), Alsafadi & Altahat, (2021) dan Almutairi & Arabiat, (2021) state that there is a relationship between human resource practices and job satisfaction mediated by employee engagement. The hypothesis of this seventh relationship is that employee engagement mediates the relationship between human resource practices and job satisfaction.

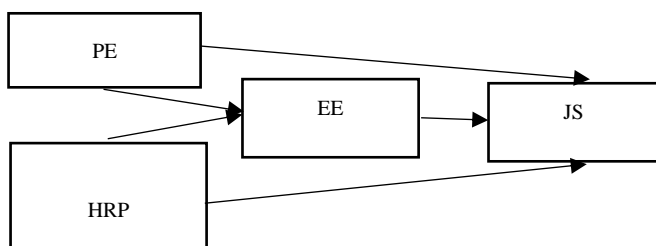


Figure 1. Theoretical Framework

## Methods

This type of research used a quantitative research approach with a causal relationship with 130 education staff at private tertiary institutions in the city of Padang, Indonesia. The sampling method in this study is saturated or census sampling (Sugiyono, 2014) The data collection method uses a questionnaire (Istijanto, 2005). Measurement of research variables using a research questionnaire based on a Likert-5 scale (Arikunto, 2006).

Job satisfaction is measured by 12 statement items adapted from Colquitt, et al, (2011). Employee engagement is measured using 11 statement items developed by Schaufeli & Bakker,

(2004). Psychological empowerment is measured by 12-item statements adopted from Spreitzer (1995). Human resource practice measured 14 item statements made by Delery & Doty, (1996).

The data obtained was transferred to Microsoft Excel and then processed using the Smart PLS program version 4.0.9.5 based on Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). Evaluation of the measurement model consists of two parts, namely convergent validity and discriminant validity. First, Convergent validity, there are four parts that can be assessed, namely the Outer Loading value  $> 0.7$  (Bagozzi & Yi, 1988; Hulland, 2020), Cronbach Alpha (CA) value  $> 0.7$  (Bagozzi & Yi, 1988), Composite Reliability (CR) value  $> 0.7$  (Bagozzi & Yi, 1988), Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value  $> 0.5$  (Bagozzi & Yi, 1988). Both discriminant validity, the method used is the Fornell-Larcker criterion method (Fornell and Larcker, 1981), the cross loading method (Bagozzi & Yi, 1988), and the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio/HTMR matrix (Henseler *et al.*, 2015).

The two discriminant values The researcher conducted an inner model analysis by looking at the R-square value (R<sup>2</sup>) or the goodness-fit model test based on Hair, et al (2014) to find out the magnitude of the contribution of exogenous variables to endogenous variables and looking for the extent to which respondents' responses to the statements questionnaire distributed using the level of respondent achievement (TCR).

After the data is valid, a bootstrapping test is then carried out to determine the causal interaction of direct and indirect effects through the research antecedent variables (Ghozali dan Latan, 2015). The results of the hypothesis testing in this study can be seen through the T-statistics value of  $> 1.96$  and the P-value of 0.05 (Hair, et al., 2014). To test the mediating effect, the method developed by Zhao, et al (2010) was carried out

Table 1. Validity and Reliability Test Results

No	Variabel	Cronbach's Alpha (CA)	Composite Reliability (CR)	AVE	Result
1	Job Satisfaction	0,879	0,905	0,576	Valid and Reliable
2	Employee Engagement	0,923	0,937	0,650	Valid and Reliable
3	Psychological Empowerment	0,853	0,890	0,576	Valid and Reliable
4	Human Resource Practice	0,944	0,951	0,618	Valid and Reliable

Source : Processed data with Smart PLS Software (2023)

## Results and Discussion

### Description of Research Data and Identity

Questionnaires were distributed directly to respondents, who all returned them and analyzed them. The number of respondents was dominated by 93 male employees (71.54%) and 37 female employees (28.46%).

Furthermore, in terms of age, the majority of respondents were aged between 20 and 30 years, namely as many as 41 people (31.54%), followed by respondents aged 41 to 50 years, as many as 36 people (27.69%). Based on the status of the respondents, the majority were married—as many as 97 people (74.62%), followed by respondents with unmarried status—as many as 30 people (23.08%), and the status of divorced respondents—as many as 3 people (2.31%).

Furthermore, from the last education, the majority of respondents completed Bachelor (S1) education, as many as 44 people (33.85%), followed by high school graduates, as many as 61 people (46.92%), Diploma 3 graduates (DIII), as many as 10 people (7.69%), and there are still junior and elementary school graduates, as many as 7 people (5.38%) and 6 people (4.62%). Finally, there were 2 master's graduates (1.54%).

### Validity and Reliability

In this test, 2 stages were carried out and the results obtained showed that all variables had an outer loading value of  $> 0.7$  so that they fulfilled the specified conditions.

The variable of job satisfaction has a CA value of  $0.879 > 0.7$ , a CR value of  $0.905 > 0.7$ , and

an AVE value of  $0.576 > 0.5$ . The three results of the analysis have fulfilled the specified conditions. The employee engagement variable has a CA value of  $0.923 > 0.7$ , a CR value of  $0.937 > 0.7$ , and an AVE value of  $0.650 > 0.5$ . The three results of the analysis have fulfilled the specified conditions. The psychological empowerment variable has a CA value of  $0.853 > 0.7$ , a CR value of  $0.890 > 0.7$ , and an AVE value of  $0.576 > 0.5$ . The three results of the analysis have fulfilled the specified conditions. For the human resource practice variable, it has a CA value of  $0.944 > 0.7$ , a CR value of  $0.951 > 0.7$ , and an AVE value of  $0.618 > 0.5$ . The three results of the analysis have fulfilled the specified conditions.

Discriminant validity shows the uniqueness of the construct from other constructs. The results of the discriminant validity test using the Fornell-Larcker Criterion method show that the correlation score for each variable is greater than the correlation. Thus, it can be concluded that the results of the analysis using the Fornell-Larcker criterion method have fulfilled the required rule of thumb (Fornell and Larcker 1981).

The results of the discriminant validity test with the Cross Loading method show that all statement items used to measure a variable have a greater correlation coefficient with each construct than the coefficient values of the items in the construct block in the other columns. (Fornell and Larcker 1981).

The results of the discriminant validity test with the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio method showed that all correlation values for each variable

were below 0.85, so that the three constructs had good discriminant validity values (Henseler, et al, 2015).

### Coefficient of Determination (R-Square)

The R-square value for the job satisfaction variable is 0.438, which means that the magnitude of the influence of psychological empowerment and human resource practices on job satisfaction is 43.8% or is included in the weak category (Hair et al., 2014).

Furthermore, the R-square of employee engagement is 0.423, which means that the magnitude of the influence of psychological empowerment, human resource practices, and job satisfaction on employee engagement is 42.3% and is included in the weak category (Hair et al., 2014).

Then, the Q-square value on the job satisfaction variable is 0.404, which shows the results fall into the strong category (Hair et al., 2014). This can be interpreted as meaning that the ability of psychological empowerment variables and human resource practices to predict job satisfaction variables is included in the strong category.

For the Q-square value on the employee engagement variable of 0.394, which shows the results fall into the strong category (Hair et al., 2014). This shows that the ability of the variables of psychological empowerment, human resource

practices, and job satisfaction to predict employee engagement is in the strong category.

### Hypothesis Test

Hypothesis testing can be done using the bootstrapping method on the Smart PLS statistical test program. The Bootstrapping test results are:

Table 2. R-square and Q-square Results

Variabel	R-square	Q-square
Job Satisfaction	0,438	0,404
Employee Engagement	0,423	0,394

### Discussion

#### The Effect of Psychological Empowerment on Employee Engagement

The bootstrapping results show that the effect of psychological empowerment on employee engagement has an original sample value of 0.6434, a T-statistic value of 8,820, which is greater than 1.96, and a P-value of 0.000, which is less than 0.05, so that it can be concluded that Hypothesis 1 (H1) is declared accepted.

The results of this study are in line with the results of an empirical study by Do et al. (2020), Alagarsamy et al. (2020), and Nwachukwu et al. (2022), which show that psychological empowerment has a positive relationship with and has a significant effect on employee engagement.

Table 3. Descriptive Statistic

Hypothesis	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation	T- Statistik	P- Values	Result
PE -> EE	0,634	0,638	0,072	8,820	0,000	Accepted
HRP -> EE	0,038	0,032	0,070	0,545	0,586	Rejected
PE -> JS	0,194	0,195	0,080	2,428	0,015	Accepted
HRP -> JS	0,532	0,545	0,072	7,354	0,000	Accepted
EE -> JS	0,058	0,052	0,083	0,705	0,481	Rejected
PE -> EE -> JS	0,037	0,033	0,053	0,691	0,489	Rejected
HRP -> EE -> JS	0,002	0,003	0,007	0,303	0,762	Rejected

Source: Processed data with Smart PLS Software (2023)

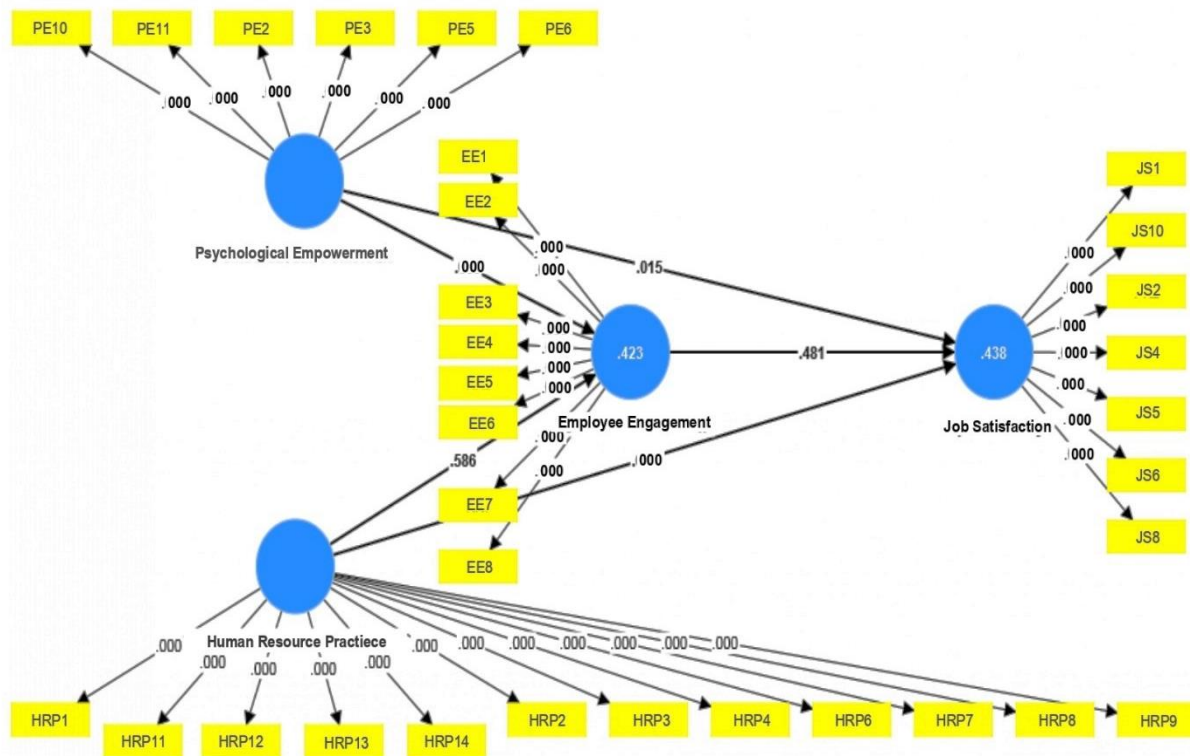


Figure 2. Bootstrapping Results

### Effect of Human Resource Practices on Employee Engagement

The bootstrapping results show that the effect of human resource practices on employee engagement has an original sample value of 0.038, a T-statistic value of 0.545, which is smaller than 1.96, and a P-value of 0.586, which indicates greater than 0.05, so it can be concluded that Hypothesis 2 (H2) was declared rejected.

These results are in line with research findings from Zulfqar Ahmad Bowra (2012), Nugrohoseno (2019), and Avianto et al. (2019), who concluded that human resource practices do not have a direct and insignificant impact on engagement.

### The Effect of Psychological Empowerment on Job Satisfaction

The bootstrapping results show that psychological empowerment on job satisfaction has an original sample value of 0.194, a T-statistic value of 2.428, which is greater than 1.96, and a P-value of 0.015, which indicates less than 0.05, so

that it can be concluded that Hypothesis 3 (H3) is declared acceptable.

The results of this study are in line with the results of research by Singh & Singh (2019), Qing et al. (2019), Maan et al. (2020), and Alagarsamy et al. (2020), which state that psychological empowerment has a positive relationship and significantly influences job satisfaction.

### The Effect of Human Resource Practices on Job Satisfaction

The bootstrapping results show that the effect of human resource practices on job satisfaction has an original sample value of 0.532, a T-statistic value of 7.354, which is greater than 1.96, and a P-value of 0.000, which indicates less than 0.05, so it can be concluded that the hypothesis 4 (H4) has been declared accepted.

The results of this study are in line with the results of research by Pradhan et al. (2019), Alsafadi & Altahat (2021), Almutairi & Arabiat (2021), and Emilisa (2023), which found that there is a positive and significant effect of human resource practices on job satisfaction.

### **The Effect of Employee Engagement on Job Satisfaction**

The bootstrapping results show that the effect of employee engagement on job satisfaction has an original sample value of 0.058 with a T-statistic value of 0.705, which is smaller than 1.96, and a P-value of 0.481, which indicates greater than 0.05, so that it can be concluded that Hypothesis 5 (H5) is declared rejected

This is in line with research findings from Tambariki et al. (2019), Atthohiri & Wijayati (2021), and Soleh (2022), which found that employee engagement has a positive but not significant effect on job satisfaction.

### **The Effect of Employee Engagement on the Relationship Between Psychological Empowerment and Job Satisfaction**

The bootstrapping results show that the effect of employee engagement as a mediator between psychological empowerment and job satisfaction has an original sample value of 0.037, a T-statistic value of 0.691, which is greater than 1.96, and a P-value of 0.489, which indicates greater than 0.05, so that it can be concluded that Hypothesis 6 (H6) was declared rejected.

Based on the mediation effect test proposed by Zhao et al. (2010), it shows that the results of the Structural Model Assessment for testing the H6 hypothesis show that the indirect effect of the T-statistic value and the P-value is not significant.

### **The Effect of Employee Engagement on the Relationship Between Human Resource Practices and Job Satisfaction**

The bootstrapping results show that the effect of employee engagement as a mediation between human resource practices and job satisfaction has an original sample value of 0.002 with a T-statistic value of 0.303 which is greater than 1.96 and a P-value of 0.762 which indicates greater than 0.05 so that it can it was concluded that Hypothesis 7 (H7) was declared rejected.

Thus, based on testing the mediating effect proposed by Zhao, et al (2010) shows that the results of the Structural Model Assessment for testing the H7 hypothesis show that the effect of the indirect effect of the T-statistic value and the P-value is not significant.

### **Conclusions**

This study proves that psychological empowerment has an effect on employee engagement with education staff, human resource practices have no effect on employee engagement with staff, psychological empowerment has an effect on job satisfaction on education personnel, human resource practices have an effect on job satisfaction on staff, employee engagement has no effect on job satisfaction in Education Personnel, employee engagement does not mediate the relationship between psychological empowerment and job satisfaction in Education personnel, and employee engagement does not mediate the relationship between human resource practices and job satisfaction in Education Personnel.

Practical implications that can be given to organizations are the need for encouragement from organizations to overcome dissatisfaction that occurs, such as coaching career paths and work assignments, competency training, and rewards. It is expected to increase job satisfaction among education staff, which can have an impact on improving performance. Organizations must focus on cultivating a work environment that supports employees and keeps them motivated, not only about the job but also about the organization as a whole.

Organizations can seek to increase the meaning of the importance of work for individuals and see the effect of employee involvement on their unit so that employees who have a high level of psychological empowerment feel they have more competent abilities, so as to make employees more satisfied with their jobs and have high organizational commitment.



Organizations can hold that human resource development needs to be done for all employees. If the organization is able to improve human resource practices, it will increase employee productivity and motivation, which, in the end, will benefit the organization in the future.

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