



**UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA**

**RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LIFESTYLE AND JOB PREFERENCE  
AMONG YOUTHS IN MARGINALIZED COMMUNITIES IN MALAYSIA**

**ELIZABETH WONG ZU YEE**

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By

**ELIZABETH WONG ZU YEE**

**Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia, in  
Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Science**

**November 2018**

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## DEDICATION

*I would like to dedicate this work to all my loved ones.*



Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Science

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**November 2018**

**Chairman : Associate Professor Hamisah Binti Hasan, PhD**  
**Faculty : Modern Languages and Communication**

Employment in Malaysia is often set back by the educational and job mismatched. Youth unemployment is basically because of the mismatched between their qualifications to that the job market needs. Based on the Expectancy Theory that focused on job behavior and decision making the study was conducted with the general objective to examine the lifestyles of youth in the marginalized community and its relationship to their job preferences. Specifically the study was conducted to examine, i) to examine the lifestyles of youth in the marginalized community, ii) to examine the job preferences of youth in the marginalized community, iii) to identify the relationship between the lifestyle of youth in the marginalized community and preferences to working in the public organization, iv) to identify the relationship between the lifestyle of youth in the marginalized community and working in the private organization, v) to analyse the most significant factor of lifestyles that affects job preferences.

A survey using a set of questionnaire as the instrument for data collection were distributed to 510 respondents mainly in the area of Kerinchi, Seri Kembangan and Klang. The Stratified Sampling Technique was conducted to sample the respondents for the study.

The finding of the study shows that the lifestyles of youth affected their job preferences and that they have the tendency to prefer to work in the public organization. However, though the youths in the marginalized community prefer to work in the public organization, based on the lifestyles they are practicing, it leads them to work in the private organization. In terms of the lifestyle domains and the relationship with job preferences, religious and community activities, as well as physical and vocational activities showed a positive relationship towards job preferences of youth in the public organization. On the contrary, religious and community activities, physical and

vocational activities as well as highbrow activities showed a positive relationship towards job preferences of youth in the private organization. This can be explained that the marginalized youths were not really involved in media related organizations even though they were engaged in media lifestyles.

The regression test using “Enter” method showed that religious and community activity was the best predictor towards job preferences of youth. This was then followed by physical and vocational activities. The study showed that the respondents were practicing a media oriented lifestyle while other dimensions of lifestyles were still being practiced at a moderate level. Therefore, there was likelihood that most of the youth in the marginalized community engaged themselves in the organization based on their religious culture. In general, the lifestyles of youths have a positive relationship on their job preferences which lead towards their desired occupational outcome.

This research found that the lifestyles of youths were factor in deciding towards their job preferences. Hence, the findings surprised the Expectancy Theory by Vroom. This research also partially contributed towards the literature in the local context of lifestyles and job preferences.

Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk ijazah Master Sains

**HUBUNGAN ANTARA GAYA HIDUP DAN PILIHAN PEKERJAAN  
DALAM KALANGAN BELIA YANG BERADA DI DALAM  
GOLONGAN YANG TERPINGGIR DI MALAYSIA**

Oleh

**ELIZABETH WONG ZU YEE**

**November 2018**

**Pengerusi : Profesor Madya Hamisah Binti Hasan, PhD**  
**Fakulti : Bahasa Moden dan Komunikasi**

Pengambilan pekerjaan di Malaysia sering kali dikait rapat dengan faktor pendidikan dan ketidak padanan dalam pencarian pekerjaan itu sendiri. Faktor utama pengangguran dalam kalangan belia adalah disebabkan oleh kelayakan mereka yang tidak memenuhi kehendak pekerjaan itu sendiri. Berdasarkan Teori Jangkaan yang memfokuskan kepada perihal pekerjaan dan kemampuan membuat keputusan, objektif utama adalah untuk mengkaji gaya hidup belia yang berada dalam golongan yang terpinggir dan hubungannya dengan pemilihan pekerjaan mereka. Objektif am penyelidikan ini adalah untuk menyelidik gaya hidup belia yang berada di dalam golongan yang terpinggir dan hubungannya terhadap pemilihan pekerjaan. Secara khususnya, penyelidikan ini adalah untuk i) menyelidik gaya hidup belia yang berada di dalam golongan yang terpinggir, ii) menyelidik pemilihan pekerjaan oleh belia yang berada di dalam golongan yang terpinggir, iii) mengenalpasti hubungan antara gaya hidup belia yang berada di dalam golongan yang terpinggir dan kehendak untuk bekerja dalam organisasi awam, iv) mengenalpasti hubungan antara gaya hidup belia yang berada di dalam golongan yang terpinggir dan kehendak untuk bekerja dalam organisasi swasta, v) mengenalpasti faktor utama dalam gaya hidup yang memberi kesan kepada pemilihan pekerjaan.

Satu kaji selidik yang menggunakan kaedah soal selidik sebagai instrumen utama untuk mengumpul data telah pun dijalankan kepada 510 responden yang kebanyakkan berada di kawasan Kerinchi, Seri Kembangan dan juga Klang. Teknik Pensampelan Berstrata juga telah dijalankan untuk menguji responden-responden tersebut untuk kajian ini.

Kajian ini telah menemukan bahawa gaya hidup belia memainkan peranan dalam pemilihan kerja mereka dan mereka lebih cenderung untuk memilih pekerjaan dalam organisasi awam. Akan tetapi, walaupun belia yang berada di dalam golongan yang terpinggir ini lebih berminat untuk bekerja dalam organisasi awam, gaya hidup mereka lebih cenderung untuk membawa mereka bekerja dalam organisasi swasta. Dari segi hubungan antara gaya hidup dan pemilihan kerja, hanya aktiviti keagamaan dan komuniti serta aktiviti fizikal dan vokasional sahaja yang menunjukkan impak positif terhadap pemilihan kerja belia dalam organisasi awam. Manakala, aktiviti keagamaan dan komuniti, aktiviti fizikal dan vokasional serta aktiviti intelektual menunjukkan impak positif terhadap pemilihan kerja belia dalam organisasi swasta. Hal ini secara tidak langsung menunjukkan bahawa golongan belia yang terpinggir ini tidak terlalu terlibat dalam organisasi-organisasi yang berkaitan dengan media meskipun mereka mempraktikkan media dalam gaya hidup mereka.

Selain itu, ujian regresi menggunakan kaedah “Enter” menunjukkan bahawa aktiviti keagamaan dan komuniti merupakan penanda terbaik untuk menjangkakan pemilihan pekerjaan dalam kalangan belia. Hal ini diikuti dengan aktiviti fizikal dan vokasional. Kajian ini juga menunjukkan bahawa para responden mempraktikkan media dalam gaya hidup mereka, tetapi dalam masa yang sama gaya hidup yang lain juga dipraktikkan dalam kadar sederhana. Belia yang berada dalam golongan yang terpinggir ini sering melibatkan diri mereka di dalam organisasi berdasarkan budaya keagamaan. Tetapi pada amnya, gaya hidup belia itu sendiri mempunyai impak yang besar kepada pemilihan kerja mereka yang menjurus kepada hasil pekerjaan yang diimpikan.

Penyelidikan ini telah menemukan bahawa gaya hidup belia itu sendiri yang menentukan pemilihan kerja mereka yang menjurus kepada hasil yang pelbagai. Jadi, teori yang terhasil daripada penyelidikan ini dapat membuktikan Teori Jangkaan oleh Vroom. Pada masa yang sama, penyelidikan ini juga telah sebahagiannya menyumbang ke arah kesusasteraan dalam konteks gaya hidup dan pemilihan pekerjaan.



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This thesis was submitted to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia and has been accepted as fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Science. The members of the Supervisory Committee were as follows:

**Hamisah Binti Hasan, PhD**

Associate Professor

Faculty of Modern Language and Communication

Universiti Putra Malaysia

(Chairman)

**Abdul Mua'ti@Zamri Ahmad, PhD**

Professor

Faculty of Modern Language and Communication

Universiti Putra Malaysia

(Member)

---

**ROBIAH BINTI YUNUS, PhD**

Professor and Dean

School of Graduate Studies

Universiti Putra Malaysia

Date:

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Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Chairman  
of Supervisory  
Committee:

Associate Professor Dr. Hamisah Binti Hasan

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Member  
of Supervisory  
Committee:

Professor Dr. Abdul Mua'ti@Zamri Ahmad

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AMOS	Analysis of Moment Structures
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
APC	Age-period-cohort
LRGS	Long-Term Research Grant Scheme
PDRM	<i>Polis Diraja Malaysia</i>
SEM	Structural Equation Model
SPM	<i>Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia</i>
SPSS	Statistical Package of Social Science
STPM	<i>Sijil Tinggi Persekolahan Malaysia</i>
TBO	Time Budget Survey
TBS	Dutch Time Budget Studies
UN	United Nations

## **CHAPTER 1**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1 Introduction**

This chapter introduces the study by discussing the research background, problem statements, research objectives, the significance of the research with its limitations and the important keywords.

#### **1.2 Background**

With the enormous changes of technology today, the lifestyles and life experiences of youths have also changed significantly. In the modern era, youths are experiencing growth in a very different ways as compared to the generations before them (Furlong and Cartmel, 2007). These changes included aspects, such as experiences in education, their relationship with their friends and families, daily leisure activities, values and attitudes as well as preferences of professions in the job market. Consequently, the restructuring of job markets occur alongside the changes of social policies and the increase in demand for educated labour in the markets (Furlong and Cartmel, 2007). These changes were also taking place in the educational experiences and affected the job markets (Green and Worswick, 2010). The new era has shown a more varied set of lifestyles that is unpredictable with new challenges. Therefore, it becomes imperative for youths to be independent and matured to enable them to cope with the risks and opportunities that they may be facing.

Getting a job is one of the essential elements in daily living. It is considered as one of the basic needs for humans achieving self-esteem according to Maslow's Theory (1943). There are many types of jobs offered in the job market which are scaled into two categories and they include the public and private organization. The public organization involves government and non-government organizations which provide services to the public and provide job security (Diefenbach, 2009; Ko & Jun, 2015) while the private organization is managerial and structurally different from the public organization (Van der Wal, De Graaf, & Lasthuizen, 2008), it focuses on financial resources and professional development (Ko & Jun, 2015).

The ASEAN Forum on Youth Employment (2013) reported that nearly half of the Malaysian populations are youths. It was estimated that the population of youth is approximately 8,171,200 in Malaysia. In fact as reported by Bricker and Foley (2013), youth represented a large population group in most developing countries. In terms of employment, they represented 64% or 7,820,400 of the country's total employment which is at 12,284,400, whereby most of them are from technical and professional

sectors. With more than half of our youths employed in the country, a need to conduct studies based on youths and their jobs or career preferences in order for the society to have a better understanding on the career development through lifestyles arises.

Unemployment among youths is said to be a serious problem because it can cause the country to lose a whole generation of young people from both from the labour market as well as the society. Thus, employment is important not only for increasing economic resources but also for its social and psychological effects (Ali, 2010). Based on the Department of Statistics Malaysia (2015), the Malaysia's unemployment rate is at 3.20% in February 2015 while it was only 2.70 % in August 2012. The statistics shows a significant increase in the unemployment rate which has a difference of 0.50%. However, Bernama (2016) reported that Datuk Ahmad Badri, who is the secretary of Strategic Investment Division at the Ministry of Finance Malaysia stated that 1.5 million jobs would be created in the country by year 2020 in order to reduce the rate of unemployment. The only thing is that the candidates will have to strive in order to fit into the position.

Ali (2010) reported that there have been a number of studies conducted to understand the phenomena of how individuals perceive and select jobs. Many factors were introduced to examine career choices. The studies analyzed various job preferences such as job characteristics, organizational characteristics, individual characteristics, demographic concerns and also social factors. Clearly, job preferences are based on various factors and lifestyle factors is one of them. Russell and O'Connell (2001) mentioned that unemployment became a significant problem in most of the countries especially among youths. Based on their study, they focused that unemployment was mainly affected by personal characteristics such as age, gender, parenthood, educational levels as well as previous work experiences and unemployment duration. At such, employment is strictly related to the lifestyles and personal choices of a person.

Unemployment was mainly affected by personal characteristic such as age, gender, parenthood, educational levels well as previous work experience and unemployment duration (Russell and O'Connell, 2001). The subjects and result of the study were similar to the study conducted by Ali (2010). The study aims to answer the question on the relationship between lifestyles and employment of youths in the marginalized community in Malaysia.

### **1.3 Problem Statement**

The discussion of lifestyles and employment among youth will normally raise the uncertainties towards unemployment (Caliendo, Tatsiramos, & Uhlendorff, 2013). Malaysia is a multiracial country where individuals have differences in interest, behavior, perception, value, and attitude. Similarly, individuals will have different

views and preferences in job selections based on his or her personal choice (Saleem, Hanan, and Shamshad, 2014). Some youths might still be looking for the appropriate job while others may already be in the job market. However, they will find that the job may not be aligned with their interests and they might find it difficult to fit into organizations. This is mainly because there is a wider range of job selections for them to choose from and through the job selection process, they will develop an impression where they see their own choices as unique and all problems faced can be overcome (Furlong, 2007). As a resultant, youths became too affluent and choosy about the jobs they want. This then leads to an increase of rate of unemployment.

A similar study conducted on job preferences in the ASEAN Forum on Youth Employment which in 2013, reported that youth do not have enough commitment to prepare for challenges and take the risk. In order to support this statement, Lee, Whitehead, & Balchin (2000) stated that there is a need for youth to prepare themselves with the lifelong learning in order for them to succeed in their career. By practicing wrong attitudes, it may cause them the inability to adapt with the job market and thus unprepared.

With a big demand of job placements that required a higher level of education, one has to own a certain level of education in order to fit into the high competitive job market (Furlong and Cartmel, 2007; Singh & Singh, 2008) and this includes marginalized youths. In addition, Singh & Singh (2008) also claimed that employment in Malaysia is often set back by the educational and job mismatched especially youth in the marginalized community. This means that the degree qualification is no longer a must in getting a job in this competitive market. This may be the result of the tendency of Malaysian youth to underestimate the job market where they failed to understand the fact that the job market would prefer experience over qualification. In other words, the job market would prefer specific skills and experiences which are beyond knowledge and qualification since there was a difference between employers' and graduates' perceptions (Singh & Singh, 2008). Therefore, youth unemployment is basically because of the mismatched between their qualifications to that the job market needs. It was also caused by the lack of soft skills, lacking of exposure to the job market, and most importantly the attitudes shown by the youth (Ramakrishnan and Yasin, 2010).

Besides, not all of the youths have the same opportunity and privilege to choose what they want because substantial numbers of youth living in the marginalized community (Othman, Iskandar, Mohamed, 2016). Thus, it can be said that, marginalized community means practice of excluding a social group from the mainstream of the society. This means the marginalized community might have less opportunity to get involve in the mainstream lifestyles and activities. This will affects the job preferences of marginalized youths and thus leading job mismatch problem to be occurred. In line with that, it is important to examine the expectation of youth in relations to their job preferences. Thus, the questions that need to be answered would clearly be the types of lifestyles and its relationships to the job preferences. This study was conducted to answer the following questions.

#### **1.4 Research Question**

1. What are the lifestyles of youth in the marginalized community?
2. What are the job preferences of youth in the marginalized community?
3. What is the relationship between the of lifestyles practiced by the youth in the marginalized community and the job preferences?
4. What is the most contributing factor of lifestyle that affects job preference of youth in the marginalized community?

#### **1.5 Research Objectives**

##### **1.5.1 General Objectives**

The general objective of the study was to examine the lifestyle practiced among youth in the marginalized community and its relationships to that of their job preferences. The study was conducted to examine the relationship between lifestyles and job preference of the youth to either work in the public organization or the private organization.

##### **1.5.2 Specific Objectives**

Specifically, the study aims to examine the following objectives:

1. To examine the lifestyles of youth in the marginalized community.
2. To examine the job preferences of youth in the marginalized community.
3. To identify the relationship between the lifestyles of youth in the marginalized community and their preferences to work in the public organization.
4. To identify the relationship between the lifestyles of youth in the marginalized community and their preferences to work in the private organization.
5. To analyse the most significant factor of lifestyles that affect job preferences.

#### **1.6 Significance of the Study**

There have been numerous studies conducted related to study of youth. However, the study will examine the relationship between lifestyles and job preference of youth. The study will offers findings related to the Malaysian context. In addition, the study will also help to strengthen the understanding of the Expectancy Theory. Specifically, the findings of the study will significantly contribute to strengthen the theory from the perspective of local findings. It is also hope that the research will contribute to better

understanding on the lifestyles of youth today as well as on their lifestyles and its relationship to their choices of job.

Based on the present study, the variables in Expectancy Theory namely instrumentality, valence and expectancy are in positive relationship with lifestyle and job preferences. Since Expectancy Theory is based on motivation, thus, it did provide good explanation for motivation where a person takes a particular action and the expected outcome from it. In other word, this theory explained that individual who allowed to making choices or decision and that will leads to his or her desired outcome. Similarly, youth make career choices based on their lifestyle and attitude, and that will leads to a desired outcome.

Individual would able to understand better of their preferred jobs based on their lifestyles and attitudes. Besides, this study would allow the youth to build up awareness on the importance to choose the correct job with the right organization based on the lifestyle that they are practicing. On the other hand, recruiters from organizations would understand better on the candidates based on their lifestyles and put them in the correct working position. Thus, no misplacement will occur. This study will also provide a possible platform for future research to expand on the study related to the topic.

### **1.7 Scope and Limitations of the Study**

The study only examines the lifestyles and job preferences to either work in the public organizations or private organizations of youths in the marginalized community. At such, variables such as job satisfaction and commitment towards organization can be omitted.

In order to ensure the accomplishment of the objectives and to fulfil the importance of the study, the youth in the Klang Valley area from the age range between 15-25 years old were chosen as the respondent of this study. The study focused on the youth in the marginalized community whose basic household income was RM3000 or less. The respondents were chosen from the marginalized community in the Klang Valley areas namely Seri Kembangan, Kerinchi and Klang as the location of this study. Youth in the marginalized community of various background and lifestyles are living in these areas.

The limitation of the study is that the data collected would not be suitable for the use of the whole Malaysian society who has a different demographic and lifestyle status. This is basically due to the location limitation factor as the data collected is only for Klang Valley area. Besides, this study only focused on the lifestyle and job preferences of youth and examine on the lifestyles of youth in trying to answer the question of its relationship to job preference.



## 1.8 Definitions of Keywords

### Lifestyle

According to Kotler (1996) and Robertson et al., (2010), lifestyle is defined as the way on how people act, behave, perceive, and prefer to live their lives in society. It was explained that an individual will act and perform things in a specified way. Besides, people will think, judge, and interpret different information based on their own references, knowledge and values. In other words, lifestyle is a living picture of individuals, families, and societies where they joined together to cope with their physical, psychological, and social environments on a day-to-day basis. For example, lifestyle refers to the way an individual eat, drink, and sleep. It is also the way of how an individual communicate and interact with his or her family members and friends. The way an individual spent his or her leisure time for a particular activity and the way of how an individual provide opinions and values on certain issues are also considered as lifestyle.

According to Kushner and Choi (2010), the lifestyle pattern of an individual can be shown clearly through the daily activities he or she practiced, such as media activities, community activities, physical activities, vocational activities and the High-Brow activities. The term High-brow activities refer to those high culture activities such as attending musical orchestra, reading literature, and visiting art gallery. Lifestyle is therefore a term to express the individual behavior patterns such as activities, attitudes, interests, motivations, culture, behaviors, opinions, and values.

### Job Preferences

Thorpe (2015) mentioned that in the 1550s, the word job is known as *jobbe of worke* which means a piece of work. While Droe (2015) defined that preference is an act of liking or disliking towards something. Thus, job preference can then be defined as an act of liking or disliking towards a specific piece of work. Job preference is a work position which is chosen by a particular person upon an agreed price. As reported by Feehan and Johnston (1999), job preferences is a belief in an individual to choose and achieve, masters or capable to do certain thing. It is an activity where individual may get financial support from it and also satisfaction. This is due to the fact that a job for an individual is essential for his or her daily lives.

Getting a job is the basic step for an individual to commence into an organization through the socialization process where individuals study on the requirement of the job that will leads them to fit into the organization (Miller, 2014). As such, it is also a process which refers to an ongoing behavioral and cognitive process by which individuals joins, become integrated into and exit the organizations called assimilation and job preference is the exercise that took effect at the beginning of the process (Jablin and Krone, 1987). In other words, the organization is trying to influence the adaption of individuals through a formal and informal socialization processes (Miller,



2014). Individual job preference is important because the value of the individual has to match with the organization's values in order for them to come out with and maintain a balance relationship (Edwards and Cable, 2009). Individuals will be motivated after they get the right job. They will perform well in order to come out with an expected outcome and satisfaction. When this congruence achieved, the work goals and satisfaction of both the parties would be able to fulfil.

### **Youths in the Marginalized Community**

The Malaysian National Youth Development Policy defined youth as those who were in the range between the ages of 15 – 40 years old. However, there were various categories of age groups of youth. The programs and activities for youth development are only prepared for youth whose age range is between 15 – 25 years old. Therefore, the youth range in the study is from 15 – 25 years old. The youth is the hope of our future. Youth represents a large group of population in most of the developing countries (Bricker and Foley, 2013). Consciously, youth is playing a very important role in the society as well as the future development of the country. Hence, positive youth development is no longer an option but a necessity.

According to Miles (2000), the study of youth is fascinating not only because it has the potential to tell us about what it means to be a young person but it can also tell us much about the changing nature of social life. 'Youth' is a simple word but it brings a complicated meaning. Based on McRobbie (1993), youth represents a major symbolic role for the society as a whole where the young people are basically playing an important role in the society.

According to Sibley (1995), marginalization is the practice of excluding a social group from the mainstream of the society. In other words, youth in the marginalized community is a group of young people who are aged between 15 to 25 years old that are excluded from the mainstream or urban community. The leader of the Long-Term Research Grant Scheme (LRGS) stated that youth who are receiving a household income of not more than RM 3000 per month for urban areas and RM 1500 below for rural areas are considered as living in the marginalized community based on the statistic given by the Royal Malaysia Police (PDRM).

In a report of a study conducted by the Centre for Excellence on Youth Engagement (2007), one of the ways to develop positive youth development is through youth engagement. Youth engagement is a meaningful involvement of a young person in an activity, with a focus outside of him or herself. It is a framework to understand how youth become involved in positive activities and then build up positive outcomes. The activities engaged can be anything for example sports, arts, music, volunteer work, and politics. By involving in these activities, youth will experience a positive development in terms of behavioral, cognitive, and attitudinal indicators.

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## **BIODATA OF STUDENT**

Elizabeth Wong Zu Yee completed his Bachelor's Degree in Communicaton with a major in Corporate Communication at the Faculty of Modern Languages and Communication, Universiti Putra Malaysia. After completion of her degree, she went on to join the corporate industry and was given opportunity to return to the faculty to pursue her Master's Degree in Organizational Communication.

She has a strong passion in the corporate sector as well as the servicing line. Her objective is to utilize the knowledge and skills that she gained during her Master's Degree in the corporate sector. With this passion, she hopes to serve the sector by being a part of the workforce to generate more ideas and good works.

While concluding her studies, she joins Country Garden Pacificview Sdn. Bhd., an international developer company, as their senior marketing executive. Life is a never ending learning journey, with this she is able to learn and to perform herself with the knowledge and skills she gained in the university.



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