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**The Usage of Internet for Education Promotion
A Case Study of University Students**

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Abstract

This study was designed to explore the usage of internet and its effects on education promotion among university students. A sample of 50 university students from various departments was drawn consisting 25 male and 25 female students to test the hypotheses. Questionnaire survey methodology was used to collect the data and it was found that majority of the students were using internet more than the library because it was easy and convenient to explore information regarding their academics even they can access the online books. Moreover, majority of the students were not using internet for academic purposes but only a small numbers who have higher GPA the others use internet only for the sake of entertainment. Female tend to use internet at their homes and campus but rarely other than in the internet café due to some social limitations while a few males revealed that they go to internet café for using internet due to unavailability of internet facility. It was also observed that use of internet as a research tool is greater than any other sources of information or data collection regarding the academic education.

Keywords: internet, uses, education, university, students, promotion.

Introduction

The Internet is a global network of computers linked together over large distances. It was created by the American Military as a means of communication and has been in existence since the 1950's. Up until the mid to late eighties commercial organizations and educational institutions mainly used the Internet. This was due to high costs. The rapid development of technology has seen improvement in communication links and a lowering of costs. The implication of this is that the Internet is now more widely available to more people.

More than 2 billion people in the world are using internet in which China is on first with five million users after it America is on the second position with 2.7 billion. In India the internet users are 1 million and in Pakistan only 0.2 million people are using internet and they are only 11 % of the total population. It is predicted that in 2050 the Internet Protocol Version-IPV would be available and due to this billions of website can get web addresses which

are now from 2.7 to 3 billion. (Asim Mahmood,2011).

Today's world is based on computer mediated communication. In the contemporary society people cannot live without information and internet has no doubt become the fastest information provider ever recorded. Internet is a prime mover of change for our print and electronic media as we cross the threshold of 21st century. It has brought about the greatest revolution in the field of mass communication since the invention of moveable type in printing. Unlike the previous one which took centuries reaching all parts of the world, the present revolution has already made its impact globally within a few years after its invention. Internet has created countless challenges which seriously has gained the attention of the experts in the field.

This internet technology promises to have a far larger and more serious impact on our society than the introduction of television, possibly as great an

influence on history as the industrial revolution or the printing press. Television primarily involves only leisure time; this technology will effect work, school and play and personal business and family relationships (*Surveying*, 1999).

The Internet is a valuable source of information for students looking for ideas for projects and assignments. Million web sites can be found on internet for seeking information. The only tools required to find this information would be some patience and a decent search engine. It also serves as a useful tool for lecturers in helping to prepare lesson plans as there are a number of sites, especially in America, dedicated to providing educational material.

It also serves as a forum to promote group discussion, which is time and distance independent. There are many forms this group discussion can take. These include video conferencing, where by the use of a small video camera and microphone members of the group can actually see and hear each other. Also group discussion can take the form of chat rooms where everyone comes together in a host area and communicates with each other via the keyboard.

The amount of information available on the net means that user tend to be side-tracked with a lot of unnecessary useless information. As the Internet is not owned by any one there are no checks or censorship of information available. The upside to this is that information is freely available to everyone without restriction but the downside to this is that information can be placed into the wrong hands. Also as there are no checks on the information on the net this may lead to inaccuracies and misleading information being published.

With the advent of the Internet education has definitely benefited in more ways than can be mentioned and although it will not take over the traditional methods of education it will continue to play a major part.

Researchers exploring the effects of educational media, however, have argued from a similar set of assumptions to reach dramatically different conclusions. Instead of exploring the possible negative effects of the media, proponents of “powerful effects” have heralded the positive effects promised by the use of educational media in the classroom (Kozma,1994; Salomon, 1978). The history of educational technology, specifically the use of mass media in an educational context, is infused

with promises of revolutionary proportions (Cuban, 1986). Access to books, instructional motion pictures, radio, and more recently television and interactive multimedia has been envisioned as the panacea for all that ails our educational system. The use of World Wide Web in the classroom is only the latest in a long history of mass media technologies that have been embraced by the educational establishment. Libraries, along with the liberating technologies of the postal service and telephones, were once envisioned as facilitating the elimination of schools. Educational films, radio and television programs, and educational computer software have all been employed with similar hope and optimism(Illich,1970).

Objective of the study

The first and for most objective of this study is to find out how the university students use internet? Is it for research and information gathering related to their academics? The major objective of the study is to accumulate information regarding the most favorite activity of the students on the Internet and its impact on their education and study.

Rationale of the study

Internet is a comparatively new technology and it has been adopted very rapidly. Not only it has become a necessary in office work but its application is considered mandatory in educational institutions. This study not only explores the usage of internet which make in educational institutions but also explores its impact of the students learning and education. Either the internet use is effective means of information gathering and whether its use is helpful for research. This was necessary to conduct a study which can through light on the usage pattern of internet because most of the educational institutions are offering unrestricted internet access to students. This study seeks to provide information on the impact of the Internet as a knowledge acquisition tool for students and its effect on student’s academic performance. If the Internet is seen to impact academic performance in students most Universities would be encouraged to investment in the technology.

Statement of the problem

The statement of the problem is to evaluate the usage of internet among students and its impact on their education and learning as well as internet use as a research tool for information gathering for their research projects.

Literature review

There have done a lot of research work on this topic some of the researchers are below.

Bryant and Zillmann (1994) analyzed that in this era of information technology, internet emerged as a new mass medium and the concerns of communication researchers shifted towards the functioning and effects of new technology on the users and on the human communication.

William and Grant(2007) in their article "Social Aspects of New Media Technologies" found that the communication systems such as the VCR, cable television and personal computers fundamentally expand the repertoire of the media available to people, and in so doing fragment the mass audience with narrower viewers/users groups of cultures. This research illustrated the range of social effects and especially gratifications one might observe with various communication technologies.

Follows (2004) described in his article "The internet and Daily Life" that many Americans use the internet in everyday activities but traditionally offline habits still dominate. The findings of Pew International and Americans life Project suggest that the reach of internet use into everyday life is broad but shallow. Many users go online to meet many needs and to do many things; the extent of their use is relatively limited. Most internet users resort to traditionally offline ways of accomplishing their tasks or entertaining themselves. Users consistently hold a very strong opinion of the internet use as a way to do everyday activities. But they don't finally act on those activities. There are also many obstacles between people and their internet use getting a condition, conquering technical skill building and many more.

Technology, in various forms, has always held forth the promise of improving education (Wenger, 1998). This is true whether one speaks of scholastic education or its cousins, corporate and commercial training programs. Computer-Assisted Instruction (CAI), instructional television (ITV), and programmed instruction (PI) can be counted as early examples of the application of information technology to education. The most recent and perhaps most visible cases are Web-based training programs and degree-granting programs from fully accredited institutions offered via what is known as "distance learning." Technology succeeds, when it becomes commonplace. This is illustrated by such

ubiquitous artifacts as chalkboards, training films and videos, overhead projectors and transparencies, software such as Microsoft's PowerPoint, and perhaps the most common of all, the textbook.

Teaching and learning can both be defined as processes, that is, as bounded portions of larger streams of activity. The teacher does one and the learner does the other. Teaching might or might not lead to learning (Baer, 1999). The relationship between the two processes is neither fixed nor guaranteed. However, Wenger (1998) has observed that teaching and learning are not inherently linked. More importantly, teaching and instructional materials are resources for learning in ways that often differ from those embedded in pedagogical intentions. For example, reading assignments in a course on literature can result in learning on the part of students that has nothing whatsoever to do with the teacher's instructional objectives. In other words, what is taught and what is learned may differ.

Markoff (2004) in his research article entitled "Internet use Said to Cut with Television viewing and Socializing" analyzed the average internet user in USA spends three hour a day online with much of their time devoted to work and more than half of it to communication. With the help of survey the researcher found that use of internet has displaced TV viewing and a range of other activities. Internet users watch television for one hour and 42 minutes a day, compared with national average of two hours.

Adams and Clark(2000) described the most of the college students spend hours logged into the internet sending emails, browsing for information and even playing more games. Internet is at present or primarily visual medium and visual images persuade users effectively. A lot of websites are making innovative use of this new communication medium. In the past few years free email accounts offered by sites such as Yahoo and Hotmail and have become increasingly very popular among internet users.

Chandra (2004) says that new communication technologies have the capacity to navigate from one media to another to choose between the multiple communication tools and adopt strategies to a particular situation.

Manovich(2001) placed the history of modern visuals and media cultures looked at all areas of new media, websites, virtual worlds, virtual reality, multimedia, computer games, interactive installation, digital video

and human computers interfaces. According to him computerization of cultures not only leads to the emergence of new cultural forms such as computer games and virtual world's which refine existing ones such as photography and cinema.

Anura (2000) argues that new media or communication technologies are creating a new type of community. The writer termed this new community in different ways e.g intelligent communities, smart communities, pro social communities, virtual communities and cyber communities. The social relations among the members of these new communities are not necessarily based on physical proximity. New telecommunication technologies have made it possible for business to produce consumers to produce and workers to interact without the common physical location because these communities are linked its formation super highway, direct control through ownership are becoming increasingly difficult.

Zhu and He (2000) mention that Hong Kong appears to be a dream venue for the internet as mass medium because of well developed telecommunication infrastructure, a population has both financial resources and bilingual abilities and a legal environment in which there is virtually no government regulation of content.

Cao and Li (2006) showed that new interactive technologies produced a profound effect in United States society and after the emergence of new medium analysts predicted that printed newspapers would be disappear in the near future. The online newspapers as new medium are still developing as more technological innovations are implemented.

Druge (2007) mentioned in his article that any citizen can be a reporter and journalist. The modern internet lets you cover the world. It makes us all journalists, communicators and critics.

Osger and Group (2002) write that internet has become the primary communication tool for teenagers, surpassing even the telephone among some groups according to a study by AOL (America Online) the national survey of more than 6,700 teens and their parents conducted by AOL, found that 81% if teens between the ages of 12-17 use internet to email friends or relatives while 70% use it for instant messaging both form one's computer and via wireless device. Among older teens between 18-19 years this

attitude is higher or jump to 91% for emails and 83% for instant messaging. In short, new media and communication technology have come to play an important role in young people's lives.

Hypotheses

In order to evaluate the internet use and its impact on education of the students, the following hypotheses are formed on the basis of literature review.

H1: Most of the students think internet to be easier and convenient rather than exploring books in the library.

H2: It is more likely that most of the students would use internet more for entertainment than for academic purposes.

H3: The students having higher GPA would use internet more for academic purposes as compared to the students who have lower GPA.

H4: It is more likely that female students use internet at home than their male counterpart.

H5: The use of internet as a research tool would be greater than for any other services.

Method

By considering the need, nature and objectives of the study questionnaire survey method has been used to obtain and gather data for testing the hypotheses. A structured questionnaire comprises 12 questions; mostly close ended and few having multiple options and detailed answers have been used to collect the data to test the hypotheses. The population is the all M.A students from all the departments of Bahauddin Zakariya University, Multan. The random sample technique is used to take the sample. The sample is characterized with a number features which are very close to the actual population. So a sample of 50 university students from different departments of the university consisting 25 males and 25 females is taken.

Findings

The first hypothesis states that most of the students think internet to be easier and convenient rather than exploring books in the library. It was evaluated that 17 students including males and females were using library for the purposes of education facilitation while 11 responded that they use both resources for the academic information and 22 (44%) students answered that they use internet more in regard to question asked in the questionnaire they told that the internet is easy and convenient to use and even they can read newspapers too and get information concerning our academics and also explore books on internet relevant to our study or assignment. Overall

62% of the entire sample told that they prefer to use internet for seeking information and academic facilitation while only 19 students(38%) revealed that

they use library. The findings strongly supported the hypothesis and it is accepted.

Table: 1.1 Use of Internet and Library for Educational Facilitation:

Sex	Library	Internet	Both
Male	7 (28%)	12 (48%)	6 (24%)
Female	10 (40%)	10 (40%)	5 (20%)
Total	17 (34%)	22 (44%)	11 (22%)

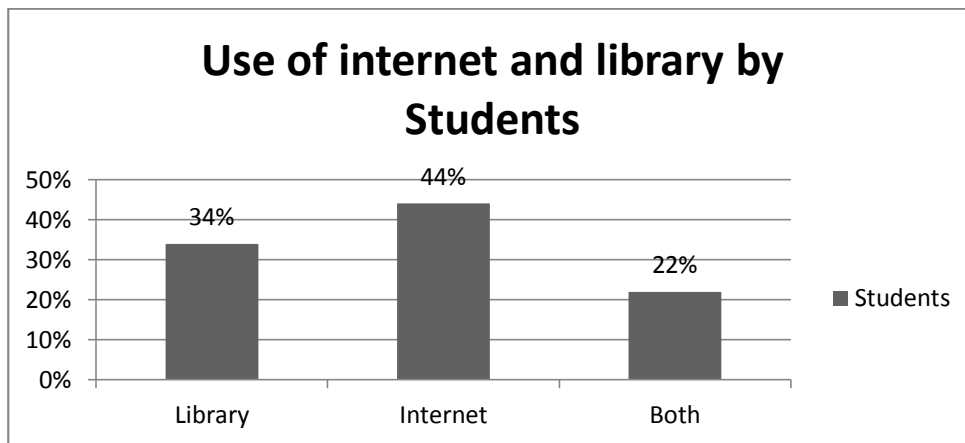
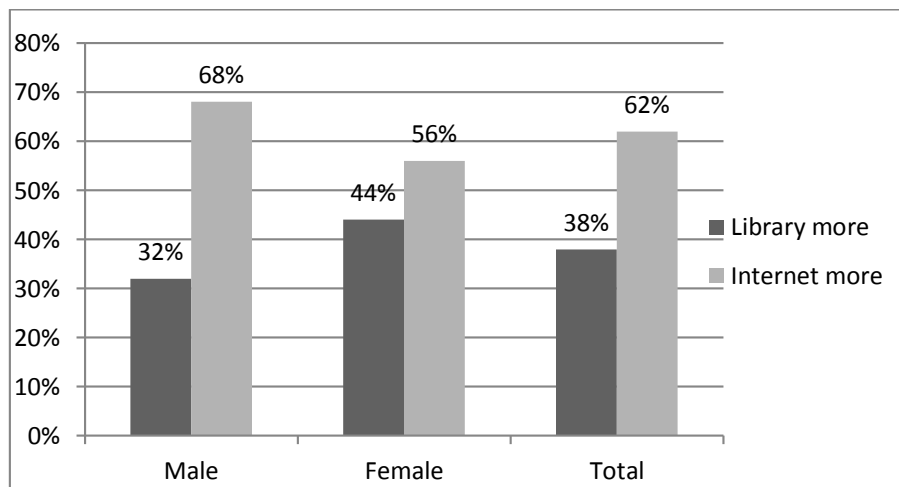


Table 1.2 PreferablyUse of Library and Internet.

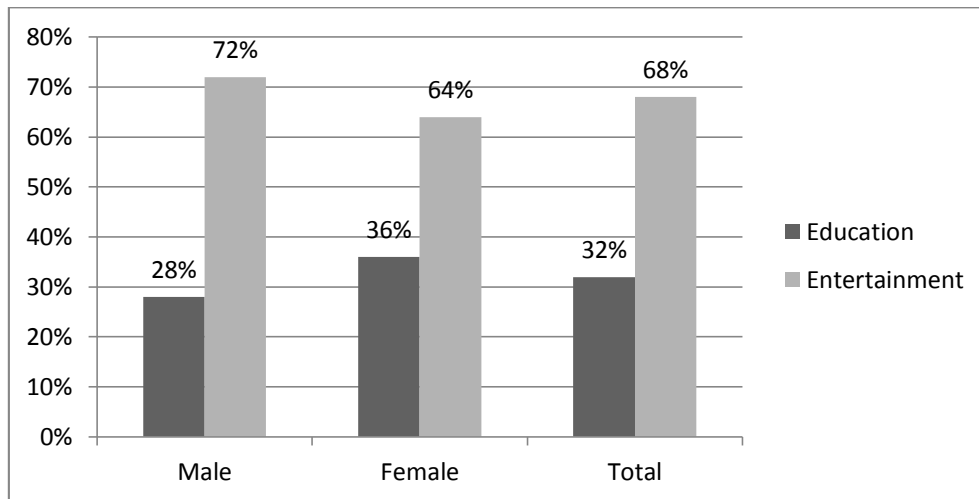
Sex	Library more	Internet more
Male	8 (32%)	17 (68%)
Female	11 (44%)	14 (56%)
Total	19 (38%)	31 (62%)



The second hypothesis states that it is more likely that most of the students would use internet more for entertainment than for academic purposes. The findings of this hypothesis also supported this and it was evaluated that only 32% including 7 males and 9 females of the entire sample of 50 students were using internet for education purposes while a large number of research subjects including 18 males and 16 females 68% were using internet for the sake of entertainment so this hypothesis is strongly accepted.

Table No 2.1 Use of Internet for Education and Entertainment

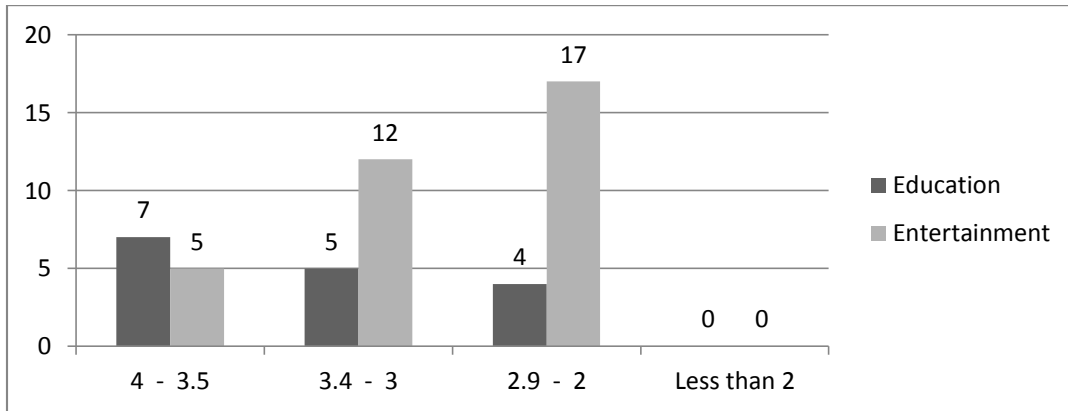
Gender	Education		Entertainment	
Male	7	28%	18	72%
Female	9	36%	16	64%
Total	16	32%	34	68%



The third hypothesis states that the students having higher GPA would use internet more for academic purposes as compared to the students who have lower GPA. It is evaluated that only 12 students responded that they have between 4-3.5 GPA out of which 7 were using internet and only 5 were getting entertainment. Between the 3-3.4 were 12 out of 50 and only 4 were using internet for education and 17 for entertainment. Between 2.9-2 were 21 out of 50 and 4 used it for education and 17 for entertainment only. There was no any student in the sample who had less than 2 CGPA. So findings supported this hypothesis and it is accepted.

Table No 3. Internet Use for Students having Higher and Lower GPA.

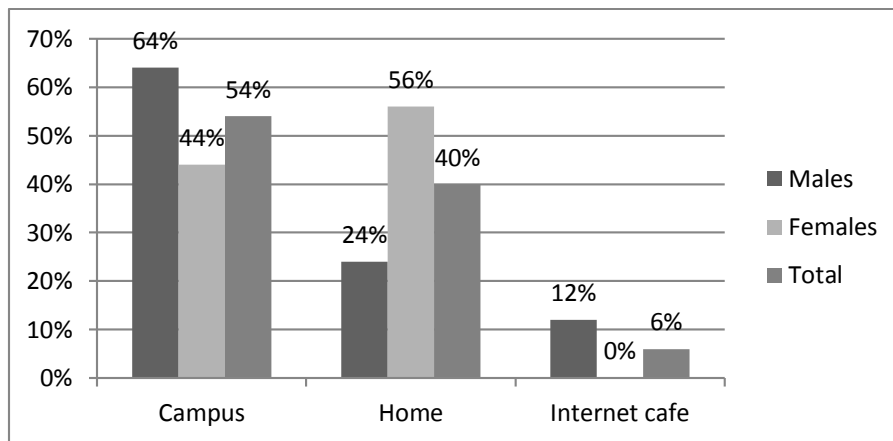
	4 - 3.5	3.4 - 3	2.9 - 2	Less than 2
Education	7	5	4	-
Entertainment	5	12	17	-



The fourth hypothesis states that it is more likely that female students use internet at home than their male counterpart. The information collected from the sample revealed that 54% of the total students were using internet at campus in which 64% were females and 44% were males. 44% students out of 50 were using internet at home including 24% males and 56% females while females were more than males who were using internet at home it was because that during the study time they use internet rarely at campus and also revealed that they use library at campus more while internet at home. Only 6% of the students were using at internet café and there was no any female student who use internet at café because due to social limitations they don't go at internet café and prefer to use at home or campus while few males were visiting internet café. The findings supported this hypothesis and it is accepted.

Table No 4. Internet Usage at campus, home and café

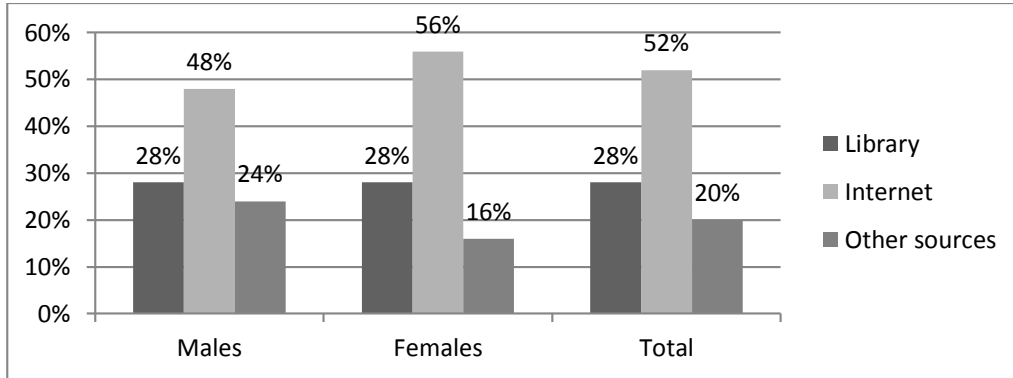
Sex	Campus	Home	Internet café
Males	16 (64%)	6 (24%)	3 (12%)
Females	11 (44%)	14(56%)	0 (0%)
Total	27(54%)	20(40%)	3(6%)



The fifth hypothesis states that the use of internet as a research tool would be greater than for any other services. The data collected to test this hypothesis revealed that only 14 % of the entire students including males and females were using library for research while 52% were using internet as a major source of information and as a research and data collection tool and only 20% students responded that they are using other sources too. The findings supported this hypothesis and it is also accepted.

Table No 5. Internet as a Research and data collection tool

Sex	Library	Internet	Other Services
Males	7 (28%)	12 (48%)	6 (24%)
Females	7 (28%)	14 (56%)	4 (16%)
Total	14 (28%)	26 (52%)	10 (20%)



Discussion and conclusion

Information technology is the most well developed technology in the world. I.T has its contributions in every sphere of life. Internet is another miracle of information technology. Latest information has become only a click of mouse away from the information seekers.

Internet is the universe of unlimited domains. One can get myriads of information there. People use internet for various reasons. That is also true that different people make different use of the same material gotten from the internet. Internet has its many functions. It provides help to everyone in one way or another. Students also take immense support from its diversity. This study was to examine how students use internet. The results very much support the hypotheses made. The findings affirmed the entire five hypotheses made.

Internet has its positive as well as negative impact on students. The objective of my study was to analyze the use of internet and its impact on education promotion. Majority consider it as convenient and easy to use as compared to library use. They also responded that using internet they can even access the online books regarding their academic purposes and also explore research studies. Mostly students were not using internet for academic purposes. They just get entertainment out of it. While students having higher GPA their use of internet was quite different than those who have lower GPA. More over number of students prefer to use internet in campus. When reasons were asked from them they told that females

do not use internet out of home because it is not socially accepted. But few male students prefer to go to internet café for using internet due to unavailability of internet facility.

In terms of policy implications we draw a number of conclusions from our research findings. Educational institutions must not provide unrestricted access to internet. They must be some check and balance system to inform the authorities which sites have been searched by the students. This will keep students from wasting their time. More over students should be given only up to one hour time daily to use internet facility so that more students can avail the facility. More over such public service messages should be floated which make people well aware about the positive aspects of internet. The above mention suggestion will not only save students from the hazards of internet but students will use internet more positively. Findings of the study cannot be generalized at a large scale due to time constraints and limited sample.

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