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IMPLEMENTATION OF BHINEKA TUNGGAL IKA IN INCLUSIF EDUCATION THE CONCEPT OF CEATIVITY IN PROJECT-BASED LEARNING

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Abstract
High school students, as the nation's future generation, require serious attention to reduce negative tendencies such as indifference to rules, hate speech, bullying, individualism, apathy, an instant-gratification culture, lack of perseverance, consumerism, and poor time management. If left unaddressed, these attitudes may negatively affect students' futures and potentially become a source of conflict within Indonesia's diverse society. This research aims to gain a comprehensive understanding of the factors contributing to these negative attitudes. The purpose of this study is to develop solutions for promoting inclusive education by integrating the values of Bhineka Tunggal Ika *(Unity in Diversity)* into project-based learning in Pancasila and Civic Education, which serve as personal development subjects. Teachers play a crucial role in determining the success of project-based learning. This study employs a mixed-method approach, combining qualitative and quantitative techniques to achieve comprehensive results. The theoretical foundation of this research is Lev Vygotsky's sociocultural theory. The qualitative data were collected through observation, participation, interviews, and focus group discussions, while the quantitative data were obtained through the distribution and analysis of questionnaires involving high school and university students. The findings reveal several key issues: (1) reluctance to accept differing attitudes or perspectives, (2) a discrepancy between teaching materials and real-life contexts, (3) boredom resulting from predominantly indoor learning activities, (4) the need for role models, (5) a desire for recognition and attention, (6) difficulty initiating social relationships, and (7) a lack of self-confidence.

Keywords: Bhineka Tunggal Ika; Collaboration; Creativity, Education

INTRODUCTION

Equal distribution and access to learning opportunities for all students are among the government's key programs, as education plays a crucial role in developing quality human resources (Sulaksana & Wibawa, 2019; Kurniawati, 2022). To support this initiative, the government issued the Inclusive Education Guidelines under Ministerial Regulation No. 70 of 2009. However, there remains a significant gap between policy formulation and its practical implementation in schools (Hardy & Woodcock, 2015; Seriwati Ginting, 2024). High school students, as the nation's future generation, need to recognize and embody the values of diversity as a national strength, as promoted in Bhineka Tunggal Ika (Unity in Diversity). Although differences exist, they are united under the spirit of diversity; however, there has been a noticeable decline in students' concern for maintaining and preserving these values. Teachers play a vital role in reviving and reinforcing the values of diversity that have begun to erode. Teachers' ability to foster harmonious interactions with students is a key determinant of learning success (Komalasari; Ningsih et al., 2019). Student success is measured not only by academic achievement but also by mindset, attitude, and behavior.

The values of diversity are considered noble principles that unite differences within society. These values reject discrimination and emphasize empathy, openness, tolerance, and a willingness

to build relationships. The motto Bhineka Tunggal Ika (Unity in Diversity), embodied in the Garuda symbol of Pancasila, is one of the central themes of Pancasila and Civic Education (Pursika, 2009). These values must be continuously instilled in each generation through a structured curriculum using appropriate methods and techniques, so that they are internalized and reflected in daily life. Teachers serve as observers, evaluators, and correctors when encountering students' behaviors that deviate from Pancasila values. Ongoing social changes and globalization may threaten national identity. The diverse student body within schools serves as a microcosm of Indonesia's plural society. A sound understanding of diversity among students should be reflected in their daily interactions. In general, the values of diversity are believed to reduce hate speech, foster patriotism, and counter radicalism and terrorism in society. Project-Based Learning (PjBL) is a pedagogical model that enhances student motivation by providing opportunities to explore learning materials within real-world contexts. Through PjBL, students are granted greater autonomy to participate actively, thereby achieving learning objectives more effectively (Handika et al., 2021). The use of visual media such as images and videos motivates students to engage in projects while stimulating creativity. Student learning activities have shown improvement through the application of project-based learning models, leading to better learning outcomes (Hidayah et al., 2023; Darmayoga & Suparya, 2021).

Diversity, recognized as a fundamental reality that must be collectively maintained and preserved, serves as a key factor in ensuring Indonesia's national stability (Harmaen, 2020). The core values examined in this study include obedience to established rules, openness to scientific and technological advancements, empathy toward others, and a willingness to make personal sacrifices (Bhakti et al., 2022; Hidayati et al., 2020; Nurwahyuliningsih & Ramdani, 2024). A new form of collaboration between Pancasila and Civic Education teachers is implemented through the development of creativity within project-based learning activities. Students demonstrate significant variation in academic abilities, regional backgrounds, communication styles, and socioeconomic status. These differences often create divisions among students, leading to the formation of social cliques grounded in shared characteristics and limited openness toward others. Such conditions are inconsistent with the values of Pancasila and the principle of Bhineka Tunggal Ika (Unity in Diversity). They also hinder the effective implementation of inclusive education by limiting students' creativity in project-based learning. Teachers must have a comprehensive understanding of students' academic abilities, as well as their interpersonal and communication skills. Such understanding serves as a crucial basis for teachers in forming learning groups under the project-based learning framework (Hartini et al., 2016; Pantiwati, 2012). An appropriate, engaging, and participatory learning process represents the core of project-based learning (Farihatun & Rusdarti, 2019; Rifai et al., 2019).

Objectives

- To analyze the critical dimensions of project-based learning practices by examining how teacher-assigned projects foster creativity, encourage peer interaction, and enhance students' understanding of their learning environment.
- To evaluate the educational potential of knowledge transfer through classroom discussions by exploring how questionnaire items function as evaluative tools that promote student awareness, reflection, and engagement with environmental issues.
- To situate learning practices within a broader framework of creativity by identifying methodologies, theoretical foundations, and creative themes that connect students to their surrounding environment.

Research Questions
Significance

This study was conducted in five private high schools and one university located in Bandung. It involved Civics Education teachers and lecturers who collaborated in developing learning materials and implementing them through daily classroom activities enriched with role play, discussion, and project-based learning. The Pancasila and Civic Education materials taught in high schools require reinforcement and deeper exploration at the higher education level. Discussions with Pancasila and Civic Education teachers indicated that the materials are interconnected most topics are introduced at the high school level and further examined through more analytical studies in higher education. Analysis of the questionnaire results shows that learning methods incorporating creativity through project-based learning are more effective. This effectiveness can be attributed to the opportunities provided by project-based learning for students to explore diverse sources, discuss ideas, share responsibilities, present findings, and determine project outcomes. The resulting outputs include artistic works, posters, videos, and articles produced using various media, including upcycled and conventional materials. Students demonstrate greater activeness and motivation when granted autonomy in managing discussions and preparing reports, while teachers serve as facilitators rather than direct sources of information. Teachers provide direction and guidance when responding to student inquiries and proactively approach groups that appear uncertain about how to begin their projects. The findings of this study can serve as a reference for implementing inclusive education practices grounded in the concept of Bhineka Tunggal Ika (Unity in Diversity), emphasizing project-based creativity, inclusive curriculum development, and multidisciplinary approaches for sustainable education in the future.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Extensive research on inclusive education reflects the awareness that every individual is unique, and no two people are exactly alike. Differences should neither be contested nor avoided but embraced as opportunities for collaboration. According to Marginson (2016), inclusive education is essential because it fosters mutual respect, equality, and non-discriminatory attitudes among individuals. In an increasingly interconnected world, diversity has become inevitable, as exemplified by Indonesia's highly diverse society. Within such diversity, individuals must recognize the importance of maintaining and preserving it as a foundation for the nation's sustainability (Sari et al., 2024). Education is a fundamental right of every citizen, ensuring that all children have equal opportunities to learn. Inclusive education cannot be implemented sporadically; it must be comprehensively implemented through the collaborative synergy of all stakeholders (Haug, 2017). Such collaboration fosters mutual reinforcement among stakeholders, creating a positive and sustainable educational environment (Andriyan et al., 2022; Collins et al., 2019). Project-Based Learning (PjBL) enables students to master academic content, adapt to challenges, foster creativity, and develop reflective and adaptive mindsets (Wijanti, 2017; Sari, 2018). The teaching and learning paradigm has shifted from valuing evaluative skills to recognizing creativity as the pinnacle of intelligence (Irhamyah, 2019). Therefore, this study emphasizes the integration of diversity values within inclusive education through the concept of creativity as an essential educational framework. Previous studies have shown that the application of Project-Based Learning in schools and universities generates more diverse forms of creativity (Yustia & Suwondo, 2015). This finding indicates that the Project-Based Learning model should be considered an integral part of the curriculum. The emergence of creativity in producing meaningful products is influenced by students' increased attention to time management, work ethic, and critical thinking (Sari & Angeri, 2016; Widyaningrum & Wijayanti, 2019).

Theoretical Framework

This study is grounded in Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, which emphasizes that cognitive development occurs through social interaction and collaborative learning, (Wertsch, James V.Vygotsky, 1985; Kozulin, Alex 1986, McCrone, John 1979) . Learning takes place most effectively when students are guided by more knowledgeable individuals, such as teachers or lecturers, who provide scaffolding during the learning process. The concept of the zone of proximal development highlights the balance between tasks that students can perform independently and those requiring instructional support. Cognitive development is optimized through active interaction with peers and continuous guidance from more experienced individuals.

Literature Gap

This study distinguishes itself from previous research by comprehensively integrating the concept of Bhineka Tunggal Ika the national motto symbolizing Indonesia's diversity as a foundational reference in implementing inclusive education through a project-based learning model. In contrast, previous studies have primarily focused on narrower aspects such as creativity or academic achievement. This study is considered more comprehensive as it examines students' internal motivation, the learning environment shaped by teachers and lecturers, and the actual conditions of inclusive education in schools and universities, all while promoting the values of diversity. With guidance from teachers or lecturers, students begin by identifying their capacities and competencies, including areas of weakness, and then present these reflections to the class. Students are given full autonomy to determine which aspects they wish to present, allowing them to express themselves confidently. This activity fosters mutual listening, respect, and self-awareness, helping students understand that imperfection is a shared human condition. Consequently, such practices reduce the likelihood of bullying, arrogance, and condescending attitudes among students. A student centered learning approach provides opportunities for creativity through communication and interactive collaboration. Students are encouraged to take ownership of their learning by formulating project themes, developing proposals, selecting locations, dividing responsibilities, and defining final outputs. Through this process, students not only master academic content but also practice articulating ideas and listening to diverse perspectives. They learn to accept alternative solutions that may differ from their own, fostering adaptability and openness. Students collaboratively integrate different ideas into tangible outputs such as artwork, posters, papers, videos, or articles. The project-based learning model enables students to engage in collaborative problem solving by connecting theoretical concepts with real-world conditions. This study encourages students to develop greater maturity in their attitudes, listening skills, reasoning, and actions. As a result, attitudes of empathy, knowledge sharing, mutual acceptance, and interdependence are progressively cultivated.

METHOD
Research Approach

This study employs a mixed-methods design that integrates both qualitative and quantitative approaches (Creswell & Creswell, 2023). This approach was chosen to achieve a deeper and more comprehensive understanding of the research problem.

Research Design

Qualitative methods were employed to capture actual field conditions through direct observations conducted in schools and university campuses among students enrolled in citizenship education courses. These courses, typically offered in the second year (semester three), formed part of the study sample. Furthermore, interviews were conducted with teachers, lecturers, and students to gain deeper insights into their experiences and perceptions. The quantitative approach involved

analyzing data obtained from questionnaires distributed to both high school and university students to measure their responses related to project-based learning and inclusivity.

Data Collection

Data collection was carried out in five private high schools and one university located in Bandung, which served as the research sites. Questionnaires were distributed to 234 respondents, consisting of 66% university students and 34% high school students. Observational findings were systematically documented and organized for subsequent analysis, which was essential for accurate data processing and interpretation. Interviews with teachers and lecturers who taught Pancasila and Citizenship Education were conducted concurrently to ensure consistency of understanding regarding the implementation of these subjects. In addition, interviews with students were conducted randomly, involving 10 high school students and 3 university students. A larger number of interviews were conducted with high school students to enhance data validity, as fewer of them completed the questionnaire compared to university students.

Data Analysis

The results of observations, questionnaire analysis, and interviews served as input for focus group discussions involving teachers, lecturers, parents, and students. The questionnaire was carefully designed to effectively reach both high school and university students. A total of 230 responses from both groups were analyzed during the data processing stage. Subsequently, both narrative and descriptive analyses were conducted. Narrative analysis was employed to obtain a comprehensive understanding of participants' experiences derived from multiple qualitative sources. Descriptive analysis, as a statistical method, was applied to present the quantitative data in tables and graphs to provide a clear depiction of its characteristics (Creswell & Clark, 2017; Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

Scope and Limitations

The scope of this study covers student activities conducted in five high schools and one university, assisted by Pancasila and Civic Education teachers and lecturers. The study primarily focused on high school and university students enrolled in Civic Education courses. Project-based learning activities were organized in groups, with teachers or lecturers facilitating group formation when necessary. They also assisted in assigning ungrouped students and ensuring proportional group composition. This approach encouraged students to collaborate with peers beyond their usual circles, thereby promoting inclusivity and interpersonal growth. Each group consisted of approximately five to seven members, depending on the total number of students.

Ethical Considerations

This study directly involves human participants, particularly in observing the interaction process during the assignment of creativity-based tasks within project-based learning activities. All sources and quoted materials used in this research are accurately referenced in accordance with academic standards. Furthermore, the results of the questionnaire analysis are reliable and uphold the principles of academic integrity and validity.

DISCUSSION

1. Challenges in Implementing the Values of Bhineka Tunggal Ika

The greatest challenges in implementing Pancasila values, particularly those emphasizing diversity, are the growing tendencies toward individualism, materialism, and consumerism. To some extent, individualism has become an inherent characteristic among the younger generation. This tendency is evident in social gatherings, where many prefer engaging with their mobile devices rather than interacting directly with peers. Such behavior reflects a growing detachment and a decline in interpersonal closeness. According to interview results, some students expressed discomfort with group assignments due to fears of rejection, being ignored, or being excluded from discussions. They perceived group work as troublesome and time-consuming because it requires discussion, patience, and active listening, while some members tend to take passive roles. These findings indicate a concerning social shift among the younger generation, who tend to show reduced empathy and social engagement, often perceiving interpersonal relationships as unnecessary or burdensome. As the younger generation represents the future leaders of the nation, serious preparation is essential to strengthen their character. National strength is closely linked to the quality and integrity of its human resources (Nopi Nopita Sari et al., 2024). Indonesia is projected to experience a demographic bonus in 2034. To fully benefit from this opportunity, students must develop not only academic intelligence but also soft skills, including emotional resilience and mental well-being. A supportive environment that values participation, active listening, and acceptance can enhance mental health and help prevent bullying.

In response to the government's concern about the shifting values among the younger generation, enrichment programs have been provided for teachers and lecturers of Pancasila and Civic Education. Furthermore, the contribution of teachers and lecturers is reflected in their growing engagement in research activities, with findings increasingly published in accredited journals. The values embodied in Bhineka Tunggal Ika (Unity in Diversity) serve as the social glue that sustains Indonesia's diversity and must be reflected in daily life. As future national leaders, the younger generation must internalize and practice these values, since the ongoing shift in moral and social attitudes poses a potential threat to the nation's sustainability. Based on responses from 233 participants, the results indicate a high level of awareness and enthusiasm toward unity as a fundamental value sustaining national cohesion. This awareness is reflected in their active participation in national activities such as seminars, Independence Day celebrations, and community assistance efforts, which received relatively high response rates. Approximately seventy-five percent of respondents agreed, twenty-three percent strongly agreed, and the remainder were undecided. To gain deeper insights and experiences, in-depth interviews were conducted with several students, covering themes such as diversity, tolerance, equality, mutual cooperation, and justice.

Table 1
Table on socio-cultural inclusive education through creativity-based project learning

Socio-Cultural Theory	Principles of Inclusive Education	Project-Based Learning	Concept of Creativity	Final Results/Output
Interact independently	Everyone has the same opportunities	Create a collaborative learning project about a specific ethnic culture in Indonesia (group)	Tabulate the interests of each group, followed by task distribution	Group presentations and poster making

Communicate and engage in dialogue with guidance from the teacher/instructor	Everyone is equal before God	Divide group members according to their religious beliefs	Each group member writes a narrative about their religion	Create a short video or create article
Not as an obstacle or hindrance	Accept and respect everyone	Stay part of the school/class community	Share various real-life experiences	Products/artwork that provide education/have commercial value
Collaborate	Collaborate	Synergize	In line with local conditions	Can be in the form of neighborhood watch equipment/gateways
Helping selflessly	Not everything has to bring profit	Sincerity is the initial capital		Scientific articles summarized from the experiences of each group member
Part of the culture	Non-discriminatory	Each student is assigned a task to complete	Create a simple task description for each group member	Products from a specific region that are documented. Can be selected from the region of origin of one of the group members
Collaboration	Teamwork	Diversity of real conditions in the field	Tabulation of factors that strengthen unity	Video or Poster
Appreciating differences as a form of love for the homeland	All human beings deserve respect	Every student can provide a real example that diversity is beautiful	The examples mentioned are created in pictures/paintings/melodies	Products/artworks/videos about the beauty of diversity

The table above serves as a reference for developing students' creativity. The ability to evaluate, once regarded as the highest form of intelligence, has now shifted toward creativity as its ultimate expression (Fahmi Irhamsyah, 2019). Creativity encompasses both creative thinking and creative action (Lufri et al., 2020), enabling individuals to produce educational and socially beneficial outcomes (Suryandari et al., 2018). The more students engage in learning processes that motivate and nurture creativity, the deeper their understanding becomes regarding the importance of preserving diversity as a foundation for national sustainability. Active participation in project-based learning can also help students avoid negative peer influences, including bullying and substance abuse.

2. Reviving Diversity as a Necessity

Interviews conducted after project-based learning guided by Pancasila and civics teachers revealed that students felt more enlightened, reflective, and open to diversity. The concept of diversity here includes not only identity-based aspects such as religion and ethnicity but also differences in intellectual abilities, communication styles, and interpersonal relationships. Students were asked to write their thoughts when collaborating with peers outside their usual social circles, and most expressed feelings of discomfort, pressure, nervousness, hesitation, and compulsion. As a follow-up, each student was instructed to write a short self introduction essay describing their strengths, weaknesses, hobbies, and aspirations. Should they feel uncomfortable, students were allowed to describe their weaknesses in general terms without providing specific details. To encourage more objective and thoughtful reflections, students were given one week to complete the assignment. The activity was designed to help students realize that no one is perfect. Students were encouraged to write their essays by hand to improve handwriting skills and foster writing habits. In the following week, each student presented their self-introduction in front of the class. Initially, some students felt awkward, as this form of self-introduction was considered unconventional. Typically, introductions are limited to basic personal information such as name, address, birthplace, ethnicity, and religion. It is uncommon for introductions to include elements such as personal strengths, weaknesses, or preferences in academic subjects. The teacher or lecturer emphasized the importance of fostering mutual understanding and collaboration, as students would be working together for an extended period one year for school students and one semester for university students.

Table 2
Activities That Build Closeness

No	Activity	Student response	Meaning of the activity
1	Each student introduced themselves in front of the class by providing additional information beyond their personal identity	Initially hesitant, but after the purpose and objectives were explained, they were willing to do it	Getting to know classmates better fosters sympathy and empathy
2	The teacher formed groups and assigned names to the group members	Wow, why not let them choose their own group members?	Students learn to step out of their comfort zone and make new friends
3	Collaborate with students who are known but not close (not part of the same circle/group)	Feeling uncomfortable, nervous, confused about how to start a conversation	Students open up and are willing to collaborate with everyone
4	Writing about themselves (strengths, weaknesses, hobbies/interests) and things they dislike, then presenting it in front of the class	Students write additional information about their strengths and weaknesses, to the extent that they feel comfortable sharing	Basically, everyone has strengths and weaknesses. Working together will complement each other
5	Determine the subheadings for the main title "The True Form of Love for the Homeland"	Some wrote: 1. August 17th Committee 2. National Songwriting Competition 3. Making August 17 decorations from	Stimulate the creativity of students and university students in group discussions and remind them that the titles should not be the

		recycled materials 4. Singing national songs 5. Wearing Traditional Clothing from Each Region 6. Environmental Cleanliness 7. Documenting patriotic films 8. Using domestic products 9. Honoring the services of heroes 10. Anti-bullying awareness 11. National Figure Drawing Contest 12. Coloring contest for elementary school students and kindergarteners 13. Making collages for upper elementary school students 14. Poster-making competition on environmental cleanliness 15. Poster about the Importance of Saving Energy 16. Video on the wise use of clean water	same. After determining the subtitles from the main titles that have been determined periodically, teachers/lecturers accompany the follow-up of the papers, the stages towards the selected outcomes.

3. Values of Tolerance

This section summarizes the discussion related to the values of tolerance. Students and university students indicated that the most sensitive issue in interpersonal relationships among individuals from diverse backgrounds is religion. Discussions concerning religious matters are often avoided, as they may lead to tension or misunderstanding among participants. This sensitivity may stem from differing levels of religious commitment and interpretation. Consequently, religion remains a sensitive topic, particularly when addressing aspects that are not well understood by the participants.

Discussing religion is not yet fully accepted by all parties. Discussions related to the concept of God can become particularly sensitive if teachers or lecturers are not able to maintain neutrality and sensitivity in addressing religious diversity. Students suggested that classroom discussions should focus on normative aspects, as most participants were Muslim while others represented different faiths. Teachers or lecturers who take a neutral stance tend to facilitate open discussions on religion without engaging in debates or arguments. Religion is a personal conviction that is explicitly protected under Article 29 of the 1945 Constitution. During classroom discussions,

students expressed that they felt confident to share their perspectives objectively, drawing from personal experiences or observations. Educational background and social environment play a crucial role in shaping an individual's mindset and worldview (Anandari, 2024). The presence of lecturers and teachers as moderators or facilitators contributes positively to maintaining a balanced classroom environment. Nearly all interviewees (ten high school students and three university students) preferred discussing topics other than religion.

The results of the questionnaires and interviews showed contrasting findings. In the questionnaires, most respondents strongly agreed on the importance of cooperation, openness to differences, and willingness to collaborate with unfamiliar peers. They also reported active participation in national activities such as seminars, flag ceremonies, competitions, and committee work. However, during the interviews, it became evident that most students preferred working with familiar peers, and thus, teacher- or lecturer-assigned group formations were initially met with reluctance. Likewise, participation in national commemorations such as Independence Day, Heroes' Day, and Youth Pledge Day was often driven by a sense of obligation rather than intrinsic motivation, partly due to disappointment with the lack of inspiring role models. Through the interviews, researchers obtained deeper insights into the students' genuine reflections and expectations regarding the learning process. Students generally perceived project-based learning as enjoyable because it was less theoretical and allowed them to express their ideas freely. They appreciated the opportunity for mutual learning within diverse groups, as the activities often took place beyond the classroom setting. Some students demonstrated strong communication skills, articulating their views clearly and confidently. Others excelled in information gathering, drawing, or documenting group processes systematically. However, a few exhibited impatience, interrupted discussions, or showed frustration when their ideas were not accommodated. These experiences provided valuable lessons that offered deeper meaning beyond theoretical understanding.

CONCLUSION

The values of diversity must be preserved and strengthened, as they form the foundation of Indonesia's national identity and social cohesion. These values encompass nationalism, unity, mutual respect, and appreciation. These principles are integral to inclusive education, which aligns closely with and reinforces the spirit of diversity. High school and university students need space and opportunities for self-discovery understanding their strengths and weaknesses to better appreciate and accept others. The study revealed that students require practical, real-life examples rather than theoretical explanations alone, as well as guidance, role models, and facilitators to support their growth. They particularly value alignment between theoretical learning and real-world application. While the role of teachers and lecturers remains essential, the primary emphasis should be on student-centered learning. Integrating the values of Bhinneka Tunggal Ika into inclusive education through a project-based learning model can enhance students' initiative, public-speaking confidence, and creativity. Creativity represents the pinnacle of the teaching and learning process. However, creativity cannot flourish without opportunities for collaboration and synergy among students. When provided with clear guidance and opportunities, numerous ideas and innovative concepts emerged from each group. This creativity was reflected in their willingness to share knowledge and experiences, organize tasks, write reports, and determine project outcomes collaboratively. Project-based learning fostered stronger social bonds and a sense of joy, as students felt recognized and accepted within their groups. Such a sense of belonging may also reduce the likelihood of negative behaviors, including bullying and substance abuse. Therefore, project-based learning must be carefully designed and structured by teachers and lecturers before implementation.

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