

## Emotional Intelligence as A Key to Reduce Academic Stress among Adolescence Student

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### Abstract

*Since the 1990s, the subject of Emotional Intelligence has gradually become the concern of Academics are researchers for the impact on stress. Stress is a way that our body responds to the demands made upon us by the environment, our relationships, and our perceptions and interpretations of those demands. We all experience both "good stress" and "bad stress." Good stress is that optimal amount of stress that results in our feeling energized and motivated to do our best work. Good stress encourages us to develop effective coping strategies to deal with our challenges, which ultimately contributes to our resilience. Bad stress occurs when our coping mechanisms are overwhelmed by the stress and we do not function at our best. The same event can affect adolescence in very individual ways—one person may see a carnival ride as thrilling and another may see it as a major stressor. Stress can become distress when we are unable to cope or when we believe that we do not have the ability to meet the challenge. The solution is to adapt, change, and find methods to turn that bad stress into good stress is by developing emotional intelligence. The aim of this paper is to describe how emotional intelligence help to reduce stress among adolescence.*

**Keywords:** *Emotional Intelligence, good stress, bad stress, effective coping strategies, stressor.*

We are at the beginning of a new century and intelligence and success are not views the same way they were before. New theories of intelligence have been introduced and are gradually replacing the traditional theory. The whole students have become the center of concern, not only his reasoning capacities, but also his creativity, emotion and interpersonal skills. The multiple intelligence theory has been introduced by Howard Gardner (1983) and the emotional intelligence theory by Mayer and Solvay (1990) then Goleman (1995). IQ alone is no more the only measure for success, emotional intelligence; social intelligence and luck also play a big role in the person success and adjustment Goleman (1995).

Mayer and Salovey (1993) assert that, emotional intelligence is the ability to monitor one's own and others feelings and emotions to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide one's thinking and action and promote emotion and intellectual growth. Caruso and Wolfe (2004) define emotional intelligence as the ability to perceive emotions, access and generate emotions so as to assist thought, understand emotions and emotional knowledge and reflectively regulate emotions so as to promote emotional and intellectual growth Sibia et al. (2005) have developed the measure of emotional intelligence in the Indian dimensions of emotional intelligence i.e., identifying, assimilating, understanding and managing emotions with the components of emotional intelligence discerned in the Indian context-social sensitivity, prosocial interaction, action tendencies, and affective states. In other words, it is a set of skills that enables the person to make their way in a complex world – the personal, social and survival aspects of overall intelligence, the elusive common sense and sensitivity that are essential to effective daily functioning. Psychologists are studying the different aspect of emotional intelligence. They are studying the phenomenon on different categories of people.

Adolescent is the period of rapid changes in terms of physical, emotional and social aspects of life. One of the major and serious problems of adolescents is of aggression which forces them to do destructive things like, taking drugs, homicidal and suicidal tendencies. The source of such acts is emotional disturbance, lack of good interpersonal relationship, unhappy, relationship with parents, family and school.

### Stress

Stress is a common phenomenon of everyday life. All of us experience stress to some degree in one or another from throughout lives, however some forms of stress are pathological and leads to development of wide variety of

symptoms and disorder. Prolonged exposure to stress leads to wide variety of physiological changes that may affect our health and functioning.

The problem of stress an adjustment is widely seen as a social crisis as well as a problem of individual behavior. When an individual does not succeed in his work regularly then he comes under the area of stress and maladjustment. The concept of emotional intelligence can be used effectively in solving these problems and helps the individual to adjust in the society. In the recent years, the great interest in emotional intelligence on the part of corporations, universities and schools have seen. The idea of emotional intelligence has inspired research and curriculum development throughout these facilities to improve educational curriculum and incorporate these principles into everybody learning for students. Building one's emotional intelligence has a lifelong impact. Many parents and educators, alarmed by increasing levels of conflict in young school children from low self-esteem to early drug and alcohol use to depression, are rushing to teach students the skills necessary for emotional intelligence. And in corporations, the inclusion of emotional intelligence in training programs has helped employees co-operate better and motivate more, thereby increasing productivity and profits, researches have concluded that people who manage their own feelings well and deal effectively with others are more likely to live content lives. Plus, happy people are more apt to retain information and do so more effectively than unsatisfied people.

Common observations of the investigator and the articles in the newspaper and magazines indicate that anxiety is high in adolescence. Now a day's depression and suicide cases are much high because of anxiety provoking situation which led researchers to undertake this topic in order to get a clear picture of anxiety difference, if any, associated with anxiety. Nevertheless, it is important to investigate the nature and range of anxiety among adolescent boys and girls. This may help the adolescents to overcome anxiety. With increasing complexity of our life style, the level of stress has been increasing at a phenomenal rate. As early as in 14th century, the term stress was used to denote hardship, strain, adversity and affliction (Lubusden, 1981). In 17th century, Hooke used the word stress in the context of physical science (Hinkle, 1973). But its scientific meaning was, in fact, given in early 20th century, stress is the process that occurs in response to the situations or events (called stressors) that disrupt or threaten to disrupt our physical, or psychological functioning (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984; Taylor, 1995; Pestonjee, 1992; Baron, 2002), in fact, stress is a many faceted process that occurs in reaction to events or situations in the environment called stressors. Although we normally think stress to be coming from negative events in our lives, positive events such as getting married or receiving an unexpected job promotion can also produce stress (Brown & McGill, 1989).

Making a survey of definitions of stress, Cox (1978) has described three classes of definitions. Stress can be thought of as a response (that is, stress response to an extreme stimulus) as a stimulus (that is, as a stressor itself) and as an intervening variable emphasizing upon the interaction between individual and environment. A good example of response definitions is one given by Selye (1950) who defined stress as a nonspecific response of the body to any demand. Characteristically, such response definitions lack the emotional component usually associated with stress. This emotional component is also lacking in stimulus definitions as that given by Levi (1987) who defined stress as conditions causing body to readapt. It can be said that here the term stress and stressor are used synonymously. In addition to these two definitions, stress is defined as intervening variable whose meaning comes closest to the everyday meaning of the term. In fact, such definitions give emphasis upon the individuals' perceptions of the demands made by the environment demands do not match, stress arises. Recent researches have shown that like the natural directions (east, west, south and north) stress has four directions: enstress, distress, hypostress and hyper stress.

### **Stressors among Adolescence**

The adolescence is a period which is full of pressure, stress, strain, storm and strife because it is a diversifying stage. Adolescence is a period of transformation from childhood to adulthood. The term youth, teenager or adolescent have been various used and defined but broadly to mean a large chunk of humanity which is marching towards the roles full of responsibility. This march is full of dreams, ideas, ambitions, achievement of promise of one side and problem, disillusionments, frustration, break-downs and stress on the other hand side.

As a transition period, adolescence is generally characterized by significant psychological, cognitive and emotional changes due to pubertal development, social role definition, cognitive development, school transitions and

emergence of sexuality and psychological – developmental tasks such separation – individuation from parents, the search for identity, and the search for intimate relationships (Eccles et al. 1993). Factors that may interrupt this process may lead to the emergence of various form of loneliness in adolescence (Williams, 1983). Viewing adolescence as a “dynamic social construction”, the volume by

Borman& Schneider (1998) explores the state of adolescence in the context of rapid social change. The articles in volume reveal a recurrent theme: no matter how adolescence is defined, the establishment of identity and the search for autonomy remain central developmental tasks of the adolescence years; change in the various social contexts in which teenagers live- family, school, community, peer group- can significantly affect the progress of teens male in these critical tasks. Also there are different expectations and roles which this change will bring, such as the transition from being a student to taking steps to one’s future career and the transition from adolescence to early adulthood. Thus, adolescence who are going through this transition comprise a major risk group.

The school going student of today are an army of boys and girls having undergone a dramatically speeded up physical metamorphosis from childhood to adulthood. Students of tenth class are in early adolescents’ period. They are often fatigued, anxious and under emotional stress.

Modern age is called the age of anxiety. Adults themselves feel lost, confused and lack of direction. So, adolescents who are also driven by the thrust of puberty are likely to repudiate adult values. They may show meaningless and destructive behavior as they are surrounded by various stresses. The stresses start pouring in as a result of the misunderstood physical growth, failure to understand their significant and specific motivation alterations. Along with this there is change in social roles during the adolescence. So adolescence is exposed to social stress. And equally serious appear to be the stress posed by examination and a misinformed vocational and educational choice resulting into deep frustrating experiences. These stressors are responsible for low self-esteem among adolescent students, increase in antisocial behavior, rise in anxiety, drug abuse and even to the extent of suicide.

The first and foremost stress in students is created by parental or family pressure to perform and stand out among other children. When they cannot rise up to that expectation, or during the process of meeting it, children may suffer from frustration, physical stress, aggression, undesirable complexes, and depression. Students who are under performers, develop negative traits such as shyness, unfriendliness, jealous, and may retreat into their own world to become loners. The students generally studying in the schools or colleges found academic stress, many a times we have seen and read the news that student commit suicide after securing poor performance in the result.

### **Academic**

Universities and colleges are called academic institutions. There was a time when academic meant “**pertaining to the development of mind**”. Now a day, it seems to mean “**anything that occurs in a school**”.

» in certain quarters people seem to assume that anything that can be taught and anything must be consciously learned is academic.

» **that is an example of the confusion that clouds the entire educational scene.**

» academic credit should not be awarded for skills, even though skills are a necessary requirement for developing and using the power of mind. If educational institutions were to adopt this principle, the reforms I advocate would be complete.

### **Academic Stress**

Academic stress is mental distress with respect to some anticipated frustration associated with academic failure or even unawareness to the possibility of such failure. Students have to face many academic demands, for example, school examination, answering questions in the class, showing progress in school subjects. Understanding what the teacher is teaching, competing with other class mates, fulfilling teachers and parent’s academic expectations. These demands may tax or exceed available resources of the students. As a consequence, they can be under stress, since the demand is related to achievement of an academic goal. So, academic related to the achievement of an academic goal.

Bisht (1989) has defined academic stress as a demand related to academics that tax or exceed the available resources (internal or external) as cognitively appeared by the student involved. According to her, academic stress reflects perception of individual's academic frustration, academic conflict, academic pressure and academic anxiety.

She has given the definition of four components of academic stress as follows:

- 1- Academic Frustration: - Academic frustration is a state caused by harm of some academic goals.
- 2- Academic Conflict: - Academic Conflict is the result of two or more mutually incompatible response tendencies to academic goals.
- 3- Academic Pressure: - When the student is under heavy demands of time and energy to meet academic goals.
- 4- Academic Anxiety: - Apprehension of harm to some academic goals.

Academic Stress is an important factor accounting for variation in academic achievement. It also contributes to major mental health hazards, problems both physical and mental stress related diseases.

### **Why should School be so stressful?**

School is supposed to be a place where young children are exposed to new, interesting learning environment. That's supposed to be enjoyable up to some extent. And of course, they besides learning make new friends and hang out with them, having the time of their young life. Unfortunately, it isn't that simple for most of them where there is fun, there are responsibilities and expectations that kick in. The homework piles up on desks, textbooks are flipped through and testing deadlines dreaded. All of this and more (sports, extra-curricular activities etc.) can put the burgeoning stress on even the smartest, straight A student. Practically everyone has it; it's not uncommon. At times, one wonders why we put stress on us, we certainly did, but then a crazy realization felt by me, as much as we hate stress, we need it. Not now, but to prepare us, physically and mentally, for the future. You, as a high school student, imagine yourself in college. The same stress will be brought upon you by midterm and the same academic expectations, probably even greater than before. Obviously, you'll have to cop up with that. Then there is your job after your graduation. Just because there won't be any SATs or AP classes to taught you any more, it doesn't mean that there won't be stress. Whatever your job will be there'll probably be a boss who'll pressurize you about deadlines and tasks, just like your teacher did back in school. Thinking about this doesn't really bring a smile to your face, but that's just how our society works. After all that is said and done, I am not justifying the academic stress because students feel the same right now. Certainly isn't the feeling making them happy, as they would be in school. However, one has to admit that it definitely prepares you for the future.

### **Academic stress and suicide cases**

In a recent TIME, magazine article, during the past four decades, the suicide has become the second leading cause death among college students. It is hard to investigate the actual causes of college suicides because while the statistics are rising and a few shocking stories have caught our attention, the number of deaths at any given school is very small and thus in death inquiries are very seldom done, but there are several factors which can increase the risk of suicide substantially. Foreign students are more prone to suicide than natives because many of them become isolated. They often can't find any familiar cultural or family ties in their new environment and thus concentrate solely on their work. Those with suicidal tendencies may be more difficult to recognize in a college setting because instead of being impulsive and out of control, college students who are suicidal tend to be withdrawn, quiet, and to draw little attention to themselves. Those students, who move beyond depression to suicide, may fantasize of a better world waiting for them. They are often very resistant to seeking help because they see it as a weakness.

### **Physical and Emotional Changes**

As if that wasn't enough, they have to deal with all this while undergoing rapid physical and emotional changes and without the benefit of life experience. But on the positive side, these challenges are perfect for developing what many experts believe is more important than IQ in predicting future success in work, personal and financial life. The 'Emotional Quotient' or 'EQ'. The EQ includes: awareness of one's emotions, strengths and limits, developing self-esteem, taking responsibility, having empathy for others, self-control, and setting high standards while being

persistent in the face of obstacles. Here are some other skills that will help students thrive at high school and beyond:

Learn to balance the demands on your time. Plan well in advance (leaving time to just nag out!), get organized—and fight procrastination. With a vivid ahead of school—work from day one – does it first, limit T.V. and refuse to waste 20 hours a week working to buy stuff you don't really need.

### **What is emotional intelligence?**

Emotional intelligence has in recent years, been popularized, and the research into its many components has multiplied. Yet this is a field that has much uncharted territory. It is the latest developments in understanding the relations between reason and emotion. The concept has its roots in the concept of “social intelligence”. Thorndike (1920) defines it as “the ability to understand and manage men and women, boys and girls-to act wisely in human relations.” The intelligence theories grouped under three clusters (Ruisel, 1992) refer to (i) abstract intelligence (the ability to understand and manipulate with verbal and mathematics symbols); (ii) concrete intelligence (the ability to understand and manipulate with objects), and (iii) social intelligence (the ability to understand and relate to people). Gardner (1983) includes inter and intrapersonal intelligences comprising intelligence in his theory of multiple intelligences: Interpersonal intelligence is the ability to understand other people: what motivates them, how they work, how to work cooperatively with them. Successful sales people, politicians, teachers, clinicians and religious leaders are all likely to be individuals with high degree of interpersonal intelligence. Interpersonal intelligence..... Is a correlative ability, turned inward? It is the capacity to form an accurate, veridical model of one and to be able to use that model to operate effectively in life. Emotional intelligence, is thus viewed as, “a form of social intelligence that involves the ability to monitor one's own and others' emotions, to discriminate among them, and to use the information to guide one's thinking and actions” (Mayer and Salovey,1993) which can be categorized into five domains:

- **Self-awareness** – Observing own and recognizing a feeling as it happens.
- **Managing emotions** – Handling feelings so that they are appropriate; realizing what is behind a feeling; finding ways to handle fears and anxieties, anger and sadness.
- **Motivating oneself** – challenging emotions in the service of a goal; emotional self-control; delaying gratification and stifling impulses.
- **Empathy** – Sensitivity to others' feelings and concerns and taking their perspective; appreciating the differences in how people feel about things.
- **Handling relationships** – Managing emotions in others; social competence and social skills.

It may be noted that self-awareness (interpersonal intelligence), empathy and handling relationships (interpersonal intelligence are essentially dimensions of social intelligence, whereas managing emotions and motivating oneself are from psychomotor domain. Thus, emotional intelligence represents an alternative grouping of tasks to social intelligence. On one hand, emotional intelligence is broader than social intelligence, including not only reasoning about the emotions in social relationships, but also reasoning about internal emotions that are important for personal (as opposed to social) growth. On the other hand, emotional intelligence is more focused than social intelligence in that it pertains primarily to the emotional (but not necessarily verbal) problems embedded in personal and social problems.

### **Stress and Emotional Intelligence**

EI has also been found to present a different definition of psychological well-being. It has been suggested that emotionally intelligent persons represent better ability for problem-solving and for managing stress, more pulse control and a more positive attitude towards oneself and others implying greater enjoyment of life, resulting in psychological well-being (Dupertuis and Garrido, 1998). High EI is thought to be a protective factor for mental and physical health (Parker et al., 2001). Also, EI is found to be related to peoples' ability to manage their moods, but not to their ability to prevent moods from biasing their judgments (Ciarrochi et al., 2000). People with high levels of

emotional awareness were found to be less likely than others to show mood congruent biases in their judgments (Ciarrochi et al., 2003).

### **Characteristics of Emotions in Adolescence**

1. Complexity. By the age a child reaches in adolescence, he experiences a number of emotional upheavals and storms. His emotional development becomes complex by the experiences he gets in his environment. We cannot understand an adolescent by the overt emotional expression, but we have to fathom deep to understand him, the adolescent learns to conceal his true emotional experience.
2. Development of abstract emotions. Generally, children show emotional expression in relation to concrete objects but adolescents can express their emotional feelings in relation to objects which are abstract or which are not present in concrete form.
3. Emotional feelings are widened. As the child grows he starts taking account of past and imagines of future and thus we can expect him to become more patient and able to tolerate delay. He gets pleasures from what he expects in future. There is great shift in his social sphere. Now he starts making friendship with his classmates. The sphere of his social relation increases. He starts appreciating elder and younger people. Sometimes he is emotionally attached with a hero of his choice who may be a historical figure, politicians, heroine or hero and other leader according to whose principles he wants to shape his life.
4. Bearing of tensions. Adolescents develop competencies to bear the tensions in different social situations. The emphasis is on self-control. The adolescents feel a kind of inner freedom, freedom to feel and experience, in an intimate personal way.
5. Capacity of sharing emotions. The adolescents develop the concern about the feelings of others and an increased capacity for sharing emotional experiences with others. In childhood, children are not able to control their emotions. Sharing of emotional experiences reaches its fullest development when an adolescent is able to relate himself to another person in such a way that the satisfaction of the person is just as important as his own. It means he begins to love his neighbors as much as himself.
6. Loyalties expand. Emotional development begins from the home environment of the infant and during adolescence it is expanded beyond home and neighborhood. These loyalties are identified with peers and leaders of various fields.
7. Realism in emotional experiences. Now the child enters the period of reality. An adolescent can perceive and appreciate people around him. He recognizes the weakness and strength of one's character.
8. Reviewing of hopes and aspirations. Adolescence is the period of life when one has high hopes and aspirations for his future life. Some adolescents work realistically to achieve their expectations and others do little to realize their hopes, they remain in illusion, and in the world of day dreams and flights of fancy which make them unrealistic.
9. Toleration of aloneness. The adolescents develop a feeling of aloneness. Sometimes they like to be alone in their homes.

### **Common Emotional Patterns in Adolescents**

Emotions develop out of feeling of excitement in two channels from the early childhood: delight and distress as love, affection and fear, anger and hostility. We will examine development of emotions during adolescence.

**Love and Affection:** The emotion of love is very important in adolescents and is related to sexual impulse. It is the result of consequences of physiological disturbances, the emotion of love and affection develops from the very

infancy in the life of the organism. In infancy love and affection develops from the very infancy in the life of the organism. In infancy love and affection develop in concrete objects of his environment, inanimate and animate but in adolescence emotion of love and affection is associated with people and only occasionally with pets. The adolescent is able to discriminate people with whom he likes to associate and build up an affectionate association. Gilliland reports that childhood loves are not sexual in nature but in adolescence love becomes a source of pleasure. The circle of persons becomes narrow. The adolescents become very closely attached with one another because of intense feeling of love. The associations made in this period are lasting. The maturation of sex is the chief source of newness in the lives of adolescents. Most of his conversation centers round the sex and its problems.

**Joy, Pleasure and Delight.** During adolescence, physical condition is one of the sources of joy and pleasure.

The first cause of the joy is one in which the individual fits, or to which, by virtue of his capacities and abilities, he is well-adjusted.

The second situation which calls forth joy in the adolescent is the release of pent-up energy, the more intense the pent-up energy and the longer it has been bottled up in the individual, the stronger will be the release when it finally does take place.

The third common cause of happiness in adolescent is the feeling of superiority. Every adolescent feels insecure and uncertain in life, any situation that is opposite to these feelings, gives happiness. Passing the examination in first division, being elected to students union, and being declared first in athlete, sports or contest, gives feelings of superiority to adolescents.

**Worry.** Worry is an imaginary fear. It is caused by a repeated rehearsal of the situation feared. It is referred by some psychologists as 'anxiety' an emotional state in which the disturbing situations does not accompany the state, but is anticipated in the future. The adolescents have the following types of worries:

1. School work.
2. Examination and test.
3. School problems as favoritism by the teacher, unreasonable homework, lack of ability to concentrate, not knowing how to study, worry of failure, and inadequacies related to 'their sex role.'
4. Home worries. Lack of understanding between adolescents and parents, illness of parents, difficulty in marriage, friends' health, problem of money, personality weakness.

**Fear:** Fear is an important negative emotion. No systematic work has been done on fears of adolescents in Indian conditions. Fear is learned from the environment in which a child moves. No generalized conclusions can be drawn as the objects of fear during adolescence. Some categories of objects are listed below which may cause fear.

1. Fear of material objects. Snakes, dogs, strange noise, lions, elephants, aero planes.
2. Social relationships.
  - a. Meeting with people in high offices.
  - b. Being with elders.
  - c. Reciting in the class or speaking from the platform.
  - d. Being alone in a room.
  - e. Meeting with the members of the opposite sex.

Fear decreases with the advancing age of the child in number and intensity.

**Anger:** Anger is also a learned response to environment stimuli. It is social in nature. Hebb writing about the nature and source of anger and fear, says, "The fundamental source of either emotion is of the same kind, a disruption of coordinated cerebral activity. Fight and aggression are two different modes of reaction tending to restore the dynamic equilibrium, or stability; of cerebral process.....each of these modes of response tends to restore integrated cerebral action."

- a. Failure of material object.
- b. Teasing by teacher, parents, elders, peers.
- c. Being unfairly treated.
- d. Sarcastic remarks, encroachment of his rights by brothers or sisters.

- e. Thwarting of self-assertions, insulting remarks, unwelcome advice, not being invited to a party and failure in activities undertaken.

### **Importance in Education**

1. Emotions are of great value for the teacher. Out of emotional appeals develop sentiments, ideals, purposes and interests. They relieve of the monotony of a highly perfect machine, making life uninteresting and a dead affair. A teacher, therefore, can achieve greater success in his work by arousing emotions of the children. Without emotional appeal the lesson cannot be interesting and an uninteresting lesson will remain ineffective. Thus, emotions are a good medium of arousing interest in the school work.
2. Sometimes, they make greater achievements possible. When emotionally excited, children can do extraordinary things. The teacher should utilize this fact in school work.
3. Strong emotions may help to break up some other crude and undesirable emotions.
4. They give a quality to personality and form its emotional basis. Temperaments of the pupils are largely controlled by the degree of emotionality and adjust his teaching and behavior accordingly.
5. Emotions are strong motivating forces of actions. The teacher should arouse right type of emotions in children, preparing subjective conditions of the pupils for the learning.
6. Taste regarding things, desirable values, virtues and subjects of learning is possible to be cultivated through emotional training and their proper stimulation and control. Transfer value of the teaching depends upon successful emotional appeal.
7. The finest flower of character which is the fundamental aim of education is the product of fine growth of emotions. The teacher should begin well with the emotions in order to achieve success in this direction.

Research in brain-based learning suggests that emotional health is fundamental to effective learning. According to a report from the National Centre for clinical infant programs, the most critical element for a student's success in the school is and understanding of how to learn from "Emotional Intelligence" by Daniel Goleman. The key ingredients for this understanding are: -

- Confidence
- Curiosity
- Intentionally
- Self-control
- Relatedness
- Capacity to communicate
- Ability to co-operate

These traits are all aspects of emotional intelligence. Traits those are key in personal and professional development and becoming successful. Basically, a student who learns is much more apt to succeed. Emotional intelligence has proven a better predictor of future success than traditional methods like the GPA, IQ and standardized test scores.

Studies by Oginska et al. (2005), Matthews et al. (2006), Montes-Berges et al., (2007) and Naidoo and Pau (2008) in different classes of samples revealed the importance of Emotional Intelligence in deciding the Coping Strategies and controlling Stress. The studies revealed that Emotional Intelligence can control and predict Coping Strategies and Stress. Emotional Intelligence is an integral part of individual functioning and development. It is intricately and intimately related to the intelligent interaction between the individual and the environment, and coping with stressful situations successfully.

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