Employee’s Motivation in Rural Local Governments in Tanzania: Empirical Evidence from Morogoro District Council

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Abstract

Human resources apart from other resources in an organization are the most valuable resource for effective organizational performance. Organization either public or private is highly depends on employee’s performance and commitment towards achieving organizational goals. Employee’s commitment is associated with employee’s motivation at workplace and depends highly on how management treats employees. The purpose of this paper was to analyze employee’s motivation in rural Local Government Authorities (LGAs) in Tanzania. The case study design was employed in which Morogoro District Council (MDC) was randomly selected as a study case. The sample size of the study was 55 employees from management, middle and lower levels. The methods of data collection used includes, Interview and self-administered questionnaires and observations. Data collected was analyzed through Statistical Packages for Social Science (SPSS). The study revealed that employees in local governments are not motivated in both financial and non financial aspects. Employees are dissatisfied with low salaries, lack of promotion and career development, poor training program, working environment, poor communication, unfair treatments and political interferences. The study recommends for the central government to improve salaries to employees, ensure fair promotion based on merits, invest in employee training and development, secure low rates loans, improve communication and relations between management and employees as well as to minimize political interference to local government employees by elected officials.

Keywords: local governments, employees motivation, local government reform, local government staff
1. Introduction

Human resource management as a profession regards human resources “people” as crucial assert in an organization (Luthan, 2011). As an organizational resource, people must be utilized for the success of an organization. Utilization of human resource depends much in employee’s job satisfaction and commitment to achieve organizational targets. Employee commitment will be achieved if employees are motivated and improve their morale toward organizational performance. Low motivation has negative impacts on employee performance and contributes a lot in increasing labour turn over in public services (Ngowi, 2015, Buberwa, 2015). Motivation is defined as situation of willingness of an employee to contribute high level of effort toward her/his work, conditioned by the capacity of the effort to satisfy the employee’s personal needs as well as personal environment (Buberwa, 2015) URT (2010).

The sources of employee’s motivation can be either intrinsic or extrinsic and differ from one employee to another. Intrinsic motivation refers to psychological related rewards such as the opportunity to use one’s ability, positive recognition, and a sense of challenge in work, and opportunities for advancement (Robbin, 2010, Gupta, 2014). Extrinsic motivation refers to those tangible rewards and in most cases related to financial incentives such as good salaries, fringe benefits, bonus, promotion and good working environment (Buberwa, 2015). There is greater link between employee’s motivation and organizational performance, to support the argument Ngowi (2015) in his study on determinants and challenges of health workers motivation in Rural Tanzania revealed that low motivation to employees has negative impacts on their performance and increase labour turn over. He recommended that local governments have to design a promotional schedule, improve recognition, improve employee’s training and liaise with the government on the possibility on increase salaries to those employees who are underpaid.

Local Government Authorities (LGAs) in Tanzania have been criticised for poor performance and ineffective social services delivery (Njunwa, 2003). In most local governments, citizens express their disappointment with local government performance. They always complain on the performance and accountability of local government staff to the local needs. Citizens complain on poor quality of the development projects implemented under the local governments and mostly the complaints consider the way local government staff fail to perform their duties effectively. The experiences show that employees in local government engaged themselves in unethical practices such as corruption and mismanagement of the public funds (Shillingi, 2017). There have been several local government job vacancy advertisements that have remained unfilled due to lack of qualified applicants. Moreover, there have been cases of local government employees resigning from the local government authorities in order to seek employment in the central government as well as the private sectors.

In realizing the importance of employee’s motivation, the government of Tanzania established various strategies and policies to improve working conditions for public servants. In early 1990s realized the importance of financial motivation as critical motivation factor to employees as the government experienced high labour turn over in public services. The government introduce “Pay and Incentive Policy” to compensate employee for the work they
do. The policy aimed at motivating employees to perform better, retain them and attract talented applicants in public services (Lufunyo, 2013). The policy aimed at minimizing recruitment and training costs to the government. In 1994, the government adopted “Pay Reform” as an integral component of public service reform program (PSRP). The implementation of the pay reform took place in two major phases. 1st phase: covered the period of (1994 -1999) and its priorities were cost containment, rationalization of the public service salary and job-grade structure. 2nd phase: cover the period of 1999 to date, and its major priority was to enhance pay in order to ensure that the public has the capacity to attract, retain and adequate motivate personnel with requisite skills to provide the desired public service and government strategic outputs (URT, 2010)

Based on the two above pay reform, the government enhanced salary and wages for the qualified and technical and professional cadres in public service. Salary and wages enhancement contribute much in attracting potential applicants to shift from private sectors and recruited in public service. Through pay reform the government managed to motivate and retain qualified technical and professional personnel. The reform went further to local government through Local Government Reform Program (LGRP) under the administrative component (Ngware, 2003). The reform led to the change in human resource management (HRM) in local government and motivates employees through training and development. The LGRP leads to the training program for HR capacity building upgrading working conditions and revising management procedures.

In order to improve local government performance, the government established various reforms such as Local Government Reform Program (Ngware, 2003). Despite the above reform initiatives there has recently been a noticeable trend of employee unwillingness to work in Tanzania’s local government authorities. There have been cases of fresh university graduates turning down employment offers in local government authorities (MDC, 2016). A number of factors may contribute to poor performance of local government staff, however, this study aimed at understanding the status and challenges of employee’s motivation in local government in Tanzania. The study hypothesis was that, there is significant relationship between motivation and employees performance in local governments. Therefore, the study intended to analyze the extent to which employees are motivated in local governments located in rural setting. The study will also examine the challenges of employee’s motivation in rural local government in Tanzania.

2. Methodology

2.1 The Study Area

The study used case study research design whereby the study was conducted in Morogoro District Council (MDC) of Tanzania Mainland. The council was randomly selected from the list of all rural local governments in Tanzania. Morogoro District Council (MDC) is one of the six (6) district councils of the Morogoro Region which covers 19 056 square kilometres (7358 sq m). The council is consisted of 31 Wards and 151 villages (URT, 2007). The council has a total number of 2855 employees in all cadres. Morogoro District Council is one of the rural local government characterize with poor social services and local people questioning the
accountability of local government staff to their local needs (Njunwa, 2003).

2.2 Sampling, Data Collection Methods and Data Analysis

The study employed a sample size of fifty five (55) employees which comprised of different cadres such as management level, middle level and lower level employees. In selecting the employees as respondents simple random sampling and purposive sampling were used. Under simple random sampling, each unit of the population has an equal probability of inclusion in the sample (Bryman, 2008; Kothari, 2008) Purposive sampling techniques was used to select Key Informants (KIs) including District Executive Director (DED), Heads of Department (HoD), Ward Executive Officers (WEOs), Head Teachers and Village Executive Officers (VEOs). The key informants were selected basing on their positions, experiences and ability to provide the required information from the district, wards and villages. Both qualitative and quantitative methods were used to collect primary data. Quantitative data was collected using structured questionnaires while qualitative data were collected through interview technique (structured and unstructured). Field observation technique as participant observer was used to observe real situation on the ground including the working environments. (Chava, 1996; Mustafa, 2010). Secondary data collections were conducted through document reviews on the subject matter. The collected data were analysed both descriptive and inferential by using Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS).

3. Conceptual and Theoretical Underpinnings

3.1 Motivation Defined

Motivation is defined as situation of willingness of an employee to contribute high level of effort toward her/his work, conditioned by the capacity of the effort to satisfy the employee’s personal needs as well as personal environment (Buberwa, 2015) and URT (2010) define motivation as anything given or done to raise employee’s morale; it can be financial, material or written congratulation with an intention to increase employees’ performance. To motivate is to create a desire or willingness to perform in the manner in which managers want to get the work done which is distinct from the capacity to work. Mullins (1996) states that “the underlying concept of motivation is some driving force within individuals by which they attempt to achieve some goals in order to fulfill certain needs. Therefore, human resource managers have to balance between employee’s needs and organizational needs. Abbas (2013) argue that lack of motivation of employees in organization is sine qua non to the failure in the achievement of the desired or designed objectives. Therefore, they stress that it is essential to invest in human capital in order to achieve organizational productivity and profits. Ngowi (2015) recommended that organization may have inputs such as machinery and equipments, but alone cannot improve organizational performances without considering human resources who handle production materials and operations.

Robbins (2010) classified employee’s motivation into two aspects, financial and non-financial motivation. He contends that individual has no universal motivational factors, some employees are motivated with financial incentives such compensation, salaries, allowances and other monetary incentives (Leshabari, M & Mwanga, 2008). Other employees
are highly motivated by non-financial incentives such as respect, recognition, training and career development as well as management supervision. Manonge (2006) in supporting the need for financial incentives argued that money does not automatically imply higher motivation to employees. However Akerle (1991) economists and managers have placed money as a high motivation in any form it comes. They believe that financial incentives are more attractive than non financial motivation especially in developing countries (Bonsu, 2014, Alalade, 2015). To strength on the relation between motivation and job satisfaction, Luthan (2011) shows the relationship between job satisfaction and labour turn over and agree that if there is considerable high job dissatisfaction, there is likely to be high labour turn over.

3.2 Motivation: A Theoretical Perspective

The study use Herzberg two factors theory as a basis of this study. This theory of motivation assisted in analyzing the factor that positively affect employee’s motivation at workplace. Various scholars explain different theories to examine the factors that influence employee’s motivation at workplace. In the main, theories of motivation can be classified into content and process categories. Content theories include Maslow Hierarchical Need Theory, Hertzberg Two Factors Theory, and McClelland’s Learned Need Theory. Process theories include expectancy theory, goal setting theory and equity theory. The content theories intended to examine what motivates employees at workplace by focusing on fundamental human needs (Hannagan 2002). Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs is the most famous theory of motivation that was developed by Maslow. The theory based upon two major assumptions; firstly, each individual’s needs depend on what she/he already has. The Maslow theory classifies the needs into lower level and upper level and recommends that the lower level needs must be satisfied because they are very crucial in motivating employees. Those hierarchical needs include physiological needs, the safety needs, belongingness and love needs, esteem and ego need, and self-actualization needs.

Hertzberg who extended the work of Maslow, however, Maslow and McClelland focused on individual differences in motivation, Hertzberg related motivation to the nature of person’s work (Njunwa, 1986). Hertzberg theory came with two factors that motivate employees at work. The factors introduced by Hertzberg are commonly known as motivating factors and hygiene factors. Hertzberg theory of motivation start with the premises that factor involved in producing job satisfaction and motivations are separate and distinct from the factors that lead to job satisfaction (Luthan, 2011). The motivations factors are those factors associated with satisfaction and describe people in relationship to what they are doing, the nature of tasks, the responsibility or recognition received achievement and advancement. Mullins (2002) recommended that Dissatisfiers had to do with the content of the work while the Dissatisfiers had to do with the context of the work. The motivation factors influence people to superior performance. Hygiene/maintenance factors are those factors associated with dissatisfaction described conditions surrounding the work and do not encourage them to high performance. Dissatisfiers include company policy and administration, supervision, salary, salary, interpersonal relations and working conditions. These maintenance factors are external to the job or in other word are highly intrinsic. Herzberg two factor theory is relevant to this study as it provide good framework on the factors that influence motivation at workplace. The
study used motivating factors such as personal achievement, career development, recognition, responsibility to link with employee’s motivation in local government in Tanzania.

4. Discussion and Findings

4.1 Awareness of the Importance of Employee’s Motivation

The study aimed at understanding the awareness of the importance of motivation among the employees. In responding to this question, all respondents 100% accepted that motivation is important for improving performances of local government staff. The table below shows the respondense results:

Table 4.1. Awareness of the Importance of Motivation

| S/N | Importance                            | Number of respondents | Percent (%) |
|-----|---------------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------|
| 1   | Improve employees morale              | 19                    | 35          |
| 2   | Improve to meet organisational goals  | 10                    | 18          |
| 3   | Result to quality performance         | 17                    | 31          |
| 4   | Reduce theft and bribery              | 5                     | 9.0         |
| 5   | Improve the life of the Employees     | 4                     | 7.0         |
|     | **Total**                             | **55**                | **100**     |

Source: Field Data, 2017

Thirty five percent 19 (35%) of the respondents agreed that motivation increases employees’ morale, 17(31%) of the respondents agree that motivation results in quality performance, 10 (18%) of respondents agreed that motivation helps the organisation to meet its targets and goals. In relation to employees’ motivation and corruption/bribery 5 (9%) of the respondents showed that if organization will improve motivation automatically will reduce corruption. The results show that, employees in local government perceive motivation as an important aspect in improving their morale and performance.

4.2 The Preference on the Type of Motivation

In relations to preferences on the type of motivation, the study intended to examine the preference of employees either on financial or non financial motivation. As shown in Table 4.2 below, majority of the respondents 41 (74.5%) preferred financial motivation to non-financial motivation. Only 14 (25.5%) showed their position to prefer non-financial motivation. The above results are in line with Maslow’s Hierarchical Need Theory that advocated on the importance of financial compensation to meet basic needs such as food, clothes and shelters. The results show that, majority of the employees in rural areas suffered much from financial constraints and need more money to solve their social and economical problems. During interview, one of Ward Executive Officer (WEO) clearly stated that;

“Life in the village is very difficult, I need money to rent house, to send my children to school, transportation and other cost, therefore to me money is more important than anything”

The findings supported by the study conducted by Leshabari (2008) which stated that 73.3% of the employees at Muhimbili National Hospital preferred salary as a major source of their
motivation compare to the 26.7% who preferred non financial motivation.

Table 4.2. What type of motivation do you prefer most?

| Type       | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent |
|------------|-----------|---------|---------------|
| Financial  | 41        | 74.5    | 74.5          |
| Valid Non Financial | 14        | 25.5    | 25.5          |
| Total      | 55        | 100.0   | 100.0         |

Source: Field Data, 2017

4.3 Financial Motivation

4.3.1 Salaries and Allowances

Salaries and allowances are a major source of financial motivation in local governments. The salary structure for operational staff differs from those with permanent and pensionable employments. Government Salary Circular (2009:2) for the salary in public service declared that salary depends on the employee’s education, working experiences, technical knowledge and nature of the job. 47 (85.4%) of the respondents claimed that, they were not satisfied with their salaries and largely demonstrated by employees in low level cadres such as WEO, VEO, Teachers, and Nurses. Given low salaries to local government employees, local government experience high employee labour turnover especially to the teaching and health official’s cadre and high level of corruptions and financial embezzlement. Most of the young energetic employees are looking for green pastures in central government and private sectors. During focus group discussion (FGDs) with Health Officers and Village Executive Officers they complained over low salaries and absence of annual increments. The researcher observed teachers engaged themselves in selling goods to students as a strategy to increase their income. The study revealed that, employees are not satisfied with their salaries 67 (89%) and complained of too many deduction on their salaries. They complained that their salaries are subjected to mandatory deductions. The finding of the study is in line with the study conducted by Ngowi (2015) determinants and challenges of health workers motivation in rural Tanzania, Rombo District Council whereby almost 84% percent of employees were dissatisfied with their salaries. All the above studies show the necessity of improving remuneration package to local government staff.

In relation to allowance, the study revealed that, through government circulars various allowances are supposed to be given to employees. Allowances given include extra duties allowances, outfit allowance, acting allowance, transport allowance, communication and house allowances to mention the few. Despite the government circulars, the study revealed that employees in local government do not benefit from the above mentioned allowances. As Table 4.3 illustrates the results:
Table 4.3. Extra Duties Allowances

| Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| 13        | 23.6    | 23.6          | 23.6               |
| 42        | 76.4    | 76.4          | 100.0              |
| 55        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

Source: Field Data, 2017

In relation to extra duties allowance, 42 (76.4%) of the respondents claimed that no such allowance is given to them. Employees in local government only depend on their monthly salaries. 13 (23.6) of the respondents agreed that they were given extra duty allowances. The results show that, the respondents from low cadre claimed that, they are working for many hours without being paid extra duty allowances. One of the Nurses at Mikese Health Centre stated that:

"I worked for more than 8 years in Morogoro District Council; I worked for more than 14 hours per day because we were only 2 Nurses work in shift. ... I claimed for Extra Duties Allowances but no single day the Council responded even to my letter”

The study found out that, only the employees in upper management levels benefited from various allowances. Therefore, the results show that, no equal payment for allowances given to employees and only the management employees’ benefits from those allowances. The study observed that, the employees in the Department of Health and Community Development benefited from the travelling allowances and per diems for development and health project. Most of the development and health projects are locate in rural areas and funded by donors.

4.4 Non-Financial Motivation

4.4.1 Promotion and Career Advancement

The promotion and career development are critical motivators to employees of any an organization (Armstrong, 2009). It should be noted that career advancement is part of intrinsic motivation; however it has positive impact in increasing employee’s salaries and allowances. Tanzania Public Service the Scheme requires employees to be promoted after every three years as stipulated in promotion schemes. However, during the interview, the researcher found that the employees in Morogoro district council are not satisfied with their promotion. About 38 (69.1%) of the respondent were not satisfied with the promotion process. Only 11 (20%) of the respondents were satisfied with promotion in the council. The employees claimed that promotion in the council is not fair and is largely based on nepotism and technical know who. The finding went contrary to the Herzberg two factor theory of motivation which insists on the importance of career advancement as important aspect of employee’s motivation. One of the employees stated,

“IT is very disappointing to see that, a new employee who came after me got promotion before me,......what even disappoints me more is that we have similar academic qualifications”
In responding to employee’s complaints, DHRO stated that what hinders promotion for most of employees is lack of funds from central government, education equivalent to the post they want to be promoted. For example, for employee to be promoted from Nurse Office I to Senior Nurse Officer II requires having Diploma certificate from recognised institution. The council lacks adequate funds to finance training for all nurses that are supposed to be promoted.

![Figure 4.1. Promotions and Career Development](image)

### 4.4.2 Training and Development

In relation to training and development, the study found that 44 (80%) of the respondents had not attended any training since they were employed by the council. The District Executive Director (DED) said that, despite having inadequate financial resources, formerly the council was budgeting funds for employees training for short and long course. However currently, the council has no budget for staff training as all funds from own sources and government are directed towards development projects. Employees who want to attend training have to arrange for their own financial sponsorship. The study revealed that, the council has no training policy to guide training process. However the council has training program/roster indicating the date an employee was allowed to attend training under private sponsorship.

**Table 4.4.** Since you were employed, have you attended any training organized by council?

|          | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent |
|----------|-----------|---------|---------------|
| Valid    |           |         |               |
| Yes      | 10        | 18.2    | 18.2          |
| No       | 44        | 80.0    | 80.0          |
| 111.00   | 1         | 1.8     | 1.8           |
| Total    | 55        | 100.0   | 100.0         |

Source: Field Data, 2017
However, the study found out that health workers attend several short courses in comparison with other employees. The finding is in line with the study conducted by Ngowi (2015) in Rombo District Council whereby 68% of employees from health department agreed that they were given adequate training. The study revealed that most of the training for health workers is sponsored by nongovernmental organizations and not local governments.

4.4.3 Working Environment

In relation to working environment, the study observed poor working environment especially in rural environment. About 43 (78.2%) of the respondents were dissatisfied with their working environment as shown in Table 4.5. However, the study found that working environment around the council headquarter is somehow attractive compared to remote areas. At the headquarters office, there are no enough rooms to be used as office and one office is occupied by more than four employees. The council do not have enough office furniture to accommodate the number of employees in the council. Poor working facilities negatively affect employee’s performance and reduce their working morale. The Village Executive Officer (VEO) office, Mikese Village his office was built with mud and no any facilities such as paper, files or chairs were available. At Bamba Village, Mkuyuni VEO has no office and sadly decided to change one of the rooms in his house to become his office.

Table 4.5. Are you satisfied with your working environment

|      | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent |
|------|-----------|---------|---------------|
| Yes  | 12        | 21.8    | 21.8          |
| No   | 43        | 78.2    | 78.2          |
| Total| 55        | 100.0   | 100.0         |

Source: Field Data, 2017

In relation to accommodation and transportation, the studies revealed that majority of the employees are not entitled to free houses and transport. The employees who are working in rural areas suffered in getting houses for rent, it is difficult to get accommodation, therefore they are required to stay in town and travel long distances to their working stations. To solve this problem, the District with the assistance from government and local communities built few houses for the employees. One of the Head teachers at Mkuyuni primary school stated that:

"Before the construction of houses for the teachers, large number of teachers came late and the level of teachers’ absence was very high, which in turn affected children’s performance, but now teachers are living near the school, hence they are working hard and we highly appreciate for the effort to build house”

4.4.4 Political Interference of Politicians to Administrators

A local government in Tanzania is comprised of both elected and appointed officials. The positive relation between elected and appointed officials is critical for improving local government performance. The study found out that 40 (72.7%) of the respondent were unhappy with interference of politicians in their professional works. A good example, Ward
councillors perform the duty of collecting taxes, financial administration and implementation of policies, while these roles were supposed to be done by Ward Executive Officer. Bad enough if employees do not comply with the directives from the Ward Councillor threatened to be transferred or dismissed from employment. Party politics affect also the morale and performance of local government staff, this experience much to the areas dominated by opposition parties.

5. Challenges of Employees Motivation in Rural LGAs

The study realized a number of constraint factors for effective provision of employee’s motivation in local governments in Tanzania. The major factor for poor motivation in local government is financial constraints. Local governments lack adequate source of revenues, therefore, it is very difficult for local governments to provide training and development, allowances to their staff and free accommodation and transport. In term of employee’s salaries and promotion, local government depend much on the central government to determine the increments, allowances and number of employees to be promoted. All local government employees’ promotion must be approved by central government through respective ministry for local governments. Political interference and party politics in local government’s performances is another challenge that negatively affect employee’s motivation in local government. Shillingi (2017) reported that elected officials do not agree with technical advice from local government staff and highly influenced by political interests. A study conducted by Mafuru (2015) recommended that for the local government authorities (LGAs) in Tanzania to perform effectively, relations between local politicians and local administrators is important. On my side, I agree with their recommendation because poor relations between politicians and administrators eventually results in interpersonal conflict that affect their performance and morale.

Poor communication and genuine worker’s participation is another challenge for effective motivation in local governments (Kwandaiy, 2013). The study revealed that employees in Morogoro District Council never attended any workers council. Most decisions are made by top management and approved by full council without adequate involvement of workers. The management used much top down approach to communicate to their subordinates; the lower levels employees felt that the management ignore them and failed to recognize their importance to the council. Lack of clear motivation and training policies affect also the level of motivation in Morogoro District Council. The research revealed that, the council does not have either motivation policy or training policy to guide motivation and training processes. Failure to have these policies/documents act as the source of complains from employees in regards to unfair treatments. The study conducted by Jacobson (1999) revealed that in developing countries politics and administration are intermingled in a way that turns administrators into politicians and politician into administrators. Therefore, create confusion in execution of their activities

6. Conclusion and Recommendation

The researcher revealed that most employees in local governments in Tanzania are not satisfied with the level of motivation and working environment. There is great relationship
between employee’s motivation and local government performance. Local government staffs are crucial instrument in improving social service delivery to the public. As revealed by the study, most prominent de-motivator factors in local governments were poor reward and compensation, political interference, poor communication, lack of fair and merit based promotions as well as training and career development. Both central government and local governments are required in order to address the major de-motivators revealed in this study. The central government should intervene in the process of motivation in local governments and address both financial and on-financial motivation. In relations to financial motivation, the government must increase wages of the staff especially lower level staff at the grassroots, increase capacity building by increasing more budgets in employees training and development.

The study realized that increasing corruption in local governments is largely caused by low waged given to the employees. More effort is needed to improve the working environment and condition to attract recruitment and retention of employees in local government. As discussed earlier, at ward levels more offices are needed, working facilities such as office chairs, computers as well as stationeries need to be improved. More incentives for employees who are working in rural areas will improve the morale of the workers. The incentives include building houses for the workers whose duty stations have no houses for accommodation, transportation allowances and other fringe benefits. The local government should maintain fair and merits based promotion and career development to minimize worker’s complaints toward unfair promotion criteria’s. The management should not treat promotion exercise as confidential and should be open as directed by government through Open Performance Review Assessment System (OPRAS). The government should minimize political interference of the elected officials to appointed officials. The concept of political-administrative dichotomy should be observe while maintain complimentary relation between politicians and administrators. Finally, local government management should improve communication and worker’s participation. The decision that directly affects them around their working environment must involve employees to reduce worker’s alienation and apathy.

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