



## Research Article

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# The Empowerment of Indigenous Papuan Women Through Home-Based Industries: A Case Study in Papua, Indonesia

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## Abstract

*The importance of women's empowerment in poverty alleviation programs in eastern Indonesia became the main objective of the research. This research aims to identify the approaches to empowering indigenous Papuan women in Yoboy Village, Jayapura. In addition, this research aims to find out the supporting and inhibiting factors in this empowerment. Indigenous Papuan women are a group of indigenous peoples from Indonesia. Several factors diminish the role of women in Jayapura, such as poverty, domestic violence, and the difficulty of self-reliance. Yoboy village has limited options for economic facilities. Therefore, this research conducted Andrew Barlette's Empowerment Theory as an analysis tool. The data collection techniques in this qualitative research were conducted by observation, interview and documentation. Three entry points must be completed to optimize empowerment in poor communities. This research indicated that the empowerment of indigenous Papuan women is also applied through participation, self-reliance, and partnership techniques. The creativity and self-confidence of indigenous Papuan women have made these empowerment programs successful. However, business capital, lack of concern, and cooperation among indigenous Papuan women have become inhibiting factors in empowerment. Therefore, the empowerment of indigenous Papuan women still requires developing and strengthening various programs. The participation of partnerships is one of the important keys to this development.*

**Keywords:** *Indigenous Papuan Women, Papua, The Empowerment of Indigenous Papuan Women, Yoboy Village*

## 1. Introduction

In general, indigenous peoples are a minority population group. Therefore, the problem that appears is repression. They are more susceptible to exploitation and isolation over a while by the majority population. The ideologies, cultural systems, and political systems adopted by indigenous peoples are particular characteristics (Tamma et al., 2020). The International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs

(IWGIA) stated that Indonesia is inhabited by 50-70 million indigenous peoples (Siringoringo & Mambor, 2021). This amount is quite large compared to other Asian countries. Indonesia termed indigenous peoples as *Masyarakat Adat*. These communities have been identified by the Smallest Indigenous Community (KAT). One of KAT's aims is to realize the protection, fulfillment of needs, and integration of indigenous peoples in Indonesia.

The summary of the 2019-2023 Regional Medium-Term Development Plan (RPJMD) of Papua Province contains details of the development focus in its efforts to overcome poverty. One of its causes is gender inequality. Therefore, the focus of Papua's development in 2019-2023 will be on optimizing the role of women (Papua, 2019). However, the patriarchal culture that has been entrenched is difficult to overcome (Kuokkanen, 2015; Situmorang et al., 2022). The lack of women's participation itself has been a significant issue to be addressed. In addition, the lack of women's role in development over a long time has also diminished their ability to contribute to the society's development (Rachmawati & Puspongoro, 2017). The existence of violence, customary regulations, the unfulfillment of indigenous Papuan women's rights has also become an issue that obstructs the success of economic development in Papua (Sopaheluwakan et al., 2023).

The UNPFFI Sixteenth Session meeting held from April 24 to May 5, 2017, has provided universal advice regarding women empowerment from indigenous peoples. The forum discussed the many challenges that indigenous women need to face. For instance, in Papua, sexual violence, lack of educational opportunities, and exclusion from decision-making have long turned off the role of indigenous women (U. Nations, 2017). The Australian Human Rights Commission, which attended the forum, encouraged the participation of indigenous women in creating economic opportunities (Imoro et al., 2022). Implementing home-based industries can be a solution, significantly accelerating the success of the 2030 global agenda in realizing Sustainable Development. Therefore, as part of the UNPFFI, Indonesia can implement this strategy. Home-based industries are micro-scale industries that are operated in a simplified way, produced at home using privately-owned equipment, and operated by family members (Permatasari, 2019). An advanced home-based industry can attract labor and generate employment. Due to technological advances, home-based industry products can be marketed from home through the internet (Lawson & Chowdhury, 2022; Saleh, 2021). Empowering Papuan women in these home-based industries can also reduce the rate of violence against women and children and economic inequality and encourage women to be active in economic activities.

This research used Empowerment Theory proposed by Andrew Barlette, there are three entry points for empowering people with low incomes: technical, educational, and social (Bartlett, 2004). The researcher will then use Barlette's Empowerment Theory as an analytical tool in examining the empowerment of indigenous Papuan women (OAP) in Yoboy Village, Sentani, Jayapura.

In order to enhance the analysis in this research, the researcher used several previous researches. First, Leah Hibbs' research stated that the women interviewed improved in all factors of the empowerment framework or components with various success rates (Hibbs, 2022). Second, research written by Mila Sell and Nicholas Minot indicated that men are more likely to have a more significant role in food crop production decision-making. The education gap is a factor that affects the difficulty of women's empowerment (Sell & Minot, 2018). Third, the women's traditional knowledge activities implemented in cooperatives (seed collection, cleaning, sorting, couscous and honey production, cactus collection and processing) enable knowledge transfer towards product development and are key to the production process itself (Montanari & Bergh, 2019).

In this research, the researcher discusses the empowerment of indigenous Papuan women in Sentani, Yoboy Village, Jayapura, as the object of research. This research considers the phenomenon of Yoboy Village as unique, and therefore it is required to be researched. The indigenous Papuan women should be able to contribute to the local economic development. Instead, the immigrant community dominates in all sectors, including the economic sector. It is the basis for the researcher's consideration to examine the research gap.

Based on the discussion above, this research aims to describe and analyze the empowerment of indigenous Papuan women in the home-based industries in Sentani, Yoboy Village, Jayapura.

Furthermore, this research aims to discover the factors that encourage and obstruct the empowerment of indigenous Papuan women in their efforts to establish a home-based industry. Therefore, the research results are intended to contribute as a resource for applying empowerment theories related to gender and indigenous peoples' issues, especially regarding the empowerment of indigenous Papuan women.

## 2. Methods

This research used a qualitative descriptive approach, which is an approach that observes social reality in its natural background without manipulation on the part of the researcher. The data sources are obtained from the government and the community. The research subjects were selected using a purposive technique: indigenous Papuan women who work in the home-based industries in Sentani, Yoboy Village, and Jayapura and those involved in empowering indigenous Papuan women in the home-based industries. In order to find out the process of an activity related to the object of this research, the researcher observes directly so that the verbal information obtained can be cross-checked. In addition, the researcher gathered data such as regional regulations, RPJMD, and documentation of empowerment activities.

The data collection techniques in this qualitative research were conducted by observation, interview, and documentation. The data were analyzed using several steps according to the theory of Miles, Huberman, and Saldana, which analyzed data with three steps: data condensation, data display, and conclusion (Miles et al., 2019). In order to test the truth in this research, the researcher used the triangulation technique—first credibility. The researcher used various methods, including extending observations in each research process. Second, confirmability. In this case, the researcher used an auditor (comparator) to ensure the research results on implementing the Indigenous Papuan Women's Empowerment Policy in Sentani, Jayapura, based on Ministerial Regulation No. 2/2016 concerning General Guidelines for Home-based Industries Development to Improve Family Welfare Through Women's Empowerment. Third, the transferability. The researcher examined the similarity of the context with the selected sample informants by collecting the same amount of empirical data through existing data without excluding any transferability when there is something more suitable for the existing situation. Fourth, the dependability. The researcher self-organized the evidence in the field from raw data on Indigenous Papuan Women's Empowerment in the Home-based Industries in Sentani, Yoboy Village, Jayapura.

## 3. Results and Discussion

### 3.1 *Participation of Yoboy Village Community in Indigenous Papuan Women Empowerment Activities*

Empowerment theory can compete with various other concepts. One of them is the concept of participation, an important development element. Participation is spontaneous participation with the awareness that it also has responsibility for the common goals that the group intends to achieve (Sastropoetro, 1988). Participation characterizes the success of an empowerment process. Participation involving various actions to increase the power or empowerment of indigenous women has an important role in realizing the optimization of home-based industries.

The form of participation is to conduct a Focus Group Discussion (FGD), which was held on November 28, 2022. Empowerment was organized by the Office of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection (PPPA). Meanwhile, the Head of the PPPA Office, Mrs. Miryam Y. Soumilena, SE, M. Si., stated that empowerment in the form of FGDs is to develop indigenous Papuan women to be more qualified. The task of the PPPA Office as a connecting link for knowledge transmission is to provide facilities and infrastructure to support business development.



**Figure 1.** Focus Group Discussion with Indigenous Papuan Women of Yoboy Village  
**Source:** Authors



**Figure 2.** Sago Products from Indigenous Papuan Women of Yoboy Village  
**Source:** Authors

As Figures 1 and 2 indicate, indigenous Papuan women have actively participated in empowerment activities. By conducting FGDs, there will be a transfer of knowledge provided to provide provision for the indigenous Papuan women in operating a home-based industry. Utilizing the beautiful natural products of Yoboy Village, indigenous Papuan women can produce various sago products. Therefore, it can be considered that the indigenous Papuan women have participated in the FGD activity to develop a home-based industry that can improve their family welfare.

### 3.2 *The Efforts in Developing Self-reliance of Yoboy Village Community in Indigenous Papuan Women Empowerment Activities*

In general, women's empowerment programs are systematically structured so that the subjects of empowerment can bring about self-reliance. Self-reliance can be defined as a person's attitude obtained cumulatively during the process of self-development (Mu'tadin, 2002). The individual will

encounter repeated learning cycles until he or she can think and act independently to develop optimally. It also becomes a concern in efforts to empower indigenous Papuan women.

One of the empowerment programs in the form of self-reliance is to improve the ability to process raw materials around Yoboy Village. Home-based industries can spend little money for initial capital, so the opportunity to independently manage home-based industries will be easy. Furthermore, it is supported by the natural condition of Sentani Lake, which is extensive and produces fresh fish that can be caught anytime as the basic ingredients for making tilapia meatballs. The existence of cages in Yoboy Village is a form of fish farming using floating nets. This way is one of the most efficient and effective tilapia-rearing cultivation techniques. This cultivation system model is very economical. The small media area means indigenous Papuan women can easily catch fish according to their needs. Therefore, this technique benefits indigenous Papuan women to begin a home-based industry.

Another activity in the empowerment of indigenous Papuan women in the form of self-reliance is making *noken* in between their activities as housewives. It will increase family income and improve family welfare to reduce cases of family violence. Self-reliance means that women's position will improve only when they are self-reliant and able to control decisions related to their lives. The empowerment of indigenous Papuan women must begin with self-reliance so that women can be prevented from repression.



**Figure 3.** Making *Noken* by Indigenous Papuan Woman of Yoboy Village  
**Source:** Authors

Mrs. Ashari as an Indigenous Papuan woman stated the advantages of women's empowerment in Yoboy Village as follows:

*"Indigenous Papuan women must be independent so they can fulfill their own needs without depending on their husbands because when women are too dependent on their husbands, they do not have an existence in the family. Sometimes this triggers family violence because the husband does not have enough money while the family needs a lot. The husband feels emotional when asked for money by his wife so that he hits her, especially in a drunken condition. Therefore, the wife is like a place for her husband to express his anger. The wife can do nothing but receive this cruel treatment. However, it is different if the wife has her own income without leaving her duties as a housewife."*

One of the advantages of home-based industries is that they can be conducted by indigenous

Papuan women at home without leaving their duties as a housewife who must take care of the home and family. It allows indigenous Papuan women to be self-reliant, supported by the availability of raw materials provided by the environment, such as the vast sago forests and Sentani Lake, which has fresh fish as raw material for making fish balls.

### 3.3 *Establishing Partnership in Empowering Indigenous Papuan Women in Yoboy Village*

The existence of abundant natural resources does not mean that indigenous Papuan women are independent in all aspects of life. There is still a need for intervention from outside parties, especially the role of government and private sector in resource management, to work together to develop the potential of Yoboy Village to be maximized. In supporting the home-based industries to survive, there are partnerships with other parties and access to social media to increase sales. Almost all indigenous Papuan women who own home-based industries have cellular phones and social media such as WhatsApp, and the signal in Yoboy Village is quite reliable. Mrs. Iriana Done, an Indigenous Papuan woman, stated that she also often uploads the token to be sold on Facebook but is constrained because only some understand how to operate Facebook, so it depends on others who understand. However, the village head always provides access to other parties' partnerships so that the token made by the residents can be well-sold by often holding festivals in Yoboy Village, for example, the sago worm festival, which was held just last year. The sago worm festival also sells various home-based industry products made by Papuan women in Yoboy Village.

The partnerships owned by Yoboy Village also extend to the capital market. By collaborating with the Indonesia Stock Exchange in collaboration with PT Phintraco Sekuritas, the Yoboy Village Government inaugurated the digital IDX Investment Gallery of Yoboy Village as stated by Mr. Sefanya Wally, the Head of Yoboy Village, as follows:

*"The existence of digital investment in Yoboy Village is an honor for the community because it is the only village in Jayapura with an IDX investment gallery. It is expected that the inauguration of a digital investment gallery in Yoboy Village can increase the literacy and knowledge of the village community on capital market investment."*

The efforts to create partnerships are facilitated by gathering all sectors and stakeholders involved in developing the Indonesia Stock Exchange. Establishing the Investment Gallery of the Indonesia Stock Exchange is intended to introduce Capital Market early on to the public, both academicians and professionals.

The partnerships in Yoboy Village are diverse, ranging from partnering with the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy, Jayapura Women Empowerment and Child Protection Office, and IDX Digital Investment Gallery. The partnerships are expected to increase the sales and knowledge of indigenous Papuan women.

### 3.4 *Enabling Factors in the Empowerment of Indigenous Papuan Women in Yoboy Village*

#### 3.4.1 *Self-Confidence*

Self-confidence is a positive attitude in which a person can develop and enhance their potential for themselves, their family, and the surrounding environment. The confidence of an Indigenous Papuan woman to dive into Sentani Lake to catch fresh fish is very important to maintain the quality of the products sold. It will ensure the sustainability of the home-based industry owned by indigenous Papuan women.

The indigenous Papuan women have high self-confidence. It can be observed that they are not ashamed to show how to make Noken, can explain the ingredients used in each home industry product sold, and can maintain the quality of the products produced. Therefore, the empowerment

conducted by the Office of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection can increase the confidence of indigenous Papuan women in managing home-based industries to improve family welfare.

### 3.4.2 Indigenous Papuan Women's Creativity

In managing a home-based industries, people should have high creativity so that the products are not monotonous and can be updated with the current times without reducing their quality. Creativity can be realized in the form of thoughts, energy and finance. The success of empowerment requires a companion to provide direction and training to indigenous Papuan women. The existence of assistants has a role in conveying the latest innovations related to processed products made from sago and fish produced in the home-based industries.

Another form of creativity of indigenous Papuan women is processing various sago-based foods into sago cakes, sago ice cream, sago brownies and dried sago. There is also a form of creativity owned by Papuan women, such as processing bark into various forms of handicrafts such as bags, wallets, book covers and paintings from bark. Thus, there are many forms of creativity owned by Indigenous Papuan women in operating home industries so that this can produce new products and increase family welfare at the same time.

### 3.4.3 Transformation of Indigenous Papuan Women's Consciousness

Transformation is a continuous process that occurs in every indigenous Papuan woman. There is a process of change that proceeds in a way that is not perceived by the people who support it. Awareness change is a condition in which indigenous Papuan women have complete control over internal and external stimuli. Suppose indigenous Papuan women's awareness of their rights and obligations has been awakened. Unfortunately, it has not been facilitated with various channels to actualize that awareness, making it vulnerable to chaos. Ms. Miryam Y. Soumilena, SE stated it, M.Si as the Head of the Jayapura Regency Women's Empowerment and Child Protection Office, as follows:

*"If Papuan women do not realize the obligation to operate a home-based industry properly, be disciplined and diligent, they will not be able to be independent and not be able to improve family welfare."*

Home-based industries are production systems that produce a product by forming added value from certain raw materials conducted at home and not in a particular location (such as a factory), using essential production equipment. However, this home-based industry needs high commitment to continue to develop in supporting family needs so that family welfare can be generated. All family members must understand awareness changes about managing this home-based industry to support indigenous Papuan women in order to be given space and enthusiasm so that they can operate a home-based industry properly and sustainably. It is expected that the home-based industry will be able to improve family welfare.

## 3.5 Inhibiting Factors in the Empowerment of Indigenous Papuan Women in Yoboy Village

### 3.5.1 Lack of Concern and Cooperation among Indigenous Papuan Women

Indigenous Papuan women tend to be busy with their own families and tend not to care about each other. It is as stated by Mrs. Leny Tungkoye, the wife of Yoboy Village Chief, as follows:

*"We have our own business, and we find it difficult to work together with other Papuan women because they have different characters and we are also difficult to work together, especially in making various products in the home-based industry because we have different life needs and different characteristics, some of them are lazy, sometimes they help cook, sometimes they do not, and this is the concern we*

*have if we invite other Papuan women to join the home-based industry."*

In addition, the problem that often occurs among indigenous Papuan women is after obtaining training from the Office of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection, the information received in the training should be disseminated, but the problem is that Papuan women often forget after getting home as expressed by Mrs. Miryam Y. Soumilena, SE, M.Si as Head of the Jayapura Regency Women's Empowerment and Child Protection Office.

In creating home-based industry products, these indigenous Papuan women should have the support of their families so that the home-based industry will be able to operate well. Therefore, the support from fellow indigenous Papuan women to care for each other and the ability to cooperate reasonably are needed to develop the home-based industry in Yoboy Village.

### 3.5.2 *Weak Partnership Enhancement*

Most home-based industries in Yoboy Village are not legally registered as business entities and are often not registered under the business taxation mechanism. In addition, home-based industries are usually managed by members of a family. Home-based industries can also exist as informally organized and flexible Joint Business Groups whose members work in their respective homes. Therefore, sometimes the hotel also asks for business legality as a requirement to include home industry products. It also becomes an obstacle for indigenous Papuan women in a home-based industry to partner with other parties such as restaurants, hotels, and souvenir shops. It was stated by Mrs. Miryam Y. Soumilena, SE, M.Si, as the Head of the Jayapura Regency Women's Empowerment and Child Protection Office as follows:

*"... there are also hotels and restaurants that ask for requirements in the form of legality or P-IRT (Home Industry Food Production) permit to insert products. It is still difficult for Papuan women to do because they have to take the time to take care of the Home Industry Permit. It becomes our priority in the future so that we can make training related to the home industry must have a household industry food production permit (PIRT) so that products from Papuan women's home industry can be placed in hotels, restaurants, and souvenir shops."*

Based on the interview results, it can be concluded that one of the inhibiting factors for indigenous Papuan women in partnership with other parties because most of the Home-based Industries in Yoboy Village do not have legality as business entities, and this is an inhibiting factor to be able to incorporate home industry products into business partners such as restaurants, hotels, and souvenir shops which are a facility to open work networks and potential markets for home industry products.

### 3.5.3 *Lack of Business Capital for Indigenous Papuan Women*

Mama Ashari, an indigenous Papuan woman, stated that if the home-based industry wants to develop progressively, there must be Papuan women's capital to start the home-based industry. Because even though we have a vast sago forest, it requires capital to process it, especially to package it attractively and feasibly. It also requires capital to sell. The same statement was also stated by Mrs. Helma Yoku, an Indigenous Papuan woman, we have to own capital that we spend from our savings to begin this home-based industry, but the problem is that we have no capital. If we have to expect assistance from the government, it is time-consuming and uncertain. Based on the interview results, one of the inhibiting factors for indigenous Papuan women is the business capital owned by indigenous Papuan women to develop their home-based industries.



### 3.6 *The Empowerment of Indigenous Papuan Women through Home-based Industries in Yoboy Village*

According to Barlett in his Empowerment Theory, three dimensions are termed entry points. Through Barlett's view, empowerment of the poor needs to be conducted by emphasizing technical, educational, and social intervention. The three dimensions then intervene integrally and can produce actual actions, which include: (1) provision of access to resources and services; (2) empowerment that emphasizes self-directed analysis, and (3) decision-making and action, and the adoption or acquisition that leads to increased production, consumption, and income. Based on this theory, indigenous Papuan women's empowerment activities can be categorized into these three dimensions. First, the implementation of technical interventions. This dimension is conducted to create or use various hardware or software to achieve the interests of economic activities. In its implementation, Yoboy Village has utilized social media to sell home industry products. An Investment Gallery is constructed to introduce the capital market by the Office of Women Empowerment and Child Protection in Jayapura. There has been an effort to reach the broadest possible market. However, it has yet to be obstructed due to the limited legality of home industry businesses owned by indigenous Papuan women.

Second, there are educational interventions. Knowledge transfer has been conducted in the form of training and FGDs. Yoboy Village regularly builds partnerships with a few parties to support the knowledge of indigenous Papuan women who begin home-based industries. For instance, there have been activities with the Office of Women Empowerment and Child Protection, the Indonesia Stock Exchange, and the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy. The transfer of knowledge from these partners, then seen through the research results presented, has been quite successful. Indigenous Papuan women of Yoboy Village can enhance their creativity to generate good self-confidence.

Third, social interventions are needed to enable low-income people to interact and adapt with individuals or community groups and broader life patterns to support broader access to economic improvement. The Office of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection and local village officials have adequately facilitated various forums enabling interaction to increase access to a better economy. However, some domestic problems inherent to women and indigenous peoples still obstruct these interactions.

Hibbs (2022) revealed different things in Yoboy Village empowerment. All framework factors or components of empowerment with varying degrees of success have improved. Leah's research focuses on the role of non-governmental organizations in assisting women's empowerment in Wales. Meanwhile, the empowerment of indigenous Papuan women is dominated by government agencies, namely the Office of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection. If there is cooperation with non-governmental organizations so that empowerment is more diverse, then the creativity of indigenous Papuan women can be more honed. In addition, competent institutions in their fields must also resolve the barriers to the empowerment of indigenous Papuan women.

In Yoboy Village, the number of schools still needs to be increased. Both men and women still find it equally difficult to have proper education. Similar to Sell and Minot's (2018) research, the education gap between women and men is the cause of women's lack of role. However, the weak role of women in Yoboy Village is triggered by poverty and violence. Through the interview results, there is great hope for indigenous Papuan women to be independent and to get out from under the shadow of resignation as housewives who rely on their husbands.

On the other hand, preserving traditional knowledge transmission to future generations is very important for the survival of rural communities (Montanari & Bergh, 2019). Empowerment for indigenous Papuan women still needs to be improved by information that stops at training classes. A way is needed to store the knowledge transferred by related parties. For example, the provision of learning videos makes the training material easy to learn again.

As described earlier, each indigenous people has multiple problems. The cycle of problems that

have been established for decades is difficult to be eliminated. However, this research is optimistic about the results of empowering indigenous Papuan women in Yoboy Village. Although there are many inhibiting factors for empowerment, the changes in creativity and self-reliance can generate perspectives and tangible changes in outcomes for indigenous Papuan women. It aligns with Shomedran's research that the increasing creativity and economic independence that began to be built to changes in the perspective and daily activities of the community slowly led to success in empowerment activities (Shomedran, 2016).

On the other hand, the active participation of the indigenous people of Colombia and the Democratic Republic of Congo has also contributed to significant changes in the success of women's empowerment (F. and A. O. of T. U. Nations & Programme, 2022). The United Nations Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation, or UN-REDD, provides funding to encourage various empowerment programs there. The case of Indigenous Papuan women's empowerment clearly shows that there is still an opportunity for success. Partnerships need to be strengthened, one of which is by cooperating with non-governmental organizations, as was done in Colombia. Therefore, to achieve success, the empowerment of indigenous Papuan women in Yoboy Village must be continuously implemented with the addition of various developments.

#### 4. Conclusion

The empowerment of indigenous Papuan women in Yoboy Village has been implemented using participation, self-reliance, and partnership programs. In the participation program, the community actively provides mind, energy, and skill participation in the home-based industries. While in the self-reliance program, indigenous Papuan women have been empowered to produce various processed home-based industry products. There is a good relationship with other parties in the partnership program, but the partnership system still needs to be made easier for indigenous Papuan women to participate in. The findings in this research are limited by time. Therefore there is still an open opportunity for further research to describe the sustainability of women empowerment programs in Yoboy Village.

This research suggests that a strategic and synergistic partnership pattern with all existing community components is needed for empowerment to proceed well. The government, the private sector, and the community should implement a good partnership among those who have funds, in this case, the institution or agency that supervises the women's empowerment and child protection program involved in the program.

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