Curricular and Pedagogical Aspects of NEP 2020 and WBSEP2023: An Overview

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ABSTRACT

Curriculum and pedagogy are at the core of any education policy, whether at the national or state level. The West Bengal State Govt. has developed its own educational policy, deviating in many cases from NEP 2020. This paper deals with the key differences between West Bengal State Education Policy 2023 (WBSEP 2023) and National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020) in the context of curriculum and pedagogy at the secondary school education level. The researchers used the WBSEP 2023 policy document and the NEP 2020 documents as primary data, and also used other relevant research papers, articles and various sources as secondary data to conduct the present study. The researchers critically analysed the policy documents and found the key differences between WBSEP 2023 and NEP 2020 in curriculum and pedagogical perspectives. The study is qualitative in nature. The researchers used the content analysis method to conduct the present study. The researchers highlighted both the possible positive and negative effects of the curricular and pedagogical recommendations of both the policies at the implementation in the secondary school education.

Keywords: Curriculum, Pedagogy, Education Policy, Secondary School Education

INTRODUCTION

The future of any nation depends on its quality of education imparted to its future citizen. Quality education plays a major role to boost the quality of all the other aspects of a nation. The role of curriculum and pedagogy is to nucleate themselves to meet the quality education of a system. To make India an empowering nation in the world in every perspective, quality education is the central and the greatest force. As secondary education is regarded as the bridge between primary or basic education and higher education, it plays an essential role for creating a path of continuation to quality education to achieve ultimate educational goal. To make education system up to date, National Education Policy (NEP 2020) comes into effect with massive transformation in education in 2020 to reform the existing education system of the country as a whole according to the present need of the country maintaining balance with the world but the states are in the responsibility to implement it properly according to its own situation.

Curriculum and pedagogy are valued as the heart of any educational system or education policy. What would be the belief and determination of students in making up their mindset for their future life depends on the what they learn and how they are taught. What the young minds imbibe have a great effect on them and it makes a solid base on which their way of future life evolves; so, the future of a nation. The secondary school curriculum is a skill-focused program that provides students with a broad and balanced knowledge of key subjects, as well as effective critical thinking and communication skills (Usha & Dandge, 2020). School already shifted from teacher centric pedagogy to child-centric pedagogy. The national and the state education policy has made a diverse change in preparing curriculum and pedagogy recommendations for the secondary school education according to the need of the 21st century. Quality education depends on the effective curriculum and pedagogy. NEP 2020 made uniform curriculum and pedagogy in the policy and made recommendations for secondary school education. Curriculum and pedagogy of NEP 2020 is holistic, flexible and multidisciplinary. Nation has made only one uniform secondary education- class 9 to 12 but the

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state has retained the structure of education- secondary (class 9 & 10) and higher secondary (class 11 & 12). So, this study discusses uniform secondary education (class 9-12) of nation and the retained form of secondary and higher secondary in the context of curriculum and pedagogy. NEP 2020 has a diverse range of recommendations in the educational policy in the various stages of education- early education, school education and higher education but this study only focuses on the curriculum and pedagogy of the secondary school level of both the policies- NEP 2020 and WBSEP 2023. This study's main focus is on the policy recommendations in curriculum and pedagogy at secondary school education. This study points out the key recommendations of both the policies- NEP 2020 and WBSEP 2023 in the context of curriculum and pedagogy at secondary school level and deep differences in the recommendation of both the policies.

Objectives

To discuss the provisions of NEP 2020 in curricular and pedagogical aspects in terms of secondary school education.

To discuss the provisions of WBSEP 2023 in curricular and pedagogical aspects in terms of secondary school education.

To explore the differences of NEP 2020 and WBSEP 2023 in curricular and pedagogical aspects in terms of secondary school education.

Significance of the Study

The National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020) is formulated to revamp education system and lay down road map for new India (Kumar, 2021). An effective education policy relies on strong curricular foundations for optimum results(Bhardwaj et al., 2024).The national education Policy is designed in such a way which is rooted in Indianization but appeals in universalization through equity, access, inclusiveness and present needs of the public. The curriculum and pedagogy are at core of this mission and vision. To make this mission a successful one, co-operation from all the states is urgently needed with their own uniqueness according to their own present need and condition of educational landscape because India is a land of diverse culture and condition on the basis of Socio-economic and geographical background. To meet the local, national and global flavour, curriculum and pedagogy need to be designed. So, the state education policy from different states comes with different flavour to meet their state's educational goals. West Bengal Govt formed its own education policy in 2023 under the name West Bengal State Education Policy 2023 to meet its educational goals with its own curriculum and pedagogy and structure deviating itself in many cases with the National Educational Policy 2020. So, there must be differences in formulation and implication of curriculum and pedagogy between the state (WB) and the nation. This paper deals with the differences of recommendations made by the national and West Bengal state education policy in the context of curriculum and pedagogy. The differences of NEP 2020 and WBSEP 2023 in the context of curriculum and pedagogy at Secondary school level will give a vivid picture of the deep differences that came out based on the national and regional differences need of education.

METHODOLOGY

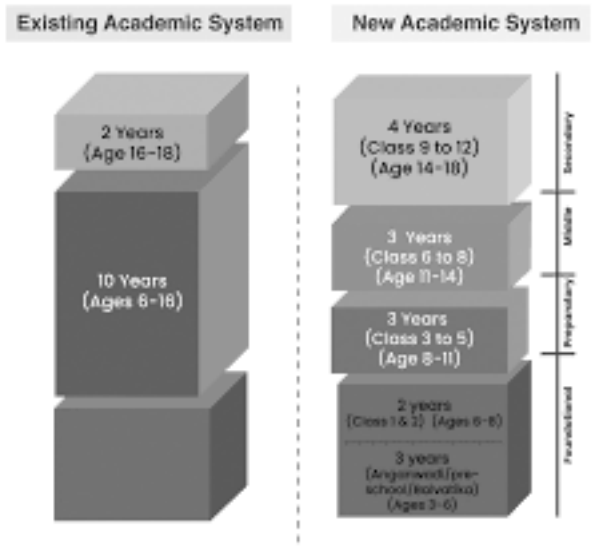
The researchers have conducted the study by reviewing both the policy documents- NEP 2020 and WBSEP2023. They used Documents Analysis method to conduct the whole study. The study is qualitative in nature. The researchers have studied the two policies in depth and discussed the key differences in curriculum and pedagogical content reflected in both the policies in the context of secondary school education. The latest educational policies of Nation and State- NEP 2020 and WBSEP 2023 are regarded as primary data. Other than the policies, related articles, research papers and other internet sources are gone through as secondary data to conduct the present study.

Provisions of NEP-2020 at Secondary School Education: with a long investigation and research NEP 2020 was designed, and started on 29 July 2020 in such a way in the context of secondary school curriculum and pedagogy that learning becomes holistic, interwoven, joyful and engaging for the best educational

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outcome. The recommendations of NEP 2020 for school curriculum and pedagogy are as below:

A.Structure of curriculum and pedagogy: There is a structural change in curriculum and pedagogy in NEP 2020. NEP 2020 changes its structure from 10+2 (NPE 1986) structure to 5+3+3+4. The policy makers have made the change as they studied according to the learners' interest and need at their different stages of development. Curriculum and pedagogy have been organised according to the structure.



B.Holistic Development of learners: The main aim of NEP 2020 initiation is the holistic development of the learners that means specific and all-round development of the learners by identifying the learners' unique capabilities and nurturing them with proper provisions to facilitate the learners. Character building is an integral part of holistic development of the learners. Curriculum and pedagogy are designed in such a way so that the goal of the policy is achieved.

C.Reduction of Curriculum Content: NEP 2020 recommends to reduce the curriculum content and introduce practical, skill-based and experience-based content. Space for enquiry, discovery, discussion, analysis, flexibility, attention to life aspiration, students' choice of subject and problem-solving is fostered to encourage critical thinking which is the top target of this policy at secondary level.

D.Experiential Learning: The policy has a great emphasis on the experiential learning of each individual. This experience would be first-hand experience of the learners while they are applying their cognitive knowledge in real life. Experience will support the learners' holistic development. Cross-curricular pedagogical approach is also integrated to experiential learning.

E.Flexibility in Course Choice: Child centric education has come in the form of choice-centric education in the case of stream and subject choice. There is no traditional stream in the secondary level, and no hard separation between science, arts and commerce. There is no hard separation between academic and non-academic, between curricular and extra-curricular. So, the students can choose subjects from any area of his interest to flourish his/her inner potentiality.

F.Three- Language Formula: India has a rich heritage in diverse language. There are so many languages. This policy recommends for three languages to be taught. The medium of instruction in the school will be mother tongue or regional language for cognitive benefits and ideas formation. Textbooks will also be available in regional language. Two of the three languages will be Indian as Indianization is prioritised in the policy. Three languages are to be taught up to class viii and beyond, that means up to secondary and higher secondary. The policy also suggests to teach the foreign languages.

G.Development of Critical thinking, Skills and Capacities: Instead of rote learning Policy made emphasis on conceptual learning of the learners and develops critical thinking of the learners. Though there is a scope

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of learners' empowerment in choosing their subject of their interest from the baskets of the diverse subjects, the curriculum has been designed in such a way that the learners are given the space of developing critical thinking, soft-skill and capacities to become a successful, reasonable, sensitive, adaptive, creative and productive human being in the fast-changing world. Vocational education, artificial intelligence, design thinking, coding, environmental education and more are the part of the curriculum.

H.Formation of NCFSE 2020-21: NCERT forms National Curriculum Framework for School Education (NCFSC) documents according to the aim of NEP 2020 in all regional languages and it is to be redesigned every 5-10 years according to the need of the nation.

I.Indianization: India has rich and diverse heritage in the culture and knowledge. According to Indian philosophy the ultimate goal of human being is liberation (Moksha). The pursuit of Knowledge (Jnan) is a way to attain it. In ancient time India had the world-class educational institutions like Takshashila, Nalanda, Vikramshila, etc for multidisciplinary teaching and research and contributed in the field of mathematics, astronomy, medical science, engineering, navigation, yoga, fine arts, chess and more. Great scholars like Charaka, Susruta, Aryabhata, Varahamihira, Bhaskaracharya, Chanakya, Chakrapani, Panini, Patanjali and many more came up from this institute. This policy takes pride for Indian knowledge and takes it as the guiding light in making up the curriculum for the nation in modern era.

J.Local Content and Flavour in Textbook: The policy's aim is to make India a driver's role in the field of education in the international level and it wants to do it through a curriculum and pedagogy that is filled with local content and flavour. Examples, analysis, discussion and applications all are with local materials for pedagogical purpose.

K.Special Provisions for Gifted Students: Every individual has innate talent and he/she shows interest to any particular field. There are some students called gifted students who show strong interest or innovation to any particular realm. NEP 2020 wants to provide some special provisions for those students. Policy recommends NCERT and NCTE to recognise those students and provide supplementary resources to enrich and enhance their special talents. Thus, special curriculum and pedagogy is made for the gifted students.

L.Value Education: Education without value education is valueless. It is urgently necessary in the context of present situation as the values of India is degenerating day by day. So, to bring back these values of Indian Heritage, special emphasis is done in the policy. 'Doing what's right' at young age; avoidance of academic cheating, plagiarism, violence, equality at later age; nurturing of constitutional values like sacrifice, tolerance, diversity, patriotism, justice, liberty, fraternity etc are to be consciously integrated in the curriculum and pedagogy. India has story-based value-education in the stories of Panchatantra, Jataka, Hitopadesh, fables and folk tales.

M.Sharing of Resource: Twining or pairing of schools between one public and one private will be adopted to share the best resources regarding curriculum or pedagogy to enhance cooperation and positive synergy among the schools and thereby improve the curriculum and pedagogy of the educational system.

N.Computer Education: To empower a nation, education in technology is urgent. This policy provides special emphasis on the computer and technological education and introduces coding learning from class vi not only as computer education but also critical and analytical thinking of the learning.

O.Vocational education: To increase the skilled workforce in the age group of 19-24(now less than 5%), Vocational education has been reimagined in this policy. The border between vocational education and general education has been removed. The vocational education was only in grade 11 and 12 but this policy recommends vocational education from Middle and Secondary school education stage in all schools and higher educational institutes.

P.Inclusive Education: For social justice and equality NEP 2020 has given a special attention on inclusive education as there is a significant disparity of progress at secondary level. CWSN students, transgender, SC, ST, minorities all the marginalised sections of the society belong to inclusive education. The policy

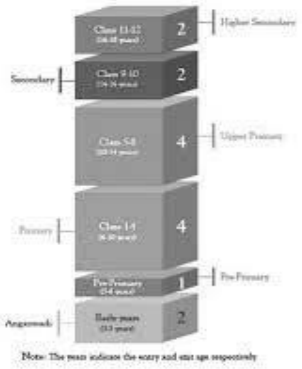
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recommends to take separate strategies for the underrepresented social categories. Policy recommends one-on-one teacher, open schooling, proper infrastructure and technology integration, well-trained teachers, gender inclusion fund, boarding facilities etc.

The policy recommends to remove biases or stereotypes and make a curriculum with detailed knowledge of various culture, religions, languages, gender identity to make the learners sensible to the diversity.

Provisions of WB SEP 2023 at Secondary School Education: State Education Policy 2023 of West Bengal comes into effect from 5th September, 2023 to ensure 50% pass out of the students enrolled at secondary and higher secondary level with at least one vocational subject, and also to ensure excellence of the students at international level by making West Bengal an educational hub curriculum and pedagogy at secondary and higher school level is designed. Secondary education prepares them for their future role in the society. The recommendations of WBSEP 2023 in the context of curriculum and pedagogy at secondary and higher secondary level are as follow:

A.Retained Structure of Curriculum and Pedagogy: West Bengal State Education Policy has retained its curricular and pedagogical structure 5+4+2+2 with a little addition of Anganwadi 2 years (3-5 years old) for early education. First 5 years includes one year pre-primary and 4 years primary; next 4 years is for upper primary, then 2 years of secondary and 2 years of higher secondary.



B.Internship: Internship programmes were in higher education to build critical thinking mindset for the learners' future professional life. Policy recommends to engage the learners in internship programmes or summer projects with local skill-based institute or higher education institute to give them exposure to build up their competency and critical thinking and explore their career options. Skills along with experience will be developed.

C.Subjects offered: There is a variety of subjects in national and international standard including mathematics, science, history, English at secondary. Health and Physical education is compulsory for all students to ensure their healthy body. In Higher secondary level there is also a variety of subjects but in categorised forms like subjects for science, arts and commerce. There is a boundary for Science, Arts and commerce. Few subjects like Machine Learning, Artificial Learning etc have been introduced.

D.Soft-skill Development: Knowledge and skill development is the key goals of this policy. Ananda parisar is a program that is designed with a variety of co-curricular activities like drawing, painting, singing, debate, quiz etc in the last class on Saturday to develop the learners' soft-skills like communication, teamwork, emotional intelligence, leadership, adaptability etc. 'Graduation ceremony' program to felicitate the learners to next class. 'Sishu Sansad' for making aware and maintain personal hygiene. Career counselling has been prioritised to develop the life aspiration of the students.

E.Semester System: To reduce the burden of curriculum for the students the policy recommends for semester system from class VIII onwards. For class 11 and 12, semester system has already been introduced.

F.Scientific mentality Integration: Bengal has a rich heritage in scientific achievement. Jagadish ch. Bose,

Meghnath Saha, Prafulla ch. Ray, Satyendranath Bose, Mani Lal Bhaumik and many more are the eminent scientists from Bengal. To promote scientific knowledge and temper to the learners, annual science competition examination Science Olympiad may be encouraged for the secondary and higher secondary learners.

G.Knowledge and skill: Schools should provide scope to the students to develop Knowledge and skill. School will give them challenging coursework, extracurricular activities, summer project. Through these activities they can acquire knowledge and develop skills to explore their career options.

H.Self-direction and Self-motivation: Motivation is the inner desire that helps learners to achieve their goals. Self-motivation is the most powerful tool to achieve any goal. This policy states that there are so many eminent persons like Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar, Rammohan Roy, Swami Vivekananda from Bengal who not only changed the total societal structure through education dissemination but also became precursor of modern education in India. By making a culture of house with eminent persons and alumni, schools should inject a love of learning, power of learning, setting a goal and a desire to work independently to achieve that goal.

I.Critical Thinking and Problem-solving Skill: Policy provides the learners an exposure to develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Policy recommends the high schools to give the students possible challenges to think them critically about the world around them and to solve problems they face. This will help them to judge the information and make reasonable arguments.

J. School Cluster: This policy recommends for making school clusters and each school under same cluster will share physical resources like laboratory, libraries, playground etc, human resources like subject teachers, counsellors, librarians etc and practices. Secondary and higher secondary schools may mentor primary and upper primary schools.

K.Library and Laboratory: The policy recommends that all higher secondary schools should have high-quality libraries and laboratories. The state has already initiated digital laboratory to facilitate the learners.

O.Digital Education: In the era of Digitalization, education has also been digital. Policy recommends for digital education. Digital content preparation, pedagogical structure creation and the impartation of content knowledge all should be designed properly for knowledge sharing. State has started digital library to access all over the state.

P.Health & Physical education: For holistic development of students the policy recommends to make Health & Physical Education as compulsory subject to make the students aware of their health because health is the first priority before doing anything significant in life.

Q.Inclusive Education: Policy recommends that state should make a dynamic mapping system with the schools and make a complete inclusive plan. The state will ensure that no child will be deprived of quality education. Policy recommends to prepare curriculum with assistive devices, technology-based tools and teaching learning materials including textbooks, Braille, sign language etc and proper pedagogy will be developed. To execute the quality education trained teacher with inclusive pedagogical knowledge will be recruited, at least one teacher for one school. First transgender woman of the country as the principle of a college belongs to West Bengal.

R.Alternate and Innovative education: Education is for all and no one will be left out. For the dropout students aged 14+ students open schooling has been initiated and 15+ students will get adult education.

S.Vocational Education: Along with the mainstream education vocational education has also got greater emphasis to produce skilled workforce. In Secondary and higher secondary level vocational education is to be introduced. There are many courses in vocational education at higher secondary level. Vocational education can be a career option in life. There should be a collaboration between industry and academia.

T.Environmental study: The weather and climate are subject to change for natural and man-made activities

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and natural disaster occurs. So, for the safety and security of the learners, school should make the learners aware of the climate change and ways to be secured.

Differences between WBSEP-2023 and NEP-2020 at Secondary School Education in Curriculum and Pedagogical perspectives:

1.curricular structure difference: The major difference between WBSEP2023 and NEP 2020 is the difference in curricular structure. While NEP 2020 recommends curricular structure of 5+3+3+4 for holistic development of the learners, WBSEP 2023 recommends for 5+4+2+2 curricular structure. Curriculum and pedagogy have been designed according to each curricular structure.

2.Flexibility in subject choice: NEP 2020 recommends to empower the students to choose subjects of their own from any stream, even the cocurricular activities and vocational subjects are also regarded as the main stream subjects which the students can choose to fulfil their aspiration. But WBSEP 2023 retains the stream system in higher secondary. So, there is no such student empowerment to choice subject though some new subjects have been introduced.

3.Three-language formula: Three languages are to be taught from primary to secondary level according to NEP 2020 but WPSEP 2023 recommends three languages formula only in upper primary level means up to class VIII.

4.School cluster: There is a significant difference between NEP2020 and WBSEP2023 in the formation policy of school cluster**.** While NEP 2020 suggests to make school cluster and school complexes to group or rationalise the small schools. Twining/ pairing is a school cluster form for sharing resources between public and private school, WBSEP2023 recommends for making school cluster with few government and government-aided under Innovative Banglar Shiksha programme and share physical resources, human resources and practice resources.

5.value education: NEP 2020 has given a strong emphasis on value education from very young age to know the importance of "doing what's right" to the ultimate goal of human life as traditional India has a rich heritage of values of moral/ethical, constitutional and of basic human life. There are traditional stories, fables and tales which teaches value education.

In contrast in WBSEP 2023 there is no such strong emphasis on value education but through main stream education and cultural and soft-skill development programmes there is hints for injection value education to the learners.

6.Vocational educational: WBSEP 2023 differs itself in vocational education. NEP 2020 recommends to introduce vocational education in all school and higher education institutes for smooth continuation of vocational education and vocational courses will be treated as other main stream courses. During Grade 6-8 students will get hands-on training on vocational crafts. But WBSEP 2023 recommends for more courses in vocational education. It recommends to introduce vocational education at secondary, higher secondary and at higher education level but not as main stream course.

7.Inclusive Education: NEP 2020 has made greater focus on the inclusive education than the WBSEP2023. NEP 2020 recommends for 'gender-inclusion-fund' and 'inclusion fund' along with the other provisions for inclusive education. In WBSEP 2023 there is no mention of such special fund though the state helps the learners under inclusive education with various provisions. NEP 2020 tells of one-on-one tutoring while SEP 2023 tells of at least one teacher for one school. There is an empowerment of the learners to choose whether they will choose special school or general school. Curriculum of NEP 2020 contains human values as importance but in WBSEP 2023 there is no such mention.

8.Rootedness of curriculum and pedagogy: NEP 2020 recommends for Indianization of curriculum and pedagogy as India has a rich heritage in ancient India in culture and education. NEP 2020 wants to bring back the cultural and educational heritage of ancient India in modern context. WBSEP 2023 wants to glorify

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the rich heritage of Bengal through education because all the precursors of modern educationists like Rabindranath Tagore, Raja Rammohan Roy, Swami Vivekananda, Vidyasagar are from Bengal.

There are some similarities between the two policies like both the policies emphasised holistic development of the learners. Both policies promoted vocational education, skill-based education, child-centric education etc.

The Major Areas of Differences are Presented Below in a Chart:

Sl No.	Policy areas	WBSEP 2023	NEP 2020
1	Structure of curriculum and pedagogy	Retain previous school structure 5+4+2+2	New school structure 5+3+3+4
2	Flexibility in Course Choice	Retain the stream division in subject choice	No stream remains. Students can choose any subject
3	Three- Language Formula	3 language formula upto Upper Primary. Bengali language is given importance.	Mother tongue until grade 5. 3 language formula upto secondary. Sanskrit is promoted
4	Use of Technology	Computer and digital learning emphasised	Usage of Technology is strongly emphasised.
5	Vocational Education	Vocational Integration to develop skill-based education from secondary level	Vocational courses as main-stream subject from Grade 6
6	Experiencial learning	challenging coursework, extracurricular activities, summer project	Reduction of course content. Cognitive knowledge to real life experience.
7	Inclusive Education	Inclusion education promotion. One teacher for one school for CWSN students	Gender-inclusion-fund, inclusion fund, one on one tutoring for CWSN students.
8	Rootedness of curriculum and Pedagogy	Glorify the rich heritage of Bengal	Indianization of curriculum and pedagogy

CONCLUSION

In order to create a knowledge society in Indian context the reformation of curriculum and pedagogy is the present need. To meet the educational goal of a system all the other aspects are designed on the basis of curriculum and pedagogy developed. The revamp of curriculum and pedagogy was necessary to keep up with the change of 21st century socio-cultural and technological advancement in all spheres of life. Ministry of Human Resource Development formed a committee which developed National Education Policy 2020 replacing the National Policy on Education of 1986 to reform the age-old curriculum and pedagogy and other aspects of the educational system of the nation to make education holistic, flexible and multidisciplinary. Along with the other states West Bengal Govt also disagrees with the curriculum and pedagogy of NEP 2020 together with the other aspects of policy and initiated its own curriculum and pedagogy furnished in the West Bengal State Education Policy 2023 to fulfil its own educational goal. WBSEP 2023 provides more importance to the curriculum and pedagogy to get desired educational outcomes. So, it can be concluded that both NEP2020 and WBSEP2023 worked on the curriculum and pedagogy, investigated on curriculum and pedagogy and finally came up with the reformed curriculum and

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pedagogy for its implication to make the educational goal a successful one to the nation and state.

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