FIELDTRIPS AS AN EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING IN GEOGRAPHY AT HIGHER SECONDARY LEVEL IN WEST BENGAL: AN OVERVIEW

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Abstract

The study identifies the importance of educational fieldtrips at higher level in different higher secondary schools of West Bengal. Field trips have been acknowledged as valuable learning experiences in geography. Fieldtrip is considered to be a major component with in geography, earth and environmental sciences curriculum and is advocated as an effective learning environment by virtually all those who are involved in learning in these disciplines. The present study was carried out through survey. The population of this study was the students and teachers of government high school. The ideas and views of male and female students and teachers were sought out regarding the importance of educational fieldtrips at higher secondary level. One hundred and thirty respondents including 30 teachers and 100 students were randomly selected. The questionnaire was used as a research instrument and collected data was analyzed by using simple percentage method. Majority of the respondents had a view that educational fieldtrips is helpful to cope up with advance learning. A large number of respondents opinioned that educational fieldtrips help to give a practical approach for the curriculum and it is helpful to develop more interest in learning among students.

Key Words: Fieldtrip, Higher level, Procedure, progressive method, cognitive skill, curriculum.

INTRODUCTION:

In geography learning the ‘real world’ is thought to be absolutely essential, contributing particular qualities that run through geography’s identity as a subject discipline from primary education to undergraduate study. It expresses a commitment to exploration and enquiry, and geography’s concern to discover and to be curious about the world.
Field Trips is important because-

1. It is of great pedagogical importance as it lets students experience the geography of a particular region which theoretical texts can’t do.
2. It helps us understand the theoretical concepts better.

A field trip or excursion is a journey by a group of people to a place away from their normal environment.

Field trips are most often done in 3 steps:

Preparation, activities and follow-up activity. Preparation applies to both the student and the teacher. Teachers often take the time to learn about the destination and the subject before the trip. Activities that happen on the field trips often include: lectures, tours, worksheets, videos and demonstrations. (Bitgood, Stephen ‘summer 1989’ school field trips: An overview.)

Good field trips provide participants with firsthand experience related to the topic or concept being discussed in the geography. They provide unique opportunities for learning that are not available within the four walls of a classroom. As with any type of educational program component, fieldtrips should be designed around specific educational objectives. A field trip should be designed so participants can easily make connections between the focus of the fieldtrip and the concepts they are learning in the rest of the educational program.

Seefeldt (2001) cited by Ayaaba (2007:36-38) identified five types of fieldtrips they are:

1. Walking trips: These are trips planned by teachers and their learners to places of interest within the school compound or the neighbourhood.
2. Split-group trips: These are trips organized by groups to specific places where they can observe and satisfy their learning potentials. In other words, such trips involve only a small group of the class.
3. Repeated trips: These are repeated visits to places of interest for new learning. They are very suitable for younger children.
4. Specific purpose trips: These kinds of trips are often organized to achieve specific purposes. For instance, a visit to parliament to observe parliamentary proceedings.
5. Woo trips: These are end of year picnics or visits to zoos that involves the parents of the learners.

**STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM:**

Field trips are important to geography lessons, because first-hand experiences can bring geography to life for students who would otherwise find it uninteresting. Field trips to art museums and galleries can help instill an appreciation for arts in students. Many students do not get the chance to go the typical field trips locations with their families, because of money constraints or lack of resources. Field trips give students the opportunity to
experience new venues. Field trips spark student’s interest in career field or other interesting paths. Field trips are a great way to create a student’s interest in subject. They greatly enhance the students understanding and grasp of a subject like geography. The new environment and information provided by the field trips stimulates the children awareness and increase their reasoning abilities. Educational fieldtrips give the practical approach to the students. They give great opportunity for students to not only observe but also to actively participate in the events going on around them. So fieldtrips is very effective for the developing of different conceptual terms in geography.

**OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:**

The principal objectives of the proposed study are as follows.

- To find out the importance of fieldtrips in effective learning of geography.
- To explore fieldtrips as an experiential learning among the students in geography.
- To find out the interest of the students to fieldtrips in geographical studies.

**RESEARCH QUESTIONS:**

The following research questions have been framed for the present study:

1. What is the importance of fieldtrips ineffective learning of geography at higher secondary level?
2. Whether it provides a real-world experiences and long-lasting learning among the students in geography or not?
3. To know how much it will help the students to take more interest in their geographical studies?

**METHODOLOGY:**

The term “methodology” seems to be wide in the sense it includes nature of populations, selection of the sample, preparation of tools, collection of data and how data will be analyzed.

**Method of study-**

In this descriptive type research the survey methods will be followed.

**Population of the study-**

All the teachers and students of geography of higher secondary school under West Bengal Council of Higher Secondary Education (WBCHSE) in West Bengal was treated as population for the present study.
Sample of the study-

The researcher selected 30 geography teachers and 100 students having geography as a compulsory subject from different higher secondary schools (WBCHSE) of Purba Medinipur & Paschim Medinipur districts in West Bengal as a sample for the present study.

Sampling techniques-

Simple random sampling was followed in this study.

Tool of the study-

The researcher use self-made questionnaire as a tool for collecting the data in the present study. For the face validity of the constructed tool was verified by different subject experts in this field.

Techniques of Data analysis & Interpretation:

Suitable statistical techniques mainly descriptive statistics was used by the researcher for proper interpretation.

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF THE DATA:

TABLE 1.1.1

# THE FIRST TABLE SHOWS THE IDEAS OF TEACHERS THAT HOW MUCH FIELDTRIPS ARE HELPFUL IN EFFECTIVE LEARNING.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl.No</th>
<th>Statement:1- Importance of fieldtrip in effective learning</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Yes(%)</th>
<th>No(%)</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Geographical fieldtrips are merely wastages of time, efforts and money for the students.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>21.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Geography is the name for fieldwork/fieldtrip.</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>09</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>8.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Field trips give practical approach for the understanding of different conceptual terms in geography.</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>05</td>
<td>83.33%</td>
<td>16.67%</td>
<td>14.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Geographical fieldtrips help students’ in making direct relationship with the environment.</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>12.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Fieldtrips create less interest in learning geographical concept among students.</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>23.33%</td>
<td>76.67%</td>
<td>11.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Fieldtrips promote cooperation and unity among students.</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>93.33%</td>
<td>6.67%</td>
<td>18.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Fieldtrips help to understand the sense of</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>07</td>
<td>76.67%</td>
<td>23.33%</td>
<td>11.32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The results of questions related to the statement No. 1 were further represented by SD, which shows that majority of the teachers think that field trips give practical approach to curriculum, it also provide self-experience & observation, guidance to face future challenges to the students. It promotes interaction between teachers and students with in the classroom.

### FIGURE 2.1.1

The visual presentation of data in bar graph shows the distribution of responses from teachers thinks that fieldtrips is important in effective learning of geography.

The statement – 1 in bar graph tell us that majority of teachers examine fieldtrips are helpful for both the teachers and students to clarify, establish, co-relate and co-ordinate accurate concepts, interpretations and enable to make learning more concrete, effective and interesting.
TABLE 1.1.2

# THE TABLE SHOWS THE IDEAS OF TEACHERS TOWARDS FIELDTRIP AS AN EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING AMONG THE STUDENTS IN GEOGRAPHY.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SlNo</th>
<th>Statement:2 - Fieldtrips as an experiential learning among the students in geography.</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Yes(%)</th>
<th>No(%)</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>It guides to confront future challenges from geographical disaster and hazardous.</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>09</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>8.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Fieldtrips broaden the learners’ perception of real art or its space.</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>63.33%</td>
<td>36.67%</td>
<td>5.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Students gain confidence to perform practical techniques of geography through fieldtrips.</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>08</td>
<td>73.33%</td>
<td>26.67%</td>
<td>9.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Fieldtrip is the only way of putting geographical concept into practice.</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>56.67%</td>
<td>43.33%</td>
<td>2.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Fieldtrips is a complex and diverse form of learning organization so that students develop cognitive interest in their geographical study.</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>4.25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results of questions related to statement No. 2 were further represented by SD, which shows that majority of teachers think that fieldtrips at higher secondary level are helpful to develop leadership qualities, promote cooperation, sense of discipline, increase confidence and also provide social training to students.

FIGURE 2.1.2

# the visual presentation of data in bar graph shows the distribution of responses from teachers thinks that fieldtrip as an experiential learning among the students in geography.

The statement – 2 in bar graph tell us that majority of teachers consider the benefits derive from fieldtrips are hands-on, real-world experiences, quality of education, positive attitudes to science and motivation towards the subjects, improvements of the socialization between students.
# THE TABLE SHOWS THE IDEAS OF TEACHERS TOWARDS THE INTEREST OF THE STUDENTS TO FIELDTRIPS IN GEOGRAPHICAL STUDIES.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Statement: 3 - Interest of the students to fieldtrips.</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Yes(%)</th>
<th>No(%)</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Fieldtrips develop knowledge by providing self-experience &amp; self-observation.</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>16.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Fieldtrips help to develop the ability among the students to various techniques to better understanding of different geographical phenomena.</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>09</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>8.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Students and teachers both get opportunity to share their knowledge and interact with each other.</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>66.67%</td>
<td>33.33%</td>
<td>7.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Fieldtrips give more opportunity to visit new places.</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>07</td>
<td>76.67%</td>
<td>23.33%</td>
<td>11.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Fieldtrips generate clear understanding among the learners how geography is integrated with other subject.</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>4.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Fieldtrips allow students to participate in different environmental awareness programme.</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>12.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Students understand world issues like environment, population and resources in the geographical fieldtrips.</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>07</td>
<td>76.67%</td>
<td>23.33%</td>
<td>11.32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results of questions related to the statement no. 3 were further represented by SD, which shows that majority of the teachers think that fieldtrips give interest towards intense study of geography.

**FIGURE 2.1.3**

![Statement: 3](https://pramanaresearch.org)
The visual presentation of data in bar graph shows the distribution of responses from teachers thinks that students gets interest from fieldtrips in geographical studies.

The statement – 3 in bar graph tell us that majority of teachers inspect fieldtrips is a great way to bring excitement and adventure to learning of geographical concept.

**TABLE 1.1.4**

# THE TABLE SHOWS THE IDEAS OF STUDENTS THAT HOW MUCH FIELDTRIP ARE HELPFUL IN EFFECTIVE LEARNING OF GEOGRAPHY.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SI No.</th>
<th>Statement:1- Helpful in effective learning</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Yes (%)</th>
<th>No(%)</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Geographical Fieldtrips are merely wastages of time, efforts and money for the students.</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>55.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Fieldtrips is one of the best way to know subject geography.</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>52.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Fieldtrips are not helpful in co-operative learning.</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>46.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>There is no difference between classroom learning and learning from fieldtrips.</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>53.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Fieldtrips help for the understanding of different conceptual terms in geography.</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>46.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Fieldtrips give opportunity to discuss different conceptual terms of geography among students.</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>39.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Fieldtrips help to know the concept &amp; definition in geography.</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>33.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Fieldtrips provide opportunity for sharing knowledge, views among the students &amp; teachers.</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>45.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Fieldtrips is the only way to know the subject geography.</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>39.60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results of questions related to the statement No. 1 were further represented by SD, which shows that majority of the students think that fieldtrips give practical approach to curriculum, it also provide self-experience & observation, guidance to face future challenges to the students. It promotes interaction between teachers and students with in the classroom.
FIGURE 2.1.4

THE VISUAL PRESENTATION OF DATA IN BAR GRAPH SHOWS THE DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONSES FROM STUDENTS THINKS THAT FIELDTRIPS IS IMPORTANT IN EFFECTIVE LEARNING OF GEOGRAPHY.

The statement – 4 in bar graph tell us that majority of student’s gets opportunities to interact with what they are learning in geography through fieldtrips.

TABLE 1.1.5

THE TABLE SHOWS THE IDEAS OF STUDENTS TOWARDS FIELDTRIP AS AN EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING AMONG THE STUDENTS IN GEOGRAPHY.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl No.</th>
<th>Statement 2: Fieldtrip as an experiential learning</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Yes(%)</th>
<th>No(%)</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Fieldtrips make co-ordinate the practical knowledge &amp; classroom knowledge of geography.</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>33.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Fieldtrips give opportunity to take place both observation and experience simultaneously.</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>39.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Fieldtrips help to develop the ability among the students to various techniques to better understanding of different geographical phenomena.</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>43.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Fieldtrips make co-ordination between the theoretical and practical knowledge in geography.</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>49.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Fieldtrips develop knowledge by providing self-experience and self-observation.</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>50.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Fieldtrips help to prepare practical copy of geography.</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>52.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Fieldtrips help to acknowledge the various use of geographical instrument.</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>53.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Fieldtrips enhance the idea of measuring scale, length, area of different map.</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>43.85</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The results of questions related to statement No. 2 were further represented by SD, which shows that majority of students think that fieldtrips at higher secondary level are helpful to develop leadership qualities, promote cooperation, sense of discipline, increase confidence and also provide social training to students.

FIGURE 2.1.5

![Bar graph showing distribution of responses from students]

The visual presentation of data in bar graph shows the distribution of responses from students thinks that fieldtrip as an experiential learning among the students in geography.

The statement – 5 in bar graph tell us that majority of students get plenty of opportunities to experience hand to hand through fieldtrips in learning of geography.

TABLE 1.1.6

# THE TABLE SHOWS THE IDEAS OF STUDENTS TOWARDS THE INTEREST OF THE STUDENTS TO FIELDTRIPS IN GEOGRAPHICAL STUDIES.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl No.</th>
<th>Statement- 3 interest of the students to fieldtrips in geographical studies</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Yes(%)</th>
<th>No(%)</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Fieldtrips give opportunity to know more information of geography in a joyful environment.</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>35.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Fieldtrips play a great role to read and write about geography.</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>45.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>We come in contact with new places through fieldtrip.</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>32.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Knowledge gathered through fieldtrip is momentary.</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>50.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Students aware world issues like environment, sustainable-development in the geographical fieldtrips.</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>29.70</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The results of questions related to the statement no. 3 were further represented by SD, which shows that majority of the teachers think that fieldtrips give interest towards intense study of geography.

FIGURE 2.1.6

# the visual presentation of data in bar graph shows the distribution of responses from students thinks that students gets interest from fieldtrips in geographical studies.

The statement – 6 in bar graph tell us that majority of students gets plenty of interest to know more definitions and conceptual terms through fieldtrips in learning of geography.

FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATION OF THE DATA:

Findings & Discussions (Based on Objectives):

Objective -1

To find out the importance of fieldtrips in effective learning of geography.

On the basis of the analysis of data, and the conclusions drawn, it is revealed that the teachers and students thinks that fieldtrips is very important in effective learning of geography.

❖ Teachers and students don’t think geographical fieldtrips are merely wastages of time, efforts for the students.

Objective – 2

To explore fieldtrips as an experiential learning among the students in geography.

❖ On the basis of the analysis of data, and the conclusions drawn, it is revealed that the teachers and students consider fieldtrips give opportunity to hand to hand experiences for learning of geography among the students.
Objective – 3

To find out the interest of the students to fieldtrips in geographical studies.

On the basis of the analysis of data, and the conclusions drawn, it is revealed that the teachers and students admit that fieldtrips encourage to better understanding of conceptual terms in geography.

Findings & Discussions (Based on Research Questions):

Research Questions-1

What is the importance of fieldtrips in effective learning of geography at higher secondary level?

The present study shows that there is importance of fieldtrip in effective learning of geography at higher secondary level.

Research Questions-2

Whether it provides a real-world experiences and long-lasting learning among the students in geography or not?

The present study shows that fieldtrips provides a real-world experiences and long-lasting learning among the students in geography.

Research Questions-3

To know how much it will help the students to take more interest in their geographical studies?

The present study shows that fieldtrips really gives more interest to the students for their geographical studies.

FINDINGS AND SUMMARY OF THE STUDY:

The findings and conclusions are drawn in the light of above tables, bar graph and pie chart.

Majority of the response show that there is lot of importance of fieldtrips at higher level. It is not only helpful in effective learning but promote the qualities of leadership, discipline and self-confidence among the students. Maximum respondents cleared that these fieldtrips are beneficial for society and individuals and also promote the importance of culture and historical places.
Limitations of the study

There was a sincere effort on the part of the researcher so that the study can be planned and conducted carefully; still it will not be wise to claim that the study is disowned of any weakness. In social science research, sample should be as large as possible. In the present age of computer programming and convenience of statistical analysis, use of large sample is not difficult, in which case findings are likely to be more reliable and valid, In this study, a sample of 30 teachers and 100 students was taken, which may appear as a modest size to many people. The researcher may not increase the sample size further as he has to undertake an in depth analysis of data.

The next is Time constraints as huge time and effort were required to develop questionnaire on Fieldtrips and collection of data. In objectives of experiential learning and interest of students, more items could have been added. So the investigator could not make wider application.

The area of the sample group was limited up to two districts (Purba Medinipur & Paschim Medinipur) only and only West Bengal council of higher secondary school. There for it was risky to generalize the findings in the context of large area population, e.g. whole of West Bengal

RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS:

- Due to the need of educational fieldtrips, it is necessary that the field trips should be arranged in every subject at higher secondary level.
- The government should provide sufficient funds and resources to the institutions/schools to held fieldtrips accordingly.
- Every student have some specific qualities, so with the help of fieldtrips we can promote leadership, socialization, unity, self-confidence, discipline and organizing qualities among students.
- At higher level, field trips also conduct by the merger of government and private sector, In such a way the students and teachers both have opportunity to share their knowledge and interact with each other.

References:


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