

EQUIPPING LEARNERS FOR LIFE:

DEVELOPING SKILLS AND PROCESSES TO ACTUALISE POTENTIAL

28 AUGUST 2025
WEBINAR REPORT

EQUIPPING LEARNERS FOR LIFE: DEVELOPING SKILLS AND PROCESSES TO ACTUALISE POTENTIAL

Thursday, 28 August 2025, 5 PM IST

Explore how skills and processes can help actualise learners' potential, moving education beyond content delivery. This webinar offers strategies to nurture balanced, resilient individuals ready to navigate uncertainty, embrace lifelong learning, and make a meaningful impact.



Moderator:
CHOKI WANGCHUK
Pallavan Learning Systems, India



Panelist:
KANCHAN LALL
Director, Partnerships & Operations,
The Education Alliance (TEA), India



Panelist:
NAMGAY WANGMO
Student, The Royal Academy,
Druk Gyalpo's Institute, Bhutan



Panelist:
JAMYANG THINLEY
Cerebral Coordinator, The Royal Academy,
Druk Gyalpo's Institute, Bhutan



Panelist:
SAKSHAM SHARMA
Receptionist, Radisson Blu Plaza, Delhi,
Alumnus, Second Chance School, Ritinjali

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CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	1
ABOUT THE SPEAKERS	3
WEBINAR SESSION	6
Reframing the Purpose of Education	6
Inequity and Access to Wholistic Education	6
Navigating a Volatile World	6
Practical Models: Roadmaps, Motherboard, and ACCCE	7
The Value of Soft Skills	7
Critical Thinking in the Information Age	8
Systemic Challenges and Enablers	8
Reimagining the Role of Teachers	8
Schools of the Future	9
Q&A HIGHLIGHTS	10
INSIGHTS FROM THE CHAT	13
CONCLUSION	14
LEARNINGS FROM THE WEBINAR	15
SUMMARY	16
WEBINAR VIDEO	18

INTRODUCTION

The webinar “Equipping Learners for Life: Developing Skills and Processes to Actualise Potential”, held on 28 August 2025, was the 21st in a continuing series of dialogues jointly organised by Pallavan Learning Systems (PLS), Ritinjali, and the Centre for Escalation of Peace (CEP).

This particular session was anchored in a fundamental question that resonates across the globe: *How can education prepare learners not just for examinations and jobs, but for life itself?* It was said that while much progress has been made in expanding access to schooling, education systems in many parts of the world continue to be dominated by content delivery and exam performance. The traditional focus on rote learning, standardised assessments, and narrow academic achievement often sidelines the cultivation of essential life skills such as adaptability, resilience, empathy, and self-regulation. In a world marked by rapid technological advancements, climate uncertainty, shifting economies, and social complexities, such an approach leaves learners underprepared for the realities they will face.

The importance of this question is magnified by the transformative pressures facing societies worldwide. With the pace of change accelerating, learners must not only acquire knowledge but also develop the inner capacity to apply it in diverse and unpredictable contexts. Content mastery without adaptability risks irrelevance; technical competence without empathy risks alienation; and achievement without self-regulation risks burnout and disconnection. This makes it essential for education to move beyond the narrow lens of examination scores and towards fostering whole individuals who can thrive personally and contribute meaningfully to their communities. At the heart of the session was the belief that skills and processes are as important as knowledge. Skills such as communication, collaboration, critical thinking, and creativity form the scaffolding on which learners build their futures. Processes such as reflection, feedback, and goal-setting are what enable those skills to deepen, evolve, and continue to serve learners throughout lives. By embedding these into the learning journey,

education can equip learners not just to pass tests, but to live with resilience, purpose, and adaptability.

The webinar also underscored the need for wholistic development. True education encompasses the cerebral, emotional, social, physical, and spiritual areas of growth. When these are nurtured together, learners are more likely to emerge as balanced individuals, capable of navigating challenges, building healthy relationships, sustaining their well-being, and finding meaning in their lives. This wholistic view is not a luxury; it is a necessity for the future of societies that seek harmony, innovation, and inclusivity.

Ultimately, the discussion reflected a shared conviction: education must be reimagined as the cultivation of human potential rather than the transmission of content alone. Preparing learners for life means enabling them to take ownership of their growth, discover their passions, and develop the qualities that will help them adapt and flourish in an uncertain world. This webinar, therefore, sought not only to explore what those essential skills and processes might be but also to reflect on how they can be meaningfully integrated into teaching, assessment, and school environments.



ABOUT THE SPEAKERS

Moderator

Choki Wangchuk

Pallavan Learning Systems, India



Choki Wangchuk has a Master's degree from Rutgers University and has more than 12 years of experience in education consultancy and project management. His areas of experience include curriculum development, monitoring and evaluation of school performance, design and implementation of educational component activities, conduction of extensive field studies and surveys, and research and analysis of data on various educational and skill development aspects.

Panelist

Kanchan Lall

Director, Partnerships & Operations,
The Education Alliance (TEA), India



Kanchan Lall is the Director of Partnerships & Operations at The Education Alliance (TEA), a Delhi-based non-profit working to ensure equitable access to quality education through strong government partnerships. With over a decade at TEA following eight years in research and consulting, she has led transformative initiatives such as the School Quality Enhancement Program in Delhi, the Foundational Learning mission in Madhya Pradesh, and currently oversees senior secondary and vocational education programs in Delhi and Punjab. In her previous role, Kanchan worked with a consulting firm in the area of foreign direct investment, advising foreign companies in the consumer and retail sectors, and supported them with market intelligence and rollout plans to establish operations in India. She has also worked with Evalueserve, a business research firm, and holds an MBA from the Indian School of Business, Hyderabad, where she served as the Community Initiatives Coordinator for the Net Impact Club, fostering student-led initiatives focused on social welfare.

Panelist

Jamyang Thinley

Cerebral Coordinator, The Royal Academy,
Druk Gyalpo's Institute, Bhutan



Jamyang is a teacher and the Cerebral Coordinator at The Royal Academy, a co-educational residential school under the Druk Gyalpo's Institute. A 2013 graduate of Sherubtse College, Kanglung, Trashigang, he went on to spend seven years as a cultural tourist guide, travelling extensively across Bhutan. This journey allowed him to immerse himself in the diverse traditions of its many communities and deepen his appreciation of the nation's rich heritage. Passionate about travelling, historical exploration, trekking, birdwatching, and photography, Jamyang brings these interests into the classroom, creating a vibrant learning environment that connects academic concepts to real-world experiences.

Panelist

Namgay Wangmo

Student, The Royal Academy,
Druk Gyalpo's Institute, Bhutan



Namgay Wangmo hails from Zhemgang, located in the south-central part of Bhutan, and is currently a Grade 11 student at The Royal Academy. An enthusiastic and well-rounded learner, she actively engages in sports such as football, basketball, and volleyball, which not only keep her physically fit but also strengthen her sense of teamwork and collaboration. Beyond athletics, she has a deep love for dancing, meeting new people, and exchanging ideas that broaden her perspectives. In her free time, Namgay enjoys exploring new activities, learning from others, and discovering creative ways to express herself. Guided by positivity and a strong work ethic, she strives to make the most of every opportunity, both inside and outside the classroom, to grow as an individual and contribute meaningfully to her community.

Panelist

Saksham Sharma

Receptionist, Radisson Blu Plaza, Delhi,
Alumnus Second Chance School, Ritinjali



Saksham Sharma, 22, hails from Kota, Rajasthan, and is currently working as a Receptionist at Radisson Blu Plaza, Mahipalpur, where he is gaining valuable experience in the hospitality industry. He completed his schooling in Rajasthan and is presently pursuing his Bachelor's degree in Delhi. He has also undertaken a six-month Soft Skills Development Program from Pallavanjali, which strengthened his communication, personality, and customer service skills. Beyond his professional pursuits, Saksham is passionate about cricket—both watching and playing—as it keeps him energetic and motivated while instilling in him the values of discipline and teamwork.



WEBINAR SESSION

Reframing the Purpose of Education

The discussion opened with reflections on the purpose of education. It was argued that education must be seen not only as a pathway to employment but as a social good, comparable to healthcare, that underpins the health, cohesion, and sustainability of societies. When education is framed narrowly in terms of economic outcomes—such as preparing learners for university or job markets—it fails to nurture the broader qualities that make individuals thoughtful citizens and compassionate human beings. Some nations have already begun to articulate their educational vision in terms of human flourishing, happiness, or realising potential. The session called for a similar re-articulation in contexts where examinations and job-readiness continue to dominate the discourse.

Inequity and Access to Wholistic Education

This discussion naturally led to the issue of inequity. Learners in private or well-resourced environments often benefit from opportunities that foster creativity, exploration, community engagement, and wholistic well-being. Meanwhile, those in public or resource-limited schools are typically confined to exam-oriented systems that prize rote memorisation over personal growth. Such disparities widen social divides, ensuring that the benefits of wholistic education are reserved for a few. For education to truly serve as a social good, these divides must be addressed by ensuring equitable access to wholistic opportunities for all learners.

Navigating a Volatile World

Attention then turned to the realities of the modern world, where volatility has become the defining characteristic. Learners today face an environment shaped by technological disruption, particularly artificial intelligence, climate instability, and rapidly shifting economies and social structures. These conditions mean that the skills most prized in

the future will not be static knowledge sets, but rather adaptability, resilience, and reflective capacity. Without these, young people risk being overwhelmed by uncertainty. The discussion emphasised that adaptability allows learners to adjust to changing contexts, while self-regulation provides the emotional balance to remain centred and resilient amidst disruption.

Practical Models: Roadmaps, Motherboard, and ACCCE

The session explored practical frameworks and tools that enable learners to take ownership of their educational journeys. In particular, the Bhutan Baccalaureate model was cited as an example of how students can be empowered to design personal roadmaps with their own goals and indicators of success. This approach shifts the focus from external validation to self-discovery and agency, encouraging learners to take responsibility for their growth. These roadmaps are supported by teacher feedback and observations, which together with learner reflections are compiled in a digital platform known as the Motherboard. This system allows patterns of growth to be tracked over time, enabling teachers, learners, and parents to see progress not just in academics but in qualities like empathy, resilience, and collaboration.

In parallel, the ACCCE (Achievement, Comprehension, Communication, Confidence, Effort) assessment was presented as an innovative tool for tracking the progress of important skills, processes and watermarks. Unlike conventional assessments that focus only on academic recall, ACCCE provides a multi-dimensional perspective that can capture both capability and character. Together, roadmaps, the Motherboard, and ACCCE create a comprehensive approach that values growth over time rather than performance in isolated exams.

The Value of Soft Skills

A significant theme was the value of soft skills. Through lived experiences, participants highlighted how training in communication, etiquette, self-building, and even the appreciation of small joys in life can be transformative. One story described how

interacting with differently-abled children—who found happiness in the simplest of things—had instilled a deep appreciation for gratitude and resilience. These experiences demonstrated that skills are not secondary to knowledge but are, in fact, what enable knowledge to remain relevant and useful across different contexts.

Critical Thinking in the Information Age

The conversation also considered the implications of information abundance in the digital age. With content so easily accessible through the internet and AI, the role of education cannot be to merely transmit facts. Instead, learners must develop comprehension, discernment, and critical thinking to differentiate credible information from misinformation and to apply knowledge constructively. This reinforces the idea that processes—how learners engage with knowledge—are as important as the content itself.

Systemic Challenges and Enablers

The discussion acknowledged that systemic change is difficult but necessary. Implementing wholistic and skills-focused approaches in large-scale government systems requires political will, decentralisation, and a rethinking of teacher roles. In many countries, exam results still act as gatekeepers, determining access to professional pathways such as medicine, vocational education, or general studies. This creates a rigid hierarchy that disadvantages learners who may excel in other capacities. Breaking free of this system requires courage at the policy level and a commitment to recognising multiple pathways of success.

Reimagining the Role of Teachers

Reimagining the role of teachers was identified as a critical step. In a world where knowledge is available on demand, teachers must be seen as mentors and facilitators rather than deliverers of information. Their role is to guide learners in reflection, help them build values, and cultivate the skills necessary for lifelong growth. For teachers to

fulfill this role, they themselves must be supported through safe working conditions, professional development, and collaborative environments. Without empowering teachers, it is impossible to empower learners.

Schools of the Future

Finally, the session turned to the vision of future schools. Instead of factory-like systems defined by grade levels and rigid outcomes, participants envisioned schools as inclusive, diverse, and learner-centred spaces. In these schools, learning would be experiential, connected to nature, and embedded in community engagement. Creativity, mentorship, and collaboration would be as central as academic knowledge. The ultimate goal would be to prepare learners not only for careers but for life—helping them discover their passions, cultivate balance, and contribute meaningfully to their societies.



Q & A HIGHLIGHTS

Q 1: If we had to think about skills for the present - something that worked in the past, but is especially important for the future - what would that skill be?

A. Namgay Wangmo: For me, the most important skill is communication. Through communication, we understand what is happening around us and what has happened in the past. This allows us to reflect and improve going forward. Communication also supports the development of adaptability, which is essential in today's fast-changing world. If we can adapt to different situations, we can move forward confidently and face challenges without hesitation.

A. Kanchan Lall: I would definitely say adaptability. The world is changing rapidly due to technology, climate change, political instability, and socioeconomic divides. We do not know what jobs, cities, or societies will look like five to ten years from now. Adaptability is a blend of perseverance and self-understanding. Alongside that, we must understand ourselves in relation to our communities and social networks. This interdependence is vital—without empathy and awareness of others, inequity and conflict will persist. So, adaptability and interdependence together are key for the future.

A. Saksham Sharma: From my side, adaptability is also the most important skill. It helps us to learn new things quickly, adjust to changes both at work and in life, and remain calm in unexpected situations. Adaptability also allows us to collaborate better with different people. In today's world, this is what really matters.

A. Jamyang Thinley: There are many skills that come to mind, but if I had to choose one, it would be self-regulation. When you understand yourself, you can also understand others. Self-regulation means being aware of your emotions and managing them in different situations. It allows you to navigate challenges in any community or environment. For me, this connects to all five areas of development—cerebral, emotional, social, physical, and spiritual. Self-regulation is central to becoming a balanced individual.

Q 2: If you could design a school for the future - thinking about the limitations of the current exam-driven model - what would you add, remove, or change to better prepare learners for life?

A. Kanchan Lall: I would start by removing the factory-like structure of schooling. Today, we treat schools as production lines, with children passing through grade-wise buckets and expected outcomes at each level. Instead, schools should be places for growth and self-discovery. I imagine a school where children are free to explore their interests, engage with communities, and learn how they respond to adversity. Assessment would not be about grades but about experiences and reflection. A school should be a jamboree of opportunities where learners discover themselves and their place in society.

A. Jamyang Thinley: My vision of a future school begins with diversity—students and faculty from different communities and backgrounds learning together. It should also be rooted in the five areas of development, so that growth is not only cerebral but also emotional, social, physical, and spiritual. Importantly, learning should take place in connection with nature. From my own experiences as a guide and traveller, I know that nature is the best teacher. Schools should create opportunities for reflection, experiential learning, and community engagement, while ensuring that content knowledge also develops along the way. Diversity and nature would be at the heart of my ideal school.

A. Saksham Sharma: If I were to design a school, I would focus less on examinations and more on preparing learners for life. In my own experience, my earlier schooling in Rajasthan was very exam-focused. Later, through Second Chance School and Pallavanjali, I experienced a very different approach where the emphasis was on skills, well-being, and preparing for the future. A future school should therefore teach students life skills, not just academic knowledge. Knowledge alone is not enough—you need skills to use that knowledge effectively, and to continue growing in life.

A. Namgay Wangmo: For me, schools of the future must focus on mentorship, inclusivity, and creativity. At the Royal Academy, I have experienced how collaboration, feedback, and inclusive education strengthen learning. Teachers must act as guides who help students reflect on their strengths and weaknesses. Schools should encourage creativity and life skills that help us navigate uncertainty. More than anything, schools should help learners discover their hidden potential and nurture it in ways that allow them to contribute positively to their communities.

Q. 3 What is the one skill or quality that connects the past, present, and future, and will always remain important?

A. Namgay Wangmo: Again, I would emphasise adaptability. In this fast-changing world, it is important to be aware of what is happening and to be ready for whatever comes next. Adaptability allows us to keep learning and to stay resilient.

A. Kanchan Lall: I would say adaptability too, but with a strong link to empathy and interdependence. Many of the global issues we face—inequity, climate change, political conflict—stem from a lack of empathy. If we can cultivate empathy alongside adaptability, learners will not only adjust to change but also care for the well-being of others.

A. Saksham Sharma: Adaptability is what I would stress. It makes it possible to adjust quickly, stay calm in unexpected circumstances, and work effectively with people from different backgrounds. This skill has helped me personally, and I know it is essential for the future.

A. Jamyang Thinley: I would emphasise self-regulation. If you can regulate your emotions and actions, you can adapt to any situation, connect with others, and remain resilient. Self-regulation is the foundation for learning, growth, and contributing meaningfully to society.



INSIGHTS FROM THE CHAT



Phurba: Thank you for providing this opportunity.

Sangeeta Doraiswami: Very insightful sharing!

Shouman Jawed: What a journey, Saksham!

Phurba: Dear Saksham, you narrated a beautiful situation. It speaks of a positive mindset as Choki sir mentioned. Appreciations to you for your great potential.

Saksham Sharma: Thank you so much.

Pallavan Learning Systems: Absolutely! What he said is what he has lived through... beautiful sharing.

Sangeeta Doraiswami: How do we make lifelong learning a natural habit rather than a slogan?

Phurba: One question regarding the acceptability of the course completion certificate. Will the certificate be valued and considered across the world? Or is there any legitimacy to the course completion certificate?

Sunaina Narang: In your view, what is the most important skill for the future?

Sangeeta Doraiswami: Can you recall a moment when a skill helped you overcome a challenge?

Sangay Dorji: Kindly share your thoughts on 21st-century or future learners' mindsets and expectations in teaching-learning experiences as per the swiftly changing demands of society and the world.

Sangeeta Doraiswami: Great sharing. Please share your thoughts on: What advice would you give learners preparing for an uncertain future?

Karma Tenzin: Thank you so much for a beautiful and enriching program.

Mala Singh: Thank you for an enriching session.

Sushma Dahal: Thank you, it was an enriching session.

Phurba: Wonderful session.



CONCLUSION

The webinar reaffirmed that the central challenge of education in the 21st century is not the transmission of knowledge but the cultivation of human potential. Participants converged on the idea that examinations and content mastery, while important, must be situated within a broader vision that values skills, processes, and holistic growth. Education must prepare learners to be adaptable, resilient, reflective, and purposeful—qualities that will enable them to thrive in uncertain times and contribute constructively to society.

Several actionable insights emerged during the session. Personalised roadmaps and reflective processes were identified as powerful practices for enabling learners to take ownership of their growth. The ACE framework offered a way to assess capability and character together, moving assessment beyond narrow examinations. The role of teachers was reimagined as that of mentors and facilitators of personal development, supported by systems that ensure their professional well-being and continuous growth. The vision of future schools was articulated as inclusive, diverse, and experiential spaces, where creativity, community engagement, and holistic development are as central as academic success.

Importantly, the session was marked by enthusiastic engagement from the audience, with participants posing thoughtful and wide-ranging questions. The lively Q&A highlighted strong interest in the themes under discussion and enriched the dialogue with fresh perspectives. The volume and depth of the questions underscored the urgency and relevance of rethinking education in terms of skills, processes, and holistic growth. The session concluded with optimism and a shared conviction that preparing learners for life is not a distant aspiration but an immediate imperative. It is a collective responsibility that requires the collaboration of educators, policymakers, communities, and learners themselves. By placing skills, processes, and holistic development at the heart of education, societies can raise not only knowledgeable individuals but balanced, compassionate, and resilient citizens equipped to lead meaningful lives.



LEARNINGS FROM THE WEBINAR

One of the strongest learnings from the webinar was the recognition that education must shift its centre of gravity from content delivery to the cultivation of skills and processes. Knowledge remains important, but it is no longer sufficient in a world where information is instantly accessible. Learners need to be equipped with adaptability, self-regulation, empathy, and critical thinking—qualities that allow them to apply knowledge meaningfully and navigate uncertainty with confidence. The discussions highlighted that these skills are best developed through reflective processes such as goal-setting, feedback, and self-discovery, rather than through examinations alone. Participants also emphasised that soft skills—such as communication, collaboration, and the ability to appreciate small joys—are not peripheral, but foundational to building resilience and sustaining well-being.

Another key learning was the importance of reimagining educational ecosystems to make such growth possible. Schools must evolve into inclusive, experiential, and community-driven spaces, where diversity, mentorship, and creativity are central. Teachers must be empowered to serve as facilitators of personal growth, supported by safe environments and professional development opportunities. At the systemic level, governments and policymakers must create space for decentralisation and flexible pathways, moving away from exam-based gatekeeping that narrows learners' futures. The Bhutan Baccalaureate's use of learner roadmaps, reflective practices, and innovative assessment frameworks like ACE provided practical examples of how education can measure and nurture intangible skills such as resilience, empathy, and confidence. The webinar demonstrated that when such approaches are prioritised, education has the power to actualise potential, reduce inequities, and prepare learners not only for employment but for life in all its complexity.



SUMMARY

On 28 August 2025 Pallavan Learning Systems hosted a webinar on the theme, 'Equipping Learners for Life: Developing Skills and Processes to Actualise Potential' in association with Centre for Escalation of Peace and Ritinjali. The session sought to generate and share knowledge on how education systems can evolve to meet the challenges of a rapidly changing world while nurturing learners to lead purposeful, balanced, and resilient lives.

The discussions emphasised the shift from content-heavy, examination-driven education to wholistic models of learning. Participants highlighted that meaningful education must equip learners with lifelong skills, encourage self-discovery, and support growth across multiple dimensions - emotional, social, physical, and spiritual, alongside academics. The importance of cultivating adaptability and self-regulation was emphasised as critical for navigating technological, societal, and environmental change. A key theme was the redefinition of assessment and learning pathways. Innovative approaches such as personalised roadmaps and evidence-based evaluation were discussed as alternatives to conventional exam-focused systems, enabling the measurement of skills like empathy, resilience, and collaboration. The need for systemic reforms to move towards such models was noted, including greater decentralisation and policy support.

Equally significant was the call to reimagine the role of educators. Rather than serving primarily as transmitters of knowledge, teachers must increasingly act as mentors and facilitators of personal development. Ensuring safe working conditions, sustained professional growth, and collaborative teaching practices were seen as essential to this transition.

The webinar concluded with a forward-looking dialogue on the vision of future schools - institutions that are inclusive, learner-centred, and community-oriented. Such schools would foster creativity, life skills, and mentorship while moving away from rigid structures that limit growth. Education, it was agreed, must prepare learners not just for

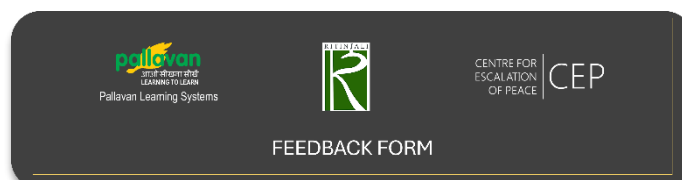
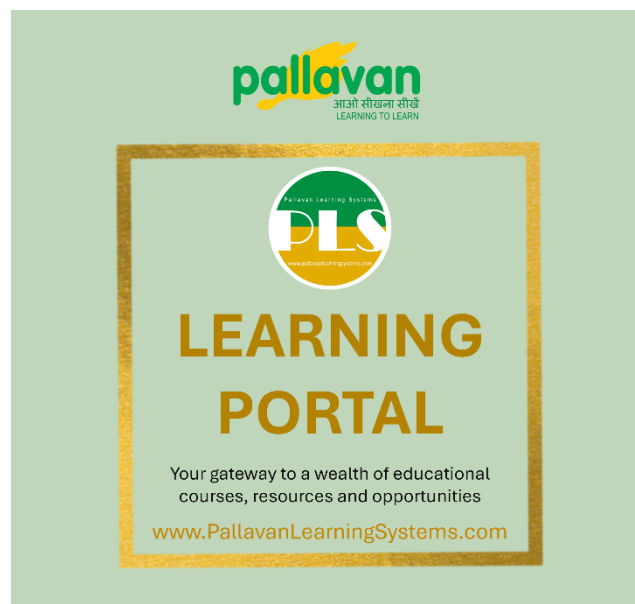
careers, but for meaningful participation in society, equipping them to face uncertainty with confidence and to lead fulfilling lives.

The session also saw active engagement from the audience, with thoughtful questions and reflections that enriched the dialogue and reinforced the relevance of these themes to diverse educational contexts.





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