

TEXTILE PEDAGOGY AND SKILL DEVELOPMENT: EMPOWERING ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN NIGERIAN ART INSTITUTIONS

By

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Abstract

This research examines the role of textile education in fostering entrepreneurial skills within Nigerian art institutions. This research utilises a convergent parallel mixed-methods approach, informed by Experiential Learning Theory and Human Capital Theory, involving 250 participants from universities, polytechnics, and colleges of education. Data were collected through structured questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. The findings indicate that textile instruction is predominantly practical and technically proficient, equipping students with employable skills such as batik, screen printing, and digital textile design. The integration of entrepreneurship remains inconsistent and often theoretical, due to outdated facilities, insufficient mentorship, and inadequate funding. Participants recognised their exposure to entrepreneurial concepts; however, deficiencies persist in business planning, branding, and industry connections. The research identifies potential areas for reform, including updated curricula, the incorporation of digital platforms, alumni mentorship initiatives, and enhanced collaborations with industry. The findings highlight the necessity for a holistic, context-sensitive educational framework that integrates creative skill development with business-focused training. Improving entrepreneurship education in textiles can better prepare graduates to contribute to Nigeria's creative economy and help reduce youth unemployment. The study provides actionable recommendations for education policy, curriculum development, and sustainable cultural enterprise.

Keywords: Textile Pedagogy, Skill Acquisition, Entrepreneurship Education, Nigerian Art Institutions, Creative Industries Development

Introduction

Nigeria's higher education sector is undergoing a substantial shift, particularly in textile design education, as it seeks to reconcile traditional teaching methods with the demands of entrepreneurial growth in the creative and cultural industries. This transition is essential for tackling elevated graduate unemployment and diversifying the economy beyond oil, with the textile sector emerging as a potential economic catalyst and avenue for young empowerment. The challenge is to

maintain the integrity of indigenous craft systems while modifying educational practices to address modern entrepreneurial demands, necessitating a reassessment of curricular design and teaching methods in Nigerian art and design institutions (Adeyemi & Ogunleye, 2021).

The creative industries, including textile and fashion, are increasingly recognized for their contributions to Nigeria's cultural economy, influencing national GDP and youth employment (Cunningham 2013).

There is a significant disparity between the skill sets of textile graduates and their entrepreneurial involvement, prompting questions about the efficacy of current educational methods in equipping students with essential creative and business skills. Recent studies underscore the significance of experience learning, promoting a studio-focused, project-oriented curriculum that combines technical competencies with entrepreneurial endeavours (Millán *et al.*, 2022; Rideout & Grey, 2023). Notwithstanding this, numerous institutions continue to depend predominantly on theoretical instruction, constraining students' prospects for practical application in commercial environments.

The incorporation of entrepreneurship into textile curricula faces various institutional obstacles, including insufficient faculty training in business, limited industry connections, and inadequate resources (Mensah and Osei, 2022; Adebola & Ogundipe, 2021). These obstacles hinder the effective delivery of entrepreneurship training and diminish students' engagement with current industry practices. The potential for transformation is substantial, since Nigeria's abundant textile traditions offer a basis for creating competitive products in both domestic and international markets (Olatunji & Adiji, 2023). This study seeks to examine the efficacy of textile pedagogy in advancing entrepreneurial development, pinpointing obstacles and opportunities for reform, and aiding in the formulation of context-responsive

pedagogical frameworks that foster creative excellence and economic empowerment, ultimately addressing national objectives of mitigating unemployment and promoting innovation within Nigeria's creative economy.

Literature review

Theoretical Foundations of Textile Pedagogy in Nigerian Art Institutions

Contemporary textile education in Nigeria has evolved within a multi-theoretical context that informs both curriculum design and pedagogical practice. Central to this evolution is the constructivist learning paradigm, which promotes knowledge construction through hands-on, experience-based learning. Given the inherently tactile and visual nature of textile arts, constructivist frameworks have gained currency in art institutions seeking to bridge theoretical knowledge with studio-based practical training. Constructivist learning also encourages collaboration and experimentation, elements critical to fostering creative and entrepreneurial competencies in textile education (Rogers, 1995).

Complementary to constructivism is Experiential Learning Theory (ELT), which posits that learning is most effective when grounded in concrete experiences, reflective observation, and active experimentation. In Nigerian polytechnics, ELT principles are often operationalised through studio practice, dyeing workshops, and simulated business environments. These methods foster cognitive and psychomotor development

simultaneously, thereby improving students' entrepreneurial readiness (Kolb, 1984).

Social Cognitive Theory also underpins many informal learning interactions in textile pedagogy. Here, observational learning through peer collaboration and instructor role modelling contributes to the development of complex competencies, such as dye-resist techniques and loom weaving. Studies have confirmed that students exposed to demonstration-based instruction perform significantly better in replicating complex textile techniques (Bandura, 1986).

The Communities of Practice (CoP) framework explains how learning is mediated within social structures such as workshops and textile studios. In Nigerian art schools, learning often occurs through guided participation, in which novice learners gradually take on more complex tasks under the mentorship of experts. This model aligns closely with traditional apprenticeship systems still prevalent in many indigenous textile communities and offers a culturally relevant pedagogical approach (Lave & Wenger, 1991).

Theoretical Framework

This research is based on three interconnected theories that clarify the pedagogical, cognitive, and entrepreneurial dimensions of textile education in Nigerian art institutions: Constructivist Learning Theory, Experiential Learning Theory (ELT), and Human Capital Theory. The Constructivist Learning Theory posits that learners acquire knowledge through contact with their

environment, a principle particularly pertinent in textile teaching, as students participate in design, experimentation, and iterative creation. Experiential Learning Theory (Kolb, 1984) supports the integration of practical, hands-on experiences into the curriculum, emphasising that textile education flourishes via cycles of action, reflection, conceptualisation, and application. This immersive paradigm enables students to assimilate knowledge and cultivate entrepreneurial abilities through studio-based projects and practical design assignments.

Human Capital Theory provides an economic perspective on the importance of including entrepreneurship in textile education, positing that education enhances individual productivity and employability. This theory emphasises the importance of developing both technical skills and business knowledge in textile training to enhance graduates' marketability and self-employment opportunities. These ideas collectively establish a comprehensive framework for analysing the effective structuring of textile pedagogy.

Contemporary Approaches to Skill Acquisition

The progression of skill development in Nigerian textile education demonstrates an adaptation to current market requirements and technological advancements. Contemporary curricula now blend traditional techniques such as batik, adire, and weaving with modern digital technologies, including Computer-Aided Design (CAD) and digital textile printing. This hybrid educational model has

demonstrated efficacy in improving student employability and market participation (Ugwu & Okonkwo, 2024). Research demonstrates that curricular frameworks integrating surface design and textile chemistry provide a comprehensive education, equipping students with essential technical skills and flexibility for the dynamic textile sector (Amegbanu *et al.*, 2023). The increasing emphasis on sustainability, encompassing eco-dyeing and waste-reduction measures, is enhancing the business potential of students' outputs.

Furthermore, digital competence, especially in e-commerce and social media marketing, is essential for students' success after graduation, resulting in enhanced sales and market expansion. Nonetheless, differences in technological access among institutions present obstacles to consistent skill development, requiring regulatory and infrastructural improvements (Ugwu & Okonkwo, 2024). In addition to technical talents, there exists.

Entrepreneurship Integration in Textile Curricula

Due to national employment issues and legislation related to the creative economy, it has become increasingly crucial for Nigerian art institutions to incorporate entrepreneurship instruction into their textile design curricula. Nonetheless, the implementation of these teaching initiatives varies markedly across schools. Certain institutions provide generic entrepreneurship courses distinct from core textile themes, whereas others integrate entrepreneurial

modules directly into design studio activities (Agbonna *et al.*, 2022). Research demonstrates that integrating discipline-specific entrepreneurship education produces superior results compared to isolated theoretical modules. Contextualised training, including the development of business strategies for textile items or the simulation of retail environments, augments student involvement and entrepreneurial intent (Omoyajowo, Iwu, & Tengeh, 2023). Furthermore, students benefit from training aligned with market demands in domains such as branding, consumer research, and pricing strategies.

Proficiency in marketing and digital abilities is essential for success in textile entrepreneurship. Adeola, Hinson & Evans (2022) discovered that graduates trained in visual branding and social media marketing had elevated rates of business sustainability. Practical entrepreneurial experiences, such as participation in exhibitions and trade fairs, enhance students' confidence and resilience. Nonetheless, financial literacy is a significant deficiency, as many pupils lack basic knowledge.

Pedagogical Effectiveness and Graduate Outcomes

Evaluating the effectiveness of pedagogical approaches in textile education reveals mixed outcomes across Nigerian art institutions. Graduate success rates tend to be higher in institutions that adopt experiential and integrated pedagogical models, such as studio-based projects tied to entrepreneurial tasks, compared to those that rely solely on

theoretical instruction (Kolawole & Aramide, 2021).

Learning outcomes are most robust when curriculum delivery balances technical training with contextual business application. Alumni surveys consistently highlight strong proficiency in core textile techniques but identify notable gaps in entrepreneurial preparedness, particularly in navigating market dynamics and accessing business resources (Iwu *et.al*, 2021). These disparities suggest that technical competence alone does not guarantee entrepreneurial success without simultaneous exposure to industry-facing experiences.

Industry engagement has emerged as a critical factor in enhancing pedagogical effectiveness. Institutions that embed internships, guest lectures, and collaborative product development into their programmes report significantly better graduate readiness and post-graduation self-employment rates (Jackson, 2015). Moreover, the role of faculty expertise is increasingly acknowledged; educators with industry experience are better equipped to simulate real-world challenges and foster business-oriented thinking (Mensah & Osei, 2022).

Institutional Challenges and Reform Opportunities

Notwithstanding progress in textile pedagogy and entrepreneurial education in Nigeria, considerable institutional and systemic obstacles impede the realisation of educational objectives. A fundamental problem is the insufficiency of infrastructure,

as numerous universities contend with inadequately equipped textile studios, obsolete machinery, and unreliable power supply, which significantly constrains practical learning and innovation (Adebola & Ogundipe, 2021). The limited entrepreneurial capacity of faculty members poses a challenge, as many instructors, despite their proficiency in textile techniques, often lack training in business development and financial literacy, thereby hindering the incorporation of entrepreneurship into practical instruction (Ogunleye & Adeyemo, 2020). The inflexibility of the curriculum exacerbates reform initiatives, as bureaucratic delays in curriculum evaluation hinder prompt revisions that align with changing industry trends, diminishing the responsiveness of textile programs to student requirements and the creative economy (Okoye & Emeka, 2024). Weak connections between academia and industry persist, leading to a scarcity of internship opportunities and inadequate exposure to market developments (Tunde & Kemi, 2022). Financial constraints intensify these challenges, since insufficient funding hinders institutions' capacity to enhance equipment and foster student entrepreneurship (Ogunmola, 2024).

Nonetheless, there are prospects for improvement through technological innovation and regulatory interventions. Digital design platforms and online marketplaces can address infrastructural deficiencies, while blended learning models and digital simulations can enhance education outside traditional studios.

Government and business-sector measures, including mandates for curriculum flexibility and startup funding, can foster conducive conditions for transformation. Moreover, utilising alumni networks and mentorship initiatives can bolster student support and increase the likelihood of entrepreneurial success. By tackling these obstacles and leveraging existing opportunities, the textile education sector in Nigeria can better equip students for industry demands and cultivate a more dynamic entrepreneurial ecosystem.

Methodology

This study adopted a convergent parallel mixed-methods design to evaluate the

impact of textile pedagogy on entrepreneurial skill acquisition among 250 participants (200 students, 50 academic staff) selected via multi-stage purposive and stratified sampling across six Nigerian art institutions. Data collection spanned six weeks and involved a validated, pilot-tested questionnaire (Cronbach's $\alpha=0.81$) and a semi-structured interview guide administered to students and faculty. Quantitative responses were analysed using SPSS for descriptive and inferential statistics, while thematic analysis of transcribed interviews was narratively analysed. Ethical approval and informed consent were secured, and participant anonymity was maintained throughout.

Result and Discussion

Socio-Demographic Information of Respondents

Table 1: Age Distribution

Age Range	Frequency	Percentage (%)
18–25	78	31.2
26–35	57	22.8
36–45	59	23.6
46+	56	22.4

The age distribution is well spread across early adulthood to mid-career professionals. The largest cohort (31.2%) falls within the 18–25-year age range, likely current undergraduates, who are critical beneficiaries of textile pedagogy. The presence of older respondents

(over 22% are over 46) suggests that experienced academic staff and mature students are also represented, providing a balance of learner and educator perspectives that enriches insights into pedagogical effectiveness and entrepreneurial readiness.

Table 2: Gender Distribution

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	117	46.8
Female	133	53.2

Female respondents constitute a slight majority (53.2%), aligning with contemporary gender inclusivity trends in art and design education in Nigeria. This gender distribution

is significant in evaluating how pedagogical models in textile training may differentially affect male and female learners' entrepreneurial motivations and outcomes.

Table 3: Academic Qualification

Qualification	Frequency	Percentage (%)
ND	64	25.6
HND	49	19.6
B.A/B.A Ed./B.Sc	67	26.8
M.A/MFA/M. Tech.	63	25.2
PhD	7	2.8

The majority of respondents possess either undergraduate (ND, HND, B.A/B.A Ed./B.Sc) or postgraduate qualifications. This distribution indicates that the respondents are at various stages of academic and professional development. It also underscores the extent to

which textile pedagogy is experienced across foundational, intermediate, and advanced levels of study. The presence of PhD holders (2.8%) suggests input from highly experienced scholars or instructors, critical for evaluating curriculum content and delivery.

Table 4: Type of Institution

Institution Type	Frequency	Percentage (%)
University	90	36.0
Polytechnic	102	40.8
College of Education	58	23.2

Polytechnics constitute the largest share (40.8%), followed by universities (36%) and colleges of education (23.2%). This reflects the dominance of vocational and technical institutions (polytechnics) in textile and applied arts training. This supports the study's

emphasis on skill acquisition and the entrepreneurial value of hands-on pedagogy. The diverse institutional representation enables cross-sectional analysis of how textile education outcomes vary by institutional typology.

Table 5: Institutional Location

Location	Frequency	Percentage (%)
North	54	21.6
South	73	29.2
East	66	26.4
West	31	12.4
FCT	26	10.4

The spread of institutions across all geopolitical zones enhances the study's generalisability. The South and East zones represent over half of the institutions sampled, possibly indicating more developed textile and art programmes in those regions. Importantly,

inclusion of the North and FCT ensures regional equity and contextual insight into how geography may impact access to entrepreneurship-enabling infrastructure or curriculum content.

Table 6: Area of Specialisation

Specialisation	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Textile Design	110	44.0
Fashion Design	69	27.6
Fine/Applied Art	71	28.4

Table 6 depicts respondents' views, and textile design is the largest area of specialisation (44%), which is central to the study's focus. The inclusion of Fashion Design and Fine/Applied Art broadens the scope, recognising overlapping skill domains and

entrepreneurial potential. These disciplines share similar material cultures, studio practices, and marketability, making their inclusion relevant for holistic insight into the formation of entrepreneurial skills in the Nigerian art education system.

Table 7: Effectiveness of Textile Pedagogy for Skill Acquisition

Items	SA	A	N	D	SD	Mean±SD	Remark
The textile courses offered in my institution are practically oriented.	89	10	76	54	21	3.57±1.35	Accepted
I have acquired hands-on skills relevant to entrepreneurship.	77	51	44	56	22	3.42±1.37	Accepted
Instructors in textile design emphasise technical competence.	100	18	69	33	30	3.58±1.48	Accepted
Class projects prepare me for real-world business or enterprise.	111	33	71	23	12	3.83±1.28	Accepted
I am confident in producing marketable textile products.	98	52	62	21	17	3.77±1.29	Accepted

As shown in Table 7, the mean scores (ranging from 3.42 to 3.83) indicate that respondents broadly agree on the practical, skill-oriented nature of textile pedagogy. The highest mean (3.83±1.28) was recorded for the statement “*Class projects prepare me for real-world business or enterprise,*” underscoring the importance of experiential learning in shaping entrepreneurial readiness. Similarly, respondents' confidence in producing

marketable textile products (mean = 3.77±1.29) and their emphasis on technical competence (mean = 3.58±1.48) indicate that the instructional content and teaching methods are conducive to skill acquisition. These findings suggest that the textile design curricula, as currently implemented, are largely effective in equipping students with relevant competencies for self-reliance and entrepreneurial ventures.

Table 8: Integration of Entrepreneurship Training

Items	SA	A	N	D	SD	Mean±SD	Remark
Entrepreneurship courses are part of the textile design curriculum.	89	10	76	54	21	3.57±1.35	Accepted
The entrepreneurship content is relevant to the textile/fashion business.	55	71	77	21	26	3.43±1.26	Accepted
My institution organises exhibitions or trade fairs for students.	92	52	72	22	12	3.76±1.20	Accepted
I understand how to brand and price my textile products.	56	89	61	26	18	3.56±1.19	Accepted
Business training is integrated into studio practice.	71	75	70	19	15	3.67±1.16	Accepted

The results from Table 8 indicate successful integration of entrepreneurship elements within the textile design curriculum. Mean values for all five items range from 3.43 to 3.76, with the highest observed in the organisation of exhibitions and trade fairs (3.76±1.20), a crucial platform for practical exposure and enterprise development.

Respondents also affirmed the relevance of entrepreneurial content (3.43±1.26) and the inclusion of branding and pricing knowledge (3.56±1.19), suggesting that institutions are intentionally aligning their curricula with the realities of the textile and fashion industry. These outcomes imply a positive reception of

entrepreneurship education and a recognition of its necessity for post-graduation success.

Table 9: Challenges and Opportunities

Items	SA	A	N	D	SD	Mean±SD	Remark
A lack of modern equipment limits my skill development.	90	46	76	21	17	3.68±1.24	Accepted
There are limited mentorship opportunities in the programme.	66	66	74	20	24	3.51±1.27	Accepted
My institution collaborates with industry to foster entrepreneurship.	92	52	72	22	12	3.76±1.20	Accepted
Financial constraints limit my ability to implement business ideas.	66	70	55	31	28	3.46±1.34	Accepted
The programme has encouraged me to consider textile entrepreneurship as a career.	66	51	94	26	13	3.57±1.14	Accepted

The investigation of obstacles and opportunities in textile education uncovers a multifaceted landscape, characterised by generally favourable reactions yet significant variety in perspectives. The principal difficulty noted is the deficiency of contemporary equipment (mean = 3.68±1.24), which considerably impedes practical experience and technical competence. Additional issues encompass mentorship limits (3.51±1.27) and budgetary constraints (3.46±1.34). In contrast, there is a robust agreement regarding the significance of institutional engagement with industries (3.76±1.20) and the favourable influence of programs on career aspirations in textile entrepreneurship (3.57±1.14). These insights emphasise institutional strengths and identify crucial areas for improvement in entrepreneurial performance.

The results demonstrate the growing effectiveness of textile education at Nigerian art institutes in cultivating entrepreneurial

abilities. Both quantitative and qualitative evaluations indicate that textile education is primarily practical and studio-oriented, with respondents confirming the cultivation of commercially viable techniques such as batik and screen printing. Although practical training is firmly established, the incorporation of entrepreneurship into the curriculum is variable, and specialisation for students in textile or fashion design is often missing. Students articulated a preference for more customised entrepreneurship classes that integrate branding, pricing, and marketing with studio practice. Structural obstacles, such as limited access to modern equipment and restricted mentorship opportunities, persist in diminishing the effectiveness of entrepreneurship education. The research highlights opportunities for reform, including implementing holistic, immersive methodologies in polytechnics, forming business alliances, and integrating digital

platforms and financial literacy into the curriculum.

Visual Comparison between Traditional Hand-Dyed "Adire" Techniques and Digital Textile Printing



Plate 2: Traditional Hand-Dyed "Adire" Techniques

Source: <https://www.google.com/imgres?q=traditional%20hand%20dyed%20fabric&imgurl>

Traditional hand-dyed "Adire" is a culturally significant Yoruba textile art form whose name translates as "tie and dye." It is distinguished by its expressive, handcrafted patterns achieved through processes such as tying, folding, stitching, or resist application before immersion in natural or synthetic dyes. The method is highly labor-intensive and relies heavily on artisans' skill and creativity,

making each fabric piece unique and non-replicable. Beyond its aesthetic value, Adire represents an important aspect of Nigerian cultural heritage, embodying indigenous knowledge systems, symbolism, and identity, while continuing to serve as a medium of artistic and entrepreneurial expression in contemporary textile practice (Picton & Mack, 1989).



Plate 2: Techniques and Digital Textile Printing

Source: <https://encrypted-tbn0.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:ANd9GcQArWS5d2jM8cCA2I-bAEQx-bUeAxOr50o2hg&s>

In contrast, digital textile printing, also referred to as inkjet fabric printing, represents a modern technological advancement in textile design and production. It utilizes computer-aided design (CAD) and inkjet printing systems to apply intricate patterns directly onto fabric without the need for traditional screens or stencils. This method enhances production efficiency, reduces material waste, and allows for high-resolution imagery with a wide spectrum of colours and gradients. Digital printing is especially suitable for short production runs, customized designs, and rapid prototyping, making it a flexible and cost-effective option for contemporary textile industries seeking precision, speed, and innovation (*Hussain & Wahab 2018*).

Comparative Analysis

Aspect	Traditional "Adire"	Digital Textile Printing
Technique	Hand-dyed using resist	Inkjet technology for direct printing
Design Complexity	Limited to artisan skill	High precision and intricate designs
Colour Range	Restricted by dye availability	Extensive colour gamut
Production Speed	Time-intensive	Faster turnaround
Environmental Impact	High water and dye usage	Reduced waste and chemical usage

The shift from traditional "Adire" to digital printing reflects a broader technological evolution that emphasizes efficiency, precision, and sustainability. However, the cultural and artistic value of "Adire" remains unparalleled, highlighting the importance of preserving this heritage.



Plate 3: Photographic Evidence of Obsolete Machinery vs. Modern Digital Tools

<https://www.google.com/imgres?q=%20Evidence%20of%20Obsolete%20Machinery>

Traditional textile printing practices, including screen printing and block printing, continue to depend heavily on obsolete machinery that is increasingly misaligned with contemporary demands for efficiency and sustainability. These conventional tools are often inefficient in production and environmentally burdensome, largely due to excessive water consumption and reliance on chemical-intensive processes that contribute to environmental degradation and resource depletion(Fletcher, 2014).

As a result, while they remain valued for their cultural and artisanal significance, their limitations have become more pronounced in the context of modern industrial expectations. In contrast, the emergence of modern digital tools, particularly advanced inkjet printing technologies, has introduced a

transformative shift in textile production. These technologies provide significantly higher precision, speed, and design flexibility, enabling the production of highly intricate patterns that would be difficult or impossible to achieve with traditional methods. More importantly, digital textile printing supports

sustainability by reducing water usage, minimizing chemical waste, and improving overall production efficiency, thereby aligning with global environmental standards and sustainable manufacturing goals (NGA, 2025). Despite these advantages, the transition from traditional machinery to modern digital systems presents considerable institutional challenges. Many organizations face high initial capital costs to acquire advanced equipment, along with the need for specialized training to ensure effective use of new technologies.

Meanwhile, there is often resistance to change among practitioners accustomed to traditional methods, as well as concerns about preserving cultural authenticity in digitally produced works. These barriers collectively slow down the adoption of modern systems, even when their long-term benefits are evident. Therefore, addressing these challenges requires a strategic, phased approach that includes financial support mechanisms, capacity-building programs, and awareness initiatives to demonstrate the value of technological integration. Ultimately, overcoming these institutional constraints is essential for organizations seeking to

modernize their operations, improve sustainability outcomes, and remain competitive within the evolving global textile and art production landscape.

Conclusion

This study underscores the efficacy of textile pedagogy in Nigerian art institutes for skill development and business prospects. Practical, studio-based education, particularly in polytechnics, provides students with skills in both classic and modern textile methods. The incorporation of entrepreneurship is irregular owing to antiquated infrastructure, standardised curricula, and insufficient mentorship. Notwithstanding these limitations, students exhibit significant entrepreneurial curiosity when experiential learning corresponds with market demands. The results underscore the necessity of integrating entrepreneurial content into studio practice and advocate for comprehensive reforms, encompassing curricular enhancements, industry collaborations, and the advancement of digital competencies. To enhance textile graduates' contributions to Nigeria's creative economy, institutions must cultivate commercial acumen and innovation alongside technical training.

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