ACTUALIZATION OF GENDER HARMONY IN FAMILIES: ANALYSIS OF WOMEN'S DOUBLE BURDEN

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Abstract

Double Burden of Women in the Perspective of the Quran refers to the situation when women hold two roles simultaneously as wives, mothers, and employees outside the home, along with their traditional roles within the household. In this framework, conflicts arise between family responsibilities and work duties, creating a dilemma faced by many working women. In Islam, there are diverse views on the role of women, including whether they should work outside the home or focus more on domestic tasks. This research aims to describe and analyze the double burden issue from the perspective of gender harmony. The research questions in this study include how double burden is viewed in the Ouran and the concept of gender harmony. This research adopts a library research approach, with primary sources including four interpretations: Tafsir Al Misbah, Tafsir al Al Syarawi, Tafsir Al Azhar, and Tafsir Al Munir. The findings of this study reveal that family harmony within the context of the double burden is realized when there is gender harmony and mutual support. This involves not undermining each other and not feeling superior or primary. In the Quranic perspective, the research emphasizes the importance of balance and mutual support in addressing the challenges faced by women juggling multiple roles.

Keywords: Double Burden, Gender Harmony, Tafsir

Abstrak

Double Burden Perempuan dalam Perspektif Al-Quran merujuk kepada situasi ketika perempuan memegang dua peran sekaligus sebagai istri, ibu, dan pekerja di luar rumah, seiring dengan peran tradisional dalam rumah tangga. Dalam kerangka ini, muncul konflik antara tanggung jawab keluarga dan pekerjaan, yang menjadi dilema yang dihadapi oleh banyak wanita yang bekerja. Dalam Islam, ada beragam pandangan tentang peran perempuan, termasuk apakah mereka seharusnya bekerja di luar rumah atau lebih fokus pada tugas-tugas di rumah. Penelitian ini bertujuan mendeskripsikan dan menganalisis permasalahan double burden dengan pandangan keserasian gender. Rumusan masalah dalam penelitian ini meliputi bagaimana double burden dalam tinjauan Al Quran dan keserasian gender. Penelitian ini bersifat library research dengan sumber utama mencakup empat tafsir, Tafsir Al Misbah, Tafsir al Al Syarawi, Tafsir Al Azhar dan Tafsir Al Munir. Dalam penelitian ini menemukan, bahwasanya keharmonisan keluarga dalam lingkaran double burden terwujud apabila adanya keserasian dan saling support satu sama lain, dengan tidak menjatuhkan yang lain dan tidak merasa paling unggul dan utama.

Kata kunci: Double Burden, Keserasian Gender, Tafsir

Pendahuluan

In a book titled 'Mother Language and Father Time,' an intriguing context from Sigmund Freud is mentioned, where he states, 'Women remained a riddle.' This sentence indicates that Freud couldn't fully decipher women. (Hill, 1933) Freud's words remind the author of one of the sayings of Prophet Muhammad (SAW), 'Women are created from a rib,' and interpreting this hadith cannot be done solely through literal translation. The sentence carries a metaphorical meaning, suggesting that women are like ribs, and if you try to straighten them forcibly, they will break. Therefore, women should be treated with utmost consideration. (Bukhori, 2001) For example, during the 9-month period of pregnancy, a woman's psychology undergoes changes. The mental image a woman holds is of herself carrying her child in her arms, referred to as the 'dawning of attachment.' This signifies the emergence of an emotional connection between two individuals with specific feelings. (T.B Brazelton, 1990)

Indeed, that is one of the roles played by a woman, being a mother and a wife. Moreover, the patriarchal ideology loudly proclaims that 'men have full authority over the family.' This perspective, rooted in Western views, has led to historical trauma and sparked significant protests demonstrated by radical feminist groups demanding equality in roles, responsibilities, both in the workplace and in social and family life. (Hoque, 2021)

The stigma of becoming a mother for women is deeply ingrained, even at a young age. This factor often reduces a woman's interest in actively participating in the workforce. Consequently, women are often faced with the dilemma of choosing between being a mother or pursuing a career (Lamar, 2020). The evolution of roles for women continues to undergo significant changes, especially in the 21st century, where many women are capable of shouldering responsibilities both in the social and domestic spheres simultaneously. However, every choice comes with its own set of risks. For instance, in our neighboring country Malaysia, a survey in 2018 revealed that 75% of women resigned from their jobs due to a lack of flexibility, 60% cited concerns about childcare, and 55% attributed their decision to the work environment (Ravindranath)

However, over time, the role of women in the family has undergone significant changes. Women now have increased access to education, job

opportunities, and active involvement in various sectors of life. (Arisandy, 2016) The shift in women's roles in the workforce from domestic focus to active involvement in the outside world is driven by the progress of time, technological advancements, and an increasingly open-minded societal perspective towards the rising cost of living. This has compelled women to not solely rely on their husbands' income continuously. This situation forces women to participate in the workforce to meet the needs of their families.. (Eva Fadhilah, 2022)

Women who work while being married automatically bear a double burden, both in the workplace and at home. Therefore, the concept of a double role for women arises, which is the application of women's roles in two areas simultaneously: the domestic and public spheres. (Utaminingsih, 2017) The dual role of women, both in the domestic and public spheres, is not fully accepted in a society that largely adheres to patriarchal thinking. Consequently, the implication is that this situation can create a shift in the values of roles and functions within the family. This includes changes in the functional structure of family life, such as the distribution of tasks within the family, managing household affairs, socio-economic activities, self-development, and the utilization of leisure time in community activities. (Utaminingsih, 2017).

Although modern women tend to seek independence and equal autonomy with men, they still value men who are willing to commit. This reflects an internal conflict in the minds of modern humans, both men and women. Essentially, deep down, there is a desire for mutual dependence. Women still crave love and protection, while men also want to be recognized as protectors. However, the obsession with free and independent individual autonomy has sometimes blurred the true human instinct for mutual interdependence. (Megawangi, 2014)

The dual role played by women is not merely about taking over the responsibilities of men as a whole, but rather complementing the deficiencies in the family and bringing a new dimension to married life. Harmony in the family illustrates harmony, compatibility, balance, and suitability. Because harmony produces complete integration and good relationships that give birth to both outer and inner tranquility. Far from feelings of envy and ambition to seize what others have. (Shalahuddin, 2020)

Understanding this is crucial to delve deeper into how women's roles in the family and public are reflected in religious teachings, especially the perspective of the Quran in Islam. How Islam provides choices to women, whether women are allowed to choose to be both a mother and a worker, and how Islam views women who work. The author presents answers through a study of the interpretation of Surah Al-Qasas verse 23 and Surah Al-Ahzab verse 33 as indicative analogies that can serve as a source of data.

Many studies have been conducted on the double burden of women. For example, Nafilah Sulfah conducted research titled "The Interpretation of Double Burden of Women: A Comparison between al Misbah and al Lu'lu' wa al Marjan fi Tafsir al Quran." Additionally, Ainul Luthfia Al Firda, Neli Zulfa Diana, and Yulianti also conducted research on "Beban Ganda Perempuan dalam Rumah Tangga di Soka Gunungkidul: Pandangan Feminis dan Islam." Finally, Salmah Intan conducted research with the title "Kedudukan Perempuan dalam Domestik dan Publik Perspektif Jender (Suatu Analisis Berdasarkan Normatifisme Islam)" However, the author's research has a significant difference, focusing on the analysis of two verses, namely Surat al Qashas verse 23 and Al Ahzab verse 33, which have contradictory statements, and the results of the analysis are juxtaposed with gender harmony in the family.

Method

This research is a type of literature review, with primary data sources derived from four exegesis books, namely Tafsir Al Mishbah, Tafsir Al Azhar, Tafsir Al Syarawi, and Tafsir Al Munir. The process of data collection was carried out through the search for information found in various books, and then the data was collected and documented. After the data was collected, qualitative analysis was conducted. The researcher also dissected supporting data found in books, journal articles, other books, and scholarly works.

The role of women in the family.

1. As a Wife

Islam establishes the rights of a wife that must be fulfilled by her husband. A wife is not just a puppet for her husband; on the contrary, Islam designates the wife as more than just a protector and supervisor. The role of women in the domestic realm encompasses various tasks, such as being a supportive partner to the husband, managing the household, and being a mother to the children. The role of a wife holds significance that is equally important as that of the husband. Wives fulfill their roles according to their nature, and the same applies to husbands. In general, the role of the husband is more oriented towards activities outside the home, while the role of women tends to be more focused on activities within the home. The understanding and application of these roles have been known since ancient times, and even today, they remain relevant. (Ulil Fauziyah, 2022)

In Islamic households, wives and husbands have their respective duties and rights that must be fulfilled to create a harmonious and blessed relationship. Wives can play the role of a discussion partner who can talk about the issues faced by their husbands. Therefore, if a husband is facing a significant problem, but the wife can contribute to a solution, the burden felt by the husband can be reduced. Additionally, as a companion, a wife also becomes a good listener. When a husband experiences dissatisfaction or unpleasant treatment at the office, his frustration may be brought home. This is where the role of the wife comes in to alleviate the husband's burden by listening to and understanding his feelings. Such an attitude can bring peace to the husband. (Musjtari, 2016) As a companion, a wife also plays the role of a wise advisor to her husband. Husbands may make mistakes that they are sometimes unaware of. Therefore, in such situations, the wife should provide guidance so that the husband can follow the right path. Moreover, when a husband faces complex problems, advice from the wife is highly necessary to help overcome the issues. (Musitari, 2016)

2. As a Mother

Men and women have differences in nature as well as non-natural aspects. Unlike inherent differences that are ingrained in each gender and cannot be changed, non-natural differences allow the roles of men and women to change, whether due to cultural influences or structural factors. (AR, 2015)

The role of a mother is crucial in educating her children, and it can be concluded that a child's character is significantly influenced by the mother's personality. Therefore, a mother who is aware of her important role in shaping the future of her children will strive with all her might to be a mother who follows the teachings of the religion faithfully (as a Muslimah or Shalihah) for the sake of her children. (Habiburrahman, 2009) As the famous poem

A mother is a school; if you prepare her, you are preparing the foundation for a good nation (Hasyimi, 1997)

A mother is the first school for her children and serves as a source of exemplary behavior for them. Therefore, the role of women as mothers plays a significant part in the development and character of their children. Character is the inner nature of a person that influences their thoughts and behavior. An individual's actions are born from their character, whether consciously or unconsciously. Character is shaped through one's relationships with others, acquired through education and experiences interacting with the environment, including both living beings and objects, as well as various events. (Shihab, Perempuan: Dari Cinta Sampai Seks, dari Nikah Mutah Sampai Nikah Sunnah dari Bias Lama Sampai Bias Baru, 2022)

The process of shaping character continues throughout a person's life. However, it's important to note the continuity between childhood and adulthood. Psychologists emphasize that the treatment and experiences a child undergoes during their early years have a profound impact on the formation of their character and personality. The expression "educating in childhood is like carving stone". From here, the importance of the role of women in shaping an individual's character becomes evident. The first social contact between a baby and their social environment is usually with a woman, namely their mother. The way a mother or anyone caring for a child provides attention, patience, and other factors will influence the formation of the child's character. The feelings of trust or suspicion towards someone are outcomes of experiences during the early years of life. (Shihab, Perempuan: Dari Cinta Sampai Seks, dari Nikah Mutah Sampai Nikah Sunnah dari Bias Lama Sampai Bias Baru, 2022)

In addition, a mother holds a central role in the family, serving as a manager, educator, psychologist, nurse, chef, protector, and role model. She also functions as an accountant, motivator, family doctor, designer, secretary, repair expert, friend, and event organizer. As a guardian of cleanliness and a partner, a mother is a superhero figure who carries out her duties with extraordinary strength for the happiness and well-being of the family. (Siti Zahrok, tt)

The rights and position of a wife are balanced with those of a husband, both in the context of household life and in social interactions. Therefore, everything in family life can be discussed and decided jointly by the husband and wife. However, there is also a viewpoint that a wife belongs to her husband, allowing the husband to treat his wife according to his desires. With such a perspective, the husband's attitude tends to view the

wife as an object rather than as a subject or an individual with fundamental rights that deserve respect.

The Double Burden (Dual Role) of Women in the Perspective of the Quran

Double burden, refers to a situation in which an individual performs two or more roles simultaneously. In this context, these roles include being a wife to a husband, a mother to children, and playing a role as a working woman outside the home. This double burden is experienced alongside traditional female roles, such as being a partner to the husband in building a household, fulfilling household needs, as well as caring for and educating children. (Suhertina, 2018) Every household and individual may have different approaches regarding the division of tasks and roles within the family, in accordance with their values, beliefs, and specific needs.

Being a woman with a career and family responsibilities is not an easy situation to overcome. Both roles demand equally strong performances. If a career-oriented woman prioritizes her work, she may have to sacrifice many aspects of her family life. Conversely, if she prioritizes her family, her performance at work may decline. This is known as the conflict between family and career roles and is a dilemma faced by many career women in their lives. In reality, many of them cannot achieve a proportional balance between these roles. This imbalance often results in negative impacts on their lives, both at home and in the workplace.

After the explanations provided in the points above, there are two Quranic verses with different directions of explanation. The first verse discusses the permissibility for women to engage in activities outside the home, while the second verse, found in Surah Al-Ahzab (33:33), addresses women's roles in the domestic sphere. The first verse, Surah Al-Qasas (28:23), states:

"When he arrived at the well of Midian, he found a group of people watering 'their herds'. Apart from them, he noticed two women holding back 'their herd'. He asked 'them', "What is the matter?" They replied, "We cannot water 'our animals' until the 'other' shepherds are done, for our father is a very old man."

If analyzed more deeply, Surah Al-Qasas: 23 indeed provides guidance on the legitimacy of women in the workforce. Implicitly, this verse illustrates how women take on tasks that are not traditionally considered their responsibilities. The verse narrates the story of Prophet Moses (Musa), who saw two women preventing their livestock from drinking at a water source used by a group of other men. Prophet Moses then inquired about their actions. It turned out that the two women were waiting and queuing until the other shepherds returned. They did this because they did not have

brothers, and their father was old and unable to perform this task. This demonstrates that women can also work and handle tasks that are typically viewed as not their concern.

Their lives are reflected in the task of providing water for the livestock, indicating that this profession is an essential part of their daily lives. This activity represents hard efforts to meet their livelihood needs. Beautifully, this story can be connected to the current social reality where women also play an active role in ensuring the needs of their families are met. Buya Hamka explains in his interpretation (tafsir) that livestock, in this case goats, is a manifestation of someone's wealth. (Amrullah, 1982) A specific type of goat referred to as livestock holds significant value and is considered true wealth by the communities or nations in that region. This could refer to the temak goat as a highly valuable asset in daily life. Interestingly, in various parts of the world during that time, the majority of people earned a living by being shepherds and livestock keepers, similar to the story of the two women in the narrative above.

As for the perspective of M. Quraish Shihab, working can be obligatory for women if the situation requires it. For example, if a woman is about to give birth and there is no midwife available to assist her except herself. Or, if she, as a worker, needs it to maintain her own survival or the survival of her children. Islam itself does not prohibit women from working inside or outside their homes, independently or collectively, as long as the work is done in a respectable environment, and as long as they can uphold religious guidance and avoid the negative impacts of their work on themselves and their surroundings. (Shihab, Tafsir Al Misbah: Pesan, Kesan dan Keserasian Al Quran, 2002)

A woman who works or pursues a career has the opportunity to express herself *creatively* and productively. Through her efforts, she can create works that bring pride, especially when she succeeds in receiving awards and positive feedback. This woman seeks meaning in her work, builds her identity, and achieves accomplishments that enhance her confidence and happiness. (Masripah, 2022)

In Islamic law, Yusuf Qardhawi categorizes the legality of women working outside the home or pursuing a career as permissible. This can be interpreted as either recommended (sunnah) or obligatory (wajib) in specific circumstances, such as the case of a widow who has been divorced by her husband or to assist in the economic needs of the husband and the family. This approach acknowledges that the conditions and needs of individuals or families can provide specific contexts related to the obligation or recommendation for women to work.. (Qardhawi, tt)

In line with that, Sheikh Mutawalli Al-Sha'rawi also suggests that if a woman is compelled to leave her home, she should do so only for a necessary purpose. Once that purpose is fulfilled, it is expected that she returns home directly and does not mingle unnecessarily with men. He also adds that when it comes to work, women are not obligated to leave their homes, and their work roles do not necessarily have to be the same as those of men. (Syarawi, 1977)

Overall, scholars exhibit a relatively open view regarding women working outside the home in the context of specific needs or necessary tasks. Despite differences in emphasis and detailed perspectives, they generally agree that women can work outside the home under certain conditions and considerations in accordance with Islamic principles.

The evidence that discusses women's roles in the domestic sphere is found in Surah Al-Ahzab (33): 33. This verse is often cited to support the view of women's roles in the household.

Settle in your homes, and do not display yourselves as women did in the days of 'pre-Islamic' ignorance. Establish prayer, pay alms-tax, and obey Allah and His Messenger. Allah only intends to keep 'the causes of' evil away from you and purify you completely, O members of the 'Prophet's' family!

The command to work in the above verse applies to both men and women. Surah Al-Ahzab, Verse 33, is often used as a basis to suggest that women should stay at home. This verse is not only directed to the wives of the Prophet but also to every believing woman. (Amrullah, 1982).

In the interpretation of this verse, scholars of exegesis have different views. In Quraish Shihab's interpretation, he refers to the perspective of Al-Qurthubi, a renowned commentator, to emphasize that in Islam there is guidance suggesting that women should maintain their presence within the home and only leave the house in emergency situations. (Shihab, Tafsir Al Misbah: Pesan, Kesan dan Keserasian Al Quran, 2002)

Wahbah Zuhaily also expressed a similar view, namely that ideally, women should stay at home and only go out if there is an urgent need. They argue that ideally, women should stay at home and only go out if there is an urgent need, even though the verse formally refers to the wives of Prophet Muhammad. This view is applied as an example and role model for all women in maintaining self-respect, preserving honor, behaving politely, and maintaining a dignified demeanor (*iffab*). (Zuhaily, 2009)

In Islam, there are many teachings regarding the rights and responsibilities of women, as well as the principle of equality between women and men. However, when discussing the roles and positions of women, Islam has defined their roles in accordance with the relevant context. There are several reasons supporting the idea that women can pursue careers. Some situations that allow women to work outside the (1) family circumstances that require additional financial resources to meet basic

and additional needs, especially when the husband faces situations such as death, illness, or other reasons that hinder the family's income (2) In society, there is a demand for particular contributions that women can make, particularly in professions like doctors, lecturers, teachers, or social counselors. The involvement of women in diverse job sectors represents a positive move towards gender inclusivity across various industries. Bringing attention to the roles of women in beauty, magazine publishing, and Sharia banking acknowledges the distinct contributions they can offer. However, it is crucial to recognize that gender equality encompasses the freedom to select a career path without being restricted by stereotypes. While upholding the identity and dignity of women is vital, it should not be construed as a constraint on their ambitions and career decisions. (Masripah, 2022)

According to Muhammad Mutawallī al-Sya'rawī, his interpretation of the verse suggests that women are preferably advised to stay at home and limit activities outside. This rule is considered to be applicable universally, without exceptions. By emphasizing household duties, it indirectly reduces women's activities outside the home. Sya'rawī argues that the disadvantage for women arises when they are occupied with work or a career outside the home while also managing household affairs outside. To address this issue, Sya'rawī offers an alternative for women to work from within the home, contributing to family finances, and alleviating the husband's burden as the head of the family. Thus, all the responsibilities inherent in the role of women as wives and mothers can still be fulfilled. (Syarawi, 1977)

Based on the diverse perspectives mentioned earlier, it is evident that there is no absolute prohibition for women to engage in work outside their homes. A woman's decision to pursue a career or work beyond the household should not be viewed as demeaning; rather, it represents a form of service and contribution to the community. Quoting this viewpoint does not imply disregarding the inherent roles and responsibilities within the domestic sphere. The essential factor for both men and women is not about specifying where their focus should be or how they spend their time, but rather the depth of commitment they share towards their homes and daily lives. Additionally, it is important to extend this commitment beyond the physical boundaries of the home, fostering a dedication that encompasses the broader world. The undeniable connection to the home on one side and the broadening awareness on the other are pivotal aspects in this perspective.

It is important to acknowledge that there is no issue if women choose to pursue a career in the social realm as a form of contribution to society. This perspective reflects an inclusive and progressive attitude toward women's roles in social development. Providing space and support for women to engage in various social activities, whether through

professional careers or volunteer work, is a crucial step towards gender Harmony. In making their contributions, women bring unique perspectives and valuable skills that can enrich social dynamics. Therefore, encouraging women to be active in the social sphere not only respects their right to participate but also recognizes the diverse contributions they make in building an inclusive and sustainable society.

The division of household tasks and the role of the wife is a perspective associated with specific religious and cultural views, particularly in the context of Islam. The explained opinion encompasses the view that household chores such as washing, cooking, and cleaning are not solely the wife's responsibility, and the husband is expected to provide assistance, such as hiring help, to perform these tasks. This aligns with the belief that the division of household tasks requires an agreement, and in the absence of a specific agreement, customs and Sharia can serve as guidelines. In the described Sharia perspective, there is no specific obligation for the wife to perform household chores, and the division of roles in performing household tasks should be based on a mutual agreement between the husband and wife.. (Buthi, 2001)

Keserasian Gender Keluarga dalam Double Burden

Women and men are not entirely different entities, despite physical differences. They are one in spirit, not opponents but partners. They are not created to oppress or dominate each other, but to complement one another, thus achieving capabilities in responsibility, maturity, and inner. (Arif, 2019) The issue of the Double Burden poses no harm to either party if there is harmony and support between husband and wife. The decision for the wife to work outside the home, whether during the day or night, heavily depends on mutual considerations. If the husband allows or supports it, then the right to financial support for the wife remains intact. (Muhammad, 2019)

It is essential to note that gender harmony and mutual support between partners are key to addressing the Double Burden. In a healthy household environment, husbands and wives can assist and support each other, collectively overcoming challenges that may arise due to the dual roles undertaken by women. Sanderson introduces the term 'Circle of Support' and defines it as a small group of family, friends, and partners who regularly provide support to an individual, assisting them in making choices and supporting their decisions. (Wistow, 2016).

In addressing the Double Burden, the concept of the 'Circle of Support' provides a foundation for husband and wife to build a strong support network. With support from family, friends, and partners, they can mutually strengthen and provide practical assistance in facing the dual responsibilities that women may encounter. However, it is important to note

that the situation can vary depending on factors such as culture, family values, and social norms prevailing in a particular society. Therefore, an effective resolution to the challenges of the Double Burden requires active involvement and awareness from both partners, as well as support from the community and the surrounding environment.

In a harmonious household, where everything is in sync, there is no superiority, as harmony fundamentally does not demand uniformity or equivalence, let alone exact equality. Harmony illustrates the blend of peace, balance, synchronization, and suitability. There is no ambition to be the first, and it is far from feelings of jealousy and insecurity. (Shalahuddin, 2020) Harmony in a marriage reflects a situation where no party feels superior to the other. This indicates that a balance of power and responsibilities between husband and wife is well-maintained. The absence of competition to be the first suggests an appreciation for each other's roles, without feelings of jealousy or insecurity.

In the context of the double burden, where women often face household tasks and professional responsibilities outside the home, harmony becomes not only an idealistic concept but also an urgent necessity. Husbands and wives need to value and recognize that the dual roles undertaken by women can create significant pressure.

Recognizing the significance of avoiding demands for uniformity or equality within a marriage yields positive outcomes, particularly in addressing the double burden. Husbands and wives are esteemed for their distinct roles and responsibilities, encompassing the wife's dual role in meeting professional demands outside the home and managing traditional household duties. Harmony encourages valuing and acknowledging the contributions of each role without diminishing one another.

Acknowledging that each individual possesses unique strengths and weaknesses, especially in the context of the double burden, couples can provide mutual support to navigate these challenges. Collaboratively, husbands and wives can establish a home environment that nurtures the growth and success of both, without compromising well-being and life balance.

In essence, harmony founded on respecting role differences and embracing diversity within the household becomes a relevant principle, particularly when confronted with the double burden. This sets the stage for a robust, mutually supportive relationship capable of effectively managing the complexities of dual responsibilities.

Conclusion

One form of support and harmony in a family is to grant women the responsibility for their choices and priorities. Even if a woman is capable of choosing both roles as a mother and a working professional, she must be accountable for both roles. While being the primary breadwinner does not grant authority to undermine or belittle her partner, showing respect and support for her positive activities is what constitutes harmony in the family. The decision for a woman to be a working professional should be based on mutual agreement and consent. This contributes to the formation of a harmonious and healthy family.

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