



“CONSUMER AWARENESS AND PERCEPTION TOWARDS GREEN MARKETING IN EAST GODAVARI DISTRICT, ANDHRA PRADESH”

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Abstract:

Green marketing is the marketing of products that are presumed to be environmentally safe. It incorporates a broad range of activities including product modification, changes to the production process, sustainable packaging as well as modifying advertisement. Thus, green marketing refers to holistic marketing concept that production, consumption and disposal of products and services happen in a manner that is less detrimental to the environment with growing awareness about the implication of global warming, non-biodegradable solid waste, harmful impact of pollutants, etc. both marketers and consumers are becoming increasingly sensitive to the need for green products and services. While the shift of ‘green’ may appear to be expensive in short run, it will prove to be indispensable and advantageous in the long run. This study is necessary to identify whether the consumers in East Godavari are aware of green marketing and green products. It identifies the general environmental beliefs of consumers. It examines the factors affecting buying behaviour of consumers for green products. It focuses the reasons which make the consumers willing to pay for green products. For this purpose, primary data were collected from 150 sample respondents using a well – structured questionnaire. Tables were used to analyze the data and use Tables, simple percentages to interpret it.

Key Words: Green Marketing, Consumer Awareness and Perception, environment, Eco-friendly.

Introduction:

Global warming and greenhouse gas emission is the main problem which today everybody is facing. Right from government and corporate bodies are concern about this issue. Everybody is putting their efforts and innovations to reduce this greenhouse emission. This led to the increasing awareness among the marketers to brand and rebrands their products to their concerns towards this global problem. As a result, there is a spur in interest toward environmental protection and sustainable development. Many Indian corporate houses changed their logo brands to reflect their willingness and commitment towards fighting this issue. One type of environmentally conscious behaviour is environmental consumerism (green buying)-purchasing and consuming products that are benign towards the environment. The rising number of consumers who prefer and are willing to buy eco-friendly products are creating opportunity for businesses that are using "eco-friendly" or "environmentally friendly" as a component of their value proposition. This change in consumer behaviour and future trends must be spotted by a marketer and offer their products and services to consumer in order to retain market share and build future green brands. Moreover, many governments are forcing to adopt green processes through policy change. This changing attitude of buying behaviour is forcing many firms to incorporate green processes.

Due to the increased importance of green marketing, firms continue to launch various kinds of green packaging programs through the introduction of recyclable and reusable packages. Green marketing is considered as one of the major trends in modern businesses. Today, environmental or green marketing is a strategic marketing approach of business organisations. Consumers are therefore, becoming more sensitive in their environmental attitudes, preferences, and purchases. The desire of consumers to purchase eco-friendly products and services are increasing. Customers are more aware about environmental issues and consequently choose products that do not damage the environment over less environmentally friendly products, even if they cost more. Business firms today are faced with consumers who are environmentally conscious when making a purchase.

Green marketing is becoming a popular research area and many theories have been proposed in the context of green marketing and consumer behaviour. The key aspects of green marketing, green consumer behaviour and consumer responsiveness on eco labelling, green advertising and green branding will be explained primarily based on the impact of green marketing on consumer purchase patterns in India. However, one of the basic assumptions of green marketing is that potential consumers would be willing to pay more for a “green” product. The present study makes an attempt to analyse the awareness and willingness of the consumer to buy green products.

Review of Literature:

Sharma, A. P. (2021) explored purchasing behavior of consumer towards green products. It is analyzed personal factors affecting green purchase; green purchase; and green marketing mix. Study analyzed various concern for eco environment, eco-labeling and perceived usefulness have been identified as major influencers of green consumer behavior. Further, found that Lack of environmental knowledge, price, perceived associated risks, organizational image, trust, and willingness to pay has been identified as barriers, creating a gap between attitude and actual purchase behaviour of consumers towards green products.

Dr Meghna Sharma, Dr Prachi Trivedi ,Syed Najmus Saqib (Nov 2020) highlighted in their paper conducted among consumers of Delhi/NCR region that increase of awareness towards green products will lead to more green consumption , he says there is less awareness of green products in the city as though consumers are show more interest towards protecting the environment. He also states that consumers consider green products only when they are environment friendly, recyclable, biodegradable, and reusable and energy efficient. Consumers should be made aware of green product and their benefits, more advertisements and campaigns should be done on online platforms to increase awareness and increase green consumption. He also concludes Age and Education level of consumers are the only demographic variables which have significant relationship with consumer awareness about eco-friendly products and factors that affect purchase behavior is Environment sustainability and Health consciousness the factors which demotivate the green purchase are unavailability for products and high price.

Chen and Tung (2018) conducted a study on consumer’s intention to purchase green products. The study was conducted on 120 respondents in Feng Chia University. The findings showed that the consumers behaviour of intention to purchase green products are based on a decision making model that integrates cognitive attributes, affective attributes and behavioural intentions in the countries. Environmental awareness indicates that environment effect influence consumer cognition when purchasing green products. The study concluded that government organisation must promote in school education programs and promulgate green policies and environmental protection. Social influences and perceived monetary values significantly affect consumers intention to purchase green appliances.

Poongodi and Gowari (2017) assessed the potential of green marketing and its impact on consumers buying behaviour on green products. The study was conducted on sample size of 450 people in Tamilnadu. The findings showed that consumers are not only aware of the multiple brands and their perceived quality but also they have started to pay more attention to the environment and thereby becoming more eco-friendly. It was noted that consumer awareness about the labels and brands of eco-friendly products was high. The study suggested that advertising should be done in attractive ways by using celebrity endorsed to intrude consumers’

minds about the concept of green product. This will increase the awareness about the green product among the consumer that increase the purchase behaviour.

Kumar & Ghodeswar,2015 - Though knowledge among Indian consumers regarding environmental degradation and ozone layer depletion has been noted in the literature, their awareness and behaviour towards green products, green marketing, and further buying behaviour towards eco-friendly products are still beyond the ambit of clear understanding.

Statement of the Problems:

Nowadays, we all facing a lot of environment problems related to harmful products. Our mother earth is suffering from many environmental issues and globally the governments are also thinking about environmental protection at their priority level. The companies are wilfully or legally forced to adopt the policies to safeguard the environment and serve the society. These situations lead us to think about working on green marketing.

Green marketing is one of the major areas of interest for marketers as it may provide competitive advantage. It is an important competitive strategy used by most of the companies. While designing the products or services, the marketer not only considers the needs, taste and preference of the consumers but also identify the other factors influencing their purchase decision like environmental knowledge, environmental concerns and credibility of environmental advertising etc. Customers are more interested to create an environmentally sustainable world. Green marketing will be successful only if the marketer understands the consumer behaviour properly. In this context it is essential to study the consumer behaviour towards green products and find out the factors influencing the consumer behaviour.

In the following part the awareness of consumers about green products, opinion of consumer on green product and a buying behaviour of the consumer is studied.

Research Methodology

The study follows descriptive and causal research method. Both primary and secondary data are used in the study. The primary data was collected through a well-structured questionnaire. Secondary data was collected from academic journals and websites. The sample size taken for the purpose of the study is 150 respondents in East Godavari District. Simple random sampling is used as sampling technique. The statistical tools like percentage, ranking, used for Data analysis.

Objectives of the Study

The present study has been conducted with the following objectives:

1. To study the general environmental beliefs of consumers.
2. To assess the awareness of consumers regarding green products.
3. To identify the factors affecting buying behaviour of consumers for green products.
4. To study the consumers' buying behaviour towards green products.
5. To suggest measures to improve consumer awareness towards Green Products.

Limitations of the Study

1. A time constraint was the major problems to this project, because the stipulated time was insufficient to carry out a detailed study.
2. Due to paucity of fund the size of the sample is restricted to a few.
3. The accuracy of the report depends upon how honestly or sincerely the respondents have answered.
4. This study was carried out only among the peoples of Rajahmundry city of East Godavari District.

Results and Discussion:**Table.1 Socio-Economic Factors of the respondents**

S.No	Factors		No.of respondents	Percentage
1.	Gender	Male	84	56%
		Female	66	44%
		Total	150	100%
2.	Age	20-30	63	42%
		30-40	42	28%
		40-50	30	20%
		Above 50	15	10%
		Total	150	100%
3.	Educational Qualifications	Illiterate	12	8%
		Below SSC	15	10%
		SSC	21	14%
		Intermediate	18	12%
		Degree	63	42%
		Post Graduate	21	14%
		Total	150	100%
4.	Marital Status	Married	93	62%
		Unmarried	57	38%
		Total	150	100%
5.	Number of members in the family	Less than 3	24	16%
		3 - 5	63	42%
		5 - 7	39	26%
		7 - 10	18	12%
		More than 10	6	4%
		Total	150	100%
6.	Employment Status	Employee	60	40%
		Business	36	24%
		House wife	33	22%
		Any other	21	14%
		Total	150	100%
7.	Monthly Income	Below 20,000	27	18%
		20,000 – 30,000	51	34%
		30,000 – 40,000	42	28%
		40,000 – 50,000	24	16%
		Above 50,000	6	4%
		Total	150	100%

Source:: Primary Data

The above table depicts that socio-economic factor of the respondents in which the samples recorded the highest response rate from male of 56% than female of 44%, Distribution of respondent by their age shows that 42% of the majority respondents are 20 to 30 years. Educational qualification reveals that the 56% (42%+14%) of the majority respondents are graduates. Analysis shows that Majority of respondents are literates. The marital status of the respondents is another important profile which was included as one of the profile variables. The marital status of the respondents may influence the financial and family commitment. Their marital status reveals that 62% of the majority respondents are married. The sample of family size of the respondents it can concluded from the table that majority of the respondents 42% had a family size of 3-5 numbers in the family. The employment profile of the respondents the value in the table shows that majority of respondents that is 40%, were employees, further 24% respondents were business holders, 19% were house wife and lowest percentage that 15% respondents were any other category. The monthly income of the respondents where majority of the respondents were 34%, 20,000-30,000 had monthly income, followed monthly income 28% who had 30,000-40,000 monthly income, and 4% to the group who had monthly income above 50,000.

Table.2 Buying behaviour of consumer of green products

S.No	Statements	Yes		No	
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Are you aware of “green products” or Eco-friendly products?	126	84%	24	16%
2.	If green features increase the price of the product, are you willing to pay more?’	39	26%	111	74%
3.	Do you think is enough information about “green features when you buy the product?	81	54%	69	46%
4.	Do you think being environmental friendly is important?	117	78%	33	22%
5.	Have you ever purchased eco-friendly product?	105	70%	45	30%
6.	When purchasing a product, will you first consider eco-friendly product?	48	32%	102	68%
7.	Do you always purchase eco-friendly product	21	14%	129	86%

Source: Primary Data

Table 5.10 depicts the opinion of respondents towards green products. The findings reported that out of 150 respondents 84% of the respondents are aware of green/eco-friendly products, however if green features increase the price of products only 26% have shown their willingness to pay while 74% are found unwilling. It was also observed that 54% feel that enough information about “green features” is available while buying green products. The results also pointed at 78% think that being environment friendly is important. About 70% of respondents have purchased eco-friendly products and 30% have not yet purchased. Only 14% of respondents always purchase eco-friendly products and whenever purchasing any product 32% will first consider eco-friendly product.

Table.3 Source of information about green products

Source of information about green products	Frequency	Percentage
T.V	81	54%
Newspapers	18	12%
Magazines	06	04%
Friends	30	20%
Others	15	10%
Total	150	100%

Source: Primary Data

The Table.3 presented the percentage of consumers on the basis of their source of information about green products. The findings shows that majority of the respondents that is 54% became aware of green products through television, 20% through friends, 12% through newspapers, 10% through others and 4% through magazines. Thus television and friends have been important source of generating awareness on green eco-friendly products.

Table.4 Level of awareness about green products

Level of awareness about green products	Frequency	Percentage
Completely aware	66	44%
Partially aware	36	24%
Unaware	48	32%
Total	150	100%

Source: Primary Data

Out of the total 150 respondents, 44% of the respondents were aware of the eco-friendly products, while 24% of them was partially aware and 32% of the respondents were unaware of the eco-friendly products.

Table.5 Perceptions regarding the prices of eco-friendly products

Perceptions regarding the prices of eco-friendly products	Frequency	Percentage
Higher	105	70%
Same as other products	18	12%
Not concerned	12	08%
Lower	15	10%
Total	150	100%

Source: Primary Data

Table.5 reveals that a majority (70%) of the respondents feel that the prices of green products are higher when compared to non-eco-friendly products, while 12% of the respondents feel that the prices are same as the non-eco-friendly products. 8% of the respondents were not concerned about the prices, while 10% of the respondents feel that green products are less expensive than the non-eco-friendly products.

Table.6 Consumers attitude towards paying more money on green products

Consumers attitude towards paying more money on green products	Frequency	Percentage
Enhance a quality of life	21	14%
Environmental protection responsibility	63	42%
Potential increase of product value	33	22%
Getting high level of satisfaction	33	22%
Total	150	100%

Source: Primary Data

The data show in table.6 give the percentage of Consumers attitude towards paying more money on green products. It is seen that majority of respondents 42% are willing to pay more as they feel that they have environment protection responsibility while 22% of the respondents reason is attribute for high level of satisfaction. It was also seen 22% of respondents have shown willingness due to potential increase of product value while remaining 14% feel that it enhances a quality of life. Thus it can be said that the main reason why consumers are willing to pay more for green products is their feeling of sense of responsibility towards environment protection.

Table.7 Reason for green marketing in headlines

Green marketing in headlines to make	Frequency	Percentage
Consumers aware of green products	57	38%
Company increasing its competitive edge	60	40%
Company's attempt to address society's new concern	33	22%
Total	150	100%

Source: Primary Data

Table.7 presented the opinion of consumers on reasons for green marketing in headlines by companies. The findings revealed that 40% of the respondents think that due to such headlines company gains its competitive edge. Whereas 38% of the respondents feel that companies are making aware of green products. About 22% of the respondents feel that it's a company's attempt to address society's new concern.

Table.8 Influencing factors on buying behaviour towards green products

Influencing factors on buying behaviour towards green products	Frequency	Percentage
Product	66	44%
Package	36	24%
Place	21	14%
Promotion	27	18%
Total	150	100%

Source: Primary Data

Table.8 presented influencing factors on buying behaviour towards green products. The findings show that 44% of the respondents buying behaviour are influenced by products, 24% of the respondents influenced by the package of the product. It also can be observed that 18% of the respondents are being influenced by the promotion of the green products while least number of customers i.e. 14% through place. Thus it can be said that out of four P's product is the major factor followed by packaging that strongly influence consumers buying behaviours.

Table.9 Kind of eco-friendly product that consumers have bought

Kind of eco-friendly product that consumers have bought	Frequency	Percentage
Cloths	33	22%
Organic food	72	48%
Electrical appliance	27	18%
Furniture	12	08%
Others	06	04%
Total	150	100%

Source: Primary Data

Table.9 depicts the detail information about the eco-friendly product being purchase by consumers. It is seen that majority of the respondents 48% had purchase organic food followed by 22% who have purchased clothes while 18% have bought electrical appliance and 8% furniture and other products. Thus it can be said that more demand is of organic food followed by clothes.

Table.10 Reasons restricting purchase of green products

Reasons restricting purchase of green products	Frequency	Percentage
Eco-friendly assurance	18	12%
Not easy to find	69	46%
Relatively Expensive	42	28%
Others	21	14%
Total	150	100%

Source: Primary Data

Table.10 presented the percentage response on reasons that restrict consumers from purchasing green product. The findings indicated that majority of respondents 46% reported that it is not easy to find the products followed by 28% who feel that green products are relatively expensive. However, 14% consumers are doubtful about the assurance of eco-friendly products. Thus it can be said that major factors that restrain consumers from purchasing eco-friendly products is their availability, expensiveness and assurance.

Table.11 Need for Green Marketing

Need for Green Marketing	Frequency	Percentage
Environment protection	96	64%
Health factor	33	22%
Product features	15	10%
Publicity	06	04%
Total	150	100%

Source: Primary Data

In table (11) 150 respondents were considered for the study of “Need for Green Marketing” Among these respondents 64% of the respondents are concerned about environmental protection and 22% prefer green marketing because of the health factor.

Table.12 Frequency of buying green products

Frequency of buying green products	Frequency	Percentage
Regularly	51	34%
Average	66	44%
Rarely	33	22%
Total	150	100%

Source: Primary Data

The table.12 regarding Frequency of buying green products revealed that 44% of consumers said Average of buying green products, 34% of consumers said that regularly they purchase green products, 22% of consumers said that rarely they purchase green products.

Table: 13 Types of green products bought recently

Types of green products bought recently	Frequency	Percentage
Food	78	52%
Cleaning products	18	12%
Cosmetics	12	08%
Clothes	30	20%
Others	12	08%
Total	150	100%

Source: Primary Data

Table.13, given that detailed information about the types of green products bought recently by consumers. It is seen that majority of the respondents 52% had purchase organic food followed by 20% who have purchased clothes while 12% have bought cleaning products and 8% cosmetics and other products. Thus it can be said that more demand is of organic food followed by clothes.

Table.14 Factors influencing the buyers before buying green products

Factors influencing the buyers before buying green products	Frequency	Percentage
Increase quality of life	45	30%
Environment protection	60	40%
Potential increase in product value	24	16%
Self-satisfaction	21	14%
Total	150	100%

Source: Primary Data

The table.14 regarding factors influencing the buyers before buying green products revealed that among the various factors 40% of the respondents said environment protection, 30% of the respondents said increase

quality of life, 16% consumers said Potential increase in product value and 14% of the consumers said self-satisfaction.

Table.15 Reason for companies showing reluctant

Reasons for companies showing reluctant	Frequency	Percentage
Difficult for all companies	27	18%
High investment	93	62%
Lack of Government initiative	24	16%
Others	06	04%
Total	150	100%

Source: Primary Data

Table.15 presented the percentage response on Reasons for companies showing reluctant. The findings indicated that majority of respondents (21%) feel our companies are not going for green marketing as it incurs huge cost which is not affordable by tiny and small scale industry which is large in number.

Table.16 Internal factors influencing in buying green products

Internal factors influencing in buying green products	Frequency	Percentage
Personal value	96	64%
Motivation	54	36%
Total	150	100%

Source: Primary Data

Table.16 presented the percentage response on internal factors influencing in buying green products. The findings indicated that majority of respondents (64%) feel personal values as internal factor that influences more in purchasing green products.

Table.17 External factors influencing in buying green products

External factors influencing in buying green products	Frequency	Percentage
Packaging	30	20%
Label	36	24%
Community	48	32%
Information	21	14%
References	15	10%
Total	150	100%

Source: Primary Data

From the Table.17 it is understood that out of 150 respondents, 32% of the respondents said that the external factors influencing in buying green products is taken by community, 24% of the respondents said that label, 20% of the respondents said that packaging, 14% of the respondents said that information and 10% of the respondents said that the external factors influencing in buying green products is taken by references. Majority of the respondents feel community as an external factor influences them more in buying green products.

Environmental beliefs of consumers

In the following parts the beliefs of consumers pertaining to environment is study me findings are discussed below:

Table.18 Response of consumers on environmental concern

S.No	Statements	Yes		No	
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
1.	I believe our climate is changing	108	72%	42	28%
2.	I am concerned about global climate change	123	82%	24	16%
3.	Global climate change will impact future generations.	102	68%	48	32%
4.	Global climate change will impact our environment in the next 10	51	34%	99	66%

	years				
5.	The actions of individuals can make a positive difference in global climate change	96	64%	54	36%
6.	I can do my part to make the world a better place for future generations	108	72%	42	28%

Source: Primary Data

Table.18 depicts the percentage values showing the perceptions of consumers on environmental change. The findings reported that out of 150 respondents 72% of the respondents are believe our climate is changing, 82% of the respondents said that I am concerned about global climate change, 68% of the respondents said that Global climate change will impact future generations, 64% of the respondents said that The actions of individuals can make a positive difference in global climate change, 72% of the respondents said that I can do my part to make the world a better place for future generations. However least percentage 34% was observed for the statement, global climate change will impact our environment in the next 10 years. Thus it can be said that the people are concerned about the impact of climate change on the environment and future generations.

Table.19 showing the reasons behind non-usage of green marketing products

S.No	Statements	Yes		No	
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Lack of awareness about green products.	117	78%	48	32%
2.	Green products are very expensive	108	72%	42	28%
3.	Green products are not promoted properly.	129	86%	21	14%
4.	Lack of confidence in the performance of green products	123	82%	27	18%
5.	Green products are not available in full range of variety	117	78%	33	22%
6.	Green products are not easily available in shopping outlets	120	80%	30	20%
7.	Labels of green products are not informative; they don't fully inform about their greenness.	78	52%	72	48%

Source: Primary Data

Table 19 depicts the percentage values Showing the reasons behind non-usage of green marketing products The findings indicated that the reason behind low demand for green products are 78% feel due to lack of awareness, 7% feel due the expensive price of green products, 86% feel it is not promoted properly, 78% feel the green products are not available in full range, 80% feel sufficient green products are not available in the shopping outlets, 52% feel that the labels of the green products are nit informative.

Findings:

1. The findings reported that majority of respondents are aware of the green products. While very less have shown willingness to pay more for the green product.
2. However majority respondents think that being environmental friendly is important. It was also noted that majority of the respondents have purchase eco-friendly products less percent of the respondents pointed that while purchasing any product they will be first considering eco- friendly products.
3. The most of the respondents are strongly believed that all 4 P's of marketing element will equally influencing the buying behaviour of green products
4. It was also noted that main source of information that created awareness about green products was television followed by magazines and newspapers. It was also noted that lectures in class also raised awareness about green products.

5. Most of the respondents preferred food product.
6. The finding also reported that majority of consumer are willing to pay more for green products due to feeling of environmental protection responsibility while some have also cited high level of satisfaction as the reasons.
7. It was observed that majority of respondents think that reason for green marketing in headline by company is for increasing their competitive edge. Whereas some of the respondents feel that due to such headlines companies make consumers aware of green product.
8. It was observed that major factor that strongly influences consumers buying behaviour of green products is the product followed by package, promotions and place of seen the majority of the consumers have purchased the organic food.
9. 64% feel personal values as internal factor that influences more in purchasing green products.
10. 32% feel community as an external factor influences them more in buying green products.
11. The findings indicate that main reason that restricts the purchase of green product is it known availability. Many respondents have also attribute expensiveness of the green product as the reason. It was also noted that many restrict themselves due to assurance of eco-friendly products.
12. The findings also showed that respondents have given higher frequency to all statements reflecting the environmental concerns. It can be said that the respondents are highly concerned with the impact of global climate change on the environment and their future generations.
13. The reason behind low demand for green products are 78% feel due to lack of awareness, 72% feel due the expensive price of green products, 86% feel it is not promoted properly, 78% feel the green products are not available in full range, 80% feel sufficient green products are not available in the shopping outlets, 52% feel that the labels of the green products are nit informative.

Suggestions:

1. The government should take remedial measures for easy access of eco-friendly products from the near market.
2. Proper awareness should be provided by Government to encourage public to purchase green products.
3. Price for the green products should be reduced to an extent which is affordable to all.
4. The companies should create more awareness by means of various promotions.
5. If necessary, the company can increase the price of the green products as customers know the green factors increases the price of the product and they are ready to pay a little higher for those products.
6. Consumer should give awareness regarding the negative impact of non-green products.
7. Consumer should ready to buy green product by considering the environment.
8. Companies should give more range of green products that supports in having a better choice among the customers.
9. More efforts should be made to motivate the customers being more environmental friendly.
10. Seminars and awareness programmes should be conducted by authorities to enhance the knowledge of consumers on green products.
11. To be included in the syllabus of students regarding importance and benefits of green products for making environmental sustainability.

CONCLUSION:

Today's customer is well aware of social, economic and environmental responsibilities. Customer of today wants product which have good quality and safe to use for them and their families. And companies also want to increase sales and get some new and innovative product that will facilitate customer's life. Green products are such items which are environmental friendly and safe for customers to use. One thing is being reiterated is that the current consumption levels are too high and are unsustainable. Hence there is a need for green marketing for shift in the consumer's behaviour and attitude towards more environmental friendly life styles. Public are beginning to realize their role and responsibilities towards the environment. The study shows that educational background has no significant influence on purchasing decision of green products and less access of green product is the main restricting factor for purchasing eco-friendly products. So the marketer should make available these products in near locality. It will definitely lead to increase the demand for the products. The

government should also take measures for promotions of green products. Consumers are willing to pay extra price towards green products, organizations are taking notice of the demand and behaviour and attitude of the consumers.

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