

The Correlation between Mindfulness and Flourishing of Elementary Teachers in the Merdeka Curriculum Era

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Abstract. The study aims to analyze the relationship between mindfulness teaching and the level of teacher flourishing at elementary schools in Denpasar during the Merdeka Curriculum era. The study involved 30 elementary school teachers who were selected through a purposive sampling technique using a quantitative approach and correlational design. The data were collected through a questionnaire adopting the MAAS and PERMA Profiler instruments and analyzed using simple linear regression aided by SPSS. The results showed a significant positive relationship between mindfulness teaching and flourishing, with a correlation coefficient (R) of 0.469 and a coefficient of determination (R^2) of 0.220. This finding indicates that 22% of the variation in flourishing can be explained by mindfulness teaching. Teachers who displayed more mindfulness exhibited better emotional, social, and psychological well-being, and were able to face professional challenges more positively. The study provides theoretical and practical contributions, confirming the importance of mindfulness teaching in improving teachers' flourishing while encouraging the development of mindfulness training to support teachers' roles in dynamic educational environments.

Keywords: elementary teachers, flourishing, mindfulness.

1 Introduction

In the education sector, teachers play an important role, including elementary school teachers who are assigned with forming the foundation of student education [1]. Teachers not only play a role and are responsible for conducting academic teaching but also student character-building [2], [3], classroom management [4], and the development of 21st-century skills demanded by the independent curriculum [5], [6]. It was in line with the statement that the role of teachers in developing the Independent Curriculum, namely: (a) formulating specific learning objectives based on curriculum objectives, subject characteristics, students, and classroom conditions; (b) designing a learning process that can effectively help students achieve predetermined learning objectives or competencies; (c) carrying out the learning process as a form of curriculum implementation; (d) evaluating the learning process and results; (e) evaluating the interaction of curriculum components that have been implemented [7].

The implementation of Merdeka Curriculum requires a comprehensive implementation of the entire school community. As important parties in growing successful learning, teachers should maintain and ensure that they teach students happily. Teachers' persistent stress is correlated with decreased well-being and poor outcomes for educators and students, impacting physical and emotional health, engagement, and overall performance [8]. Insufficient teacher well-being also negatively affects student achievement levels and performance [9], [10]. It implies that teachers as the main milestone of learning in Merdeka curriculum needs to have good psychological well-being.

In the Merdeka curriculum era, teachers are not the main actors during the learning process. However, they act as a facilitator who provides a place and direction for students so that educational goals can be realized [11], [12]. During the implementation of independent curriculum, teachers are required to provide knowledge with relevant techniques to the abilities and students' needs as the demand of a new paradigm (differentiated instruction) [13]. These various demands are a huge responsibility for teachers in realizing educational goals in a comprehensive, systematic, and planned manner. Thus, teachers' well being must be the main concern to support effective learning and achieve those goals.

In fact, teachers mostly face several relative challenges when conducting their role in the classrooms [14]. These include high workloads, complex classroom management, administrative demands, and parental expectations. The high workloads can reduce teacher well-being, leading to burnout, depression, or emotional exhaustion. High workloads, excessive administrative demands, and lack of institutional support can lead to burnout and reduce teacher well-being [15]. Teachers as a social part must fulfill In the learning process, teachers need to prepare learning media that are relevant with the curriculum and the complex needs of students [16]. Other study [17] also explained that the challenge of teachers is to divide teaching duties and fulfill the completeness of school administration. This challenge certainly has an impact on teacher well-being, both psychologically and emotionally.

Based on a preliminary study of several elementary school teachers in the Denpasar area, it was found that similar challenges and workloads were also felt by these teachers. The majority of primary school teachers in Denpasar stated that the workload in the independent curriculum is quite complex, ranging from preparing differentiated teaching tools, teaching with innovative techniques, and completing E-performance on PMM. This certainly has an impact on the flourishing level of elementary school teachers in Denpasar.

The results of previous study confirm that a good level of flourishing is directly related to the quality of learning and students' educational success [18]. Well-being teachers are better able to create learning environments that are positive, adaptive, and supportive of student development [19]. Therefore, it is important to investigate the flourishing of primary school teachers in Denpasar.

Flourishing is a concept of well-being that involves optimal functioning in emotional, social, and psychological aspects [20]. Flourish refers to a state in which individuals are not only free from mental disorders but also experience life satisfaction, engagement, and a sense of meaning in their lives. A person can be classified as flourishing if the individual's life is going well and achieving the expected goals [21], [22]

According to [23] in the concept of PERMA's high level of well-being, flourishing has 5 aspects consisting of: positive emotions (P), engagement (E), relationship (R), meaning (M), and accomplishment (A). Based on these five aspects, a person can be said to flourish if an individual is more likely to experience positive emotions than negative, feel happiness, and positive experiences, enjoy involvement in the activities they do, always have a desire to develop, have positive and supportive relationships with others, understand the direction and purpose of life clearly, and are satisfied with the achievements achieved thanks to their efforts [24]. Therefore, flourishing teachers are not only happy but also able to face work challenges positively and continue to develop professionally.

The flourishing status can impact an individual's development fully and carry out the functions in life properly. Unachieved flourishing levels have negative impact individuals and the environment. The negative impacts of low teacher flourish include increased stress, emotional exhaustion, and decreased motivation. These conditions can affect the quality of teaching, interactions with students and academic productivity. It was in agreement with the statement that psychological well-being in teachers greatly affects the learning process and will have an impact on maintaining student well-being and student academic achievement [25]. Therefore, it is significant to explore appropriate strategies to support teacher well-being.

One strategy that has proven effective in improving psychological well-being is mindfulness. Mindfulness refers to the ability to notice and accept present experience consciously without judgment [26]. Mindfulness is a quality of consciousness, which includes states of awareness and attention and should be distinguished from mental processes such as cognition, motivation, and emotional states [27]. Another expert explains that mindfulness as a way to find connections between all the experiences that have been experienced to facilitate the challenges faced and shape individuals into better characters [28].

Several previous research has shown that individuals who have a mindfulness attitude tend to have better well-being. Research on elementary school teachers in the Southeastern United States (Kentucky) showed that elementary school teachers who were given mindfulness interventions could improve their mental health through reduced levels of stress and anxiety. This proves that teachers in these elementary schools have achieved a good level of well-being with low levels of stress and anxiety [29]. Another study involving 42 preschool teachers and teachers' assistants in the city of Santiago, Chile proved that mindfulness has a significant relationship with the level of personal fulfilment, depression, anxiety, stress, and quality of life [30]. The finding indirectly implied that there is a relationship between mindfulness and teacher well-being. It proved a potential relationship between mindfulness and flourishing.

Although the relationship between mindfulness and flourishing has been widely studied, no research specifically explores the relationship between mindfulness to flourishing in elementary school teachers. In Indonesia including Bali, teacher well-being is still not a major concern, especially in an education system that is more oriented towards student academic outcomes. Based on the preliminary interview, it also found that vast majority of teachers in Denpasar feel struggling due to the Merdeka curriculum. This reason become the subject matters for choosing teachers in Denpasar as the

subject of the study. Further, the purpose of this study is to determine the relationship of mindfulness to flourishing elementary school teachers in Denpasar in the era of the independent curriculum. The study seeks to fill the gap and contribute to existing literature about the significance of mindfulness for teachers' flourishing in local context. This research finding is expected to support the development of mindfulness training programs for teachers in Denpasar. By understanding the relationship between mindfulness and flourishing, schools can design policies that support teacher well-being more holistically.

2 Method

2.1 Research Design

This research uses a quantitative approach with a correlational study design as it aims to measure and analyze the relationship between mindfulness teaching variables (independent variables) and teacher's flourishing (dependent variable). Correlational research involves collecting data to determine whether, and to what degree, a relationship exists between two or more quantifiable variables [31]. It was designed to identify and measure the relationship between mindfulness and aspects of teacher flourishing and determine the strength of the relationship. Other variables may have contributed to the relationship between the two variables studied in this study. However, to minimize the presence of other confounding factors, the data collection was carefully conducted and the sampling was chosen based on certain criteria.

2.2 Population and Sample

The population of this study was all elementary school teachers in Denpasar. This population was chosen because the teaching profession at the elementary school level has unique emotional and professional challenges, making it relevant to look at the application of mindfulness teaching and its effect on flourishing. Then, 30 elementary school teachers in Denpasar were selected as a sample of the study. The sample was determined using a purposive sampling technique, which selects teachers who meet certain criteria such as at least 3 years of experience as a teacher in elementary schools.

2.3 Technique of Collecting Data and Instruments

The data collection techniques in this study applied observation, questionnaire, and documentation techniques. The observation technique was used to observe the initial condition of teachers, especially at the flourishing level. It was applied as a preliminary study behind the implementation of this research. The questionnaire technique is a data collection technique by gives a set of questions or written statements to respondents to answer. The questionnaires used include the mindfulness questionnaire and the flourishing questionnaire. This mindfulness questionnaire adopts MAAS which consists of 15 statements, and the flourishing questionnaire through PERMA Profiler which consists of 23 statements. Mindfulness questionnaire was measured through 6 scales, i.e.

Scale 1 = Always; Scale 2 = Very often; Scale 3 = Quite often; Scale 4 = Somewhat rare; Scale 5 = Very rarely; and Scale 6 = Almost never.

Meanwhile, flourishing questionnaire (PERMA) was designed by five indicators including positive emotions (P), engagement (E), positive relationships (R), meaning (M) and accomplishment (A). Each indicators used 10 scales from 0 (never) to 10 (always) category. These two questionnaires were not tested for validity and reliability again as the researcher used the MAAS questionnaire[32] and PERMA Profiler [33]. Further, documentation techniques were used to support the research results, including photographs taken at the time of research data collection, which were used as evidence or complementary data for the two main data.

2.4 Techniques of Analysis

The data analysis techniques using quantitative data analysis techniques (descriptive and inferential statistics) assisted by SPSS. Before hypothesis testing, there are prerequisite tests carried out by normality test and linearity test. The normality test aims to determine whether the research data has been categorized and normally distributed or not. In this test, Kolmogorov-Smirnov was used with the SPSS 22.0 version for Windows. The test criteria for this normality test were: (a) if data can be said to be normally distributed if the p-value or Sig. value > 0.05. Conversely, the data will be declared not normally distributed if the p-value or Sig. value < 0.05. If the normality test is fulfilled, then the test continues at the linearity test stage. This test is used as a prerequisite in applying the linear regression method. This test is carried out by analysing the relationship between the independent variable (X) and the dependent variable (Y). The linearity test criteria are assessed through the significance value of deviation of linearity. If the significance value (linearity) < the significance level < 5% (0.05), then there is a linear relationship between variables, and vice versa.

During the hypothesis testing, the analysis used is simple linear regression analysis. Simple linear regression analysis is used to determine the direction of the relationship between the independent variable (X) and the dependent variable (Y) whether positive or negative. Simple linear regression test criteria can be seen from the significance value, namely: (a) if the Sig. value is less than the probability value of 0.05 then there is a relationship between the influence of mindfulness on flourishing; or (b) if the Sig value is greater than the probability value of 0.05 then there is no relationship between mindfulness and flourishing.

3 Findings and Discussion

3.1 Findings

This study involved 30 respondent elementary school teachers in Denpasar to analyse the relationship between their mindfulness and flourishing. The results of this study are classified into two, namely descriptive statistical analysis and inferential statistical analysis as follows.

The results in Table 1 illustrate the descriptive statistical analysis on the mindfulness and flourishing scores of the 30 respondents.

Table 1. The results of descriptive statistics

	N	Range	Minimum	Maxi- mum	Sum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Vari- ance
Mindfulness	30	45	45	90	2155	71.83	12.052	145.247
Flourishing	30	71	133	204	5203	173.43	19.557	382.461
Valid N (listwise)	30							

Table 1 shows the mean mindfulness score is 71.83 with a standard deviation of 12.052, indicating a moderate level of data variation. The mindfulness score has a range of 45, with a minimum score of 45 and a maximum of 90, and a variance of 145.247. Meanwhile, the mean flourishing score was 173.43 with a standard deviation of 19.557. Flourishing has a value range of 71, with a minimum score of 133 and a maximum of 204, and a variance of 382,461. The total mindfulness score of all respondents was 2155, while the total flourishing score reached 5203. Overall, these results indicate a fairly even variation in the level of mindfulness and flourishing among respondents, which is the basis for analysing the relationship between the two variables

Furthermore, statistical inferential analysis is carried out through assumption tests and hypothesis tests. The results of the assumption test with the normality test through Kolmogorov Smirnov are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. The result of normality test

One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	Details
	.200	Normally distributed

Based on the results in Table 2, the Sig value can be obtained. $200 > 0.05$. Referring to the normality test criteria, the data can be said to be normally distributed if the Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) > 0.05 . Because the value of Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) $.200 > 0.05$, it can be said that the teacher mindfulness and flourishing data are normally distributed.

The second assumption test is the linearity test with the ANOVA test with the results in Table 3.

Table 3 The results of linierity test

Analysis	Sig. Value	Details
Deviation from Linearity	0,638	Linier

Table 3 shows that the value of Deviation from linearity Sig. = $0.638 > 0.05$. Based on test criteria, it can be concluded that there is a linear relationship between the mindfulness variable and the flourishing. Since both prerequisite tests have been fulfilled, the analysis process remains to hypothesis testing through simple linear regression test.

The simple linear regression test was applied and aided by SPSS 23.0 version for windows. The results of this hypothesis test are presented in Table 4.

Table 4 The results of regression linier

Variable	F	Sig
Mindfulness & flourishing	7.886	.009 ^b

Table 4 shows that the Sig. value in the regression results is $.009 < \text{the probability value of } 0.05$ so that based on the test criteria it can be concluded that there is a relationship between mindfulness and flourishing.

Table 5 The results of coefficient correlation and coefficient determination

Variables	R	R square
Mindfulness & Flourishing	.469	.220

Table 5 revealed that the correlation coefficient (R) value is 0.469, which indicates a moderate positive relationship between mindfulness and flourishing. The finding means that the development of mindfulness tends to be followed by good level of flourishing. It implied that the higher the mindfulness in teachers, the level of well-being in the flourishing aspect of teachers also increases. Meanwhile, the coefficient of determination (Rsquare) of 0.220 indicates that 22% of the variation in flourishing can be explained by mindfulness, while the remaining 78% is influenced by other factors not included in the model. Thus, it proves that mindfulness has a significant role in influencing teachers' flourishing at Denpasar.

3.2 Discussion

Based on the results of the study, it can be stated that there is a positive relationship between mindfulness and teacher flourishing in elementary schools in Denpasar. This study proves that mindfulness not only impacts the quality of learning, but also significantly affects the emotional, psychological, and social well-being of teachers. In the analysis, it was found that the F value was 7.886 with a significance level of $p=0.009$, so H_0 was rejected. The finding means that there is a significant relationship between mindfulness and flourishing. Then, the correlation coefficient (R) value is 0.469, indicating a moderate positive relationship between mindfulness and flourishing. Therefore, it can be explained that the higher the mindfulness in teachers, the level of well-being in the flourishing aspect of teachers also increases.

Several things are important foundations for the formation of a positive relationship between mindfulness and flourishing of elementary school teachers in Denpasar. First, mindfulness contributes to the flourishing aspect of teachers, i.e., building positive emotions. Mindfulness help teachers improve their skills in establishing effective interactions with students and coworkers, which contributing to the creation of more harmonious social relationships [34]. In the context of Merdeka Curriculum, teachers have flexibility to determine learning concepts for their students. This flexibility can minimize teachers' pressure, which has an impact on improving teacher's flourishing. Decreased stress levels can build calm feelings so that emotional control is maximized. Teachers with good emotional control tend to produce positive emotions.

The application of mindfulness has the potential to be an effective strategy in building a conducive and positive learning environment [35]. Mindfulness gives a person the power to make meaning of life so that it has a positive impact on emotional management. Positive emotions include emotions felt towards situations such as happiness, joy, gratitude and excitement for what happened in the past and looking forward to the future with hope [23]. Martini explained that one of the 5 dimensions of mindfulness is observing [36]. Observing is the ability of individuals to realize or pay attention to external and internal experiences such as sensations, cognitions, emotions, sights, sounds, and smells. By being aware of the environment, an individual will learn to understand phenomena around their environment which has an impact on proper emotional management.

Positive emotions are emotions that are felt when someone experiences something pleasant and has a positive impact on them. Someone who has a high level of mindfulness tends to have wise perceptions. It is associated with the statement by a researcher who proved that mindfulness assists teachers in creating wise decision-making [37]. Teachers with positive thinking and wise decision due to their mindfulness encourage the formation of positive emotions. It also proved by elementary school teachers in Denpasar that mindful attitudes provide opportunities to appreciate others and help maintain harmonious relationships. Harmonious relationships without conflict minimize negative emotions.

Elementary school teachers in Denpasar who practice mindfulness can create a harmonious learning environment by showing greater appreciation for students, colleagues, and parents. For example, they are more patient in guiding students with learning difficulties, listen to colleagues without judgment during school discussions, and respond to parents' concerns with empathy and constructive solutions. Additionally, when facing administrative pressures or school policy changes, mindful teachers remain calm and reflective, maintaining positive relationships with school principals and staff. Thus, mindfulness helps teachers build better communication and foster a more harmonious school atmosphere.

The result of a moderate positive correlation between mindfulness and flourishing is attributed by the practice of mindfulness. Mindfulness help teachers form positive relationships. Those positive relationships mean positive relation with coworkers, students, and parents. Individuals can manage stress, anxiety, and negative emotions more effectively when they practice mindfulness [30]. This supports the creation of emotional balance that contributes to the formation of positive relationships as one aspect of flourishing. Furthermore, mindfulness practice helps individuals to be more empathic and fully present in social interactions. In the context of teaching, mindfulness enables teachers to create comfortable and more supportive relationships with students and colleagues. This reinforces the positive social relationship aspect of flourishing.

A teacher who is mindful or practices mindfulness tends to focus more on their purpose, manage obstacles better, and find meaning in daily activities [37]. Teachers who practice mindfulness can help students develop a deeper understanding of life purpose and meaningfulness, which supports the engagement dimension of flourishing. These results are in line with studies showing that mindfulness has a positive relationship to increased motivation and resilience [36]. The research finding also in agreement with [29] who proved that mindfulness can improve teachers' well-being through reducing the level of stress and anxiety. Another study involving 42 preschool teachers and teachers' assistants in the city of Santiago, Chile proved that mindfulness has a significant relationship with the level of personal fulfilment, depression, anxiety, stress, and quality of life [30]. The finding indirectly implied that there is a relationship between mindfulness and teacher well-being.

The results of this study are in line with the findings of previous researchers conducted [38] that there is a positive relationship between self-compassion and mindfulness towards flourishing. Individuals who have high levels of self-kindness and mindfulness tend to be better able to deal with various difficult situations well. In addition, they are more resilient in managing emotional distress and are not easily affected by

negative emotions. This ability allows individuals to treat themselves with gentleness and mindfulness, which in turn supports the improvement of overall well-being.

Other relevant findings also support the research results that mindfulness has significant potential to improve sustainability in education by promoting teacher well-being and reducing the risk of burnout [39], [40]. Teachers who practice mindfulness are better able to manage the emotional and cognitive demands of their profession, which in turn improves classroom dynamics and strengthens relationships with students. As the education system continues to adapt to the challenges educators face, mindfulness offers a valuable pathway to creating a more resilient and effective teaching environment. The integration of mindfulness in education is not only an investment in teacher well-being, but also in the long-term success of students and the sustainability of the education system as a whole.

Theoretically, the results of this study support the theory that mindfulness contributes to increased flourishing. Mindfulness, which reflects full awareness in the present moment, helps individuals to manage emotions, reduce stress, and improve psychological well-being. Therefore, the findings are in line with previous literature which suggests that mindfulness can enhance positive aspects of mental health and well-being. In terms of practical implications, the results of this study provide insight that mindfulness-based programs or interventions can be used to enhance flourishing in individuals. In an educational or workplace context, mindfulness training can help participants to focus more, reduce stress, and achieve a better life balance [37], [41]. Therefore, organizations or institutions may consider integrating mindfulness training as part of personal development programs.

The results of this study demonstrate how mindfulness-based programs can promote personal flourishing. Mindfulness training can be a useful strategy to improve focus, lower stress levels, and advance general wellbeing in both educational and professional contexts. Beyond these advantages, though, putting mindfulness interventions into practice also needs to address current issues in education, like student disengagement, mental health issues, and the growing cognitive demands of contemporary classrooms. In the field of education, including mindfulness into the curriculum may benefit students' capacity to manage academic demands, cultivate emotional resilience, and boost self-regulation. By creating a safe and stress-resilient learning environment, mindfulness exercises can also help teachers and educators improve classroom dynamics and student-teacher interactions.

In a similar vein, mindfulness training can help staff members boost productivity, manage stress at work, and promote a healthy company culture. Employers can improve employee engagement and job satisfaction by incorporating mindfulness into leadership development, teamwork training, or well-being initiatives. A organized, evidence-based approach to mindfulness training should be adopted by institutions in light of these possible advantages, making sure that it is easily accessible, culturally appropriate, and flexible enough to be used in a variety of educational and professional settings. Furthermore, ongoing assessment and incorporation with additional psychological and instructional techniques might improve the efficacy of mindfulness programs in tackling issues related to holistic well-being.

A potential mindfulness training program for elementary school teachers in Denpasar could focus on enhancing self-awareness, stress management, and classroom application. The training would introduce basic mindfulness techniques, such as breathing exercises and body scanning, to help teachers regulate emotions and maintain focus. Practical strategies for integrating mindfulness into teaching, including mindful transitions and calming exercises for students, would also be emphasized. Additionally, sessions on stress management and resilience building could support teachers in coping with workload pressures, while mindful communication training would enhance interactions with students, colleagues, and parents. By incorporating mindfulness practices into the school environment, teachers can foster a more supportive, harmonious, and productive learning atmosphere.

The research findings also have significant implications for other stakeholders, including school administrators, policymakers, and parents. School administrators can support teachers' flourishing by providing professional development programs focused on mindfulness training, fostering a school culture that prioritizes mental well-being. Further, policymakers may consider incorporating mindfulness-based interventions into teacher training curricula and educational policies to address teacher burnout and student mental health challenges. Additionally, parents can benefit by collaborating with schools to reinforce mindfulness practices at home, promoting holistic well-being for children. Overall, the implementation of mindfulness programs in schools can contribute to a healthier and more effective educational system.

However, with the above findings, this research certainly has limitations. The limitations in this study are in the subjects involved in the research, the scope of the variables studied, and the limited place of research. The subjects involved in this study were only 30 teachers at the elementary level so that they were not able to provide generalizations for the relationship between mindfulness and flourishing. The second limitation is the variables; future researchers need to explore more variables to analyse other factors that correlated to teachers' flourishing. Third, the research site only used the Denpasar area. In fact, there are various regions in Bali that have not been analyzed for the level of teacher well-being. The challenges found during the study was ensure the participants of the research comprehending their mindfulness and flourishing in a good matter. Due to the limitations of variables and technique of research analysis, the study cannot generalized that mindfulness was correlated with teachers' flourishing in different context. Thus, future researchers are suggested to confirm and conduct in depth study with more variables and other setting or sampling technique. Those ways are essential to find depth generalization about correlation between mindfulness and flourishing in education context.

4 Conclusion

Based on the results of the research and discussion above, it can be concluded that there is a moderate positive relationship between mindfulness teaching and flourishing aspects of teachers in elementary schools in Denpasar. This result is proven by H_0 is rejected and H_1 is accepted. The application of mindfulness teaching contributes

significantly to improving teacher well-being, which includes emotional, psychological, and social dimensions. This research indicates that teachers who consistently apply mindfulness teaching in learning practices tend to have higher levels of flourishing, including a sense of job satisfaction, positive interpersonal relationships, and deep meaning in carrying out their duties.

Referring to the conclusions, several suggestions can be recommended for teachers and future researchers. Teachers are suggested to attend training or workshops that focus on the application of mindfulness in learning. With more in-depth skills, teachers can improve teaching effectiveness while maintaining their psychological well-being. Furthermore, future researchers can expand the scope of the study by involving teachers from various levels of education, such as kindergarten, secondary school, or inclusive education, to get a more comprehensive picture of the relationship between mindfulness teaching and flourishing. Besides, other researchers are advised to use more in-depth mixed methods by balancing quantitative and qualitative data. It may provide a more holistic understanding of the factors that influence the relationship between mindfulness teaching and teacher flourishing.

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