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Gender, Slum and Society

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Abstract - The notion of human wellbeing itself is more broadly conceived to include, not only consumption of goods and services but also the accessibility of all sections of the population, especially the deprived and those who are living below the normative minimal poverty line, to the basic necessities of a productive and socially meaningful life. Analysis of data from the World Values Surveys demonstrates that the linkage between individual resources, emancipative values and freedom rights is universal in its presence across nations, regions and cultural zones. A specific focus on these aspects of development is necessary, as experience shows that economic prosperity measured in terms of per capita income. It does not always ensure enrichment in quality of life reflected in broader dimensions of well-being like in indicators on longevity, literacy or, for that matter, environmental sustainability. Attainments in these dimensions of welfare are desirable in themselves; hence, they are socially valued. This study demonstrates that socio-economic development, emancipative cultural change and democratization constitute a coherent syndrome of social progress – a syndrome whose common focus has not been properly specified by classical modernization theory.

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I. Introduction

Generally women and girls in slums have a poor quality of life in slums. The lack of basic services affects them the most. They have to spend considerable time collecting potable water and getting rid of wastewater. Looking after children who are frequently sick, husbands who do not earn adequately and can be drunk and trying to ensure that the family gets a meal every day. Women are most disadvantaged in slums. Girls have to look after younger siblings when both parents go to work. Combined with a traditional bias against educating girls they are often not sent to school or drop out at an early stage. Girls do not have the exposure to everyday city life situations, which men, women and young men have. As a result they are often anxiety prone and stressed. The unhealthy and polluted environment, lack of immunization, malnutrition and absence of educational exposure affects children in slums. Sadly, their physical, emotional and intellectual growth is stunted from a very early age. The situation with respect to women's health in the urban slums is no different; rather their health is neglected the most. Insecurity related to regular income, food, shelter, access to health care and other essential services,

along with poverty and difficult physical and social environments, such as exploitation and abuse in the treatment of women, have an adverse impact on the health of the urban poor women.

There is a consensus among the leading international organizations (e.g. UN, WHO, World Bank, and ILO) and development scholars that to achieve an effective change for better health and quality of life for women, a dual approach is needed (UNDP, 1999; Kar and Acalay, 2000). These are: (1) reforming health and welfare systems that meet the specific and urgent needs of women (e.g. health care, day care), and (2) reforming socio-cultural systems that perpetuate gender inequalities which are the source of all day-to-day problems (e.g. equal opportunities for education, income, cultural practices and devaluation of women). These two approaches address what Moser (1987) identifies as two types of women's needs- 'practical needs' and 'strategic needs' respectively. The first approach focuses on day-to-day needs that are akin to the proverb, giving a fish to a starving person; while the second approach is giving a fishing rod and opportunities to fish. There is synergy between health systems, human development systems, and broader social reform. While men and women in large numbers and in many nations have benefited from various forms of social and technological developments, women continue to suffer from persistent inequalities in both poor and rich societies. In general, women carry most of the burden of caring for their children and domestic work. Empirical studies show that women also suffer most of the brunt of poverty and abuses due to persistent inequalities and relative powerlessness (Sen, 1990). Both in rich and poor nations, women suffer various forms of institutionalized injustice and abuse including: denial of basic needs (education and health care), feminization of poverty, unfair opportunities for employment, income, and leadership; sexual harassment and exploitation; physical mutilations and deaths, domestic violence; insufficient interest in gender-related issues in policy and research; and culturally conditioned practices that endanger women's health and quality of life (e.g. dowry deaths, honor killing, early marriages).

II. Methodology

The data have been collected from secondary and primary sources.

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a) Secondary Sources

Data is collected and compiled from the books, reports, published and unpublished papers, leaflets, booklets, Municipal records and Governmental circulars.

b) Primary Sources

Interviews from the field with respondents, word counselors and slum leaders have been conducted to elicit their opinions and experiences in slum life with the help of interview schedule.

III. The Universe and Sample Size:

The study was conducted on slums of the capital city of Chhattisgarh, Raipur, India. Total 300 families from four slums taking 95 families from Gandhi Nagar, 88 families from Moulipara, 100 families from Kushalpur and 17 families from Kota basti have taken as sample. Total surveyed population is 1383. Head or senior most persons of the family are the respondents.

IV. Gender in Slums: Some Aspects

Family is a miniature of the society. Women in the family are inevitable. The basic organization of society comes from the organization of family. Family imparts essential social training to its members in self-restraint, responsibility, human relations and goal-directed behaviors. Once a new activity has been accepted as desirable by wide sections of the population, families assume an increasing role in equipping the next generation with knowledge, skills and attitudes supportive of the activity. The hereditary

transmission of occupation from father to son has taken place for millennia. Today children are no longer as likely to enter the same field as their parents, but they still acquire basic skills and attitudes that influence their occupation. When an activity has matured to the point that family plays a very active role in its transmission, the activity has become a part of the culture of the society.

Community activism is an important avenue towards participation in city-level planning and policy making processes. But there is the danger that, if women confine themselves in organizing self-help and survival strategies, they may be left to manage communities on their own, without resources or political and professional support (Beall, 1995). Recent concern with urban governance stems from general attention being paid to the issue of 'good governance' in development. It is essentially preoccupied with questions of financial accountability and administrative efficiency, and political concerns related to democracy, human rights, and participation. Urban governance used to be equated solely with urban management but more recently, it has come to be understood both as government responsibility and civic engagement involving a full range of participants, which makes it more possible to integrate a gender perspective. Women need to participate in public office because they have particular experiences of, and relationships to, the urban environment, and they have proved themselves to be effective agents of change at the city or local level on a range of issues (Beall, 1995). Some of the aspects of women faced in daily life have been focused below.

Table 1 : Participation of the Women in Local Issues

Name of Slum	Always	%	Sometime	%	Not take	%	Total Respondents
Kota Basti	1	5.88	7	41.18	9	52.94	17 (100%)
Kushalpur	9	9.00	16	16.00	75	75.00	100 (100%)
Gandhinagar	22	23.16	28	29.47	45	47.37	95 (100%)
Moulipara	12	13.64	13	14.77	63	71.59	88 (100%)
Total	44	14.67	64	21.33	192	64.00	300 (100%)

Source : Personal survey-2012

Participation in local issues by the women reflects her ability to the leadership and importance in the family and community as well as her degree of empowerment. 14.76% respondents have said that they themselves or their wives are always concerned about the local issues (table-1). 21.33% respondents have said that some time they or their wives participate in local issues, but 64% women do not participate at all in local

issues. Here it shows that majority of women do not actively participate in local issues and keeps themselves out of reach to these issues due to many reasons. In Kota Basti and Gandhinagar women's participation rate is same whereas other two slums projects same picture in this regard.

Table 2: Involvements of Women in Self Help Groups

Name of Slum	Availability of S.G.H / Participation by women								No Involvement		Total Respondents
	Handi-craft	%	Food Processing	%	Sales man	%	Others	%	Total	%	
Kota Basti	1	5.88	1	5.88	1	5.88	-	-	14	82.35	17 (100%)
Kushalpur	-	-	1	1.00	3	3.00	-	-	96	96.00	100 (100%)
Gandhinagar	5	5.26	1	1.05	10	10.53	-	-	79	83.16	95 (100%)
Moulipara	6	6.82	-	-	2	2.27	1	1.14	79	89.77	88 (100%)
Total	12	4.00	3	1.00	16	5.33	1	0.33	268	89.34	300 (100%)

Source : Personal survey-2012

Self help groups become important as a tool of poverty alleviation. Most of the financial institutions, being commercial institutions, do not find it commercially feasible to lend to the poor. The poor are generally illiterate, they have no fixed salary and they cannot offer anything as collateral security. So in spite of the availability of huge funds, bigger financial institutions do not finance the poor. It is interesting to note that a majority of the members of SHGs in India are women (Khan & Kraemer, 2008). The 74th Constitutional Amendment has given a significant role to both rural and urban local bodies in terms of empowerment and expanding their normal functions to include poverty alleviation. In this regard, all the urban local bodies have to focus on micro finance at the grass root level (slums). Self help groups are the key to empowerment of women. As table 2 shows that only near about ten percent women are actively involved in SHGs. Out of them 4% women involve in making handicraft, 1% people involve in food processing (making pickle), and 5.33% women work as sales girl. But near about 89% women are not involve in SHGs activities.

a) Social inequality and social justice: Some facts

Race, status, and class are one of the main reasons for inequality. There is a high degree of social inequality in India. Social inequality has been defined as a conflicting status within a society with regards to the individual, property rights, and access to education, medical care, and welfare programs. Much of society's inequality can be attributed to the class status of a particular group, which has usually been largely determined by the group's ethnicity or race. All societies treat people with certain characteristics differently from others, males/females, old/young, rich/poor, etc. This differential treatment leads to social inequality and the placing of individuals into social classes or hierarchy's. Some hierarchy's, such as an ascribed status, effect individuals from the moment they are born, like a child

born into a wealthy family, is more likely to be seen as successful and have more life chances, than a child born to a poor family who would be likely to have less life chances, and considered low-class. An ascribed status is a feature assigned to an individual by circumstance rather than by accomplishment, and tends to be the characteristics acquired at birth, such as race, sex, and age. In modern, capitalistic societies, income and wealth are major factors in assigning one to a specific place in the hierarchy. The structural-functionalist, believe that a society that has unequal rewards will operate more smoothly and make people want to strive to do better things with their lives. We live in a society in which you must work for everything you get, and functionalists believe that those with more ambition, who are willing to work, will get what they want. Matching two different kinds of processes has socially created social inequality. "The social roles in society are first matched to 'reward packages' of unequal value and individual members of society are then allocated to the positions so defined and rewarded" (David, 2001).

To protect the urban poor as vulnerable group it is now widely recognized that the rapid growth of urban populations has led to a worsening in absolute and relative poverty in urban areas. Urban poverty has, until recently, been low on the agenda of development policy because of dominant perceptions of urban bias and the need to counter this with a focus on rural development policy. However, policy interest in urban issues is increasing as a result of two phenomena: projections of a large and increasing proportion of poor people living in urban areas, partly as a result of urbanization; and claims that structural adjustment programmes - which have removed some of the urban bias, by removing price distortions - have lead to a much faster increase in urban poverty than rural poverty.

Social inequality is different from economic inequality but the two inequalities are linked. Economic

inequality refers to disparities in the distribution of economic assets and income. While economic inequality is caused by the unequal distribution of wealth, social inequality exists because the lack of wealth in certain areas prohibits these people from obtaining the same housing, health care, etc. as the wealthy in societies where access to these social goods depends on wealth. "The degree of inequality in a given reward or asset depends, of course, on its dispersion or concentration across the individuals in the population" (David, 2001).

Situations of marginality produce ideas of justice. Lack of access to means of representation, resources, and survival means such as education, health, etc. produces marginality. One of the implications of this manifold context is that while the issue of justice is studied only or mostly in terms of governance, its delivery mechanisms, and the various governmental forms of justice, social justice as different and distinct from governmental justice emerges as a distinct category of social reality to be inquired and appreciated in its own right. The social justice scenario is to be investigated in the context of two streams of entitlements- (a) sustainable livelihood, which means access to adequate means of living, such as shelter, clothing, food, access to developmental means, employment; education, health, and resources (b) social and political participation (enabling or empowering

means), which is built on the guarantee of fundamental rights, and promotion and empowerment of the right to participation in the government, and access to all available means of justice, and on the basis of which 'justice as a political programme' becomes a viable reality. A study is required therefore based on select illustrations of various issues relating to government policies on topics such as (a) the right to food and water (b) housing, which includes resettlement and rehabilitation (c) access to education, (d) access to provisions of health and healthcare, (e) right to work, and (f) access to information and the right to communication (David, 2001). In short, one of the important ways in which the inquiry will proceed will be through taking stock of various forms that have occasioned the articulation of ideas of social justice.

The constitution ensures that there is no discrimination against any section of our society. In India, certain social groups such as the SCs, STs, OBCs and Minorities have historically been disadvantaged and vulnerable. Then there are certain other groups which may be discriminated against and which suffer from handicaps. These include persons living in slum, disable, older persons, street children, beggars and victims of substance abuse. Our Constitution contains various provisions for the development of such marginalized groups.

Table 3 : Feeling Being Discriminated by the Respondents

Name of Slum	Feel Discrimination						Don't feel		Total Respondents
	Inadequate Development	%	Lesser access to city facility	%	Others	%	Total	%	
Kota Basti	5	29.41	2	11.76	2	11.76	8	47.06	17 (100%)
Kushalpur	21	21.00	17	17.00	6	5.00	56	56.00	100 (100%)
Gandhinagar	38	40.00	28	29.47	4	4.21	25	26.32	95 (100%)
Moulipara	48	54.55	19	21.59	2	2.27	19	21.59	88 (100%)
Total	112	37.33	66	22.00	14	4.67	108	36.00	300 (100%)

Source : Personal survey-2012

Many residential areas within the city tend to be socially isolated from others, partly by choice & partly by location. The slums are especially so as their chief link with the rest of the community is their identification with labour market, but there may be an additional link through politics, slum dwellers function equally with others as citizen & as they are able to identify themselves with social group. The urban poor face multiple challenges. Insecure tenure reinforces poverty and social exclusion. Slum dwellers are often excluded

from many of the attributes of urban life critical to full facilities, facing restricted access to economic activity, credit, health and education services and exclusion from safety, the rule of law or political voice. People in slum areas often face stigmatization, discrimination, and administrative isolation, and suffer disproportionately from civic amenities adequately (Radoki & Lloyd, 2002). In Raipur slum dwellers feel being discriminated in many respects. Slums, like the larger societies of which they are part, have powerful vested interests, entrenched

power bases and inequality. Solutions need to work for the poorest and most vulnerable members; also for the groups that face discrimination (which in most societies means particular attention to ensuring marginalized equal participation). Table 3 shows that maximum people feel discrimination because they think that sufficient development has not been taken place for their community (37.33%) and 22% respondents feel that they access smaller facilities than others. 36% respondents think that they are not being discriminated.

People living in Kota Basti and Kushalpur have the same opinion about the feeling of discrimination. On the contrary People of Gandhinagar and Moulipara equally feel discrimination. They think that access to the facilities is less than other areas and inadequate development is probable reasons for feeling of discrimination.

Table 4 : Opinions of Respondents about Social Justice

Name of Slum	Opinion about social justice						Don't know		Total Respondents
	Equal Treatment	%	Availability of Resources	%	Indifferent Attitude	%	Total	%	
Kota Basti	5	26.66	3	20.00	3	16.00	6	37.33	17 (100%)
Kushalpur	20	20.00	39	39.00	11	11.00	30	30.00	100 (100%)
Gandhinagar	16	16.84	18	18.95	13	13.68	48	50.53	95 (100%)
Moulipara	36	41.33	20	22.66	7	8.00	25	28.00	88 (100%)
Total	77	25.67	80	26.67	34	11.33	109	36.33	300 (100%)

Source : Personal survey-2012

Diversified opinions and mixed responses are received from the respondents on this matter. Table 4 shows that 63.67% respondents feel they enjoy least social justice because being discriminated. The people have said (25.67%) that they don't get equal treatment with compared to the rest of the city community, 26.67% people have reported non availability of basic facilities, and 11.33% respondents have said that being slum dweller they face indifferent attitudes from the mainstream community and often from the administration. 36.33% people have not made any comments on this. The gross opinion reflects that social justice is an arena only partly covered by law; rest is covered by social and political ideas and practices. Ethical ideas about honour, right, respect, autonomy, claim, share, revenge, and shame also play significant role in determining mores of justice. A sense of entitlements plays a role. Justice thus propels variety of forms – from social-economic rights, to the forms of justiciability, forms of redistribution of wealth, the form of due process, subjective experiences of justice, and as distinct from these experiences the objective tests of justice. People of Gandhinagar (50%) don't have any idea about social justice. Kushalpur and Moulipara are having the same kind of people who think alike in this regard.

b) Moral, socio-cultural and mental development of slum dwellers

The social development process provides opportunities to promote people's moral, social and cultural development. People's moral development involves the growth of their sense of self, their unique potential, their understanding of their strengths and weaknesses, and their will to achieve. They develop the knowledge, skills, understanding, qualities and attitudes they need to foster their own inner lives and material as well as non-material wellbeing. People's moral development also involves people acquiring an understanding of the difference between right and wrong and of moral conflict, a concern for others and the will to do what is right. They are able and willing to reflect on the consequences of their actions and learn how to forgive themselves and others. They develop the knowledge, skills and understanding, qualities and attitudes they need in order to make responsible moral decisions and act on them.

Social and cultural development involves people's acquiring an understanding of the responsibilities and rights of being members of families and communities (local, national and global), and an ability to relate to others and to work with others for the common good. People display a sense of belonging and an increasing willingness to participate. People develop the wisdom, skills, qualities and attitudes they

need to make an active contribution to the democratic process in each of their communities. People's cultural development involves pupils acquiring an understanding of cultural traditions and ability to appreciate and respond to a variety of aesthetic experiences. Human being acquires a respect for their own culture and that of others, an interest in others' ways of doing things and

curiosity about differences. They develop the knowledge, skills, understanding, qualities and attitudes they need to understand, appreciate and contribute to culture. If social development is to be understood a focus must be given on moral, cultural and mental development of the slum dwellers.

Table 5 : Opinions of Respondents Regarding Untouchability

Name of Slum	Believe in Untouchability						Don't Believe						Total Respondents
	Caste Superiority	%	Tradition	%	Others	%	Old customs	%	Un-constitutional	%	Others	%	
Kota Basti	1	5.88	-	-	-	-	16	94.12	-	-	-	-	17 (100%)
Kushalpur	3	3.00	1	1	-	-	96	96	-	-	-	-	100 (100%)
Gandhinagar	5	5.26	6	6.32	-	-	71	74.74	13	13.68	-	-	95 (100%)
Moulipara	5	5.68	-	-	-	-	75	85.23	8	9.09	-	-	88 (100%)
Total	14	4.67	6	2.00	-	-	263	87.67	17	5.66	-	-	300 (100%)

Source : Personal survey - 2012

Once upon a time India was the worse victim of untouchability. *Dalit (untouchable)*, also called outcaste, is a self-designation for a group of people traditionally regarded as of untouchables. Dalits are a mixed population of numerous caste groups all over state, and speak various languages. While the discrimination on the ground of caste has been abolished under the Indian constitution, there is still discrimination and prejudice against Dalits in Raipur. About 93%

respondents don't believe on untouchability. Those who still believe on uncouchability either they are very traditional or religiously fanatic. They think that some castes are superior to other castes. In this regard all people of the slums think alike. Few people of Gandhinagar and Moulipara have said that caste system is unconstitutional that is why they oppose untouchability.

Table 6 : Views & Opinion of Respondents about Dowry System

Name of Slum	Accept Dowry	%	Don't believe in Dowry	%	Total Respondents
Kota Basti	11	64.71	6	35.29	17 (100%)
Kushalpur	55	55.00	45	45.00	100 (100%)
Gandhinagar	72	75.79	23	24.21	95 (100%)
Moulipara	69	78.41	19	21.59	88 (100%)
Total	207	69.00	93	31.00	300 (100%)

Source : Personal survey-2012

One of the biggest threats of the Indian society is the dowry system. This is a fact that it is condemned by every modern citizen of this country and yet it still flourishes at a very large scale in our society is a testimony of how deeply rooted this system is in the slum society. Dowry (*dahej*) is one of the most ancient practices of India. Oxford dictionary defines it as 'an amount of property or money brought by a bride to her husband on their marriage'. Till now the amount and contents of dowry are decided solely by the parents of the bride. The government has taken many steps to stop

the abominable practice of dowry. The 'Dowry Prohibition Act', passed in 1961, prohibits the request, payment or acceptance of dowry, where dowry is defined as a gift demanded or given as a precondition for a marriage. As the table (6) shows 69% respondents have accepted that they believe on dowry and practice it overtly or covertly. But 31% respondents have said they don't believe in dowry. The spread of this practice is almost same over all slums. In Gandhinagar and Moulipara comparatively less people believe on dowry system.

Table 7 : Feelings of Complexity among Respondents

Name of Slu	Feelings of inferiority Complex						No feelings of inferiority Complex						Total Respondents
	Lack of Money	%	Inferior Culture	%	Living Standard	%	Equal Right	%	Live our own	%	Others	%	
Kota Basti	2	11.76	3	17.65	4	23.53	2	11.76	6	35.30	-	-	17 (100%)
Kushalpur	16	16.00	11	11.00	13	13.00	12	12.00	48	48.00	-	-	100 (100%)
Gandhinagar	20	21.05	15	15.79	11	11.58	12	12.63	30	31.58	7	7.37	95 (100%)
Moulipara	5	5.68	9	10.23	9	10.23	14	15.91	51	57.95	-	-	88 (100%)
Total	43	14.33	38	12.67	37	12.33	40	13.34	135	45.00	7	2.33	300 (100%)

Source : Personal survey- 2012

An inferiority complex, in the fields of psychology and psychoanalysis, is a feeling that one is inferior to others in some way. Such feelings can arise from an imagined or actual inferiority in the afflicted person. It is often subconscious, and is thought to drive afflicted individuals to overcompensate, resulting either in spectacular achievement or extreme deviant behavior, or both. It revolves around social status, power, ego, and dominance. People have inferiority complex when they feel inferior and think that other people are better than them. Being slum dweller many people suffer from inferiority complex. 39.33% respondents, as table 7 shows, feel inferiority complex because they think (14.33%) they are poor, belong to comparatively inferior culture (12.67%) and because of low living standard (12.33%). But majority doesn't think so (60.67%). They think that they enjoy many civic facilities like others and they have equal rights (13.44%). 45% respondents have said that they live their own life in their own way.

Feeling of inferiority complex among people of Kota Basti is higher than other slums. On the contrary the people of Moulipara feel fewer inferiority complexes than other slums.

V. Concluding Remarks

Firstly in conclusion, while the problems of urban poverty in slums are enormous, it is perhaps

relevant to note that some of the solutions are relatively clear. This is particularly the case in terms of the provision of physical infrastructure and in the area of human capital. The task is to implement, the problem is to overcome the political and economic constraints. Social infrastructure including facilities and measures for providing education, health care, community development, equitable income distribution, employment and social welfare are yet to be built in slums. The concept of social infrastructure is very broad and covers various aspects of Government service delivery. Major social policy concerns of the Government included the provision of infrastructure services, fostering Government and community partnerships, community capacity building, integrated service delivery and social justice.

Secondly, migration not only involves the environmental, socio-economic and other problems but it is also largely responsible for human resource development which is again a facet of the urban microenvironment. Thus a value system consequent on congestion and poverty is a characteristic of slums. Migration is the key process here by which people belonging to certain socio-economic backgrounds move to Raipur and finds their way into slums. But for further mobility whether intra- or inter-occupation, self-initiative plays a crucial role by bringing in more

information and generating skill and other pre-requisites for improvement in earnings. The economic and social security of the inhabitants is worse than the city. The LPG (liberalization, privatization and globalization) has congested the slum areas and consequently made the people poor and vulnerable with deficient or absence of any social security.

Thirdly, Women's empowerment is also justified as a utilitarian necessity, healthy and empowered women are an important social capital because they are the primary care givers in most communities, and investment in women results in greater benefits to their children and family. It is argued that participatory methods can act as a process through which slum dwellers can demand appropriate health care for themselves and their families. In so doing, they can redefine their health needs in order that health intervention can be directed more appropriately.

Fourthly, to improve the productivity of industry, trade and services as well as to make the city more competitive, this matter of vocational training would have to be taken up in broad manner. The major focus of vocational training programme is to teach women the skills necessary to accomplish job tasks is needed.

Lastly it can be said that the Raipur's culture and traditions are not getting killed. Rather more things are getting adopted, accommodated and adapted. Every new aspect of culture adopted from the west (or elsewhere) adds a new taste, a new dimension to our existence. It does not take the place of another value, but rather adds to it. Good aspects from various cultures are added to the already heady mix, catering to a hitherto unexplored taste. Undesirable traditions and cultural aspects is discarded whether they are Indian or foreign. The valuable ones are retained and consolidated. This is a process of evolution. It makes the slum experience richer and merrier. Anything that is proven by time thus, definitely has intrinsic values that are appreciated and cherished by residents of slums. Moreover, it has sustained since it has been able to take many things foreign and make them its own. External winds are blowing and will blow – they'll bring in some things of value and probably blow away some of lesser value.

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