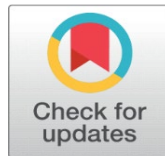
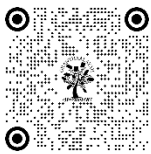


# BURNOUT AND OCCUPATIONAL STRESS AMONG SCHOOLTEACHERS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC IN BANGALORE URBAN AND BANGALORE RURAL

Dr. Pushpalatha R<sup>1</sup>✉, Keshamma E<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Associate Professor, Department of Psychology, Maharani Cluster University, Palace Road, Bengaluru, Karnataka, India

<sup>2</sup> Associate Professor, Department of Biochemistry, Maharani Cluster University, Palace Road, Bengaluru, Karnataka, India



## Corresponding Author

Dr. Pushpalatha R,  
[p13.rajagopal@gmail.com](mailto:p13.rajagopal@gmail.com)

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## ABSTRACT

Burnout is a psychological condition brought on by ongoing stress that impacts people's feelings, mental health, and physical behaviour. Burnout is more common among those whose jobs require communication with a client or a third party. Burnout predicts intention to leave and actual job turnover. A negative perception of the profession can lead to progressive absenteeism and, finally, to withdrawal from teaching. Burnout has historically been linked to the teaching profession. Teacher shortages are not a new issue. Shortages began in the mid-1980s due to increasing student enrolments and decreasing numbers of college graduates becoming teachers. During the pandemic a wave of change disrupted the education of the students. Both the students and the teachers were forced to adapt in a short time to new ways of working that include social distancing in classrooms, hybrid teaching and virtual instructions. Teachers have reported increased levels of anxiety, difficulties in communication and a lack of administrative support. All these new stressors proximal to burnout added to the fear generated by COVID-19, which almost all people have experienced. Teachers are most valuable assets to any country who part their knowledge and guide the young minds to be a contributing citizen of the nation. The teachers are often pressurized with huge demands which usually leads to a lot of stress. Work related stress negatively affects the performance of the teachers. Majority of teachers perceived their work-related stress due to dependent variables like gender, education, family income and economic instability. Job insecurity, poor students' behaviour, ineffective leadership at departmental levels results in stress level of teachers and it also results in psychological distress among teachers. Educational status and years of experience of teachers are the factors responsible for creating stress among teachers. The aim is to study the stress and burnout among the schoolteachers. The sample consisted of 120 schoolteachers working in government and private schools as well as in rural and urban areas. Both male and female teachers constituted the sample for study. The teachers were residing in Bangalore urban and Bangalore rural areas. The teachers were administered the stress and burnout questionnaires. A purposive sampling design was opted for the study. The mean, SD, and 't' was computed using appropriate statistical measures. The result revealed that there was a significant difference in stress and burnout between schoolteachers of urban and rural areas as well as male and female teachers.

**Keywords:** Burnout Occupational Stress Schoolteachers COVID-19 Pandemic Bangalore Urban and Bangalore Rural

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Around the globe, COVID-19 has severely impacted public health systems and economies, disrupting trade, industry and financial markets. In India too, the pandemic has had far-reaching economic consequences across sectors, resulting in the widespread loss of lives, livelihoods and incomes (Keshamma, 2022). Consumption and employment were severely affected during Covid-19 pandemic (Keshamma, 2022). The term job burnout was first proposed by American

psychiatrist Freudenberg (1974) in the 1970s to describe the negative emotions experienced by individuals at work, such as emotional exhaustion, physical and mental fatigue, decreased work engagement, and decreased sense of work achievement status Freudenberg HJ. (1975). Maslach and Jackson (1981, 1986) first used a three-dimensional model to define job burnout: in the occupational field where people serve as the object, the individual's response to long-term exposure to emotional and interpersonal tension sources is mainly manifested as emotional exhaustion, Symptoms such as dehumanization and loss of personal fulfilment are a psychological syndrome. Maslach C, (2001). Teacher burnout is an extreme reaction to teachers' inability to cope with work pressure smoothly and is a state of exhaustion of teachers' emotions, attitudes, and behaviors under long-term stress experience. Typical symptoms are low job satisfaction, loss of work enthusiasm and interest, and Emotional alienation and apathy Byrne BM. (1993).

Since December 2019, with the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, burnout has increased dramatically not only among healthcare professionals but also among other professions (Afulani et al., 2021; Ma et al., 2021; Naldi et al., 2021; Oksanen et al., 2021). This would be due to changing work and lifestyles in response to the lockdowns and curfew that pushed the government to adopt working from home for some professions (Prado-Gasco et al., 2020; Price, 2020; Suliman et al., 2021). Moreover, a hallmark of the pandemic's impacts is that they have been highly heterogeneous within and between rural spaces (Keshamma, 2022).

The importance of burnout syndrome in the educational setting is even more emphasized because apart from affecting the mental, psychosomatic, and social health of educators it also decreases the quality of teaching and work performance, which in turn may negatively influence students' academic achievement (Blandford, 2000). Maslach and Jackson (1986) recognized the deleterious effects of burned-out teachers on themselves, their students, and finally on the learning process, and the importance of studying the burnout phenomenon in the educational environment. According to related research studies, burnout influences most teachers at some point in their teaching profession (Cheek, Bradley, Parr & Lan, 2003; Dorman, 2003; Schwab & Iwanicki, 1982). As Wood and McCarthy (2002) indicated when teachers have burnout, it can have consequences for their professions. Besides increasing burnout in teachers' professions makes teachers hate their careers and it affects their students' achievement.

Burnout has been defined as a syndrome with three dimensions-emotional exhaustion (EE), depersonalization (DP), and reduced personal accomplishment (PA) -that usually occurs among those who work with people (Maslach, 1982). Emotional exhaustion, in the teaching profession, happens when the teacher has a feeling of tiredness and fatigue that develops when emotional energies are drained. As a result, the teachers find that they cannot give their best to students as they once could. Teachers experience depersonalization or cynicism when they do not have positive feelings about their students. For example, they show cold, callous, negative, and indifferent attitudes toward them and sometimes resort to physically distancing themselves from the students. Depersonalization usually develops in response to overload exhaustion (Leiter & Maslach, 2004). Reduced personal accomplishment or inefficacy occurs when teachers feel that they can no longer help the students to learn and grow. In other words, their feelings of competence and successful achievement in relation to the students decrease. Among the three dimensions, emotional exhaustion represents the basic experience of individual stress (Maslach, Jackson, & Leiter, 1996).

Different sources have been associated with the phenomenon of burnout. Background (e.g., educational level, type of graduate school, etc.), individual attributes (e.g., age, gender, number of children, etc), and organizational factors (e.g., class size, work environment, workload, etc.) are involved in the burnout occurrence (Schwab & Iwanicki, 1982). The consequences of burnout can be somatic (biological, physiological, medical) or psychological (cognitive, emotional, behavioural) orders (Rasclé, 2001). Maslach's (1999) definition also incorporates the consequences of burnout as "an emotional state in which the worker loses his beliefs and positive feelings (optimism), his sympathy and his respect for the clientele. This moral exhaustion is often accompanied by physical exhaustion, illness or disorders evolving in a psychosomatic mode" (p. 212)

Job stress is the most common psychological phenomenon that is prevalent among people who are in different jobs and professions. To believe that stress may be especially prevalent among the human service profession, particularly the teaching profession various researchers have worked in this area. (Kjyiacou & Sutcliffe, 1977-78; Pettegrew & Wolf, 1982; Cherniss, 1980; Cooper & Marshall, 1978). As teaching is a human service profession, stress within the teaching profession is considerable and may have far-reaching consequences on the entire education system. Teaching is a complex process wherein the teacher is expected to exhibit many skills (Griffith, Steptoe & Cropely, 1999). This makes a teacher to experience stress in the profession.

The lockdown has given them a ray of hope for teachers and students to continue their educational activities through online (Keshamma, 2022). Teachers are the most valuable assets of any country as they impart knowledge and skills to students who after completing school join different sectors of the country, starting to contribute towards the economy

and development of their country. Stress is often accepted as an inescapable aspect of teaching. Teachers face numerous organizational stressors that affect teachers differently across different contexts; student misbehavior (Kokkinos, 2007), workload and student behaviour (Klassen, 2010), role conflict, school stress, role overload, task stress, management style, role ambiguity, supervisory support, and peer support (Adams, 2001), pupil behaviour (Robertson & Dunsumir, 2012) and, teachers coping abilities (Richards, 2012). Teachers describe how their personal and professional lives are affected by work-related stress-it seems that all suffer to some extent, and in the worst cases teachers fear they will be forced to leave the profession to escape the impact of teaching stress on their lives. Teachers' personal problems including a lack of technical knowledge, course integration with technology is damper their engagement in online teaching (Keshamma, 2022). Kyriacou (1987) indicated that research has found that the sources of teacher stress are not clear cut and those differences due to characteristics such as sex, age, teaching experience, and post-held are prone to cause inconsistent findings. Additional context-specific studies are required to clarify the complex nature of the factors producing stress among teachers. Although a certain amount of stress might be seen as a good thing and helps to promote a high level of performance, too much stress can have a negative impact on employees and employers alike. Moreover, both teachers and students are getting familiar to this new normal, which is definitely more challenging for the teachers to handle with Covid-19 situation (Keshamma, 2022). From the point of view of teachers' rights, online education has exposed various as yet unresolved legal issues, especially in terms of copyright and how to deal with unapproved misuse of lectures (Keshamma, 2022).

## 2. METHODOLOGY

### AIM

To find out about burnout among schoolteachers in Bangalore's urban and rural areas.

To find out about stress among schoolteachers in Bangalore's urban and rural areas.

### OBJECTIVE

To study burnout among schoolteachers in Bangalore's urban and rural areas.

To study stress among schoolteachers in Bangalore's urban and rural areas.

### HYPOTHESES

There will be no significant difference in burnout between schoolteachers in Bangalore's urban area and Bangalore's rural area.

There will be no significant difference in burnout between urban male and urban female schoolteachers.

There will be no significant difference in burnout between rural male and rural female schoolteachers.

There will be no significant difference in stress between schoolteachers in Bangalore's urban area and Bangalore's rural area.

There will be no significant difference in stress between urban male and urban female schoolteachers.

There will be no significant difference in stress between rural male and rural female schoolteachers.

### VARIABLES

Independent variable: Male and female schoolteachers

Dependent variable: Burnout and Stress

### SAMPLE

The sample consisted of 120 schoolteachers of which 60 teachers were residing in Bangalore city and 60 teachers were from Bangalore's rural area. Of the 60 teachers, 30 were male teachers and 30 were female teachers. The teachers were working in government and private institutions. The age of the teachers ranged between 30 - 40 years.

### INCLUSION CRITERIA

Teachers from urban and rural areas were considered for the study.

Both male and female teachers were part of the study.

The age of the teachers ranged between 30-40 years.

Teachers teaching in Kannada medium and English Medium schools were considered for the study.

Teachers working in government and private institutions were part of the study.

## EXCLUSION CRITERIA

Teachers below the age of 30 and above 40 years were not considered for the study.

Teachers having major psychological and physical issues were not considered for the study.

## RESEARCH DESIGN

A between-group design with purposive sampling opted for the study.

### 3. TOOLS

#### MASLACH BURNOUT INVENTORY (MBI)

The Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) is the most used tool to self-assess whether you might be at risk of burnout. To determine the risk of burnout, the MBI explores three components: exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal achievement. The inventory consists of 22 items. The items are answered in terms of the frequency with which the respondent experiences these feelings on a 7-point scale, fully anchored scale- ranging from 0, "never" to 6, "every day". The reliability for co-efficient for the emotional exhaustion sub-scale is .90, for depersonalization .79, and for personal accomplishment is .71. The test-retest reliability for the three subscales is emotional exhaustion -.82, depersonalization-.60 and personal accomplishment-.80. The inventory has good validity.

#### TEACHERS' OCCUPATIONAL STRESS QUESTIONNAIRE SHIROM, OLIVER, AND STEIN (2009)

Teachers' Occupational Stress Questionnaire (TOSQ) consists of 20 items. The questionnaire was derived based on Shirom, Oliver, and Stein (2009) description of the main sources of stress in teaching. The items of the TOSQ were shown to possess a high level of internal consistency, as measured by a Cronbach's alpha of 0.90, while the criterion validity of the instrument was also shown to be satisfactory. Each of the 20 items of TOSQ was rated on a six-point scale, ranging from 1 – this activity does not stress me at all to 6 – this activity stresses me very much.

#### PROCEDURE

The sample consisted of 120 teachers of which 60 were from Bangalore urban and 60 were from Bangalore rural. Of the 60 teachers, 30 were male teachers and 30 were female teachers. The teachers were working in government and private institutions. The teachers were approached personally by the researcher and were explained the importance of the research work that was taken for the study. After the consent from the teachers and assuring them that the collected data would be used for research purposes only, the subjects were administered both questionnaires. Any doubts regarding the questionnaire were clarified immediately.

### 4. ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

The results were scored, and an independent t-test was computed to study the burnout and stress of male and female teachers.

**Table 1 shows the mean SD and t for burnout between urban and rural teachers.**

Variables	Group	N	Mean	SD	t
Emotional Exhaustion	Urban	60	27.31	.46	5.02**
	Rural	60	26.53	1.11	
Depersonalization	Urban	60	14.63	.71	5.49**
	Rural	60	13.86	.81	
Personal Achievement	Urban	60	17.65	4.44	3.75**
	Rural	60	15.25	2.18	

\*\* Significant at 0.01 level.

Table 1 shows the mean SD and t for burnout between urban and rural teachers. The mean obtained in emotional exhaustion for urban teachers is 27.31, SD is .46. The mean score for rural teachers is 26.53, SD is 1.11. The obtained t-value is 5.02 which is significant at 0.01 level. The obtained result has been supported by the study conducted by Louw, D., et.al (2010). The result of the study indicated that the teachers in urban areas experienced severe emotional exhaustion. In another study conducted by Maas, J., et.al. (2021). The result of the study showed a strong relationship between teachers' perceived time pressure and emotional exhaustion. Another study conducted by Ozoemena, L.E., et.al. (2021) showed that psychological distress was significantly associated with emotional exhaustion.



In the area of depersonalization, the mean score for urban teachers is 14.63, SD is .71. The mean for rural teachers is 13.86, SD is .81. The obtained t value is 5.49 which is significant at 0.01 level. The result of the present study has been supported by the study conducted by Ojha, S (2016). on burnout of rural and urban teachers in Varanasi. The study concluded that there is a significant difference in depersonalization between urban and rural teachers. Roslan, B.N.A., et.al (2016) carried out a research study on burnout among rural and urban primary teachers. The result of the study indicates that urban teachers experienced a high level of depersonalization compared to rural teachers.

In the area of personal achievement, the mean score for urban teachers is 17.65, SD is 4.44. The mean score for rural teachers is 15.25 and SD is 2.18. The obtained t value is 3.75 which is significant at 0.01 level. The obtained result has been supported by the study conducted by Ozoemena, L.E., et.al. (2021). The result indicated that psychological distress among teachers led to reduced personal achievement. In another study conducted by Ojha, S (2016), the result indicated that there was a significant difference in personal achievement between urban and rural teachers. A study carried out by Alqassim, Y.A., et.al. (2022) on burnout among teachers during COVID-19 reported that the schoolteachers showed lower personal accomplishment.

**Table 2 shows the mean, SD, and t for burnout between urban male and female teachers.**

Variables	Group	N	Mean	SD	t
Emotional Exhaustion	Male	30	25.83	.98	5.38**
	Female	30	27.03	.71	
Depersonalization	Male	30	14.83	.87	5.26**
	female	30	13.73	.73	
Personal Achievement	Male	30	25.56	1.16	5.16**
	Female	30	24.10	1.02	

\*\* Significant at 0.01 level.

Table 2 shows the mean, SD, and t scores for burnout between urban males and female teachers. The mean for male teachers is 25.83, SD is .98. The mean score for female teachers is 27.03 and SD is .71. The obtained t value is 5.38 which is significant at 0.01 level indicating that there is a significant difference in emotional exhaustion between male and female teachers. The obtained result has been supported by the study carried out by Redondo-Flórez, L., (2020). The result of the study showed that the female professors presented significantly higher scores than males in emotional exhaustion. Another study conducted by Kreuzfeld, S and Seibt, R (2022), have reported from their study female teachers' high emotional exhaustion compared to males. A research study carried out by Mukundan and Khanderoo (2010) among 120 English teachers in Malaysia has shown that the females experienced high levels of emotional exhaustion.

In the area of depersonalization, the mean for male teachers is 14.83, SD is .87. The mean score for female teachers is 13.73 and SD is .73 indicating that there is a significant difference in depersonalization between the male and female teachers. The obtained result has been supported by the study conducted by Ogus, Greenglass, and Burke (1990) compared burnout between male and female teachers and found that men experienced higher levels of depersonalization than women. Another study carried out by Purvanova and Muros (2010) revealed that male teachers suffer from depersonalization more than female teachers. According to Martin (2000) and Lackritz (2004), male teachers experience depersonalization more than female teachers in elementary and high school.

In the area of personal achievement, the mean score for male teachers is 25.56, SD is 1.16. The mean score for female teachers is 24.10 and SD is 1.02. The obtained t value is 5.16 which is significant at 0.01 level indicating that there is a significant difference in personal achievement between the male and female teachers. The result of the present study has been supported by the study conducted by Jamaludin, I.I., and You, W.H. (2019). A study on burnout in relation to gender, teaching experience, and educational level among educators was studied. **The result revealed that** female educators with master's degrees and 6 to 10 years of experience are highly affected by reduced personal accomplishment levels. (Antoniou et al 2006) carried out a research study on burnout among schoolteachers in Haryana. The result revealed that female teachers experienced a lack of personal achievement. Mousavy, S and Nimehchisalem, V (2014) have found from their research study that female teachers reported low levels of personal achievement.

**Table 3 shows the mean, SD, and t for burnout between rural male and female teachers.**

Variables	Group	N	Mean	SD	t
Emotional Exhaustion	Male	30	25.93	.69	4.0**
	Female	30	26.86	1.07	
Depersonalization	Male	30	22.10	1.06	4.69**
	female	30	20.26	1.85	
Personal Achievement	Male	30	25.30	1.62	3.06**
	Female	30	24.30	.74	

\*\* Significant at 0.01 level.

Table 3 shows the mean, SD, and t values for emotional exhaustion between rural male and female teachers. The mean for male teachers is 25.93, and SD is .69. The mean for female teachers is 26.86 and SD is 1.07. The t value is 4.0 which is significant at 0.01 level. The obtained result indicates that there is a significant difference in emotional exhaustion between male and female teachers. The result of the present study has been supported by the study carried out by Dagar, N, and Mathur, M (2016). The findings of the study showed that female teachers experienced more emotional exhaustion compared to male teachers. Malla, L., and Puan, R.R. studied burnout among elementary school teachers in Odisha. The result showed that female schoolteachers experienced more stress and emotional exhaustion than male teachers.

In the area of depersonalization, the mean score for male teachers is 22.10, SD is 1.06. The mean score for female teachers is 20.26, SD is 1.85. The obtained t value is 4.69 which indicates that there is a significant difference in depersonalization between the male and female teachers in rural areas. The obtained result has been supported by the study conducted by Candeias, A., et.al (2019). The result of the study revealed that male teachers feel more depersonalized. Another study carried out by Burk and Greenglass (1993) found in their research work that male teachers had a higher score in depersonalization. Schwab and Iwanicki (1982) found that male teachers reported more frequency and intense feelings of depersonalization toward their students compared to female teachers.

In the area of personal achievement, the mean score for male teachers is 25.30, SD is 1.62. The mean score for female teachers is 24.30, SD is .74. The obtained t-value is 3.06 which indicates that there is a significant difference in personal achievement between male and female teachers in rural areas. The obtained result has been supported by the study conducted by Sood, S. (2019). The result of the study revealed that the male teacher's personal achievement was low compared to their counterparts. A contradictory result has been revealed in the study carried out by Lau et al. (2005). The study concluded that female teachers experienced more emotional exhaustion and reduced personal accomplishment. Faiza Shaheen, F., and Mahmood, N. studied Influence of demographic characteristics towards emotional burnout among public school teachers in Punjab. The result showed that the mean scores of male teachers were found high on reduced personal accomplishment than female teachers.

**Table 4 shows the mean, SD, and t for teachers' occupational stress between urban and rural teachers.**

Variable	Group	N	Mean	SD	t
Teachers Occupational Stress	Urban	60	43.75	1.17	5.41**
	Rural	60	42.23	1.82	

\*\* significant at 0.01 level.

Table 4 shows the mean, SD, and t for teachers' occupational stress between urban and rural teachers. The mean score for urban teachers is 43.75 and SD is 1.17. The mean score for rural teachers is 42.23 and SD is 1.82. The obtained t values is significant at 0.01 level which indicates that there is a significant difference in teachers' occupational stress between urban and rural teachers. The obtained result of the present study has been supported by the study carried out by Kaur, M and Kumar, R. (2017). The result of the study revealed that the teacher's stress levels were found to be high. In another study conducted by Arockiasamy, S. and Subramanian, P. (2021) on occupational stress among urban and rural teachers, the result revealed that urban higher secondary school teachers have more occupational stress than rural teachers. A study carried out by Abel, H.M., and Joanne Sewell, J. (1999) reported that urban schoolteachers experienced significantly more stress from poor working conditions and poor staff relations than rural schoolteachers.

**Table 5 shows the mean, SD, and t for teachers' occupational stress between urban male and female teachers.**

Variable	Group	N	Mean	SD	t
Teachers Occupational Stress	Male	30	33.63	1.29	3.45**
	Female	30	34.60	.81	

\*\* significant at 0.01 level.

Table 5 shows the mean, SD, and t value for teachers' occupational stress between urban male and female teachers. The mean for male teachers is 33.63, SD 1.29. The mean for female teachers is 34.60, SD, .81. The obtained t value is 3.45 which is significant at 0.01 level indicating that there is a significant difference in occupational stress experienced by male and female teachers. The result of the present study has been supported by the study carried out by Bhargu, V., Dubey, s., and Singh, J (2021). The result of the study showed female teachers were under above-average levels of stress. Another study was conducted by Rana (2014). The researcher reported that fewer effective teachers were having high occupational stress and female teachers were found under more occupational stress. (Klassen, 2010) has reported that

Female teachers conveyed significantly higher levels of stress from the workload and student misbehavior. Pal (2011), in his study on job satisfaction and occupational stress among secondary school teachers, found male teachers to be more satisfied and less stressed with their jobs as compared to their female counterparts.

**Table 6 shows the mean, SD, and t for teachers' occupational stress between rural male and female teachers.**

Variable	Group	N	Mean	SD	t
Teachers Occupational Stress	Male	30	25.10	.84	4.35**
	Female	30	26.20	1.09	

\*\* significant at 0.01 level.

Table 6 shows the mean, SD, and t value for teachers' occupational stress between rural male and female teachers. The mean for rural male teachers is 25.10, SD is .84. The mean for female teachers is 26.20, SD is 1.09. The obtained t value is 4.35 which is significant at 0.01 level indicating that there is a significant difference in occupational stress experienced between the male and female teachers. The result of the present study has been supported by the study conducted by Singh, B. (2015). The researcher conducted a study on job stress among female teachers at rural primary schools. The result revealed that the female primary teachers of government-run primary schools in rural areas have high job stress. Ghosh, D., et.al. (2020), studied the occupational stress of male and female teachers. The study revealed that the female teachers felt more stress than their male counterparts. Elamparuthi, D. (2020) conducted a study on occupational stress among female teachers working in higher secondary schools. The result showed that female teachers experienced more stress.

## 5. CONCLUSIONS

The results show that the teachers working in urban areas experience more emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and low personal achievement when compared to rural teachers.

The result indicates that female teachers in urban areas have more emotional exhaustion and low personal achievement. The male teachers experience more depersonalization.

The result of the study shows that emotional exhaustion was high in female teachers working in rural areas, and male teachers experienced high depersonalization and low personal achievement.

The result shows that teachers working in urban areas have more stress compared to teachers working in rural areas.

The result indicates that female teachers in urban areas experience high stress compared to their counterparts.

The result shows that female teachers in rural areas experience high stress compared to male teachers.

## LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study was restricted to Bangalore's urban and Bangalore rural areas.

The sample size was very small.

Other demographic variables were not considered for the study.

## CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

None.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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