

Entrenching Islamic Moral Education in Girls' Secondary Schools in Nigeria

Tukur Mohammed Aliyu, PhD

Department of Islamic Studies, Taraba State University, Jalingo.

mohammedtukuraliyu248@gmail.com

Abstract

The study aimed at entrenching Islamic moral education in girls' secondary schools in Nigeria due to the increasing need of improving girl child development. This area of study has not been given adequate research or emphasis. To achieve the set objectives of this research, an analytic cross-sessional method was adopted. The research also benefitted from secondary sources which included published books, journal articles, digital information and seminar papers. These materials proved useful in providing the necessary information on the subject matter. Some of the findings include: Moral education helps one to distinguish between right and wrong; it reflects in one's personality and it helps in building a good personal and professional life. The study concluded that Islamic moral education is germane to the overall character development of girls in schools and colleges. Finally, the study recommended that teachers should adopt appropriate methodology in instructional activities and the interest of the learner must always be considered and the difference between parental value and school value be harmonized.

Keywords: Islamic Morality, Education, Moral Education, School, Nigeria

Introduction

Man has an innate tendency to moral values from the beginning to the end of his life, and his character has always been tested with the criterion of moral virtues or vices. And everyone who can achieve higher scores in this measurement will have a higher and more valuable status for God and in people's memories. Therefore, the messengers of God in human history have guided man to grow by inviting nations to worship the only Creator of the universe and relying on authentic moral values in all aspects of life. The messenger of Islam Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon Him), one of the messengers of Almighty Allah (God), mentioned the completion and perfection of moral virtues as one of the reasons for his arousal. "Moral education" has been one of the most important missions of the prophets and

has a special place in Islamic culture, especially in the Innocent's biography (peace be upon them) (Banar, 2000, p. 540).

Moreover, it is an interdisciplinary topic which, on the one hand, is related to Psychology and, on the other hand, to educational sciences and ethics. Ethical science makes acceptable values available to moral education and informs it about the values that should be taught to students, and education makes the acceptable principles and methods of training available to this field. Moral education has been part of ethical science in Muslim works; therefore, as an independent discipline, the concept is relatively new (Baba Nezhad, et al., 2010).

In discussing moral education, two important areas of "education" and "ethics" are studied as two factors of moral education. The area of moral education is indebted to two areas of "ethics" and "education". In other words, it seeks help from ethics and education. Since in ethics, the greatest emphasis is on self-constructing and in education is on other-constructing, moral education also includes self-constructing and other-constructing. In the contemporary world, as human relations become complex and globalization occurs, moral education has become more evident and has been one of the most essential sciences for humans so one of the most important missions of the prophets has been cultivating and refining humans. The Holy Prophet also considers perfecting benevolent humans as the goal of his mission. God has not probably introduced samples and examples in any science except in ethical science introduced His last messenger and prophet and the best creatures of the universe as samples.

At the beginning of the third millennium, despite the amazing advances in science and technology, morality, identity, and ethics (in general use), such as professional ethics, organizational ethics, personal morality, ethics, morality, and citizenship have found significant importance. There has always been attention to the role of ethics and moral values in various areas of life throughout human history. This attention to morality is because human nature has an undeniable tendency towards divine and human values (Saheb al Zamani, 2010). If we want to know the relationship between ethics and education, it is necessary to pay attention to the definition of education. Providing context for nurturing the innate talents of every creature and the emergence and actuality of potentials can be considered very important. In addition, ethics is a set of spirits, mental traits, and characteristics. Therefore, it can be concluded that ethics is one

of the most important results of education, and it has a two-sided effect.

On the one hand, education should lead to the recognition of moral virtues and vices. In Islam, the ultimate goal of human education is reaching ultimate perfection; therefore, each action or adjective that to any extent helps humans reach perfection or provides the grounds to reach perfection has moral value to that extent (Musavi, Qasempoor & Rezazadeh, 2013). In this way, Islamic doctrines pioneer humans step by step and gradually, and the Islam religion does not neglect any matter, from the most important matter to the minor one, and it has offered a complete program (Saheb al Zamani, 2010). Because ethics and moral education have an essential role in the fate of humans and society, they have long been concerns for human scholars and religious leaders. The majority of the religious teachings of Judaism, Christianity, Islam, and other religions consist of ethics, and most of the activities of the various Muslim scholars include moral education. Khajeh Nasir al-Din Tusi considered the creation and establishment of certain characteristics that bring bliss and perfection and the highest degree of bliss (i.e. reaching proximity to the Lord of the Worlds) as the main purpose of moral education (Kaviani Arani, 2009).

Akhlaq (ethics) is known as the plural of Kholq (mood) and means power and the inner nature of humans which is understandable with insight and inapparent vision. Moreover, "mood" is known as the firm sensual characteristic that human acts according to that attribute promptly; for instance, an individual who has the "courage characteristic," does not hesitate when facing the enemy (Deilami & Azarbajejani, 2006, p. 15). Raqeb Isfahani describes: "khalq (creation) and kholq (mood) are in essence similar but creation is limited to the forms and shapes that can be perceived by eye" (Raqeb Isfahani, 1943, p. 158). Thus, according to philologists, it becomes clear that mood is an internal and consistent quality and characteristic in the human soul that does not have external and obvious aspects and does not become separate from the self easily (Kaviani Arani, 2009). In "Tathir al Araq", Abu Ali Maskuyeh stated that mood is a status for the soul and self of humans that inspires them to work without thought and reflection. According to Motahari in Qara Maleki, et al (2007), ethics is "a series of acquired traits, virtues, and habits accepted as ethics by humans; in other words, it is a template for the human spirit and the human soul is constructed within that framework and according to that design and map." Ethics is how the human spirit is.

The following are some of the Islamic female secondary schools across Nigeria where moral instructions have been entrenched in their curricula and can be seen clearly from the behaviour of the students that are of good products: Iqra Islamic Secondary School Jalingo, Taraba State, Al-Iman Secondary School Jalingo, Taraba State, Ansar-Ud-Deen Girls Secondary School Itire, Lagos, Imaad School Lekki, Agungi, Lekki, Lagos, Abdullahi Islamiyya Secondary School koki, Kano, Al Ansar Girls College Kano, Islamic Learning Centre Kaduna, Usra Academy Kaduna, Al-Azhar Islamic Academy Kaduna, Al Qalam Schools Ibadan, Muhammad Kamalud-Deen College Kwara State, An Nur Islamic Secondary School Kwara State, Institute of Qur'an Memorization and Islamic Civilization Gombe State, JIBWIS Gombe.

Analytic and Conceptual Framework for Moral Education and Ethics

Moral education is a microcosm of ethics. It is believed that both concepts are interwoven. Many definitions have been proposed for moral education. For example, "moral education means how to use and nurture talents and internal forces to develop and establish desirable attributes and behaviors, and attain moral virtues and avoid vices, and eradicate them ... Moral education forms an integral part of ethics" (Deilami & Azarbajejani, 2006, p. 17, quoted in Qomri, 2009, pp. 75-91). In another definition, it is stated that "moral education is teaching moral principles and values and nurturing moral tendencies and values" (Davoodi, 2009, pp. 10-11, quoted in Qomri, 2009, pp. 75-91). Another definition is "moral education is the process of preparation and implementation of procedures to thrive, invigorate and create moral behaviours and virtues, and also to modify and remove immoral attributes, behaviors and practices in oneself or others" (Banari, 2000, p. 180). Principles are the plural of principle and mean the basis of everything. Here, we mean the root and basis of moral education which moral education is based on that. Principles of moral education are "descriptive statements that specify the general orientation of moral education and play a role in determining the principles and methods of moral education" (Davoodi, 2009, p. 77, quoted in Saheb al Zamani, et al. 2010). Principles of moral education mean the talents, possibilities and necessities of humans related to moral training and they also represent the kind of procedures and methods in moral education.

Moral education is defined by basic tenets and methods. Tenet is the plural of tenet and means "the stem, root, and base of everything; therefore, tenets means the roots, bases, rules and regulations" (Amid, 1984, vol. 1, pp. 217-

218). In addition, it means origin and source, and here the tenet of the source is the actions of the teacher and instructor in moral education. In applied sciences, such as educational sciences and management, a tenet means a rule and instruction that is considered as the guideline for action. "Dr. Hushyar defined tenet as the criterion and basis of the work and action of students and teachers ... In addition, tenets mean not only the theoretical principles that are extracted from the existing factors in life but also the criteria for action" (Saheb al Zamani, 2010). Methods of moral education can be defined as detailed instructions, applied techniques, and practical behaviors that make the principles and purposes of education possible and give them objectivity. "Method is a way extended between the basis and purpose and regulated and connected the sequential action with the aim and purpose of the instructor" (Shokuhi, 2007, p. 139). Methods such as guidelines and recommendations indicate how educational measures are implemented according to special circumstances and occasions (Kaviani Arani, 2009).

The other concept that needs clarification is "ethics". According to various human attributes such as bravery, generosity, integrity, cowardice, greed and betrayal, it can be perceived that these traits are so firm in some humans that they do the works related to these traits easily and without any retrospection and thought. In contrast, others have sometimes been attributed to these traits, and possibly force themselves to do the works related to these traits with retrospection. Whenever, a trait becomes stable in a person and penetrates him so that he does the related works of the trait easily and without much thought, it is stated that this trait has become a queen (habit) for him. But, if the trait is momentary and the person forced himself to do the related work of the trait, this trait is called "instant" (Mesbah, 2009, quoted in Kaviani Arani, e2009). Thus, ethics means the consistent and firm traits (i.e. habit) that physical acts are easily done by the requirements of those traits and habits without thought and hesitation, and ethics is referred to the set of these traits (Naraqi, 2007). Therefore, the person who has the consistent generosity trait can be considered a generous person because he has not hesitated to be generous to other people and this generosity has not been difficult for him. It should also be noted that the literal meaning of ethic is not limited to good and praiseworthy traits but includes bad and inadmissible traits, and as some individuals have the good trait of generosity, others have the inadmissible trait of stinginess (Naraqi, 2007).

Ethics is a concept related to personality, mood, and the nature and habits that regulate human behavior in all aspects of social life (work, daily life, politics, science, family, personal relationships within the group, the class) (Aqa bakhshi, 1996, p. 39, quoted in Qarvian, 1998). Ethics means a compromise with the standards, rights and common tasks; however, there is a possibility of conflict between acceptable social standards and the individual learns to judge based on individual conscience in such cases (Poor afkari, 1994, p. 148). Sometimes the word "ethics" is just used for the good and praiseworthy characteristics and behaviors; for example, sacrificial is known as a moral character and robbery is known as an immoral character. All the sensual attributes are the origin of good or bad actions, whether the attribute is stable and consistent or unstable and ephemeral. According to this term, if a stingy person, despite his usual nature, gives things generously to others, he is considered as having a generous character in that case so that his generosity is perceived as a positive and praiseworthy moral action. However, because this trait is not stable in him, according to the literal meaning, generosity is not considered his characteristic (Mesbah, 2007, p. 16, quoted in Kaviani Arani, 2009). At this juncture, how important is ethics? The Holy Prophet (may Allah bless him and his family) said that "God appointed me to complete and accomplish moral virtues." The impact of moral virtues on moral excellence is evident as the holy prophet introduced the purpose of his appointment as the completion of moral virtues. The Islamic saints also obligate their followers to learn ethics to lead them to self-purification and self-constructing, and they prioritize acquiring this science which is the basis of the well-being of the society (Feiz, translated by Saedi, 1993, p. 7).

The importance of ethics and self-purification is not hidden from anyone. Modifying humans and different societies and rescuing them from problems and social corruption, war, bloodshed, etc. can be only possible in the light of promoting correct ethics and inviting people to be adorned with social virtues. In Holy Quran, purification, along with teaching books and wisdom, is mentioned as the aim of sending the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and his family) (Mesbah, 2009, p. 65). In another hadith, Ali ibn Abi Talib (peace be upon him) said that "if we did not have hope for or faith in Paradise and fear and horror from hell and did not expect reward and punishment, it would be appropriate to follow moral virtues because they are guides to achieve success and salvation" (Bahar al anvar, vol. 66, p. 405). This hadith clearly shows that moral virtues not only lead to the

salvation of humans but also that mundane life would not be improved without them. Good behavior is the most important virtue for religious leaders; this good trait has an important role in attracting hearts and closing to God and people. Imam Sadiq (peace be upon him) said that there is no better action than good behavior for the believers on Judgment Day (Saheb al Zamani, et al. 2010).

Ethics in Islam Religion

Various definitions have been proposed for Akhlaq (ethics) which is driven from kholq (mood). The late Naraqı said that "mood" is a sensual estate that causes actions to be easily issued from humans without needing attention and thought" (Naraqı, 2007, p. 46). Ethics is also defined as "a set of principles and values that has regulated human behavior and determined their divine teachings and issued rules for humans to reach the aim of human existence" (Rahimi, 2008). The late Allameh Tabatabaei defined ethics as "a technique that argues about human habits related to plants and animal forces and distinguishes the virtues of habits from their vices so that human can complete his practical wellbeing due to the manifestation and qualification of moral virtues. As a result, human shows actions and behaviors which cause public praise and the praise of human society." Of course, what has been mentioned as the purpose of ethics is from the viewpoint of scholars of Greece. But we believe that the purpose of Islamic ethics is to "achieve the satisfaction of God" not "achieve eulogy and praise of society or not even the mere achievement of human virtue and perfection" (Allameh Tabatabaei, 1993, vol. 1, pp. 376-378).

Whatever the definition of ethics is, the necessity of discussing it continuously and permanently in society is self-evident. The saying of Imam Ali confirms this necessity: "If we did not have hope for Paradise and fear from the hell and did not expect reward and punishment, it would be appropriate to follow moral virtues because they are guides to salvation" (Koleini, 1990). This hadith indicates that morality is a human need and does not belong to a specific society. Similarly, the Holy Prophet (may Allah bless him and his family) said that "if humans knew what benefits are for him in good behavior, he would know he needs a good behavior ..." (Bahar al anvar, vol. 71, p. 396). Moreover, he said that "God has placed moral values as means of communication between Himself and his servants; therefore, it is sufficient for you to have a behavior that links you to God" (Makarem Shirazi, 2006, vol. 1, p. 23). Mohammad Saleh Mazandarani, one of the greatest scholars, explained the necessity of moral

and ethical issues in society: "It is surprising that people have left ethics and acting according to it and suspected that they can find the hereafter salvation in apparent acts, and they do not care to purify the self as much as they try to purify the uncleanness, and this is the misleading disaster" (Usul al-Kafi, vol. 8, p. 85). Here, the responsibility of scholars becomes heavier because they should not only consistently and constantly benefit from moral virtues but also consistently caution the public to pay attention to moral issues. The Holy Prophet (may Allah bless him and his family) said that "Islam is good behavior" (Mizan al hekmat, p. 170). Imam Ali (peace be upon him) said that "good behavior is the basis of all goodness" (Mizan al hekmat, p. 170). In addition, there is an anecdote in this regard: "A man approached the Messenger of God from the front and asked: O'Messenger of God, what is religion? The Holy Prophet answered: It is good behavior. Then, he came from the right side and asked, what is religion? The Holy Prophet answered: It is being good-tempered. Then he came from the left side and again asked, what is religion? The Holy Prophet answered: don't you understand? Religion is that you do not become angry" (Rahimi, 2008). Islam therefore has a unique moral education.

Moral Education in Islam

The dignity of each science depends on the dignity of its topic. Therefore, theology, which its subject is the holy nature of self-existent, its characteristics and actions, is the highest science. After the principles of belief, training, knowledge and ethic with their moral concept are the top of sciences and techniques from the dignity and status perspective because the topic of them is the human spirit and self; that is, it is the "breath of heaven" (Haj Sura, verse 29) which is blown to the earthly body, and its completion and competency to carry the divine honesty and undertaking the position of "Caliph of Allah" (Baqare Sura, verse 20) is possible in the light of ascribing to "God's attributes" (Bahar al anvar, vol. 68, p. 423) and purifying the impurities.

Whenever we perceive the fact that human creation is intended to complete his spiritual growth, and the purpose of the mission of prophets, especially the last prophet (may Allah bless him and his family) is to complete moral virtues and provide the tools for this growth and perfection, the status of education, ethics, and its final destination becomes clear. According to this perspective, moral character constitutes the essential element and the main essence of human existence which is the purpose of laws and programs of human cultivation; therefore, moral education is at the top of religious

teachings and duties with the opinions and laws (Usul al-Kafi, vol. 9, p. 32). And even some researchers called it "major jurisprudence" and others called it "spiritual medicine" and traditions have considered it as the highest status of ethics and education. When the Holy Prophet (may Allah bless him and his family) dispatched "Muadh ibn Jabal" to deliver the message of Islam to Yemen, recommend him to "teach them the God's book and train them in favorable behavior" (Tohf al oghul, p. 25).

Moreover, there are various sayings about this topic: "With good behavior, believers reach the degree of those who fast and those who are wakeful" and "Nothing is heavier in the scale of action than good behavior" and "It is incumbent upon you to have good behavior because the place of those who have good behavior is unquestionably paradise and avoid bad temper because the place of those having a bad temper is inevitably hell" and "the most popular of you in the sight of Allah are those whose behavior is better, more flexible and more attuned, and the most hated of you in the sight of God are those who gossip and estrange among the brothers and attribute crimes to innocents" (Majlesi, Bahar al Anavar). Islamic texts and sources attest that moral and educational programs are the main programs of this human-cultivating religion, and ethics have a high rank in Islamic education. Referring to the status of ethics and self-purification in Islam, Imam Khomeini said that "Islam is not a materialistic school, but it is a materialistic-spiritual school. Islam accepts materials in the cover of spirituality. Islam is for spiritualities, ethics, and self-purification and cultivating human; all monotheistic schools are consolidated to cultivate human ... Islam and all prophets aim to correct humans; if the human is trained, all the issues will be solved" (Sahifeh Noor, vol. 7, p. 16, quoted in Eskandari & Kiani, 2007). This points to an Islamic lifestyle that will benefit girls in secondary schools.

The Doctrine of Girls' Islamic Lifestyle

The most important innovation in the concept of Islamic lifestyle is that it has considered the Islamic teachings and the totality of Islam. "Islamic lifestyle" is known in the majority of human sciences at the international level so it has been considered and studied from various angles. Islamic lifestyle is related to all life of individuals and its dimensions. Islamic lifestyle is different from other lifestyles in one way. In sociology, management, medical sciences and clinical psychology, etc., lifestyle is also discussed, but only a specific behavior is considered in these domains and there is no direct connection with cognition and emotions. But because

the Islamic lifestyle is Islamic, it cannot have any relationship with cognition and emotions. Accordingly, any behavior that is to have an Islamic basis should have at least a minimum of Islamic cognition and emotions as support. In lifestyle from the psychological, sociological and medical sciences perspective only behavior is considered, but they neglect the individual's intentions, cognitions, and emotions. Islamic lifestyle cannot be indifferent towards intentions; for example, if there is no belief in God and the Resurrection in prayer, it is not considered an Islamic behavior (Kaviani, 2009).

To describe the Islamic lifestyle, we can refer to the lifestyle tree. Adler and his followers analogized the lifestyle of every individual, from the formation stage to the results and consequences stages, to a tree (Kaviani, 2009):

The roots of this tree are the roots of lifestyle that describe its formation;

This tree's pedicel is about people's beliefs and general attitudes (including beliefs, emotions, and behavioral preparation). The branches and twigs of the tree are life responsibilities. The real lifestyle is branches and twigs.

Thus, the Islamic lifestyle (the twigs) is considered at the individual, family, and societal levels. Here, we consider the guidelines of social life from the perspective of Imam Jafar Sadiq (peace be upon him). They are dispute resolution, treatment with the thankful poor, submission to God, the attempt for livelihood and serving father and mother.

Dispute Resolution: A man had a dispute with one of his relatives over inheritance and they quarrel with each other. Mofazal, one of the companions of Imam Sadiq (peace be upon him), came by and became aware of the quarrel, and he invited the two men to his own home. By giving four hundred dirhams, he made a compromise between them and put an end to their quarrel. Then, he told them "You should know the money that I paid for the resolution of your dispute was not mine and it was from the property of Imam Sadiq (peace be upon him). Imam has ordered me to make peace between Shiites with his property whenever two Shiites disagreed with each other."

Treatment with the Thankful Poor: One of the companions of Imam Sadiq (peace be upon him) says: when we were eating grapes with the

Imam in Mina, a poor came by and asked Imam for help. Imam gave him a cluster of grapes, but he refused and said I want money. Imam said God would help you. The poor went and came back again and asked for the cluster of grapes, but Imam said God would help him and gave him nothing. Another poor came by and Imam gave him three acini of grapes. The poor took them and said "Thank God, the Lord of the universe, who fed me." Imam filled his both hands with grapes and gave him. The poor said "Thank God who is the Lord of the universe." Imam asked his bondservant "How much money do you have?" He had 20 dirhams and gave them to the poor. The poor said "Thank God; O Allah, these blessings are from you. You are alone and have no partner." Imam told him to stay and gave him a shirt and said to wear it. The poor said, "Thank God who gave me a shirt and dressed me." Then he told Imam "God will reward you." He did not praise Imam but only thanked and praised God; therefore, Imam granted him other things (Sheikhi, 2004).

Submission to God: One of the companions of Imam Sadiq (peace be upon him) said "I went to his house to visit his sick child. I visited Imam in front of the house and he was upset and depressed. I asked about the health of the child." Imam answered, "I swear God, he will die." Then, he went to the house and came back after a while and he was not upset anymore. I became happy and thought the child was better, and I asked about the child. Imam said the child died. I said with wonder when the child was alive, you were upset but now he is dead you are not sad. Imam said, "We are the family that expresses our concern before the tragedy but when the divine happens, we are pleased with God's satisfaction and submit to him" (Sheikhi, 2004).

The Attempt for Livelihood: Whenever Imam Jafar Sadiq (peace be upon him) took a shovel in a garden or farm and engaged in farming, his friend said "O son of the Messenger of Allah why do you bother yourself in this position? Let us work and you rest." Imam answered "Leave me alone. I like it when God watches me laboring and working with my hands, and put my body under pressure and endure hardship for lawful living."

Serving Father and Mother: A person came to Imam Jafar Sadiq (peace be upon him) and said "O son of the Messenger of Allah, my father is old and weak, so that I should serve him like a little child." Imam answered: "As far as you have the ability, you should do so. You should take a mouthful for him and put it in his mouth with extreme kindness and

gentleness. Doing this will make your entrance to Paradise easy on the Day of Judgment" (Sheikhi, 2004). Consistent with this idea, Strawbridge et al. (1998) found that more involvement in religious activities exacerbated the negative impact of family dysfunction (e.g., marital or child problems) on depressive symptoms of elderly adults, whereas religiousness buffered the negative effects of more "uncontrollable" types of problems (e.g., chronic health problems, poverty). While similar research has yet to be conducted with families of clinic-referred youth, certain religious beliefs and practices could exacerbate as well as buffer the maladjustment of clinically distressed youth.

Conclusion

Islamic moral education among secondary school girls in Nigeria, being the subject of the study has shown that moral education helps one to distinguish between right and wrong; it gets reflected in one's personality; It helps in building a good personal and professional life; it helps to eliminate problems like violence, dishonesty, jealousy, etc. from one's life; it can wipe out bad influences in the society like violence, crimes, agitations, child abuse, disregarding women, etc. It also helps in building a positive approach to things, self-confidence, and motivation; it helps in finding out the true purpose of life. These values help one to be dedicated, unselfish, loving, and caring for others.

Recommendations

The recommendations are based on the following challenges that arise from the art of impacting Islamic moral education among secondary school girls in Nigeria: method of teaching and evaluation teaching morality and moralizing the students are two different things; students do not show interest in Islamic moral education lessons; some teachers lack adequate qualification in imparting moral education; teachers also face the challenge of parental expectation of their children; the distance between school values and family values and the problem of communications. In light of these challenges, the following recommendations were: Teachers and instructors of Islamic educational values should adopt proper methodology when engaging students. Such methods must take into consideration the cognitive, affective, and psycho-motor skills of individual learners for effective and efficient results. Also, the academic and non-academic staff should stimulate the interest of students especially females in Islamic moral education and values. The government and parents should ensure that qualified Islamic teachers and instructors are recruited for all schools

and colleges due to the significance of the moral upbringing of the youths. The difference between parental/home values and school values should be reduced by the proper functioning of the Parents-Teachers Association (PTA), Ministry of Education Monetary Unit, Nigeria Union of Teachers and other supporting agencies. Finally, the nature of communication between Islamic teachers/instructors and parents on one hand and that of Islamic teachers/instructors and students should be effective, efficient, understandable, free of misconceptions, and very loyal and friendly.

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