The Actual Contribution of Mass Media Use To Integrative Tendency in Nigeria

by Osabuohien P. Amienyi

Abstract

This article presents an empirical study of the contribution of mass media to various integrative tendency among three ethnic groups in Nigeria. The study examined five dimensions of integrative tendency, namely (i) spatial integrative behaviour (working, visiting another state); (ii) associational integrative behaviour (working under another tribe, allowing son to marry from another tribe); (iii) government integrative behaviour (fostering interstate travel); (iv) use of a common language; and (v) inter-ethnic trust.

The findings suggest that the contribution of the mass media to integrative tendency varies according to media type and dimension of integration. They also indicate Nigeria's need to streamline media policy on integration. But the author concludes that other agents of socialization (schools, family, peers) may also offer an integrated approach to achieving national cohesion in Nigeria.

Prof. Osabuohien P. Amienyi teaches in the Department of Radio-TV, Arkansas State University, Arkansas, U. S. A. This paper was prepared for the 1991 Southwest Symposium organized by the Southwest Education Council for Journalism and Mass Communication, Corpus Cristi, Texas, October 6–7, 1991.

La Véritable Contribution de l'Usage des Masses Médias au Profit de l'Intégration au Nigéria

Résumé

Cet article présente une étude empirique de la contribution des masses médias aux tendences d'intégration entre trois groupes ethniques au Nigéria. L'étude passe en revue cinq dimensions de ces tendence d'intégration, à savoir: (i) le comportement d'intégration vis -à-vis de l'espace (travailler dans un Etat différent du sien, voyager dans un autre Etat); (ii) comportement social (travailler sous une autre tribu; permettre à son fils de se marier dans une autre tribu); (iii) contribution gouvernementale (promouvoir des visites inter-états); (iv) utilisation d'une langue commune et (v) la confiance inter-éthnique.

Les résultats suggèrent que la contribution des masses médias à ces tendences d'intégration varie suivant le type de médias et la dimension d'intégration. Ils font également état du besoin du Nigéria de formuler une politique médiatique d'intégration. Cependant l'auteur tire la conclusion que d'autres agents sociaux tels que les écoles et la famille, pourraient aussi offrir une approche intégrée susceptible de mener à la cohésion national au Nigéria.

Introduction

Integrative tendency (also called integrative behaviour) is perhaps the most important aspect of national integration (Paden, 1980). It is defined as the readiness of individuals or groups to work in an organized fashion for common purposes and to behave in a manner conducive to the achievement of those purposes (Abernethy, 1969). It is essentially the process whereby diverse groups or individuals interlock their communication habits, share meaning, learn to predict each other's behaviour and coordinate each other's action. Integrative tendency has been receiving the attention of the federal government of Nigeria since the country became independent. Governmental efforts in this regard concentrated on the insurance of "national cohesion in the process of nation building" (*Nigerian Television Authority Administrative Manual*, 1972, p.ii). This goal has been paramount because, as the late Alhaji Abubakar Tafawa-Balewa, the prime minister of Nigeria's first republic explained, "it is self-evident that planning and prosperity can thrive only in conditions of peace and orderliness" (Tafawa-Balewa, 1962, p.131).

The mass media have been participants in the efforts to evolve integrative tendency in Nigeria for more than three decades. Media activities have been part of the total governmental strategy aimed at creating a "sense of territorial nationality which overshadows or subordinates parochial loyalties" (Wiener, 1969, p.53). This goal has merged with the development priority of improving the standard of living of citizens. For example, it is the goal of integrative tendency that has made it imperative for media services to focus on the development of common values, norms, structures and linkages among the country's different ethnic and religious groups.

In general, the integrative activities of the media have been greatly motivated by the faith the government and media managers have in the abilities of the media. Since media establishments were installed in the country, they have been perceived by the governments as effective integrative tools. The government's belief has been that the media can "influence societal values profoundly and in so doing, improve and strengthen the social, economical, political and technological fabric" of the country (*Nigerian Television Authority Administrative Manual*, 1972, p.i). Similarly, media managers believe that the Nigerian media can aid adult viewers find a sense of identification with their nation that may rise above sectional, linguistic and tribal allegiances (Bass, 1969).

Although it is generally agreed by social scientists that the mass media have a limited influence on changing political attitudes, recent

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studies indicate that the mass media can in fact produce "nationalist benefits" (Kang, 1988). As Kuo (1977) has noted, "communication is important to the formation of a people, a community and a nationality" (p. 319). The communicative ability of a country is a determinant of the rate of national assimilation or differentiation. Head (1985) has remarked that broadcasting draws a nation together in the time of crisis, helps mutually hostile and disparate entities find a common ground and serves the cause of national integration by evoking "national pride and the sense of communal identity" (p. 301). He suggests that this reason explains why many Third World leaders see the establishment of national media service as a right of passage into true nationhood. Stokke (1971) has observed that the ability of the mass media to transcend divisions in a society at many structural level makes them valuable to the process of nation-building. He noted that the media can create national identifications and loyalties by identifying and focusing on national symbols, interests, values and aspirations (instead of particularistic interests, values and aspirations).

While these theoretical suppositions that the media can bind a country "together culturally, intellectually and economically" (Bass, 1969, p.164) are no longer debatable, it is still unclear whether the contribution made by the mass media to the process of national integration varies according to the mass medium or specific mass media program being used or the dimension of national integration being influenced. Such information is necessary to strengthen our understanding of how much influence the mass media, individually or collectively, really exact on the integration process.

The present study sought to empirically determine the contribution of different mass media organs to various levels of integrative tendency in Nigeria. The study is significant because it provides information that the Nigerian government can use to formulate a more precise media policy on the question of integrative tendency. Such media policy precision is required since the media are not the only socializing agents that influence the various levels of national integration. Other socializing agents such as schools, peers, family and urbanization also play a role in the accomplishment of this task (Dawson and Prewitt, 1969; Fischer, 1980; Laughlin, 1980).

Previous Research

A number of studies have been devoted to the examination of the integrative influence of mass media in Africa. Some of these studies have focused on national integration as a broadly defined concept. Others have focused on specific dimensions of national integration. Of

the broad studies, perhaps the most pertinent are Ogunade (1982), Amienyi (1989a) and Amienyi (1990a). These studies have described, sometimes with empirical data, the extent to which the mass media have been contributing to the creation of an institutional base for national integration.

For example, Ogunade (1982) critically examined the effect of ideology on the media's role in national integration and concluded that the absence of a political ideology has limited the Nigerian media's ability to become "vigorous advocates of national integration" (p. 31). Similarly, Amienyi (1989a) critically evaluated the specifics of media performance in Nigeria and reported that certain socio-cultural factors were serving as obstacles to broadcasting for national integration. According to him, these factors included ethnic diversity, language and religion pluralism, misguided policies and misconception of the process of integration.

Also Amienyi (1990a) investigated the perception of adults relative to the integrative contribution of mass media in Nigeria. He asked the adults to indicate how helpful they thought radio, television, newspapers and magazines were to the creation and sustenance of national integration (defined very broadly) in Nigeria. He found a high percentage of respondents (80%) perceiving radio and television as being very helpful to national integration. Over 70 percent of the adults also perceived newspapers as being very helpful to the same task.

The studies that have examined the topic from a more focused angle are Fischer (1980) and Amienyi (1990b). These studies have provided empirical verifications of the actual contribution made by mass media to specific levels of national integration. For example, Fischer (1980) interviewed Ghanaian secondary school students about their orientation toward national integration. He found a positive relationship between radio and the verbal identification level of national integration. However when he correlated the use of radio with student orientation to the stated dimension of national integration, he did not find statistically significant results.

Fischer's results have been replicated by Amienyi (1990b), who conducted a survey of Nigerian adults' degree of national identification (verbal, affective, and symbolic). Although Amienyi found a high percentage of adults identifying with Nigeria (89% verbal, 73% symbolic and 66% affective), his correlation of the adults' use of various mass media (radio, television, daily newspapers, weekly newspapers and magazines) with their degree of identification produced only a low to moderate correlation (beta weights ranged from .13 to .40).

The present study extends the foregoing works by focusing on another dimension of national integration, integrative tendency. The

specific research questions were (1) Which mass media organ is the most used in Nigeria? (2) What is the current level of integrative tendency among diverse Nigerians? (3) What is the magnitude of the relationship between various organs of mass media and different dimensions of integrative tendency; and (4) Which mass media organ makes the most contribution to each dimension of integrative tendency?

Three basic hypotheses were tested: (1) There will be a low positive relationship between various organs of mass media and different dimensions of integrative tendency, (2) Listening to radio will contribute the greatest amount of variance to each stated dimension of integrative tendency, and (3) The selected measures of mass media exposure, either singularly or collectively, will not account for or explain a significant proportion of the variances associated with the scores achieved on the five scales measuring integrative tendency. This is expected because previous research has shown that the mass media have a limited influence in changing beliefs and integrative tendency appears to emanate from belief.

Method

Data for the study were collected in Plateau State, Nigeria, in March, 1989. Located in the middle-belt zone of the country, Plateau State has a total population of about 3.3 million, which is distributed among over 50 ethnic groups. The economy of the state revolves around mining (tin, columbite and aquamarine), manufacturing, agriculture and tourism.

The survey population was defined as members of three ethnic groups in the state: the Berom, the Jarawa/Afizere and the Mada. The groups were chosen through a stratified, multi-stage sampling procedure. Face to face interviews were held with a sample of 367 adult respondents (at least 20 years and older).The demographic distribution of the sample was as follows: 226 (62%) were between the ages of 20 and 35; 133 (36%) were Berom, 120 (33%) Jarawa/Afizere and 114 (31%) Mada. 210 (57%) were males and 208 (about 56%) were married. 117 (32%) had over 12 years of formal education, 133 (36%) had between 7 and 11 years of education, 66 (18%) had between 1 and 6 years of education, and 50 (14%) had no formal education. 213 (58%) lived in the rural areas, 259 (71%) were christians, 90 (25%) were moslems and 18 (4%) were believers in African traditional religions.

The respondents were interviewed using a three-part survey schedule. The first part of the schedule sought information about frequency of the respondents' use of radio, television, daily newspapers, weekly newspapers and magazines. The respondents were also asked

about their use of specific radio and television programs. The programs were delineated as follows: music (or musical in the case of TV), news/ current affairs, entertainment drama, instructional and developmental. Examples of each type of program were provided in the questionnaire to aid the respondents in answering the questions.

The second part of the schedule dealt with respondents' views, attitudes and opinions toward the dependent variable, integrative tendency. Respondents were asked to indicate on a five-point scale their level of agreement or disagreement with 65 questions measuring integrative tendency. The responses were factor analyzed and the results of the analyses were used to create five scales measuring different dimensions of the dependent variable. The scales were named "spatial integrative behaviour," "associational integrative behaviour," "government integrative behaviour," "use of a common language" and "inter-ethnic trust" (Amienyi, 1989b). The frequency of the scores obtained on each scale was used to divide the scores into "high," "medium" or "low."

The last part of the schedule presented seven questions which were used to obtain basic demographic information about the respondents.

Data analysis was performed using the stepwise multiple regression procedure. The independent or predictor variables were 15 measures of mass media use. Each item was considered to be a possible predictor of the scores associated with five scales measuring integrative tendency. Only the variables that made significant contribution to the prediction (i. e. had F's with alpha levels of .05 or higher) were considered important and subsequently reported in the results.

Results

Table 1 shows the means of the respondents' mass media exposure. The table shows that radio is the medium mostly used by the respondents. Radio (X = 4.01) is followed by television (X = 3.68), daily newspapers (X = 2.74), weekly newspapers (X = 2.37) and magazines (X = 2.52), respectively.

Table 2 shows the distribution of the respondents' scores on the scales measuring the five stated dimensions of integrative tendency. The table shows variation in the percentage of respondents having a high score on the five scales. Of the 367 respondents surveyed, 256 (about 70%) obtained high scores on the spatial integrative behaviour scale, 202 (55%) obtained high scores on the associational integrative behaviour scale, 159 (43%) scored high on the government integrative behaviour scale, 153 (about 42%) obtained high scores on the use of a

Table 1: Means of Responses to Items Measuring Mass Media
        Exposure

Item	Mean	SD
Listen to radio	4.01	1.37
Listen to the following Radio Programs		
Music	3.91	1.44
News & Current Affairs	3.68	1.51
Drama (Entertainment)	3.46	1.49
Instructional (Educational)	3.38	1.55
Developmental	3.32	1.56
Watch Television	3.68	1.51
Watch the following Television Programs		
Musical	3.42	1.58
News & Current Affairs	3.37	1.58
Drama (Entertainment)	3.27	1.51
Instructional (Educational)	3.14	1.55
Developmental	3.14	1.57
Read the following Print Media		
Daily Newspapers	2.74	1.63
Weekly Newspapers	2.37	1.45
Magazines	2.52	1.51

Table 2: Frequency and Percentage of Respondents' Scores on Five
         Scales Measuring Integrative Tendency

Integrative Tendency	Frequency/Percentage		
	High	Medium	Low
Scales	(15-36)	(37-60)	(61-75)
Spatial Integrative Behavior	256 (69.9%)	109 (29.8%)	1 (3%)
Associational Integrative behaviour	202 (55.3)	156 (42.7)	7 (1.9)
Government Integrative Behavior	159(43.4)	198 (54.1)	9 (2.5)
Use of a Common Language	153 (41.9)	169 (46.3)	43 (11.8)
Inter-Ethnic Trust	140 (38.3)	202 (55.2)	24 (6.6)

common language scale and 140 (38%) obtained high scores on the inter-ethnic trust scale.

Table 3 on page 40 shows the significant (p ≤ .05) Pearson's correlations between the scales measuring the five dimensions of integrative tendency and the fifteen indicators of mass media exposure. The table shows that all of the 75 independent correlations produced statistically significant coefficients at the .05 alpha level. The directions of the significant linear correlations are positive and the magnitude of the correlations (or beta weights) ranges from .09 to .36.

Table 4 on page 41 shows the results of the stepwise multiple regression between the measures of mass media use and the five dimensions of integrative tendency (i.e. spatial integrative behaviour, associational integrative behaviour, government integrative behaviour, use of a common language and inter-ethinc trust).

Spatial Integrative Behavior (SIB): Five predictors are found for this dimension of integrative tendency. The best single predictor is reading daily magazines, with an R value of .28 and R2 value of 8%. The next best predictor is listening to radio development programs (R = .33; R^2 = 11%). Other predictors include listening to radio musical programs, watching television news and current affairs programs and watching television musical programs. These add 1%, 1% and 2%, respectively, thus bringing the total variance accounted for to 15%.

Associational Integrative Behavior (AIB): Three predictors are found for this dimension of integrative tendency. The best single predictor is watching television news and current affairs programs (R = .37; R^2 = 14%). The second best predictor is reading daily newspapers (R = .42; R^2 = 18%) and the third best predictor is watching television musical programs (R = .44; R^2 = 19%).

Government Integrative Behavior (GIB): The best single predictor for this dimension of integrative tendency is reading daily newspapers (R = .21; R^2 = 5%). The second best predictor is listening to radio drama programs which adds 2% to the variance explained by reading daily newspapers. This brings the total multiple correlation coefficient for this variable to .26 and the total variance explained to 7%.

Use of a Common Language (UCL): For this dimension of integrative tendency, the best predictor is watching television in general (R = .31; R^2 = 10%). The second best predictor is reading weekly newspapers. Reading weekly newspapers adds 1% to the variance explained by

Table 3: Pearson's Correlations of Mass Media Use and Integrative Tendency

	Indicators of Mass Media Exposure						
	Listening to Radio	Watching Television	Reading D/Newspapers	Reading W/Newspapers	Reading Magazines	Listening to Radio music	Listening to Radio News/CA
SIB	.16	.19	.29	.25	.27	.12	.23
AIB	.18	.26	.35	.32	.33	.14	.30
GIB	.11	.11	.21	.18	.20	.17	.21
UCL	.17	.30	.20	.20	.15	.15	.19
IE	.09	.07	.13	.15	.15	.13	.18

	Indicators of Mass Media Exposure							
	Listening to Radio Drama	Listening to Radio Instr.	Listening to Radio Deve.	Watching TV Musical	Watching TV News/Curr. Affairs	Watching TV Drama	Watching TV Instructional	Watching TV Developmental
SIB	.25	.20	.23	.14	.26	.21	.21	.21
AIB	.32	.27	.28	.23	.36	.36	.30	.32
GIB	.22	.16	.15	.13	.19	.10	.14	.13
UCL	.16	.16	.16	.26	.26	.24	.24	.26
IE	.17	.16	.13	.10	.13	.10	.15	.14

Note: All beta weights are in the positive direction.

watching television. This brings the total multiple correlation coefficient for this variable to .32 and the total variance explained to 11%.

Inter-ethnic Trust (IE): Reading magazines is found to be the best single predictor for this dimension of the dependent variable ($R = .16$; $R^2 = 2\%$). This is followed by listening to radio drama programs, which adds 1% to the variance explained by reading magazines. The total multiple correlation coefficient obtained for this variable is .20. The total variance collectively explained by the two predictor variables is 4%.

Table 4: Stepwise Multiple Regression Between Integrative Tendency and Indicators of Mass Media Use

Integrative Tendency	Predictor Variables	d*	R	R^2	I**	F	P
Dimension							
SIB	R Magazines	+	.28	.08	.08	30.46	.∞
	L Radio Dev	+	.33	.11	.03	21.67	.∞
	L Radio Music	+	.35	.12	.01	16.29	.∞
	W TV N/CA	+	.37	.13	.01	13.43	.∞
	W TV Musical	+	.39	.15	.02	12.19	.∞
AIB	W TV N/CA	+	.37	.14	.14	54.93	.∞
	R D/N-Papers	+	.42	.18	.04	37.41	.∞
	W TV Musical	+	.44	.19	.01	27.29	.∞
GIB	R D/N-Papers	+	.22	.05	.05	16.88	.∞
	L Radio Drama	+	.26	.07	.02	12.55	.∞
UCL	Watch TV	+	.31	.10	.10	36.67	.∞
	Wkly/N-Papers	+	.32	.11	.01	20.44	.∞
IE	R Magazines	+	.17	.03	.03	10.33	.∞
	L Radio Drama	+	.20	.04	.01	7.18	.∞

Note: * d = direction of relationship (See Table 3).
  ** I = incremental percent of variance accounted for by the addition of this variable.

Hypothesis Testing

As indicated previously, three general hypotheses were tested in this study. The first hypothesis states that there will be a low positive relationship between the indicators of mass media exposure and the dimensions of integrative tendency. The second states that listening to radio will contribute the greatest amount of variance to each stated dimension of integrative tendency. The third states that the selected measures of mass media exposure, either singularly or collectively, will not account for or explain a significant proportion of the variances associated with the scores achieved on the five scales measuring integrative tendency.

The findings provide support for the first hypothesis. The data in Table 3 show significant positive Pearson's correlations between all (but three) of the different measures of mass media use and the different levels of integrative tendency. This suggests that using various organs of the media several times a day may be related to the achievement of high scores on integrative tendency scales. This agrees with the opinion of previous researchers that the media can positively affect the process of national integration in developing countries.

The second hypothesis is not supported by the findings. Contrary to expectation, reading magazines and watching television predict more of the variance of the scores associated with the different levels of integrative tendency than listening to radio. This suggests that the print media and television may influence integrative tendency more than radio.

The third hypothesis is partially supported by the findings. The findings presented in Table 4 show that the proportion of the variance explained by the group of mass media use indicators exceeded the proposed 15% on the scores associated with two of the five levels of integrative tendency.

Discussion

The respondents' high scores on the spatial integrative behaviour and associational integrative behaviour scales seem to be consistent with the existing patterns of social interaction among Nigeria's diverse ethnic groups which have maintained contact among themselves (albeit limited in some cases) even before the colonial era. These contacts, as Olaniyan (1985) has pointed out, were maintained in the forms of cross-frontier trade, scholar exchange programmes, treaties signed between states and interstate wars. Through these contacts, diverse ethnic entities cultivated and maintained relationships that cut across cultural, religious and political lines.

The inter-ethnic cultural, religious and political alliances, cultivated in the pre-colonial days, were fostered by the amalgamation of Nigeria's diverse ethnic groups into a single — if artificial — geopolitical entity in 1914. This action centralized the government, and the administration of the country's vital institutions — for example the railways, customs and excise, communications and the judicial system (Ajayi, 1962). This meant that, regardless of their ethnic, religious or linguistic diversity, Nigerians could reside in and secure employment anywhere in the country, inter-marry and associate freely at every possible level.

Since the amalgamation, the primordial sentiments of kinship, ethnicity and religion have been steadily on the decline in favour of a more nationalist behaviour. Today, regardless of their ethnic, religious and linguistic differences, Nigerians are travelling freely across state boundaries, maintaining residence in communities other than their community of origin, working with and under people of other ethnic groups, holding membership in trans-ethnic associations and inter-marrying. For this reason, it is both logical and realistic that the study's respondents are found to exhibit a high degree of spatial and associational integrative behaviours.

The respondents' medium scores on the GIB, UCL and IE scales suggest that there may still exist some political, linguistic and confidence obstacles hindering the full realization of every aspect of integrative behaviour among Nigerians. One of these obstacles may be lack of adequate facilities for the development of harmonious relationships among the country's peoples. Although governmental mandate has led to constitutional provisions for national integration (such as those described in Section 15 of the 1979 Nigerian Constitution), these provisions have been effectively negated by the emphasis on statism (state citizenship).

The emphasis on statism ascribed to state citizens the right to perceive non-citizens as a threat to the state's interest, economy and resources (Amienyi, 1989a). At the time the data for this study were collected (in 1989), the statism measure was deepening ethnicity and fostering discrimination on the basis of state of origin. States were discriminating against non-citizens in employment and in admission to institutions of higher learning. Some states were even contemplating issuing identity cards to their indigenes (Falola and Ihonvbere, 1985), while others were carrying out their threat of dismissing non-indigenes from their civil service. In the light of these occurrences, the opinion of the survey respondents that governmental integrative behaviour is still formative (as is evident from their medium scores on the GIB scale) appears to be justified.

Another obstacle may be linguistic pluralism. There is no doubt that linguistic pluralism continues to present a clear and serious

challenge to integrative behaviour in Nigeria. As Azikiwe (1965) noted, it has been difficult for people who speak diverse languages to cultivate the national spirit of oneness. The difficulty emanates from the fact that language is one of the factors that govern the character of inter-group relations. This is elucidated by Smock and Smock (1975), who found that Ghanaians who knew another Ghanaian language were more likely to consider members of that group as similar to themselves.

Like Ghana, Nigeria uses the English language as her lingua franca. This has undoubtedly made it possible for members of different ethnic groups to interact socially, culturally and politically. However, the relationships developed between groups on the basis of this alien language have often lacked closeness and emotional satisfaction. The use of English has not led to the emergence of stronger inter-group relationships because the language is popular among only a small fraction of the Nigerian population. *The Economist* (1986) notes that only a tiny fraction of Nigerian elite, mostly foreign-educated lawyers, civil servants, academics and business people, use English for everyday purposes in their homes. There is the need, therefore, to make the use of English more pervasive in Nigeria.

A third obstacle may be the continuing rivalry and distrust among the various ethnic groups in Nigeria. While all ethnic groups in the country have shared common historical experiences since the 1800s, there have continued to be deep seated rivalry and suspicion among them. This has produced a continuing power tussle between ethnic groups which has made it difficult for them to reach full integration.

Generally, the findings related to the GIB, UCL and IE levels of integrative behaviour suggest that there may be hope for the achievement of full national integration in Nigeria. This hope is revealed when it is considered that the respondents' scores on the three stated scales were distributed in the middle ranges of the scales. The distribution of scores in the middle ranges indicates that the respondents may have acquired some of the necessary integrative behaviours. It could be speculated then that with the passage of time a true Nigerian nation may emerge, where each group would trust each other, learn to speak the same language and be committed to running a government fully devoted to the ideals of maintaining unselfish integration and cohesion.

Conclusion

This study attempted to assess the contribution of mass media (i. e. radio, television, daily newspapers, weekly newspapers and magazines)

to indications of integrative behaviour in Nigeria. While the results are not generalizable beyond the boundaries of the three ethnic groups surveyed, they show that the effect of mass media on integrative tendency is low and differentiated by media organ and type of integrative tendency. Therefore, it may be necessary for the Nigerian government to streamline media policy on integrative tendency.

While some attention must still be given to the media component of the country's integration strategy, the results of this study suggest that an overemphasis on mass media as the principal integration tool may yield minimal results. Therefore, it may be necessary to continue an integrated approach to dealing with the problem — this approach should put emphasis on such other agents of socialization as schools, peers and family and display of leadership by government officials.

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