Survey on Women's Health and understanding the Effect of Pharmaceutical Industry Marketing

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Abstract- **The pharmaceutical sector significantly impacts modern healthcare by developing and producing medications. However, its marketing efforts, including sample provision, continuing medical education, and direct-to-consumer advertising, also significantly influence public health, medical decisions, and healthcare environments. Women's health is particularly important in this dynamic industry, which offers a range of products and services to meet their healthcare needs. This relationship includes awareness, information availability, treatments, and societal views. Pharmaceutical marketing strategies, such as online campaigns, physician promotion, and direct-to-consumer advertising, influence women's perceptions of health issues and treatments. These tactics can lead to increased demand for certain drugs and influence treatment choices. However, these strategies can also lead to overdiagnosis and overtreatment of certain disorders. Additionally, pharmaceutical marketing can reinforce gendered views of attractiveness, fertility, and aging, causing unrealistic expectations about women's bodies and health results. This can exacerbate mental health and body image issues, potentially leading to unnecessary medical procedures or body dissatisfaction. The study highlights the complex relationship between pharmaceutical industry marketing and women's health outcomes. Marketing campaigns aim to educate consumers about treatment options but can also influence attitudes and treatment choices. The persistent beauty standards and gender stereotypes in advertising can harm women's wellbeing. Ethical questions arise about balancing product promotion and consumer education, and regulatory actions are needed to prioritize patient welfare.**

Keywords: **Significant Impact, Pharmaceutical Marketing, Women, Health, Treatment choice, physician, Birth control pills.**

1.1Introduction:

The pharmaceutical sector plays a major role in the delivery of modern health care, including the development and production of medications. But the industry's massive marketing efforts directed at physicians through sample provision, continuing medical education, and other means as well as direct-to-consumer advertising also have a significant impact on the practice of medicine. Marketing from the pharmaceutical sector has a significant impact on public health, medical decisions, and healthcare environments. The relationship between pharmaceutical marketing and healthcare becomes more important when it comes to women's health. This dynamic industry includes a broad range of goods and services designed to meet the particular healthcare requirements of women at various phases of their lives. Pharmaceutical marketing for women's health focuses on a number of topics, including hormonal therapy, contraception, gynaecological problems, menopausal symptoms, and reproductive health. There are several ways to examine how pharmaceutical marketing affects women's health, including awareness, information availability, available treatments, and societal views. The pharmaceutical sector plays a major role in the delivery of modern health care, including the development and production of medications. But the industry's massive marketing efforts directed at physicians through sample provision, continuing medical education, and other means as well as direct-to-consumer advertising, also have a significant impact on the practice of medicine. [1]

In order to create and control markets for their medications and gadgets, pharmaceutical companies are deeply ingrained in every facet of modern medicine and are also driving the social process of medicalization. Companies continue to invest significant resources in direct attempts to influence physicians' attitudes, dispositions, and prescribing behaviour in addition to funding the majority of clinical research, organizing it to produce an evidence base that supports their innovations, and influencing the regulation of pharmaceutical drugs and devices. Global healthcare environments are significantly shaped by the pharmaceutical business, whose marketing tactics have an impact on a number of public health issues. One important area of study in this rapidly evolving field is women's health, where pharmaceutical marketing methods have a major influence on healthcare outcomes as well as public attitudes. Comprehending the complexities of marketing by the pharmaceutical business and its impact on women's health is crucial to grasping the wider healthcare environment. [2]

Women's emotional suffering is medicalized through misguided symptomatic treatment approaches that neglect the underlying reasons. According to reports, women are therefore more likely than males to be prescribed anti-anxiety medications, sleeping pills, and medicine for mental health issues. Historically, women's health has usually been seen almost exclusively in terms of reproductive health. [3] In order to change the current gender system in Spanish institutions, gender sensitivity is still crucial. This has an effect on health both directly and indirectly. [4]
This project is a component of the research on gender bias in health, which shares the empirical presumption that there are errors, a lack of rigor, and transparency in medical practice with the paradigm of evidence-based medicine. In terms of incorporating a gender perspective in the study design and the analysis that followed, it dealt with the distinction between the ideas of sex and gender as well as between the concepts of sex-related disparities and gender inequalities. The pharmaceutical industry has a large emphasis on women's health, with drugs and therapies addressing issues including osteoporosis, menopause, reproductive health, and other chronic disorders that are more common among women. Pharmaceutical companies frequently use collaborations with women's health-focused healthcare practitioners, instructional materials, and customized advertising campaigns to target women. [5] It is projected that the global market for women's health drugs will grow significantly between 2023 and 2030. The market is anticipated to expand beyond the estimated horizon in 2022 due to the constant growth rate and increasing adoption of tactics by major players. [6]

1.2 Procedure:

The impact of pharmaceutical industry marketing methods on diverse facets of healthcare, specifically pertaining to women's health, has garnered significant attention and apprehension. In the setting of Maharashtra, India, this study aims to investigate and comprehend the effects of pharmaceutical industry marketing on women's health.

Methodology for Survey

The purpose of the Maharashtra survey was to evaluate the effect of marketing by the pharmaceutical industry on women's health. A standardized questionnaire was used to conduct a month-long poll with 70 women in February and March of 2024. The questionnaire covered a wide range of topics, including age group, educational background, occupation, knowledge of women's health products, the impact of pharmaceutical advertisements, the frequency of exposure to such ads, sources of product information, and opinions regarding the pharmaceutical industry's emphasis on women's health in their marketing campaigns. Through the analysis of the responses, researchers hope to learn more about how women's perceptions of pharmaceutical products and health decisions are influenced by marketing techniques.

Selection of Area

We are students at the Amravati, Maharashtra-based Dr. Rajendra Gode Institute of Pharmacy. We focused on the effects of pharmaceutical industry marketing on women's health, hence we choose Maharashtra as the location for our study. A number of reasons influenced our conclusion. First off, our study will include a wide range of demographics because Maharashtra is one of the most populated and diverse states in India. Second, since we are situated in Maharashtra, it is simpler for us to reach the survey's target audience and get the statistics.

Survey Report

We created a few standard questions for:
a. Gathering information for the survey.
b. To gain a general understanding of the impact of pharmaceutical marketing
c. Compile data regarding product awareness for women's health
d. To be aware of the resources for information on new items
• Survey questionnaire:

1. Which age group are you in?

- 18-25
- 26-35
- 36-45
- 46 and above

2. How much schooling have you had?

- High School
- Bachelor's Degree
- Master's Degree
- Other

3.What is your occupation?

- Student

- Employed full-time
- Employed part-time
- Homemaker
- Other

4. Are there any medications that are intended especially for the health of women?

- Yes
- No

5. If yes, please specify which products you are aware of?

- Birth control pills
- Menstrual pain relief medications
- Hormone replacement therapy
- Osteoporosis medications
- Others

6. Do you think that commercials for pharmaceuticals have an impact on your choice of women's health products?

- Yes
- No

7. How frequently do you see commercials for products aimed at women's health?

- Daily
- Weekly
- Monthly
- Rarely

8. Normally, how do you find out about new items for women's health?

- commercials
- Social media
- Television Doctor's recommendation
- Family and friends
- Other

9. Do you think that pharmaceutical corporations put women's health at the top of their list for marketing purposes?

- Yes
- No

Survey Outcome

1. Are there any medications that are intended especially for the health of women?

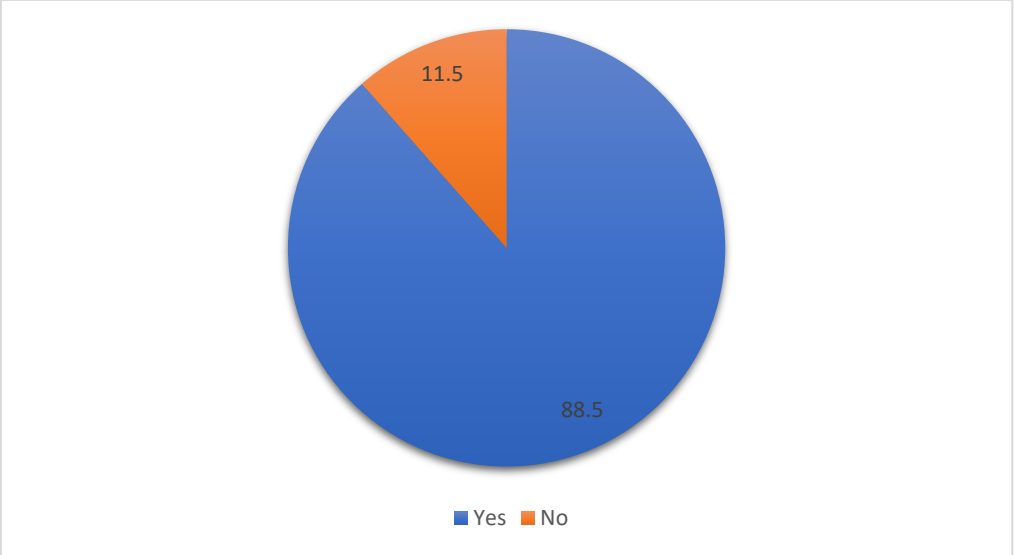

figure No. 1

A sizable majority of the women surveyed 88.5% are aware that there are pharmaceutical products designed expressly with women's health in mind, whereas a smaller percentage 11.5% do not. This suggests that the intended audience is aware of the existence of specialized healthcare options for women.

2. . If yes, please specify which products you are aware of?

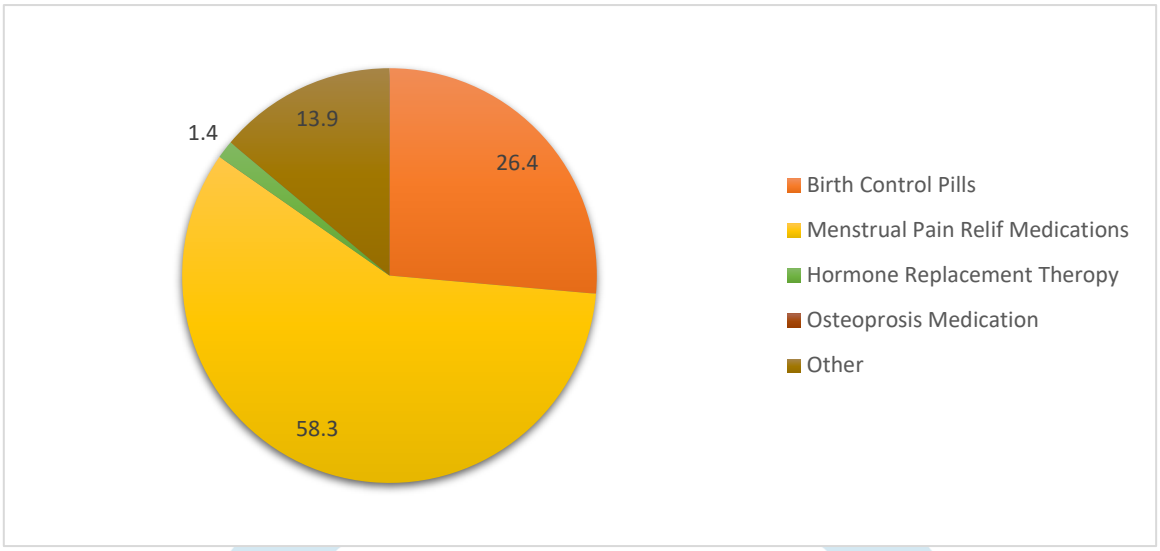

figure No. 2

The following summary shows the particular knowledge of women who responded that they were aware of pharmaceutical goods intended for women's health:

Among them,

- 26.4% said they were aware of birth control pills.
- 58.3% of people are aware of drugs that relieve menstruation discomfort.
- 1.4% reported having knowledge of hormone replacement treatment.
- Not a single person mentioned being familiar with osteoporosis drugs.
- 13.9% reported having osteoporosis medications.

The aforementioned data illustrates the wide array of pharmaceutical goods that women are cognizant of concerning the management of their health requirements.

3. Do you think that commercials for pharmaceuticals have an impact on your choice of women's health products?

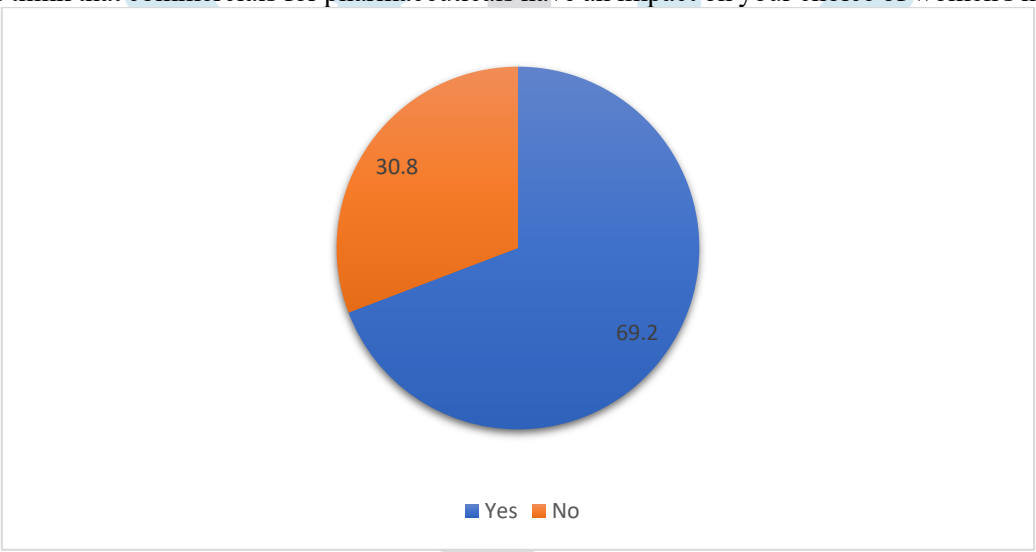

figure No. 3

According to the survey results, women's health product decisions are influenced by pharmaceutical marketing in the following ways:

• Of those surveyed, 69.2% said they were swayed by pharmaceutical commercials while choosing women's health items.

• Of those surveyed, 30.8% said they felt no influence from pharmaceutical marketing while making decisions. This information helps to clarify the potential influence of pharmaceutical advertising on the choice of women's health products.

4. How frequently do you see commercials for products aimed at women's health?

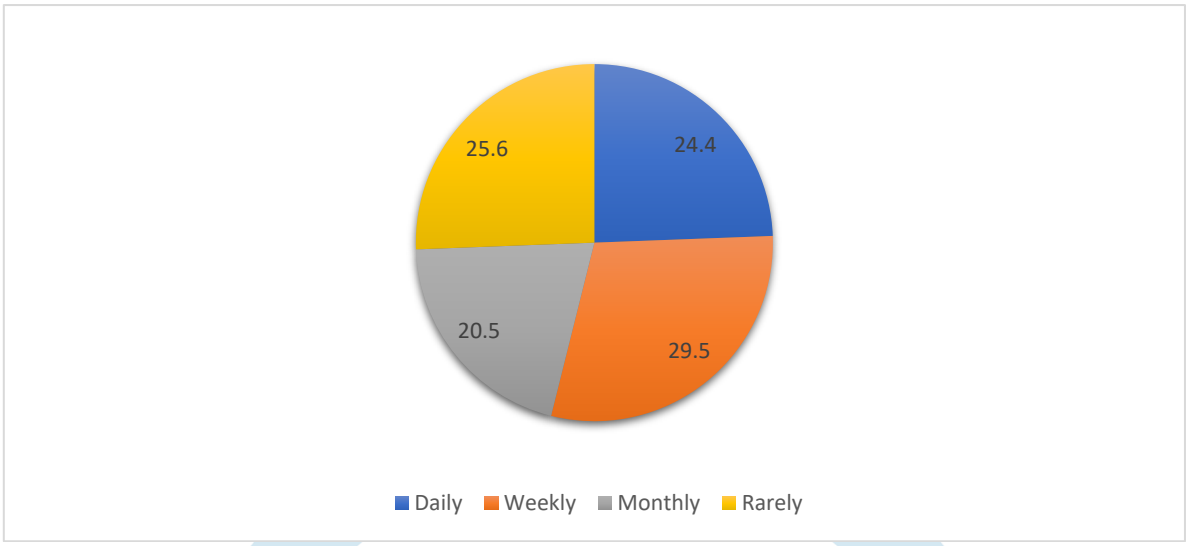

figure No. 4

According to the survey's findings, respondents were frequently exposed to commercials for women's health products:
• Of those surveyed, 24.4% said they saw these ads every day.
• A weekly exposure rate of 29.5% was reported.
• A monthly reporting rate of 20.5% indicated exposure.
• Of them, 25.6% reported seldom exposure to these kinds of ads.
This information sheds light on how frequently women see ads for health items catered to their specific needs, which may affect their knowledge of and choice for these products.

5. Normally, how do you find out about new items for women's health?

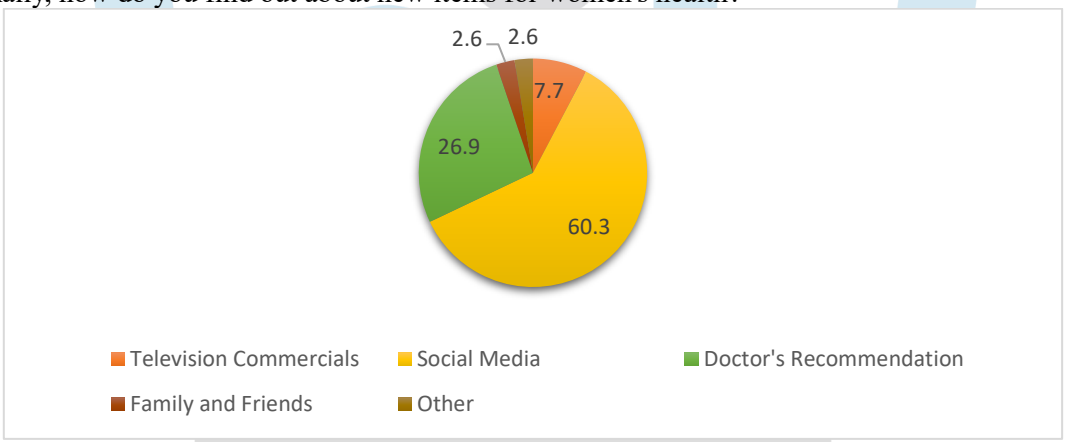

figure No. 5

The results of the poll identify the main channels by which participants usually learn about new women's health products:
• 60.3% of consumers use social media sites to find new products.
• 7.7% identify their source as television commercials.
• 26.9% follow medical professionals' recommendations.
• 2.6% of consumers find out about new products via recommendations from friends and family.
2.6% mention additional techniques not on the above list.
These findings provide light on the various ways that women learn about women's health goods, including new digital platforms, personal recommendations, and conventional media.

6. Do you think that pharmaceutical corporations put women's health at the top of their list for marketing purposes?

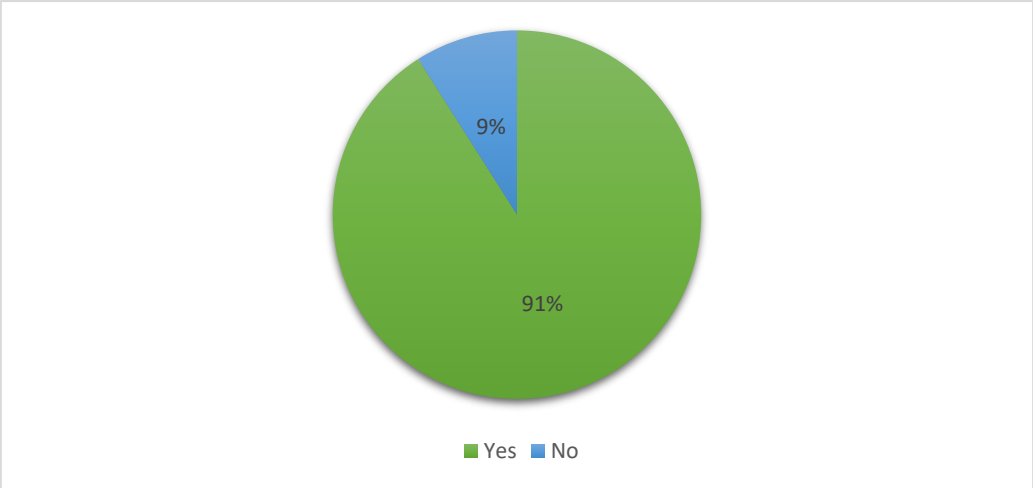

figure No. 6

The survey's findings reveal opinions on whether or not pharmaceutical firms give women's health a priority in their advertising campaigns:

- 91% of respondents think that when it comes to their marketing efforts, pharmaceutical corporations give women's health top priority.
- 9% of those surveyed don't think pharmaceutical corporations give women's health top priority when developing their marketing campaigns.

This data illustrates how women perceive the importance pharmaceutical firms place on women's health issues in their marketing campaigns.

Summary:

In this survey, we investigate how marketing from the pharmaceutical sector affects women's health in Maharashtra, India. We conducted a month-long poll of 70 women to learn more about their opinions and experiences with women-targeted pharmaceutical ads and goods. According to our poll, a sizable majority of women (84.3%) are aware that pharmaceutical companies make items specifically for the health of women. These consist of hormone replacement therapy, birth control pills, and drugs for menstrual pain, among others. It is noteworthy that a significant segment of participants (68.6%) express that pharmaceutical advertising have an impact on their decision-making process for women's health items. This suggests that marketing techniques have an effect on consumer behaviour.

Our research indicates that women are consistently exposed to commercials, with a significant proportion being exposed either daily or weekly. Additionally, the poll highlights a variety of sources such as social media, television advertisements, physician referrals, and word-of-mouth through which women learn about new women's health products. The majority of respondents (92.2%) think that pharmaceutical companies prioritize women's health in their marketing methods, notwithstanding considerable difference in awareness and exposure. Overall, our survey sheds light on the attitudes and practices of women in Maharashtra, India, and offers insightful information about the complex relationship between pharmaceutical marketing and women's health decision-making.

1.3 Result and Discussion:

1. Marketing Tactics' Effect:

To attract women, pharmaceutical marketing uses a variety of strategies, including as online marketing campaigns, physician promotion, and direct-to-consumer advertising.

Women's perceptions of health issues and available treatments are influenced by direct-to-consumer advertising, which frequently results in a rise in the demand for particular drugs.

In order to promote physicians, some medicines must be prescribed, which may have an impact on patient outcomes and treatment decisions.

Online marketing initiatives use websites and social media platforms to interact with female consumers, share information, and influence their opinions on health-related matters.

2. Influence on Treatment Choices:

Pharmaceutical marketing has the power to sway women's treatment choices by portraying some drugs as better or more desirable than others, even when those alternatives might be just as effective.

Persuasive advertising messages or professional endorsements from the medical community may influence women to ask their doctors for particular medications.

As women seek out pharmaceuticals touted as answers to perceived health concerns, marketing strategies may lead to overdiagnosis and overtreatment of some disorders.

3. Viewpoint on Well-Being and Health:

Pharmaceutical marketing strategies frequently reinforce gendered views of attractiveness, fertility, and aging by reinforcing cultural norms and prejudices pertaining to women's health.

Unrealistic expectations about women's bodies and health results can be shaped by advertising imagery and message, which can exacerbate mental health and body image problems.

Pharmaceutical marketing may put pressure on women to live up to society norms, which could result in needless medical procedures or body dissatisfaction.

Discussion:

The findings demonstrate how intricately pharmaceutical industry marketing interacts with women's health outcomes. Marketing campaigns seek to enlighten and educate consumers about the range of treatment alternatives that are available, but they also have the power to affect attitudes, actions, and treatment choices connected to health. Furthermore, the persistence of unattainable beauty standards and gender stereotypes in pharmaceutical advertising may be detrimental to women's general wellbeing and self-esteem.

There are ethical questions about how to balance product promotion and consumer education, especially when it comes to possibly needless medical procedures and the medicalization of everyday activities. Stricter regulation of direct-to-consumer advertising and openness in physician-industry contacts are two examples of the regulatory actions required to guarantee that marketing strategies put patient welfare ahead of business profits. In order to empower women to make educated decisions regarding their health, there is also a need for a stronger focus on patient education. Healthcare professionals are essential in helping patients make sense of the confusing world of pharmaceutical marketing and choose the best course of action based on their unique requirements and evidence-based practices.

1.4 conclusion:

In conclusion, improving patient autonomy, dispelling gender stereotypes, and developing comprehensive methods to healthcare delivery all depend on an awareness of how the pharmaceutical industry's marketing affects women's health. Advocates for ethical practices and a critical examination of marketing strategies can help stakeholders strive toward a healthcare system that puts women's health first and encourages educated decision-making.

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