

An investigation on the motivations of the children in conflict with the law to finish the rehabilitation program

Jose Sherief O Panelo¹, Allan O de la Cruz²

^{1,2} Cagayan State University-Sanchez Mira Campus Sanchez Mira, Cagayan Region, Philippines

Abstract

This study generally aimed to investigate the motivations of the juveniles to complete the rehabilitation program at Cagayan Valley Regional Rehabilitation Center for Youth. Qualitative method using case study design was employed. Purposive sampling was adopted to select the eight participants- in conflict with the law who are under suspended sentence and, who are undergoing the rehabilitation program. These informants who are from the Cagayan Valley Region are 15 to 17 years old, and who acted with discernment at the time of the commission of the offense. These participants were chosen based on knowledge, consent, willingness and capability to share the best information needed in the study. To gather the data needed, a semi-structured interview was employed. All interviews were recorded through cellular phone. The recorded interview was transcribed, and the transcripts were read over a number of times. Initial notes were listed and emergent themes were identified. The first emergent themes were then listed and the researcher tried to see the connections of each theme and may be clustered which later may become the super ordinate concepts. The themes were translated into a narrative account which was expanded and explained as the emerged themes. It is concluded that both intrinsic and extrinsic motivations such as divine existence, support, activities and rewards are effective which were manifested by the participants in the delivery and response of their actions.

Keywords: children in conflict with the law, juvenile delinquency, motivation, rehabilitation program, Cagayan valley

Introduction

Juvenile delinquency as cited by Aclis (2016) ^[1] is defined as the habitual committing of criminal acts or offenses by a young person, especially one below the age at which ordinary criminal prosecution is possible. Though the definition pertains to the acts committed by children, it is also very important to consider the age of criminal responsibility since this is one of the most common differences by several states in its universal perspective.

There has been a controversy on how to handle juvenile offenders with some people arguing that they should be treated like adult offenders. The government has considered both public safety and the need to rehabilitate the juvenile offenders in its effort to fight this behavior. This has been effective in reducing the case of juvenile delinquency. All over the world, an examination of the juvenile justice system is being done. Aala *et al* (2013) in their study pointed out that among the areas of concern undergoing re-investigation is the philosophy of punishment involving juvenile offenders and the process of bringing them into the juvenile system of justice. While their focus is on the philosophy of punishment as a deterrent to juvenile delinquency, the present study focuses on the philosophy of rehabilitation as part of the tertiary interventions without resorting to juvenile justice process.

According to Young, Greer, & Church (2017), the sentencing of an individual convicted of a criminal offense is largely driven by three key considerations: retribution (punishment), deterrence, and rehabilitation. In the case of juvenile offenders, the principle of rehabilitation is often assigned the greatest weight.

In as much as the principle of rehabilitation applies in juvenile justice, its primary goal of placing juveniles in

institution is to help them adjust positively to reentry in the community. And therefore, they should be treated in a manner that their rights are accorded too with dignity and respect. One of which is the right to treatment.

The concept of a right to treatment was first introduced to the mental health field in 1960 by Morton Birnbaum (Siegel& Senna 2000) ^[14].

The right to treatment argument has expanded to include the juvenile justice system. One of the first cases to highlight this issue was *Inmates of the Boys' Training School versus Affleck* in 1972. Affleck was one of the first cases to describe some of the horrible conditions existing in many of the nation's training schools (Siegel& Senna 2000) ^[14].

Obviously, in the previous case, the placements of juveniles are in training schools whereas in the present study, juveniles are treated in the rehabilitation center.

It is very important to note, however, that confinement is not only applicable to custodial setting similar to jail or prison. It may include others just like in the police stations, boot camp training schools and rehabilitation centers (JDL rules).

Further, treatment of Children in Conflict with the Law shall only be used as a last resort for a short period of time.

In the Philippine setting, the influx of children in conflict with the law has become one of the social ills in which the society needs to take into account.

According to the Philippine Institute for Development Studies (2009), data gathered from Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP) of the Department of Interior and Local Government show that on crimes against person committed by Children in Conflict with the Law (CICL), the National Capital Region (NCR) is the highest in number.

Relatively, data provided by the Juvenile Welfare Council (JWC), revealed that there were at least 11,000 Children in Conflict with the Law in 2009.

According to the Philippine National Police, from 2012 to 2015, there are about 60 percent of juvenile delinquencies fall under crimes against property like theft, robbery, malicious mischief, and estafa. On the other hand, crimes against persons constitute 36 percent of the crimes committed by children in conflict with the law. The top 3 cases committed by children in conflict with the law include theft, physical injuries, and rape cases.

Moreover, from July 1 to August 2016, or roughly the first two months of President Duterte's term in office, a total of 20,584 juveniles have surrendered to local police offices, according to the Philippine National Police's Women and Children Protection Center (WCPC). Of this total, 3,971 were juveniles from Central Visayas. Northern Mindanao has the second highest number of juvenile drug surrenderees at 3,783. Zamboanga region came in far third with 2,196. Meanwhile, Cagayan Valley region has 511 juveniles in conflict with the law who are involved in drugs.

The abovementioned phenomena reflect how serious it was when it comes to juvenile delinquency cases.

Section 44 of RA 9344 likewise provides the objective of rehabilitation and reintegration of children in conflict with the law and that is to provide them with interventions, approaches and strategies that will enable them to improve their social functioning with the end goal of reintegration to their families and as productive members of their communities.

In addition, the law reiterates the primary responsibility of DSWD to establish and maintain the Regional Rehabilitation Centers for Youth (RRCY) in each region of the country. It is also responsible for providing technical assistance to Local Government Units (LGUs) in the development of community-based programs for intervention, diversion and rehabilitation.

In 1992, a 13.5 hectares agricultural land property in Roma Norte, Enrile, Cagayan was turned over to the Department of Social Welfare and Development by the Department of Agrarian Reform for the establishment of a community farm park facility for out-of-school youth, juveniles and other disadvantaged children. The DSWD agreed to pay for the use, maintenance and improvement undertaken in the property.

Cagayan Valley Regional Rehabilitation Center for Youth (CV-RRCY) is unique among all other youth rehabilitation centers for its ecologically-friendly and self-sufficient environment for the residents and workers. It is managed by the DSWD Field Office-02 and as a managing agency; it regularly coordinates and cooperates with other sectors involved in the project such as the LGUs, NGOs and various line departments.

CV-RRCY provides twenty-four hour care, various rehabilitation services such as interventions which seek to restore functioning on minors for family re-unification and community reintegration, provision of a home environment and group living arrangement with well-balanced, organized and non-formal activities for the youth, provision of preventive, and curative interventions to promote mental health and reduce/prevent sickness, psychological service that would enable the minors to cope and overcome abusive circumstances and experiences, provision of formal/non-formal education, opportunities for educational/vocational

skills development while at the center and others such as spiritual and recreational services.

At present, records show that there are forty-three residents occupying the center. Twenty of whom have suspended sentence, twenty-two are on trial, and one is on diversion program. The common cases committed include seventeen on crimes against persons, sixteen on crimes against property, one on crime against chastity, and nine on the violations of special laws. Notably, residents occupying the center are all male children in conflict with the law.

Rehabilitation is a remedial measure. This approach would only be used as a last resort. For the best interest of the child and in adherence to United Nations Convention on the Right of Children and in consonance with the existing law of the Philippines, the State takes remedies in order to save the Children. Our National Hero once said that "The Youth is the Hope of the Fatherland". Someday, they shall become the face of this nation. They determine where our country is going. Hence, they should be taken cared of with dignity and respect. Despite the misbehaviors, everybody should not stop working with the Children even if it went to the level of rehabilitation. Bear in mind that they are the assets of the society.

Due to the delicate nature involving children in-conflict with the law and the urgency of taking this social problem into serious attention and in effect, some researches tried to study juveniles & juvenile delinquency along profile variables only. However, only a few studies have approached the issue qualitatively. It is in this context that the researcher was motivated to conduct a case study to investigate the motivations of the juveniles under rehabilitation programs at the Cagayan Valley Regional Rehabilitation Center for Youth, Region 2.

This study is of much significance to everyone especially those people who have direct contact with the children in conflict with the law.

The government is also benefited from this study in as much as policy formulation is concerned. Specifically, DSWD from the Regional Rehabilitation Center for Youth-Cagayan Valley would gain insights from this study in the formulation of guidelines on the rehabilitation process of the CICL along with the allocation of funds necessary for its implementation.

Moreover, professors in the field of criminology and sociology would also gain knowledge from this study that may be imparted to the students.

To the CICL who are the direct beneficiary in this study, they would be provided with learning outcomes, an internalization that what they are experiencing are the services that would prevent them from re-offending. Acceptance in these programs is a motivation.

Lastly, findings of this study would be of significance to future researchers in generating literatures related to the experiences of juveniles and juvenile delinquency.

Objective of the Study

This study generally aimed to understand the motivations of the children in conflict with the law to complete the rehabilitation program at Cagayan Valley Regional Rehabilitation Center for Youth.

Methodology

This study employed qualitative method using case study design. According to Lichtman (2013) as cited by Wa-

Mbaleka (2018) ^[25], a Case study is an in-depth examination of a particular case or several cases. It is the only design that's more like a one-size-fits-all design.

Further, an open ended-question was administered to a selected sample from a specific population identified and selected by the researcher.

Population and Locale of the Study

The sample size of the participants in the study was determined through purposive sampling. The researcher chose only the participants who have knowledge, have given their consent and were willing and capable of sharing the best information needed in the study.

The participants were eight children in conflict with the law under suspended sentence and who are undergoing rehabilitation programs at Cagayan Valley Regional Rehabilitation Center for Youth whose age ranges from sixteen (16) to seventeen (17) years who acted with discernment at the time of the commission of the offense. Further, the participants reside from Cagayan Valley Region and whose cases include crime against chastity, crimes against property and violations of special law.

The participants under suspended sentence were the primary beneficiaries to undergo rehabilitation programs in compliance with the disposition measures set by the court.

Data Gathering Instrument

To gather the data about the experiences of juveniles under rehabilitation programs, a semi-structured interview was employed. All interviews with the participants were recorded through cellular phone. This was used upon the approval of the head of the Regional Rehabilitation Center for Youth and the juvenile if possible. Likewise, actual observations in the conduct of interview were done.

Further, an open ended-question was administered to a selected sample from a specific population identified and selected by the researcher.

Data Gathering Procedure

In order to achieve the answers to the research question posted in the present study, the following procedures were undertaken.

The researchers wrote a request letter to the office of the Regional Director, Department of Social Welfare and Development Field Office 2 requesting for the gathering of data needed in the study. The researchers filled out the research request form with the terms and conditions indicated which were used in the review/assessment of the research study by the agency research committee before it can be recommended for the approval of the Regional Director. An endorsement letter to the center head was forwarded to the Cagayan Valley Regional Rehabilitation Center for Youth allowing the researchers to gather the data needed for the said study.

Prior to the interview, the researchers had a conversation with the center head after which the researchers were turned over to the different social workers at the center to arrange schedules for the signing of the consent, assent and declaration of non-disclosure forms.

In one of the gatherings conducted by the center, the researchers had a chance to meet the parents of the participants and had the opportunity to explain to them the forms needed in the study before the actual signing.

From the list of participants, the researchers had chosen ten

among the juveniles who were interviewed. However, only eight of them signed the consent form assent form and the declaration of non-disclosure.

After the signing of the pertinent documents needed in the study, the researchers started to interview the participants of the study in the conference hall of the center. All interviews were recorded using mobile phone as permitted and were transcribed later for coding.

For triangulation purposes, a similar procedure was maintained utilizing those personnel who have direct contact with the operations of the center specifically the house parent, social worker and the psychologist. The interview was conducted the following day.

Triangulation method is the means of using more than one method to collect data on the same topic. It is also a way of assuring the validity of research through the use of variety of methods to collect data on the same research topic (Kulkarni, 2013). In this research, it was vital to use triangulation method because this study does not only focus on the information coming from the participants but also from the information given by the personnel to assure validity and to gain additional information.

Ethical Consideration

In this study, the information that was revealed was treated with confidentiality. No other persons including the members of the panel had the access to the information without the permission from the participants. Confidential information was not also included in the transcripts of the interview. Further, the information that was revealed was used for this research only.

Prior to the interview, consent, assent, and declaration of non-disclosure forms were provided. The contents of these forms were fully explained to the participants, parents and/or representatives and if necessary were explained in a manner that the participants, parents and/or representatives were understood the risks and benefits of participating in this study. By signing the informed consent and the assent forms, the participants voluntarily agree to participate in the interview. No remuneration or any forms of reward were given to them. Such acts of volunteerism however, were maintained throughout the conduct of interview and actual observation. In case that the participants withdraw his participation in this study, he was not forced to continue from participating and the interview notes and audio recordings were to be turned over to the participants and any information that the participants have provided in the manuscript was not used. The researchers did their best to erase traces of the participants upon withdrawal from participating.

Further, the transcripts of the interview were kept and these shall be personally destroyed after two years.

Lastly, anonymity of the participants was maintained throughout the study. Their names were not be divulged in this study and no identifying statement has made that shall point at him as the source of the information. Therefore, coding was designated to each of the participants.

Data Analysis

The data that were gathered from the interview were collated, analyzed, and interpreted.

The following steps were used as the process of interpretation.

A semi structured type of interview was utilized in

exploring the experiences of juveniles under rehabilitation programs. The recorded interview was transcribed. The transcripts were read over a number of times. Initial notes were listed and emergent themes were identified. The first emergent themes were then listed and the researcher tried to see the connections of each theme and may be clustered which later may become the super-ordinate concepts. The themes were translated into a narrative account which was expanded and explained as the emerged themes.

Results and Discussion

The table that follows below revealed the general themes derived from the participants with regard to their motivations to complete the rehabilitation. The general theme is paralleled and aligned with the problem of the

study which yielded various subordinate themes. Excerpts from the participants are provided to further enlighten the floated theme. Only those statements that appear to be with heavier weight in terms of substantiating and validating the derived theme were selected from the verbatim of the participants.

Motivations of the Juveniles to Complete Rehabilitation

Table 2 shows the motivation of the juveniles to complete rehabilitation. It is gleaned from the table that the participants are motivated with the divine existence, support, activities and rewards to complete the rehabilitations programs. These motivating factors are effective in influencing the actions of the participants towards the completeness of the rehabilitation process.

Table 1: Motivations of the juveniles to complete the rehabilitation

Superordinate Theme	Subordinate Theme	Significant Statements
Motivations to complete the rehabilitation	Divine Existence	“Ang nagbibigay lakas sa akin ay ang Diyos.”
	Support	“Para sa pamilya ko ang lagi kong ginagawa sa loob.” “Sila po ang nagbibigay ng kalakasan ko.” “Mga pangalawang pamilya ko sir ang nagbibigay lakas sa akin.”
	Activities	“Pag nanalo po kami ay nasa isip namin na kayang kaya naming lumaban sa pagsubok kahit papaano.”
	Rewards	“Ang income din po and nagbibigay sa amin ng lakas.” “Nagcocompete po sila per cottage tapos lahat may mga prices po sila.

Motivations through divine existence. Most of the participants revealed that divine existence is on top of the other motivating factors. This implies that the participants value the divine power to influence their action in the rehabilitation which is intrinsic in nature.

According to participant 2, he revealed that “*Ang nagbibigay lakas sa akin sir ay ang Diyos. Sabi nila manalangin kalang kayang kayang mo yan. Huwag kang mawalan ng pag asa. Lahat ng sinasabi nila ay sinusunod ko.*”(The one that motivated me is God and my family. They give pieces of advices because they noticed the disposition of my case. They said, you can do it, just pray. Do not lose hope). These statements were concurred by the other participants. These statements by the participants relate to the intrinsic that drives them to continue their rehabilitation because of the love of God they felt.

The findings of this study are well associated to the spiritual development model proposed by Fowler (n.d.) as cited by Shek (2012) in his study titled “Spirituality as a Positive Youth Development Construct: A Conceptual Review”. In this model, it introduced faith development. Faith which is characterized by conformity with little reflection on one’s religious beliefs and faith characterized by personal struggle and choice. Moreover, it argued that the existence of personal struggle and choice are important elements of mature spirituality. This is also manifested in the present study in such a way that through personal struggles and choices in the center, the participants conformed to the programs of rehabilitation as he is guided by divine existence.

Motivations through Support. In like manner, the family motivation can relate to the support of the family to the participants or to the value of the family to them.

According to participant 2, he revealed that “*Ang nagbibigay lakas sa akin sir ay pamilya ko. Pinapayuhan po nila ako dito kasi nakikita nila yung takbo ng case ko.*”(The one that motivated me is my family. They give pieces of

advices because they noticed the disposition of my case).It was supported by the statements of Participant 3 stating that “*Siyempre yung pamilya ko sir. Hindi naman ito iyong permanenteng buhay namin sir. Kaya iniisip ko na para sa pamilya ko ang lagi kong ginagawa sa loob. Yung pamilya ko ang motivation ko.*”(Of course my family sir. This is not the permanent life for us. That is why I think that what I usually do here inside are for my family. My family is my motivations).

In another interview, participant 1 disclosed that “*Yung pamilya ko po. Tuwing Friday at Sabado binibisita naman po ako dito. Kasi sila mahal na mahal ko po. Meron po time na hindi po sila nagbisita ng isang sabado, parang naghina po ako. Inisip ko po na nakalimutan nila ako. Tapos nalaman ko yung rason na pinaayos yung sasakyan namin. Naintindihan ko naman po. Sila po ang nagbibigay ng kalakasan ko.*”(My family. Every Friday and Saturday they come here to visit me. It’s because I love them so much. There was one Saturday when they did not visit me. I felt emotionally disturbed. I thought that they forgot me. Then, I learned that they did not appear because they repaired our vehicle. I understood it. They are the one’s who provide me strength). These imply the value of family towards the completeness of the rehabilitation processes which is intrinsically in nature and the extrinsic support of the family in their own very special ways to feel their presence despite of the misbehaviors of the participants and the experiences brought about by these conditions.

In the study by Burke, Mulvey & Garbin (2014) titled “The Challenge and Opportunity of Parental Involvement in Juvenile Justice Services” in which the findings of the present study are associated, it affirmed that the parent-child relationship, whether positive or negative, is a significant factor in adolescent development. As a result, parental involvement is now widely recognized as a crucial consideration for promoting positive child outcomes in juvenile justice.

On the contrary, it can be argued that the importance of parental involvement is still not adequately appreciated, and that the methods for realizing parental involvement are still under developed (Burke, Mulvey & Garbin 2014).

It is very interesting to note that participant 4, aside from God as a motivator he asserted that *“Ang mga pamilya ko din po dito sa Center mga pangalawang pamilya ko sir ang nagbibigay lakas sa akin.”* (My family here in the center, my second family are the ones providing me with motivations). This implies that the participant is extrinsically motivated with the staff support of the center.

These abovementioned arguments were validated from the interview with the personnel in the center. According to the social worker, she affirmed that *“Number one is yung support po ng family talaga and then yung support din po ng staff.”* (Number one is really the support of the family; then, the support of the staff).

Together with psychologist, he confirmed that *“Ako personally, alam ko yung mga staff hindi lang trabaho eh. Mahal nila yung mga bata kaya yung bata kung narandaman nila na mahal sila ng staff, nagiging mabait sila. Ang fear ko lang dapat pagbalik nila sa community nila wala na doon yung temptation kasi may danger na babalik sila eh unless yung rehabilitation very strong sila.”* (To me personally, I know that the staff is not only working. They love the children. If the children felt the love portrayed by the staff they will become good. My fear is that, when they go back to the community, there must be no temptation because there is a danger that they will return unless the rehabilitation is very strong).

And in as much as the house parent is concerned, he revealed that *“Yung pananalig sa Diyos. Yung personal devotion, life group session. Yung pagmamahal namin sa kanila at saka yung tulong ng bawat rehab team sa kanila ang mga nagmomotivate sa kanila.”* (The faith in God. Those personal devotions, life group session. Our love to them and the help of every rehab team to them are the ones that motivated them).

The findings of the study was corroborated with the broad doctrine of *parens patriae*, which the staff oftentimes actively assert themselves into a parent role (Pennell, Shapiro & Spigner 2011) as cited by (Burke, Mulvey & Garbin 2014). In the present study the staff is deemed influential in the adherence to the different services provided to the participants to complete their rehabilitation. Motivations through activities. It was recounted in the study that the activities which are extrinsically in nature were the motivators for the completeness of the rehabilitation.

Participant 3 disclosed that *“Nagbibigay din po motivation yung mga activities po dito. Lalo na kapag nananalo yung team namin. Pag nanalo po kami ay nasa isip namin na kayang kaya naming lumaban sa pagsubok kahit papaano.”* (It is also motivating about the activities here. Especially when the team wins. If we won we think that we can do to fight struggles perhaps). This implies that the participant is pushed to be motivated because of the the reward that he receives.

These findings were supported by a personal communication with the social worker revealing that *“Namomotivate din sila dun sa monthly activity. Nagcocompete po sila per cottage tapos lahat may mga prizes po sila. So yun po yung isa sa mga motivations nila na nakikita mo talaga yung cooperations ng mga bata. Nandun yung unity. At isa pa doon makikita yung pagiging*

creative nila at yung mga talents nila. Nagshowshowcase talaga sila ng talents at skills nila. Yung kahit hindi marunong magsayaw, matututong magsayaw para makipagparticipate sa monthly theme.” (They are also motivated with the monthly activity. They are competing per cottage then all of them have prizes. So, that is the one of their motivations that you can see the cooperation of the child. In there, there is unity. And one thing more it is there where you see their creativity, and their talents. They showcase their talents and skills. Even those who do not know how to dance will learn to dance just to participate in the monthly theme).

The findings of this study were closely related to Charles Snyder’s Hope Theory arguing that optimizing children in conflict with the law to have sense of hope may improve their personal and psycho social functioning through learnings with the programs and services provided.

In the present study, by engaging to different activities in the center, the participants set personal goals for their future and develops strategies that would help them achieve these goals.

In so doing rehabilitation through involvement in the different activities and programs may promote feelings of hopefulness and optimism among the participants who are aiming to be reintegrated to the mainstream society.

Motivations through Rewards. In addition to the activities undertaken by the participants, rewards such as the fruits of their labor are good motivators to complete the rehabilitation processes.

Participant 3 revealed that *“Ang income din po ang nagbibigay sa amin ng lakas. May farming po kasi kami dito. Pag uwi namin may pera kami 12 percent po kami sa farming. Sa gardening 50 percent po kami. Kaya po madali lang pong magkaroon ng income dito kung matiyaga ka. Inexplain kasi nila ung kagandahan nito sir. Naisip ko ok ito para paglabas ko may pera akong uuwi.”* (The income also gave us strength. We have farming here. When we go back home, we get 12 percent from farming. In gardening, we get 50 percent. That is why it is easy to have an income if you are patient. They explain to us the benefit of this sir. I think of it that this is ok so that when I go backhome I have money). In addition, participant 3 revealed that *“Pagkalabas namin meron kaming konti maiuwi.”* (The moment that we will be released we have something to bring home). These also imply that the participant is extrinsically motivated by the income that he received while working in the farm.

Reinforcement theory closely corroborates with the present study as it explains in detail how an individual learns behavior. Staff members who are making attempt to motivate the participants through giving of a positive reinforcement through rewards as in the case of the participants that they are provided with the income out of their work assignments in the farm, would increase the probability for outstanding performance.

Accordingly, the findings of this study affirmed in the statements of Rhodes (2017) stating that the juveniles can have the rewards given accordingly for positive behavior. The participants in the present study were able to participate in activities such as farming and given income to generate their funds as one of the rewards provided. These rewards are given simply by following the rules and behaving appropriately.

Motivators such as divine existence, support, activities and

awards corroborate to the idea of Bandura (1994), who introduced self-efficacy. According to Bandura, self-efficacy is defined as the people's beliefs about their capabilities to produce designated levels of performance that exercise influence over events that affect their lives. Self-efficacy beliefs determine how people feel, think, motivate themselves and behave. In as much as rehabilitation is concerned, the children in conflict with the law are being influenced by their motivations for them to be actively engaged in the rehabilitation services of the center.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Conclusions

Based on the research findings, it can be concluded that the motivational factors influencing the actions toward the completeness of the rehabilitation process include both intrinsic and extrinsic motivations such as divine existence, support, activities and rewards are effective which were manifested by the participants in the delivery and response of their actions.

Recommendations

In relation with the findings and conclusions, the following are the recommendations.

1. Encourage the staff to strengthen the motivational services provided to the parents and juveniles.
2. A similar study is requested to be conducted involving other variables and set of participants.
3. A proposed intervention program may be adopted to enhance the rehabilitation services of the center, although other services are already implemented regularly.

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