Teacher Leadership

Areas:
Educational Leadership and Change,
Perspectives and Inspirations, International Perspective

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Teacher leadership in Ukraine: The role of teachers in school management and professional development

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This article presents the current situation with teacher leadership in Ukraine. The authors focus on the connection of teacher leadership with shool autonomy, forming school culture and professional development experiences of teachers. Professional development refers to activities that advance teachers' skills and knowledge, with the ultimate aim of fostering teacher leadership. The presented research was based on the results of the All-Ukrainian Monitoring Survey of Secondary School Teachers and Principals with the use of TALIS methodology. Research was conducted by the Ukrainian Educational Research Association. The monitoring survey was a part of the Teacher Project within the big scale project "Educational Reform: Quality Assessment in the International Context" realized by Ukrainian Step by Step Foundation with the support of Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine and Porticus. For comparison, the average data of the international TALIS 2013 survey was given. The article concludes with a discussion useful for policy makers, school leaders and teachers.The material demonstrates how complex teacher leadership is and how powerfully it can influence all the aspects of school life.

The understanding of teacher leadership in Ukrainian secondary education and research

At the present stage of rapid changes in the world, societies, as well as individuals, face new challenges imposed by globalization and modernization. Perhaps the most challenging dilemma for educators in the 21st century is a new demand for skills and knowledge which teachers themselves need to acquire for the purpose of an effective teaching of their 21st century students. Actually, in the new world of digits, automation and outsources high educational demands for life and work require teachers to be high-level knowledge workers who advance their profession as well as demonstrate their leadership skills. Ukrainian teachers try to adjust to the changes initiated by the new Law of Education. It sets higher requirements for teachers' proficiency and their lifelong professional development (Supreme Soviet of Ukraine, 2017).

Literature review on the problem gives us variety of concepts and practices of teacher leadership for the past two decades (Lyniov, 2016). Among them are numerous small-scale, qualitative studies that describe dimensions of teacher leadership practice, teacher leader characteristics and conditions that promote and challenge teacher leadership. However, the investigations of teacher leadership as they are described in Ukrainian scholarly literature differ from the way they are seen from the international perspective.

In Ukrainian secondary education, teacher leadership is mainly understood as formal school management team represented by the school principal and vice-principals. (Shchudlo, Kovalchuk, 2014). In this understanding of the issue, teacher leadership is not taken into account. Most research has been done in Ukraine concerning ways of efficient school management and only a few studies focused on teachers who are not members of the official administrative team. It might lead to the conclusion that the teachers' roles and impact on different aspects of the school life have been underestimated. The issues under research in Ukraine to some extent resemble the issues internationally studied in the 1980s. Those are grouped around developing the teacher leadership qualities, where the teacher is seen as a leader in teacher-student or teacher-class relations in education. For instance, N. Semchenko and N. Marahovska analyzed the pedagogical conditions that help future teachers to generate and develop their leadership skills during extra-

curricular activities (Semchenko, 2005; Marahovska, 2009). D. Zerbino attempted to describe teacher-leader research skills and 'teacher-students' relationship in this context. To become effective science-leader a teacher needs to generate new ideas (Zerbino, 2011), be culturally focused (Moskovets, 2012) and professionally competent (Osovska, 2012). The other trait of effective teacher leader is identified as the talent for facilitation, which enables not only to attract people, enchant and inspire them, but as well to lead by the force of the arguments and persuasion (Zavalevsky, 2008).

Joellen Killion and Cindy Harrison in the book *Taking the Lead: New Roles for Teachers and School-Based Coaches* define top ten roles of teacher leaders: resource provider, instructional specialist, curriculum specialist, classroom supporter, learning facilitator, mentor, school leader, data coach, catalyst for change, learner (Killion, Harrison, 2006).

The above-given roles demonstrate how complex teacher leadership is and how powerfully it can influence all the aspects of school life. In the article, teacher leaders are viewed through their ability to influence school culture and teachers' professional development.

Ukrainian context: teachers and the schools where they work

For understanding what teacher leadership is about in Ukraine, is it is essential that the reader should see the big picture of Ukrainian education represented by teachers and schools where they work. Table 1 demonstrates Ukrainian teachers' profile regarding their gender distribution, age distribution, work experience, educational level, and specialized training. The information provided below is part of the Ukrainian Educational Research Association report prepared for the Ministry of Education of Ukraine (Shchudlo, Zabolotna, Lisova, 2017).

Teachers' profile

As to the gender distribution in Ukrainian teachers' profile, 84% Ukrainian teachers are women. If to view the issue from the regional perspective the percentage fluctuates from 76,7% of female teachers in the Central part of Ukraine to 87.7% in the capital.

The average age of Ukrainian middle school teachers is 44.7. Most Ukrainian teachers belong to the 40 – 49 age group (29%); more than

12% of Ukrainian teachers are older than 60 with the oldest teachers working in the capital.

As to their work experience, in the average, Ukrainian teachers have 21.7 years' work experience. Moreover, in the average, Ukrainian teachers devote 17.8 years to the same school which demonstrates a low level of teachers' mobility within education.

In Ukraine, 96.3% have Bachelor's degree or higher (Specialist, Master or Candidate of Sciences). However, the percentage of teachers who are Candidates or Doctors of Sciences corresponding to Doctors (Ph.D.) or Habilitated Doctors is quite low (0.2%).

Ukrainian teachers demonstrate a high percentage of those specially trained for work in education (98.3%). Most teachers claim that their training included all the elements: content of the subject(s) they teach (82.5%), pedagogy of the subject(s) they teach (82.9%), classroom practice in the subject(s) they teach (79.9%). In all these elements Ukrainian teachers feel well and very well prepared. In the capital, the percentage of those who are somewhat or not at all feel prepared in higher than in the regions. Some teachers, especially teachers of Arts (4.3%) have not been specially trained for the subject(s) they teach.

Teachers' distribution at Ukrainian schools
Another aspect contributing to understanding Ukrainian teacher leadership is the distribution of teachers at schools.

According to the UERA report, 7.1% of Ukrainian teachers work at schools where there are more than 10% of children who are non-Ukrainian speakers. Less than 1% of Ukrainian teachers admit that they work at the school where there are more than 10% of students with special educational needs. If compared to other countries, the data provided by Ukrainian teachers might bring about the question of insufficient attention given to diagnosing special needs. 64.9% of Ukrainian teachers point out that there are no children with special educational needs in their classrooms. However, 6.5% of Ukrainian teachers work at schools where more than 30% of children come from low-income families.

Research methodology
Much of the educational research before the 1980s fell into the positivist domain and dealt with descriptions of administrative positions

and personal traits. However, it did not uncover relationships between leadership and school culture, leadership and professional development or more general conceptualizations of leadership. As a result, in our research, we will move from direct effects to mediated effects and antecedent effects. We have turned to a multivariate analysis of data, enabling the construction of a model of effects within a model of teacher leadership. This sophisticated statistical illustration of teachers leaders effects on school culture and teachers' professional development has allowed for substantive conclusions on effective leadership.

The research was based on the results of the All-Ukrainian Monitoring Survey of Secondary School Teachers and Principals (by TALIS methodology) conducted by the Ukrainian Educational Research Association with the questionnaires for teachers and principals used for Teaching and Learning International Survey conducted by OECD in 2013.

The monitoring survey was a part of the Teacher Project within the big scale project "Educational Reform: Quality Assessment in the International Context" realized by Ukrainian Step by Step Foundation with the support of Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine and Porticus. The project was headed by Prof. Svitlana Shchudlo and co-coordinated by Prof. Oksana Zabolotna and Doc. Tetiana Lisova.

The first two waves of Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) were conducted by OECD in 2008 and 2013. Ukraine did not participate in TALIS 2008 and 2013; neither is it going to participate in its next wave in 2018. It deprives Ukraine of valuable data that might contribute to understanding the current situation by comparing the data to those received from EU and other countries. With this in mind, Ukrainian Educational Research Association got from OECD the permission to use TALIS 2013 Principal and Teacher questionnaires for the TALIS-like survey in Ukraine.

The All-Ukrainian survey was aimed at getting comparable evidence of teachers' social, demographic and professional characteristics and school environment. The data could be used for answering the following **research questions:**

→ What are interconnections of school autonomy and teacher leadership in Ukraine?
→ What is the role of teacher leaders in forming school culture?

→ To what extent is teachers' leadership fostered by teachers' professional development programmes?

Ukrainian Educational Research Association conducted the research betewen February and August 2017. The researched school population embraced 201 principals from 201 schools, as well as 3600 school teachers (ISCED 2). The research was conducted in all the regions of Ukraine except Crimea and the territories in the conflict zone. The two-stage sampling design was used in the research (S.E. – 1.6%, participation rate for teachers – 97%.). The participants filled in paper-based questionnaires.

To view the issue from the comparative perspective, the authors use the results of the All-Ukrainian monitoring conducted by UERA in 2017 and the TALIS research conducted by OECD in 2013.

Research Results

Interconnections of school autonomy and teacher leadership

TALIS principal's questionnaire (OECD, 2014a) included some questions about the level of school autonomy and about the responsibility for taking some decisions at the school level (principal, financial manager, department heads, teachers, representative(s) from school, parents or guardians, students).

As the TALIS 2013 results prove, in some spheres schools may be more autonomous, in the others – less autonomous. For example, they might have the right to appoint teachers but cannot establish teachers' starting salaries including setting payscales, etc. They may demonstrate different levels of influence on establishing student disciplinary policies and procedure, choosing learning materials, determining course content, etc. Schools are getting more autonomy in most European school systems; however, there has been relatively little research into interconnection of teacher leadership and school autonomy.

Table 1 demonstrates teachers' distribution at schools where by principals' responses the schools have the key responsibility for decision taking in some aspects. As teacher leadership is all about influence, it is important to see their ability to influence different aspects of school life.

Table 1. Teachers' distribution at schools where by principals' responses the schools have the key responsibility for decision taking in some aspects (%)

TASKS	SCHOOL RESPONSIBILITY (ALL SCHOOL AGENTS INCLUDING TEACHERS)		TEACHERS' RESPONSIBILITY
	UKRAINE AVERAGE	TALIS AVERAGE	UKRAINE AVERAGE
Appointing or hiring teachers	65.7	74.7	1.2
Dismissing or suspending teachers from employment	54.1	68.4	3.0
Establishing teachers' starting salaries, including setting payscales	23.5	35.9	1.2
Determining teachers' salary increases	20.3	37.1	4.2
Deciding on budget allocations within the school	45.4	82.5	5.5
Establishing student disciplinary policies and procedures	98.8	95.8	50.9
Establishing student assessment policies, including national/regional	75.1	79.1	50.3
Choosing which learning materials are used	100.0	81.2	2.4
Determining course content, including national/regional curricula	94.0	94.0	88.5
Deciding which courses are offered	86.9	64.6	68.5

Source: OECD, 2014a; UERA database, 2017.

The research produces clear evidence that all Ukrainian teachers work at schools where approving students for admission is the school responsibility (the TALIS 2013 average is 81.2%). Nearly all Ukrainian

schools (98.8%) enjoy freedom in establishing student disciplinary policies and procedures (the TALIS 2013 average is 95.8%). 94% of Ukrainian teachers work at schools that have the right to choose which learning materials are used (TALIS 2013 results are similar). Establishing student assessment policies and determining course content are also attributed to the school responsibility at the schools which are the place of work for 75% of Ukrainian teachers.

However, less than 40% teachers participating in TALIS 2013 work at schools which can influence some financial issues dealing with establishing teachers starting salary, determining teachers salary increases and deciding on budget allocations within the school. In Ukraine, the collected data shows an even lower level of impact on financial issues with only 23.5% of teachers working at schools that influence establishing teachers starting salary and 20.3% of teachers working at schools with an impact on determining teachers salary increases.

According to some TALIS 2013 principals' responses, there are some countries (Czech Republic, Estonian, the Netherlands, Slovak Republic, United Kingdom) where schools enjoy a great degree of school autonomy in most spheres. In Ukraine, however, the schools have autonomy which is selective. By selective autonomy, we mean the ability of the school to take the responsibilities unless the decisions have an impact on financial matters.

With the current state of school autonomy in Ukraine we should bear in mind that the sphere of teachers' responsibility depends on the sphere of school responsibility. Owing to the fact that the school responsibility is distributed between the principal, financial manager, department heads, parents and teachers, the latter have the sphere of responsibility which is much narrower than that borne by the school.

The provided evidence drives us to the logical conclusion that Ukrainian teachers do not have a sufficient impact on educational policy, school administration, state standards and other issues.

Role of teacher leaders in forming school culture
Many different descriptions of school culture can be found in articles and scholarly books. Some publications focus on the school culture which contributes to teacher leadership flourishing. They are common in admitting that the productive in this respect school culture should

rely on collegial environment, problem-solving orientation, trust, and clear communication (Educator Effectiveness, 2015). There has been some research devoted to the role of teacher leaders in forming school culture. For instance, in the research described by Roby the following conclusions have been drawn: "Initiating open dialogue to tackle key issues that were confirmed by the survey results would give teacher leaders a chance to potentially change negative aspects of school culture. Trust building, managing change, and strengthening relationships of educators at the workplace are key items the survey revealed that need to be addressed by teacher leaders and school administrators" (Roby, 2017)

A part of TALIS teacher's and principal's Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) 2013 questionnaires (OECD, 2014a; OECD, 2014b) included some questions about distributive leadership, that is how the responsibilities are delegated. For getting the information, the questionnaire asked both the principals and the teachers to define to what extent they agree with the following statements:

→ This school provides staff with opportunities to actively participate in school decisions
→ This school has a culture of shared responsibility for school issues
→ There is a collaborative school culture which is characterised by mutual support

Table 2 provides the information which can be used for comparing the attitudes to the same issues viewed at the principals' and teachers' angle.

Table 2. School decisions and collaborative school culture: Percentage of principals and teachers who *'strongly disagree', 'disagree', 'agree' or 'strongly agree'* with the following statement about their school

		UKRAINIAN PRINCIPALS	TALIS PRINCIPALS AVERAGE	UKRAINIAN TEACHERS	TALIS TEACHERS AVERAGE
This school provides staff with opportunities to actively participate in school decisions	Strongly disagree	3.5	0.3	2.9	6.3
	Disagree	0.0	1.8	13.6	20.4
	Agree	70.6	64.6	67.8	61.9
	Strongly agree	25.9	33.2	15.6	11.4
I make the important decisions on my own	Strongly disagree	10.4	18.3	-	-
	Disagree	62.2	47.1	-	-
	Agree	23.9	28	-	-
	Strongly agree	3.5	6.6	-	-
This school has a culture of shared responsibility for school issues	Strongly disagree	-	-	2.0	4.4
	Disagree	-	-	10.7	21.1
	Agree	-	-	69.4	62.8
	Strongly agree	-	-	18.0	11.7
There is a collaborative school culture which is characterised by mutual support	Strongly disagree	2.0	0.5	1.8	4.3
	Disagree	11.0	4.3	9.5	18.3
	Agree	72.0	62.7	67.9	62.1
	Strongly agree	15.0	32.5	20.8	15.3

"-" – the questionnaire did not contain the question

Source: OECD, 2014a; UERA database, 2017

As seen from table 2, most Ukrainian principals as well as the principals participating in TALIS 2013 claim that at their schools, there is a collaborative school culture which is characterised by mutual support (87% and 95.2%) and providing their staff with opportunities to actively participate in school decisions (96.5 and 97.8%).

If compared, principals' and teachers' responses are somewhat different in their description of their school culture. For instance, 33.2% of the surveyed principals strongly believe that their school provides staff with opportunities to actively participate in school decisions whereas only 15,6% of teachers share the same idea. The next example concerns the statement that there is a collaborative school culture which is characterised by mutual support. Only 15% of school principals enjoy such state of things while 20.8% of teachers believe it to be true. These examples may demonstrate different approaches of official school leaders and teachers to understanding what 'collaborative school culture is' and different expectations as to what it may mean to them. School principals may believe that they collaborative school culture is about delegating responsibilities while teachers may believe that it is about getting more rights and freedom in taking important decisions.

Another issue concerns the sphere of teachers' responsibilities. In Ukraine, school principals do not take responsibility for staff and financial issues, consequently, teachers' responsibilities predominantly deal with academic issues. Therefore it deprives the teachers of the possibility to apply their leadership to performing different roles in the spheres other than teaching.

Teacher leaders and their influence on teachers' professional development

As teacher leaders are characterized by their ability to influence school improvement, it is important that we should seek evidence of their ability to influence teachers' professional development. To examine these issues, TALIS adopts a broad definition of professional development among teachers: "Professional development' is defined as activities that aim to develop an individual's skills, knowledge, expertise and other characteristics as a teacher" (OECD, 2009, p. 49).

The most visible ways that might give evidence to teachers' ability to influence professional development are as follows:
  → Teachers' current involvement in mentoring activities
  → Teachers' professional development and support
  → Teachers as evaluators through their providing formal and informal feedback to other teachers

Teachers' current involvement in mentoring activities

There has been extensive research as for how mentorship can influence different aspects of schooling and educational policy. There is Mentoring Leadership and Resource Network which is an ASCD network dedicated to supporting educators everywhere with best practices in mentoring and induction. For six years, the network has provided assistance and free advice to mentors and mentoring programs (MLRN: The Mentoring Leadership And Resource Network, 2017).

In the publications, the mentoring process is understood in different ways. As Koki states „mentoring is a complex and multi-dimensional process of guiding, teaching, influencing and supporting a beginning or new teacher. It is generally accepted that a mentor teacher leads, guides and advises another teacher more junior in experience in a work situation characterized by mutual trust and belief " (Koki, 2015, p. 3). Process of mentoring can help to extend „far beyond supporting the induction of new teachers into the school system through professional guidance and encouragement" (*ibidem*). It is about beliefs, values and teacher leadership. The idea has been proved by a number of researchers where mentoring is closely linked to the concept of school leadership.

In Ukraine, mentoring is more associated with professional guidance. The difference in terminology caused some difficulties in completing the questionnaire and required additional explanation. As a result, the responses can concern the combination of different types of teacher support: tutoring, mentoring and coaching as there is no differentiation between them in Ukrainian scholarly publications. Officially, mentors are appointed to any novice teacher that is a teacher who has a teaching experience which is less than three years. There are some schools in Ukraine with formal Novice Teachers' Schools within them. They are official institutions organizing consultancy and spreading more experienced teachers' expertise.

In TALIS questionnaires, mentoring is defined as a support structure at schools where more experienced teachers support less experienced teachers. This structure might involve all teachers in the school or only new teachers. By TALIS 2013 results, in most countries mentoring programmes are becoming the prevailing form of teachers' professional socialization. They are aimed at assisting novice teachers' (and a broader teacher community) professional induction and development.

The TALIS principal's questionnaire sought information about teachers' involvement in mentoring programs. As seen from principals' answers, only 10.8% of Ukrainian teachers work at schools without current mentoring programmes (Table 3). In the TALIS 2013 countries, nearly quarter of teachers do not have access to mentorship. There are some countries where mentoring programmes are not active (Chile, Finland, Mexico, Portugal, Spain), whereas there are countries offering mentoring programmes to a broad community of teachers (Australia, Croatia, the Netherlands, United Kingdom, Serbia, etc.).

Table 3. Mentoring programmes at Ukrainian schools (%)

		UKRAINE AVERAGE	TALIS AVERAGE
ACCESS TO MENTORING PROGRAMMES (PRINCIPALS' RESPONSES)	Novice teachers	47.1	27.0
	Teachers with less than 5 years experience	19.3	22.2
	All school teachers	22.8	24.9
	There is no mentoring programmes	10.8	25.8
ACCESS TO MENTORING PROGRAMMES (TEACHERS' RESPONSES)	Teachers who have mentors	15.9	12.8
	Teachers who are mentors	25.8	14.2

Source: OECD, 2014a; UERA database, 2017.

In Ukraine, most teachers (90.7%) work at schools where mentors teach the same subject as the novice teachers (middle column of Table 5). However, there are countries (the Netherlands and Belgium) where in mentoring programmes the taught subject is not necessarily taken into account. The TALIS peculiarity is that the data are gathered at different angles, as the same questions are answered by principals and teachers. The last column of the table demonstrates the teachers' answers to the questions about mentoring. 25.8% of Ukrainian teachers answer that they are mentoring one or more teachers. 15.9% of Ukrainian teachers have a mentor who supports them in their professional socialization. Most countries are characterized by a situation when the percentage of teachers who have mentors is much lower than the percentage of teachers who (by evidence taken from principals'

responses) work at schools with current mentoring programmes. This can be attributed to the fact that some teachers are currently in the mentors' role. Nevertheless, the situations where the difference is strikingly big may cause some anxiety as it may mean that some teachers are not interested in having mentors or that there is no the culture of partnership at some schools. For instance, in the Netherlands, 71% of teachers work at schools with access to mentoring programmes whereas only 17% of teachers have their own mentors; in Romania, the percentage is 53% and 8% respectively. In Ukraine this difference between 22.8% and 15.9% that is quite acceptable.

Tables 4 and 5 demonstrate some characteristics (gender, work experience, employment status, and weekly hours of work) of teachers who report that they have appointed mentors and the teachers who work as mentors.

Table 4. Distribution of teachers who have appointed mentors by gender, work experience, employment status, weekly hours of work: Percentage of teachers who have mentors

		UKRAINE AVERAGE	TALIS AVERAGE
GENDER	Male	18.2	13.3
	Female	15.4	12.5
WORK EXPERIENCE	0 to 5 years of experience as a teacher in total	62.1	24.8
	More than 5 years of experience as a teacher in total	10.0	9.6
EMPLOYMENT STATUS	Permanent employment	15.1	11.0
	Fixed-term contract	34.6	24.2
WEEKLY HOUR OF WORK	Worked less than 30 hours in the most recent complete calendar week	20.7	12.6
	Worked 30 and more hours in the most recent complete calendar week	15.0	12.8

Source: OECD, 2014b; UERA database, 2017.

Table 5. Distribution of mentor teachers by gender, work experience, employment status, weekly hours of work: Percentage of teachers who are mentors

		UKRAINE AVERAGE	TALIS AVERAGE
GENDER	Male	18.4	14.0
	Female	27.2	14.0
WORK EXPERIENCE	0 to 5 years of experience as a teacher in total	3.8	6.0
	More than 5 years of experience as a teacher in total	28.7	16.4
EMPLOYMENT STATUS	Permanent employment	26.4	15.6
	Fixed-term contract	14.4	6.4
WEEKLY HOURS OF WORK	Worked less than 30 hours in the most recent complete calendar week	21.5	12.7
	Worked 30 and more hours in the most recent complete calendar week	26.5	14.7

Source: OECD, 2014b; UERA database, 2017.

The data show that among Ukrainian teachers who have mentors 18.2% are male and 15.4% are female. What differs Ukrainian responses from the TALIS average is that much more female (27.2%) than male teachers (18.4%) provide mentoring to other teachers. In TALIS 2013 the percentage is nearly the same.

It is quite natural that teachers with five and more years of experience more often take the roles of mentors (28.7%) than the mentored ones (10.0%). As those surveyed claim, in Ukraine, 62.1% of teachers who have 5 or fewer years of experience have appointed mentors (average TALIS 2013 percentage is 24.8%). However the questionnaire does not address the issues revealing the nature of the mentoring programmes, neither it shows the level of their efficiency. Some further research is needed to go into the nature of mentoring programmes in Ukraine as the fact of having appointed mentor does not mean getting real expert support in induction and further professional development.

As in most TALIS countries, teachers with permanent employment more often take the mentor's role (26.4%), than have mentors

themselves (15.1%). As the received evidence show, among the teachers who work less than 30 hours a week, there is roughly the same percentage of those who work as mentors (21.5%) and those who have mentors (20.7%). Those who claim that they work more than 30 weekly hours more often perform mentor's role (26.5%).

Teachers' professional development and support

The TALIS team admits that teachers' professional development has a long-term positive effect on students' achievements (OECD, 2014). There is also some recent research that explores teacher leadership and professional development from a number of perspectives. It shows that a lot of teacher leaders emerge from a multitude of professional development activities and initiatives (Alexandrou, Swaffield, 2016). As a result, policymakers directly associate teachers' professional development with chances to improve educational systems. In this, teacher leadership plays one of the most important roles.

TALIS sought evidence of teachers' professional development by asking questions about teachers' participation in different professional development activities and their duration (in the period of the last 12 months) including activities taking place during weekends, evenings or other off work hours. In Ukraine, 98.2% of teachers claim that they have participated in at least one professional development activities in the 12 months prior to completing the questionnaire. The TALIS 2013 average is 88.4% which proves that teachers' professional development is paid much attention to.

Table 6 demonstrates participation rates and reported the personal financial cost of professional development activities undertaken by lower secondary education teachers in the 12 months prior to the survey. The second column provides information about the percentage of teachers who report that they have participated in at least one professional development activities without any support from the school (18.2% for Ukraine and 5.7% for TALIS average). The last three columns of the table demonstrated the percentage of teachers who had to pay for none, some or all of the professional development activities undertaken. In fact, two-thirds of the surveyed answered that they did not pay for the participation in professional development activities.

Table 6. Teachers' recent professional development and personal cost involved (%)

		UKRAINE AVERAGE	TALIS AVERAGE
Percentage of teachers who undertook some professional development activities in the previous 12 months		98.2	88.4
Percentage of teachers who undertook some professional development activities in the previous 12 months without any type of support		18.2	5.7
Percentage of teachers who had to pay for none, some or all of the professional development activities undertaken	None	73.6	66.1
	Some	17.7	25.2
	All	8.7	8.6

Source: OECD, 2014b; UERA database, 2017.

In Ukraine, the percentage of teachers who report that they have paid for professional development programmes (8.7%) is nearly the same as TALIS average (8.6%). The data provided by TALIS 2013 give clear evidence that the percentage of teachers actively participating in professional development programmes is higher in the countries providing support to the teachers. The programmes provided by universities and colleges and aimed at giving teachers higher qualification levels usually involve more resources and therefore fully and partially paid for (OECD, 2014). For Ukraine, the situation is quite common as secondary and higher educational establishments are financed from different sources.

Table 7 demonstrates the dependence of the surveyed teachers' participation rates in professional development programmes on some characteristics including gender, experience, work status, and hours of work per week.

The evidence shows that the percentage of female teachers who participated in professional development activities (98.3%) is somewhat higher than the percentage of male teachers (97.9%) though the difference is quite slight. A noticeable difference in TALIS 2013 countries is observed only in the Czech Republic and Italy where female outnumbered male teachers by about 9%. As to the correlation of work experience and participation in professional development activities

it should be noted that Ukrainian teachers with more than 5 years in profession demonstrated higher activity in participation compared to teachers with 5 and fewer years of work in education (95.9%).

Table 7. Teachers' recent professional development, by work status, experience and gender (%)

		UKRAINE AVERAGE	TALIS AVERAGE
GENDER	Male	97.9	86.8
	Female	98.3	88.9
EXPERIENCE	5 years teaching experience or less	95.9	86.5
	more than 5 years teaching experience	98.6	88.8
WORK STATUS	Permanent teachers	98.4	89.1
	Fixed-term teachers	94.7	84.6
HOURS OF WORK PER WEEK	Less than 30 hours per week	94.6	84.2
	30 hours per week or more	98.9	89.6

Source: OECD, 2014b; UERA database, 2017.

Similarly to TALIS 2013 countries, Ukrainian permanent teachers (98.4%) seem more interested in professional development than fixed-term teachers (94.7%). The same situation is observed with teachers working 30 hours per week or more (98.9%) compared to teachers working less than 30 hours per week (94.6%). In the average, in TALIS countries the teachers who work at state schools are more active in professional development programmes than those working at private schools. Nevertheless, there are countries with higher participation rates on the part of private school teachers (for instance, in Portugal, Slovak Republic, and Spain the difference is up to 6%). It would be wrong to make a conclusion about the situation in Ukraine based on

the described research as the sampling included only one private school. In general, in Ukraine, most of the schools are state ones with only less than 1% private schools.

The research sought information about the types of professional development programmes most often offered to and taken by Ukrainian teachers. In the TALIS questionnaire (OECD, 2014b) the list included both formal and informal activities, and the conducted research provided us with the information about Ukrainian teachers' participation in them. Moreover, it provided the information that can be used for comparing Ukrainian situation with that peculiar to some countries participating in TALIS 2013.

The survey results demonstrate that the professional development activities that are the most popular with Ukrainian teachers are education conferences or seminars (where teachers and/or researchers present their research results and discuss educational issues) and participation in a network of teachers formed specifically for the professional development of teachers.

With 86,4% of teachers reporting their participation in educational conferences and seminars, Ukraine rates very high among TALIS countries where the average is 43.6%. The highest percentage is demonstrated by Croatia (79%) while there are some countries where the percentage is less than 25%: Czech Republic (22%), France (20%), Slovak Republic (25%), Spain (24%) and Belgium (Flanders) (23%). Far from being too optimistic, we assume that in different countries there is a different understanding of what educational conference/ seminar is. In Ukraine, those surveyed might mean any gathering where educational issues are discussed which do not imply either prior preparation or presenting the research carried out by the teachers.

Another common practice in Ukrainian teachers' professional development is their participation in specifically formed networks of teachers (85.4%). The percentage is much higher than the TALIS average which is 36.9%. The TALIS scale in this respect is quite broad – from 17% as the lowest (Czech Republic) to 63% as the highest (Croatia). Such a broad scale may mean a different understanding of the professional teachers' networks and different degree of their formality in different countries. In Ukraine, the teachers are members of the so-called methodological unions that are formal structures aiming at sharing the best educational practices.

The received data show that 65.4% of Ukrainian teachers participated in some courses or workshops (e.g., on subject matter or methods and/or other education-related topics) which in the average took them 10.6 days. TALIS average in this respect is 70.9% and 8.5 days. The lower percentage is demonstrated by Italy (51%), Romania (52%) and Slovak Republic (39%).

As reported (see figure 1), mentoring and/or peer observation and coaching, as part of a formal school arrangement are practiced by 67.9% of Ukrainian teachers, the percentage being really high with the TALIS average of 29.5%. As mentioned above, less than quarter of Ukrainian teachers work as mentors which may mean that such a high percentage is demonstrated due to active peer observation at Ukrainian schools. It is proved by the fact that 69,6% of Ukrainian teachers report participating in observation visits to other schools.

On the one hand, 55.9% of Ukrainian teachers claim that they participate in individual or collaborative research on a topic of professional interest and 43.8% take qualification programme (e.g., a degree programme), on the other hand, Ukraine demonstrates the lowest percentage of teachers who have Ph.D. or higher degrees.

Another aspect that requires further research is school-community partnership for creating the opportunities for fostering teacher leaders through their professional development. What the research clearly shows is that there is no real partnership of the school with business, public organisations, and non-governmental organisations. The evidence can reinforce the argument as not many Ukrainian teachers participate in observation visits to their premises (20,2%) or in in-service training courses organized by business, public organisations, or non-governmental organisations.

Figure 1. Type of professional development recently undertaken by teachers:

Participation rates for each type of professional development reported to be undertaken by lower secondary education teachers in the 12 months prior to the survey (%)
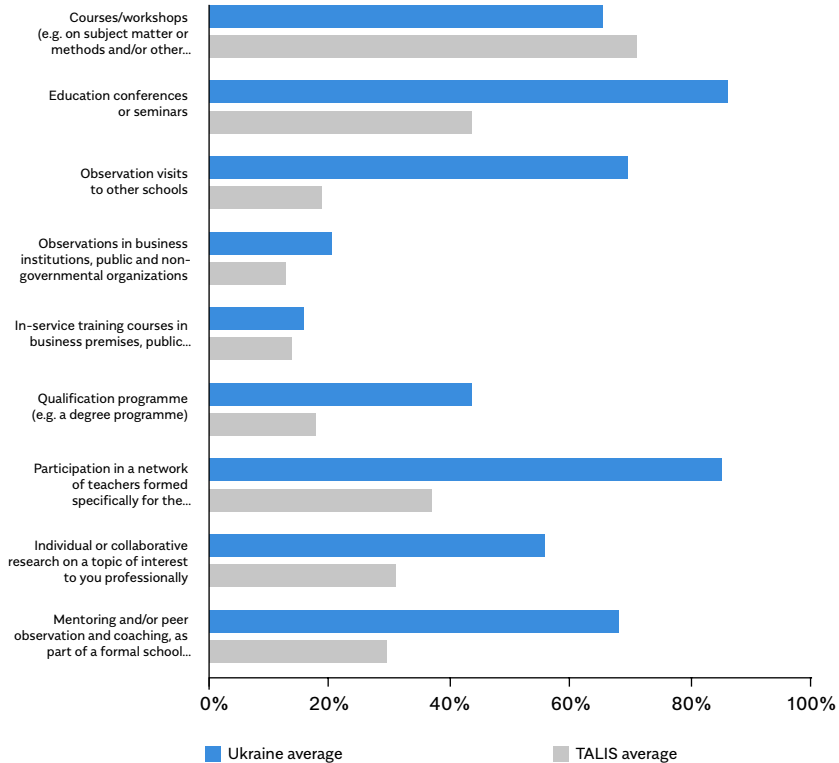
Source: OECD, 2014b; UERA database, 2017.

In the questionnaire, the teachers were asked about the positive impact of professional development activities dealing with different aspects. The surveyed Ukrainian teachers reported different levels of impact varying from 16.7% (Teaching in a multicultural or multilingual setting) to 92.0% (Pedagogical competencies in teaching their subject field(s)) (see figure 2). More than 75% admitted the positive impact of the following aspects: knowledge and understanding of their subject field(s) (90.9%); student evaluation and assessment practices (78.5%); new technologies in the workplace (76.9%). In all these

aspects, Ukrainian teachers demonstrated higher percentage than the TALIS 2013 average. Nevertheless, the percentage of Ukrainian teachers who admitted the positive impact of school management and administration (17.2%) and teaching students with special needs (22.2%) on their professional development is considerably lower than the TALIS 2013 average.

Figure 2. Content and positive impact of professional development activities, Ukraine (%)
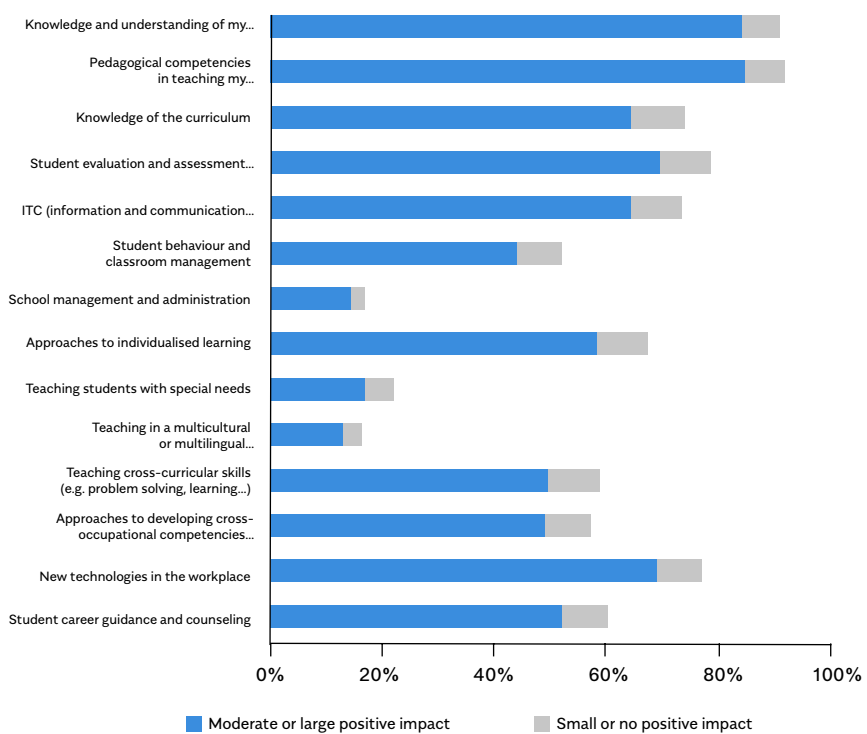
Source: OECD, 2014b; UERA database, 2017.

Teaching students with special needs has internationally been mentioned as one of the most important issues to tackle in professional development. However, only 5.6% of Ukrainian teachers reported that it should be included in professional development programmes. They are mostly interested in ICT (information and communication technology)

skills for teaching (14.1%) and new technologies in the workplace (16.8%) (see figure 3).

Figure 3. Teachers' needs for professional development
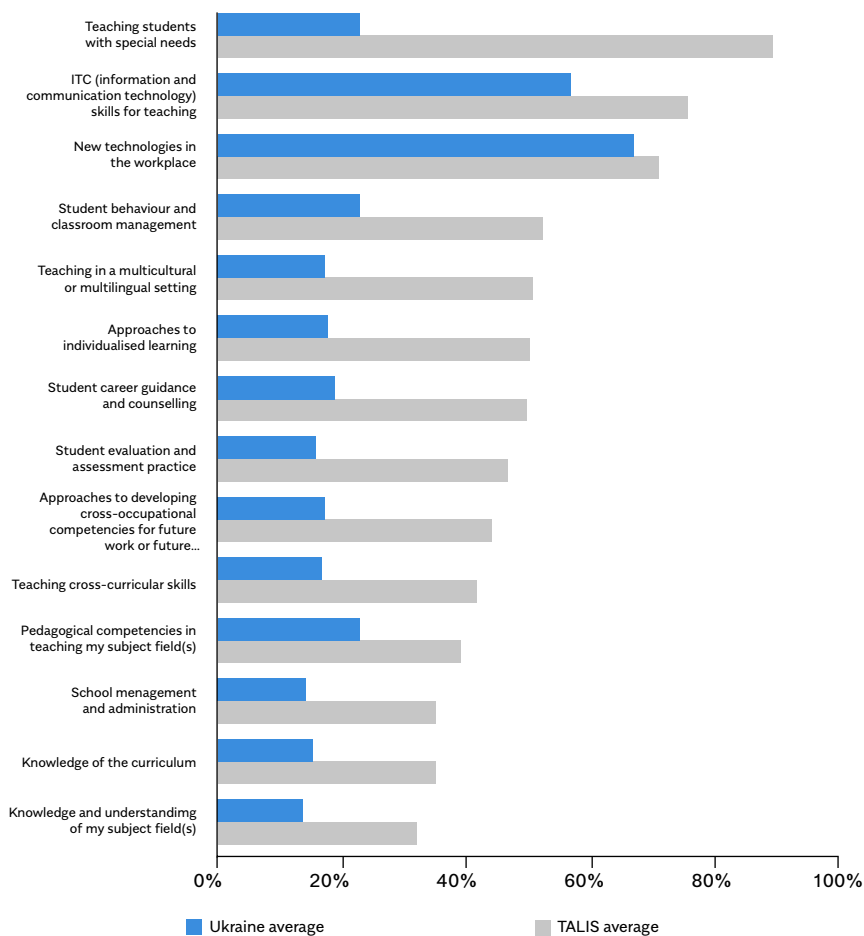
Source: OECD, 2014b; UERA database, 2017.

As the evidence shows (Table 8), the main barrier to teachers' professional development in Ukraine and in TALIS countries are that professional development conflicts with their work schedule (54% of etchers in Ukraine and 50.6% of teachers in the average

in TALIS 2013 countries). The next important barrier to successful teacher professional development is the absence of incentives for participating in such activities (50.2% for Ukraine and 48% for the TALIS 2013 countries). It should be noted that less than 23.8% of Ukrainian teachers consider professional development too expensive/unaffordable. The percentage is much higher in Italy (83%), Portugal (85%) and Spain (80%) which shows that it is a serious problem for the countries where teachers have to fully or partially cover the expenses of the professional development programmes.

Table 8. Barriers to teachers' participation in professional development (%)

Percentage of lower secondary education teachers indicating that

they *"agree"* or *"strongly agree"* that the following reasons represent

barriers to their participation in professional development

BARRIERS TO TEACHERS' PARTICIPATION	UKRAINE AVERAGE	TALIS AVERAGE
I do not have the pre-requisites (e.g. qualifications, experience, seniority)	4.9	11.1
Professional development is too expensive/unaffordable	23.8	43.8
There is a lack of employer support	16.5	31.6
Professional development conflicts with my work Schedule	54.0	50.6
Professional development conflicts with my work Schedule	11.5	35.7
There is no relevant professional development offered	18.8	39.0
There are no incentives for participating in such activities	50.2	48.0

Source: OECD, 2014b; UERA database, 2017.

Teachers as evaluators through their providing formal and informal feedback to other teachers

Teacher appraisal and feedback are important components of teachers leadership. The primary purpose is to provide teachers with valuable input to better understand and improve their teaching practice. However, teacher appraisal and feedback can also be used to identify

professional development or career opportunities for teachers. They can significantly improve teachers' understanding of their teaching methods, teaching practices, and student learning. (Santiago, Benavides, 2009). They help teachers improve their teaching skills by identifying and developing specific aspects of their teaching and can improve the way teachers relate to students (Gates Foundation, 2010). As defined in TALIS, teacher assessment and feedback occurs when a teacher's work is reviewed by the school principal, an external inspector, or the teacher's colleagues (OECD, 2009). Broadly, such evaluations provide an important, and often unique, opportunity for teachers to receive feedback on their work and serve as a means of identifying what is and is not working in the classroom and why (Behn, 2003).

Table 9 demonstrates the percentage of teachers who claim to receive feedback from different sources or did not receive feedback either. To define external individuals or bodies, as used below, TALIS refers to inspectors, municipality representatives, or other persons from outside the school (OECD, 2014b).

Table 9. Sources of evaluation providing formal and informal feedback to other teachers

		UKRAINE AVERAGE	TALIS AVERAGE
Teachers received feedback as to their work from	External individuals or bodies	62.2	28.9
	School principal	84.4	54.3
	Member(s) of school management team	93.9	49.3
	Assigned mentors	24.4	19.2
	Other teachers (not a part of the management team)	44.8	41.9
Teachers never received any feedback as to their work		0.6	12.5

Source: OECD, 2014b; UERA database, 2017.

According to TALIS 2013, the average rate of the countries interviewed indicates that 87.5% of teachers receive school feedback. In this regard, Ukraine is significantly above the average, demonstrating 99.4% of teachers who receive feedback on their work. At the same time, there are differences between the predominant sources of

feedback in Ukraine and other groups of countries. Thus, Ukrainian teachers are much more likely to receive feedback from external bodies or individuals than their colleagues from TALIS 2013 countries (62.2% and 28.9%), from the members of the school administration (93.9% and 49.3%) and the school principal (84.4% and 54.3%). The indicators of feedback from peers and mentor-teachers are close to international indicators.

When interviewing Ukrainian teachers, the study sought information about the methods used to provide feedback. These methods included feedback on the basis of direct observation of classroom teaching, student surveys about teaching, assessment of content knowledge, an analysis of students' test scores, self-assessment of teachers work (e.g., presentation of a portfolio assessment) and surveys or discussions with parents or guardians. Table 10 shows the percentage of teachers who claim they have received feedback using such forms and methods.

Table 10. Forms and methods of feedback to teachers (average)

	UKRAINIAN AVERAGE	TALIS AVERAGE
Direct observation of classroom teaching	98.7	78.8
Students' surveys about teaching	90.8	53.3
Assessment of field knowledge	92.1	54.8
An analysis of students' test results	93.1	63.6
Self-assessment of teachers work	92.1	52.7
Surveys or discussions with parents or guardians	84.2	53.4

Źródło: OECD, 2014b; Baza danych UERA, 2017 r.

Regarding each feedback method, Ukraine shows the higher percentage of teachers who claim they receive feedback from this method then the average of TALIS countries, OECD members, and PISA leaders. The feedback following direct observation of classroom teaching is recognized as the most common method in Ukraine for providing feedback to teachers about their work (98.7%). The vast majority of Ukrainian teachers argue that one of the most common methods for providing feedback is the analysis of students' test scores

(93.1%), assessment of content knowledge (92.1%), and the results of the students' surveys about teaching (90.8%). The discussions with parents or guardians are estimated to be the lowest.

Together with the methods of getting feedback TALIS study sought information about areas, which are applied to give a feedback. The questionnaire provides eleven aspects of schooling that were presented to teachers.

Table 11 demonstrates eleven key areas of feedback to teachers in Ukraine presented in an increasing order. Into account was taken the percentage of teachers who emphasized the following areas as "important" or "very important" for receiving feedback. For comparison, the average data of the international TALIS survey is given.

Table 11. Areas applied to give feedback

	UKRAINIAN TEACHERS	TALIS AVERAGE
Student performance	87.3	87.5
Knowledge and understanding of the subject field(s)	88.7	83.5
Pedagogical competencies in teaching my subject field(s)	89.6	86.8
Student assessment practices	85.0	83.0
Student behaviour and classroom management	77.5	86.9
Teaching of students with special needs	25.7	68.7
Teaching in a multicultural or multilingual setting	19.2	43.7
The feedback provided to other teachers to improve their teaching	40.7	57.4
Feedback from parents or guardians	48.2	70.8
Student feedback	56.1	79.1
Collaboration or working with other teachers	73.6	80.7

Source: OECD, 2014b; UERA database, 2017.

The information provided by the two groups of teachers demonstrates an equally significant level of importance for students' performance when providing feedback to teachers about their work (87.3% and

87.5%). The replies of Ukrainian respondents and respondents from the TALIS survey on average about pedagogical competencies in teaching the subject field(s) vary in a small amount (89.6% and 86.8% respectively). As well as minor variations are seen between countries in areas of knowledge and understanding of the subject field(s) (88.7% and 83.5%), and assessment of students' skills (85.0% and 83.0%). To some extent, indicators on areas: of students behaviour and classroom management (77.5% and 86.9%), feedback provided to other teachers to improve their teaching (40.7% and 57.4%), assessment of teachers by students (56.1% and 79.1%), as well as the assessment of teachers by parents or guardians (48.2% and 70.8%) are given less value by Ukrainian teachers when receiving feedback.

No doubt, regardless of any specific form of teacher assessment and feedback, they look very fair and accurate ways of teachers' appraisal. Though classroom observations is regarded as the most common assessment tool used in all above-mentioned countries (Ukraine, TALIS countries), the teachers' surveys, teacher-developed portfolios, and student outcomes may also be a useful instrument for teachers' professional development, depending on the context. Regardless of the specific ways of feedback for teachers, as discussed above, it is clear that they hold the potential to impact teachers' leadership through their professional development.

Discussion

As outlined in this paper, teacher leadership has a powerful potential for introducing change into education. Nevertheless, in Ukraine, this opportunity is somewhat underestimated and is not paid proper attention to. First of all, it is seen through the interconnection of teacher leadership and school autonomy. As long as the school enjoys a selective autonomy without having a real impact on all the spheres of school life we cannot speak about teacher leadership in all its dimensions. If the school is deeply stuck in the web of state control and imposed values and beliefs, no teacher leadership may flourish. Educational, financial and administrative issues are all closely connected each other in the education, thus without the possibility to influence all of them teachers cannot be free to take decisions concerning the life of the school community. In our opinion, it is more the matter of trust, when the state is not ready to entrust the teachers with the freedom to decide

on the principal issues in the sphere of their expertise. On the other hand, without gaining this freedom, teachers do not learn to take a real responsibility which is the cornerstone of teacher leadership.

In the line with the first issue comes the role of teacher leadership in forming school culture which is based on collegial environment, problem-solving orientation, trust, and clear communication. All experience tends to show that a lot of new teachers come to school believing that they can change the world of education for the better. Then, when they get in the narrow corner of school life where they cannot see 'the big picture' and cannot take even minor decisions, they can get disappointed and experience a professional burnout.

It seems to us that doing meaningful long-term tasks dealing with school administration can bring about the teacher leadership. What is even more important in this respect is that the teachers should have a clear vision of the future of their school. If they have a shared vision, they will contribute to developing the strategies as well as to organizing pioneering practices in school. By 'shared vision' we mean the picture of the school development created by teachers and school administration in mutual respect and collaboration. As seen from the research, teachers and official school leadership team see their school culture differently. At this point, we again refer to freedom and responsibility entrusted to teachers as the main prerequisites for fostering teacher leadership.

Another principal thing about teacher leadership is active participation and honest feedback on everything what is going on at their school. The teachers should voice out the opinions they have and not what the others could anticipate to hear from them. The matter of integrity is crucial not only for today's educationalists in the field of theory but also for educational practitioners. As feedback is an important issue to tackle, the teacher leaders should learn to give it to their students and colleagues. It is also important for teachers' continuing professional development. In Ukraine, teachers have sufficient opportunities to participate in professional development activities. It is also important that they should actively participate in organizing the activities and on deciding what is important for them. Then the teacher leaders can lead the others to positive changes in their school and education in general.

Together, our findings lead to the conclusion that though teacher leaders are in high demand in Ukraine, there are some crucial problems

to solve before they can enrich all spheres of school life with their zest and creativity.

Although further work is required to gain a more complete understanding of how teacher leaders can help their colleagues to implement effective teaching strategies, how they can ensure consistent curriculum implementation throughout a school, how they can engage their peers in using data to strengthen the instruction, as well as how they can participate in developing a shared vision in the process of breaking the status quo and looking for better ways.

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