



DETERMINANTS AND FORMATION OF WOMEN'S INNOVATIVE POTENTIAL IN THE CONTEXT OF NEW UZBEKISTAN: A SOCIAL-PHILOSOPHICAL AND EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS

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Abstract: The formation of women's innovative potential has become one of the key priorities for achieving sustainable social development, strengthening human capital, and promoting gender equality in contemporary Uzbekistan. This study aims to examine the social-philosophical foundations, determinants, and development mechanisms of women's innovative potential within the context of ongoing socio-economic and digital transformations.

The research employs a mixed-methods approach, regression, correlation, factor analysis, reliability, and Cronbach's alpha, SEM, and SPSS, combining social-philosophical analysis with empirical data obtained through a sociological survey. The study applies comparative, systemic, axiological, and empirical methods to identify the factors influencing women's innovative potential and to evaluate their role in enhancing social participation and innovation capacity. The findings reveal that education, digital competencies, institutional support, social values, leadership



opportunities, and innovative culture are the primary determinants shaping women's innovative potential. Furthermore, the study proposes a conceptual framework that integrates human capital, innovation, and social-philosophical perspectives to explain the formation of women's innovative potential. The results contribute to the theoretical understanding of gender and innovation while offering practical recommendations for strengthening national policies aimed at women's empowerment and sustainable development in Uzbekistan.

Keywords: Women's innovative potential; social philosophy; human capital; gender equality; innovation; innovative competence; digital transformation; women's empowerment; sustainable development; Uzbekistan

Introduction:

The modernization processes taking place in Uzbekistan, together with the widespread dissemination and implementation of innovations, have created favorable conditions for the transformation of human potential into an increasingly innovation-oriented capacity. Investment in innovation undoubtedly accelerates the development and enhancement of innovative potential. However, innovation-driven development depends not only on financial investment but also on scientific, intellectual, technological, cultural, and spiritual investments, all of which play a significant role in promoting sustainable social progress and increasing national competitiveness. One of Uzbekistan's strategic priorities is to become a developed, rapidly advancing country. Achieving this objective requires continuous reforms, knowledge-based development, and innovation. As President Shavkat Mirziyoyev emphasized: "Having set ourselves the goal of transforming Uzbekistan into a developed country, we can achieve this only through accelerated reforms, science, education, and innovation. To this end, it is essential to enhance the practical effectiveness of reforms and encourage our people to become more active and initiative-driven in promoting new ideas and initiatives at the local level"[1.p.23]. These priorities underscore the growing importance of developing innovative potential as a key driver of socio-economic modernization and sustainable development in contemporary Uzbekistan.

As innovation advances, society is increasingly becoming an innovation-oriented system, making it essential for individuals to become more socially active and adaptive. This transformation requires individuals to continuously reorganize their activities around innovative approaches, effectively implement new ideas and technologies, and systematically enhance their innovative potential. Consequently, the continuous self-development and renewal of individuals as active participants in social and innovative processes have become an increasingly significant prerequisite for sustainable social development and national competitiveness. Yusuf Khas Hajib attached great importance to the value and significance of knowledge in both individual and social development. In his renowned work *Qutadg'u Bilig (Wisdom of Royal Glory)*, the character Aytoldi serves as a symbolic representation of wisdom, intellect, and the pursuit of knowledge. The author portrays Aytoldi's intellectual growth through the metaphor of the moon: as the moon gradually becomes full, Aytoldi likewise becomes more complete and elevated through the acquisition of knowledge. This literary image suggests that human perfection is achieved through continuous learning and intellectual development[2.p.14]. From a contemporary perspective, the metaphor may be interpreted as an expression of intellectual advancement, emphasizing that the accumulation of knowledge enhances an individual's cognitive capacity, critical thinking, and ability to contribute to social progress. The concepts of knowledge, intellectual capacity, and the qualities of a virtuous and wise individual are comprehensively examined in Al-Farabi's *The Virtuous City (Al-Madinah al-Fadilah)* [3.p.15].



Al-Farabi pays particular attention to the role of a knowledgeable person in society and highlights the significance of knowledge for both social development and the well-being of the community. According to the philosopher, human intellect, together with knowledge accumulated through social life and experience, produces the greatest benefit when applied to activities that serve the common good. He argues that reason should be directed exclusively toward constructive and beneficial purposes. In this sense, a truly wise person possesses intellect and employs it responsibly for the benefit of society. Among the great scholars mentioned above, Abu Ali Ibn Sina (Avicenna) occupies a distinguished position. In his philosophical thought, Ibn Sina devoted considerable attention to the concept of the complete and virtuous individual, emphasizing that a person's physical well-being and profound intellectual capacity significantly influence their social activities and overall contribution to society. He argued that the harmonious integration of physical health, intellectual excellence, and moral character—three phenomena with anthropological and epistemological significance—forms the foundation of effective and socially beneficial human activity. Such harmony enables individuals to realize their full potential and attain a respected position within society.

Furthermore, Ibn Sina maintained that human beings achieve true salvation by purifying both the soul and the self. According to him, this requires acquiring knowledge of the nature of existence and cleansing the heart and mind from moral and spiritual impurities, thereby fostering intellectual maturity and ethical perfection[4.p.70]. Al-Ghazali, one of the most influential spiritual leaders, philosophers, and theologians of the Islamic world and the author of numerous scholarly works, regarded knowledge and wisdom as among the highest virtues of human beings. He maintained that self-knowledge is the foundation of knowing God, expressing the view that a person who does not truly know oneself cannot attain genuine knowledge of the Creator. Furthermore, Al-Ghazali emphasized that the continuous pursuit of knowledge elevates the individual intellectually, morally, and spiritually, thereby contributing to both personal perfection and the well-being of society [5. p.220]. According to Abu Nasr Al-Farabi, a society, community, or state can achieve sustainable development and prosperity only when it is guided by virtuous individuals who regard moral excellence as the highest purpose of human life. In his view, a virtuous person is one who possesses moral integrity, intellectual maturity, and profound knowledge, while striving for both self-understanding and the knowledge of God. Al-Farabi further emphasizes that the path to knowing the Creator begins with understanding the created world and comprehending the order and nature of existence. Thus, the pursuit of knowledge and virtue forms the philosophical foundation for both individual perfection and the development of a just and flourishing society [3. p. 100]. Human potential is one of the most extensively explored topics in contemporary philosophical research. Contemporary studies indicate that human capital has become one of the most important determinants of innovation capability in the knowledge economy [8. pp. 381-425]. Investment in education, digital literacy, professional skills, and lifelong learning enhances individuals' capacity to generate, adopt, and commercialize innovations. In particular, strengthening women's human capital significantly contributes to entrepreneurial activity, technological adaptation, and sustainable socio-economic development. The continued scholarly interest in this concept demonstrates its enduring relevance to both social development and human life.

An analysis of philosophical studies and related academic literature indicates that human potential has become a key determinant of objective societal progress and the subjective development of individuals in the contemporary world. Consequently, the concept of potential occupies a central position in discussions concerning sustainable development, human capital, and social transformation. Various dimensions of potential—including its nature, forms,



manifestations, and realization—have been examined by numerous scholars, resulting in diverse theoretical interpretations and methodological approaches. These differing perspectives reflect the multidimensional and interdisciplinary character of the concept and underscore its significance for understanding contemporary social processes.

Literature review and methods: Recent studies have increasingly emphasized the role of human potential, innovation, and gender equality in promoting sustainable social development. Recent international research further demonstrates that women's innovative potential is shaped by the interaction of human capital, innovation capability, digital transformation, and inclusive innovation ecosystems [6.pp.1-15]. Investment in women's education, digital skills, entrepreneurial competencies, and research participation significantly enhances innovation performance and contributes to sustainable economic growth [7.pp.15-16]. Furthermore, gender-inclusive innovation policies strengthen women's participation in science, technology, entrepreneurship, and leadership, thereby improving national innovation capacity and social resilience. International organizations such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), UNESCO, the OECD, and the World Bank recognize women's innovative potential as a strategic resource for economic growth, social inclusion, and technological advancement. Contemporary scholars have examined innovation capacity from the perspectives of human capital, digital transformation, entrepreneurship, and women's empowerment. However, relatively few studies have explored women's innovative potential through a socio-philosophical perspective, particularly in the context of Uzbekistan's ongoing modernization. Therefore, this study seeks to bridge this gap by integrating philosophical concepts of human development with empirical evidence on women's innovative potential.

Ancient Greek philosophers such as Democritus, Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle highly valued knowledge as a fundamental condition for human perfection and social progress. In particular, Aristotle emphasized that intellectual abilities and advanced forms of human thinking enable individuals to act wisely and prudently in life. According to his philosophy, human reason is oriented toward freedom, responsibility, self-awareness, and the pursuit of higher goals. Thus, intellectual development is not limited to the accumulation of knowledge but is a process of moral improvement and the formation of a conscious individual capable of meaningful social action. Aristotle's philosophy demonstrates that intellectual potential is an essential component of human potential in general. From the perspective of the present study, this idea is particularly significant because women's innovative potential is also based on intellectual development, creativity, critical thinking, and the ability to apply knowledge in socially valuable activities. Therefore, cultivating intellectual capabilities is a fundamental prerequisite for enhancing individuals' innovative activity and their contribution to societal transformation.

Russian scholar T. V. Kalinina, who has conducted extensive research on the concept of human potential, defines potential as a universal characteristic that reflects the inherent capacities and abilities of an entity. According to Kalinina, potential is associated with the power or capability possessed by its bearer and may manifest in various forms, including physiological, biological, social, and psychological potential. She argues that the general concept of potential is universal because it constitutes a fundamental property of all forms of existence, through which the latent possibilities of the world are realized. From this perspective, human potential expresses the essential nature, existence, and capabilities of the individual. It is through the realization of this potential that individuals live, pursue their goals, and, most importantly, engage in meaningful social activity [6.p.16]. Kalinina's interpretation broadens understanding of human potential by emphasizing that it is not limited to innate abilities but also encompasses capacities that develop



through social interaction and personal experience. This perspective is particularly relevant to the present study, as women's innovative potential should be understood as a dynamic, multidimensional phenomenon shaped by education, professional competence, creativity, digital literacy, and the surrounding sociocultural environment. Consequently, the realization of women's innovative potential depends not only on individual capabilities but also on institutional support, equal opportunities, and innovation-oriented public policies. This sociophilosophical perspective provides the conceptual foundation for analyzing the development of women's innovative potential in contemporary Uzbekistan.

Another Russian scholar, G. B. Solntseva, interprets human potential as a reflection of the capacities of both individuals and society, emphasizing its future-oriented nature. According to Solntseva, research on human potential is inherently directed toward the future because human development lies at the center of addressing future societal challenges. She argues that the problem of human potential is essentially the problem of the future, involving the assessment, development, and effective management of individuals' capabilities [7.p.59]. This perspective reflects a futurological approach, according to which human potential is viewed not only as a characteristic of the present but also as a strategic factor shaping future social development. From this standpoint, the development of women's innovative potential should be regarded as a long-term investment that enhances the adaptive capacity, competitiveness, and sustainable development of society under the conditions of rapid technological and social transformation.

The American philosopher and psychologist William James argued that human potential is formed through an individual's interaction with various historical events and social experiences. According to James, human capabilities develop as a result of active participation in social processes and become fully manifested under specific historical conditions [8.p.214]. This perspective highlights the dynamic and contextual nature of human potential, suggesting that individual abilities are not static but continuously evolve through experience, activity, and engagement with the surrounding social environment. From this standpoint, human potential should be understood as a process of continuous formation influenced by social, cultural, and historical factors. In the context of this study, James's approach is important because women's innovative potential is also shaped by the opportunities, institutional conditions, and social transformations within which women participate. Therefore, creating favorable social environments and expanding opportunities for women's active involvement in innovation processes are essential factors in realizing their potential.

The Methodological Basis of the Study: The conceptual and theoretical foundations of social philosophy, contemporary approaches to human potential, innovation development, and gender studies form the methodological basis of this study. The scientific and conceptual framework of the research is based on the principles and methodological approaches of both classical and modern philosophical thought, which provide a comprehensive understanding of the formation, development, and realization of women's innovative potential in the context of social modernization. To achieve the research objectives and address the identified tasks, a set of complementary methods and approaches was applied. The study employs analysis and synthesis methods to examine the theoretical foundations of human potential, innovation, and women's social activity. The historical and cultural retrospective approach was used to analyze the evolution of views on knowledge, intellect, creativity, and human development in philosophical thought. The hermeneutic approach enabled the interpretation of philosophical concepts and scientific ideas related to human capabilities and social transformation.



Furthermore, interdisciplinary and systemic approaches were applied to reveal the multifaceted nature of women's innovative potential as a phenomenon influenced by educational, social, cultural, technological, and institutional factors. The synergetic approach was used to understand innovation processes as dynamic systems characterized by interaction, self-development, and transformation. The principles of complementarity and systematicity contributed to a holistic analysis of the relationship between individual capabilities and social conditions in the development of women's innovative activity. The combination of these methodological approaches allowed the study to integrate philosophical analysis with empirical research and to develop a comprehensive understanding of women's innovative potential as an important factor of sustainable social development in contemporary Uzbekistan.

Results and discussion: In the context of Uzbekistan's modernization processes, this international principle demonstrates the necessity of creating institutional and educational conditions that support women's participation in innovation activities. The development of women's innovative potential requires expanding access to scientific knowledge, digital technologies, entrepreneurial opportunities, and innovation-oriented education. Therefore, gender equality in science, technology, and innovation should be considered not only as a social policy objective but also as an important factor in strengthening human potential and accelerating innovative development. Several female scholars have researched issues related to women's social status, participation in public life, and roles in governance processes.

In particular, the dissertation studies of S. Shoimova and T. Egamberdiyev reflect important theoretical and practical perspectives on ensuring women's active participation in social development and public administration. Their research emphasizes that expanding women's opportunities, increasing their social activity, and involving them in decision-making processes are essential factors for achieving gender equality and strengthening the role of women in society. The approaches presented in these studies demonstrate that women's participation in social and political processes should be considered not only as a matter of equality but also as an important component of human development and social modernization. In this regard, the development of women's innovative potential requires the creation of institutional conditions that support women's intellectual growth, leadership abilities, scientific activity, and participation in innovation-oriented processes.

Several significant studies have been devoted to the investigation of women's social status, civic activity, and participation in societal development. In particular, Professor A. A. Khuseynova, Doctor of Philosophy and Psychology, in her monographic study entitled *Civil Society and Women*, conducted a scientific and theoretical analysis of the objective and subjective aspects of women's lifestyle, social activity, and participation within civil society [9.p.76]. Her research highlights the importance of creating social conditions that enable women to realize their abilities and actively participate in public processes. O. J. Nishonova, in her dissertation research, examined the specific national and cultural characteristics of the ethnoculture of Uzbek women. Her study emphasizes the role of cultural traditions, values, and social experiences in shaping women's identity and social activity[10.pp.12-15]. The analyses presented in these studies demonstrate that women's participation in society is determined not only by institutional factors but also by cultural, intellectual, and value-based foundations. From the perspective of the present research, these approaches provide an important theoretical basis for examining women's innovative potential, as innovation activity is closely connected with education, social experience, cultural values, and opportunities for self-realization. However, the current study extends these



perspectives by focusing specifically on women's innovative potential as a socio-philosophical phenomenon in the context of Uzbekistan's modernization processes.

N. R. Nishonova's doctoral dissertation provides a comprehensive scientific analysis of issues related to public administration, women's socio-political activity, and the prospects for expanding their participation in social development. The study examines the transformation of women's roles in Uzbekistan, emphasizing that innovative approaches, in accordance with international norms and principles, contribute to the active participation of women as an important social group in the socio-political and cultural spheres of society. The research also highlights the transition of women's social roles from traditional forms of activity toward modern models of leadership, initiative, and active citizenship. The findings of N. R. Nishonova's research demonstrate that the modernization of women's social status is closely connected with institutional reforms, expanded opportunities, and the development of leadership qualities. From the perspective of the present study, these ideas are significant because innovative potential represents a new dimension of women's social activity, encompassing intellectual development, creativity, technological competence, and the ability to participate in innovation-oriented processes [11, pp. 86-94]. Therefore, the formation of women's innovative potential can be considered a continuation of the broader process of increasing women's social, political, and cultural participation in contemporary Uzbekistan.

The analysis of previous studies demonstrates different dimensions of women's development and social participation:

- **N. R. Nishonova** focused on women's socio-political activity and examined the social and philosophical foundations of increasing women's participation in public administration and social processes in Uzbekistan.
- **A. A. Khuseynova** explored the relationship between civil society and women, analyzing the social status, lifestyle, and civic participation of women within the framework of civil society development.
- **O. J. Nishonova** investigated the ethnocultural foundations of Uzbek women's identity, emphasizing the role of national values, traditions, and cultural factors in shaping women's social activity.
- **The present study** extends these approaches by examining the socio-philosophical essence of women's innovative potential, including its intellectual, creative, digital, and social dimensions within the context of modernization processes in Uzbekistan.
- A fundamental question concerns how women's potential is manifested and the elements that constitute it when understood as an integrated system. According to Russian scholar **P. V. Lemanova**, human potential consists of a set of interconnected competencies that determine an individual's capacity for effective social and professional activity. These include intellectual ability, energy, optimism, reliability, commitment, resilience in overcoming life's challenges, the ability to maintain a clear position in discussions, evaluate political and economic conditions, demonstrate a willingness to learn, apply creativity and imagination, organize and use knowledge effectively, formulate goals and objectives, solve problems rationally in non-standard situations, search for and share new information, collaborate productively within teams, and adhere to contemporary ethical principles (Lemanova, 2016, p. 14).
- From the perspective of the present study, these characteristics constitute the essential components of women's innovative potential. They reflect not only individual competencies



but also the social, intellectual, and ethical capacities that enable women to generate, adopt, and implement innovations, thereby contributing to sustainable social development and human capital enhancement.

The above considerations provide a theoretical foundation for understanding and effectively promoting the development of women's social and innovative activities. They highlight the importance of creating favorable conditions that enable women to realize their intellectual, professional, and creative potential in response to the demands of contemporary society. In Uzbekistan, women's participation in innovation-driven development has become increasingly significant, particularly in the fields of advanced technologies, science, finance, family entrepreneurship, and leadership. Their growing achievements in these areas demonstrate the expanding role of women as active contributors to socio-economic transformation and national development. At the same time, the continuous improvement of market relations, the rapid expansion of the digital economy, and increasing levels of productivity and economic efficiency represent important indicators of innovation-led development. These processes not only strengthen the country's innovation ecosystem but also create broader opportunities to enhance women's innovative potential, promote gender equality, and foster sustainable socio-economic progress.

According to the National Statistics Committee of the Republic of Uzbekistan, as of 1 January 2025, the number of small enterprises and microfirms headed by women reached 43,860. By sector of economic activity, these enterprises were distributed as follows: 17,239 in the service sector, 17,161 in trade, 5,464 in industry, and 3,996 in other sectors. Compared with the corresponding period of the previous year, the number of women-led small enterprises and microfirms increased by 2,611, indicating a steady expansion of women's entrepreneurial activity and their growing contribution to the country's economic development [11. 7 May 2026].

These statistics demonstrate that women are becoming increasingly active participants in Uzbekistan's entrepreneurial ecosystem. The upward trend reflects the positive impact of government policies aimed at promoting women's economic empowerment, strengthening entrepreneurial capacity, and creating favorable conditions for innovation-driven development. From the perspective of social philosophy, the growing participation of women in entrepreneurship represents an important indicator of the development of women's innovative potential and their expanding role in achieving sustainable socio-economic progress.

In recent years, Uzbekistan has significantly strengthened its legal and institutional framework for fostering innovation and supporting women's participation in innovation-driven development. In particular, the Presidential Resolution "On Additional Measures for the Further Development of the Intellectual Property System," the Resolution amending Presidential Resolution No. PQ-42 of 10 December 2021, entitled "On Measures to Fundamentally Improve the System of Training Engineering Personnel for Economic Sectors through Innovation and Digitalization," and Presidential Decree No. PF-165 of 6 July 2022, "On the Approval of the Innovation Development Strategy of the Republic of Uzbekistan for 2022–2026," have established an important legal foundation for the development of an innovation-oriented economy, the integration of science and technology with industrial production, and the promotion of women's innovative activity [President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, 2021; President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, 2022].

The Innovation Development Strategy identifies digital transformation, support for start-up initiatives, the commercialization of scientific research, and the development of high-tech industries as strategic priorities [President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, 2022]. These policy



measures contribute to expanding opportunities for women to participate in entrepreneurial, scientific, and technological activities, thereby strengthening their innovative potential and increasing their contribution to sustainable socio-economic development. From a social-philosophical perspective, the implementation of these reforms reflects the transition toward a knowledge-based society in which innovation, human capital, and gender inclusion constitute key drivers of national competitiveness and long-term development.

The findings of this study indicate that enhancing women's innovative potential requires a comprehensive and systematic approach. Several key challenges should be addressed to strengthen women's participation in scientific research, innovation, and entrepreneurship. **First**, cooperation among the ministries, governmental agencies, and organizations responsible for promoting women's scientific and innovative activities remains insufficient. In addition, the activities of research institutions and laboratories are not adequately coordinated, limiting the effective implementation of innovation policies. **Second**, the commercialization of research outcomes generated by women remains relatively limited. Despite the increasing involvement of women in scientific research, mechanisms for transforming research findings into market-oriented products, technologies, and innovative services require further development. **Third**, there is a shortage of highly qualified specialists capable of facilitating technology transfer and implementing modern innovation management practices. This constrains the effective diffusion of innovation and reduces opportunities for integrating scientific achievements into the real sector of the economy. **Fourth**, existing mechanisms for financing women's scientific and innovative activities require greater transparency and effectiveness. Furthermore, incentives for attracting private investment, extra-budgetary funds, and venture capital to support women-led innovative projects remain underdeveloped. **Fifth**, the rapid adoption of innovation-based technologies represents one of the essential prerequisites for Uzbekistan's sustainable socio-economic development while simultaneously expanding opportunities for women's innovative participation. Achieving this objective requires further improvement of the legal and institutional framework governing women's professional engagement in innovation. Particular attention should be given to improving the quality and effectiveness of education through the integration of innovative teaching methods and advanced digital technologies, as well as creating lifelong learning opportunities that strengthen women's intellectual, professional, and innovative competencies. Overall, addressing these challenges will contribute to the development of a more inclusive national innovation ecosystem in which women can fully realize their innovative potential and make a greater contribution to sustainable development, human capital formation, and economic competitiveness.

Conclusions

Human potential reflects the essential nature of the individual and manifests across economic, physical, intellectual, spiritual, and other dimensions. It encompasses both human resources and human capital, serving as a multidimensional capacity for individual and societal development. Objective social development is dialectically interconnected with the continuous enhancement of subjective human potential, making it a fundamental determinant of sustainable social progress. Innovation emerges as a consequence of societal renewal and modernization, creating the conditions for the formation and development of human innovative potential. It is a key driver of progressive socio-economic, scientific-technological, political-legal, cultural, and spiritual development, responding to the continuously evolving needs of both individuals and society. As an outcome of objective social development, innovation contributes to the formation of an innovation-oriented society and the emergence of innovative consciousness among individuals. This process enhances innovative potential by strengthening the capacity to generate,



adopt, and effectively implement new ideas and technologies. The growing and increasingly complex needs of society and individuals stimulate the continuous creation of innovations, while innovation itself serves as the foundation for the sustained development and activation of innovative potential.

The formation of an innovation-oriented worldview among women requires the cultivation of national identity, patriotism, a sense of responsibility for the nation's future, accountability for the upbringing of future generations, and active civic engagement. These values should be developed through the dialectical interaction between national and universal human values, thereby contributing to both the protection of national interests and the achievement of sustainable national development. In this context, promoting national and religious values, ethical principles, and constructive ideas that encourage diligence, social responsibility, and active participation is of particular importance. Enhancing the innovative potential of women, especially women in leadership positions, requires systematic attention to several interrelated priorities. First, it is essential to ensure the harmonious integration of spiritual, intellectual, and innovative capacities, thereby fostering holistic personal and professional development. Second, efforts should be directed toward strengthening patriotism and commitment to national development in accordance with the demands of contemporary society. Third, particular emphasis should be placed on developing women's axiological consciousness by promoting an informed appreciation of national values and cultural heritage. Finally, it is necessary to cultivate creativity, innovative thinking, and critical thinking skills, enabling women to respond effectively to contemporary social, economic, and technological challenges while actively contributing to innovation-driven development.

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