



Conceptualising Positive Youth Development in the African Context: A Systematic Review of Theory and Practice

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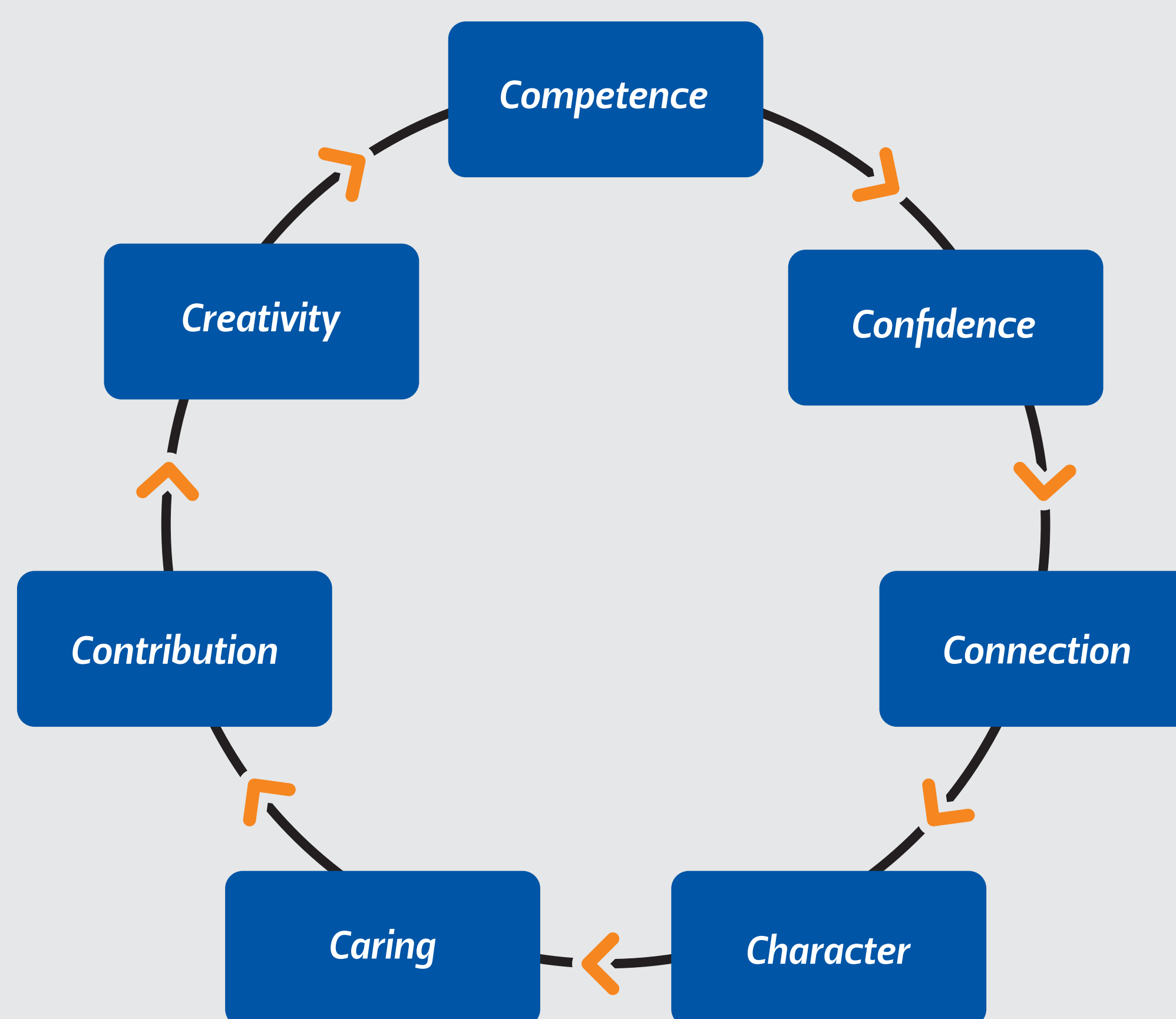
Aim of the Study

AIM

- Identify and analyse the theoretical frameworks used in PYD research within African contexts
- Evaluate the practical implementations of PYD programmes in Africa
- Assess the outcomes and impacts of PYD initiatives on African youth
- Identify gaps in the current literature and suggest areas for future research

Theoretical lense

Positive youth development (PYD) (Arnold & Gagnon, 2020; Benge & Howard, 2022; Gonzalez et al., 2020; Lerner, 2004, 2005).



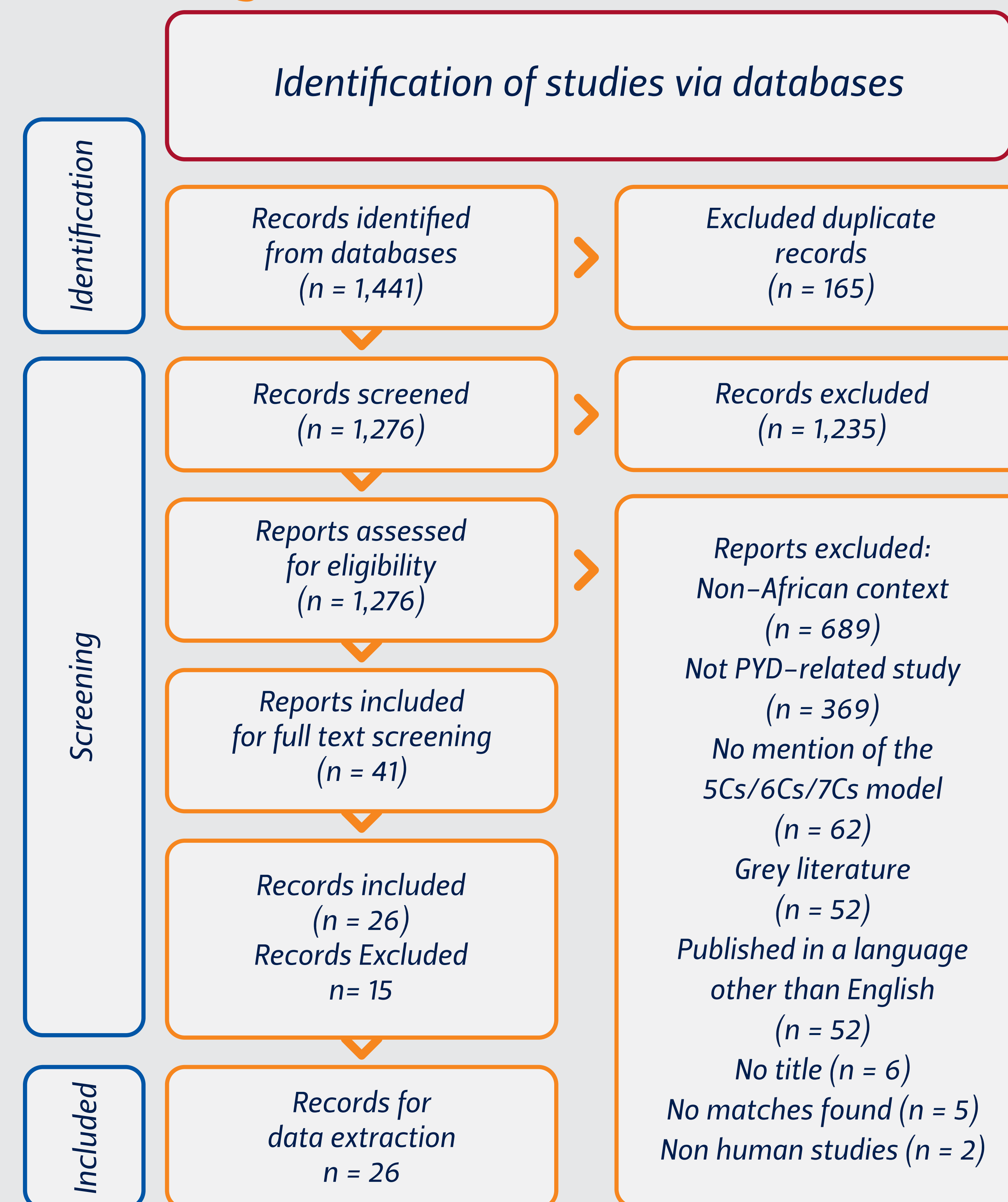
Methodology

This project is linked to the Africa Long Life Study (ALLS), an ongoing mixed-methods, longitudinal study. This extensive, international research study investigates the psychological development of emerging adults in different African countries.

Screening of the Literature

A Systematic Review was conducted. The Rayann AI tool was used to screen titles. Two independent reviewers screened the data. Inclusion/exclusion criteria were used to assess for eligibility. Discrepancies were resolved through consultation and discussion. PRISMA checklist and flow diagram were used to screen the literature.

PRISMA diagram



Data Extraction

Data was extracted using a standardised form.

Data analysis

A narrative synthesis was conducted to summarise findings, focusing on the theoretical frameworks, practical implementations, and outcomes of PYD programmes.

Preliminary Results

Theoretical Frameworks used

- Imported/adapted frameworks
- Heavy reliance on the 5Cs model
- Lack of critical evaluation of person and context

Practical implementaion of PYD Programmes

- School-based and sports-based programmes (teamwork, leadership, mentoring)
- Community-driven initiatives (employability, entrepreneurship, education)
- Varied delivery models (group training, mentoring, hybrid approach)

Outcomes and Impact

- Individual level (value of connection and well-being)
- Gender specific (girls' school retention, self-efficacy)
- Community level (reduction in substance use, increased entrepreneurial skills)

Gaps and future research directions

- Lack of longitudinal studies to assess sustained PYD impacts
- Cultrural adaptations of PYD frameworks
- Emphasis placed on conceptual frameworks
- Few rigorous interventions/programmes
- Mental health outcomes under-represented
- Need for comparative studies

Conclusion

PYD in Africa shows strong potential, particularly when programmes emphasise relational connection, community engagement, and multi-level partnerships. However, for PYD to fully resonate within African realities, the field must move toward contextualised theories, rigorous longitudinal evaluations, and culturally grounded measures that capture the lived experiences of African youth.



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