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ANALYSIS OF PLACEMENT IN EMPLOYMENT OF GRADUATES OF THE FACULTY OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND SPORT AT CHARLES UNIVERSITY IN EMPLOYMENT

ANALIZA ZAPOSLOVANJA DIPLOMANTOV FAKULTETE ZA TELESNO VZGOJO IN ŠPORT IZ KARLOVE UNIVERZE

Abstract

The purpose of the investigation was to gather objective up-to-date information on the present employment rates of graduates of the Charles University, Faculty of Physical Education and Sport, in the labour market as an indispensable basis for possible adjustments of the contents and orientation of the subjects in programmes of the study. 293 graduates of the Charles University, Faculty of Physical Education and Sport, from the academic years 1995-2002 were addressed by a letter inviting them to complete an anonymous questionnaire. The survey results were analysed using basic statistical methods, a qualitative evaluation of the collected data, and a comparison with the situation about 3–5 years ago. It was ascertained that more than a half of the graduates (60.9%) were employed in the field of PE and sport, of whom 40.5% were working as teachers in all school grades and 20.4% were active in municipal PE and in sport clubs. In spite of radical changes in the employment market, a growing rate of graduates of the Charles University, Faculty of Physical Education and Sport, being employed demonstrates positive trends. That finding – together with zero percentage of unemployed among the graduates – may be regarded as a confirmation of the elected adjustments in the study programmes.

Key words: employment of university graduates, PE teachers, Charles University, Faculty of Physical Education and Sport

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Izvleček

Z raziskavo smo želeli ugotoviti objektivne podatke o trenutni stopnji zaposlenosti diplomantov Karlove univerze, Fakultete za telesno vzgojo in šport, in tako postaviti nujno potrebne temelje za prilagoditev vsebine študijskih programov in naravnosti študijskih predmetov. 293 diplomantom Karlove univerze, Fakultete za telesno vzgojo in šport, ki so študij zaključili v obdobju 1995-2002, smo poslali pismo in jih povabili, naj izpolnijo priložen anonimen vprašalnik. Rezultate raziskave smo analizirali s pomočjo osnovnih statističnih metod, kvalitativne analize zbranih podatkov in primerjave s stanjem pred 3 oz. 5 leti. Ugotovili smo, da se je več kot polovica diplomantov (60,9 %) zaposlila na področju telesne vzgoje in športa, od katerih je bilo 40,5 % učiteljev v vseh razredih šole, 20,4 % pa jih je delovalo na področju telesne vzgoje v organizaciji lokalne skupnosti in v športnih klubih. Kljub velikim spremembam na trgu delovne sile, kaže naraščanje zaposlenosti diplomantov Karlove univerze, Fakultete za telesno vzgojo in šport pozitiven trend na tem področju. To ugotovitev – skupaj z ničelno stopnjo nezaposlenih med diplomanti – si lahko razložimo kot potrditev izbranih prilagoditev v študijskih programih.

Ključne besede: zaposlovanje univerzitetnih diplomantov, učitelji športne vzgoje, Karlova univerza, Fakulteta za telesno vzgojo in šport

INTRODUCTION

At present the prosperity of a university may be evaluated not only from the point of view of the number of applicants in the study but also from the point of view of rates of graduates' placement in employment. That point of view is increasingly important for secondary school students when choosing their higher education career. The grants also depend on students' interest in certain schools, which consequently affects the selection of new students.

To be successful at present as well as in the future, it is important for a school to monitor the employment of its graduates in a long run. Therefore, in the nineties, the universities increasingly conducted investigations of placement of their graduates in employment. A similar investigation encompassing evaluation of professional placement and employment rate as well as the quality of the attained education at the Faculty of Physical Education and Sport was carried out with the senior students in the academic year 1994-1998 (Tilinger & Perič, 1997, 1998).

Some of the previous studies revealed that since 1989 the percentage of graduates taking a teaching position had gradually been decreasing. Men expressed a greater dislike of teaching. Most men who took a position in a school preferred secondary school and higher education, whereas women mostly selected primary school. In the year 1996 the Ministry of Education (Kaštankova & Ryška, 1996) launched a study on employment rate of university graduates. The percentages of those graduates of the pedagogical faculties with teacher training programmes who were employed in schools varied by institution – in Prague it was only around 67%, in Brno 79%, in Usti n.L. 92% and in Hradec Kralove incredible 98%. However, 20% of teachers combined the teaching profession with some other employment. Evidently, the reason for changes in the teaching profession is primarily insufficient financial evaluation – 95% of teachers in Hradec Kralove, 75% of Prague teachers and 39% of teachers from Usti. Moreover, about 40-50% of teachers did not consider their profession to be prospective.

The research results sustain the estimations of teachers' satisfaction with their financial evaluation, and therefore, these findings should be submitted to the authorities formulating the policies on school financing and teachers' salaries. The most extensive and representative investigation into employment of the graduates of pedagogical and physical education faculties in the Czech Republic was presented by Jansa and Kocourek in 1997. A survey was made on a sample of one hundred graduates of the Faculty of Physical Education and Sport from the academic years 1990-1996. The purpose was to ascertain how many graduates took positions in schools or outside the school system and how many were still employed in schools at the time of investigation.

The percentage of graduates of the Charles University, Faculty of Physical Education, who started their teaching career was 61%, gradually decreasing to only 38.9% and finally plunging to 22.2%. The answers of those teachers who left school may be summarised in one sentence: "Working in school was very interesting and I enjoyed it, but the low salary forced me to quit" (Jansa & Kocourek, 1997). Another study analysing employment of graduates of the Faculty of Physical Education and Sport was published by Tilinger and Šmidova (2000). Our study may be regarded as a continuation of the mentioned one, as it offers an opportunity for comparison of the results after a five-year interval.

The purpose of the study was to gather objective information on the present state of placement of graduates of the Charles University, Faculty of Physical Education and Sport, in employment

as an essential basis for improvements in the faculty management's decision making in the field of study contents and prospects of the study subjects.

To some extent the tasks relating to the above mentioned purpose included:

- a) Describing of the employment spectrum of the graduates of the Charles University, Faculty of Physical Education and Sport, establishing of reasons and causes for the graduates' working activities in the past, present or future.
- b) Gathering of information and opinions on possible suitable corrections or additional study programmes for the contemporary students.

METHOD

Participants

A specially constructed questionnaire constituted the basic approach. We are of the opinion that the present labour market of physical education and sport is so flexible and undergoing quite rapid changes (compared to ten years ago and more), that it would be improper to deal with employment of graduates after 10 and more years since graduation. The past period did not bring substantial stimulations for frequent changes in this profession; there was no unemployment and other phenomena connected with the labour market. Hence, we have followed the graduates of the Faculty of Physical Education and Sport from 1995 to 2002. The sample included 100-120 graduates of the Faculty of Physical Education and Sport from each academic year in the 1995-2002 period, i.e. 700-800 potential respondents, of whom little less than one half were from two-subject study and the remainder from one-subject study. As 50-60% of questionnaires were returned, we expected to evaluate about 350-450 answers. On the whole, 293 questionnaires were returned and their results evaluated. Additional inquiries and interviews should have helped us obtain sufficient knowledge about the real-time employment of the "modern, young" graduates of the Charles University, Faculty of Physical Education and Sport.

The second task consisted of the analysis of opinions based on many years of teaching practice for possible adjustments to the study programmes in both of the investigated study subjects at the Charles University, Faculty of Physical Education and Sport, that could improve the outcome of the study.

Instrument

In order to obtain the relevant data we distributed an anonymous questionnaire which was already tested in a previous investigation. It primarily included multiple-choice questions with added spaces for optional answers. The items composing the questionnaire are presented in the results. The graduates were addressed by a letter which was sent to their permanent as kept in the records of the faculty's matriculation office.

Procedure

Once the graduates leave the faculty, it is impossible to establish new addresses for all of them – therefore we expected a return rate to be only about 50%. On the whole, we have sent over 700 letters with the questionnaires, of which 293 were returned and their results evaluated. Of course, some of the questionnaires were not answered in full, nevertheless the results of the completed parts were used.

The basic statistical characteristics – arithmetic mean, median, standard deviation, quartil variation coefficient, variance, relative frequency were used for presentation. The analysis was focused on a qualitative evaluation of the established facts. A comparison with a previous survey from 2000 (Tilinger & Šmidova, 2000) was also carried out.

The study characterisation of the graduates was based on: subject, gender, and graduation year. During the evaluation of the questionnaires, data of one-subject study of physical education and sport (PES) and data of two-subject study for teachers (study of physical education and another subject such as mathematics, geography and the like) were processed separately. In some of the questions we followed groups according to gender or present employment (a group of graduates working in the field of PE and sport, outside that field and others), since those factors could have influenced the graduates' views of some issues and so it was possible to find the alternative differences.

The number of answers is given with all questions (percentage of total number of returned questionnaires) as well as the number of missing answers. Every answer is given as percentage of the number of answers in the relevant question, not of the whole sample. As regards the questions dealing with study programmes, the opinions of those graduates working in the promoted subject were the most significant.

RESULTS

The results are presented in the framework of the evaluated answers. On the whole there were 13 questions in the original questionnaire; however, only five principal questions were selected for presentation.

We succeeded in obtaining a proportional representation of graduates from the classes 1998 through 2001; the results from 1997 and 2002 (see Figure 1) did not differ to a great extent. The representations from 1995-1996 were considerably affected by the fact that the records on the graduates from those years were deficient. The representation of the subjects of study other than PES, PE and biology, PE and geography and PE and mathematics may be considered a symbolic one. It is impossible to estimate how those graduates who were unable or simply refused to answer would change the results.

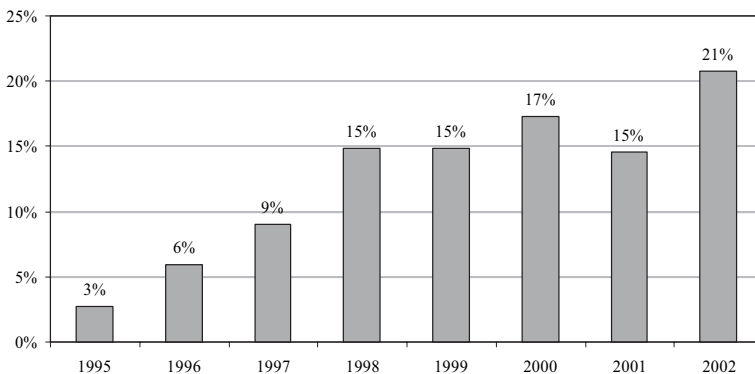


Figure 1: Number of questioned graduates expressed in percentage by year of graduation

Question 1: What is your present employment?

284 questioned graduates answered this question. More than half of them were employed in the field of physical education and sport (60.9%), both groups of men and women, with all subjects accounting for more than half of all followed graduates (see Table 1).

Table 1 Present employment of the investigated graduates

	Total		Men		Women	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Secondary school teacher	47	16.5%	34	20.9%	13	10.9%
Primary school teacher	39	13.7%	20	12.3%	19	16.0%
Coach	24	8.5%	14	8.6%	10	8.4%
University teacher	20	7.0%	10	6.1%	10	8.4%
Other job in the field of PE & sport	17	6.0%	10	6.1%	7	5.9%
Private school teacher	10	3.5%	4	2.5%	6	5.0%
Trainer	11	3.9%	4	2.5%	7	5.9%
Sport manager	4	1.4%	3	1.8%	1	0.8%
Sport club owner	1	0.4%	1	0.6%	0	0.0%
<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>173</i>	<i>60.9%</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>61.3%</i>	<i>73</i>	<i>61.3%</i>
Outside the field of PE & sport	86	30.3%	51	31.7%	35	28.5%
Student, doing military service	16	5.6%	12	7.5%	4	3.3%
On maternity leave	7	2.5%	0	0.0%	7	5.7%
Works in the field of PE & sport	173	61.3%	100	61.3%	73	61.3%
Works outside the field of PE & sport	86	30.5%	51	31.3%	35	29.4%
Other job (student, doing military service, on maternity leave)	23	8.2%	12	7.4%	11	9.2%
Does not work or did not answer	11	3.8%	5	3.0%	6	4.8%
Total	293		168		125	

40.5% of graduates were employed as teachers in all grades of primary and secondary school, universities – or higher schools – and private schools, 20.4% of graduates were working in municipal physical education and in sport clubs. The greatest number of women employed in schools were teaching in primary schools whereas men more often in secondary schools. A comparison of the results with those of the preceding investigation (Tilinger & Šmidova, 2000) reveals that the number of graduates employed in the study subject under scrutiny is on the increase and that men more often continue to work in the school system. As a rule the graduates working in school mostly take up a second or even third employment which is also in the field of physical education and sports (trainer, coach). The reason for obtaining second employment is predominantly of a financial nature. Development of private physical education facilities has been offering new possibilities for work and, consequently, the number of graduates of the Charles University, Faculty of Physical Education and Sport, in that domain of physical education (9%)

increases. The percentage of graduates working outside schools has declined to 30.3% (according to Tilinger and Šmidova, 2000, 44.2%). At present, 8.1% of the graduates pursue their studies or do their military service or civil service or are on maternity leave (see Figure 2). A very important finding was that no one stated to be unemployed.

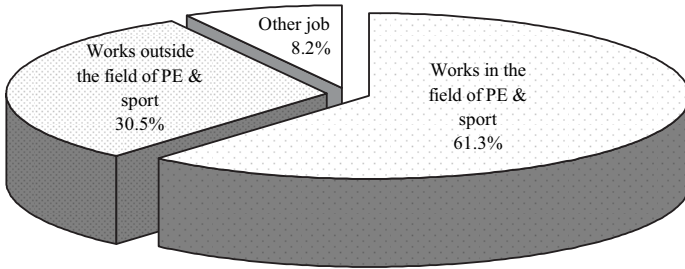


Figure 2: The share of graduates of the Charles University, Faculty of Physical Education and Sport, working in the field of physical education and sport and outside that field

Question 2: Which principles have you adhered to in choosing employment?

279 graduates answered to this question. Most of them did not rank the importance of principles and 75 answers were incomplete. Therefore, only the absolute frequency of the introduced principles was evaluated, irrespective of the order of priority (see Figure 3).

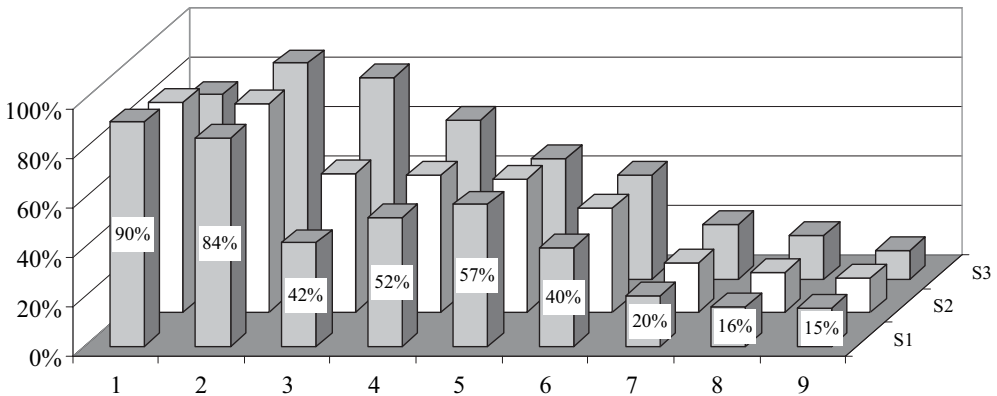


Figure 3: Reasons for choice of employment

Legend:

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| S1 working in physical education and sport (PES) | 4 prospects of professional growth |
| S2 total | 5 quality of the teaching staff |
| S3 outside PES | 6 social evaluation |
| 1 personal satisfaction | 7 perspective of material benefits |
| 2 interesting work | 8 other |
| 3 financial attraction | 9 immediate material benefits |

Question 4: In your opinion, which subjects delivered at the Faculty of Physical Education and Sport are the most important for graduates working in the field of physical education and sport?

271 graduates answered this question. They regarded as the most important the following subjects: theory of sport training (60.5%), physiology (52%), anatomy (35.4%), sport activities (33.9%). There were no additional specifications in the answers. The following subjects were considered significant: psychology, foreign language, pedagogy, specialisation and student teaching (see Table 3). The opinions of the graduates from the one-subject study and those from the two-subject study all of whom work in their profession are significantly different. The greatest difference was established in the item theory of sport training, which was selected by 69% of the graduates from the one-subject study and only 26% of the graduates from the two-subject study; and the opposite trend was seen in the practical activities (26% : 61%). Women, unlike men, appreciate gaining knowledge in the subjects such as anatomy and psychology.

Table 3: The most important subjects delivered at the Faculty of P. E. and Sport, Charles University

	Total		Works in the field of PE & sport		Works outside the field of PE & sport		Other job	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Theory of sport training	164	60.5%	100	60.2%	40	54.1%	24	77.4%
Physiology	141	52.0%	90	54.2%	39	52.7%	12	38.7%
Anatomy	96	35.4%	63	38.0%	17	23.0%	16	51.6%
Sport activities	92	33.9%	55	33.1%	25	33.8%	12	38.7%
Psychology	56	20.7%	36	21.7%	17	23.0%	3	9.7%
Foreign language	35	12.9%	22	13.3%	10	13.5%	3	9.7%
Specialisation	33	12.2%	19	11.4%	12	16.2%	2	6.5%
Pedagogy	32	11.8%	19	11.4%	9	12.2%	4	12.9%
Student teaching	31	11.4%	13	7.8%	11	14.9%	7	22.6%
Practice in sport clubs	27	10.0%	18	10.8%	5	6.8%	4	12.9%
Biochemistry	18	6.6%	12	7.2%	4	5.4%	2	6.5%

Question 5: What are the main problems of education in physical education?

284 graduates answered that question. 71% of graduates agree that the greatest problem is deteriorated economic conditions for work in the field of physical education and underestimation of the teaching profession. The answers (see Figure 4) are relatively well distributed across all possibilities. The graduates stated a low social evaluation of their work (50%) and also a great difference between reality and the conditions at the Charles University, Faculty of Physical Education and Sport. One-subject study graduates considered low financial evaluation of work as the most hampering; however, graduates of the two-subject study view the parameters of economic conditions, difference between reality and the conditions of the study with a low social evaluation as nearly equivalent. The graduates of one-subject study have less chances of employment than the graduates of the two-subject study. Surprisingly women experience the economic imbalance more than men.

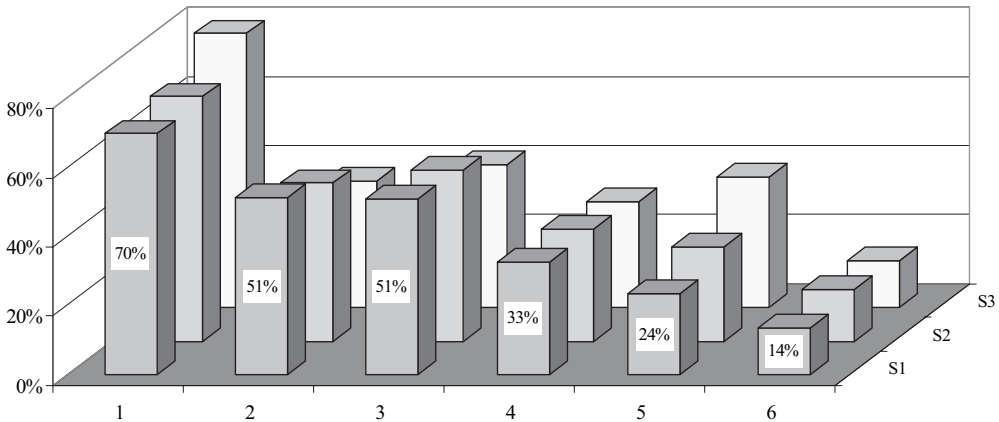


Figure 4: Problems in physical education

Legend:

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|----|---|---|--|
| S1 | employment in the field of physical education and sport | 2 | difference between the reality and the conditions at the Faculty of Physical Education and Sport |
| S2 | employment outside physical education and sport | 3 | low social evaluation |
| S3 | employment elsewhere | 4 | discrepancy between the study and practice |
| 1 | bad economic conditions | 5 | low possibilities for placement |
| | | 6 | inapplicability of the theory in practice |

DISCUSSION

The purpose of the investigation was to obtain maximally objective up-to-date information on the present situation in the employment of the graduates of the Charles University, Faculty of Physical Education and Sport, in the labour market as an essential basis for improvements in the faculty management's decision making in the field of study contents and orientation of the study subjects.

The results indicate that:

- Of approximately 700 graduates of the Faculty of Physical Education and Sport who were sent the questionnaires, we succeeded in obtaining views of 293 respondents (former students), the majority of whom graduated from physical education and sport.
- On the whole, 59.9% of graduates worked in their first employment, 25.3% in the second employment and 10% in the third one. Only 13 persons (5%) were working in more than three employments. As regards number of employments, no differences were found between men and women or between the graduates of one-subject and two-subject studies.
- More than a half of the graduates work in the field of physical education and sport (60.9%), both men and women, from all subjects. 40.5% of graduates teach in all school grades (primary, secondary, university and private schools). 20.4% of graduates are employed in municipal physical education and in sport clubs. The majority of women employed in the school system work in primary schools, whereas men prefer secondary schools.

- d) The graduates chose their employment in line with the expected personal satisfaction with work and according to attraction of the contents. Those working in physical education and sport stated – besides the mentioned two characteristics – very often the quality of the working team and prospects of professional growth. For those graduates who decided to pursue their career in the field of physical education the financial issue did not represent an important criterion (it ranked fifth). Compared to the results of the preceding investigation (Tilinger & Šmidova, 2000) financial attraction of this profession decreased significantly (on the whole 56%, before 88%) and, contrary to that, prospects of professional growth increased (from 41% to 56%).
- e) The graduates regarded their education as entirely satisfactory in 19% of cases, 50% of them evaluated their education as predominantly satisfactory and 28% as satisfactory. Only 4% negatively evaluated their education as predominantly unsatisfactory.
- f) Education programmes should be complemented especially by foreign languages, economy, laws and regulations, sport training and medical disciplines. As regards skills, the graduates consider it a necessity to develop their management, educational & psychological and motor skills.
- g) The following subjects are considered the most important: theory of sport training (60.5%), physiology (52%), anatomy (35.4%), sport activities (33.9%) – none of these answers was further elaborated. The following subjects are regarded as significant: psychology, foreign language, pedagogy, specialisation and student teaching. The ideas of the graduates from one-subject and two-subject studies, all of whom work in the field of physical education, differ quite substantially. The greatest differences occur in the theory of sport training, since 69% of the graduates from one-subject study prefer this subject, while the respective percentage of the two-subject study graduates is only 26%; quite the opposite is seen in the case of activities (26% to 61%). Women, unlike men, appreciate more broadening their knowledge in activities as well as in anatomy and psychology.
- h) 71% of graduates agreed that deteriorated economic conditions for working in physical education was the greatest problem as well as low evaluation of the teaching profession. Responses are relatively well balanced across all possibilities. The graduates also stated low evaluation of their work (50%) and large difference between real-life conditions and those at the Charles University, Faculty of Physical Education and Sport. A low financial evaluation matters the most to one-subject study graduates, while the graduates from the two-subject study regard economic conditions as most unacceptable, however the difference between reality and the study conditions and low social evaluation are nearly equivalent. Those who studied only physical education believe they have fewer possibilities for employment than the graduates of the two-subject study. Surprisingly, women experience economic imbalance more than men.
- i) The most outstanding problem in the study of physical education is a strong emphasis on performance (36%) and lack of eligible subjects (30%).

According to the graduates, the importance of theoretical subjects is overemphasised, whereas the activities are underestimated, especially didactics, training in teaching etc., not performance. The two-subject study graduates are more unanimous in their opinions and they would

prefer having more eligible subjects (53%); they are also against overemphasising of the theory (45%) and stressing of performance, while the one-subject study graduates are bothered about performance requirements. That matters especially to women.

In spite of the significant changes in the labour market it is positive to discover that the employment rate of the graduates of the Charles University, Faculty of Physical Education and Sport, in the field of physical education and sport is growing. That finding – together with the established zero unemployment of the graduates – confirms that the adjustments made to the study programmes in the nineties were correct.

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