



BACHA BAZI

THE EFFECT ON AFGHANISTAN

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ABSTRACT

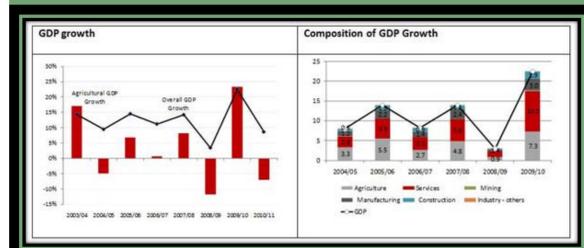
Torn by civil war, Afghanistan gains social and economic development through sex-trafficking of the Bacha Bazi ("boy play"). Boys as young as four are forced into slavery by older men for sex and entertainment. Afghani people are aware of the tradition, but there exists a controversy over its legality. We hypothesize that social and economic factors contribute to the continuation of the Bacha Bazi business. Using scholarly journals and statistical databases, we will evaluate our claims.

INTRODUCTION

The practice of Bacha Bazi describes the industry of male prostitution in Afghanistan. Wealthy older men purchase Bacha Bereesh, "beardless boys," for entertainment and sexual pleasure. The boys define the social status of the rich, which causes the need for continuation of the tradition. The cycle revolves as the boys grow older and buy their own Bacha Bereesh when they gain enough money. The attraction to wealth and extravagance promotes the flourishing of Bacha Bazi in Afghanistan.

ECONOMIC FACTORS

- The poor families who are either forced to sell their children to become "bacha bareesh" and/or boys from poor families willingly becoming "bacha bareesh" to try and support their families, as much as possible.
- Chronic poverty and frustration resulting from unemployment is also a contributing factor to levels of domestic violence, including child abuse and abandonment.



"I am used to it, I love my lord. I love to dance and act like a woman and play with my owner"
- 17 year old Ahmad Jawad



"I was dancing last night. I have no choice, I'm poor. My father is dead, and this is the only source of income for me and my family. I try to dance well, especially at huge parties. The men throw money at me, and I gather it up. Sometimes they take me to the market and buy me nice clothes."
- 14 year old boy



"I am not really rich, but I am just as the wealthy. I want as many bacha bereesh as possible, so that when I go to parties I am no worse than anybody else"
- Nasro Bay

SOCIAL FACTORS

- Status symbol of the wealthy older men
- Rich men have few forms of sexual entertainment because women are not permitted to display themselves in the presence of men as per tradition
- Boys and men are too ashamed to admit when they are subjected to Bacha Bazi
- Lack of enforcement against the masters

INTENDED SOLUTIONS & CONCLUSION

- Implement incentive program that persuades police officers and armed enforcements to report these crimes
 - Enforce education system
 - Birth certificate laws and enforcement
- Provide free psychiatric care for people who have been through this so the cycle ends

SOURCES

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