



The Social Etiology of Human Trafficking: How Poverty and Cultural Practices Facilitate Trafficking

Alexis A. Aronowitz, PhD, Senior Lecturer criminology, University College Utrecht

Paper presented at

The Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences

Human Trafficking: Issues Beyond Criminalization

17 – 21 April, 2015

Casina Pio IV, Vatican City

Introduction

Human trafficking has come to be known as the slavery of the 21st Century. Due to its clandestine nature, the magnitude of the problem is unknown. Various sources estimate the number of persons trafficked in the millions.[1] In the same year that the International Labour Organization estimated the exploitation in forced labor of approximately 21 million people, only 46,570 victims of trafficking (of which, 17,368 victims of labor trafficking) were identified worldwide (US Department of State, 2014).[2] The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime reported 40,177 victims of trafficking identified by Government authorities or non-governmental organizations (NGOs) between the years 2010 and 2012 (UNODC, 2014).

The data – both estimates and actual cases of victims uncovered and identified by governmental and non-governmental organizations – provide some insight into trafficking patterns and victims. According to the most recent statistics provided by the International Labour Organization (2012), the majority of those in forced labor (including for sexual exploitation) are adults (74%; approximately 26% are children) and more women are victims of forced labor than men (55% of victims are women, however women comprise the majority of victims (98%) in sexual exploitation and exploitation in the private economy. The majority of victims are found in forced labor (14.2 million), while 4.5 million persons are victims of forced labor for sexual exploitation (ILO, 2012).[3]

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) reports similar findings. The majority of trafficked victims by age and gender are adults (67%) – adult women (49%), followed by girls (21%), adult men (18%), and boys (12%). Where these two reports diverge, is in the type of exploitation most prevalent. According to UNODC (2014), in most parts of the world, sexual exploitation is the major form of exploitation perpetrated against victims identified in the *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons*.

What is clear from both the ILO and the UNODC reports is that global, aggregate figures obscure significant regional differences – with regard to the forms of exploitation, but also whether the victims are adults or children and the trafficking source countries.

Trafficking patterns will differ across and within countries and (sub-)regions of the world. This may be explained by "...a unique set of causes and effects" (Bales, 2007; 269). Bales identifies some common causes, such as economic pressures, political instability and corruption, natural disasters, the greed of human traffickers, as well as social and cultural factors. It may be these social and cultural practices which, more than any other factor, provide an explanation for these differing patterns of trafficking in a particular country or countries within a region. The devaluation of women and girls in society, the use of children in prostitution due to the belief that they are free from HIV/AIDS, and the practice of child fosterage – placing children from poor families with relatives or friends in more affluent families – are examples of such practices (Bales, 2007).

This paper focusses on three unusual patterns of trafficking, two of which were identified in UNODC's *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons* (2014), and examines the economic situation, and social and cultural practices that may explain these unusual patterns of trafficking in three different areas of the world.

Unusual Trafficking Trends

This section briefly examines three patterns of trafficking that deviate from the norm in other regions. The age of the victim as well as the trafficking flows or routes are first discussed. A different pattern, not discussed in the UNODC trafficking report, but alluded to in other reports, is the focus of the third trafficking trend.

Adults and Child Victims of Trafficking

The reports of both the ILO (2012) and UNODC (2014) find that the majority of victims of trafficking and forced labor are adults. The ILO (2012) puts the percentage of adults at 74%; according, also, to the most recent UNODC *Trafficking in Persons* report (2014), the majority of victims of trafficking are adults (67%). This holds true for 3 of the 4 regions included in the TIP report. In Europe and Central Asia, 82% of identified victims of trafficking are adults; in the Americas, 69% of victims are adults and in South Asia, East Asia and the Pacific, the figure is 64%. Only in Africa and the Middle East are the majority of victims (62%) children.

Trafficking Flows

Trafficking patterns indicate global movement, with victims from 152 different source countries, identified in 124 destination countries (UNODC, 2014). Globally, slightly more than a third of the trafficking flows were domestic (34%), with an almost equal number reported as cross-border within the same region (37%) or from a nearby sub-region (3%). In the majority of sub-regions (South Asia, South America, East Asia, Sub-Saharan Africa and Eastern Europe and Central Asia)[4], trafficking occurs almost exclusively from neighboring countries or countries within the sub-region (UNODC, 2014; 40). What is striking, is that within the Middle East and North Africa, two thirds (67%) of the identified victims were from outside of the region.[5] This pattern of inter-regional trafficking, to such a high degree, is unique.

Domestic Child Trafficking in Afghanistan

Trafficking in the form of child sex tourism or commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC) is a problem in many countries.[6] An unusual pattern of child sex abuse, *bacha bazi*, has been identified in Afghanistan. *Bacha Bazi*, is a practice involving young boys, who are dressed in women's clothing and made to sing and dance at weddings and other parties in front of an all-male audience. Besides providing entertainment, the boys are often forced into sexual relations with their owners, and after the parties, the highest bidder – often a much older man. The practice, occurring in Afghanistan and parts of Pakistan,[7] in this form, appears to be found only in this region of the world.

Each of these trafficking patterns will be discussed separately below.

Child Trafficking Victims

According to the ILO (2010), at 25.3%, Sub-Saharan Africa boasts the highest proportion of children engaged in child labor of any region in the world. Approximately one child in every four is a child laborer. UNODC (2104) also reports that the largest percentage of trafficking victims in this region are children (62% of all identified victims). The UNODC trafficking statistics may be explained in part, by countries where human trafficking is only defined as exploitation against children. The fact, however, that so many children are exploited in forced labor (according to the ILO, 2010) may be attributed to other factors such as poverty and the large number of the available children. A large percentage of the population in African countries is below the age of 15 (41%) compared to the population under 15 in the rest of the world (26%).[8] According to the ILO, “high population growth, the AIDS pandemic, recurrent food crises, and political unrest and conflict clearly exacerbate the problem” of exploitative child labor.[9]

There is much cross-border trafficking of children in most of Sub-Saharan Africa, but the pattern of child trafficking has been found to be more prevalent in West and Central Africa (in more than 70% of countries in the region) than in other regions (Adepoju, 2005). The cross-border trafficking of children is facilitated by a link between source and destination countries. These links between countries are influenced by the ease in crossing borders (Kelly and Regan 2000), porous borders, weak border control, and the traffickers' use of local customs, (IOM 2000; De Lange, 2009), or expatriate populations in the country of destination. Tribal, historical and colonial links between countries, or the presence and tolerance of an extensive sex industry (Kelly and Regan 2000) also facilitate trafficking.

There are two main trafficking patterns in this region. The first involves domestic and intra-regional trafficking flows where children are exploited in the legitimate labor market (often in mining, fishing, agriculture, market vendors, bus assistants, and as domestic servants). The second trafficking flow involves the exploitation of young women for forced prostitution domestically, intra-regionally or in Europe and the Middle East. Children in this region have also been trafficked for forced begging or for use as child soldiers (although these forms of child trafficking will not be discussed in this paper). According to the ILO (2001), female children are generally trafficked into domestic service or work as market vendors. Male children are trafficked predominantly into the fishing industry or for labour on coffee or cocoa plantations. Both male and female children are also trafficked into forced begging.

Poverty, Polygamy and Child Fosterage

Poverty is a driving factor in all forms of human trafficking on the African continent. African countries score low on the United Nations Development Program's (UNDP) Development Index. Of the 43 countries ranked low on UNDP's Development Index, 35 of these countries are in Africa. The eighteen countries scoring lowest on the Development Index (ranked 170-187 are in Africa).[10] Salah (2001) attributes the trafficking of women and children in Africa to abject poverty, inequality and the absence of programs for the creation of employment. Those most affected are children in rural areas. Millions in Africa live below the poverty line, and child trafficking goes hand in hand with poverty and child labor.

Polygamy has been described as a "value system" in many countries in Sub-Saharan Africa and is practiced particularly in rural areas. It helps maintain a high level of fertility and has contributed to what Hiyase and Liaw (1997; 293) refer to as the "explosive population growth in sub-Saharan African countries since the 1950s". A widow often remarries another male in the family of her deceased husband, usually a brother. The large number of children produced within these polygamous marriages can put a financial strain on the family which may influence the decision to place (some of) the children with other families. The majority of trafficked children in Sub-Saharan Africa come from large, poorly educated and often polygamous families where opportunities for education and training are limited for children (ILO, 2001). They are often kept from attending school and are forced to help support the family. Parents, who cannot support their children, are often willing to "give" them to traffickers in the false belief that the child will be given an education, training or a job (ILO, 2001; UNICEF, 2002).

Historical and cultural patterns of child fosterage exist in West African nations. The placement of children outside of the home is based on cultural values and is done to foster the further education and vocational training of the child and to strengthen extended family solidarity (Howard, 2011; De Lange, 2008; Aronowitz, 2006; Manzo, 2005; Bazzi-Veil, 2000). The education and care of the child is believed to be the responsibility of the extended family, and it is not uncommon for children to grow up and work in families which are better able to provide for the future of the child. Work teaches children social values and children are often made to work at very young ages.

The voluntary placement of children under the child fosterage system is done partly as a result of poverty and partly by the desire to provide their children with a better life (Verbeet 2000). The receiving family may give a financial incentive to the child's biological parents. Often times the promise is made to pay the child, but this rarely occurs. According to Truong (2006; 64), however, the practice of child fosterage "... has been distorted into a commercial transaction".[11] The practice has been corrupted from one of placing the child for the benefit of the child's future, to viewing the child as an income-generating opportunity. Whether the child is placed for altruistic or economic purposes, child placement or fosterage can easily lead to the exploitation of children who are located in homes with no supervision. "This 'strategic fostering out of children' is said to be a stronger causal factor in child trafficking than poverty".[12]

Trafficking of Girls and Young Women: Gender Inequality and Ju-ju

The majority of trafficked children in West and Central Africa are girls (Dottridge, 2002). Two deep-rooted culturally accepted practices contribute to the trafficking of girls into domestic service, and girls and young women into sexual exploitation. These are the devaluation of girls and women in Sub-Saharan Africa, and voodoo practices, known in some West African countries as ju-ju.

"In an African cultural setting, children are regarded as economic assets, and from around age 6, they are gradually integrated into the family's productive process, performing various services" (Adepoju, 2005; 81-82). Consideration is given to family members perceived to be most likely to bring the highest returns, usually the male children. Girls are perceived to be less valuable than boys, and girls' futures will be sacrificed to pay for the education of the male children in the family.

Girls are expected, and are more willing to make sacrifices for the family. They are also said to be "more obedient" than boys (Dottridge, 2002). Furthermore, they are seen as a poor investment since they will be leaving the family upon marriage (Dottridge, 2002; Aronowitz, 2006). The fact that boys are chosen over girls to receive an education, and that girls are often kept out of school, contributes to high rates of unemployment among females. This makes it easier for the parents to place their female children outside of the family, often in households where they will learn domestic responsibilities. Training in domestic services is also seen as preparation for marriage (ILO-IPEC, 2002, Human Rights Watch, 2003).

Another traditional practice in Central and Western Africa that makes children, and especially women and girls, vulnerable to trafficking, is the custom of early marriage (UNICEF, 2003). In extreme poverty, girls are seen as an economic burden and a survival strategy is often to sell their young daughter for the purpose of marriage. Girls and women who try to escape abusive relationships end up in destitute poverty (UNICEF, 2003).

A further factor discriminating against girls and women is tied to rules of inheritance. The fact that girls and women are excluded from inheriting and owning land in many countries, results in their marginalization, poverty and high risk of being trafficked (Dottridge, 2002).

The trafficking of girls and young women into sexual exploitation can be explained by many of the same factors that explain trafficking into domestic service. Poverty, lack of educational and employment opportunities, and gender violence, foster the desire to migrate in search of better opportunities. "It appears that the trafficking of women and children is closely related to an erosion of social protection, which has pushed them to find other options elsewhere" (Truong, 2006; 63).

The fact that young women from (predominantly West) Africa – and in particular, Nigeria – end up trafficked transnationally into prostitution, is a pattern that has been observed in numerous Western European countries. While trafficking into prostitution of (young) women from many other parts of the world also occurs, what differentiates West African women from other trafficked victims is the means used to exercise control over them.

In the early 1990's, large numbers of Nigerian girls began arriving in the Netherlands and, as unaccompanied minors, began seeking asylum. By the mid to late 1990's, women's interest groups and social workers began observing large numbers of young Nigerian girls surfacing in prostitution in various Red Light districts throughout the Netherlands. Stories began to surface of religious practices binding the girls to their traffickers and causing them to be terrified of cooperating with the authorities. Unique to the West African countries of Nigeria and Ghana is the use of voodoo practices or "juju" to instill fear into young women and prevent them from escaping or cooperating with police. Prior to their departure, a fingernail clipping, lock of hair or piece of (intimate) clothing is used in a voodoo ritual performed by a priest which binds the victims to their traffickers. Victims are forced to swear an oath; failure to respect the oath results in misfortune befalling the girls or their families (Van Dijk, 2001; Siegel and De Blank, 2010).[13] Part of the agreement requires the girls to pay back inflated debts and swear allegiance to their traffickers. It is alleged that the trafficked women are so fearful of these oaths, that Italian police note that compared to other foreign women trafficked into prostitution into Italy, Nigerian women are subjected to much less physical supervision and control (Aronowitz, 2009).[14]

It is not clear to what degree voodoo played a part in the control of young Nigerian girls in prostitution in the Netherlands.[15] Anthropologists have been critical, pointing out that the Dutch police created a moral panic in building their investigations of Nigerian trafficking around voodoo. What is clear, is that local religious traditions, the belief in magic, and rituals played a role in the trafficking of young women to Europe. It is better understood as a symbolic action to seal a promise (Carling, no date; Van Dijk, 2001), but one which appears to have frightened young women into submission.

In concluding, poverty, large nuclear families and gender discrimination against female children can be considered root causes contributing to the trafficking of persons in (West and Central) Africa, facilitated by the practice of child fosterage. These can be classified as 'intermediate' and 'deep structural' causes. More easy to address are intermediate causes, such as the failure of parents to recognize the dangers to their children of child fosterage, or the lack of school opportunities for girls or job opportunities in rural areas. Because child labour is so ingrained – and in some cases, necessary to sustain families – in the social structure of West Africa, a balance must be created to allow children to receive an education while still helping to support the family. It is not necessarily the eradication of (all forms of) child labour, but the elimination of the worst forms, the most dangerous and abusive practices, which must be the goal. More difficult – but essential to address – are deep structural causes, such as gender discrimination, the historically accepted practice of child placement outside of the home, countries' massive structural debt, as well as the common practice of those in power to protect their interests, and systematic corruption. These require long-term approaches which make it difficult, but not impossible, to eradicate trafficking and modern day slavery in this part of the world (Aronowitz and Peruffo, 2003).

Trafficking to the Gulf States

In another part of the world, trafficking involves mainly adults. Countries which are part of the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf, also known as the Gulf Cooperation Council, or GCC States – Bahrain, Kuwait, Iraq, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) – are among the wealthiest countries of the world (see Table 1). Relatively small populations, immense wealth and booming construction developments have created a demand for foreign workers in the region (Fargues, 2011), which, to a large degree, explains the international trafficking flows to this region.

The discovery of oil led to rapid development of the region. An eightfold growth in population – one of the most rapid in the world – from 4 million in 1950 to 40 million in 2006 – was due not to a natural growth of the native population, but through the importation of foreign workers (Kapiszewski, 2006). The Middle East is "... one of the fastest growing migrant-receiving regions in the world." (Khan and Harroff-Tavel, 2011; 295).[16]

These came predominantly from the SAARC (South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation) countries of Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. Migration occurred from densely populated (Bangladesh, India and Pakistan) countries indexed medium to low[17] on UNDP's Development Index scale (Table 2), to sparsely populated and highly developed countries in the Gulf Region (Table 1).

Table 1: GDP and Population (2013) by Country of Receiving Countries

Country

GDP (current US\$)

Population, total (2013)

Development

Index

Bahrain

\$32.89 billion

1.332 million

Very High (44)

Kuwait

\$175.8 billion

3.369 million

Very High (46)

Oman

\$79.66 billion

3.632 million

High (56)

Qatar

\$203.2 billion

2.169 million

Very High (31)

Saudi Arabia

\$748.4 billion

28.83 million

Very High (34)

United Arab Emirates

\$402.3 billion

9.346 million

Very High (40)

Source: World Bank Data, Countries and Economies; <http://data.worldbank.org/country> and United Nations Development Program, Table 1: Human Development Index and its components; <http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/table-1-human-development-index-and-its-components>

Table 2: GDP and Population (2013) by Country of Sending Countries

Country

GDP (current US\$)

Population, total (2013)

Development

Index

Bangladesh

\$150.0 billion

156.6 million

Medium (142)

India

\$1.877 trillion

1.252 billion

Medium (135)

Nepal

\$19.29 billion

27.80 million

Low (145)

Pakistan

\$232.3 billion

182.1 million

Low (146)

Sri Lanka

\$67.18 billion

20.48 million

High (73)

Source: World Bank Data, Countries and Economies; <http://data.worldbank.org/country> and United Nations Development Program, Table 1: Human Development Index and its components; <http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/table-1-human-development-index-and-its-components>

Foreign workers make up a large percentage of the labor force in the Gulf States. Information from 2008, shows that the percentage of the labor force in the Gulf States ranges from a low of 51% in Saudi Arabia to a high of 94% in Qatar. This information can be found in Table 3 on the following page. See Table 4 in the Appendix for a distribution of the national and foreign populations in the Gulf States.

Table 3: Foreign nationals as a Percentage of GCC Labor Force (2008)

Country

%

Bahrain

76.7 %

Kuwait

83.2 %

Oman

74.6 %

Qatar

94.3 %

Saudi Arabia

50.6 %

United Arab Emirates

85.0 %

Source: Baldwin-Edwards (2011; 9).

Human Trafficking and Abuse of Migrant Workers

Workers often sign contracts in their home countries through recruitment agencies only to find that the contract is destroyed upon arrival in the destination country (in some cases two contracts have been drawn up – one for the worker and an official one for the employer). Upon arrival in the destination country and at their workplace, their passports are taken from them and workers are often forced to work for a salary far less than what was promised.[18] Workers are often dependent upon their employers for shelter, clothing, food and transportation,[19] and are often subject to physical and sexual abuse. Accusations of human trafficking and abuse of workers' rights have been levied at a number of Governments in the region and have been documented by organizations such as Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International, the International Labour Organization and the International Trade Union Confederation.

Foreign laborers initially filled the gap on large construction projects in GCC countries. With development, came expansion into other occupational areas such as domestic help, hospitality and retail, opening the way for women to migrate to the region (ILO, no date). The number of domestic workers is rapidly increasing in the region. Since the beginning of the decade, the number of domestic workers has increased in Saudi Arabia by 40%; in Kuwait the figure has increased by 66% since the mid 1990s. Each household in the UAE is estimated to employ, on average, three domestic workers (ITUC, 2014).

Workers are often recruited through promises of well-paid jobs but once in the destination country, find themselves residing in substandard living conditions and exposed to exploitative and sometimes dangerous working conditions including excessively long hours, working in the sweltering heat, limited periods of rest, rationed food, low (or no) pay, verbal and physical abuse, sexual harassment and assaults by employers (Calandrucchio, 2005; Human Rights Watch, 2007, 2009; Vlieger, 2011; Khan and Harroff-Tavel, 2011; Bajracharya and Sijapati, 2012; Americans for Democracy and Human Rights in Bahrain (ADHRB), 2014). Domestic servants are often kept isolated in the homes and subject to sexual harassment (Vlieger, 2011; Kapiszewski, 2006), while construction workers are forced to reside in labor camps on the outskirts of cities, often in crowded and unsanitary conditions characterized by a lack of electricity and running water. Newspaper accounts document horrific exploitation of migrant workers and deaths as a result of mistreatment and neglect. [20] The situation appears to be particularly egregious in Qatar, where media reports hundreds of deaths among construction workers building stadiums for the World Soccer Cup in 2022 (Morin, 2013; Gibson and Pattison, 2014; BBC, 2014).

The ILO estimates that in the Middle East, 3.4 in every 1,000 of the region's inhabitants are in positions of forced labor. This amounts to some 600,000 victims (Harroff-Tavel and Nasrim, 2013). The International Trade Union Confederation puts the number much higher and estimates that 2.4 million migrant domestic workers are enslaved in Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates (ITUC, 2014).

Mistrust and Marginalization of Foreign Workers

Historically, mistrust of foreign workers has existed in the region. Migrant workers were viewed as a threat to the stability of the GCC countries. They were perceived to influence the security and structure of society and endanger the cultural identity of their host country (Abella, 1995; Kapiszewski, 2006). During the GCC summit in Manama in December 2004, the Bahraini King submitted a report on the danger posed by foreign labor to the social and cultural life as well as the economy of the GCC states. Majeed ibn Muhsen Al-Alawi, his Minister of Labor and Social Affairs, said in an interview that "we should save future generations from having their culture lost" and that although "we are not against the foreign labor" at the same time "we do not want these workers to become citizens in the region." (Kapiszewski, 2006; 11). Nationals are concerned about the negative influence of foreign workers on the national identities, values and cultures as well as the social structure (Kapiszewski, 2006).[21] Of particular concern were foreign teachers and domestic helpers / nannies who might educate and raise the children "without proper attention being given to Islamic and Arabic values" (Kapiszewski, 2006; 12).

Foreign workers in the region are not just feared, but are also despised. When asked how Qataris view foreign workers who are there building the infrastructure in the country, Sharan Burrows, General Secretary of The International Trade Union Confederation replied, "I don't think they [the Qataris] see them [foreign guest workers] as human".[22]

This mistrust may have been exacerbated by disturbances (in some cases violent protests) in Bahrain, Kuwait and Qatar by migrant workers. In Dubai, UAE, hundreds of construction workers of mainly south Asian origin went on a violent rampage to protest horrific working conditions, low pay and their lack of rights (Kapiszewski, 2006). In November 2014 around 800 workers went on strike to protest poverty wages and breaches of contract. Rather than investigations into workers' allegations of abuse, they were physically attacked, arrested and held in detention – often incommunicado for long periods – before being deported (ITUC, 26 November 2014).

Trying to create a balance between economic growth on the one hand, and fearing permanent settlement of non-Arab and non-Muslim foreign workers and their influence on cultural identity on the other, the GCC countries introduced a system characterized by diversification, tight security, rotation, and restrictions on mobility. The only way to import labor was through the system of *kafala* – which imposed limitations on the guest worker tantamount to abuse of their human rights (Abella, 2005).

The Kafala System

The employment system in the Middle East and Gulf States is a major contributing factor to the trafficking and exploitation of foreign works in the region. Employers pay sometimes large sums of money to recruit foreign workers. Due to their initial financial investment, employers are often anxious to recoup their investment.

The *kafala* system served originally to host foreign workers in GCC countries. It is an employer-driven sponsorship system regulating the relationship that the sponsor (*kafeel*) or employer has with his migrant workers. The host or *kafeel*, assumed responsibility for the migrant's visit, safety and protection (Bajracharya and Sijapati, 2012). What originated as a form of hospitality, has become a “system of structural dependence” giving the *kafeel* significant power over the legal and economic responsibility of the migrant worker (Khan and Harroff-Tavel, 2011; 294). The *kafeel* determines the terms and conditions of residence and work (Khan and Harroff-Tavel, 2011), often holds the passport of the foreign worker and determines whether the employee can change jobs or leave the country.[23] This “unequal power dynamic” between *kafeel* and migrant worker may lead to abusive, slavery-like situations. “According to experts, the sponsorship rule entails elements of servitude, slavery, and practices similar to slavery, as defined by the UN Trafficking Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children” (Calandruccio, 2005; 279[24]; Khan and Harroff-Tavel, 2011).

Labor laws, if they exist, are often not respected by the employers (Khan and Harroff-Tavel, 2011; Bajracharya and Sijapati, 2012). The ILO and the ITUC report that labor laws do not adequately protect domestic servants, entertainers and those employed in the agricultural sector, nor are workers allowed to organize (Harroff-Tavel & Nasrim, 2013; ITUC, 2014). In some countries (Qatar and Saudi Arabia), an employee is barred from seeking other employment without the permission of the original sponsor/employer. In Bahrain, a worker cannot transfer jobs without the permission from the Government; the request is often denied (ADHRB, 2014). Workers who attempt to leave, or those who flee abusive employers are considered illegals and may be detained or deported at their own expense. The *Kafala* system has been described as “... a deeply seeded structural system that causes, permits, and in some cases encourages violence towards migrant workers” (ADHRB, 2014; 8). Because it creates such a dependency of the migrant worker on the employer, it creates vulnerability and facilitates abuse and exploitation (ADHRB, 2014).

The Governments of GCC countries must not tacitly accept the structural abuse of migrant workers so important to the development of their countries. Two approaches can be taken to alleviate the misery of foreign workers in the Gulf States. The first involves the *Kafala* system, which must be modified or abandoned. Sanctions must be taken against illicit recruitment agencies in both source and destination countries. This involves prosecution of the owners and operators of *mala fide* recruitment agencies. Migrant workers must be provided with the right to unionize and fair pay for their labor – which must be paid on a regular (monthly) basis. Exit visas for migrant workers, and the right to leave the country and the ability to change jobs should never be decided upon by the employer, nor should the employer be allowed to hold the worker's documents. The destination countries must ensure workers are given the right to terminate a contract and leave an abusive employer. Mechanisms must be put into place to allow foreign workers to file complaints (without penalty of incarceration or deportation). Improvements must be made in the cramped and unsanitary living conditions in the labor camp residences for foreign workers. Regulations regarding the maximum number of hours a laborer may work and regulated rest hours must be put in place and enforced. Multinational construction firms must establish human-rights based guidelines and ensure that local subcontractors adhere to these. With pressure from the government and private industry, many of these changes could be implemented without much effort. The second, and perhaps more difficult challenge is to address discriminatory attitudes among residents of the Gulf States towards non-Muslim workers – involving a more long-term process.

Afghanistan's Bacha Bazi

Unlike the recent press coverage of maltreatment of foreign workers in the Gulf States,[25] the practice of *bacha bazi* in Afghanistan is an almost unknown phenomenon. It is believed to be widespread, but the extent to which it occurs is unclear. Sadly, little attention has been paid to it. According to the U.S. Department of State's 2009 Human Rights Report on Afghanistan, "Numerous reports alleged that harems of young boys were cloistered for 'bacha baazi' (boy-play) for sexual and social entertainment; although credible statistics were difficult to acquire..." (US Department of State, 2009). A few newspaper articles (Mondloch, 2013; Londoño, 2012a and 2012b; Brinkley, 2010; Qobil, 2010; Abdul-Ahad, G. 2009; Smith, 2002), even fewer academic articles (Martin and Shaheen, 2014; De Lind van Wijngaarden, and Rani, 2011), an evaluation of the situation for the Dutch (Schutt and Van Baarle, 2014) and U.S. military (Human Terrain Team, 2009)[26] and the 2010 Public Broadcasting System (PBS) documentary on "The Dancing Boys of Afghanistan" are all that one can find. The U.S. Department of State (2009) refers to *bacha bazi* as "...a source of shame and ... a widespread culturally sanctioned form of male rape." Reference is made to the custom in the US Department of State's *Trafficking in Persons Report 2014*: "Some Afghan families knowingly sell their children into prostitution, including for *bacha baazi* – where wealthy or influential men, including government officials and security forces, use young boys for social and sexual entertainment".[27]

The practice of *bacha bazi*, or "boy play" is found in Afghanistan and parts of Pakistan. Children as young as 8 (and generally not older than 18) are chosen for their youthfulness and beauty.[28] Young boys are dressed in women's clothing (with bells on their ankles and wrists, and sometimes wearing make-up) and perform erotic dances and songs for an all-male audience. After the performance the boy may be "sold" to the highest bidder to provide sexual services. According to a number of journalists and an internal report to UNICEF, *bacha bazi* appears to be gaining in popularity (Mondloch, 2013; Londoño, 2012; PBS, 2010) but the extent of the practice is unknown.

Bacabozlik, as it was referred to by anthropologist Ingeborg Baldauf, was observed among the Uzbeks and Pashtun in Afghanistan in the 1970's (De Lind van Wijngaarden and Rani, 2011).[29] What Baldauf describes is the training of young boys to sing and dance at all male parties, and an affectionate relationship between the owner and young boy. According to her, there was rarely anal-genital intercourse as this would mean the end of the relationship (De Lind van Wijngaarden and Rani, 2011). The practice today, however, has degenerated into something far more harmful to the children than simply using them as social entertainers.

The custom of having a young male sexual companion has been strongly linked to the southern and eastern areas in Afghanistan in what is known as the country's rural Pashtun belt, as well as in the northern (predominantly Tajik) countryside (Mondloch, 2013). The history of Afghanistan and the cultural practices among the Pashtuns provide insight into the practice of *bacha bazi*.

Mujahideen warlords who battled the Soviets in Afghanistan's civil war in the 1980's kept male servants, or "chai boys" (tea boys) who also provided sexual services. It was common practice (Mondloch, 2013) and according to a former mujahideen commander, everyone had a boy ("I had a boy partner when I was an unmarried commander. I had a boy because every commander had one. There's competition amongst the commanders. Without one, I couldn't compete with the others"). (PBS, 2010). This peer pressure to have young male sexual companion was also documented in Baldauf's study (De Lind van Wijngaarden and Rani, 2011). It goes beyond peer pressure, though. The practice of keeping young male sexual partners is linked with status and power (Schut and Van Baarle, 2014; De Lind van Wijngaarden and Rani, 2011; PBS, 2010).

This tradition of keeping young boys for sexual companionship was historically prevalent until it was banned under the Taliban in the 1990's, but with the demise of the Taliban in 2001, the practice returned and is believed to have spread from more rural areas of Afghanistan to the capital and beyond. Many former warlords are now in important government positions. The ones who are supposed to protect children from abuse, are the same ones perpetrating these crimes against them (Schut and Van Baarle, 2014; Mondloch, 2013; De Lind van Wijngaarden and Rani, 2011; PBS, 2010).

Poverty, Social and Cultural Practices, and Government Corruption

Poverty

Afghanistan is a war-torn country, a failed state (Rotberg, 2003), characterized by crushing poverty (ranked 169 out of 187 countries in the UNDP Development Index[30] with 29.8% of the population living in severe poverty).[31] The GDP per capita (2011 PPP\$) of Afghani is \$1,892.26. Income in rural areas is much lower. The mean years of schooling is 3.2. It is questionable, in a war-torn country, if children in rural areas are able to attend school at all.

Poverty does not cause, but facilitates the practice. Children are recruited from the streets, as orphans, or families give away their young boys in the hope of providing the child with better opportunities. In other cases,

the *bacha baz* – the owner – promises the family a small income in exchange for the child. In a study of *bacha bazi* by anthropologist Ingeborg Baldauf in Afghanistan in the 1970s, she found that boys are used by poor families as a source of income or to guarantee the repayment of loans (De Lind van Wijngaarden and Rani, 2011). The poverty in Afghanistan ensures a large pool of potential victims.

Further contributing to the problem is gender inequality (and discrimination) – of 151 countries, Afghanistan is ranked 149 on the United Nations Development Program’s Gender Inequality Index Rank, 2013.[32] Abject poverty and gender inequality only partially explain the practice of *bacha bazi*. Other factors, such as the role of women in society, social and cultural norms, and government corruption also support the practice.

Patriarchy and Social Exclusion

It is a patriarchal society with strict segregation between men and women, and exclusion of women from public life. Women are marginalized and men have little to no opportunity for social contact with women outside of their wife and female family members. Due to the strict separation between men and women, Pashtun men “...often lack the experience of these aspects of life with women”. (HTT, 2009; 2). According to De Lind van Wijngaarden and Rani (2011; 1069), “Male relationships with women outside of marriage are strongly discouraged, while social and physical affection between males is socially tolerated. The association of adult men with boys is not questioned, adding to boys’ vulnerability to sexual abuse and exploitation”.

The fact that men are not allowed to socialize with unmarried women, but are allowed to socialize with other men (and boys), has been said to contribute to the all-male social activities, including sexual relations. This was supported in Baldauf’s original study of *bacha bazi* in Afghanistan, and confirmed by De Lind van Wijngaarden and Rani (2011; 1069) in their study of *bacha bazi* in Pakistan – “The cultural difficulty for unmarried Pakistani men to have social or sexual relations with women seems one of the root causes of *bacha baazi*”. The separation between unmarried men and women means that “[w]omen are simply unapproachable. Afghan men cannot talk to an unrelated woman until after proposing marriage.[33] Before then, they can’t even look at a woman, except perhaps her feet. Otherwise she is covered, head to ankle” (Brinkley, 2010; 3; see also De Lind van Wijngaarden and Rani, 2011). According to a professor of psychiatry at Columbia University, Justin Richardson, the extreme restrictions on sexual relations with women lead to an increased prevalence of sexual relations between men and young boys (Reynolds, 2002). “In some Muslim societies where the prohibition against premarital heterosexual intercourse is extremely high – higher than that against sex between men – you will find men having sex with other males not because they find them most attractive of all but because they find them most attractive of the limited options available to them” (Reynolds, 2002; 1).

Additionally, Arabic – the language of the Koran – is not spoken by many of those who follow the religious teachings of Islam. In rural southern Afghanistan, members of the Pashtun communities are dependent upon the interpretation of local Mullahs to understand the Koran. “The more rural the area, the far less likely it becomes that even the Mullah himself understands Arabic and the more likely that what is taught is based upon local cultural tradition, independent of Islam itself. Homosexuality is strictly prohibited in Islam, but cultural interpretations of Islamic teaching prevalent in the area tacitly condone it in comparison to heterosexual relationships” (Human Terrain Team, 2009; 5). Sex with a man, while not condoned, is “...preferable to sex with an ineligible woman, which in the context of Pashtun honor, would likely result in ...revenge and honor killings” (HTT, 2009; 6).

Another problem, according to anthropologists and sociologists, results from a “perverse interpretation of Islamic law” (Brinkley, 2010; 3). The Koran has very strict regulations regarding cleanliness. During menstruation, the woman is considered unclean and “execution of ritual prayer, fasting, reading from or coming into contact with the Koran, sexual intercourse, or the entering of a mosque is forbidden” (Wunderlich and Schlüter, 1982; 25). Fundamentalist imams, exaggerate a passage from the Koran on menstruation and “...teach that women are ‘unclean’ and therefore distasteful” (Brinkley, 2010; 3).[34] The social scientist who prepared the report on Pashtun culture and practices for the U.S. military reports that local cultural interpretations of the Koran “have created the passionately if erroneously held belief that women are physically undesirable” (HTT, 2009; 6-7). This is another example of interpretations which are selected to support preconceived beliefs.

Cultural and Social Norms

Cultural and social norms are often unspoken rules or expectations of behavior within a specific cultural or social group which dictate social standards of desirable and undesirable behavior. These cultural and social norms persist because of individuals’ preference or pressure from others to conform. Internal pressures and external influences are thought to maintain social and cultural norms (World Health Organization, 2009).

Bacha bazi has been closely linked to members of the Pashtun[35] ethnic group and tribal leaders. Pashtun literature praises the love of older men for beautiful young boys (Schut and Van Baarle, 2014; de Lind van

Wijngaarden and Rani, 2011; HTT, 2009; Reynolds, 2002). The Pashtun traditional practice of *halekon* – taking boys from their families to use them as apprentices or to integrate them into the collective fighting groups has a long history (Martin and Shaheen, 2014). During this process they are also sexually objectified and abused (Londoño, 2012). This, coupled with the socially acceptable practice by mujahideen of keeping young male sexual partners during the war, greatly facilitated the practice and its widespread acceptance among certain members of society.

The military study of Pashtun found that “Pashtun men are freer with companionship, affection, emotional and artistic expression, and the trust bred of familiarity with other men.” It further identified “a *culturally-dependent homosexuality* appearing to affect a far greater population base than some researchers would argue is attributable to natural inclination” (HTT, 2009; 2).[36] And yet, Pashtun men do not think of themselves as homosexuals (HTT, 2009). It appears that it is the label, rather than the practice itself, which is condemned. Research in Afghanistan (Baldauf) and Pakistan (De Lind van Wijngaarden and Rani, 2011; 1070) found that “...the attraction for boys is not defined in terms of homosexuality by either the boy or the *bacha baz*, as homosexuality is often defined as sex between ‘equal’ men, whereas these boys are considered (both by themselves and by the *bacha baz*) to be ‘not-yet-men’. This is the key reason why these relationships end at a certain stage, when the young men become too ‘similar’, physically, to the *bacha baz*, the relationship becomes untenable”.

In some parts of Afghanistan, and among certain segments of Afghan society, *bacha bazi* or the sexual abuse of adolescent males by older men is a social norm (Schut and Van Baarle, 2014).[37] According to De Lind van Wijngaarden and Rani (2011; 1068), “[t]his only becomes possible, culturally, if there is a shared understanding of ‘value’ in the boys, at least among the men who desire them. This value is their beauty...the promise of erotic fulfillment and pleasure. The lavish spending on clothes, shoes and other goods all tend to focus on beautification of the boys and increasing their desirability in the eyes of the *bacha baz* and his ‘rivals’”. The more attractive or talented the boy is deemed, the more his presence elevates the status of his patron (HTT, 2009; 10).

In a country where women are suppressed and socially marginalized, men dictate laws and practices, further normalizing the practice of the dancing and sexual abuse of young boys.

Corruption

Corruption is another factor which supports the practice. Afghanistan is governed by national, common and Sharia law, has a number of national action plans and strategies to protect children,[38] and has ratified a number of international conventions protecting the rights of the child[39] (Schut and Van Baarle, 2014). Laws exist in the country prohibiting pederasty (sex between an adult man and a boy), sexual abuse of children and forced labor. All legal mechanisms are in place to protect Afghanistan’s children, yet the practice continues. Rather than protecting the children of Afghanistan, many of the offenders are police officers, military leaders or wealthy businessmen (Martin and Shaheen,[40] 2014; U.S. Department of State, 2014; PBS, 2010). While the deputy chief of police in Takhar province, Afghanistan told investigative journalist Najibullah Quraishi that “If the people are caught, they will be severely punished”, his chief of the youth crime department and chief investigator were caught on film attending a *bacha bazi* party (PBS, 2010).[41] Attending such performances is only one of the corrupt practices in which police are involved. PBS (2010) documents a case in which a police officer provided a weapon used to kill a young *bacha bazi* dancer who had escaped from his master. Despite having received a long sentence, the officer was freed from jail within a few months. Others involved in *bacha bazi* who were arrested, were also freed within a short period of time (PBS, 2010). The situation is so dangerous that Nazer Alimi, UNICEF researcher who compiled an internal report for UNICEF Afghanistan said he knew the offenders but refused to identify them by name as he feared for his life.[42] One respondent in Schut and Van Baarles’ research (2014; 36) calls it “the weakness of the government”.

The UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, Radhika Coomaraswamy, has repeatedly tried to call attention to the problem only to find that no one in Afghanistan wants to discuss it. No one denies its existence, but it is a taboo subject. Coomaraswamy (2010) has said “Where states fail and don’t provide services due to corruption or incompetence ... there is nothing, nobody to protect these children” (PBS, 2010).

The dangers of ignoring such abuses of young boys is not limited to the child victims themselves. At least one *bacha bazi* dancer, Imam, expressed his desire, when he is too old to dance at the age of 18, to “...become the master of his own stable of dancing boys... I’ll probably keep between 20 to 30, if I can afford to. A boy should be 12 or 13 and of good character, a very polite boy. He should have no other interests except *bacha bazi*. I would like to keep them for myself, and they should be useful for me and my friends” (PBS; 2010).[43] And so the cycle of violence is perpetuated. Another report admonishes that by usurping the female role in society,

this and similar practices "... may contribute to the alienation of women over generations, and their eventual relegation to extreme segregation and abuse (HTT, 2009: 2).

The Human Terrain Team Report (2009; 8) attributes *bacha bazi* to "poverty, segregation and tacit cultural approval". *Bacha bazi* and the unspoken acceptance of this practice can be addressed through a number of measures. Poverty alleviation in geographical areas and aimed at "at risk" families is an important first step. Until children are able to get an education and parents are in a position to support their family, the risk exists that male children will be given up to a wealthy "patron". Awareness raising – and "breaking the silence" is necessary to make parents understand the harm done to young boys. This harm is not just limited to the physical assault that occurs during forced sexual relations, but also the psychological harm and stigma attached to those boys who have participated in *bacha bazi*. [44] The tacit approval, participation in *bacha bazi* parties and protection of powerful figures by law enforcement and government officials must be addressed and corruption at all levels of government that support this practice must be eradicated. Law against sexual assault of children must be strictly enforced. In addition to prevention, programs must also exist to reintegrate children already harmed by the practice.

Concluding Remarks

Patterns of trafficking vary in different (sub)regions of the world. In fact, trafficking patterns (age, gender, markets, *modus operandi* of recruitment, movement, control and exploitation) differ, and should be studied at the local, rather than national or global level. While quite different, each of the patterns examined – intra-regional child trafficking for forced labor in West and Central Africa, international sexual exploitation of girls and young women from Nigeria to Europe, the international trafficking of adults for labor exploitation from South Asia to the Gulf States in the Middle East, and the domestic trafficking of young boys for entertainment and sexual exploitation in Afghanistan – share some commonalities. Poverty is a driving force in all of these trafficking patterns. Children are recruited from poor families, often in rural areas, for placement in wealthier families (often in urban areas) as domestic or sexual servants. Parents in West Africa and Afghanistan give their children to others in the hope of providing a better future for the child, or sell their children out of desperation. Girls and young women migrate to Europe from Nigeria, and adult laborers depart South Asian countries for the Gulf States leaving poverty and the hope of employment to support families back home.

Deeply-rooted attitudes supporting gender inequality in Africa and Afghanistan, and discrimination of non-Muslims in the Gulf States further contribute to the trafficking problem and exploitation of vulnerable populations. In Africa, gender discrimination puts girls and women at risk of exploitation. In Afghanistan a different pattern emerges. There, the gender discrimination and marginalization of women puts young male children at risk of exploitation. Discrimination against non-Muslim foreign workers allows for the exploitation of this population in Gulf States.

The social and cultural practices which facilitate trafficking are unique to a particular geographic area, and must be studied and dealt with as such. The cultural and social practices that have been linked to human trafficking and exploitation in the patterns discussed in this paper – child fosterage in Africa, the *Kafala* system in the Middle East, the strict separation of men and women in Afghanistan – do not, in and of themselves *cause*, but *facilitate* trafficking. They can facilitate uncontrolled, systematic abuse when children or migrant workers are employed in households or businesses in which there is no supervision, inspection or control. Social and cultural norms and attitudes that facilitate exploitation must be addressed and changed. The tacit tolerance of exploitation by employers, family members and sub-sections within society, as well as weak government response, indifference and corruption, further reinforces the problem. Changing these deeply-rooted attitudes, and cultural norms involve long-term structural change.

The common *cause* of trafficking in all of the forms of exploitation discussed in this paper is the demand generated by those who desire the low-cost services of trafficked victims – and the scrupulous intermediaries/traffickers/exploiters – who step in to meet this demand. Without the demand for household and agricultural help in Africa, for sexual services of victims in their own countries or further abroad in Europe, the Middle East and the Americas, for construction workers and domestic servants in households in the Gulf States, or the companionship and sexual services of young boys in Afghanistan, human trafficking and exploitation would not exist. Our approach to reducing exploitation must target problems such as poverty, corruption, lack of educational and employment opportunities, discrimination, gender inequality, social and cultural practices that support these abuses – and the demand which drives the market.

Appendix

Table 4: Total population, and percentage of nationals and non-nationals, latest year

Country

Total population**% Nationals****% Non-nationals**

Bahrain (2010)a

1,234,571

46.0

54.0

Kuwait (mid-2013)b

3,891,943

31.5

68.5

Oman (mid-2013)c

3,855,206

56.3

43.7

Qatar (2010)d

1,699,435

14.3

85.7

Saudi Arabia (2012)e

29,195,895

67.9

32.1

United Arab Emirates (2010)f

8,264,070

11.5

88.5

Total

48,141,120

51.9

48.1

(a) CIO, Census 2010; (b) PACI, Oct. 2013; (c) NCSI, *Bulletin of Population Statistics* n°3, 2013; (d) QSA, Census 2010; (e) CDSI, <http://www.cdsi.gov.sa/english/index.php>; (f) www.uaestatistics.gov.ae

Source: Gulf Research Center Cambridge; Determinants of Future Migration in the Gulf; http://www.grm.grc.net/workshop/94_WS10%20-%20Determinants%20of%20Future%20Migration%20in%20the%20Gulf.pdf; accessed on 1 March 2015.

[1] Kevin Bales, co-founder of Anti-Slavery International has put the figure at 27 million. The U.S. Department of State's *Trafficking in Persons Report 2007* estimated that between 4 and 27 million people are trafficked across the world. The International Labour Organization (ILO) estimated 2,4 million people were victims of trafficking worldwide (ILO, 2005). In its 2012 report, the ILO estimates the number of victims of human trafficking and forced labor is around twenty-one million (ILO, 2012).

- [2] There is a clear distinction between these two phenomenon – not all cases of forced labor are a result of human trafficking – but this discussion is beyond the scope of this paper. For more on these differences, and a discussion on forced labor see ILO (2005).
- [3] The ILO does not make a distinction between victims in forced labor as a result of human trafficking, and as a result of other forms of forced labor. In its 2005 report, ILO did estimate that 2.45 million people were enslaved as a result of human trafficking.
- [4] See the UNODC *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons* (2014; 21-22) for a breakdown of countries in each region.
- [5] The majority were East Asians (33%), followed by South Asians (18%), Sub-Saharan Africans (10%) and Eastern European and Central Asians (6%).
- [6] UNICEF, 2006; For more on CSEC, see also the work of organizations such as the ILO-IPEC, ECPAT and Terre des Hommes.
- [7] The practice of *bacha bazi* has been identified in parts of Pakistan, but there it takes on a different form. Young boys are kept by older men as (sexual) companions, but are not forced to wear women's clothing and dance at parties.
- [8] Population Reference Bureau. Accessed on 9 March 2015 at <http://www.prb.org/DataFinder/Geography/Data.aspx?loc=246>.
- [9] International Labour Organization (no date), Child Labor in Africa. Accessed on 10 March 2015 at <http://ilo.org/ipec/Regionsandcountries/Africa/lang--en/index.htm>.
- [10] UNDP Table 1: Human Development Index and its components. Accessed on 15 January 2015 at <http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/table-1-human-development-index-and-its-components>
- [11] Truong (2006) citing a 2003 Anti-Slavery International report.
- [12] Aronowitz (2006; 27) referencing Email correspondence between Anne Kielland and Human Rights Watch cited in Human Rights Watch (2003; 13). Kielland cites a report by Bazzi-Veil, "Traffic des enfants en Afrique de l'Ouest et du Centre", World Bank.
- [13] Aronowitz (2009) refers to Okojie, C. (2003), *Programme of Action Against Trafficking in Minors and Young Women from Nigeria to Italy for the Purpose of Sexual Exploitation, Report of Field Survey in Edo State, Nigeria*, UNICRI; Aghatise (2005) Aghatise, E. (2005). "Women Trafficking from West Africa to Europe: Cultural Dimensions and Strategies", *Mozaic*, 2005/1; Skogseth (2006). *Trafficking in Women – Fact-finding trip to Nigeria (Abuja, Lagos and Benin City) 12-26 March 2006*, Landinfo, Oslo, Norway, 2006; http://www.landinfo.no/asset/224/1/224_1.pdf.
- [14] It is not clear if these women are trafficked victims or free-lance prostitutes who have paid off their debt and begun working for themselves.
- [15] While on mission to Nigeria with the UN in 2000, the author of this paper was told by various people working at NGOs of the practice of ju-ju which was used to control trafficked victims.
- [16] Citing International Organization for Migration (IOM) (2010). *World Migration Report 2010–The Future of Migration: Building Capacities for Change*. Geneva: IOM.
- [17] With the exception of Sri Lanka, which scores high on the Development Index.
- [18] The ITUC reports that workers in Doha, Qatar were forced to work for a salary that was two thirds of what has promised to them (ITUC, 26 November 2014).
- [19] Multiple dependencies on an employer is an indicator of human trafficking.
- [20] See, for example, The Guardian's section on "Modern-day slavery in focus" at <http://www.theguardian.com/global-development/series/modern-day-slavery-in-focus>.
- [21] Citing Kapiszewski, Andrzej (2001). *National and Expatriates. Population and Labour Dilemmas of the GCC States*. Reading: Ithaca Press.
- [22] See the documentary *Qatar's World Cup*; <https://vimeo.com/95215527>; accessed on 3 March 2015.
- [23] Workers are not allowed to depart a country without the written permission of the sponsor.
- [24] Citing Borkholder, J.L., and Mohammed, M. (2002). *Domestic service as a form of trafficking in persons in the Middle East*. First World Congress for Middle Eastern Studies, Mainz, Germany, 12 September 2002.

[25] See, for example, The Guardian's section on "Modern-day slavery in focus" at <http://www.theguardian.com/global-development/series/modern-day-slavery-in-focus>.

[26] The more recent interest in the phenomenon of the sexual abuse of young boys by older men was generated, in part, by US, British and Dutch military stationed in the country, who were suddenly confronted with practices unusual or unacceptable in the West (Schut and Van Baarle, 2014). The HTT report (2009) refers to US soldiers being openly propositioned by Pashtun men wearing make-up, and older men openly showing inappropriate physical behavior toward young male children.

[27] US Trafficking in Persons Report, Afghanistan at <http://www.state.gov/j/tip/rls/tiprpt/countries/2014/226664.htm>.

[28] Once the child begins developing signs of becoming a young man, he is no longer attractive as a sexual partner or *bacha bazi* dancer.

[29] De Lind van Wijngaarden and Rani (2011) compare Baldauf's study in Afghanistan in the 1970's to their study of *bacha bazi* – which takes a slightly different form – in Pakistan today. Baldauf's original article was published in a now defunct journal and is inaccessible to this author. Any comments about Baldauf's study refer to the article by De Lind van Wijngaarden and Rani (2011).

[30] UNDP, *Human Development Reports*, Table 1: Human Development Index and its components; accessed on 9 March 2015 at <http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/table-1-human-development-index-and-its-components>

[31] UNDP, *Human Development Reports*, Table 6: Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI); accessed on 3 March 2015 at <http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/table-6-multidimensional-poverty-index-mpi>.

[32] United Nations Development Programme, *Human Development Reports*, Table 4: Gender Inequality Index; <http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/table-4-gender-inequality-index>.

[33] Additionally, when they marry, men are required to pay large sums of money to, and buy presents for the bride and her parents – something unobtainable for many young men (Baldauf, cited in De Lind van Wijngaarden and Rani 2011; Human Terrain Team, 2009).

[34] See also Human Terrain Team (2009).

[35] The Pashtuns are the largest ethnic group in Afghanistan, and they are the dominant group in the government.

[36] "Dr. Mohammed Nasem Zafar, a professor at Kandahar Medical College, estimates that about 50% of the city's male residents have sex with men or boys at some point in their lives" (Reynolds, 2002).

[37] "Sexual exploitation and/or abuse of adolescent males by older men (...) can, in some parts of the country, be considered a social norm within certain segments of Afghanistan society, particularly among certain populations" Schut and Van Baarle, citing S. Khan, *Everybody knows, but nobody knows: Desks review of current literature on HIV and male-male sexualities, behaviours and sexual exploitation in Afghanistan* (NAZ Foundation International, 2008; 10).

[38] The 2004 National Action Plan Against Child Trafficking and the 2008 National Strategy for Children at Risk.

[39] The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) Convention on Preventing and Combating Trafficking in Women and Children for Prostitution.

[40] Martin and Shaheen citing Jalalza, M. K. (2011) *Child Sex, Bacha Bazi and Prostitution in Afghanistan*. LAP. Lambert Academic Publishers.

[41] Direct quote taken from the documentary transcript at <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/dancingboys/etc/script.html>.

[42] See interview with Nazer Alimi, director of the UNICEF-funded Youth Information and Contact Center in Mazar-e-Sharif at <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/dancingboys/etc/alimi.html>

[43] Quotes downloaded from the documentary transcript at <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/dancingboys/etc/script.html>.

[44] De Lind van Wijngaarden en Rani (2011) in their study of *bacha bazi* in Pakistan (which takes a slightly different form) argue that boys who have been adopted by a bacha baz would probably later end up in male prostitution.

