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Research exercise: The Business of Trafficking: Supply and Demand

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The Business of Slavery: Supply and Demand

Who are the Victims?:

Human trafficking victims have been identified in cities, suburbs, and rural areas in all 50 states and in Washington, D.C. They are forced to work or provide commercial sex against their will in legal and legitimate business settings as well as underground markets. Some victims are hidden behind locked doors in brothels and factories. In other cases, victims are in plain view and may interact with community members, but the widespread lack of awareness and understanding of trafficking leads to low levels of victim identification by the people who most often encounter them. For example, women and girls in sex trafficking situations, especially U.S. citizens, are often misidentified as “willing” participants in the sex trade who make a free choice each day to be there.

Who are the facilitators?

It is important to realize that human trafficking operations often intersect or exist alongside legitimate businesses. As a result, certain industries may help to enable, support, or facilitate human trafficking. This “support structure” may include a wide range of individuals, organizations, businesses and corporations, and internet sites and practices.

Examples:
- Hotels and Motels, Landlords, Labor brokers, Taxi and other driving services, Airlines, bus, and rail companies, Advertisers, Online websites like Craigslist.com and Backpage.com, Phone books, Alternative Newspapers (and some mainstream newspapers), Banks and other financial services companies

Who are the Traffickers?:

Traffickers include those who recruit, transport, harbor, obtain, and exploit victims, often using force, threats, lies, or other physical and psychological methods of control. They can be foreign nationals and U.S. citizens, males and females, family members, intimate partners, acquaintances, and strangers.

traffickers include:
- Pimps
- Intimate partners/family members
- Gangs and criminal networks
- Brothel and fake massage business owners and managers
- Growers and crew leaders in agriculture
- Labor brokers
- Employers of domestic servants
- Small business owners and managers
- Large factory owners and corporation

Why so profitable?:

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Near endless supply of potential, low-cost
- Low transportation costs
- High demand for cheap sex and labor