

Arriving with machines, skills, and transnational networks: korean immigrants' involvement in the garment industry in latin america / Jin Suk Bae

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Deskripsi Lengkap: <https://lib.ui.ac.id/detail?id=20470867&lokasi=lokal>

Abstrak

ABSTRACT

This article examines the migration and economic adjustment processes of Korean immigrants, concentrating on their involvement in the garment industry in Korea and Latin America countries. Koreans, who were originally sent as agricultural immigrants to Latin American countries in the 1960s, unexpectedly carved out a niche in the garment industry. This garment-related entrepreneurial opportunity became one of the precipitating factors for the later Korean influx into South America. Simultaneously, access to the U.S clothing market led Koreans engaged in the garment business in Korea to Central American countries. This article focuses on Korean immigrants in Latin America who arrived already having clothing-related skills and experience in Korea. It examines how these Koreans' previous occupational experience in Korea influenced both initial immigration decisions and choice of destination and whether and how patterns of economic adjustment differed from those of Koreans who came to Latin America without relevant experience or skills. Korean immigrants with prior clothing-related skills and experience have contributed to the further development of Korean-owned garment businesses in Latin America countries. In terms of global Korean diasporic formations, the garment business has played a unique role in the growth and expansion of Korean immigrant communities across the Americas.