

# Research on the Citizenization of Chinese Migrant Workers from the Perspective of Industrial Layout

zhang Fujian

(School of Economics, Anyang Normal University, Henan Anyang 455000)

---

**Abstract:** After the reform and opening up, China's rural surplus labor has moved to cities for employment, and the process of urbanization has accelerated. However, due to the mismatch between the industrial layout and the population distribution, a large number of rural labor forces have been transferred across regions and have increased the economic, social and psychological costs of their urbanization. By optimizing the industrial layout and realizing the employment of migrant workers nearby, it can promote the urbanization of migrant workers.

**Key words:** Industrial layout; urbanization; urbanization of migrant workers

---

Date of Submission: 04-12-2021

Date of Acceptance: 18-12-2021

---

## I. Introduction

The industrial layout and evolution of a country or region are the product of specific historical conditions. Since the founding of New China, the industrial layout has also changed with changes in the country's political and economic situation. The industrial layout has shown different characteristics in different periods, and has experienced a development process from industrial equilibrium to industrial imbalance. At the end of the 1970s, China began its reform and opening up from a planned economic system to a market economic system. The country implemented an unbalanced industrial layout strategy that prioritizes efficiency, emphasizing that coastal areas should develop with better efficiency and faster speed. The distribution of industrial gradient development in the eastern, central and western regions has taken shape, and the regional gap has gradually widened. Although China has emphasized the coordinated development of regional economy since the end of the 20th century, and has successively proposed the "Western Development", "Revitalizing the Northeast" and "Rise of Central China" strategies, the regional development gap has not narrowed rapidly. Gradually attenuate, the gap between the absolute value and the relative value of per capita GDP between regions is still large. The mismatch between industrial layout and population distribution has triggered a large number of rural laborers to transfer employment across regions, increasing the economic, social, and psychological costs of urbanization, and seriously hindering the process of urbanization in China and the resolution of the "three rural" issues. Many scholars believe that realizing the transformation of peasant workers from farmers to citizens, that is, the urbanization of peasant workers, is the key to solving the problem of peasant workers, which is also a hot issue of current research in all sectors of society.

## II. The Impact Of The Unbalanced Industrial Layout On The Urbanization Of Migrant Workers

(1) The relationship between industrial development and urbanization

Industrial development is closely related to urbanization. Industrial development, especially industrialization, is the economic foundation of urbanization, and urbanization needs industrial support. The agglomeration of large-scale industries in cities provides employment and income for the urban population, which in turn stimulates urban consumption and promotes urban expansion and development. At the same time, the development of cities also provides good infrastructure and various necessary production factors for industrialization, and promotes the sustainable development of the industry. With the agglomeration of industries in cities, the population began to concentrate in cities, which is also the fundamental driving force for the development of modern cities. The well-known American economist Hollis Channery's "multi-country model" shows that when the per capita income exceeds US\$100 in the first half of the period, the level of urbanization and the proportion of the secondary industry in GDP both show an upward trend, and the latter rises. However, when the per capita income reaches a higher value, the rate of urbanization will start to increase faster than that of the secondary industry, and C/B will gradually decline. This shows that in a certain range of per capita income, the growth momentum of urbanization is mainly from the improvement of industrialization. It can be seen that the difference in regional urbanization caused by the unbalanced industrial development is extremely obvious. The large-scale agglomeration and pioneering development of industries in the east have

driven the development of urbanization. However, due to the small industrial scale in the central and western regions, both industrialization and urbanization are still in the early stage of development, the impetus for industrialization to drive urbanization is insufficient, and the process of urbanization is slow.

(2) The imbalance of industrial layout triggers mobile employment of migrant workers

According to the above analysis, regional differences in industrial development have caused significant differences in the level of urbanization between eastern and central and western China. However, with the rapid concentration of industries in the east, the population has not been correspondingly concentrated, resulting in a high imbalance between China's regional industrial layout and population distribution (Cai Yifei and Zhang Chewei, 2012). The share increased from 50.2% to 57.3%, and the population share increased from 38.2% to 41.3%. The increase in the latter was much smaller than the former, but the decline in the population share in the central and western regions was lower than the decline in the industrial share. It can be seen that the degree of mismatch between industrial layout and population distribution has been expanding, and this mismatch has also accelerated the transfer of human capital to employment. According to the push-pull theory, attracted by a large number of jobs in the eastern region, the surplus rural labor force in the central and western regions has been continuously transferred to the developed eastern regions for employment, forming a team of migrant workers who are employed in different places. Take Guangdong Province as an example. According to data from the sixth national census, Guangdong Province has a permanent population of more than 100 million people. It is the only province in the country with a permanent population of more than 100 million. However, the registered population of Guangdong Province during the same period was only 85 million. The additional population of more than 20 million is the result of the agglomeration and development of the manufacturing industry in Guangdong Province attracting human capital in the central and western regions.

(3) Migrant employment of migrant workers hinders the process of urbanization

In the process of transforming Chinese migrant workers into citizens, due to the existence of the dual system of urban and rural areas, they cannot complete the complete transformation from farmers to citizens of occupation, region and identity at one time like the urbanization in Western countries. The "Chinese path" of "farmers-migrant workers-citizens" has been established. In this context, the cross-regional migration of migrant workers caused by the mismatch between the industrial layout and the population distribution makes the transition process of "migrant workers-citizens" very slow. A large number of migrant workers are employed in eastern cities, but their homes are in the rural areas of the central and western regions. As a result, a large number of migrant workers shuttle between urban and rural areas in the east and central and western regions, increasing the economic, social, and psychological costs of labor migration, which is not conducive to stable employment and living of migrant workers in cities. According to statistics, between 1980 and 2008, the number of newly registered urban residents in China was about 270 million, but the total population of migrant workers who actually converted to urban household registration was about 20-30 million, accounting for only 1/10 of the total population of migrant workers. The "migration" of migrant workers has severely restricted China's urbanization, and the process of migrant workers' urbanization has been extremely slow.

### **III. Conclusions And Reflections**

Based on the above analysis, the imbalance of China's industrial layout is the industrial root cause of the cross-regional mobility of migrant workers and the slow process of urbanization. In the context of the current emphasis on coordinated regional development and urbanization, industrial layout should no longer simply emphasize economic effects, but should pay more attention to regional and social development, so as to narrow the development gap in the central and western regions while creating conditions for the urbanization of migrant workers. Specifically, it is necessary to optimize the regional layout of industries, vigorously promote industrial upgrading in the developed eastern regions, and at the same time transfer labor-intensive industries to the central and western regions.

The factor endowment possessed by a region is the foundation of the region's economic development, and the structure of the factor endowment largely determines the region's comparative advantage industries. With the uneven development of China's regional economy, the regional comparative advantages have also changed. After more than 30 years of rapid growth, the economic development of the eastern region has been far ahead of the central and western regions. But at the same time, production costs such as land and labor are getting higher and higher, and the traditional advantages of labor-intensive industries have gradually disappeared. According to the theory of industrial gradient transfer, when the profit space of labor-intensive industries that rely on "low cost—comparative advantage" is gradually lost, industrial upgrading should be carried out, and at the same time, industries that have lost their comparative advantages should be transferred to other regions.

A realistic situation is that although the state encourages the transfer of labor-intensive industries to the

central and western regions in terms of policies, it is based on the costs and risks of industrial transfer, plus the labor-intensive industries in the eastern region have been placed in the promotion of employment and even social stability. From a perspective, the eastern region hopes to maintain labor-intensive industries while achieving industrial upgrading. Therefore, the governments and enterprises in the eastern region lack the motivation for industrial transfer subjectively. However, under the premise of limited resources, continuing to retain a large number of low-level industries is detrimental to the development of high-level industries, just as growing grass will take away the nutrients from seedlings. Because the existence of low-level industries makes companies rely too much on low wages, low-cost advantages, and lack the motivation to improve technology, thus restricting industrial upgrading.

It can be seen that relying solely on the market mechanism cannot spontaneously realize the large-scale transfer of labor-intensive industries in the eastern region to the central and western regions. This requires the government to properly manage and regulate industrial development. Therefore, in order to accelerate industrial upgrading in the eastern region, the government should issue relevant policies. For example, by increasing the production costs in the eastern region such as labor, land, and environmental protection, the profit margin of low-end industries will be further reduced and low-end industries should be forced to move out of the developed eastern regions. . At the same time, actively guide enterprises to develop high-tech, high-value-added, high-service manufacturing and tertiary industries, focus on independent innovation, and take the path of brand development, so as to obtain higher profits and broader development space. In this way, on the one hand, it can reduce the dependence on migrant workers in different places and reduce the cross-regional mobility of migrant workers; on the other hand, high-tech industries will encourage enterprises to focus on the construction of human capital teams, which is conducive to the stable employment and urbanization of migrant workers.

At the same time, encourage the central and western regions to undertake labor-intensive industries. The central and western regions have abundant labor resources and low labor costs, and the comparative advantages of labor-intensive industries are more prominent. Therefore, the central and western regions should make preparations for industrial transfer and actively absorb labor-intensive industries related to their own advantages. This will not only make full use of its own comparative advantages to reduce the labor costs of enterprises, but also enable migrant workers in the central and western regions to find employment nearby, reduce the migration costs of their "migratory bird" employment, improve the stability of their work, and promote their citizenship. process.

### References

- [1]. Wang Kexia. Industrial structure adjustment, industrial level upgrade and urbanization process[J]. *Economist*, 2012 (09).
- [2]. Cai Yifei, Zhang Chewei. A new perspective on the regional gap: a study on the mismatch between population and industry distribution[J]. *China Industrial Economy*, 2012 (05).
- [3]. Chen Xiaoling et al. Analysis of the influencing factors of the dynamic changes of China's regional comparative advantage[J]. *Macroeconomic Research*, 2011 (11).
- [4]. Li Shimei, Xu Zhiyong. An Economic Analysis of the "Migrant Worker Shortage" in Southeast China[J]. *Journal of Demography*, 2005 (03).

zhang Fujian. "Research on the Citizenization of Chinese Migrant Workers from the Perspective of Industrial Layout." *IOSR Journal of Research & Method in Education (IOSR-JRME)*, 11(06), (2021): pp. 43-45.