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# Spatial Patterns in China's Rural Industrial Growth and Prospects for the Alleviation of Regional Income Inequality

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### Abstract

Exploring regional patterns of growth in 26 of China's rural manufacturing industries between 1986 and 1994, we find that the growth taking place in the inland region may not favor its relatively low-cost labor resources. In addition, the coast appears to have labor productivity advantages that persist across industries. This discovery contradicts the notion that higher returns to labor on the coast arise from increasing dependence on capital-intensive industries in the coastal region relative to the inland. Our results cast doubt on the potential for policy-led rural enterprise investment in inland provinces to alleviate regional income inequality. *J. Comp. Econom.*, September 1999, 27(3), pp. 475–497. Reed College, 3203 SE Woodstock Boulevard, Portland, Oregon 97202-8199; and International Programs Center, United States Bureau of the Census.



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