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Yanlin Yang, Xu Shao

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Understanding Industrialization and Employment Quality Changes in China: Development of a Qualitative Measurement

Yanlin Yang and Xu Shao

School of Economics and Management, Wuhan University, P. R. China

Email: yyl7772@163.com

Abstract: Conceptual definition of an employment includes dimensions beyond the status of a static employed or unemployed dichotomy. Since such a dichotomous measurement of the employment, we are unable to observe structural and qualitative changes of a developing economy during its industrialization process. An improved measure thus is needed to represent the multiple characteristics of employment quality and describe its gradations on the continuum of industrialization process. In this paper, the authors construct and evaluate multi-component variables to measure employment quality in China. The paper also evaluates its validity by using a panel data regression model to examine the changes between 1990 and 2014. The results indicate that employment quality is significantly associated with an industrialization process, while political and institutional barriers constitute major constraints for the development of the employment quality. Policy implications are also discussed in the paper.

Keywords: industrialization; employment quality; social security

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