

*Economic Upgrading, Social Upgrading, and Rural Migrant Workers in the Pearl River Delta**

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Abstract

The article investigates whether and how economic upgrading leads to social upgrading for rural migrant workers (RMWs) in the Pearl River Delta (PRD) region of China. Two cities that represent different types of economic upgrading in the PRD, namely Shenzhen and Foshan, were selected as the investigation sites. The data were mainly obtained from statistical yearbooks and interviews with 72 informants, including RMWs, scholars, employers, and officials. The article argues that two types of economic upgrading, namely reindustrialization and tertiarization, affect the social upgrading of RMWs in different ways. However, both types of economic upgrading have caused a pushing-out effect by increasing unemployment or working intensity and living costs.

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