

# Measurement of GDP per capita and regional disparities in China, 1979–2009

Masashi HOSHINO  
Hokkaido University\*

April 20, 2011

## Abstract

This paper analyzes provincial GDP per capita disparities in China from 1979 to 2009. Provincial GDP per capita of official statistical materials has several problems such as problems of data correctness and reliability, because the data cover the *hujj* population and the *changzhu* population. The *hujj* population is registered with the police, and such registration does not reflect migration patterns. The *changzhu* population data reflect the resident population that has stayed in the same area for more than 6 months and indicate migration patterns. This study compares results using modified *changzhu* population GDP per capita data with results using official statistical materials. The empirical results are as follows: (1) Studies since the 1990s have overestimated inter-province disparities; (2) inter-province disparities have decreased since 2005; and (3) The western region has experienced an increase in intra-regional disparities since 2002. These results suggest that provincial GDP per capita statistics should be used more carefully.

*Keywords:* Regional disparities; GDP per capita; Statistics; China

*JEL classification:* E01, O18, O53, R12, R23

---

\* Slavic Research Center, Hokkaido University, Kita-9, Nishi-7, Kita-ku, Sapporo, 060-0809, Japan. E-mail: mhoshino@gakushikai.jp