



Productivity Series 31

# NEW CURRENTS IN PRODUCTIVITY ANALYSIS

## *Where to Now?*

by Renuka Mahadevan

APO 94 pp. December 2002 ISBN 92-833-1721-0

This book attempts to highlight some developments in the expanding field of productivity growth analysis. First, the various total factor productivity (TFP) growth measurement methods are categorized under the frontier and non-frontier approaches. By way of illustration, a survey of TFP growth studies of Singapore and Malaysia is used for discussion. Skepticism regarding the usefulness of TFP growth measures and their interpretation is also addressed.

Second, a more focused approach to understanding the determinants of TFP growth is explained. One important feature of the book is the preliminary empirical investigation based on data from the publication *APO Asia-Pacific Productivity Data and Analysis 2001*. This was used to draw policy implications and lessons from various countries for improving productivity growth in the Asia-Pacific region.

As the emergence of the new or knowledge-based economy is already evident in some Asia-Pacific countries, the debate and evidence surrounding the information technology-productivity nexus as well as the challenges in adopting information technology are reviewed. Finally, to raise the APO's profile and spearhead its efforts in productivity research, suggestions are provided on what and how more can be done in this area.

Chapter One introduces TFP growth measurement, including types of productivity growth measures, approaches to TFP growth measures, and problems and prospects underlying their use. Chapter Two deals with sources of output growth and TFP growth, with the emphasis on a more focused approach to determinants of productivity growth. Empirical analysis of productivity growth performance is the focus of Chapter Three. Here the author provides extensive coverage of the factors affecting productivity growth. Chapter Four expounds on productivity growth and the new economy, especially the impact of IT on productivity. In the concluding Chapter Five the author makes a number of proposals for future directions in productivity research.

The author is Dr. Renuka Mahadevan, a lecturer in the Department of Economics, University of Queensland, Brisbane, Australia. She received her Master's and PhD in economics from the Australian National University and has published extensively in the area of productivity growth analysis in the Asia-Pacific region. Her forthcoming book entitled *The Economics of Productivity in Asia and Australia* will be published by Edward Elgar later this year.

For order and inquiry on APO publications and videos, please contact the Information and Public Relations Department, Asian Productivity Organization, Hirakawa-cho Dai-ichi Seimei Bldg. 2F, 1-2-10 Hirakawa-cho, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 102-0093, Japan. Phone number: (81-3) 5226-3927, Fax: (81-3) 5226-3957, E-mail: [ipr@apo-tokyo.org](mailto:ipr@apo-tokyo.org)