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CAN EXPORTING PRODUCER SERVICES FACILITATE GREEN TOTAL FACTOR PRODUCTIVITY?

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Abstract

This paper develops a theoretical framework explaining how exports of producer services affect green total factor productivity (GTFP) and tests its predictions using a panel dataset covering 158 economies from 2005 to 2023. It underscores the importance of participation in advanced segments of the international division of labor for inclusive growth. The empirical results show that producer services exports significantly raise GTFP through the channels of innovation, industrial upgrading, and energy-efficiency gains. Moreover, institutional quality, environmental regulation, and digital economy significantly moderate this relationship. Furthermore, greater trade competitiveness magnifies the effect, with modern and digital services trade playing a pivotal role. Heterogeneity across economies also matters: in developed economies, exports lead to sustained improvements in GTFP, whereas in less-developed economies the effect is weaker, reflecting lower technological intensity. Based on these findings, this paper recommends policies to enhance export competitiveness, deepen the industrial and technological base, strengthen governance and environmental regulation, and expand investment in digital infrastructure.

Key words: export competitiveness, green total factor productivity, producer services exports

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