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**R&D PROPENSITY AND
PRODUCTIVITY PERFORMANCE
OF FOREIGN-CONTROLLED FIRMS
IN CANADA**

*Working Paper Number 33
March 2001*

Industry Canada Research Publications Program

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ABSTRACT

Using firm-level data, this paper examines the R&D propensity of Canadian-controlled and foreign-controlled firms in Canada. The empirical results suggest that foreign-controlled firms in Canada, after accounting for other factors, spend significantly less on R&D than Canadian-controlled firms. But, foreign-controlled firms increased their R&D propensity at the same pace as Canadian-controlled firms during the 1985–94 period. In the two groups of firms, R&D propensity is higher in high-technology and export-oriented firms, and lower in large and medium-size firms. In addition, the paper shows that foreign-controlled firms are actively adopting advanced technology (including other intangible assets) from their parents. This may explain why foreign-controlled firms are more productive than Canadian-controlled firms.

1. INTRODUCTION

Foreign direct investment plays a significant role in the Canadian economy, especially in the manufacturing sector. Today, foreign-controlled firms generate more than half of revenues in the Canadian manufacturing sector and about one third of revenues in the Canadian economy (Table 1). More importantly, foreign-controlled firms create more than one third of well-paid jobs in the Canadian manufacturing sector.¹ Besides output and employment, foreign-controlled firms also represent a significant share of total R&D spending in Canada. In 1997, they accounted for about 42 percent of total R&D spending in the Canadian manufacturing sector (Table 2). In textiles, chemicals, petroleum refining, and transportation equipment industries, their share of total R&D spending is more than two thirds.

But, the total R&D propensity — defined as the ratio of R&D spending to sales — of foreign-controlled firms in the Canadian manufacturing sector is significantly lower than that of their Canadian-controlled counterparts.² For instance, in 1994, the R&D propensity of foreign-controlled firms was 0.77, compared to 1.19 for Canadian-controlled firms (Table 3). Because of this seemingly significant gap in manufacturing R&D propensity, foreign-controlled firms are generally blamed for Canada's innovation problems and, ultimately, productivity problems. In addition, the lower R&D propensity of foreign-controlled firms is perceived as a potential loss to the Canadian economy in terms of creating well-paid jobs and local spillover effects of R&D.³

However, many factors could contribute to the observed gap in manufacturing R&D propensity between the two groups of firms. These include differences in firm size, industry composition and export orientation.⁴ These variables and their relationship to R&D spending will be discussed in this paper.

Table 1
Share of Foreign-controlled Firms in Total Operating Revenue in Canada

Industry	1988	1994	1996
Food, beverage and tobacco	38.6	44.1	n.a.
Wood and paper	21.2	27.2	28.9
Chemicals and textiles	57.2	62.3	64.4
Metallic minerals and metal products	25.8	31.2	29.4
Rubber and plastics	51.4	55.5	n.a.
Machinery	35.2	39.9	37.0
Electrical and electronic products	53.8	56.0	56.4
Transportation equipment	49.8	58.1	57.8
Instruments	65.2	64.3	n.a.
Total manufacturing	45.8	51.2	50.9
Communications services	11.6	14.8	16.5
Financial services	26.2	27.5	27.0
All industries	27.3	31.0	31.1

Source: Statistics Canada

Table 2
Share of Foreign-controlled Firms in R&D Expenditures in Canada

Industry	1985	1988	1994	1997
Food, beverage and tobacco	53.1	49.8	55.5	51.2
Textiles	80.6	85.5	83.4	80.7
Wood and furniture	8.3	1.8	1.5	1.6
Paper and printing	7.2	5.9	3.4	1.5
Pharmaceutical and medicine	67.3	65.4	84.9	81.9
Other chemical products	56.7	65.7	73.7	74.1
Petroleum refining	55.2	87.9	80.2	67.9
Rubber and plastics	58.9	26.0	24.6	29.9
Stone, clay and glass	76.8	76.3	38.0	37.3
Primary metal	2.3	1.8	1.2	1.2
Fabricated metal	42.1	38.5	17.9	12.8
Machinery except electrical	20.5	21.3	20.6	17.5
Electrical and electronic equip.	39.1	35.4	26.4	28.5
Motor vehicles	63.7	68.3	85.9	72.4
Other trans. equip.	58.2	68.5	54.3	63.4
Scientific and professional equipment	56.5	31.5	20.7	16.1
Other manufacturing	13.8	7.1	16.9	38.0
Total manufacturing	43.8	44.1	40.4	42.1
Communications services	7.5	12.4	6.3	11.0
Computer and related services	1.6	8.0	17.1	23.9
Engineering and scientific services	7.5	18.8	18.5	9.5
All industries	34.3	35.3	31.1	32.6

Source: Statistics Canada

Table 3
R&D Propensity in Manufacturing
(R&D Expenditures as a Percentage of Sales)

Year	Canadian-controlled	Foreign-controlled	Total
1988	0.87	0.82	0.85
1989	0.85	0.83	0.84
1990	0.95	0.89	0.92
1991	1.07	0.92	0.99
1992	1.15	0.88	1.02
1993	1.27	0.82	1.04
1994	1.19	0.77	0.97

Source: Statistics Canada

The main objective of the paper is to examine the R&D performance of foreign-controlled and Canadian-controlled firms in the Canadian manufacturing sector, using firm-level data for the 1985–94 period. We focus on the manufacturing sector because it has the highest share of foreign ownership. Our research hopes to shed some light on the following four related questions:

- What are the key determinants of R&D propensity?
- Does the nationality of ownership of multinational firms matter for R&D spending in Canada after controlling for other relevant factors?
- Have foreign multinationals in Canada increased their R&D propensity over time?
- Why are foreign-controlled firms more productive than Canadian-controlled firms?

Our empirical results suggest that foreign-controlled firms, after accounting for other factors, spend significantly less on R&D than Canadian-controlled firms. But, in the two groups of firms, R&D propensity increased at the same pace during the 1985–94 period. The R&D propensity is higher in high-technology and export-oriented firms, and lower in large and medium-sized firms in the two groups. We also show that foreign-controlled firms are actively adopting advanced technology (including other intangible assets) from their parents. This may explain why they are more productive than their Canadian-controlled counterparts.

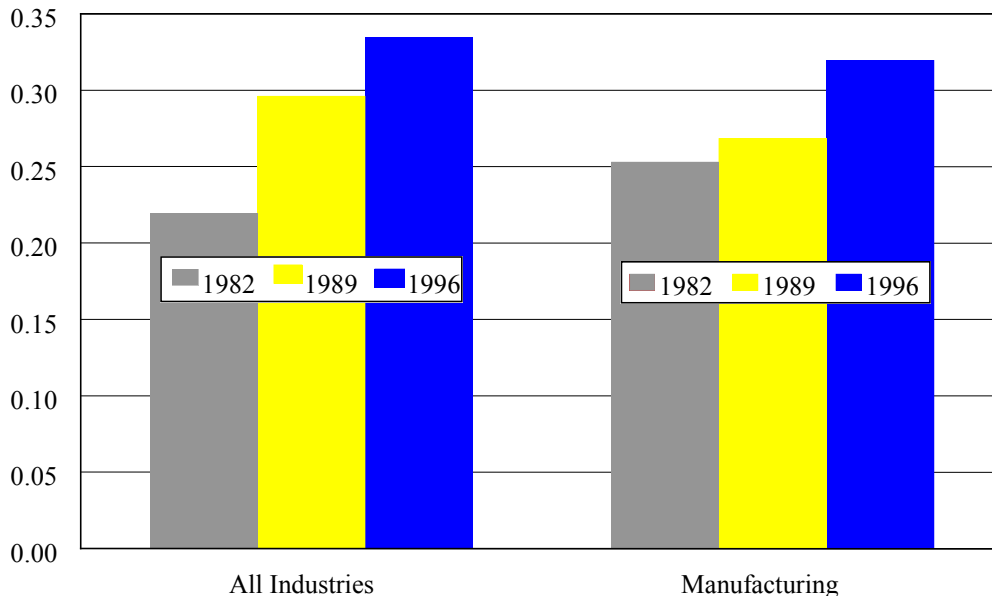
In the next section, we briefly examine the R&D performance of foreign multinationals in host countries. Then, using panel data on firms, we present regression results on the determinants of R&D propensity in foreign-controlled and Canadian-controlled firms in Canada. In section 3, we review the R&D performance of foreign multinationals in the United States over the last 20 years and the R&D record of U.S. multinationals abroad. In section 4, we examine technology adoption and the productivity performance of foreign-controlled firms in Canada. Finally, in section 5, we summarize the main findings of our research and discuss their implications.

2. R&D PERFORMANCE OF FOREIGN MULTINATIONALS IN CANADA

It is well known that multinationals do the major part of their R&D at home.⁵ The phenomenon is commonly called the headquarter effect of R&D spending of multinationals. For instance, in 1996, the R&D propensity of U.S. non-bank parent firms in the United States was 4.2 percent while the R&D propensity of their affiliates abroad was only 1.4 percent, about one third of the R&D propensity of their parents (Chart 1). In general, the R&D propensity of foreign affiliates is less than the national average in the host country. For instance, the R&D propensity of foreign affiliates in the U.S. manufacturing sector is only about 78 percent of the national average for the U.S. manufacturing sector (Chart 2). Similarly, the R&D propensity of U.S. affiliates in Canada is only about 60 percent of the Canadian national average.

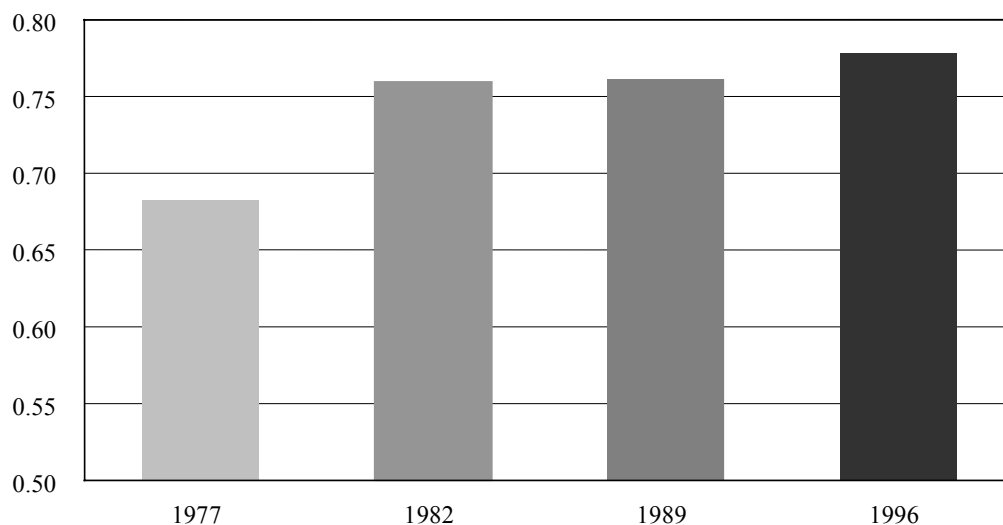
There are many reasons for multinationals to centralize their R&D spending. Multinational enterprises still perform the major part of their R&D at home, because of scale economies in R&D, proximity to the firm's headquarters, and protection of the secrecy of the firm's top technologies at headquarters for strategic reasons (Fors, 1996). In addition, the centralization of R&D has a further advantage: sending intangible research results around the world may be less costly than shipping physical components (Caves, 1996, p. 84).

Chart 1
Ratio of R&D Intensity of Majority-owned Non-bank Affiliates
Abroad to the R&D Intensity of their U.S. Non-bank Parents
(R&D Intensity of Parent = 1.00)



Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis, *Surveys of Foreign Direct Investment in the United States*.

Chart 2
Ratio of R&D Intensity of Foreign Affiliates
in the U.S. Manufacturing Sector
(R&D Intensity of U.S. National Firms = 1.00)



Sources: OECD ANBERD, OECD STAN, Bureau of Economic Analysis,
Surveys of Foreign Direct Investment in the United States.

Firm Panel Data

To examine the impact of the headquarter effect on foreign-controlled firms in Canada, we construct a balanced panel data set on Canadian-controlled and foreign-controlled firms over the 1985–94 period. This panel data set is compiled from a number of sources: Compact-Disclosure/Canada databases, supplemented by data from Micromedia’s “Profile Canada”, Moody’s International, and Statistics Canada’s Inter-corporate Ownership. Firms based in Canada with data on R&D expenditures, sales, and ownership have been selected. Our panel data set consists of 58 manufacturing firms with observations for the 1985–94 period. All firms in the sample are performing R&D. Most of the sampled firms are publicly-traded companies listed either on a Canadian stock exchange or on an American stock exchange. Of this number, 28 firms are Canadian-controlled and 30 are foreign-controlled. A firm is labelled as Canadian-controlled if it is ultimately controlled by Canadians; otherwise it is labelled as foreign-controlled.⁶

Table 4 shows that our sample firms represent about 22 percent of total manufacturing sales and about 25 percent of total manufacturing R&D expenditures. The R&D coverage ratio is slightly higher than the sales coverage ratio.

Table 4
Sample Coverage Ratios
(Percentage Share of Total Manufacturing)

Year	Sales			R&D		
	Canadian-controlled	Foreign-controlled	Total	Canadian-controlled	Foreign-controlled	Total
1988	17.2	28.1	22.2	17.6	37.0	26.2
1989	17.2	28.7	22.4	17.7	38.1	26.9
1990	16.9	26.2	21.2	18.9	34.1	25.8
1991	17.7	27.8	22.6	17.1	37.8	26.4
1992	18.8	27.2	22.9	16.6	36.2	25.1
1993	17.8	26.3	22.2	14.1	28.4	19.9
1994	17.8	25.2	21.6	13.7	30.4	20.5

Sources: Authors' sample and Statistics Canada.

Empirical Analysis

To examine the difference in R&D propensity between Canadian-controlled and foreign-controlled firms in our sample, we first run a simple regression: R&D propensity as a function of the ownership dummy variable and a constant,

$$(1) \quad r_i = \alpha + \beta D_i + \varepsilon_i$$

where r_i denotes the R&D propensity of firm i , defined as the percentage ratio of R&D expenditures to sales; D_i is the ownership dummy variable for firm i , taking on a value of 1 if the firm is foreign-controlled and of 0 if it is Canadian-controlled; ε_i is the error term; finally, α and β are the parameters.

The pooled regression results after taking into account heteroskedasticity show that foreign-controlled firms have a significantly lower R&D propensity than Canadian-controlled firms (Column 1 of Table 5).⁷ This finding is consistent with the significant gap in manufacturing R&D propensity between the two groups of firms, as shown in Table 3.

However, many other factors could contribute to the observed gap in manufacturing R&D propensity between the two groups of firms. In this paper, we focus on the differences in firm size, industry composition and export orientation.⁸ To examine the effect of nationality of ownership on R&D propensity, we need to control for the influence of such factors.

Medium- and large-size R&D performing firms, other things remaining constant, have a lower R&D propensity than small-size R&D performing firms (Holbrook and Squires, 1996).⁹ To control for the influence of firm size on R&D propensity, we divide our sample firms into three size groups according to sales: less than \$500 million (small firms); between \$500 and \$1,500 million (mid-size firms); and greater than \$1,500 million (large firms).

Export-oriented firms have to spend more on R&D because they need to be highly competitive in terms of price, quality of service and product novelty. As shown by Rao, Legault and Ahmad (1994), outward-oriented firms are doing more R&D than domestically-oriented firms by a significant margin. To disentangle the influence of export orientation, we divide the sample firms into two groups: firms that export and firms that do not export.

Table 5
Determinants of R&D Propensity^a

Variables	(1) Simple Regression	(2) Multiple Regression
Ownership dummy	-0.0044 (-3.8)*	-0.0065 (-4.1)*
Ownership x Time		-0.0002 (-0.6)
Mid-size dummy		-0.0025 (-1.6)**
Large-size dummy		-0.0042 (-3.9)*
High-tech dummy		0.0146 (7.0)*
Export dummy		0.0057 (4.1)*
Time		0.0003 (1.8)**
Constant	0.0160 (20.0)*	0.0069 (4.6)*
Number of observations	580	580
R-Square (Buse)	0.03	0.21

^a T-ratios are in parentheses.

* Significant at the 5 percent level.

** Significant at the 10 percent level.

Similarly, firms in high-tech industries tend to spend more on R&D than firms in other industries on average. To capture the influence of industry composition, we divide our sample firms into two groups: high-technology and others. A firm is labelled as high-tech if its major business is in chemicals, petroleum & coal products, electrical & electronic products, or industrial machinery.

Finally, the globalization of the world economy may lead multinationals to decentralize their R&D spending. This may change the pattern of R&D spending of firms. In particular, it may reduce the disparity between foreign-controlled firms and Canadian-controlled firms in R&D propensity. To capture trend changes in R&D spending, a time-trend variable is introduced. The product of the time variable and the ownership dummy variable is used to capture the differences in trend changes in R&D propensity between foreign-controlled and Canadian-controlled firms.

The pooled regression results after taking into account the above factors and heteroskedasticity are reported in column (2) of Table 5.¹⁰ Several interesting findings emerge. First, foreign-controlled firms spend significantly less on R&D than Canadian-controlled firms after controlling for other factors. Second, as expected, the R&D propensity of high tech and export-oriented firms is significantly higher than that of low-tech and non-exporting firms. Third, R&D propensity and firm size are significantly negatively related. Finally, the estimated coefficient of the time-trend variable is positive and significant, indicating that the R&D propensity of both foreign-controlled and Canadian-controlled firms increased during the 1985–94 period.¹¹ In addition, the pace of expansion is the same for both groups of firms, as indicated by the insignificant coefficient of the product of ownership and time variables. Thus, our analysis does not support the hypothesis of a narrowing R&D propensity gap between Canadian-controlled and foreign-controlled firms.

3. GLOBALIZATION OF R&D SPENDING BY MULTINATIONALS

As part of the globalization of the world economy, R&D expenditures of multinationals have been increasing in some host countries. Four factors have been identified as the main drivers of the decentralization of multinationals R&D spending: the increasing share of foreign production, leading to a corresponding increase in R&D spending to adapt advanced technologies in host countries (Ronstadt, 1978; Behrman and Fischer, 1980; and Pearce, 1989); the growing share of knowledge workers in host-country employment (Pearce and Singh, 1992; Fors, 1996); increasing synergies between parents and subsidiaries, a result of advances in transportation and communications technologies; and increased competition in the host country (OECD, 1998).

The globalization of R&D is increasing, but the scale and significance of this phenomenon is not universal across countries. Some host countries are benefiting more than others from this trend. The United States, as a host country, is clearly a beneficiary of R&D globalization (Florida, 1997; Hounshell, 1996; Serapio and Dalton, 1999). Indeed, the R&D propensity of foreign affiliates in the United States increased relative to the national average in the U.S. manufacturing sector (Chart 2). At the same time, U.S. multinationals are increasing their R&D spending overseas. As shown in Chart 1, the R&D propensity of majority-owned non-bank foreign affiliates of U.S. parent firms has increased over time relative to their parents in all industries and in the manufacturing sector. For instance, in 1982, the R&D propensity of U.S. foreign affiliates in all industries was less than 22 percent that of their parents, but this number had increased to 33 percent in 1996.

Is Canada benefiting from the globalization of R&D? The answer seems to be negative. As shown in Table 3, the R&D propensity of foreign-controlled firms fell behind that of Canadian-controlled firms. Consequently, the gap in R&D propensity increased significantly during the 1988–94 period. A close examination of the data reveals that 86 percent of the widening gap was due to an increase in the R&D propensity of Canadian-controlled firms, while the remaining 14 percent was due to a decline in the R&D propensity of foreign-controlled firms. Although foreign-controlled firms increased their share of R&D expenditures in motor vehicles, chemicals, and high-tech services industries, their share of R&D in most of resource-based industries decreased dramatically (see Table 2). The decline in their share of R&D in wood and furniture; paper and printing; rubber and plastics; stone, clay and glass; and metals was more than 50 percent from 1985 to 1997.

This result is consistent with the findings from the panel data. As shown in the previous section, after controlling for other factors, both foreign-controlled and Canadian-controlled firms increased their R&D propensity in Canada during the 1985–94 period, but there is no evidence that foreign-controlled firms in Canada were doing more R&D per unit of sales over time than their Canadian-controlled counterparts.¹²

4. R&D SPENDING, TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER AND PRODUCTIVITY

In this section, we relate R&D spending of foreign-controlled firms to their productivity performance. As shown in the previous section, foreign-controlled firms do less R&D per unit of sales than Canadian-controlled firms. The question is, does this affect their relative productivity performance? The answer is No. On the contrary, previous studies have consistently shown that foreign-controlled firms outperform Canadian-controlled firms in productivity.¹³

Globerman, Ries and Vertinsky (1994) compared the economic performance of Canadian-controlled and foreign-controlled establishments, using Statistics Canada's Census of Manufacturing, Mines and Logging for 1986. They showed that foreign affiliates have significantly higher value-added per worker than Canadian-controlled firms.¹⁴ Corvari and Wisner (1993) came to the same conclusion, using industry-level data. More recently, Baldwin and Dhaliwal (1998) examined labour productivity differences between domestic and foreign-controlled firms in the Canadian manufacturing sector, using the micro-economic establishments data from the Canadian Census of Manufacturers for the period 1973–93. Their analysis also showed that Canadian-controlled manufacturing firms lagged behind their foreign-controlled counterparts in labour productivity growth among different size and growth groups. In terms of total factor productivity, Rao and Tang (2000), using firm-level data, showed that foreign-controlled firms are, on average, about 15 percent more productive than Canadian-controlled firms, even after taking into account the influence of many factors such as industrial structure, unionization, export orientation, firm size and firm age.

Why do foreign-controlled firms outperform Canadian-controlled firms in productivity despite the fact they do less R&D per unit of output than their Canadian-controlled counterparts? The answer to this question lies in the rationale for the existence of multinationals. According to the transaction cost theory, the rationale for the existence of multinationals is the international utilization of technology (including other intangible assets) to avoid the market failures associated with such assets (Fors, 1996). While it is costly, technology transfer via intra-firm trade is less costly than arm's length market alternatives (Teece, 1977).¹⁵ In addition, advances in transportation and communications technologies have increased the ability to control and coordinate operations in different countries. It has become more efficient for multinationals to exploit their firm-specific knowledge in different countries.

The comparative advantage of multinationals resides in state-of-the-art technologies, often developed in their home country. Multinationals then exploit these firm-specific technologies in many countries to maximise the returns on their investment in those technologies. The international operations lead to technology transfer into the host countries. Fors (1996) and Behrman and Fischer (1980) provided two observations for this argument, based on evidence from company data. First, most R&D is undertaken in multinationals' home operations even though the share of overseas R&D is increasing. Second, R&D performed in the home country is more basic, generally applicable and long-term in character, compared with R&D in foreign affiliates, which is mainly oriented toward adapting technologies created at home to local conditions and regulations.

The Canadian experience strongly supports the hypothesis of a technology transfer from parents to their foreign subsidiaries in host countries. The evidence stems from international transactions linked to technology transfers (Table 6).¹⁶ Technology transfers here cover a variety of income flows for the use of intellectual property rights, including patents, industrial designs, trademarks, franchises, copyrights and related rights. We first observe that the receipts from technology transfers of Canadian-controlled firms were much larger than the corresponding payments, indicating that Canadian-controlled firms are net exporters of technology.

Table 6
International Transactions Linked to Technology Transfers* of Canadian Firms
by Ownership and Affiliation, 1997
(\$CDN million)

		Technology Transfers	
		Receipts	Payments
Foreign-controlled firms	Affiliates	245	2,441
	Other firms	88	205
Canadian-controlled firms	Affiliates	291	77
	Other firms	279	214

* This notion covers a variety of flows for the use of intellectual property rights, including patents, industrial designs, trademarks, franchises, copyrights and related rights (the sale of the rights themselves is excluded).

Source: Statistics Canada

This is in a sharp contrast to foreign-controlled firms in Canada. Payments associated with technology transfers by foreign-controlled firms are much larger than the corresponding receipts. The evidence clearly indicates that foreign-controlled firms are massive net importers of technology. Most of their technology is imported from affiliated firms; more than 92 percent of the payments made by foreign-controlled firms go to affiliated companies.

How much technology is transferred from parent firms? In Table 7, we have listed technology transfers of U.S. affiliates in Canada in 1994. In this case, we were able to further decompose affiliated firms into parent companies and other affiliated firms. Table 7 shows that about 78 percent of technology transfers to U.S. foreign affiliates in Canada come from their U.S. parents.

Table 7
Receipts and Payments of Technology Transfers*
of U.S. Affiliates in Canada, 1994
(\$US million)

		Technology Transfers	
		Receipts	Payments
Related firms	U.S. Parents	23	1,123
	Other affiliated firms	33	125
Other firms		42	200

* This notion covers a variety of flows for the use or sale of intangible property or rights, such as patents, industrial processes, trademarks, copyrights, franchises, designs, expertise, formulas, techniques, manufacturing rights, and other intangible assets or proprietary rights.

Source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis

The trade patterns in technology transfers clearly indicate that foreign affiliates in Canada receive massive amounts of technology transfers from their parents. Thus, although foreign affiliates tend to do less R&D in Canada, technology transfers from their parent firms maintain their technological capability and competitiveness.¹⁷ This conclusion is consistent with the observation that foreign-controlled firms tend to spend relatively less on basic research than their Canadian counterparts, reflecting their access to technologies developed by their parent firms (Holbrook and Squires, 1996). It is also in line with the finding that foreign direct investment is associated with lower costs and higher productivity in Canada

over the period 1973–92 (Gera, Gu and Lee, 1999). In addition, it is strongly supported by international evidence from many studies identifying a link between foreign direct investment and efficiency improvements in the host country. For instance, Barrell and Pain (1997) demonstrated that FDI raised technical progress in West Germany and in the United Kingdom. Thus, all the evidence suggests that technology transfers are the key explanation behind the superior productivity performance of foreign-controlled firms in Canada.

5. CONCLUSIONS

The main objective of this paper was to analyse the R&D performance of foreign-controlled firms in Canada. Our empirical results from panel data show that even after accounting for other factors, the R&D propensity of foreign-controlled firms is significantly lower than that of Canadian-controlled firms. In both groups, the R&D propensity is higher in high-tech and export-oriented firms, and lower in large and mid-size firms. Although the R&D propensity of the two groups of firms has increased at the same pace during the 1985–94 period, there is no evidence that Canada is benefiting from the globalization of R&D.

Despite the fact that foreign-controlled firms spend less on R&D, they are, on average, more productive than Canadian-controlled firms because of their superior technological and managerial capabilities, imported from their parents. An important implication of this result is that R&D as an indicator of innovation is biased against foreign-controlled firms, which suggests that the innovative performance of foreign-controlled firms should not be judged by their R&D propensity. Instead, it should be judged on the basis of a broad set of performance indicators such as output and productivity growth, export orientation and technology adoption.

NOTES

- 1 In 1997, on average, foreign-controlled manufacturing firms paid their employees 25 percent more than Canadian-controlled firms.
- 2 We use R&D propensity instead of R&D intensity. Jeffrey Bernstein pointed out that although the term R&D intensity is often used, especially by the OECD, it is in fact incorrect. Intensity usually refers to either an input-output ratio or the ratio of two inputs.
- 3 There are intra-industry, inter-industry and cross-border R&D investment spillovers. In general, the social rates of return to R&D investments greatly exceed their private rates of return (Griliches, 1979; Bernstein, 1988).
- 4 Some people may argue that foreign-controlled firms have a lower R&D propensity than Canadian-controlled firms because they are more productive — they generate more sales than Canadian-controlled firms per unit of input. However, the question is why foreign-controlled firms are more productive than Canadian-controlled firms. The issue is discussed in section 4.
- 5 As shown by Behrman and Fischer (1980) and Fors (1996), home-country R&D is more basic and long-term while R&D undertaken in foreign affiliates is mainly oriented toward adapting technologies created at home to local conditions and regulations.
- 6 A firm is ultimately foreign-controlled if a majority of its voting rights is held by foreign citizens or by one or more Canadian companies that are themselves foreign-controlled. Ownership here is measured in discrete terms as Canadian-controlled or foreign-controlled. We are constrained by the data to measure this variable in a more continuous fashion.
- 7 Similar results are obtained with ordinary least-square estimation.
- 8 There are many other factors, such as cash flows, government grants, and R&D tax credits, affecting R&D activities in Canadian-controlled and foreign-controlled firms. In terms of government grants, Howe and McFetridge (1976) showed that an incentive grant has on average more effect on increasing total own-funds R&D expenditures in Canadian-controlled firms than in foreign-controlled firms.
- 9 Note here that all firms are performing R&D. In general, large firms are more likely to perform R&D than small firms (Cohen and Klepper, 1996; Baldwin, 1997).
- 10 Autocorrelation is not considered here because it is inconsistent with the objective of the study. One of the main objectives of our study is to examine whether ownership matters in R&D spending. Autocorrelation in the specification will essentially eliminate any fixed effect of individual firms on R&D. Thus, with autocorrelation, we are unable to measure the difference in R&D spending between foreign-controlled firms and Canadian-controlled firms. Indeed, the model with autocorrelation does not converge at all for the same reason.
- 11 The positive coefficient of the time trend could be capturing the influence of the growing importance of innovation for competitiveness and profitability, and the positive influence of government incentives in encouraging R&D spending in Canada.

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- 12 Anderson and Gault (1999) showed that the percentage of foreign sources of funding for Canadian R&D performers has been increasing during the period 1987–95. However, this increase largely reflects the relative increase of foreign firms in Canada, and does not indicate a trend towards increased internationalization of R&D.
- 13 Using U.S. establishments data, Doms and Jensen (1998) also found that foreign-controlled firms were more productive than domestically-controlled firms in the United States.
- 14 Note, however, that the difference vanished once factors such as size and capital propensity were controlled.
- 15 Behrman and Wallender (1976) suggest five general mechanisms of technology transfer from parents to foreign affiliates: (i) documentation in the form of manuals produced for specific purposes or through regular reporting from parent companies, (ii) instruction programs, (iii) visits and exchanges of technical personnel, (iv) development and transfer of specialised equipment for use in affiliates, and (v) continuous oral and written communications.
- 16 There is strong evidence showing that part of knowledge transfers to affiliates are also “embodied” in intermediate-good deliveries from parent companies (Coe and Helpman, 1995; Scherer, 1982; and Fors, 1996).
- 17 This is true for a country as a whole, as the OECD (1998) shows that some countries where the R&D propensity is low spend far more on patent and licence imports than they do on their own research.

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