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THE MARKET FOR CORPORATE CONTROL AND FIRM INNOVATION

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This research examines an integrated theoretical model that explains how strategies for participating in the market for corporate control (acquisitions and divestitures) affect internal control mechanisms and, together, influence internal and external innovation. Nine out of ten hypotheses received support, with results showing that firms engaging in acquisitions and divestitures emphasize financial controls, deemphasize strategic controls, and thereby produce less internal innovation. Furthermore, these firms are likely to seek external innovation to gain short-term benefits in competitive advantage. We conclude that engaging in the market for corporate control strongly affects the context in which innovation is framed, the control mechanisms employed, and the design and process of innovation.

Mergers and acquisitions have been a significant firm strategy for many years. For example, during the 1970s and 1980s, the fourth wave of mergers and acquisitions in this century (Golbe & White, 1988; Walsh & Kosnik, 1993) was observed. There were over 55,000 such deals in the 1980s, valued at just under \$2 trillion. In fact, almost \$250 billion was invested in acquisitions during 1988 alone (Weston & Chung, 1990). Moreover, although there was a reduction in such activity in the early 1990s, more dollars were invested in acquisitions during 1994 than in any previous year (Steinmetz, 1995).

Concurrent with the heavy merger and acquisition activity, firm innovation in the form of new products and processes has become increasingly important as a way for companies to achieve and maintain a competitive advantage (Franko, 1989). The technological revolution and greater competition in international markets have increased the competitive importance of innovation (Hitt, Keats, & DeMarie, 1995). In fact, a new competitive land-scape is forming, in which rapid technological change and diffusion and

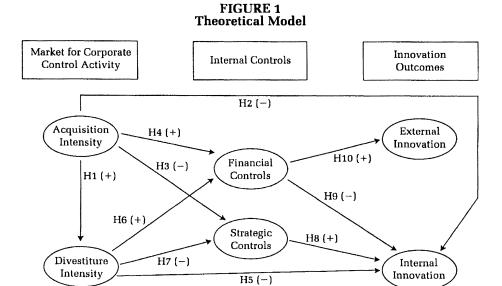
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increasing knowledge intensity are salient features (Bettis & Hitt, 1995). Thus, firm innovation has become important for value creation in many industries. Unfortunately, the market for corporate control often has not created the value expected and has harmed companies' innovative capabilities (Hitt, Hoskisson, Ireland, & Harrison, 1991a, 1991b). The market for corporate control is defined as the transferring of managerial control to new capital providers (e.g., shareholders) through acquisitions, divestitures, and other control-transfer mechanisms. Essentially, it is the market for buying and selling businesses or parts thereof (Manne, 1965).

Although Jensen (1993) argued that the failure of the market for corporate control regarding innovation is partly due to legal restrictions on the capital market (e.g., Roe, 1990), he suggested that the major source of failure is "internal control systems." By this term he means the overall governance systems of firms, including poor managerial incentives. Jensen's argument implies that internal control systems designed to regulate managerial behavior, especially that of divisional managers, may have critical effects on firm innovation. Jensen (1993) provided evidence that internal control systems have not produced effective R&D and capital expenditure allocations. Seward and Walsh (1995) concluded that the effects of acquisitions and divestitures on shareholder wealth could be largely attributed to internal managerial control practices. The management literature has partially addressed the relationship of governance and innovation activities (e.g., Baysinger, Kosnik, & Turk, 1991; Graves, 1988; Hansen & Hill, 1991; Hill & Snell, 1988), but more research is required to precisely explain the relationships involved. Thus, there is need for research that examines the problems identified by Jensen (1993) and explores the effects of acquisition and divestiture activity on internal managerial controls and the consequent effects of these controls on firm innovation. In particular, there is a need to examine these relationships in a systemic integrated model.

In the reported research, we developed a model integrating strategic activities related to the market for corporate control, internal control mechanisms, and forms of firm innovation. The purpose of this research was to test this systemic model of the effects of buying and selling assets (acquisitions and divestitures) on firm innovation. Figure 1 depicts the theoretical model developed and tested.

In prior research, Hitt and colleagues (1991b) found acquisitions to have a direct negative effect on firms' R&D intensity. Furthermore, Hoskisson and Johnson (1992) found that divestment activity that refocused firms had a direct, positive effect on R&D intensity over time. Jensen (1993) argued that firms' R&D performance had suffered largely because of the failings of internal control systems. Acquisitions and divestments are strongly linked to internal control systems (Hoskisson & Hitt, 1994). However, to gain a clear understanding of the relationships among firms' participation in the market for corporate control, their internal control systems, and their innovative capability and productivity, there is need to test these relationships in a systemic, integrated model. The current study extends prior research by



developing more sophisticated measures of acquisition and divestment activity and examining how they affect the internal development of innovation (investment in R&D and new product introductions to the market) and the external acquisition of innovation (such as acquiring firms with new products), both directly and through the use of specific internal controls (financial and strategic). Importantly, it examines these relationships in the systemic integrated model illustrated in Figure 1. Below, we explain the theoretical model and each of the expected relationships and present the hypotheses tested in this study.

THEORETICAL MODEL AND HYPOTHESES

Firms that are actively seeking and completing acquisitions, managing a portfolio of businesses (acquiring and divesting), or only divesting businesses are all active in the market for corporate control. A firm may follow an acquisition strategy for several reasons. A primary reason for acquisitions is to achieve greater market power. Acquisitions may be used to increase the size of a firm and its resources and capabilities, all of which can improve its ability to compete, especially in the global marketplace. Additionally, a firm may use acquisitions to overcome barriers to entry into desirable markets. In fact, acquiring a firm in industries with high entry barriers may be the only way to enter such markets (Balakrishnan, 1988). Often, market entry through acquisitions can be less costly, require less time, and achieve a more profitable return than internal new ventures. Target firms have track records that can be carefully analyzed; future revenues and costs can be forecasted from

historical records. So acquisitions often represent more certainty and lower risk than do new ventures. Although it may be easier to develop new products for a firm's existing markets internally, it is more difficult to develop and successfully enter new markets that the firm's managers do not understand well. Thus, acquisitions also represent a popular way of diversifying, and managers may prefer to enter new markets through acquisitions. Finally, firms may use acquisitions to enter related and unrelated markets to reduce dependence on markets with substantial competitive pressure (Hitt, Ireland, & Hoskisson, 1995) or with severe cyclicity (Amit & Livnat, 1988).

Similarly, firms divest assets for several reasons (Hoskisson, Johnson, & Moesel, 1994; Johnson, 1996). Divesting firms often seek to correct strategic mistakes and improve their performance, so they may divest businesses to obtain significant new cash flows with the purpose of strategically refocusing on their core businesses and core competencies. Divestiture may be necessary because of overdiversification (Markides, 1992). Thus, firms may divest businesses to restructure their portfolios of assets, reduce debt associated with heavy acquisition activity, and improve the innovative competitiveness of existing businesses.

Regardless of the reason for acquisitions and divestitures, research suggests that buying and selling activity may ultimately have an effect on a firm's level of innovation and the type of innovation sought. However, to understand this effect, one must examine a causal network among acquisition and divestiture activity, internal control systems, and internal and external innovation. Below, we describe a systemic, integrated model of the relationships among these variables. The first relationship examined is the link between acquisitions and divestitures.

Acquisitions and Divestitures

Because acquisitions are a major source of firm growth, over time they may lead to the need for divestitures (Porter, 1987). Acquisitions frequently produce little or no return to acquiring shareholders (Jensen, 1988), so some acquiring firms evidently have been unable to achieve the desired synergy with the acquired assets. When this occurs, firms seek to divest those assets to reduce future losses and thereby improve firm value. Ravenscraft and Scherer (1987) found that almost one-third of the businesses acquired by the firms they studied were subsequently divested. Additionally, firms following an acquisition strategy, particularly for the purpose of diversification, may overdiversify (Hoskisson & Hitt, 1994; Markides, 1992; Shleifer & Vishny, 1991). Roll (1986) suggested that managers may overvalue their ability to manage new businesses, exhibiting hubris that leads to excessive diversification. In overdiversified firms, top executives find it difficult to effectively manage the many separate businesses, and thus firm value decreases. Later, these firms seek to strategically refocus by divesting assets that are unrelated to their core businesses (Johnson, 1996).

Often, acquisitions require substantial financial resources, and firms have commonly used leverage as one source of such capital (Hitt, Hoskisson, & Ireland, 1990; Hoskisson, Hitt, & Ireland, 1994). As firms use greater amounts of leverage, their financial risk increases. At times, debt costs (repayment of principal and interest) can be substantial. In fact, the payment of debt costs may require significant cash flow. Firms with high debt costs may require new cash flows to repay the debt and reduce their financial risk (Hitt & Smart, 1994), so active acquirers may divest assets to create greater cash flow. Hoskisson, Johnson, and Moesel (1994) showed that divestiture programs are positively associated with high relative debt and high relative diversification (overdiversification). Finally, firms following an active acquisition strategy may seek to divest assets in order to change their portfolios of assets. In fact, some firms are continuously acquiring and divesting businesses in the management of their asset portfolios. For these reasons, we expected a positive relationship between acquisitions and divestitures.

Hypothesis 1: Acquisition intensity is positively related to divestiture intensity.

Acquisitions and Innovation

Acquisitions often entail substantial transaction costs that result in acquiring firms not realizing gains from acquisitions (Barney, 1988). Transaction costs include negotiating, bidding, monitoring, and enforcement costs resulting from transaction difficulties in the exchange process. Among the potential relevant transaction difficulties are "bounded rationality" and uncertainty and complexity (Jones & Hill, 1988). Acquisition negotiations are often highly complex, with multiple parties involved, including investment bankers, lawyers, and top executives from both firms. To extract the highest price possible for its shareholders, target firm managers attempt to exchange only information that can positively affect the acquisition price. Information asymmetries between the two parties often result. Finally, the complexity and information asymmetries are exacerbated by the bounded rationality of the primary actors on each side of the acquisition negotiations. Thus, acquiring firms may not easily nor accurately predict potential synergy between the target and acquiring firm assets. This lack of accuracy may lead to problems in integrating the acquired assets into the acquiring firm and to economies of scale and scope that are lower than predicted (Haspeslagh & Jemison, 1991; Jemison & Sitkin, 1986). Ineffective integration processes may harm internal innovation efforts, particularly if they draw attention and resources from such efforts (Pritchett, 1985). Internal innovation refers to the development and introduction of new products and processes.

The acquisition process often absorbs significant amounts of managerial time and energy, thereby diverting managerial attention from other important activities (Haspeslagh & Jemison, 1991). Acquisitions require extensive preparation and negotiations. Firms with an active acquisition strategy must

conduct searches for viable acquisition candidates, which generally involves extensive data gathering and analyses. Although executives rarely gather the data and perform the analyses, they must review the results of those analyses and select appropriate acquisition targets. After selecting targets, they must formulate an effective strategy to acquire the firms and begin the negotiations. These negotiations frequently consume much time, particularly if an acquisition bid is undesired by the target firm (Hitt et al., 1990). During this process, the attention of several members of a top management team may be diverted from internal activities, particularly important long-term investments such as developing and bringing new products to the market.

Target firm executives also have to exert much energy and attention toward acquisition negotiations. Activities in target firms being vigorously pursued often enter a state of "suspended animation" (Hoskisson, Hitt, & Ireland, 1994). Daily operations continue unabated, but decisions requiring long-term commitments are often postponed, pending the outcome of the acquisition negotiations. Managers of a target firm are frequently reluctant to make long-term commitments of resources (e.g., heavy investments in R&D), unless they are made for defensive purposes—for instance, to reduce the firm's cash position, making it a less attractive acquisition candidate. Therefore, the process of acquisition often creates a short-term perspective and heightened risk aversion among the top-level managers of both the acquiring and target firms.

Once an acquisition is completed, the process of integrating the acquired assets becomes critical (Fulmer & Gilkey, 1988; Shrivastava, 1986). Because of the importance of gaining synergy between the two sets of assets and the complexity involved in the integration process, much managerial time and energy is devoted to this process in successful acquisitions. Thus, an acquisition may consume considerable amounts of managers' energy over substantial time periods. Therefore, firms following an active acquisition strategy may have lower managerial commitment to internal innovation (Hitt et al., 1990).

Firms following an active acquisition strategy often need substantial resources to complete their acquisitions and thus resort to the use of debt, as noted above. Doing so creates debt costs that must be traded off against the use of these resources for other purposes. Constable (1986) concluded that diversification by acquisition diverted investments from internal development. Furthermore, debt holders frequently impose strict rules that include higher costs for risky projects with assets that are not redeployable for other purposes (Williamson, 1988). The creation of innovation through internal development (R&D) involves assets that are largely nonredeployable. As a result, debt holders are likely to prefer the use of debt to fund acquisitions rather than to support innovation activities. Increased leverage, then, is likely to lead to greater risk aversion on the part of managers. In turn, risk aversion reduces managerial commitment to innovation.

Finally, firms following an active acquisition strategy may use acquisitions as a substitute for internal innovation. Managers often perceive inter-

nally developed innovation as entailing a high risk because of the low probability of success and the length of time required for new innovations to produce adequate returns (Clark & Malabre, 1988; Hill & Snell, 1989). For example, Biggadike (1979) found that new ventures require multiple years to achieve profitability and even more to generate adequate cash flows. Furthermore, a significant number of innovations fail to achieve adequate returns on their investment (Mansfield, 1969). This problem has intensified in recent years because the increasing pace of technological change and heightened global competition have shortened the amount of time that firms have to achieve adequate returns on their innovation investments (Bettis & Hitt, 1995).

The preceding arguments suggest that firms involved in an active acquisition strategy may invest less in the internal development of innovation than other firms. Transaction costs make it difficult to understand and realize potential synergies, acquisitions often absorb much managerial time and energy, and acquisitions use significant resources, which are often at least partially financed by debt. Finally, investments in acquisitions may be perceived as less risky than investments in innovation and yet offer new products, processes, or markets to acquiring firms. As a result, we expect a negative relationship between acquisition activity and internal firm innovation.

Hypothesis 2: There is a negative relationship between acquisition intensity and internal firm innovation.

Acquisitions and Internal Controls

Hoskisson and Hitt (1988) argued that two types of major internal controls associated with the management of large firms, particularly diversified firms, have an important effect on firm innovation: strategic controls and financial controls. Strategic controls entail the use of long-term and strategically relevant criteria for the evaluation of business-level managers' actions and performance. Strategic controls emphasize largely subjective and sometimes intuitive criteria for evaluation (Gupta, 1987). The use of strategic controls requires that corporate managers have a deep understanding of business-level operations and markets. Such controls also require a rich information exchange between corporate and divisional managers (Hoskisson, Hitt, & Ireland, 1994).

Alternatively, financial controls entail objective criteria such as return on investment (ROI) in the evaluation of business-level managers' performance. They are similar to what Ouchi (1980) and Eisenhardt (1985) referred to as outcome controls. Thus, top-level managers establish financial targets for each business and measure the business-level managers' performance against those targets. Such an approach can be problematic when the degree of interdependence among business units is high. Thus, emphasis on financial controls requires each division's performance to be largely independent

of that of other divisions; for instance, there would be little resource sharing between divisions (Goold & Campbell, 1987; Hill & Hoskisson, 1987; Jones & Hill, 1988).

Firms following an active acquisition strategy may add whole firms or multiple businesses to their portfolios with each acquisition. Sometimes, acquisitions add substantial numbers of new assets and multiple markets to a firm's original portfolio. Thus, as a firm grows through acquisition, it also grows in complexity and the number of units that corporate executives must oversee and manage (thereby increasing their spans of control). Clearly, each acquisition increases corporate managers' need for information processing, sometimes dramatically so. These changes make it difficult for corporate managers to use strategic controls. To reduce information-processing demands, they may change their emphasis from strategic to financial controls.

As noted earlier, acquisitions are a primary means of diversifying firms. As a firm acquires businesses that are different from its current core businesses or portfolio of businesses, additional information-processing demands are placed on corporate managers. In fact, major diversifying acquisitions can change a firm's center of gravity (Galbraith & Kazanjian, 1986). A firm's center of gravity is established by its initial operations in a specific industry at a particular stage in a product-market stream. Each industry has specific, and often different, critical success factors. If multiple acquisitions produce extensive diversification, or even changes in the firm's center of gravity, corporate managers may begin to experience control loss. Control loss occurs when corporate managers are not adequately informed about the internal operations or the external environments of major businesses (e.g., divisions) (Ellsworth, 1983). This problem results from the corporate managers' lack of knowledge of the acquired firms' business operations and markets. Furthermore, top managers are often unable to adequately attenuate the information asymmetry between themselves and business-level managers. Thus, as a result of bounded rationality alone, highly diversified firms may overload the ability of corporate managers to process the necessary information and adequately evaluate and control business-level managers' performance (Williamson, 1985).

Although development of highly sophisticated management information systems has helped corporate managers in this regard, effective strategic control often requires the use of face-to-face communication to obtain the rich information necessary to make appropriate subjective assessments using strategically relevant criteria (Chandler, 1991; Goold & Campbell, 1987). Thus, as firms acquire more businesses, particularly ones that are unrelated to their current core businesses, corporate managers often change the emphasis of the controls they use from a strategic (more subjective) to an objective (often financial) one. Objective criteria do not require extensive knowledge of each business operation and its markets.

Corporate culture (a set of core values shared by organizational members) can also help corporate managers control business-level operations (Kilmann, Saxton, & Serpa, 1986). However, a firm following an active ac-

quisition strategy often finds it difficult to maintain a common corporate culture throughout the total organization; such a widespread culture has been called a clan control system (Ouchi, 1980). Firms that are acquired have their own corporate cultures, and these cultures may differ, sometimes significantly so, from the acquiring firm's culture. A common corporate culture facilitates the use of strategic controls (Hill, Hitt, & Hoskisson, 1992). However, firms with multiple and diverse cultures find it difficult to implement common strategic controls. Thus, they are more likely to emphasize financial controls.

These arguments suggest that firms following an active acquisition strategy are likely to emphasize financial controls and deemphasize the use of strategic controls. Thus,

Hypothesis 3: Acquisition intensity is negatively related to the use of strategic controls.

Hypothesis 4: Acquisition intensity is positively related to the use of financial controls.

Divestiture Intensity and Firm Innovation

Firms divest businesses or portions thereof for multiple reasons. One of the most common reasons they do so is because of poor performance (Hoskisson et al., 1994; Jain, 1985). Undoubtedly, many firms' low performance is the result of poorly performing assets (businesses). Low performance from poorly performing assets is often related to strategic errors made in the acquisition process in earlier years. For example, some firms acquire businesses with unrealistic expectations of achieving synergy between the acquired assets and their current sets of assets. A common reason for such errors is managerial hubris (Roll, 1986) or overvaluation of managerial capability in the acquisition process.

Furthermore, firms that have used acquisitions to diversify reach a point of overdiversification, as described earlier (e.g., Hoskisson et al., 1994; Markides, 1992, 1995). They then may divest units that are unrelated to their core to strategically refocus or "downscope" (Hoskisson & Hitt, 1994). Divestitures help make adjustments to a firm's asset portfolio designed to induce a higher market return from that portfolio.

As noted earlier, firms often divest assets in order to increase cash flow, particularly where they have heavy debt loads. Thus, firms sell off assets to pay substantial debt costs (Hoskisson, Johnson, & Moesel, 1994; Scherer, 1988). Where debt costs are high, resources from divestitures of assets are used to pay the debt costs (Lee & Cooperman, 1989), rather than to make such long-term strategic investments as developing internal innovation (Hitt & Smart, 1994). Firms undergoing significant divestitures frequently operate as if in suspended animation (Hitt et al., 1990) and experience a period of "post-restructuring drift" (Johnson, Hoskisson, & Margulies, 1990). Many of

these firms exist in highly turbulent environments—those characterized by significant technological change or substantial global competition, for instance—that produce disorder, disequilibrium, and significant uncertainty within the organizations (Prigogine & Stengers, 1984). As a result, managers often postpone significant long-term investments during the process of divestitures. Also, because of poor performance, high debt costs, or both, the firms do not have the appropriate resources to make significant investments that won't realize returns for several years. In addition, because of the significant uncertainty created by the substantial changes and the turbulent environment in which they exist, managers may find it difficult and undesirable to make long-term commitments.

After a deal is consummated, the divesting firm must engage in damage control within its remaining units (Nees, 1981; Taylor, 1988). The process of divestiture (and acquisition as well) can result in lower morale, higher turnover, and a decrease in productivity due to uncertainty and a lack of clear signals from top management (Hayes, 1972; Johnson et al., 1990; Nees. 1981: Walsh, 1988, 1989). As the level of distrust increases due to a lack of information from top management, communication and cooperation may decrease (Nees, 1981; Schweiger, Ivancevich, & Power, 1987). Managers and employees alike fear making mistakes that become visible to key decision makers because of job security concerns. Individuals afraid of making visible mistakes are conservative in their actions and therefore less innovative. This concern may continue for some time after a divestiture is completed, particularly in firms that have made multiple divestitures. Furthermore, divestitures disrupt existing communication networks, thereby constraining information flows. Innovations often are the result of combining information from disparate sources (Gemunden, Heydebreck, & Herden, 1992). Disruptions in communication flow can limit innovation. Thus, we expect a negative relationship between divestitures and internal innovation to prevail during a divestiture program.

Hypothesis 5: There is a negative relationship between divestiture intensity and internal innovation.

Divestitures and Internal Controls

As noted earlier, firms that are widely diversified are expected to make heavier use of financial controls (Hoskisson & Hitt, 1988; Reece & Cool, 1978). These same firms are expected to have a lower emphasis on strategic controls (Hitt et al., 1990). Furthermore, previous research has suggested that firm performance is generally poor prior to divestiture (Duhaime & Grant, 1984; Hoskisson, Johnson, & Moesel, 1994; Jain, 1985; Johnson, 1996; Ravenscraft & Scherer, 1987). For example, Jain reported that firms exhibited negative abnormal returns of –10.8 percent prior to divestiture, and Duhaime and Grant reported that 40 percent of divested units were sustaining losses and 44 percent exhibited unacceptably low profits. There is growing evidence to

suggest that most firms engage in cost and asset reduction to halt performance declines and stage successful turnarounds (Barker & Mone, 1994; Hofer, 1980; Robbins & Pearce, 1992). Such actions almost always entail strict cost reductions (Grinyer & McKiernan, 1990; Hambrick & Schecter, 1983). Strict cost reductions imply the increased use of tight financial controls (Hambrick & Schecter, 1983), including an emphasis on short-term cash flows and accounting returns like ROI, to help reduce expenses (Barker & Mone, 1994; Robbins & Pearce, 1992). We therefore expect firms engaging in divestitures to emphasize financial controls to improve their profitability.

Often making divestitures also requires significant time and effort on the part of top executives. For example, completing divestitures of assets entails many of the transaction costs described earlier for acquisitions. The process of divesting a business unit involves several stages—recognizing the need for divestitures, deciding to divest, selecting the assets to divest, finding a buyer, negotiating the sale, and obtaining ratification by the board (Taylor, 1988). The decision process may involve roadblocks such as sociopolitical issues and unwillingness to admit failure, which require further time on the part of top management. Taylor (1988) reported that executives perceive the divestiture process as similar to a divorce. Most of the executives in her study felt it was much easier (in terms of time and energy) to acquire a business than to divest one (cf. Hayes, 1972; Nees, 1981; Porter, 1976).

Divestitures differ from acquisitions in that the market for divested assets often follows a "Dutch auction" process in which the divesting firm initiates the transaction (as opposed to the buyer) and normally deals with only one buyer (Jain, 1985; Sicherman & Pettway, 1992). A Dutch auction implies that the firm sets a price for the unit to see if a buyer is interested. If no buyer comes forward, the unit price is reduced until a buyer is found or the firm decides to retain the unit. After a potential buyer is identified, the negotiation process begins. Latent problems in the business are hard to discover, making potential buyers cautious. Thus, potential buyers often bid the lowest possible amount (discounted present value of a continuing stream of depressed profits) for the unit. It may, therefore, take considerable time for the buyer and seller to reach a mutually agreeable price; Nees (1981) reported a range of 20 months to several years in her study. Spin-offs represent an alternative to divestitures because they don't require buyers, but the separation process is still difficult. For example, it is not clear how successful the AT&T breakup will be. It has been particularly disruptive for Bell Laboratories, the traditional engine of innovation for AT&T businesses (Ziegler & Gautam, 1995).

While managers are engaged in divesting units, they may not be able to maintain the characteristic openness of strategic control systems because of a lack of time and information-processing limitations exacerbated by the divestiture process. Rather, executives rely on more formal procedures, such as ex ante budgets and other financial controls, while a firm is actively involved in divesting business units because they require less time and energy (Johnson et al., 1990).

The previous arguments suggest that top management increases financial controls and reduces strategic controls as the number of divestitures increases. Thus,

Hypothesis 6: There is a positive relationship between divestiture intensity and financial controls.

Hypothesis 7: There is a negative relationship between divestiture intensity and strategic controls.

Internal Organizational Controls and Internal Firm Innovation

Strategic controls focus on long-term performance: managers in firms that emphasize strategic controls evaluate the strategies business-level managers formulate and the strategic actions they take rather than their outcomes (Chandler, 1991). Firms in which strategic controls are used often are more focused and emphasize the long-term development of their core businesses (Goold & Campbell, 1987; Hoskisson, Hitt, & Hill, 1991). Use of strategic controls helps establish a norm of risk sharing between corporate and business-level managers. Business-level managers are more likely to undertake risky projects because they feel that corporate managers understand their strategic proposals. Also, business-level managers believe they will be rewarded for the quality of their strategies rather than for short-term financial outcomes. In addition, with a strategic control emphasis, corporate managers frequently establish criteria to promote innovation in these businesses and reward division managers for meeting those criteria. So strategic controls promote increased managerial commitment to innovation (Hitt et al., 1990). This commitment can be observed in higher levels of investment in R&D and in managers' championing new product ideas to bring them to the market (new product introductions). Thus, we expect the use of strategic controls to promote more internal innovation.

Hypothesis 8: There is a positive relationship between strategic controls and internal innovation.

In firms that emphasize financial controls, managers are evaluated on objective financial criteria such as ROI. Furthermore, managerial rewards are contingent on the achievement of these financial outcomes. ROI can be increased in the short term by reducing long-term expenditures, such as investments in R&D (Hayes & Abernathy, 1980). The effects of reducing these long-term investments will not be evident for several years. Because tenure in a specific managerial position is often less than five years, managers who reduce or postpone long-term investments are unlikely to be present when the outcomes of such actions become evident (Fredrickson, Hambrick, & Baumrin, 1988). Furthermore, if managerial compensation and other rewards such as promotion are tied to the achievement of short-term financial outcomes such as ROI, rational managers will take actions to achieve those outcomes (Hoskisson et al., 1991).

In contrast to corporate executives, business unit managers cannot diversify their employment risk. Therefore, proposing risky investments (e.g., R&D) or championing risky new product ideas places a business manager's future earnings (and career) at risk. Because financial performance outcomes are a function of managerial behavior, as well as other factors beyond managerial control, rewards based on financial outcomes shift some of the firm risk to the business-level manager (Eisenhardt, 1985). This shift of risk is likely to produce increased managerial risk aversion at the business level (Hitt et al., 1990). An emphasis on financial controls thus often leads to lower internal innovation (Hayes & Abernathy, 1980; Rappaport, 1978).

Hypothesis 9: There is a negative relationship between financial controls and internal innovation.

Goold and Campbell (1987) found that firms with strong financial controls achieved growth largely by acquiring new operational units rather than by direct internal investment. In industries in which innovation is important to maintain competitive parity or gain competitive advantage, managers working under strong financial controls may still search for ways to bring innovation to their firms. Their search will, however, emphasize innovation with less risk and more certain short-term payoffs. As a result, they may attempt to identify businesses that have developed and introduced new products to the market or new processes that have achieved at least a measure of short-term success. They then seek to acquire these firms in order to incorporate the new products or processes into their firms. Such acquisitions may also help acquiring firms move into new markets. We should, therefore, expect firms with strong emphases on financial controls to seek external innovation.

Hypothesis 10: There is a positive relationship between financial controls and external innovation.

In summary, the theoretical arguments presented above suggest that activity in the market for corporate control diminishes internal innovation. Activity in the market for corporate control produces significant transaction costs and absorbs substantial amounts of managerial time and energy, whether assets are being acquired or divested. As firms acquire more units, diversify through acquisition, or both, information-processing demands on corporate managers increase geometrically. They thus tend to emphasize financial controls over strategic controls. Firms using high levels of strategic controls produce more internal innovations, whereas firms using high levels of financial controls tend to produce fewer internal innovations but acquire more innovation externally. Firms restructuring through divestitures are often seeking to improve performance, pay debt costs, or change their portfolios of assets. This process requires much managerial time and energy, along with significant transaction costs. During the process of restructuring, there is likely to be internal turmoil, and managers may operate as if in a state of suspended animation. Thus, they are unlikely to make significant long-term investments or to change their control emphasis. We tested the integrated model posed herein using a complex research design and a multiyear, multisource data collection effort. The methodology used to test the proposed hypotheses is described next.

METHODS

Sample

The sample was drawn from Standard & Poor's COMPUSTAT Annual Data Tape and from the COMPUSTAT Business Segment Tape. The sampling frame consists of those firms that reported R&D expenditures each year between 1985 and 1991, with some operations in the industrial manufacturing segment (Standard Industrial Classification [SIC] codes 2000–4000). We focused on industrial firms because they form a major base for strategic competitiveness (Hitt, Keats, & DeMarie, 1995) and provide useful measures of internal innovation (e.g., investments in R&D, new product introductions). In addition, firms were required to have at least \$25 million in total assets for each year of the study. We imposed this criterion to remove small start-up firms from the sample. The time frame was chosen because significant restructuring activity (acquisitions and divestitures) occurred during this period (Weston & Chung, 1990).

Information on divestitures and acquisitions was obtained from *Mergers & Acquisitions*, the *Wall Street Journal Index, Compact Disclosure*, and the popular business press (*Business Week, Fortune*, and so forth). A total of 776 firms had the necessary COMPUSTAT information. Of this total, 286 firms had all necessary data (including survey data). As 36 of these firms had completed their divestiture program by the end of the study period, we deleted them from the analyses, for consistency with the hypotheses. Thus, the resulting sample for this study was 250 firms.

Survey

Few studies have attempted to measure corporate internal control systems or the importance of external innovation (Hill et al. [1992] and Johnson, Hoskisson, and Hitt [1993] are exceptions). A survey was developed to measure type of controls and degree of emphasis on external innovation because this information is unavailable from secondary sources. CEOs and other top management team members were identified from Standard & Poor's Directory of Corporate Affiliations. We made an attempt to contact each firm's CEO by telephone to secure his or her cooperation in completing the survey. Response rates can be significantly increased when verbal commitment is obtained prior to sending a survey instrument (O'Keefe & Homer, 1987). In most cases, if the CEO could not be reached, a researcher spoke to a CEO designee. In some firms, no telephone contact was possible.

The survey was mailed in 1991 and responses were largely received in

the summer and fall of 1991 (a few were received in early 1992). The overall response rate for the survey was 36.9 percent (286 out of 776). This response rate is quite high, given that surveys were completed by CEOs or their designees (usually a firm's chief financial officer or top officer in charge of strategic planning). Because time is scarce among this group, Gaedeke and Tootelian (1976) forecasted a 20 percent response rate from surveys of top executives. Additionally, our response rate exceeds that achieved by Nayyar (1993; 20.1 percent) and is similar to that of Finkelstein (1992; 34.5 percent), both of whom sought survey responses from top executives. Thus, our response rate can be considered quite good.

To check for potential nonresponse bias, we conducted t-tests to examine potential differences in all the COMPUSTAT-based variables used in the structural equation modeling procedure. There were no significant differences in firm performance (returns on assets, equity, or sales), R&D intensity, size (total assets, total sales, or number of employees), or current ratio between respondents and nonrespondents during the time period over which survey data were collected (i.e., 1991). These findings suggest that respondents did not differ from nonrespondents along the dimensions examined. Furthermore, there was no significant difference in average industry R&D intensity (t = .79) between respondents and nonrespondents, suggesting that industry response bias also is not a concern in this sample.

Measures

Data for the study were collected over three different time periods. Following previous research on corporate restructuring (e.g., Hoskisson & Johnson, 1992), we collected product diversification data for the two years prior to the year in which a firm began to engage in acquisition or divestiture activity, which we refer to as restructuring. Pre-restructuring years were used because diversification (control variable) has been argued to affect firm strategies and control systems (cf. Hoskisson & Hitt, 1988). We collected acquisition intensity and divestiture intensity data from the first three years of our study period beginning with the onset of the restructuring (activity started in 1985, 1986, or 1987) through 1991 (the end of the study period). For those firms engaging in no restructuring activity during the period of this study, 1985 was considered the base year, and product diversification data were collected for 1983-84). Survey data used to assess external innovation and control systems were collected in 1991, and the internal innovation data were collected in the period 1991-92. Firms that completed their restructuring activity prior to filling out the survey (a total of 36) were deleted to meet the assumptions of our theoretical arguments. We expected firms that had completed a planned restructuring to act differently than those in the process of restructuring. All other financial information was collected for 1990-91 and averaged to remove possible accounting inconsistencies or unusual effects in a given year.

Primary Variables

Acquisition intensity. Acquisition intensity was operationally defined using two indicators: (1) number of acquisitions completed and (2) percentage of sales acquired. The number of acquisitions was the total number of business units acquired during the restructuring period. The percentage of sales acquired was measured as the acquisition price of the unit being acquired divided by the acquiring firm's total sales during the previous year. This measure is similar to that used by Simmonds (1990). These percentages were summed over the years the firm acquired businesses to obtain the total percentage of sales acquired.

Divestiture intensity. Divestiture intensity was defined using two different indicators: (1) number of divestitures made, and (2) percentage of sales divested. Number of divestitures was the total number of business units sold through sell-offs, buyouts, or equity "carve outs" or spun off during restructuring (Hoskisson, Johnson, & Moesel, 1994; Johnson et al., 1993). The percentage of sales divested was measured as the sales price of a sold unit divided by its total sales for the previous year. This measure is similar to that used by Bethel and Liebeskind (1993) and Hoskisson, Johnson, and Moesel (1994). In the absence of a publicly reported price for a divestiture, we used the unit's sales for the previous year to serve as a proxy for this price because publicly reported prices often approximate this figure. These percentages were summed over the years a firm restructured to derive the total percentage of sales divested.

Financial controls. The financial control factor was composed of four items modified from a scale reported in Hill and colleagues (1992). These items assessed the importance of financial control measures and procedures in evaluating divisional managers' performance on a seven-point Likert scale. The four items were (1) return criteria such as return on assets, return on invested capital, and so forth, (2) cash flows, (3) objective strategic criteria such as return on investment, and (4) formal reports from management information systems received by headquarters. The coefficient alpha for this scale was .70.

Strategic controls. We measured strategic controls used by top management to process external and internal information in order to evaluate business unit strategy and allocate resources using survey items. These items indicate the emphasis on using strategic controls in evaluating division managers' strategies and performance on a seven-point Likert scale. The strategic control variable is composed of three survey items used by Johnson and colleagues (1993): (1) formal face-to-face meetings between headquarters and subunit personnel, (2) informal face-to-face meetings between headquarters and subunit personnel, and (3) subjective strategic criteria, such as attributes of marketing strategy internal to a firm. The coefficient alpha for this scale was .72.

External innovation. External innovation was composed of three items from the survey instrument asking to what extent a firm had made (1) ex-

ternal acquisitions of new products, (2) external acquisitions to develop new processes, and (3) external acquisitions to build new markets. These three items describe the importance of external innovation to the firm on a seven-point Likert scale. The coefficient alpha for this scale was .73.

Internal innovation. Internal innovation was defined with two variables measuring different dimensions of the construct: (1) firm R&D intensity and (2) new product intensity. R&D intensity was a firm's reported R&D expenditure per \$1,000 of sales. This variable is commonly used to assess inputs to the innovation process. We obtained new product data from Dialog's PTS New Product Announcements on-line database containing full-text news releases issued directly by companies and their authorized marketing representatives. The database includes both U.S. and international companies from the industrial manufacturing and service sectors. Announcements include the introduction of all types of new products and services, new processes, new technologies, product modifications, and licensing agreements. We scanned the database for the years 1991–92 to obtain the number of new products introduced. The search was constructed in such a way that duplicate announcements were removed from the sample. We then divided the mean number of new product announcements over the two years by mean annual firm sales to adjust for size effects in the number of new products introduced (Acs & Audretsch, 1987; Chaney, Devinney, & Winer, 1991). This variable is referred to as new product intensity.

Control Variables

Product diversification. The level of preacquisition or predivestiture product diversification was used as a control because it has been shown to influence R&D expenditures (Hoskisson & Hitt, 1988) and divestiture intensity (Bethel & Liebeskind, 1993; Hoskisson, Johnson, & Moesel, 1994; Markides, 1992), and to be related to acquisition intensity (Hitt et al., 1991b). We calculated level of product diversification using the entropy measure (Jacquemin & Berry, 1979; Palepu, 1985) and the approach specified by Davis and Duhaime (1992). The following formula was used: entropy measure = $\sum P_j \times \ln(1/P_j)$, where P_j is defined as the percentage of firm sales in segment j and $\ln(1/P)$ is the weight for each segment j. This measure, therefore, takes into account the number of segments in which a firm operates and the relative importance of each segment in sales (Palepu, 1985). This continuous measure of diversification has been found to have good construct validity relative to other diversification measures (Chatterjee & Blocher, 1992; Hoskisson, Hitt, Johnson, & Moesel, 1993).

Firm size. Firm size has been shown to influence both R&D expenditures (Baysinger & Hoskisson, 1989) and product introductions (Chaney & Devinney, 1992; Chaney et al., 1991). In addition, firm size is related to firm diversification and acquisitions (Bettis, 1981; Hoskisson et al., 1993; Montgomery, 1982), and divestiture intensity (Hoskisson & Johnson, 1992; Hoskisson, Johnson, & Moesel, 1994). We calculated firm size by using the loga-

rithms of total assets, total sales, and number of employees as indicators. Industry-adjusted firm size was calculated by subtracting the average values of the above-mentioned variables for the dominant two-digit SIC code industry from their firm counterparts.

Average industry R&D intensity. Previous research has shown that average industry R&D intensity has an effect on the relative levels of R&D intensity at the firm level and new product introductions (Baysinger & Hoskisson, 1989; Chaney & Devinney, 1992; Hoskisson & Johnson, 1992). Average industry R&D intensity may also reflect a firm's need to remain in technological parity with competitors, thus necessitating external innovation if internal innovation is not forthcoming. We defined average industry R&D intensity with two indicators: (1) average industry R&D divided by average industry total assets. Average industry R&D intensity was calculated using average industry R&D, sales, and total assets at the two-digit SIC code level.

Accounting performance. High levels of firm performance have been shown to influence R&D spending and new product introductions (Chaney & Devinney, 1992). High performance may also influence a firm's ability to engage in acquisition activity and external innovation. We measured accounting-based performance using three indicators: (1) return on assets (ROA), (2) return on equity (ROE), and (3) return on sales (ROS). Each measure was calculated by dividing net income by total assets, total common equity, and total net sales, respectively. To control for industry effects, we adjusted ROA, ROE, and ROS for industry by subtracting the dominant two-digit industry average ROA, ROE, and ROS from their respective firm counterparts.

Current ratio. A standard measure of liquidity, the current ratio (current assets/current liabilities) has been found to influence the amount of funds available for R&D (Baysinger & Hoskisson, 1989; Hitt et al., 1991b).

Interrater Reliability

In order to assess interrater reliability for survey items, we sent duplicate surveys to a random sample of 130 responding firms. A total of 62 firms returned the duplicate questionnaire for a response rate of 47.7 percent. Fifty-five of the duplicate surveys were usable. The interrater reliability was .74 (p < .0001) for the strategic control factor, .76 (p < .0001) for the financial control factor, and .81 (p < .0001) for the external innovation factor. These results provide strong support for the reliability of these measures. Furthermore, they strongly suggest that the survey measured firm attributes as opposed to individual idiosyncratic interpretations. Table 2, which appears in the Results section, reports additional construct validity information concerning the factor loadings and significance levels of the confirmatory factor analysis. Overall, the results suggest good construct validity.

TABLE 1
Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations^a

Variable	Mean	s.d.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. R&D intensity	4.78	6.17								
2. New product intensity	0.02	0.04	.51							
3. External acquisition of new										
products	4.16	1.73	03	01						
4. External acquisition to develop										
new processes	3.40	1.57	07	18	.58					
External acquisition to build										
new markets	4.22	1.71	08	20	.43	.45				
6. Return on investment criteria	5.78	1.50	25	30	.11	.13	.14			
7. Cash flows	5.39	1.58	11	14	.02	.05	.11	.45		
8. Objective strategic criteria	5.49	1.46	20	24	.13	.19	.14	.46	.42	
9. Formal reports from MIS systems	4.77	1.62	10	17	.11	.17	.11	.22	.29	.42
10. Formal face-to-face meetings	6.05	1.34	.18	.12	.07	.01	.12	.10	.13	.09
11. Informal face-to-face meetings	5.72	1.45	.17	.14	.05	.08	.07	.10	.16	.09
12. Subjective strategic criteria	4.93	1.40	.22	.15	.07	.14	.05	.07	.10	.10
13. Number of acquisitions	6.41	7.55	19	48	.16	.19	.28	.18	.17	.15
14. Percent of sales acquired	16.89	18.67	08	24	.22	.19	.30	.13	.11	.15
15. Number of divestitures	4.18	8.74	26	35	08	.10	.01	.16	.16	.15
Percent of sales divested	8.39	7.52	18	22	08	.01	.01	11	.15	.11
17. Product diversification	0.47	0.52	29	48	.01	.15	.13	.18	.15	.24
18. Firm total assets ^b	6.62	1.86	19	62	01	.17	.05	.11	.03	.21
19. Firm sales ^b	6.83	1.79	22	62	02	.15	.05	.14	.02	.24
20. Firm employees ^b	1.90	1.65	20	59	03	.14	.04	.16	.02	.23
21. Current ratio	2.12	0.91	.25	.44	.06	08	.09	15	15	06
22. Industry R&D/sales	4.47	2.35	.34	.40	.11	05	.02	29	07	18
23. Industry R&D/assets	4.28	2.19	.32	.35	.14	03	.01	27	07	17
24. Industry-adjusted ROA	1.89	7.60	04	04	.15	.10	.12	.04	19	.01
25. Industry-adjusted ROS	0.53	13.94	05	06	.16	.10	.11	.06	18	.01
26. Industry-adjusted ROE	1.42	22.72	04	10	.13	.08	.10	.06	16	.01

^a Correlations greater than or equal to .19 are significant at p < .001; those greater than or equal to .15 are significant at p < .05; and those greater than or equal to .12 are significant at p < .05; and those greater than or equal to .10 are significant at p < .10.

General Model (Structural Equation) Method

The hypotheses were tested using structural equation modeling. By definition, structural equation analysis is a combination of factor analysis and path analysis. Our approach to estimating the structural equations model follows the two-stage procedure recommended by Anderson and Gerbing (1988). The first stage involves estimation of the measurement model using confirmatory factor analysis. This stage tests whether or not the variables selected to measure each construct exhibit sufficient convergent and discriminant validity. Once a good measurement model is established, the final stage tests the theoretical model (for a complete explanation of the decision tree process used, see Anderson and Gerbing [1988] and Bollen [1989]).

RESULTS

Table 1 reports means, standard deviations, and correlations between all variables used in the study. Analysis of the correlation matrix shows initial

^b Variable is a logarithm.

TABLE	1	(continued)
--------------	---	-------------

9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25

```
.10
      .69
.10
      .35
.05
            .41
.17
     -.09
           -.11 -.16
.17
     -.09
           -.08 -.14
                        .57
                        .28
 .09
     -.11
           -.10 -.13
                              .09
           -.08 -.11
                        .08
                              .12
 .15
     -.11
                                    .71
                        .39
 .01
      .01
           -.01 -.08
                              .17
                                    .36
                                          .18
                        .39
 .04
      .11
            .06
                  .10
                             .10
                                    .35
                                          .16
                                                .51
      .09
                        .39
.04
            .04
                  .09
                              .11
                                    .34
                                          .12
                                                .50
                                                      .97
.06
      .08
                                    .32
                                          .10
                                                      .93
            .04
                  .07
                        .40
                              .11
                                                .51
                                                            .95
-.06
     -02
            .05 -.02
                       -.20
                             -.10
                                   -.28
                                         -.19
                                               -.32
                                                    -.46
                                                           -.46
                                                                 -.45
                                                           -.40
-07
      04
            .11
                  .05
                       -.19
                              .01
                                         -.12
                                               -.35 -.36
                                                                 -.36
                                                                      .25
                                   -.25
-.06
      .05
            .13
                  .03
                       -.17
                              .03
                                         -.09
                                               -.34
                                                    -.35
                                                          -38 - 35
                                                                      .25
                                   -.24
                                                                            .94
-.05
      .01
            .06
                 -.07
                        .02
                              .03
                                   -.14
                                         -.13
                                                .01
                                                      .16
                                                            .19
                                                                 .17
                                                                       .26
                                                                            .05
                                                                                 .04
                                                      .18
-.04
      .01
            .06
                 -.08
                        .02
                              .04
                                   -.15
                                         -.11
                                                .01
                                                            .20
                                                                  .16 .24
                                                                            .05
                                                                                 .04
                                                                                      .90
                                         -.10
                                                      .21
                                                                  .21
-.01
      .01
            .04
                 -.11
                        .08
                              .07
                                   -.13
                                                .08
                                                            .23
                                                                       .16
                                                                            .02
                                                                                 .05
                                                                                      .85
                                                                                           .85
```

evidence of good convergent and discriminant validity. Nine of 11 correlations greater than .60 involve intrafactor correlations. The other two correlations are both .62 and reflect part of the important control path from firm size to new product intensity.

Overview of Structural Equation Modeling Results

Tables 2–5 and Figure 2 summarize the results derived from the structural equation modeling.

Table 2 summarizes the results of the confirmatory factor analysis (first stage of the modeling procedure) on the initial measurement model (model 1). Measurement information from the final "best" model (model 5) is also included for comparative purposes. Each variable is named and linked with a factor; a factor loading and its associated Z-statistic, where applicable, are reported for both models 1 and 5. Table 3 presents summary statistics of all models estimated in both stages of the modeling procedure as well as chi-square statistics and goodness-of-fit information for each model.

As the factor loadings for model 1 in Table 2 show, the expected mea-

TABLE 2 Factor Loadings: Measurement Model Compared to Final Best Model^a

		Model 1, Meas	surement Model	Model 5, Final Best Model		
Variable	Factor Name	Loading	Z-statistic	Loading	Z-statistic	
R&D intensity	Internal innovation	0.520***	7.252	0.518***	7.180	
New product intensity	Internal innovation	0.974		0.978		
External acquisition of new products	External innovation	0.746***	7.872	0.749***	7.792	
External acquisition to develop new processes	External innovation	0.753***	7.874	0.758***	7.790	
External acquisition to build new markets	External innovation	0.615		0.605		
Return on investment criteria	Financial controls	0.664***	6.086	0.664 * * *	6.110	
Cash flows	Financial controls	0.622***	5.931	0.620***	5.943	
Objective strategic criteria	Financial controls	0.699***	6.184	0.697***	6.208	
Formal reports from MIS systems	Financial controls	0.483		0.485		
Formal face-to-face meetings	Strategic controls	0.804***	9.807	0.803***	9.748	
Informal face-to-face meetings	Strategic controls	0.845		0.847		
Subjective strategic criteria	Strategic controls	0.486***	7.015	0.483***	6.965	
Number of acquisitions	Acquisition intensity	1.000***	11.066	0.999***	11.067	
Percent of sales acquired	Acquisition intensity	0.574		0.574		
Number of divestitures	Divestiture intensity	1.000***	15.764	0.995***	15.765	
Percent of sales divested	Divestiture intensity	0.707		0.707		
Product diversification	Product diversification	1.000		1.000		
Firm total assets ^b	Firm size	0.977***	40.341	0.977***	40.359	
Firm sales ^b	Firm size	0.994***	45.296	0.994 * * *	45.290	
Firm employees ^b	Firm size	0.952		0.952		
Current ratio	Current ratio	1.000		1.000		
Industry R&D/sales	Industry R&D intensity	0.993***	21.310	0.991 * * *	21.382	
Industry R&D/total assets	Industry R&D intensity	0.942		0.944		
Industry-adjusted ROA	Firm performance	0.952***	24.839	0.952***	24.838	
Industry-adjusted ROS	Firm performance	0.951***	24.812	0.951***	24.812	
Industry-adjusted ROE	Firm performance	0.890		0.890		

^a This analysis allows a comparison of factor patterns throughout the modeling process.

b Measured as a logarithm. *** p < .001

surement model performed very well. This conclusion is confirmed by the model chi-square statistic and goodness-of-fit measures for model 1 reported in Table 3. For instance, all of the factor loadings for model 1 in Table 2 are higher than .48. Factor loadings at the .40 level and above are routinely used in the social sciences (Ford, MacCallum, & Tait, 1986). Furthermore, there is good discriminant validity among the factors. Thus, all factors appeared adequate for use in the second stage.

The chi-square statistic and goodness-of-fit measures for model 1 in Table 3 reflect a very strong model. Goodness-of-fit measures of .90 and above on the Bentler-Bonett normed fit index (NFI) are considered desirable, and values of .95 and above on the comparative fit index (CFI) are generally considered strong evidence of practical significance (Bentler, 1989). Table 4 summarizes the hierarchical model testing sequence employed to compare the models and to determine the final best model (model 5).

We compared models 1–5 in Table 3 while examining the theoretical model (see Figure 1) and used sequential chi-square difference tests (SCDTs) to obtain successive fit information (Steiger, Shapiro, & Browne, 1985). Following a series of hierarchical tests, a final best model was derived that is both theoretically meaningful and free of obvious specification problems.

As presented in Table 3, the theoretical model (model 2) suggests the removal of five paths from the fully saturated model (model 1). Model goodness-of-fit measures are highly comparable across the two models. In Table 4, this comparison is summarized as the first step in the hierarchical sequence in the row labeled "model 2 vs. 1." The difference in chi-square is shown to be statistically significant, indicating that there is some misspecification in the theoretical model (model 2). Specifically, model 2 lacks a path or paths that are important to the overall fit of the model.

The second step involves the comparison of the next-best constrained model (model 3) with the theoretical model (model 2). In the next-best constrained model, one or more of the paths previously specified in the theoretical model are eliminated. In model 3, the next-best constrained model, we chose to drop the paths from divestiture intensity to financial and strategic controls to test the notion that the effects of divestitures on firm innovation are direct and not mediated by internal controls. Hoskisson and Johnson (1992) found a direct relationship between divestitures and investment in firm R&D. The comparison of model 3 to model 2 (Table 4) results in a significant chi-square statistic (p < .005), indicating that the theoretical model (model 2) is preferred over the next-best constrained model (model 3). These results suggest that the eliminated paths should be restored.

In the third step, we tested the next-best unconstrained model (model 4) against the theoretical model (model 2). The next-best unconstrained model contains all of the paths specified in the theoretical model plus one or more previously unspecified paths that represent important alternative theoretical arguments in the literature. For the next-best unconstrained model, we specified three new paths from acquisition intensity to external innovation, from strategic controls to external innovation, and from strategic controls to

TABLE 3
Model Statistics^a

Model	Description	χ²	df	p	NFI	NNFI	CFI
1	Measurement	387.970	246	<.001	.914	.955	.966
2	Theoretical	412.450	251	<.001	.909	.950	.962
3	Next-best constrained	435.111	253	<.001	.904	.944	.957
4	Next-best unconstrained	389.315	248	<.001	.914	.956	.966
5	Final model	390.456	250	<.001	.914	.956	.967

^a NFI = Bentler-Bonett normed fit index, NNFI = Bentler nonnormed fit index, CFI = comparative fit index.

financial controls. Hitt and colleagues (1990) argued that in addition to the effects on internal innovation mediated by control systems, acquisitions could serve as a substitute for internal innovation, implying that firms may acquire innovation rather than develop it internally. Alternatively, firms that emphasize strategic controls are less likely to focus on external innovation. Strategic controls require knowledge of the businesses operated, and executives are less willing to acquire new businesses of which they have little understanding. Finally, although all firms normally use some amount of both strategic and financial controls, it has been argued that there is a trade-off between the two, suggesting a negative relationship (i.e., Hoskisson & Hitt, 1988; Hitt et al., 1990). Thus, there are reasons to expect the relationships posed by the paths added to the model. The chi-square difference test reported in Table 4 is statistically significant, indicating that the next-best unconstrained model is preferred over the theoretical model.

In the fourth step, the next-best unconstrained model (model 4) is compared to the measurement model (model 1). The chi-square difference test presented in Table 4 was nonsignificant (p > .10), suggesting that model 4 is preferred over model 1. Lastly, we dropped the one path that was not significant in model 4. The test of the difference between the model 4 and model 5 chi-squares was nonsignificant (p > .10), indicating that model 5 (the most parsimonious model) is preferred. Anderson and Gerbing's (1988)

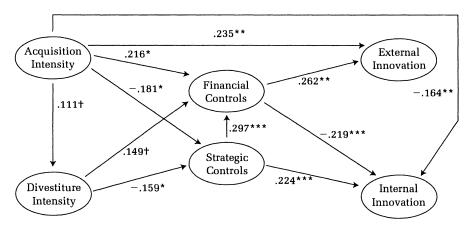
TABLE 4
Testing Sequence and Difference Tests

Comparison	$\Delta\chi^2$	Δdf	p ^a	Model Preference
Model 2 vs. 1	24.480	5	<.005	1
Model 3 vs. 2	22.661	2	<.005	2
Model 4 vs. 2	23.135	3	<.005	4
Model 4 vs. 1	1.345	2	>.10	4
Model 5 vs. 4	1.141	2	>.10	$5^{ m b}$

^a Probabilities are stated in inequality terms as chi-square tables are sparse.

^b Results of hierarchical modeling suggest acceptance of the final model (model 5) as the final best model. The modeling process was terminated at this point.

FIGURE 2 Final Model ^{a,b}



- ^a Parameters are standardized parameter estimates. Terms in ellipses are factor names.
- ^b This is a simplified version of the actual model. It does not show error terms, exogenous factor variances, disturbance terms, correlations between exogenous factors, or control paths from statistical control variables.
 - † p < .10
 - * p < .05
 - **p < .01
 - *** p < .001

decision-tree framework suggests accepting the results of model 5 as the final best model.

Identifying a final best model without condition codes or other signs of misspecification allowed a test of hypotheses using the theoretical model (Figure 1 and model 2) and comparison to the final best model illustrated in Figure 2 (model 5).

Table 5 presents results for the theoretical path model illustrated in Figure 1 (model 2 in Table 5). For purposes of direct comparison, we also present parallel results for the final best model illustrated in Figure 2 (model 5 in Table 5). The first ten rows present results of the hypothesis testing. Path coefficients and their respective Z-statistics and indications of significance are summarized for each hypothesis. The next two rows present results for the paths added during the testing of the next-best unconstrained model. The last 25 rows present control paths with path coefficients, Z-statistics, and indications of significance. From the top ten rows of Table 5, we note that all ten hypothesized relationships are in the direction expected in model 2. Seven out of ten relationships were statistically significant at conventional levels (p < .05). Two more relationships were statistically significant at marginal levels (p < .05). As illustrated in Table 5, the results remained stable for models 2 and 5.

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Structural Equations Modeling Results Comparing Hypothesis Tests for the Theoretical and Final Models **LYBFE 2**

2	aboM	7	ləboM			
Z	Path Coefficient	Z	Path Coefficient	Hypothesized Direction	Description of Path	Hypothesis
1.724	+III.	817.1	40II.	+	Acquisition intensity → divestiture intensity	Ţ
010.6-	**491	141.6-	**791	-	Acquisition intensity → internal innovation	2
715.2	*181	018.2-	*181	-	Acquisition intensity → strategic controls	3
2.514	*812,	2.133	*971.	+	Acquisition intensity $ o$ financial controls	₽
		626.0 -	810	_	Divestiture intensity → internal innovation	5
1.834	46₽Ι.	1.802	48£1.	+	Divestiture intensity → financial controls	9
-2.055	*921	780.2-	*821	-	Divestiture intensity → strategic controls	L
4.015	* * * \$	£97.£	***261.	+	Strategic controls → internal innovation	8
-3.300	***612	991.6-	** 1 94	-	Financial controls → internal innovation	6
2.716	**282.	3.036	** <u>\$</u> 08.	+	Financial controls → external innovation	0
2.797	**852.			+	Acquisition intensity → external innovation	yqqeq bətp _s
3.291	***762.			_	Strategic controls → financial controls	yqqeq bətp _s
686.1-	*221	196.1-	*021		Product diversification \rightarrow internal innovation	Control
∂ 58.∂−	***868	809.2-	***97E		Firm size → internal innovation	lontrol
2.128	* I \$ I.	2.201	*£41.		Industry R&D intensity → internal innovation	Control
∂ 99.0−	₽£0	827.0-	8£0		Firm performance → internal innovation	Control
2.557	*121.	2.632	** 1 61.		Current ratio → internal innovation	Control
725.0	5₽0.	901.1	960.		Product diversification \rightarrow external innovation	Control
₽65.0-	2 20	711.0	210.		Firm size \rightarrow external innovation	Control
1.723	48£ſ.	1.756	† ε₽Ι.		noitsvonni lantetty → external innovation	Control
2.254	*881.	2.101	*£71,		Firm performance → external innovation	Control
871.0	310.	171.0	310.		Current ratio → external innovation	Control
-0.526	₽₽O	265.0-	5₽0.−		Product diversification $ o$ strategic controls	Control
4.60.€	**£08.	800.8	**20£.		Firm size $ ightarrow$ strategic controls	Control
1.859	† Ε₽Ι.	1.844	†I\$I.		Industry R&D intensity → strategic controls	Control
200.1-	080	966.0-	6Z0		Firm performance $ ightarrow$ strategic controls	Control
686.0	₽80°.	686.0	₽80°.		Current ratio → strategic controls	Control
₽₽0.ſ	160.	1.128	201.		Product diversification → financial controls	lontrol
791.1-	621	842.0-	920		Firm size \rightarrow financial controls	Control
-2.563	* 412	440.2-	*691		Industry R&D intensity → financial controls	Control
0.052	₽00°	882.0	220.		Firm performance \rightarrow financial controls	lontrol
979.0-	620	062.0-	520		Current ratio → financial controls	Control
2.459	*281.	2.463	*48I.		Product diversification \rightarrow divestiture intensity	lontrol
204.2	*661.	2.386	*8er.		Firm size \rightarrow divestiture intensity	ontrol
9₽1.1–	£70	9£1.1-	270		Industry R&D intensity → divestiture intensity	lontrol
Z£8.Z-	**881	-2.830	**781		Firm performance \rightarrow divestiture intensity	lontrol
-0.546	880	₽₽5.0-	860		Current ratio \rightarrow divestiture intensity	lontrol

^{100. &}gt; q *** ; 10. > q ** ; 20. > q * ; 01. > q †^a These paths were hypothesized in the next-best unconstrained model (model 4).

Results of Hypothesis Tests

Acquisition intensity hypotheses. Acquisition intensity is positively related to divestiture intensity (.111, p < .10). Thus, Hypothesis 1 received support. Hypothesis 2 also received support. Acquisition intensity has a statistically significant, negative effect on internal innovation (-.164, p < .01). Additionally, acquistion intensity has a significant, negative effect on strategic control use, supporting Hypothesis 3 (-.181, p < .05). Lastly, acquisition intensity is positively related to financial controls (.216, p < .05). Hypothesis 4 therefore received support.

Divestiture intensity hypotheses. Hypothesis 5 was not supported. There was no statistically significant relationship between divestiture intensity and internal innovation (-.016, n.s.). Hypothesis 6 received support. Divestiture intensity had a statistically significant effect on use of financial controls (.149, p < .10). Alternatively, divestiture intensity exhibited a negative relationship with use of strategic controls (-.159, p < .05). Thus, Hypothesis 7 received support.

Control system hypotheses. Strategic controls were found to be positively related to internal innovation (.224, p < .001), providing support for Hypothesis 8. Hypothesis 9 also received support. Financial controls exhibited a statistically significant, negative relationship with internal innovation (-.219, p < .001). Lastly, financial controls were positively related to external innovation (.262, p < .01), providing support for Hypothesis 10.

Other Results

Special paths in the final model. Table 5 presents two special paths that were added during model respecification (in the next-best unconstrained model, model 4). Because we did not initially hypothesize these paths, no path coefficients or Z-statistics are available from the theoretical model (model 2). Two of the three added paths are statistically significant. In the first added path, a positive relationship between acquisition intensity and external innovation was predicted. The path coefficient was positive and statistically significant (.235, p < .01). In the second added path, the relationship between strategic controls and financial controls was predicted to be negative. However, the path coefficient was positive and statistically significant (.297, p < .001). The third path, between strategic controls and external innovation, was not statistically significant.

Control variables. There were 25 paths between control variables and the primary theoretical variables in the model. Table 5 depicts these paths, 12 of which were statistically significant. It is of note that firm size was positively related to strategic controls (.304, p < .01) but negatively related to internal innovation (-.393, p < .001). Other relatively strong relationships included the path from firm performance to divestiture intensity (-.188, p < .01) and that from industry R&D intensity to financial controls (-.214, p < .05). These relationships were as we expected on the basis of prior research.

DISCUSSION

The research provided strong support for the general model presented in Figure 1. In fact, nine of the ten hypotheses received support from the results of the study. These results strongly suggest that firms actively buying or selling businesses, or both, are likely to produce less internal innovation and rely more heavily on external innovation for a variety of reasons, including the structure and implementation of the internal control systems derived from their strategic actions.

The results have important implications for the fields of strategic management and organization theory. First, innovation is an important outcome of firm processes and has been shown to be critical for firm performance, particularly in industries with global competition (Franko, 1989). Bettis and Hitt (1995) described a new competitive landscape that is developing because of the increasing global competition and the technological revolution that affect most all organizations. This new competitive landscape places importance on firms being able to innovate in order to remain competitive in global markets. Innovation is important in both new product introductions and the processing of information and communications throughout complex organizations with operations in multiple countries.

This study focused on strategic actions that have been popular for many years, exemplified by the more than 55,000 acquisitions that occurred during the 1980s, followed by the significant restructuring (downscoping and downsizing) of many major corporations in the United States and abroad (Hitt, Keats, Harback, & Nixon, 1994). Recent data suggest the potential for a new wave of mergers and acquisitions on a global basis. Given that innovation is important for strategic competitiveness and that the buying and selling of businesses is becoming a globally popular strategic action, our results are profoundly important.

Our results suggest that an active acquisition strategy has direct, negative effects on the internal development of firm innovation. This effect is likely due to the transaction costs involved and to acquisition-related activities that absorb managers' time and energy. Because of these transaction costs, managers have little time left to manage other important projects, and target firm managers in particular become strongly risk averse. Thus, managers of acquiring and target firms may postpone major decisions regarding long-term investments such as R&D and thereby reduce the innovative capabilities of their firms.

Acquisitions also have indirect effects on the internal innovation of a firm through the control systems used to implement this strategy. As a firm acquires new units, top corporate executives' span of control increases, and their need to process information grows. Their information-processing capacities become strained, and they often change from an emphasis on strategic controls to an emphasis on financial controls. This change is important because our results show that strategic controls have a positive effect on internal innovation, but financial controls have a negative effect on it. Fi-

nancial controls establish financial targets whereby division managers become increasingly oriented toward the short term and reduce investments (e.g., in new product development) that will not pay off except in the long term.

Alternatively, firms following an active acquisition strategy may remain innovative by acquiring firms that have produced innovations. In other words, they may seek firms that have recently introduced new products or processes in order to remain competitive in their markets. This finding is interesting and suggests how acquiring firms, such as General Electric, can remain competitive while producing less internal innovation. However, Goodman and Lawless (1994) argued that although the acquisition of external innovation may aid a firm's competitive position, it simultaneously lessens corporate control over strategic results. Also, as these acquiring firms integrate the newly acquired innovative business into their organizations and apply the same set of control systems, the new business is likely to become less innovative over time.

These problems are dramatically shown by Smucker's acquisition of Mrs. Smith's. Smucker's faced challenges from competitors that introduced new products to the market, and it turned to acquisitions for new products and sales and profit growth. One of Mrs. Smith's new product lines, Smart-Style lower-calorie desserts, which was introduced with a costly promotional campaign, failed after the acquisition and had to be withdrawn from the market. This failure hurt Smucker's financial performance. One analyst suggested that Smucker's past risk aversion had hurt its competitiveness in the marketplace. Moreover, this analyst predicted that the firm's future was based on its ability to leverage new products through acquisitions (Murray, 1995). More research is required to understand the nature of external innovation and its effects on long-term firm performance.

Jensen (1993) argued that firms that are spending too much on R&D (i.e., the R&D is not producing adequate returns for investors) may be targeted for acquisition. However, the appropriate level of investment in R&D may be difficult to identify. The recent example of Chrysler Corporation provides a case in point. Kirk Kerkorian, a large Chrysler shareholder, made a tender offer for Chrysler Corporation, in partnership with Lee Iaccoca, the former CEO. In particular, Kerkorian felt that Chrysler had excessive cash reserves that should be distributed in dividends to shareholders. However, corporate executives argued that the high cash reserves were necessary to sustain the future new product development required in a globally competitive environment. In this case, the market sided with Chrysler managers, and Kerkorian's proposal did not receive the financial support it needed to move ahead (Woodruff, Laderman, Spiro, Kerwin, & Treece, 1995).

Our results regarding active divestitures provide finer-grained information than previous research and thereby have important differences. For example, Hoskisson and Johnson (1992) suggested that restructuring firms (those actively divesting units) might be able to reestablish strategic controls and thereby improve their innovation (although they did not measure strategic controls). Our results suggest that firms that are actively divesting

businesses cannot reinstate strategic controls while they are restructuring. The process of divestiture also creates significant transaction costs, similar to those acquiring firms incur. Additionally, these actively divesting firms are undergoing significant transformations, so managers may be experiencing significant chaos. Thus, to maintain some order and control, firms making significant divestitures are likely to maintain or even heighten financial controls.

Alternatively, no relationship was found between divestiture intensity and internal innovation. These results suggest that the major effects of divestitures on innovation are indirect, mediated by control systems. Some of the firms making divestitures are likely doing so as a part of a well-planned program of downscoping (Hoskisson & Hitt, 1994). Although such firms may desire to change their control systems, the turmoil (and even chaos) created by the major changes do not allow them to do so. However, the goals of the divestiture program may be to refocus the firm and, in the process, increase firm innovation. Thus, the countervailing forces of positive goals and negative effects from the emphasis on financial controls produce neutral effects of divestitures on internal innovation. In our data set were 36 firms that had completed their divestiture program (they had made no divestitures in the most recent two-year period). These firms, for this reason, were not included in the sample for our primary hypothesis tests. However, post hoc analyses showed divestiture intensity in these firms to have a positive and significant effect on internal innovation. These results provide support for prior research (Hoskisson & Johnson, 1992) and for the arguments regarding the goals of divestitures stated above.

The results of this study strongly suggest that the least innovative firms are likely those following a portfolio strategy. Those firms are regularly acquiring and divesting businesses, so the effects on control systems, internal innovation, and external innovation are likely to be magnified. Because of the continuous changes in the portfolio of businesses through acquisitions and divestitures, these firms have strong financial controls and use few, if any, strategic controls. Furthermore, even if they acquire innovative businesses, they are less likely to realize advantages from them because of the strong focus on acquisitions and divestitures (significant transaction costs and use of managerial time and energy) and heavy emphasis on financial controls. Thus, a portfolio strategy is likely to be successful only in industries in which innovation is unimportant (e.g., mature industries where increases in internal efficiencies can produce greater returns).

The results of this study provide guidance for future research. The significance of internal controls in our study strongly suggests that control systems should be examined in research on organizational innovation. Additionally, we need a better understanding of the long-term implications of substituting external for internal innovation. The research reported herein also suggests that research on organizational innovation should examine systemic integrated models (as opposed to simple bivariate relationships).

More research is also required to understand the true relationship between strategic and financial controls. The results of our study suggest a positive relationship between the two. Perhaps strong use of strategic controls allows positive use of financial controls and delimits their negative effects on organizations.

This research has provided a finer-grained examination of the effects of buying and selling businesses on firm innovation than done in previous research. Specifically, this study has several features not included in previous studies. These include the simultaneous examination of acquisition and divestiture intensity, examination of the relationships between internal control systems and acquisition and divestiture intensity as well as internal and external innovation, examination of both R&D investments and the introduction of new products (internal innovation), and examination of acquiring innovation externally. Perhaps the greatest contribution, however, is that these relationships were examined in a holistic, integrated model for the first time. Although acquisitions seem to have both a direct and mediated effect on firm innovation, divestitures' effect on firm innovation is more indirect, mediated through the firm's control system (until the program of divestitures is completed).

This research suggests that active involvement in the market for corporate control can be negative to an organization's health in industries in which innovation is important. Furthermore, because of the growing importance of innovation in the developing new competitive landscape and the increasing global activity in mergers and acquisitions, the findings of this study may be critically important for firms' maintenance of strategic competitiveness. We conclude that the context in which innovation is framed is strongly affected both by top management's engagement in the market for corporate control and by the effects of that engagement on the control mechanisms used and the design and process of innovation in the organizational units most responsible for innovation.

In conclusion, this research has added to both the strategic management and organization theory literatures focused on acquisitions, restructuring, and organizational innovation. Activity in the market for corporate control can have potentially positive and negative effects, and managers need to understand those effects and their meaning for long-term firm competitiveness and performance. The amount and timing of organizational innovation is becoming increasingly important (Damanpour, 1991; Eisenhardt & Schoonhoven, 1990). Thus, there is a need to understand how strategies undertaken by top executives may affect firms' ability to be innovative, even though those strategies are not designed to affect the firm's innovativeness. Research has shown that firms can be active acquirers and still remain innovative (Hitt, Harrison, Ireland, & Best, 1995). However, it requires a conscious strategic emphasis on innovation and careful selection of target firms for the goals of acquisition and firm innovation to be simultaneously achieved. Therefore, the results of this study may have critical implications for firms competing in the global marketplace.

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