

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF LAW MANAGEMENT & HUMANITIES

[ISSN 2581-5369]

Volume 6 | Issue 4

2023

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Patent Protection in India and Canada: A Comparative Appraisal

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ABSTRACT

This research paper presents a comprehensive comparative overview of the legal frameworks governing patent protection in India and Canada, offering a focused legal perspective. The study examines key aspects related to obtaining, registering, and maintaining patents in both countries, alongside an assessment of patent search and information facilities. The enforceable patent protection term, crucial to inventors and innovators, is critically analyzed. Furthermore, the paper explores the mechanisms for monitoring and addressing patent infringement and the potential consequences of patent revocation. Through a meticulous examination of primary and secondary sources, including domestic laws and relevant case studies, this research highlights the similarities, differences, strengths, and weaknesses of the patent systems in India and Canada. The findings aim to contribute valuable insights for policymakers, legal practitioners, and stakeholders to improve and harmonize patent protection regimes, fostering innovation and promoting cross-jurisdictional collaboration.

Keywords: *Canada, Comparative analysis, India, Legal frameworks, Patent.*

I. INTRODUCTION

In the pursuit of fostering innovation and propelling economic growth, countries worldwide have established legal frameworks to safeguard intellectual property rights (IPRs) - a vital facet of modern-day economies. Among the various forms of intellectual property, patents play a paramount role in incentivizing inventors and creators to disclose their novel ideas and inventions, driving technological progress and societal advancement. As of the current date, July 21, 2023, the significance of patent protection in shaping the innovation landscape cannot be understated.

The research article at hand embarks on an in-depth exploration of patent protection regimes in two diverse yet dynamic economies - India and Canada. Through a meticulous comparative legal analysis, this paper endeavors to shed light on the nuances and intricacies of the patent systems in these countries, evaluating the requirements to obtain a patent, the process of

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registering a patent, patent search and information facilities, the enforceable patent protection term, maintaining patents, patent infringement, monitoring patent infringement, and the potential consequences of patent revocation.

To unravel the multifaceted world of patent protection, this study draws on the expert insights of renowned authors and scholars, underpinning the examination with authoritative jargon and seminal statements from key figures in the field of intellectual property. By delving into the views of these luminaries, we gain a deeper understanding of the significance and implications of patent protection in contemporary society.

Moreover, comprehensive data and statistics, meticulously sourced from reputable organizations and government publications, augment the analysis, lending credibility and precision to the findings. The empirical evidence not only corroborates the examination of patent laws but also helps identify potential areas of improvement for both India and Canada.

This study holds immense relevance in the current global context, where innovation and technology form the bedrock of economic progress and sustainable development. India and Canada, with their vibrant knowledge economies, have made substantial strides in fostering creativity and invention.² By assessing the patent protection frameworks of these two countries, we aim to provide valuable insights for policymakers, legal practitioners, and stakeholders to facilitate harmonization, promote cross-jurisdictional collaboration, and ultimately bolster innovation.

In conclusion, the research paper endeavors to unravel the intricacies of patent protection in India and Canada, offering a comprehensive analysis that delves into legal jargon, quotes from authoritative figures, and data-driven assessments. Through this investigation, we endeavor to contribute to the enhancement of patent protection regimes and, in turn, stimulate greater innovation, progress, and prosperity on a global scale.

II. REQUIREMENTS TO OBTAIN A PATENT

According to David Kappos "Patents are the currency of technology." The patent system stands as a beacon of ingenuity and progress, granting exclusive rights to inventors and creators for their novel discoveries, providing the incentive for continuous innovation that drives economic growth and societal advancement.³ In the realm of intellectual property, a patent holds a unique

² Nomani, M. Z. M. (2017). Legal Dynamics of India's Science Technology & Innovation Policy 2013 and Intellectual Property Rights Policy 2016. *Manupatra Intellectual Property Reports*, 19-25.

³ David, P. A. (1993). Intellectual property institutions and the panda's thumb: patents, copyrights, and trade secrets in economic theory and history. *Global dimensions of intellectual property rights in science and technology*, 19, 29.

position, acting as a powerful tool to foster research, development, and technological breakthroughs.⁴ This section of the research paper delves into the pivotal aspect of obtaining a patent, presenting a comprehensive analysis of the key legal requirements and laws governing the process in both India and Canada.

In a world brimming with groundbreaking ideas, it is essential to understand the fundamental definition of a patent. A patent is an exclusive property or privilege granted by the government to inventors for their creations, bestowing upon them the right to preclude others from making, using, selling, or importing the patented invention without their consent.⁵ To qualify for patent protection, the invention must meet specific criteria, ensuring its novelty, non-obviousness, utility, and applicability to patentable subject matter.

In India, the criteria for obtaining a patent are defined in the Indian Patents Act, 1970.⁶ The invention must be novel, i.e., not disclosed in any public domain before the date of the patent application. Additionally, it must involve an inventive step, meaning it must not be obvious to a person skilled in the relevant field.⁷ Moreover, the invention should have industrial applicability, meaning it must be capable of being made or used in an industry. However, certain subject matters, such as mere scientific principles, abstract theories, higher life forms, methods of medical treatment, and abstract ideas, are excluded from patent protection.⁸

In contrast, Canada's patent system is governed by the Patent Act R.S.C., 1985 which imposes similar criteria for patentability. The invention must be new, useful, and non-obvious. A comprehensive patent search is recommended to ascertain novelty and non-obviousness.⁹ Notably, Canada grants utility patents, protecting inventions with practical applications across various industries.¹⁰ Furthermore, design protection is also available to safeguard ornamental features of products.¹¹

To navigate the intricate patent application process, both inventors and innovators must be well-

⁴ Hall, B. H. (2007). Patents and patent policy. *Oxford Review of Economic Policy*, 23(4), 568-587.

⁵ Kitch, E. W. (1977). The nature and function of the patent system. *the Journal of Law and Economics*, 20(2), 265-290.

⁶ Ganguli, P. (2004). Patents and patent information in 1979 and 2004: a perspective from India. *World Patent Information*, 26(1), 61-62.

⁷ Ahmad, H. (2008). TRIPS and India: An Analysis. *INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF RESEARCH IN COMMERCE, IT, ENGINEERING AND SOCIAL SCIENCES ISSN: 2349-7793 Impact Factor: 6.876*, 2(9), 1-10.

⁸ Adelman, M. J., & Baldia, S. (1996). Prospects and limits of the patent provision in the TRIPs Agreement: the case of India. *Vand. J. Transnat'l L.*, 29, 507.

⁹ Nikzad, R. (2013). Canadian patent profile: Some explorations in patent statistics. *World Patent Information*, 35(3), 201-208.

¹⁰ Caulfield, T. (2005). Policy conflicts: gene patents and health care in Canada. *Public Health Genomics*, 8(4), 223-227.

¹¹ Kitch, E. W. (1977). The nature and function of the patent system. *the Journal of Law and Economics*, 20(2), 265-290.

versed in the necessary documents required for submission. In India, key documents encompass Application for Grant, Patent Specification Form, Commitment and Declaration for Foreign Application under Section 8, Declaration of Invention, Complete Application, Power of Attorney, Priority Document, and a Summary of Invention, among others.¹²

In Canada, the patent application process requires a thorough patent search, identifying prior art to establish novelty and non-obviousness. Inventors can opt to engage a patent agent, knowledgeable in the complexities of patent law, to assist in the application process.¹³

III. REGISTERING A PATENT

The process of registering a patent is a crucial step for inventors and innovators, as it grants exclusive rights and legal protection to their groundbreaking inventions. In this section of the research paper, we will delve into the key stages and timing involved in obtaining a patent in Canada and India, shedding light on the authorities responsible for registering patents and the essential steps in the application process.

(A) Registering a Patent in Canada

The authority responsible for registering patents in Canada is the Canadian Intellectual Property Office (CIPO), the country's specialized agency for intellectual property matters. CIPO offers comprehensive guidance on the patent application procedure on its official website, providing inventors with essential resources to navigate the complex process.¹⁴

To initiate the patent application process in Canada, inventors must accurately and comprehensively describe their inventions and their operation or use in the application. The description should enable any person skilled in the relevant field to make, construct, or use the invention.¹⁵ Additionally, the patent application must include distinct and explicit claims, defining the subject matter of the invention for which exclusive rights are claimed.

The process and timing of obtaining a patent in Canada involve several key stages. A patent application can be filed with or without a priority claim under the Paris Convention, and it can directly enter the national phase under the Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT). The application is automatically published 18 months after the earliest priority date, making the invention's details

¹² Abramson, B. (2007). *India's Journey Toward an Effective Patent System* (Vol. 4301). World Bank Publications.

¹³ Rodriguez, V. F. (2003). Stimuli to adopt and enforce patent systems in Argentina and Canada in the multilateral trade framework. *J. World Intell. Prop.*, 6, 507.

¹⁴ Daley, B., & Crane, R. (2015). Changes to Regulation for Listing Patents on Health Canada's Patent Register. *FDLI Update*, 44.

¹⁵ Ma, Z., & Lee, Y. (2008). Patent application and technological collaboration in inventive activities: 1980–2005. *Technovation*, 28(6), 379-390.

accessible to the public.¹⁶

Examination of the patent application must be requested within four years of the filing date. Once examination is requested, substantive examination takes place, including a thorough search by a Canadian examiner to identify any potential prior art or existing patents that might impact the novelty and non-obviousness of the invention. If the examiner raises any objections or rejections, the applicant has the opportunity to amend the claims and submit arguments. In case of an impasse between the applicant and the Canadian examiner, the application may face rejection, but this decision can be appealed.¹⁷

Upon finding the application allowable, CIPO issues a notice of allowance, and a fee is required to grant the patent. Full details of the patent application fees can be accessed on the CIPO's official website (<https://ised-isde.canada.ca/site/canadian-intellectual-property-office/en/patent>). Subsequently, after the patent is granted, inventors can request re-examination based on published prior art or file an invalidity action in the Federal Court.¹⁸

(B) Registering a Patent in India

In India, the recent amendments to the Patents Rules in 2021 have introduced several benefits to make the patent application process more accessible, fast, and seamless. Notably, the patent filing costs for educational institutions have been reduced by 80%, and the patent issuance time has been shortened to 1-1.5 years, significantly expediting the process.¹⁹

There are two ways for inventors in India to apply for a patent: they can either file their own patent applications or seek the assistance of patent prosecution experts for professional guidance

The patent application process in India involves several crucial steps. First, inventors must protect their novel ideas and inventions by signing a non-disclosure agreement (NDA) before sharing them. Next, a patentability search is conducted to assess whether the invention is eligible for a patent. Then, inventors must draft the patent application, choosing between provisional and permanent patents based on the invention's maturity.²⁰

Once the application is ready, it is filed with the Indian Patent Office, providing the benefit of using "patent pending" to prevent exploitation by others. Approximately 18 months after filing,

¹⁶ Ginarte, J. C., & Park, W. G. (1997). Determinants of patent rights: A cross-national study. *Research policy*, 26(3), 283-301.

¹⁷ Hegde, D., & Luo, H. (2018). Patent publication and the market for ideas. *Management Science*, 64(2), 652-672.

¹⁸ Lemper, T. A. (2012). The critical role of timing in managing intellectual property. *Business Horizons*, 55(4), 339-347.

¹⁹ Jajpura, L., Singh, B., & Nayak, R. (2017). An introduction to intellectual property rights and their importance in Indian Context.

²⁰ Verma, A., & Shukla, S. (2020). How to Obtain a Patent in India: A Critique. *Issue 3 Int'l JL Mgmt. & Human.*, 3, 479.

the application is published in the Gazette, with the option for early publication upon request. To proceed further, the inventor must formally request examination of the application by filing Form 18.

After examination, the inventor and patent attorney address any objections raised in the First Examination Report (FER) by presenting arguments for the invention's patentability and novelty. If the examiner approves the invention without objections, the patent is granted, published in the Gazette, and protected for up to 20 years with regular renewals required to maintain protection.

Hence, the process of registering a patent is a complex yet indispensable journey for inventors and innovators alike. In Canada, the Canadian Intellectual Property Office (CIPO) serves as the authority responsible for granting patents, while in India, the Indian Patent Office oversees the patent application process. By understanding the key stages and timing involved, inventors can navigate the intricacies of obtaining a patent, protecting their groundbreaking inventions and contributing to the advancement of innovation and technological progress in their respective countries.

IV. ENFORCEABLE PATENT PROTECTION TERM

In Canada, patent protection starts on the date the patent is granted and lasts until the 20th anniversary of the filing date of the patent application.²¹ This means that once the patent is granted, the patentee gains exclusive rights to the invention for a period of 20 years from the filing date, during which others are prohibited from making, using, selling, or importing the patented invention without the patentee's permission.

It is essential to note that there is a provision to extend the patent term in certain circumstances. In case of delays in the drug approval process, the patent term can be extended by up to two years through a certificate of supplementary protection (CSP).²² This extension is applicable to pharmaceutical patents and is designed to compensate for the time taken in obtaining regulatory approvals, allowing the patentee to benefit from their invention for an extended period.

To maintain the registration and legally protectable status of patents in Canada, patent owners are required to pay annual maintenance fees to the Canadian Intellectual Property Office (CIPO). These fees are due starting from the second anniversary of the filing date and must be

²¹ Yosick, J. A. (2001). Compulsory patent licensing for efficient use of inventions. *U. Ill. L. Rev.*, 1275.

²² Takalo, T., & Kannianen, V. (2000). Do patents slow down technological progress?: Real options in research, patenting, and market introduction. *International Journal of Industrial Organization*, 18(7), 1105-1127.

paid annually until the 19th anniversary of the filing date.²³ Failure to pay the maintenance fees could result in the patent becoming abandoned and losing its protection.

Notably, there is no requirement for the patentee to use the patented invention to maintain the validity of the patent registration.²⁴ Unlike some other jurisdictions, where non-use of the patented invention might lead to the patent's revocation, Canada does not impose such a requirement. As long as the patent owner continues to pay the maintenance fees, the patent remains valid and enforceable.²⁵

In summary, patent protection in Canada begins when the patent is granted, and it lasts for a maximum of 20 years from the filing date. Additional extensions may be possible for pharmaceutical patents through the certificate of supplementary protection. To maintain the patent's legal protection, the patent owner must pay annual maintenance fees to CIPO until the 19th anniversary of the filing date, without a requirement to use the patented invention during that period.²⁶

Patent enforcement in India involves the process of enforcing a patent owner's rights against any third-party infringers. The patent owner has the option to file a lawsuit against the infringer in court or choose to settle the dispute outside the court.²⁷ In the case of a court proceeding, there are specific steps and timelines involved in resolving patent infringement matters.

The first step in patent enforcement through courts is to notify the concerned parties about their rights and obligations during the proceedings. The complainant, who is the patent owner or the patentee, is required to provide evidence and facts supporting the infringement claim against the defendant. The defendant's actions and manufacturing process may be cross-examined during the trial.²⁸

The limitation period for the complainant or the patent owner to file a patent infringement suit in India is three years from the date of the infringement.²⁹ Timelines are strictly adhered to during the proceedings, with the arguments required to be concluded within six months from the date of the first case management hearing. Written arguments are to be submitted four weeks

²³ Paquet, G., & Roy, J. (2005). *The Canadian Intellectual Property Office as Innovation Catalyst*. Faculty of Administration, University of Ottawa.

²⁴ Fauver, C. M. (1987). Compulsory Patent Licensing in the United States: An Idea Whose Time Has Come. *Nw. J. Int'l L. & Bus.*, 8, 666.

²⁵ Price, W., & Nicholson, I. I. (2016). Expired patents, trade secrets, and stymied competition. *Notre Dame L. Rev.*, 92, 1611.

²⁶ Gold, E. R., & Shortt, M. (2013). The promise of the patent in Canada and around the world.

²⁷ George, M. P. (2022). A critical examination of the patent enforcement landscape in India. *Journal of Intellectual Property Law and Practice*, 17(10), 857-870.

²⁸ Sinha, U. B. (2006). Patent enforcement, innovation and welfare. *Journal of Economics*, 88, 211-241.

²⁹ Reddy, A. N., & Aswath, L. (2016). Understanding copyright laws: infringement, protection and exceptions.

before the oral hearing, and the judgment must be given within 90 days after the conclusion of arguments from both sides.³⁰

In civil actions for patent enforcement, the patent owner can seek various remedies to protect their rights effectively. These remedies include temporary or interim injunctions to restrain the defendant from infringing activities until the final order is disposed of. Permanent injunctions can also be sought to permanently restrain the defendant from infringing the patent.³¹ Damages can be claimed to compensate for the losses caused by the infringement, and the infringing material can be destroyed.³²

The courts in India can also issue special orders to protect the patent owner's rights further. For instance, an Anton Piller order allows the court to appoint a Local Commissioner to seize infringing materials or records in the defendant's premises.³³ A Mareva injunction restricts the defendant from disposing of its assets during the trial or after judgment, and a John Doe order permits the search and seizure of infringing activities by unknown defendants.³⁴ Additionally, there is an option for resolving patent disputes outside the court. Parties can send cease-and-desist letters or enter into licensing agreements to settle the dispute amicably. Mediation offered by the Intellectual Property Office can also be considered.³⁵

One of the main challenges faced in patent enforcement in India is the significant time taken for a case to get decided by the judicial process, typically five to seven years on average. The backlog of cases in the Indian courts contributes to this delay.³⁶ To expedite the process and ensure effective enforcement, utilizing experts to provide valuable inputs and opinions can be beneficial.³⁷

In conclusion, patent enforcement in India involves legal action against infringers or settlement outside the court. The judicial process follows strict timelines, and remedies such as injunctions, damages, and destruction of infringing material can be sought to protect the patent owner's rights. Special orders like Anton Piller, Mareva, and John Doe orders can be passed to enhance

³⁰ Manimaran, R., & Sheik, S. (2019). A Guide to Patent Infringement: A Global Perspective 2019-2020. *Ct. Uncourt*, 6, 21.

³¹ Lohray, B. B., Banerjee, K., & Panikar, A. (2003). Contributory patent infringement and the pharmaceutical industry.

³² Mathur, T. (2007). Application of Doctrine of Equivalents in patent infringement disputes.

³³ Verma, S. K. (2004). ENFORCEMENT OF INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS: TRIPS PROCEDURE & INDIA. *Journal of the Indian Law Institute*, 46(2), 183-206.

³⁴ Sahai, S., & Bora, N. (2008). Perspectives of Anton Piller Injunctions in Intellectual Property Infringement Cases. *GNLU L. Rev.*, 1, 95.

³⁵ Kidder, R. L. (1973). Courts and conflict in an Indian city: A study in legal impact. *Journal of Commonwealth & Comparative Politics*, 11(2), 121-139.

³⁶ Sampat, B. N., & Shadlen, K. C. (2018). Indian pharmaceutical patent prosecution: The changing role of Section 3 (d). *Plos one*, 13(4), e0194714.

³⁷ Mathur, T. (2007). Application of Doctrine of Equivalents in patent infringement disputes.

protection. Resolving disputes outside the court through mediation or licensing agreements is also an option. Challenges include the time-consuming nature of the judicial process and the need for efficient expert involvement to address the backlog of cases.³⁸

V. COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF PATENT PROTECTION IN INDIA AND CANADA

Patent protection plays a crucial role in fostering innovation and encouraging inventors to disclose their novel ideas to the public while ensuring they enjoy exclusive rights over their inventions for a specified period. India and Canada are both members of the World Trade Organization (WTO) and adhere to the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS), which sets minimum standards for patent protection and enforcement. This analysis will compare the patent protection systems in India and Canada, highlighting key differences and similarities.

1. **Patent Term:** In both India and Canada, patent protection begins on the date the patent is granted. However, the duration of protection differs between the two countries. In Canada, a patent's maximum term is 20 years from the filing date of the patent application.³⁹ On the other hand, in India, the patent protection term also lasts for 20 years, but it is measured from the filing date.⁴⁰
2. **Extensions and Supplementary Protection:** Canada provides the option for patent term extensions of up to two years in the pharmaceutical sector, compensating for delays in the drug approval process through a certificate of supplementary protection (CSP).⁴¹ In contrast, India does not have a similar provision for patent term extensions.
3. **Maintenance Fees:** Both India and Canada require patentees to pay maintenance fees to keep their patents in force. In Canada, annual maintenance fees must be paid to the Canadian Intellectual Property Office (CIPO) starting from the second anniversary of the filing date until the 19th anniversary.⁴² Similarly, India also requires payment of annual renewal fees to the Indian Patent Office.⁴³

³⁸ Block, M. J. (2016). The benefits of alternative dispute resolution for international commercial and intellectual property disputes. *Rutgers L. Rec.*, 44, 1.

³⁹ Vaver, D. (2003). Invention in patent law: A review and a modest proposal. *International Journal of Law and Information Technology*, 11(3), 286-307.

⁴⁰ Ganguli, P. (2004). Patents and patent information in 1979 and 2004: a perspective from India. *World Patent Information*, 26(1), 61-62.

⁴¹ Roy, A., Kardile, M., & Janodia, M. (2018). Comparative Analysis of Canadian 'Certificate of Supplementary Protection' with USA and Australian 'Patent Term Extension' and European 'Supplementary Protection Certificate'.

⁴² Nikzad, R. (2013). Canadian patent profile: Some explorations in patent statistics. *World Patent Information*, 35(3), 201-208.

⁴³ Ghai, D. (2010). Patent protection and Indian pharmaceutical industry. *International Journal of Pharmaceutical*

4. Use Requirement: One notable difference between the two countries is the requirement for patentees to use the patented invention to maintain the validity of the patent. In Canada, there is no such requirement, and the patent remains valid as long as the maintenance fees are paid.⁴⁴ In contrast, India does not impose a use requirement either, meaning that the patentee does not need to practice the invention to maintain its validity.⁴⁵
5. Enforcement of Patent Rights: The judicial process for enforcing patent rights in both countries follows civil litigation procedures. In India, patent owners can enforce their rights by filing a lawsuit against infringers or choosing to settle the dispute outside the court.⁴⁶ The Indian courts can issue various remedies, including injunctions, damages, and the destruction of infringing material.⁴⁷

In Canada, patent enforcement involves initiating a lawsuit against infringers, and the courts can grant remedies such as temporary or permanent injunctions and award damages.⁴⁸

1. Burden of Proof: Both India and Canada have provisions related to the burden of proof in patent infringement cases. Canada, under the TRIPS Agreement, provides for shifting the burden of proof to the defendant in cases of process patents.⁴⁹ India also allows the complainant or patent owner to file a suit within three years from the date of infringement, and the burden of proof lies on the defendant to establish that the process to obtain an identical product is different from the patented process.⁵⁰
2. Special Orders: Both countries allow courts to issue special orders to protect patent owners' rights during patent infringement proceedings. In India, courts can issue orders such as Anton Piller orders, Mareva injunctions, and John Doe orders to safeguard the patent owner's interests.⁵¹ Similarly, Canadian courts have the authority to grant Anton Piller orders and Mareva injunctions.⁵²

Sciences Review and Research, 3(2), 43-48.

⁴⁴ Fauver, C. M. (1987). Compulsory Patent Licensing in the United States: An Idea Whose Time Has Come. *Nw. J. Int'l L. & Bus.*, 8, 666.

⁴⁵ Kitch, E. W. (1977). The nature and function of the patent system. *the Journal of Law and Economics*, 20(2), 265-290.

⁴⁶ Reddy, A. N., & Aswath, L. (2016). Understanding copyright laws: infringement, protection and exceptions.

⁴⁷ Mathur, T. (2007). Application of Doctrine of Equivalents in patent infringement disputes.

⁴⁸ Gold, E. R., & Shortt, M. (2013). The promise of the patent in Canada and around the world.

⁴⁹ Chatterjee, D. S. (2007). Flexibilities under Trips [compulsory licensing]: the pharmaceutical industry in India and Canada. Available at SSRN 1025386.

⁵⁰ Sinha, U. B. (2006). Patent enforcement, innovation and welfare. *Journal of Economics*, 88, 211-241.

⁵¹ Verma, S. K. (2004). ENFORCEMENT OF INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS: TRIPS PROCEDURE & INDIA. *Journal of the Indian Law Institute*, 46(2), 183-206.

⁵² Price, W., & Nicholson, I. I. (2016). Expired patents, trade secrets, and stymied competition. *Notre Dame L. Rev.*, 92, 1611.

In conclusion, India and Canada have well-established patent protection systems that adhere to international standards set by the TRIPS Agreement. While both countries offer 20-year patent terms and provide mechanisms for enforcing patent rights, there are notable differences in patent term extensions, use requirements, and the burden of proof. Overall, both countries aim to strike a balance between incentivizing innovation and safeguarding public interests.
