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OBJECTIVES

HYPOTHESES

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

FINDINGS

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THE IMPACT OF E-BANKING ON PERFORMANCE – A STUDY OF INDIAN NATIONALISED BANKS

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ABSTRACT

Banks all over the world make significant investments in information and communication technologies (ICT) aiming to increase their efficiency. It is of critical importance to investigate the impact of these investments on banks performance. The role of information and communication technology and its effect on the productivity both at micro and the macro level has been a subject of recent debate in economics. World over the contribution of information technology to the efficiency of a system, especially in the service sector, is being questioned. Still this relation is an unresolved paradox. This paper presents the results of an empirical investigation of the effect of ICT investments on performance of banks measured through comprehensive index of performance. The study is based on a research dataset of eleven nationalised banks which has been collected from head offices and websites of banks. . Using the time series database of Reserve Bank of India, covering the period 1998 to 2010, an information technology index and a performance index is derived. Empirical prognostication of the relation has been done using the correlation, regression and other techniques. Study confirms that contribution of technology to bank's performance has a differential behaviour. It contributes positively only to those banks where some preconditions conducive to performance are existing, e.g., trained manpower, size and scale of business. It shows that bank's performance is related not just to its technological stance but to other areas of competencies.

KEYWORDS

Information Technology, Performance, Productivity, Profitability.

INTRODUCTION

The two most powerful forces affecting each sector of the economy today are the increasing rate of globalisation and advances in information and communication technologies. It causes companies to use their input resources as much as possible in an effective way. Information technology is a powerful force and perhaps the single massive drive, impacting global society during past decade. Under the saga of information technology, world economy has witnessed a massive technological change in the recent past. Technological change brings about an increase in per capita income, either by reducing the amount of inputs per unit of output or by yielding more output for a given amount of input. In the last decade, almost all the sectors have gone in for a massive investment in information technology. One of the major areas of economy that has received renewed focus in recent times has been the financial sector and within the broad ambit of the financial sector, it is the banking sector that has been the cynosure of academia and policy makers alike. The role of information technology in performance of an organization is still a paradox. As technology is not a panacea, it is a tool for efficiency, to make it work it requires planning, organizational capabilities, managerial skills, and entrepreneurship. In the age of competition, the contribution of information technology to the performance of an organization is being questioned. In this context, the study is an attempt to analyse the effect of information technology on performance of Indian banking industry. Hence the study deals with the research question how information technology is going to have its impact on performance of Indian banking industry.

MAIN OBJECTIVES

In the present study it is broadly hypothesized that the increasing use of information technology has improved the intellectual capital and has made the banks to be more efficient. The main objective of the study is to: (a) review the theory and empirics on the relation of technology and performance with special reference to service sector; and (b) analyse the relation of information technology and performance in nationalised banks

DATA

The data comes from the publicly available data source on bank's financial statements and income expenses reports sent to banking associations. The secondary data and information have been collected from the publications of the Reserve Bank of India, Annual Reports of Respective banks and other valuable publications of banks in India. Various websites have also been used for the collection of data and information.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The studies that examined the association between information technology spending and performance in developed countries and many developing countries may not apply directly to Indian banking industry. The current research study fills the gap in existing information about the relationship between information technology and performance. The study adds to the existing pool of knowledge on technology-productivity paradox. It also has a social significance. Over budgeting for information technology spending would leave fewer resources for other activities with transparent financial profitability. Further since information technology managers and senior executives of organization often face pressure to justify rising information technology expenditure to shareholders; the current study provides new knowledge and perspectives on how information technology investment affects performance.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The enduring magnitudes of investment in information technology have drawn attention of many researches and policy makers to the impact of IT on growth and productivity. The expectation was that increased investment in IT would naturally lead to increase in performance of organization but despite massive investment in IT, its impact on performance continued to be questioned (Willock et. al 1998). Despite hundreds of studies carried out, opinion of the experts is solidly divided on the IT-productivity debate. The debate is divided into two groups: (a) productivity Paradox, i.e., the IT has no impacts on productivity; and (b) productivity pays off, i.e., IT does improve the productivity. Some literature defence the idea of Solow paradox in concluding that information technology may affect negatively on bank's efficiency and may reduce productivity. Similar conclusions of productivity paradox have been reached by many studies (Loveman,

1994); Roach, 1998; Dasgupta, 1999; Barua et al., 1995; Onliner and Sichel, 1994; Egland et al., 1998; Diwert and Fox, 1999; and Beccalli, 2003). Some of the studies have drawn on statistical correlation between IT spending and performance measures (Das Santos et al., 1996; Prattipati, 1997; and Strassman, 1995). They have found an insignificant correlation, implying thereby that IT spending is unproductive.

Conversely there are many works, approving the positive impact of information technology to business value. Such studies have used firm level evidence and have concluded that productivity paradox has disappeared (Bender, 1986; Brynjolfsson and Hitt, 1995 & 1996; Lichtenberg, 1999; Mody and Dahlman, 1992; Karemer et al., 1994; Dewan Karemer, 1998; Weill, 1992; and Holden Ken, 1999). Work by Jorgenson and Stiroh (1995) reported the productivity paradox but however in their recent works in the year 2004, they concluded that the impact of IT on aggregate economic performance has increased overtime. Some of the recent studies have shown a strong empirical evidence in support of the benefit of further investment in IT (Battery, 2003; Vincent, 2005; Hernando and Nieto, 2006; Agboola, 2007; Mashhour, 2008; and Parsad, 2008). These findings raise several questions about mismeasurement of output by not accounting for improved variety and quality. However, some studies could not show a clear cut pay off of information technology (Gera, 2004); Shu and Westley, 2005; Albert, 2005; Altinkemer, 2005; Howells; 2005; and Shobhani, 2008). The difficulty in measuring and evaluating the benefits of information technology has generated an extensive literature both quantitative and qualitative. There are very few studies to appropriately index both the information technology and the performance of a service organization. This work is step ahead to fill this gap.

METHODOLOGY

As already mentioned, the main objective of the study is to analyse the effect of information technology on performance of nationalized banks. Study draws its database from RBI and IBA publications and databases. To make the work manageable and effective, it is confined to 11 nationalised banks only. They are Canara Bank, Bank of Baroda, Bank of India, Punjab National Bank, Dena Bank, Punjab and Sind Bank, Union Bank of India, Allahabad Bank, Indian Overseas Bank, Oriental Bank of Commerce and Central Bank of India. It covers the period from the year 1998 to 2010. To derive the overall technology parameter, a **technology index** has been derived using the discrete technology parameters. They are: (a) number of ATM per one lakh customers (b) number of credit card per one lakh customers; (c) number of computerized branches as percentage to total branches; (d) number of internet banking branches as percentage to total branches; (e) number of mobile banking branches as percentage to total branches; and (f) number of tele-banking branches as percentage to total branches. Performance analysis has been done by computing a **performance index** which takes into consideration different variables like profitability, efficiency and productivity. Six performance indicators have been taken to generate the performance index. The selected indicators are credit-deposit ratio, business per branch, profit per branch, profit per employee, spread per branch and spread per employee. The relation of technology index and performance index has been analysed by using correlation and regression on time series and panel data. Wherever needed, appropriate price adjustments have been made.

ANALYSIS

Using the methodology outlined above, technology and performance indices have been computed for 11 sampled banks of India. The straight forward way to analyze the relation is by using simple Karl Pearson's correlation coefficient. Correlation between technology and performance has been analyzed using the cross-section data and time series data, first separately then by pooling the two and forming a panel data. Karl Pearson's correlation coefficient between the technology index and performance index, for cross section data, for different years is shown in table no: 1 The statistical significance of correlation has been tested at 5 percent and 1 percent level of significance using t-test. It reveals that during the entire period under consideration, there has been a positive correlation between technology and performance. It is further learnt that for the initial years, from 1998-99 to 2008-09, correlation is consistently positive and is statistically significant at 1 percent level of significance. In the recent years, i.e., 2009 onwards, the value of coefficient is positive but is statistically insignificant. A clear conclusion that emerges from this analysis is that performance is a positive function of information technology in the Indian banking. That is to say, information technology is a driving force behind efficiency and performance in the Indian banking.

TABLE- 1: CORRELATION BETWEEN TECHNOLOGY INDEX AND PERFORMANCE INDEX AMONG NATIONALISED BANKS

Years	Karl Pearson's Correlation Coefficient	t-statistics
1998-99	0.716**	5.529
1999-00	0.831**	8.053
2000-01	0.818**	7.649
2001-02	0.819**	7.696
2002-03	0.839**	8.308
2003-04	0.798**	7.131
2004-05	0.762**	6.341
2005-06	0.676**	4.822
2006-07	0.623**	4.287
2007-08	0.490**	3.028
2008-09	0.539**	3.447
2009-10	0.374 ^{NS}	2.172
2010-11	0.179 ^{NS}	0.979

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level; NS means, not significant

Using the temporal data, table 2 shows the correlation between technology index and performance index of all the 11 nationalized banks, It is learnt from the table that there is a close relationship of technology index and performance index for Canara Bank, Bank of Baroda, Bank of India, Punjab National Bank, Dena Bank, Union Bank of India, Allahabad Bank, Indian Overseas Bank. The relation is significant at 1 percent level of significance. A close look at the table also leads us to conclude that for Central Bank of India, correlation is significant at 5 percent level of significance. It is further observed from table that for Punjab and Sind Bank, Oriental bank of commerce, Correlation is positive but not statistically significant.

TABLE 2: BANK-WISE CORRELATION BETWEEN TECHNOLOGY AND PERFORMANCE INDEX

	Code	Name of the bank	Correlation	t-statistics	Significance
1.		Canara Bank	0.777	4.10	**
2.		Bank of Baroda	0.925	8.09	**
3.		Bank of India	0.907	7.13	**
4.		Punjab National Bank	0.883	6.23	**
5.		Dena Bank	0.676	3.05	**
6.		Punjab & Sind Bank	0.343	1.21	NS
7.		Union bank of India	0.760	3.87	**
8.		Allahabad Bank	0.834	5.02	**
9.		Indian Overseas Bank	0.898	6.76	**
10.		Oriental Bank of Commerce	0.516	2.00	NS
11.		Central Bank of India	0.607	2.53	*

**Significant at 0.01 level;

* Significant at 0.05 level;

NS Not significant

On the whole, the table shows that value of correlation coefficient is positive for all the banks, this correlation is much stronger and significant for some nationalized banks. The logic is that public sector banks have a scale and size advantage. They stand at advantage so far as market share, size of bank and experience of the bank is concerned. Their market share in the total business is large. Their branch network and customer base is large. These public sector banks are maintaining their performance (with exception of few banks) and information technology has undoubtedly contributed to large banks having greater flexibility to adapt to changes,

To better investigate the above preliminary evidences and to gain a deeper insight into the relationship between technology index and performance index, a set of regressions has been analyzed. Technology index has been treated as independent (exogenous) variable and performance index has been treated as dependent (endogenous) variable. The mathematical representation of regression equation is written as follows:

$$Y = a + bX$$

Where Y is the performance Index; 'a' is the intercept; 'b' is the regression coefficient and X is the technology index. Regression coefficient represents the estimated change in the value of dependent variable, for each unit change in independent variable values. Following analysis deals with regression analysis at banking group and individual banks' level.

NATIONALISED BANKS

At the bank level, the regression results as shown in table no.3 indicate that performance index is a positive function of technology index as all the nationalized banks under study have positive regression coefficients indicating the contribution of technology towards performance but for Dena Bank, Oriental Bank of Commerce and Central Bank of India, R^2 turns out to be very poor, indicating weak explanatory power (45 percent, 26 percent and 36 percent respectively). For Punjab and Sind Bank, regression results are what may be called damped, as the regression coefficient are statistically insignificant. Moreover low explanatory power of R^2 (12 percent) indicates that IT investment explains a relatively low portion of performance measure. Overall the results indicate that technology has improved the performance of nationalized banks but some nationalized banks like Dena Bank, Punjab and Sind Bank and Oriental Bank of Commerce have not been successful in leveraging their technologies to raise their performance.

POOLED DATA REGRESSION RESULTS

Pooled data regression analysis has been done for 11 Indian nationalised banks, for all the years under study (1998-99 to 2010-11). The regression model is as follows:

$$\text{Performance Index} = f(\text{Technology Index})$$

Regression results are indicative of the fact that regression coefficient of performance as a function of technology is positive. At the nationalized bank group level, the regression results show that performance index is a positive function of technology index and the regression results are statistically significant ($p=0.01$ level). Further the coefficient of determination comes out to be 0.43 percent. It shows that although this new technology regime is shaping the performance of the nationalized banks, yet the coefficient of determination shows that technology is a poor determinant in case of nationalized banks. Study confirms that contribution of technology to bank's performance has a differential behaviour. It varies with size, scale, ownership and phase of technology adoption.

TABLE 3: REGRESSION RESULTS FOR PERFORMANCE AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY RELATIONSHIP IN NATIONALIZED BANKS AND BANK GROUP IN INDIA

Bank/ Group	Constant (a)	Coefficient (b)	Standard Error	t for coefficient	R^2	F for Regression
Canara Bank	0.047	0.402**	0.098	4.097	0.604	16.787**
Bank of Baroda	0.028	0.225**	0.028	8.092	0.856	65.488**
Bank of India	0.096	0.216**	0.030	7.126	0.822	50.780**
Punjab National Bank	0.073	0.227**	0.036	6.227	0.779	38.776**
Dena Bank	0.079	0.193**	0.063	3.046	0.458	9.281**
Punjab & Sind Bank	0.078	0.110 ^{NS}	0.091	1.209	0.117	1.462 ^{NS}
Union Bank of India	0.074	0.260**	0.067	3.873	0.577	14.996**
Allahabad Bank	0.099	0.107**	0.021	5.016	0.696	25.160**
Indian Overseas Bank	0.085	0.200**	0.030	6.757	0.806	45.651**
OBC	0.135	0.066 ^{NS}	0.033	1.996	0.266	3.982 ^{NS}
Central Bank of India	0.092	0.087*	0.034	2.534	0.369	6.421*
Nationalized Banks Group	0.089	0.151**	0.014	10.463	0.437	109.472**

Note: Marking * indicates significant at 5% and ** indicates significant at 1%

Source: Calculated

MULTIVARIATE REGRESSION RESULTS

So far, the performance has been taken as a sole function of technology and assuming the effect of other inputs to be constant. This is an unrealistic assumption and hence the inferences are indicative of the broad relation. To refine the technology and performance relationship, technology is taken in conjunction with other inputs: capital and labour. Now the modified performance function appears as follows:

$$\text{Performance} = f(\text{Capital, Labour, Technology})$$

For arriving at the coefficients, multiple regression model has been fitted to the panel data. The analysis has been carried at the banking group level only. Following is explicit form of regression model fitted.

$$Y_i = a + b_1X_1 + b_2X_2 + b_3X_3$$

Where Y_i is the performance of Bank Group i ; a is the constant intercept; X_1 is capital; X_2 is labour; X_3 is technology; and b_1 , b_2 and b_3 are regression coefficients of capital, labour and technology respectively.

The regression results are presented in table 4. Regression results are indicative of the fact that in case of nationalized banks group, performance is positively determined by labour and technology and negatively by the capital. But the regression coefficient for labour is significant at 1 percent level of significance and for other two variables, it is statistically insignificant. Coefficient of determination is 0.952 which show that model is statistically a sound model. Hence in case of nationalized banks labour out-performs the capital and technology.

TABLE 4: REGRESSION RESULTS FOR DIFFERENT BANKING GROUPS IN INDIA

Bank Group	a	B1 (S.E) (t-value)	B2 (S.E) (t-value)	B3 (S.E.) (t-value)	R2	F	N
Nationalized Banks	-0.0019	-0.0015 (0.044) (0.033)	0.744** (0.048) (15.634)	0.236 (0.048) (4.966)	0.952 (0.746)	140.213** (3, 139)	142

Note: Marking ** Indicates significant at 1 percent level of significance and NS, not significant

Overall, multivariate regression explains that out of three variables namely capital, labour and technology, capital impact is negative in case of nationalized banks. It indicates that these banks have gone for a highly capital intensive mode of production. However the performance has not grown to that extent at which the capital has accelerated. Labour is contributing significantly for all the banks. It is because of better human resource management practices in all banks which include performance based pay, flexible job design, improving employee's skill and institutional structure affecting the labour management relations. So far as technology is concerned, it is contributing positively to public sector banks. Overall it implies that every investment decision relating to technology must be evaluated in the light of its interaction with other inputs and its contribution to performance.

CONCLUSION AND POLICY IMPLICATION

The complex nature of this relationship has been stylized and modelled empirically. In general, this study does not show a clear link between IT investment and performance. Study confirms that contribution of technology to bank's performance has a differential behaviour. It contributes positively only to those banks where some preconditions conducive to performance are existing, e.g., trained manpower, size and scale of business. It shows that bank's performance is related not just to its technological stance but to other areas of competencies. Banks those give greater stress both to use of advance IT and human resource strategies, experience superior performance gains; whereas, in some other banks, higher IT investments are not associated with higher performance. The technology is a poor determinant in case of nationalized banks. This implies that every investment decision relating to technology must be evaluated in the light of its interaction with other inputs and its contribution to performance. Still, this relation is a sort of paradox which needs to be analyzed with larger data base. Above results are what may be called preliminary in nature for policy and planning issues, an exercise, fortified with a bigger data base is called for.

LIMITATIONS

1. Since financial performance data analysed is obtained from bank's annual reports published on the websites of commerce banks and central bank of India (RBI). In some cases, the two sources contained discrepancies.
2. There was non availability of some requisite data. Although plethora of information and data are available with the bank, most of the bankers even today are very conservative and are reluctant to part with the information treating it as confidential. This non response further narrowed the coverage of the study.
3. In addition to the parameters studied some other parameters may exist which may not have been included in the study.

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