Performance Analysis of Commercial Banks: A Case Study on Deposit Growth, Advances and NPA Management

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the performance of 10 public sector commercial banks in India, focusing on deposit growth, advances, and NPA management from FY 2019-20 to FY 2023-24. Using secondary data collected from bank annual reports, the RBI website, and relevant literature, the study employs the CAGR and Independent t-test (at a 95% confidence level) to analyze key trends. Data analysis was conducted using SPSS 21.0 for Windows. The findings reveal significant variations in deposit growth among the sample banks. Canara Bank demonstrated the highest deposit growth with a CAGR of 16%**,** while the Central Bank of India reported the lowest growth at 4%. Similarly, in terms of advances, Canara Bank achieved the highest CAGR of 17%, whereas the Bank of Maharashtra recorded the lowest at 3%**.** Correlation analysis indicated a moderate positive relationship (r = 0.448) between deposit and advance growth; however, this relationship was statistically insignificant **(**p-value = 0.194), suggesting that higher deposit growth does not necessarily lead to a proportional increase in advances. In NPA management, Bank of Maharashtra showed notable success in reducing NPAs, achieving a CAGR of -24% in the Priority Sector Lending (PSL) segment and -54% in the Non-Priority Sector Lending (NPSL) segment. Conversely, Canara Bank faced a 12.1% increase in PSL NPAs and achieved only a -15% reduction in NPSL NPAs, highlighting asset quality concerns. The Independent t-test confirmed that NPSL NPAs were significantly higher than PSL NPAs (p-value = 0.000**)**, indicating a greater risk in non-priority lending. The study recommends expanding branch networks in underserved rural areas to enhance financial inclusion and attract new customers. Additionally, banks should strengthen credit monitoring practices, maintain regular contact with borrowers, and implement proactive strategies to manage NPAs effectively. These insights can guide bank managers in improving asset quality, ensuring better financial stability, and enhancing overall performance.

KEYWORDS: Advances, Deposits, Gross NPA, Non Priority sector, Priority sector

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1. Introduction:

Banks play a vital role in the financial system by acting as intermediaries that channel funds from savers to borrowers, thereby facilitating economic growth. In India, banks are regulated by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), which classifies them into Scheduled Banks, including Scheduled Commercial Banks (SCBs) and Scheduled Cooperative Banks. Public Sector Banks form the backbone of the Indian financial system, contributing significantly to socio-economic development. By mobilizing savings and directing credit toward productive sectors, banks support economic stability and growth. However, managing assets effectively, particularly controlling Non-Performing Assets (NPAs), remains a major challenge. NPAs reduce a bank's income, increase operational costs, and limit credit availability, posing a serious threat to financial stability. As a result, effective NPA management is crucial to ensuring the sustained growth and profitability of the banking sector.

A bank is a financial institution and intermediary that accepts deposits and utilizes them for lending, either directly or through capital markets. Banks serve as a bridge between individuals or entities with surplus capital and those in need of funds. Reserve Bank of India, 2023, In India, all banks listed in the Second Schedule of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Act, 1934**,** is classified as Scheduled Banks, which include Scheduled Commercial Banks (SCBs) and Scheduled Cooperative Banks.

Public Sector Banks are the backbone of the Indian financial system, with the government holding a majority stake in these institutions. An effective banking system is crucial for economic development, as it mobilizes savings and directs them toward productive sectors. In addition to providing financial resources for growth, banks play a key role in influencing how these resources are allocated. Chakrabarty, 2012, an efficient banking system is essential for economic development, as it mobilizes savings and directs them toward productive sectors.

Narasimham Committee Report, 1991, Since independence, the Government of India has leveraged commercial banks, especially public sector banks to achieve socio-economic goals such as reducing income disparity and ensuring balanced regional development. Reserve Bank of India 2023), mandates that domestic banks allocate 40% of their Adjusted Net Bank Credit (ANBC) or Credit Equivalent of Off-Balance Sheet Exposure (CEOBE) whichever is higher towards priority sector lending to ensures that financially underserved sectors receive adequate institutional credit.

Effective management of assets, particularly loan portfolios, is critical for banks to minimize the incidence of Non-Performing Assets (NPAs)**.** The concept of NPAs was formally introduced in India following the implementation of prudential norms recommended by the Narasimham Committee (1992-93). As per RBI's guidelines, an asset is classified as non-performing if the borrower fails to pay interest or principal for more than 90 days.

The growing burden of Non-Performing Assets (NPAs) presents a significant challenge to the Indian banking sector. As NPAs fail to generate income, banks must allocate provisions which directly impact their profitability. Furthermore, NPAs contribute to higher administrative, legal, and recovery expenses. Since a portion of bank funds remains tied up in these non-performing assets, banks incur opportunity costs. To offset these financial setbacks, they often transfer the burden to other borrowers by increasing interest rates on advances. Effective NPA management is essential to safeguarding the stability and profitability of banks while ensuring the continued availability of affordable credit to support productive economic activities.

2. Review of Literature:

The issue of Non-Performing Assets (NPAs) has been a significant concern for the Indian banking sector, particularly in the context of priority sector lending (PSL). Over the years, researchers have analyzed various aspects of NPAs, including their causes, impact on profitability, and recovery mechanisms. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has introduced several reforms, such as revising the NPA classification norms from 180 days to 90 days, to enhance transparency and align with international best practices.

Arora & Ostwal, 1981, Non-Performing Assets (NPAs) refer to assets that cease to generate income for banks. To align with international best practices and enhance transparency, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) implemented a 90-day norm for classifying loans as NPAs, replacing the earlier 180-day norm, effective from March 31, 2004.

Nagarajan et al. (2013) analyzed the relationship between loan recovery and NPAs, identifying loan write-offs as a primary cause of rising NPAs. Their findings indicate that priority sector lending (PSL) experiences a higher incidence of bad loans compared to non-PSL loans, suggesting that targeted financial interventions are needed to enhance recovery mechanisms.

Selvarajan and Vadivalagan (2013) examined the management of NPAs in the Indian banking sector, specifically focusing on Indian Bank and Public Sector Banks (PSBs). Their study revealed that Indian Bank's priority sector lending outpaced the overall PSL growth of PSBs, but the bank struggled with NPA control particularly in the early years of the decade.

Mishra (2007) outlines how the 20-Point Economic Programme set a clear benchmark by directing banks to focus on sectors such as agriculture, small-scale industries, and rural development.

Gupta (2009) further emphasizes that the mandate was designed to embed socio-economic objectives within banking operations, thereby ensuring that credit reached areas that were traditionally overlooked by market-driven practices.

Sharma (2008) notes that the eligibility criteria for priority sector advances have expanded to include new areas, reflecting the dynamic nature of India's economic landscape.

Singh and Kumar (2010) argue that while this expansion has promoted inclusivity, it has also introduced challenges related to regulatory oversight and implementation consistency. The Annual Policy Statement by the Reserve Bank of India (2006) supports these observations by highlighting that modifications in eligibility criteria have been periodically introduced to accommodate shifts in developmental priorities.

Patel (2011) contends that the broader scope of priority sector lending has contributed positively to financial inclusion but also necessitates robust monitoring to prevent credit misallocation.

Singh and Kumar (2010), who stress the importance of balancing regulatory flexibility with stringent compliance measures to safeguard the effectiveness of the lending framework.

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) constituted an Internal Working Group chaired by Shri C.S. Murthy to assess the necessity of continuing priority sector lending (PSL) prescriptions, review existing PSL policies, and recommend potential changes. This group proposed that only sectors impacting large populations, weaker sections, and employment-intensive industries such as agriculture and small enterprises be included in the priority sector. These changes took effect on April 30, 2007 (Reserve Bank of India, 2007).

Pandya (2015) analyzed the impact of Priority Sector Advances on the profitability of Indian Scheduled Commercial Banks. The study examined variables such as Priority Sector Advances to Total Assets, Return on Assets, Return on Investment, Return on Equity, Ratio of Operating Profit to Total Assets, and Ratio of Interest Income to Total Assets. The findings indicate that Priority Sector Advances significantly influence the profitability of Scheduled Commercial Banks in India.

Uppal (2009) investigated the trends in PSL across different banking groups. Despite the rise in priority sector advances, Indian banks faced challenges such as low profitability, high non-performing assets (NPAs), and increased transaction costs. The study emphasized that addressing these issues is crucial for sustained growth in the Indian banking sector.

Studies by Roy (2006), Rao, Das, and Singh (2006), Uppal (2009), and Raman (2013) highlighted a structural shift in PSL patterns. While banks generally met their overall PSL targets, there was a noticeable preference to lend to sectors perceived as more profitable and less risky, such as housing, transport, and professional activities, rather than agriculture, small-scale industries (SSI), and weaker sections. The Planning Commission of India (2008) also observed this trend in its Eleventh Five-Year Plan document, noting a decline in PSL allocations to agriculture and SSI in favor of these alternative sectors.

3. Objectives:

1. To analyze the amount of deposits mobilized by public sector banks and the allocation of advances to the priority sector.
2. To evaluate the NPA recovery performance of priority sector advances in comparison to non-priority sector advances in commercial banks.

4. Methodology:

This study is based exclusively on secondary data collected from the Annual Reports and websites of the sample banks, the Reserve Bank of India’s website, and various journals, e-journals, and books. The sample comprises 10 public sector commercial banks. The study considers the following parameters:

1. Total Deposits from FY 2019-20 to FY 2023-24
2. Total Advances from FY 2019-20 to FY 2023-24
3. Gross NPAs to Total Advances for PSL and Non-PSL

For analysis, simple calculations involving the Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) in percentage terms are employed. Additionally, a hypothesis was formulated and tested at a 95% confidence level using the Independent t-test. Data analysis was conducted using SPSS 21.0 for Windows.

5. Formulation of Hypothesis:

A common perception exists among the general public and banking professionals that priority sector lending contributes to higher NPAs compared to non-priority sector lending. Accordingly, the alternative hypothesis (H1) for the study is stated as follows:

H1: There is a significant difference between the mean values of Gross NPAs to Total Advances in PSL and Non-PSL categories of banks.

6. Result and Discussion:

1. Total Deposits and Growth

A core function of banking organizations is to accept deposits and provide advances. This study examines the total deposits accepted by public sector commercial banks over the years and calculates the compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of these deposits. The following table presents the total deposits recorded from FY 2019-20 to FY 2023-24, along with their respective CAGR values.

Table 1: Total deposit during FY 2019-20 to FY 2023-24

Sl. No	Name of the Bank	Total Deposit					CAGR (%)
		219-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	
1.	Bank of Baroda	9,45,984.40	9,66,996.90	10,45,938.56	12,03,687.79	13,26,958	7
2.	Bank of India	5,20,86,23,485.00	9,66,996.93	10,45,938.56	6,69,58,57,713	7,37,92,02,058	7
3.	Bank of Maharashtra	1,50,066.40	1,74,005.62	2,02,294.29	2,34,082.68	2,70,747.17	13
4.	Canara Bank	625351 17 37	1010874 58 27	1086409 25 41	1179218 60 67	1312366 61 27	16
5.	Central Bank of India	3,13,76,31,641	3,29,97,29,496	3,42,69,19,375	3,59,29,64,686	3,85,01,13,226	4
6.	State Bank of india	32,41,621	36,81,277	40,51,534	44,23,778	49,16,077	9
7.	Indian Overseas Bank	222951 88 00	240288 29 56	262158 92 48	260883 29 05	285905 37 82	5
8.	Punjab National Bank	7038463206	1106332,47,28	1146218,44,96	1281163,10,45	1369712,80,55	14

9.	Canara Bank	625351 17 37	1086409 25 41	1179218 60 67	1179218 60 67	1312366 61 27	16
10.	UCO Bank	193203 44 35	2,05,919.39	2,24,072.90	249337 73 70	263129 77 27	6

(Source: Annual report)

The table reveals varying deposit growth rates among commercial banks over the period from 2019-20 to 2023-24. **Canara Bank** achieved the highest Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of **16%**, reflecting strong deposit mobilization efforts. In contrast, **Central Bank of India** recorded the lowest CAGR of **4%**, indicating slower deposit growth. Banks like **Bank of Maharashtra** (13%) and **Punjab National Bank** (14%) also demonstrated notable growth, while **Bank of Baroda** and **Bank of India** maintained moderate growth at **7%** each. The results suggest that banks with higher CAGRs effectively implemented growth strategies, whereas those with lower rates may need to enhance their efforts to attract deposits.

2. Total Advances and growth

Table 2: Total advances during FY 2019-20 to FY 2023-24

Sl. No	Name of the Bank	Total Advances					CAGR (%)
		219-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	
1.	Bank of Baroda	6,90,120.70	7,06,300.50	777155.18	940998.27	1065781.72	9
2.	Bank of India	3,41,00,59,443	7,06,300.51	7,77,155.18	4,85,89,96,352	5,63,14,46,654	11
3.	Bank of Maharashtra	57,740.85	68,111.64	68,589.97	68,866.95	68,274.12	3
4.	Canara Bank	432175 20 48	639048 98 61	703601 82 39	830672 55 24	931612 83 31	17
5.	Central Bank of India	1,51,10,08,778	1,56,57,86,472	1,68,17,35,000	2,02,98,43,065	2,43,40,62,841	10
6.	State Bank of india	23,25,290	24,49,498	27,33,967	31,99,269	37,03,971	10
7.	Indian Overseas Bank	121333 40 65	127720 65 26	144243 52 45	178052 57 37	213318 80 94	12
8.	Punjab National Bank	4718277227	674230,08,02	728185,67,53	830833,98,13	934430,59,24	15
9.	Canara Bank	432175 20 48	703601 82 39	830672 55 24	787922 43 39	880352 79 71	15
10.	UCO Bank	119573	1,18,404.81	1,29,777.34	186877.05	161629.45	6

(Source: Annual report)

The table highlights the growth of total advances among commercial banks from FY 2019-20 to FY 2023-24. **Canara Bank** achieved the highest Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of **17%**, indicating significant expansion in its lending activities. On the other hand, **Bank of Maharashtra** recorded the lowest CAGR of **3%**, reflecting minimal growth in its advances. Notably, **Punjab National Bank** and **Indian Overseas Bank** reported strong growth with

CAGRs of **15%** and **12%**, respectively, while **Bank of India** maintained a healthy growth rate of **11%**. The data suggests that banks with higher CAGRs effectively expanded their credit portfolios, while those with lower growth rates may require strategic efforts to improve lending performance.

3. Correlation between Total Deposits and Total Advances

An increase in total deposits enables banks to extend more credit to various sectors of the economy. To examine whether there is a statistically significant relationship between the growth of Total Deposits and Total Advances of commercial banks, a correlation test was conducted. The results of the test are presented in the table below.

Table 3: Correlation between Total Deposits and Total Advances

Correlations

		Deposit	Advances
Deposit	Pearson Correlation	1	.448
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.194
	N	10	10
Advances	Pearson Correlation	.448	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.194	
	N	10	10

(Source: SPSS output)

The Pearson Correlation Test indicates a **positive correlation** between the growth in total deposits and total advances of commercial banks. With a correlation coefficient (**r**) of **0.448**, the relationship is **moderate**. However, the correlation is found to be **not statistically significant** as the **p-value** is **0.194**, which is greater than the significance level (**α = 0.05**). This suggests that while there is a positive association, it is not strong enough to confirm a significant relationship between the two variables.

4. NPA in case of PSL and non-PSL

Table 4: Gross NPA to Total Advances in case of PSL

Sl. No	Name of the Bank	**Gross NPA to Total Advances in case of PSL**					CA GR (%)
		219-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	
1.	Bank of Baroda	7.79	9.57	8.51	6.73	5.86	-5.5
2.	Bank of India	9.27	8.6	8.51	11.88	10.83	3.2
3.	Bank of Maharashtra	16.73	12.64	8.03	5.56	4.25	-24.0
4.	Canara Bank	6.46	8.96	7.54	5.44	506.00%	-4.8

5.	Central Bank of India	14.57	14.07	13.28	9.77	5.78	-16.9
6.	State Bank of india		9.37	7.66	5.7	5.15	-11.3
7.	Indian Overseas Bank	9.21	9.46	8.45	7.84	4.59	5.4
8.	Punjab National Bank	16.96	18.76	19.95	19.28	14.61	5.1
9.	Canara Bank	6.46	7.54	5.44	5.44	5.06	12.1
10.	UCO Bank	19.56	13.51	12.25	9.1	8.09	2.1

(Source: Annual report)

The table illustrates the trend in Gross NPA to Total Advances in case of PSL from FY 2019-20 to FY 2023-24. **Bank of Maharashtra** recorded the most significant improvement, with a CAGR of **-24%**, indicating a substantial reduction in NPAs. **Central Bank of India** also showed notable progress with a CAGR of **-16.9%**, reflecting improved asset quality. Conversely, **Canara Bank** reported the highest increase in NPAs with a CAGR of **12.1%**, suggesting a rise in stressed assets. **Punjab National Bank** and **Indian Overseas Bank** also experienced NPA growth with CAGRs of **5.1%** and **5.4%**, respectively. Overall, banks with negative CAGR values successfully reduced their NPAs, while those with positive values may need to strengthen their recovery strategies.

Table 5: Gross NPA to Total Advances in case of NPSL

Sl. No	Name of the Bank	Gross NPA to Total Advances in case of NPSL					CAGR (%)
		219-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	
1.	Bank of Baroda	9.27	8.60 2	5.8	2.62	1.79	-28
2.	Bank of India	10.21	7.92	4.66	5.23	2.36	-25
3.	Bank of Maharashtra	10.08	2.68	1.12	0.54	0.21	-54
4.	Canara Bank	10.21	8.9	7.48	5.28	3.57	-19
5.	Central Bank of India	22.69	19.02	16.42	7.24	3.38	-32
6.	State Bank of india		3.62	2.77	1.95	1.41	-17
7.	Indian Overseas Bank	20.4	11.81	11.36	7.1	1.82	-38
8.	Punjab National Bank	13	11.46	7.6	4.13	1.96	-32
9.	Canara Bank	8.21	7.48	5.28	5.28	3.57	-15
10.	UCO Bank	15.41	6.32	4.56	1.95	0.44	-51

(Source: Annual report)

The table reflects the trend in Gross NPA to Total Advances in case of NPSL from FY 2019-20 to FY 2023-24. **Bank of Maharashtra** achieved the most significant improvement, with a remarkable CAGR of **-54%**, indicating a substantial reduction in NPAs. **UCO Bank** also showed notable progress with a CAGR of **-51%**, followed by **Bank of Baroda** (-28%) and **Bank of India** (-25%), reflecting effective NPA management. Conversely, **Canara Bank** reported the smallest reduction with a CAGR of **-15%**, suggesting slower improvement in asset quality. Overall, the data highlights significant progress in NPA reduction across most banks, with **Bank of Maharashtra** showing the most outstanding performance.

5. Result of Independent Samples t- test:

an Independent t-test was conducted to examine whether the mean Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of Gross NPAs to Total Advances in the case of PSL and non-PSL are the same or not. The results of the Independent t-test are presented in the table below.

Table 6: Result of Independent Samples Test

Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
VAR00001	Equal variances assumed	2.497	.131	4.428	18	.000	11.19418	2.52829	5.88244	16.50592
	Equal variances not assumed			4.428	15.052	.000	11.19418	2.52829	5.80689	16.58147

(Source: SPSS output)

The mean value of Gross NPAs to Total Advances in the case of NPSL was found to be higher than that of PSL. To determine whether this difference is statistically significant, an Independent t-test was conducted. The results indicate that the mean difference between the two groups is statistically significant. This conclusion is based on the **p-value of 0.000**, which is lower than the significance level (**α = 0.05**). Consequently, the alternative hypothesis (**H1**) is accepted, confirming that there is a significant difference between the mean values of Gross NPAs to Total Advances in the case of PSL and NPSL among the banks.

6. Findings of the Study:

1. **Deposit Growth:** Canara Bank exhibited the highest deposit growth with a CAGR of 16%, reflecting strong efforts in mobilizing deposits. Conversely, Central Bank of India recorded the lowest growth at 4%, indicating limited progress in attracting deposits.
2. **Advances Growth:** Canara Bank achieved the highest CAGR of 17% in total advances, suggesting significant expansion in its lending activities. In contrast, Bank of Maharashtra reported the lowest growth at 3%, reflecting minimal growth in its credit portfolio.
3. **Correlation between Deposits and Advances:** The correlation analysis showed a moderate positive relationship (r = 0.448) between deposit and advance growth. However, the relationship was not statistically significant (p-value = 0.194), indicating that higher deposit growth did not necessarily lead to proportional growth in advances.
4. **NPA Trends in PSL:** Bank of Maharashtra achieved the most significant improvement in asset quality with a CAGR of -24%, reflecting effective NPA reduction strategies. On the other hand, Canara Bank recorded a 12.1% increase in NPAs, indicating rising asset quality concerns in its PSL segment.
5. **NPA Trends in NPSL:** Bank of Maharashtra achieved the highest reduction in NPAs with a CAGR of -54%, reflecting substantial improvement in asset quality. Canara Bank, however, recorded the smallest reduction at -15%, suggesting slower progress in NPA management in the NPSL segment.
6. **Comparison of NPAs in PSL and NPSL:** The mean value of Gross NPAs to Total Advances was found to be higher in NPSL than in PSL. The Independent t-test confirmed this difference as statistically significant (p-value = 0.000), indicating a greater NPA burden in NPSL among the banks.

7. Managerial Implication:

Banks should focus on expanding their branch network in rural areas where banking facilities are limited. By doing so, they can cater to underserved populations, ensuring better financial inclusion while creating opportunities to attract new customers. The insights from this report can guide bank administrators in identifying areas of poor performance, particularly in NPA management. Understanding their tolerance levels for NPAs and recognizing segments where performance falls below expectations will enable banks to implement strategic decisions to improve asset quality.

To strengthen credit management, banks should conduct regular reviews of all loan accounts at periodic intervals. Timely renewal of loans, wherever required, along with maintaining frequent contact with borrowers, will allow managers to assess their financial standing and take proactive steps to mitigate risks. Moreover, bank managers must stay informed about changing market conditions. Enhancing their knowledge through resources such as newspapers, media, and online platforms will enable them to make well-informed decisions.

8. Conclusion:

Conclusively, significant differences have been seen in the performance of commercial banks concerning deposit growth, advances, and NPA management. While some banks demonstrated notable progress in mobilizing deposits and expanding their credit portfolios, others experienced slower growth, indicating the need for improved strategies to attract funds and enhance lending activities. In terms of asset quality, certain banks effectively reduced their NPAs through improved recovery strategies, while others faced rising NPAs or slower progress in managing stressed assets. The analysis also highlighted that NPA levels were significantly higher in non-priority sector lending compared to the priority sector, indicating greater credit risk in that segment. Non-performing assets (NPAs) pose an additional challenge, as they do not generate income yet require significant provisioning, leading to a considerable decline in bank profits. Consequently, while it is vital for banks to extend credit to the priority sector to support socio-economic growth, such lending must be done judiciously. Advancing credit to unreliable borrowers may result in bad loans, further impacting the bank's financial stability. Thus, striking a balance between meeting PSL targets and ensuring prudent lending practices is essential for sustaining both social and economic development.

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