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STRIDES – A STUDENTS' JOURNAL OF SHRI RAM COLLEGE OF COMMERCE
ISSN 2581-4931 (PRINT)

Shri Ram College of Commerce is well known for its academic excellence and dedicated approach towards dissemination of knowledge in the academic world. The college appreciates the role of research in education and is committed to developing an inclination towards research in both faculty and students. In this pursuit, the college has taken the initiative to launch a new Journal named 'Strides – A Students' Journal of Shri Ram College of Commerce'.

ABOUT THE JOURNAL

It is a double blind reviewed bi-annual Journal launched exclusively to encourage students to pursue research on the contemporary topics and issues in the area of commerce, economics, management, governance, polices etc. The journal provides an opportunity to the students and faculty of Shri Ram College of Commerce to publish their academic research work.

PUBLICATION POLICY

Shri Ram College of Commerce is committed to upholding the high academic standards. Therefore, the Committee On Publication Ethics (COPE) follows a 3-Stage Selection Process while approving a paper for publication in this Journal. The policy is as follows:

Stage-1. Screening of Plagiarism

To maintain high academic standards, academic ethics and academic integrity each research paper received by COPE (Committee On Publication Ethics) is sent for screening of plagiarism on "Turnitin". The committee adheres to the maximum tolerance limit of 25%.

After screening for plagiarism, research papers are sent to the *Referees* (Subject Experts) for double blind review.

Stage-2. Double Blind Review

The journal adheres to a rigorous double-blind review policy. Each research paper received by COPE is sent for review to the *Referee* (Subject Expert). The reports submitted by the *Referees* are sent to the respective students for improvement (if any, suggested by the *Referees*). After reporting all the suggestions recommended by the *Referees*, the revised and improved version of the papers are re-submitted by the students to the COPE.

If a research paper is rejected by the *Referee*, no further proceedings are taken into account. Once rejected by the expert means cannot be published at all.

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The following guidelines are to be carefully adhered by the students before final submission of the manuscript. The submitted manuscripts not conforming to the following guidelines are not taken into consideration for any further processing.

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Format of the article on the front page should be:

a) Title
b) Name(s) of the student(s) and mentor along with their details
c) Abstract
d) Keywords

Abstract

The abstract should capture the essence of the article and entice the reader. It should typically be of 100 -150 words, and in Italics.

Font type and word limit

The research paper is to be typed on A-4 size paper with single line spacing. The complete length of the paper should not exceed 5000 words including endnotes and references. The font size should be 12 and font style should be Times New Roman.

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The Journal adheres to the APA (American Psychological Association) Referencing Style, Sixth Edition. Students must refer to the APA Referencing Guidelines to ensure conformance to this reference style. For further information you may visit the following link - http://www.apastyle.org

Endnotes

Endnotes should be serially arranged at the end of the article well before the references and after conclusion.

Table, Figures, Graphs

The first letter of the caption for table, figure, graph, diagram, picture etc. should be in capital letter and the other words should be in small letter - e.g. Table-1: Demographic Data of Delhi, Figure-1: Pictorial Presentation of Population etc.

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Declaration

As part of the submission process, the student and mentor needs to declare that they are submitting original work for the first publication in the Journal and that their work is not being considered for publication elsewhere and has not already been published elsewhere. Again, the paper should not have been presented in any seminar or conference. The scanned copy of duly signed declaration by the students and their respective mentors has to be emailed along with the research paper.

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The student(s) remain the whole and sole author of their respective research papers published in 'Strides – A Students' Journal of Shri Ram College of Commerce' and hold its copyright. Also, the 'author' is wholly and solely responsible for plagiarism caught after publication (if any). The Editor, Referees, Mentors, COPE, SRCC, Printer, Publisher and Printing Press shall not be responsible for any plagiarism.

AWARD

The authors of best three papers from every Issue are awarded – First Prize, Second Prize and Third Prize on the SRCC Annual Day.

Principal's Message

The mission statement of the college signifying the existence and its road map to the achievement of its vision, reads as:

"To achieve and sustain excellence in teaching and research, enrich local, national and international communities through our research, improve skills of alumni, and to publish academic and educational resources"

To achieve and promote excellence in publications and applied research, the college has taken the initiative to launch a new journal exclusively to publish students' research papers and articles. It will be an add-on to the enriched catalogue of college publications and academic literature.

The Journal has provided an opportunity to the students of our college to focus on research. Since the students were not opened to the research methodologies at the undergraduate level, they were mentored by experienced faculty of our college. Simultaneously, their articles were also reviewed by the referees and tested for plagiarism before publication. After reporting all the suggestions recommended by the referees, the articles were revised and then finally published. The college had successfully released the foundation issue of the Journal **"Strides - A Students' Journal of Shri Ram College of Commerce, Volume 1, Issue 1, 2016-17"** on the occasion of 91st Annual Day of the College held on 13th April, 2017. The Journal was released by **Shri Prakash Javadekar, Honb'le Union Minister of Human Resource Development, Government of India.**

I would like to congratulate the students whose papers are published in this issue of the journal and simultaneously encourage all the students to contribute their research papers and articles for the successive issues of the Journal.

Best wishes for their future endeavors.

Prof. Simrit Kaur
Principal

Editor's Message

Shri Ram College of Commerce is well known for its academic excellence and dedicated approach towards dissemination of knowledge in the academic world. The college appreciates the role of research in education and is committed to developing an inclination towards research in both faculty and students. In this pursuit, the college has taken the initiative to launch a new Journal named 'Strides - A Students' Journal of Shri Ram College of Commerce' to encourage students to pursue research under the guidance of the faculty of Shri Ram College of Commerce.

It is a bi-annual Journal launched exclusively to publish academic research papers and articles by the students on contemporary topics and issues in the area of commerce, economics, management, governance, policies etc.

In order to maintain the high standards of publication, COPE (Committee On Publication Ethics) has been constituted. The COPE shall be the apex authority to take all the decisions related to the publication of research papers and articles in Strides. The decision of COPE shall be final and binding.

To maintain the high academic standards, academic ethics and academic integrity, a rigorous process of double blind review of research papers is followed along with screening of plagiarism of each manuscript received by the COPE

for publication. The research work published in Strides is original and not published or presented at any other public forum.

The foundation issue of the Journal **"Strides - A Students' Journal of Shri Ram College of Commerce, Volume 1, Issue 1, 2016-17"** was successfully released on 91st Annual Day of SRCC held on 13th April, 2017 by **Shri Prakash Javadekar, Honb'le Union Minister of Human Resource Development, Government of India.**

The successive Issues of 'Strides - A Students' Journal of Shri Ram College of Commerce' shall be bi-annually released.

I congratulate all the students whose research papers are published in this Issue of Strides and express my sincere thanks to their mentors and referees.

Dr. Santosh Kumari
Editor

STRIDES - A STUDENTS' JOURNAL OF SHRI RAM COLLEGE OF COMMERCE

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RESEARCH PAPERS

Analyzing Challenges of the Recent Bank Mergers

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ABSTRACT

The health of the banking system is a crucial component of the country's economy. Banks are vital institutions, which contribute to the economic growth and economic development of a nation and allows it to achieve self-sufficiency in a world of changing possibilities. The essential role played by the banks makes it necessary for the authorities to ensure that they are not vulnerable to collapse, as the downfall of the banking system in a country can trigger a financial crisis. Given how the banking system plays a crucial role in capital infusion, a financial predicament in this age of globalization will have a cascading effect on the economies of several nations and have devastating effects on the long-term growth prospects of the world. This paper seeks to highlight the challenges posed by these mergers and acquisitions in the Indian banking sector and how it will shape the future of the Indian banking system. We have built our hypothesis by extensively studying the existing literature. We concluded that these challenges are very significant and need to be strategically addressed, with operational efficiency and financial performance at the core, to bear the fruits of mergers.

KEYWORDS

Merger and Acquisitions; Core Banking System; Too Big to fail; Organizational Culture

INTRODUCTION

Banks are the pillars responsible for making the present world what it is today. They are the avenues, which facilitate investment and stimulate economic activity by mobilizing the savings of the public and channelizing funds to borrowers with promising investment propositions and needs. Keeping this view in mind, the world economies have undertaken several measures to ensure that the banks are strong and can cater to the needs of the ever-changing business environment.

In the Indian Banking system, there have been rapid changes like the entry of new foreign banks with substantial financial resources, new technological innovations to smoothen the banking operations, the introduction of complex financial products and the changing customer behavior, who are demanding a wide range of products at lower prices with excellent service quality. The increasing competition has reduced the profit margins of the banks considerably and many are struggling to achieve profitability in this dynamic environment. They are looking for new ways to increase their market share and enhance their profitability. One of these ways is Mergers & Acquisitions.

Mergers & Acquisitions is one of the most prevalent methods used by firms to increase their market share by creating synergy and economies of scale. A merger implies a combination of two or more firms into a single entity, while Acquisition indicates one firm taking over another. The word merger can be abbreviated as - M - Mixing, E -Entities, R - Resources for, G - Growth, E - Enrichment and R – Renovation (Vision 2020: Mergers and Acquisition of Indian Banking, Banking Reforms and Globalization, 2007). Mergers & Acquisitions is considered to be one of the very few methods which can strengthen market share and allow a firm to tap into new markets within a very short period of time.

Mergers & Acquisitions in the Indian banking industry started with the formation of the Imperial Bank of India by merging Bank of Bengal, Bank of Bombay and Bank of Madras (which were known as Presidency Banks). The Imperial Bank was nationalized and renamed as State Bank of India (SBI), established under the State Bank of India Act, 1955. In the early 1960s, many banks failed as they had a low capital base and the public lost confidence in the Indian banking system. To avoid a "run on the banks", many unsuccessful private banks were merged with successful public sector banks. The nationalization of 14 large commercial banks in 1968 and 6 more commercial banks in 1980, caused nearly 91% of the banking sector to be under the Indian Government's direct control. Since then, there have been many mergers & acquisitions in the Indian Banking sector.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The importance of HR in mergers has been aptly explained by Schraeder and Self (2003), who said: "HR can make or break the M&As." After reviewing the past organizational problems usually result in unsuccessful mergers. This fact has been supported by Jayadev (2007), who revealed that 90% of the banks involved in the mergers of the Indian banking system thought that HR problems were the most challenging issue to solve in a merger.

Narayanswamy (2017) opined that the acquiring firm always needed to check the financial performance of the target firm as merger affects the financial position and wealth of all stakeholders. He also highlighted that the merged entity might have poor financial performance.

Srivassan (2009) had also said that though mergers increased the firm size, it may not maximize profitability. Krati (2018) stated that the success of mergers depends mainly on how well the cultural differences are assessed and integrated. The analysis by Jayadev (2007) of the mergers in the Indian banking system revealed that nearly 90% of the banks stated that HR problems were the most complex organizational issue in case of mergers.

The importance of HR in mergers has been aptly explained by Schraeder and Self (2003), who said: "HR can make or break the M&As". After reviewing the past organizational problems usually result in unsuccessful mergers. This fact has been supported by Jayadev (2007) who revealed that 90% of the banks involved in the mergers of Indian banking system thought that HR problems were the most difficult issue to solve in a merger.

OBJECTIVES

The main objective of this paper is to study the recent bank mergers in India and analyze the expected challenges due to these mergers. We have attempted to examine these obstacles through the eyes of various stakeholders like the management, employees, public and customers. This has helped us understand the importance of settling these issues, which can hinder the entire exercise redundant if not resolved with caution.

RECENT BANK MERGERS IN THE INDIAN BANKING SYSTEM

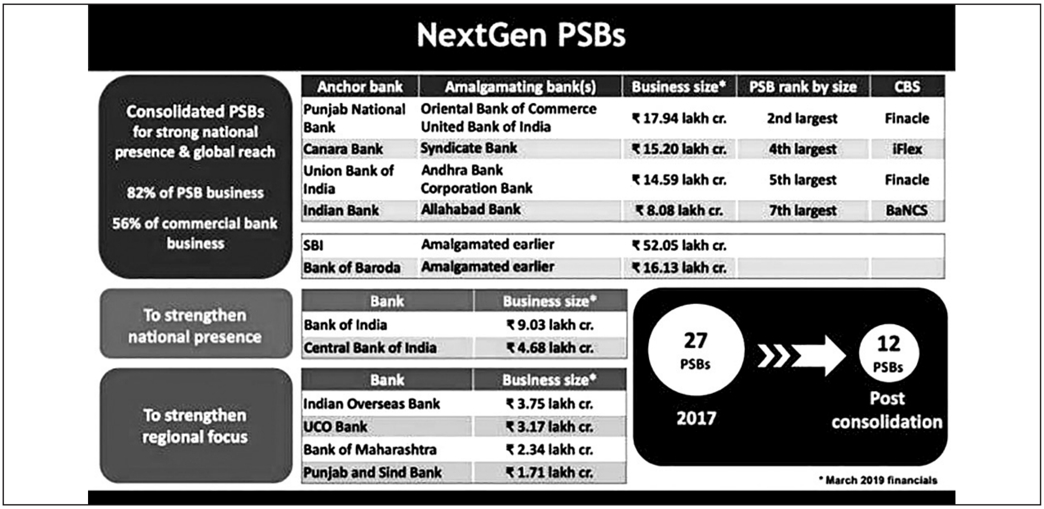
The increasing complexity of banking operations and the introduction of financial innovations have made banking a very complex industry. The importance of Mergers & Acquisitions in such a complex industry cannot be undermined. In late August, the Finance Minister of India, Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman had announced the merger of 10 Public Sector Banks into four large Public Sector Banks. Considering the recent merger of Bank of Baroda, Dena Bank and Vijaya Bank, these proposed mergers will bring down the total number of Public Sector Banks in our country from 18 banks to 12 banks. These mergers had been proposed by the Finance Minister, keeping in view the benefits of big banks.

The mergers announced by our Finance minister will help to integrate the resources of banks into a single entity and tackle obstacles like inadequate capital, lack of funds to update the latest technological developments leading to outdated technology, cutthroat competition causing reduced profitability margins, etc. These proposed mergers may provide them with the much-desired push to establish themselves as profitable and viable financial institutions with an international presence.

The credit lending ability of the banks will increase manifold due to the safety cushion provided by the combined capital of all the merging banks. These mergers also tend to contribute to risk diversification as the risks relating to the geographical and commercial aspects can be reduced. For example, if one of the banks has a strong presence in Northern India and other has a strong foothold in South India, the merged bank will be benefitted as if South India witnesses a slowdown, the overall operations of the bank will not be hit very hard due to its strong presence in North India. Similarly, one of the merging banks may specialize in dealing with big corporate customers, while one may have a larger share in the MSME loan segment. So, the merged entity will have the expertise to deal with various loan segments. Bigger banks also have a better chance of raising funds from the capital market as the size of the bank provides the investors with the required confidence to buy securities of the merged bank.

INDIAN BANKING INDUSTRY AFTER THE BANK MERGERS

Figure 1: Pictorial Presentation of Indian Banking Industry after the bank mergers



(Source – The Department of Financial Services) COMPARISON OF BANKS

COMPARISON OF BANKS

The decision by the Finance Minister of India, Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman is considered to be the most significant decision in recent times involving the Indian banking sector as it seeks to change the Indian banking ecosystem by merging ten public sector banks into 4 "global-sized banks." This can be a game-changer for the financial sector & will bring a strong national presence and global reach of these banks. But the execution & smooth transition of bank consolidation will be a huge challenge. We try to understand the impact of this move by comparing various aspects of the banks merged before the merger and understand the implication of the mergers.

Table 1: Deposits of Banks which were merged and SBI

	Deposits		(Rs. Cr.)
Banks	As on 31 Mar 2019	As on 31 Mar 2018	As on 31 Mar 2017
State Bank of India	29,11,386	27,06,343	20,44,751
Punjab National Bank	6,76,030	6,42,226	6,21,704
Oriental Bank of Commerce	2,32,645	2,07,346	2,19,339

Union Bank of India	4,15,915	4,08,502	3,75,899
Canara Bank	5,99,033	5,24,772	4,95,275
Syndicate Bank	2,59,897	2,72,776	2,60,561
Allahabad Bank	2,14,334	2,13,604	2,01,870
Indian Bank	2,42,076	2,08,294	1,82,509

Table 2: Employees of Banks which were merged and SBI

Staff Cost As % of Total Operating Cost			
Banks	For FY ending 31 Mar 2019	For FY ending 31 Mar 2018	For FY ending 31 Mar 2017
State Bank of India	58.91%	55.35%	57.00%
Punjab National Bank	60.35%	67.87%	57.79%
Oriental Bank of Commerce	54.33%	48.93%	59.90%
Union Bank of India	43.96%	48.19%	53.34%
Canara Bank	54.24%	56.96%	57.74%
Syndicate Bank	67.24%	65.61%	68.98%
Allahabad Bank	56.93%	54.13%	56.24%
Indian Bank	55.29%	57.25%	59.33%

Table 3: Branches of Banks which were merged and SBI

No. of Branches			
Banks	As on 31 Mar 2019	As on 31 Mar 2018	As on 31 Mar 2017
State Bank of India	22,218	22,620	17,365
Punjab National Bank	6,991	6,987	6,938
Oriental Bank of Commerce	2,390	2,389	2,376
Union Bank of India	4,292	4,301	4,282
Canara Bank	6,310	6,204	6,083
Syndicate Bank	4,032	4,012	3,933
Allahabad Bank	3,230	3,245	3,245
Indian Bank	2,875	2,823	2,682

Table 4: Assets of Banks which were merged and SBI

	Total Assets		(Rs.Cr.)
Banks	As on 31 Mar 2019	As on 31 Mar 2018	As on 31 Mar 2017
State Bank of India	36,80,914	34,54,752	27,05,966
Punjab National Bank	7,74,949	7,65,830	7,20,331
Oriental Bank of Commerce	2,71,910	2,33,344	2,53,065
Union Bank of India	4,94,039	4,87,406	4,52,704
Canara Bank	6,94,767	6,16,886	5,83,519
Syndicate Bank	3,11,279	3,23,977	2,99,073
Allahabad Bank	2,48,576	2,52,714	2,37,038
Indian Bank	2,80,065	2,52,716	2,18,233

(Source – Various Balance Sheets and Annual Reports of Banks)

If we have a careful look at the above figures, we observe that by merging these banks, the anchor banks involved in the mergers will almost double their assets, employees and deposits by merging with the amalgamating banks. This will give them the necessary strength to increase their operations and profits.

CHALLENGES INVOLVED IN THE BANK MERGERS

There are many challenges involved in the merger & acquisition process of banks. We have identified some of the most common issues that arise during mergers in the Indian banking sector by examining the previous bank mergers. They are given below -

- **Technology**

  The primary criteria to determine which of the banks to merge was the core banking system (CBS). This was due to the fact that the change in the core banking system is a costly and time-consuming process. However, even after adjusting for this, the merger may pose many problems in the technology front. There are many problems involving the integration of accounts and the adoption of new technology integration. It may affect the implementation of government schemes and the direct benefit transfer

(DBT). It is expected that the banks will take 2-3 years to integrate their technology involving websites and mobile phone applications completely.

- **High Non-Performing Assets (NPAs)**

  It is to be noted that though after the mergers the level of Non-Performing Assets (NPAs) may come down as a percentage of total assets, there is no change in the behaviour of the bankers who lent the loans which later turned to NPAs. In other words, it is similar to the popular idiom "You can't teach an old dog new tricks". Also, NPAs tend to increase in the immediate months following the bank merger due to the fact that the lack of follow up, one of the most crucial components for recovery of loans is not done as the merger disrupts the normal loan recovery process.

- **HR**

  Björkman and Søderberg (2006) studied mergers & acquisitions in the financial services companies of Nordic countries extensively and put forth a hypothesis that the main human resource-related issues affecting the management of the merged entity which can seriously undermine the success or gains of a merger are conflicts in organizational culture, improper communication, employee compensation, lay-offs, loss of loyal clients and improper due diligence. The HR department was not consulted by the management in the decision-making process and they were not expected to play a crucial role in the merger & acquisition process after the merger had concluded. Shook and Roth (2011) also supports the above study. They said that the HR department is not usually involved when decisions are taken with regard to lay-offs, mergers & acquisitions. They stated that the importance of HR in the success of a merger makes it necessary for the HR managers to have a proactive role during the merger & acquisition process to make sure that the HR-related aspects are also in line with the desired outcomes of the merger & acquisition process.

  Bhaskar (2009) had evaluated the role of Human Resources in the merger & Acquisition process of banks. He inferred that mergers would be successful if the Human resources are part of the process from the beginning and not after the merger had already concluded. He pointed out that employee compensation was one of the most complex problems before a bank merger, while organizational culture and organizational values are considered to be the most difficult problem after the merger.

Salame (2006) opined that downplaying the Human Resources issues caused unsuccessful mergers and that top management should invite the Human Resource department in the Merger & Acquisition process. Weber and Tarba (2012) analyzed cross-cultural management during all stages of M&A. They concluded that the high rate of M&A failures despite the increased activity of M&A might be due to the lack of harmonized activities during all stages of the mergers. In fact, a study done after the SBI's merger with its associates revealed that employees felt some unease relating to HR issues like different working styles, favoritism, behavioral issues with other employees, etc. This displeasure can be attributed to the fact that there was no significant role in HR departments at the inception of the merger & acquisition design.

- **Organizational culture**

  Any such large scale of integration does entail some short-term challenges such as managing cultural differences. In the context of mergers and acquisitions, the 'integration' perspective has been particularly dominant because these two coherent organizations have separate cultures.

  According to Rajan (2007), Organizations that do not consider the organizational cultural differences face many problems and the organization may not reap the benefits of a merger. Mohibullah (2009) had evaluated how organizational culture affects the merged entity. He found out the main reasons for a merger to be unsuccessful due to cultural conflicts are uncertainty/ ambiguity and cultural problems in the merged entity, no proper cultural integration due to faulty management and defective acculturation process. He thought that the organizations should have a mechanism to develop the communication channel from the top level of management to the bottom level of management for removing all the uncertainties regarding the integration process before the process of integration itself. However, Schein (1990) found out that this is not the case and in most of the mergers & acquisitions, the differences in organizational culture are not realized or acted upon until the merger has concluded. This leads to "cultural indigestion and the eventual divesture of units that cannot become culturally integrated."

- **Communication**

  Schweiger and DeNisi (1991) had put forth an idea which stated that the actual changes brought about by the merger is not the real reason for the stress in employees, rather it is the uncertainty which creates stress for the employees. This can be properly managed by communication in the merger process. Bhaskar (2009) highlighted the fact that banks may lose old customers and are unable to attract new customers as the merged entity is primarily focussed on gains in efficiency and downplayed the importance of employee communication. He posited that proactive communication and changes in organizational structure would lead to successful mergers. Appelbaum, Gandell, Yortis, Proper & Jobin (2000) had said that communication is necessary to ensure a smooth transition during the entire process of mergers & acquisitions. They opined that the communication process should provide clear and consistent facts or information to ensure that the employees are able to cope with the changes and the productivity of employees increases. The productivity gains will result in better financial performance and achieve the desired benefits of synergy and economies of scale.

- **Lay off, Morale & VRS**

The bank mergers can cause the closure of branches for "branch rationalization." This is done to avoid duplication of work as if there are two branches in the same locality, one of them should be closed. This may cause the management to feel that some of the employees are a "burden," and they should be removed from the job, i.e., downsizing. In India, the Voluntary Retirement Scheme (VRS) is usually provided to employees fulfilling a certain criterion in the case of bank mergers. VRS is a scheme allowing employees fulfilling a certain criterion to leave the organization while retaining some/ all of the benefits associated with superannuation. This method is prevalent in India since the law is against the direct layoff of unionized employees. The main reasons for VRS during bank mergers are dissatisfaction and uncertainty/ apprehension regarding future work environment.

Tiwari (2011) said that there might be closures of the branches, which can trigger downsizing. Park & Krishnan (2002) had reported mergers and acquisitions would fail if there is downsizing without carefully analysing the capacities and skills of employees. They said that the employees could be a source of competitive advantage and the lay-offs should be minimized to utilize the skills of the employees. Bowman and Singh (1993) had supported this by stating that firms should carefully evaluate the resources of each entity involved in the merger before any downsizing.

Thus, downsizing may lead to the loss of talented and skilled employees.

It is important to note that layoffs may even affect the remaining employees in the organization. Armstrong-Stassen M. (1998) had found that downsizing leads to less job satisfaction, less job involvement in the remaining employees of the organization and they were most likely to quit. This leads us to believe that morale is also affected when downsizing takes place in an organization.

"No employee of the associate banks would be asked to leave and branches will also not be eliminated after the merger." – Former SBI chairperson Arundhati Bhattacharya (During the SBI merger with its associates)

SBI had 17170 branches on 31st March 2017 (before the merger) and 6950 branches of its associates and Bhartiya Mahila Bank were added post the merger. However, SBI had a total of 22414 branches as on 31st March 2018 implying that nearly 1706 branches were closed due to the merger. SBI had offered VRS to 12500 employees of the associate banks who had completed 25 years of service. It was found that 4000 employees had opted for VRS and were discharged after the merger. It was also found that SBI had downsized nearly 10,584 employees within six months of the merger.

- **Customer satisfaction**

  George & Hegde (2004) had reported that employee motivation, attitude and satisfaction are important for customer satisfaction. If the employee himself is not happy, he may not serve the customer to the best of his ability. This has been supported by Schneider and Bowen (1985) who established a relationship between customers' attitudes about service and employees' perception of the human resource practices of the organization. Tiwari (2011) stated that the banks would increasingly focus on making more and more profits and they may not respond to the grievances of the clients. He also said that the work of the employees would become complicated and the employees who are burdened by heavy workload may not effectively respond to the customer. A study by Deloitte Centre for Banking Solutions revealed that customers mostly shifted to different banks after the merger within one month and the most common reasons for such a shift were emotional factors and competitive offers by other banks.

- **Too big to fail**

  It has been generally agreed by some economists and government authorities that there should be restrictions on the size of a bank to avoid the problem of "too big to fail bank." Too big to fail banks are those banks that are so large that their collapse may cause a financial crisis not only in the domestic economy but also in the global economy. This is due to the fact that the scope of operations of such banks is so great that if they fail, they can bring down the entire global financial system. Today, this risk has increased due to the close connectivity among world economies. Wheelock (2012) stated that if a large bank fails, it can cause substantial loss to other organizations and affect the working of the financial system. So, the government usually initiate action even before such a breakdown of too big to fail banks takes place. This can be explained by the widely known case of Lehman Brothers, an investment bank during the Global Financial Crisis of 2008. After it filed for bankruptcy, the stock market crashed and the stability required for overnight lending to keep businesses afloat was seriously affected. The entire world was affected by this.

CONCLUSION

In a fast-growing sector like banking, Mergers & Acquisitions is an invaluable tool, which, if used strategically after considering all the implications, will propel growth and prosperity not only in the domestic economy but also the global economy at large. Mergers should be designed in such a manner that the operational efficiency and financial performance improves. As presented above, these bank mergers can also cause some severe problems in implementation. To be able to completely reap the benefits of the mergers, all the stakeholders like the customers, employees, management should be satisfied. Other aspects like technology should be carefully considered before such mergers.

Unless the Government takes necessary steps to overcome the challenges posed by these mergers in an amicable manner, after taking inputs from all its stakeholders, these bank mergers cannot put India back on its former growth trajectory. The public sector banks will now have an increased risk appetite as the combined capital of the entities involved in the bank merger provides for a safety cushion, which will enable banks to take risks and efficiently disperse credit. This will help boost investment, which in turn will result in rising employment levels. This causes the much-needed surge in demand, propelling growth. Alternatively, these merged banks would be in a better position to implement various government schemes like the direct benefit transfers, which will put the money directly in the hands of the backward sections of the society. So, we can say that the merger of Public sector banks has come at the right moment, benefitting the Indian economy in the current economic slump. If implemented holistically, this can truly revive the country's economic growth.

The banks must change their structure to adopt the various changes brought forth by these mergers and ensure a smooth transition to the beginning of a new era in the Indian Banking sector.

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HISTORY OF THE JOURNAL

The idea to launch this Journal was discussed in December 2016 by the former Officiating Principal, **Dr. R. P. Rustagi** with **Dr. Santosh Kumari,** the Editor of the Journal. Since the idea appealed to **Dr. Santosh Kumari**, she took the initiative to contribute to SRCC by creating this new academic research Journal and took the responsibility for its Creation, Registration, License and ISSN (International Standard Serial Number) etc. along with *Editorship*. Therefore, **Dr. Santosh Kumari, Assistant Professor in the Department of Commerce, Shri Ram College of Commerce** was appointed as the Editor of the Journal vide. Office Order – SRCC/AD-158/2017 dated March 14, 2017. She meticulously worked hard in creating the concept and developing the structure of the Journal. She introduced the concept of COPE (Committee On Publication Ethics) to maintain the high academic standards of publication.

On behalf of SRCC, **Dr. Santosh Kumari** made every effort in seeking License from Deputy Commissioner of Police (Licensing), Delhi to register the Journal at "The Registrar of Newspapers for India, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India". The paper work for seeking license started under the former Officiating Principal, **Dr. R.P. Rustagi** on March 27, 2017. The foundation Issue of the Journal "**Strides – A Students' Journal of Shri Ram College of Commerce, Volume 1, Issue 1, 2016-17**" was successfully released on the 91st Annual Day of SRCC held on April 13, 2017 by **Shri Prakash Javadekar, Honb'le Union Minister of Human Resource Development, Government of India**. The title of the Journal got verified and approved by the Registrar of Newspapers for India, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India on April 21, 2017. On September 1, 2017, **Prof. Simrit Kaur** joined SRCC as Principal and signed each and every legal document required for further processing and supported **Dr. Santosh Kumari**.

On December 18, 2017, the College got the license "**License No. - DCP / LIC No. F. 2 (S / 37) Press / 2017"** to publish 'Strides – A Students' Journal of Shri Ram College of Commerce'. Due to change of Printing Press, the License got updated on March 09, 2018. On April 26, 2018, the SRCC Staff Council unanimously appointed **Dr. Santosh Kumari as the 'Editor of Strides**' for the next two academic years.

On April 27, 2018 (The Foundation Day of the College), **Dr. Santosh Kumari** submitted the application for the registration of the Journal. On May 04, 2018, the SRCC received the '**Certificate of Registration**' for ***"Strides – A Students' Journal of Shri Ram College of Commerce"*** and got the **Registration No. DELENG/2018/75093** dated May 04, 2018. ***On behalf of Shri Ram College of Commerce, it was a moment of pride for Dr. Santosh Kumari to receive the 'Certificate of Registration' on May 04, 2018 at the Office of Registrar of Newspapers for India, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India (website - www.rni.nic.in).***

On May 07, 2018, **Dr. Santosh Kumari** submitted the application for seeking ISSN (International Standard Serial Number) at "ISSN National Centre – India, National Science Library, NISCAIR (National Institute of Science Communication and Information Resources). Weblink - http://nsl.niscair.res.in/ISSNPROCESS/issn.jsp". Finally, the College received the International Standard Serial Number "**ISSN 2581-4931 (Print)**" **on June 01, 2018.**

We are proud that this journal is an add-on to the enriched catalogue of SRCC's publications and academic literature.

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