



NPA MANAGEMENT OF URBAN CO-OPERATIVE BANKS - A STUDY IN HOOGHLY DISTRICT OF WEST BENGAL

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Abstract

Urban Co-operative Bank (UCB) refers to the primary co-operative banks which were set up to meet the banking and credit requirements of urban and semi urban people and to protect them from exploitation. One of the vital problems which vitiate cooperative banking is inability of the borrower to repay their contractual obligations of interest and principal, leading to Non-Performing Assets (NPA). The presence of NPA has had an adverse impact on the productivity and efficiency of UCB. Therefore an attempt has been made through this paper to study management of NPA by the UCBs especially in the district of Hooghly in the state of West Bengal.

Keywords: Urban Co-operative Bank, NPA.

Introduction

Co-operative banks are a group of financial institutions organized under the provisions of the co-operative society's act of the states. These banks are essentially co-operative credit societies organized by members to meet their short term and medium term financial requirements. A co-operative is an autonomous association of persons united voluntarily to meet their common economic, social and cultural needs and aspirations through a jointly owned and democratically enterprise. Mutual co-operation leads to co-operatives. Co-operatives banks are constituted on co-operative principles of voluntary association, self-help and mutual aid, one share one vote and non-discrimination and equality of members. Co operative Banks in India are registered under the Co-operative Societies Act 1904. The cooperative bank is also regulated by the RBI. They are governed by the Banking Regulations Act 1949 and Banking Laws (Co-operative Societies) Act, 1965. The term Urban Co-operative Banks (UCBs), though not formally defined, refers to primary cooperative banks located in urban and semi-urban areas. These banks were traditionally centered on communities, localities work place groups. They essentially lent to small borrowers and businesses. Today, their scope of operations has widened considerably.

Literature Review

Different studies were conducted on UCBs in India by the committees appointed by the RBI and the Govt. of India. Outlines of the major ones are given below:

1. The Indian Central Banking Enquiry Committee (1931), observed as follows: The duty of these urban banks should be to try to do for the small trader, the small merchant and the middle class population.
2. The Working Group on Industrial Financing through Co-operative Banks (1968), (known as Damry Group) appointed by the Reserve Bank recognized the key role which urban banks could play in providing finance to cottage and small-scale industries.
3. The Madhavdas Committee (1979), evaluated the role

played by urban co-operative banks in greater details and drew a roadmap for their future role recommending support from RBI and Government in the establishment of such banks in backward areas and prescribing viability standards.

4. The Madhava Rao Committee (1999), focused on consolidation, control of sickness, better professional standards in urban co-operative banks and sought to align the urban banking movement with commercial banks.

Objectives

The current study is an attempt to enquire about the cause and effect of NPA in the UCBs in Hooghly district of West Bengal during 2004-05 to 2010-11. The objectives of the study comprises to ascertain the causes of NPA, to know the position of NPA over the years, to determine the problems involved in managing NPA and to examine the prospect of NPA management.

Research Design

The research methodology has the following approaches: - a detail survey of the existing position of UCBs with the help of structured questionnaires and pilot survey in Hooghly district. The collected data from the urban co-operative banks are classified, tabulated and analyzed in a systematic manner with the help of some sophisticated statistical tools like Arithmetic Mean (A.M), Moving Average, Correlation Coefficient(r), and Regression Analysis to understand the impact of NPA on the UCBs.

Research Findings

The presence of NPA has had an adverse effect on the cooperative banks in India. Their continued amelioration in absolute terms proved survival extremely difficult. It was in the early nineties these non performing assets emerged in the financial domains of India because by that time a significant number of loan assets involving uncertainty with respect to ultimate collection had piled up, plaguing the cooperative banking industry. The NPA reflects natural wastes in any economy are the bad debts and non recovered loans of the cooperative banks.



The NPA can be divided into the following three broad groups:

1. Sub standard- it would be those which exhibits problems and would include assets classified as non-performing for a period not exceeding eighteen months.
2. Doubtful- these assets are those which include assets classified as nonperforming and would also include loans in respect of which instruments are overdue for a period exceeding eighteen months.
3. Loss- these assets are those accounts where the loss has been identified but the amount of loss has not been written off.

In order to reduce NPAs, RBI has banned loans to directors and their family members and also directed these banks to step up their statutory liquidity ratio (SLR) investments in government securities. Though RBI asked

banks to adhere to 90-day NPA norms. RBI has also admitted that 203 banks have been classified as Grade IV. This means the financial condition of these banks has worsened to such an extent that they require imposition of directives, amalgamation, reconstruction and liquidation etc. Of the 203 grade IV banks, 50 are in Ahmadabad and 31 are in Mumbai. There are 5 UCBs in the district of Hooghly.

Table 1
UCBs in Hooghly

- Hooghly
1. Uttarpara Co-op. Bank Ltd (Gr I)
 2. Konnagar Samabay Bank Ltd. (Gr I)
 3. Nabagram Peoples Co-op. Bank Ltd. (Gr I)
 4. Baidyabati Sheoraphuli Co-op. Bank (Gr I)
 5. Hooghly Co-op. Bank Ltd. (Gr I)

The NPA position of the UCBs in Hooghly district is presented through Loans and Advances and Priority Sector Lending.

Table 2
Loans and Advances of Surveyed UCBs (Rs. in crores)

Sr. No.	Bsnk Nsme	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	Average Annual Growth
1	Uttarpara Co-op. Bank Ltd.	14.44	14.57 (00)	15.94 (9.4)	16.07 (00)	16.11 (00)	16.47 (2.2)	16.51 (00)	1.5%
2	Konnagar Samabay Bank Ltd.	2.98	3.01 (1)	3.26 (8.3)	4.05 (24)	4.51 (11)	5.03 (11)	5.61 (11)	14%
3	Nabagram Peoples Co-op.	14.71	47.5 (1.4)	4.72 (00)	5.04 (6.7)	5.05 (00)	5.16 (2.1)	6.26 (21)	3%
4	Baidyabati Sheoraphuli Co-op. Bank	11.71	18.15 (23)	21.50 (18)	24.54 (14)	27.55 (12)	31.48 (14)	36.77 (16)	14%
5	Hooghly Co-op Bank Ltd.	11.44	14.40 (25)	17.16 (19)	18.05 (5)	19.27 (6.7)	19.36 (00)	22.44 (16)	7.5%
	TOTAL	48.25	58.88 (13.7)	62.58 (14)	67.75 (.08)	72.49 (.06)	77.5 (.06)	87.5 (13)	7%

Note : 1) Figure in parenthesis indicates the growth percentage

2) Annual Average growth percentage is on the basis of Moving Average method to get more effective result.

The Loans & Advances of urban banks increased from Rs 48.25 crores as on 31 march 2005 to Rs 87.59 crores as on 31 march 2011 i.e., by 81.5%. The average annual growth rate of loans & advances is 7%.

Table 3
Priority Sector Lending of Surveyed UCBs (Rs. in crores)

Sr. No	Bank Name	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
1	Uttarpara Co-op. Bank Ltd (60)	8.66 (65)	9.47 (72)	11.47 (68)	10.92 (70)	11.27 (71)	11.69 (73)	12.05
2	Konnagar Samabay Bank Ltd. (60)	1.78 (64)	1.92 (62)	2.01 (60)	2.43 (60)	2.71 (65)	3.26 (66)	3.7
3	Nabagram Peoples Co-op. Bank Ltd. (74)	3.46 (76)	3.59 (75)	3.53 (77)	3.88 (79)	3.98 (75)	3.87 (76)	4.75
4	Baidyabati Sheoraphuli Co-op. Bank (65)	9.56 (68)	12.30 (68)	14.63 (70)	17.17 (74)	20.38 (69)	21.72 (68)	25.01
5	Hooghly Co-op. Bank Ltd.	7.09 (62)	8.82 (61)	10.49 (61)	11.01 (60)	11.75 (61)	11.61 (60)	13.46 (60)

Note : 1) Figure in parenthesis indicates the percentage of Loans & Advances

On an average all the banks have fulfilled the criteria of lending of 60-70 percent to the priority sector.



Gross NPA

In view of this serious problems of accumulation of NPA which are eating into the margins of these banks, Vaidyanathan Committee report had earlier recommended that entire losses due to non-payment of loans should be wiped out. But the Expert Committee on UCB in WB had proposed not to write off the entire losses rather the UCBs have to continue to make efforts towards the recovery of such loans.

Table 4

Gross NPA of Surveyed UCBs (Rs. in crores)

Sr. No.	Bank Name	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	Average p.a
1	Uttarpara Co-op. Bank Ltd	3.25 (22.3)	3.31 (20.8)	3.46 (21.6)	4.06 (25.2)	5.14 (31.2)	4.67 (28.3)	3.98 (24.9)
2	Konnagar Samabay Bank Ltd.	.38 (12.8)	.45 (13.9)	.49 (12.2)	.56 (12.6)	.67 (13.4)	.60 (10.8)	.525 (12.6)
3	Nabagram Peoples Co-op. Bank Ltd.	.44 (9.4)	.51 (11)	.73 (14.6)	.79 (15.8)	1.15 (22.3)	1.28 (20.6)	.81 (15.6)
4	Baidyabati Sheoraphuli Co-op. Bank	1.81 (10)	2.36 (11)	2.94 (12)	3.92 (14.2)	4.35 (13.8)	4.69 (12.8)	3.34 (12.3)
5	Hooghly Co-op. Bank Ltd.	1.55 (10.8)	1.69 (9.8)	1.84 (10.2)	1.97 (10.2)	3.42 (18)	1.88 (8.4)	2.05 (11.2)

Note : 1) Figure in parenthesis indicates the percentage of Gross NPA to Loans & Advances.

The standard tolerance level of GNPA as per the RBI guidelines is 15% of loans & advances and it is found that on an average all the UCBs are below that level. According to the Expert Committee, headed by Mr. Ashok Bandhopadhaya, more than the net NPA, the gross NPA is a better reflection of the actual status of bad loans without any provisions.

Table 5

NPA Calculation in a UCB

- Gross Advances
- Gross NPAs
- Gross NPA as a percentage of Gross Advance ($1/2 \times 100$)
- Deductions : Balance in interest & suspense account DICGC/ECGC/claims received and held pending adjustment, part payment of NPA account received & kept in suspense account
- Total NPA provisions held/BDDR special BDDR balance after appropriation
- Net advance (1) – (4) – (5)
- Net NPAs (2) – (4) – (5)
- Net NPAs as percentage of net Advances ($7/6 \times 100$)

DICGC : Deposit Insurance & Credit Guarantee Corporation

BDDR : Bad Debt & Doubtful Reserve

Table 6

Sub-Standard Loans of Surveyed UCBs

Sl. No.	Bank Name	% of Sub-standard Loans/asset to total credit (Loans & Advances)					% of Sub-standard asset to total impaired credit (Gross NPA)				
		2007	2008	2009	2010	Mean	2007	2008	2009	2010	Mean
1	Uttarpara Co-op. Bank Ltd	-08	-09	-10	-11	6%	29%	24%	23%	12%	22%
2	Konnagar Samabay Bank Ltd.	4%	5%	4%	3%	4%	32%	39%	29%	18%	30%
3	Nabagram Peoples Co-op. Bank Ltd.	7%	9%	10%	10%	9%	51%	57%	45%	49%	51%
4	Baidyabati Sheoraphuli Co-op. Bank	4%	5%	5%	6%	5%	33%	38%	36%	47%	39%
5	Hooghly Co-op. Bank Ltd.	3.5%	3%	2.3%	1.4%	3%	25%	29%	21%	17%	23%

It is found from the above two tables that most of the GNPA is in the form of Doubtful loans.

Table 7

Sr. No.	Bank Name	Doubtful Loans of Surveyed UCBs					% of Doubtful asset to total impaired credit (Gross NPA)				
		% of Doubtful asset to total credit (Loans & Advances)									
		07-08	08-09	09-10	10-11	Mean	07-08	08-09	09-10	09-11	Mean
1	Uttarpara Co-op. Bank Ltd	15%	19%	23%	24%	20%	70%	75%	76%	86%	77%
2	Konnagar Samabay Bank Ltd.	8%	7%	9%	7%	8%	67%	60%	70%	71%	67%
3	Nabagram Peoples Co-op. Bank Ltd.	7%	6%	12%	10%	9%	49%	43%	55%	50%	49%
4	Baidyabati Sheoraphuli Co-op. Bank	8%	9%	8%	6%	8%	66%	61%	63%	53%	61%
5	Hooghly Co-op. Bank Ltd.	3%	3%	6%	4%	4%	37%	36%	59%	55%	47%

A high percentage of NPA will not only reduce its earnings but brings the bank into a liquidity problem culminating

failure to meet the demands of the depositors. The Recovery and Law cell of the bank should supervise such sensitive loan accounts and prescribed separate medicines with proper doses depending on the merit of the case. Borrower should not be taken primarily as a party in opposition rather borrower should be taken into confidence. Assistance and guidance in times of need may embolden the relationship of the two which indirectly widens the possibility of loan recovery with ease. Sometime a small dose of working capital to the borrower may save him from possible loss. Sometime rescheduling of loans may require depending on the income generation capacity of the borrower at the material point of time. Bank may consider rehabilitation package in case of potentially sick units. Regular assessment of performance of certain enterprises is necessary because of their special nature where fluctuation and changes in the market situation may adversely affect the profitability of the business. In such cases bank should ring alarm to the enterprise but at the same time provide it with timely advice to check default of loans.

The flow of credit cannot go without elements of

Sr. No.	Bank Name	Recovery of NPA of Surveyed UCBs (Rs in cr)				
		2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	Mean
1	Uttarpara Co-op. Bank Ltd	1.52 (46)	2.00 (58)	2.72 (67)	3.18 (62)	2.35 (58)
2	Konnagar Samabay Bank Ltd.	.23 (52)	.28 (58)	.35 (63)	.41 (62)	.31 (58)
3	Nabagram Peoples Co-op. Bank Ltd.	.19 (37)	.22 (30)	.32 (40)	.49 (43)	.30 (38)
4	Baidyabati Sheoraphuli Co-op. Bank	1.48 (63)	1.82 (62)	2.82 (72)	2.65 (61)	2.1 (65)
5	Hooghly Co-op. Bank Ltd.	.79 (46)	.76 (41)	.32 (16)	.80 (23)	.66 (32)

Note: figures in parenthesis represent recovery percentage in respect to Gross NPA of previous year

The average recovery percentage ranges from 30-60 per cent which is very low rate of recovery.

Correlation between Average Loans and Advances (X) and Average Gross NPA (Y) of Surveyed UCBs

Considering average loans and advances as X and average gross NPA as Y. The figures are arrived at by making average of the yearly data of each bank. The survey of 5 banks and the data of 7 years were collected and finally their yearly average figure was considered for

Advances (X)	Average Gross NPA (Y)
Uttarpara Co-op. Bank Ltd	15.73
Konnagar Samabay Bank Ltd.	4.06
Nabagram Peoples Co-op. Bank Ltd.	5.09
Baidyabati Sheoraphuli Co-op. Bank	24.95
Hooghly Co-op. Bank Ltd.	17.44

risk. A true banker should adopt sound practice of lending as a part of its banking business. The bank has to identify risks and take adequate and timely measures to minimize these risks. For various reasons or factors viz., under financing or over financing, failure to judge the character and the sincerity of the entrepreneur to implement the project, non-assessment of the repaying capacity of the borrower, market factors, lack of post credit supervision etc. the recovery of loan may be affected. And when a bank fails to recover the loan installment within time the respective loan account will come under NPA. A proper and scientific system for recognition of income and classification of asset under 4 heads as prescribed by RBI (viz. standard, sub-standard, doubtful and loss asset) on a prudential basis be made by a bank. Poor recovery of loan or rather poor recovery efficiency of a bank may lead it to a position of high NPA. This is resulting as a problem of liquidity, reduction in earnings with erosion of the share, reserve and ultimately the deposits of the bank.

Table 8

Recovery of NPA of Surveyed UCBs (Rs in cr)

Sr. No.	Bank Name	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	Mean
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2	Konnagar Samabay Bank Ltd.	.23 (52)	.28 (58)	.35 (63)	.41 (62)	.31 (58)
3	Nabagram Peoples Co-op. Bank Ltd.	.19 (37)	.22 (30)	.32 (40)	.49 (43)	.30 (38)
4	Baidyabati Sheoraphuli Co-op. Bank	1.48 (63)	1.82 (62)	2.82 (72)	2.65 (61)	2.1 (65)
5	Hooghly Co-op. Bank Ltd.	.79 (46)	.76 (41)	.32 (16)	.80 (23)	.66 (32)

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Baidyabati Sheoraphuli Co-op. Bank	24.95
Hooghly Co-op. Bank Ltd.	17.44

the study.

Table 9

Correlation between Average Loans and Advances (X) and Average Gross NPA (Y)

Bank Name	Average Loans & Advances (X)	Average Gross NPA (Y)
Uttarpara Co-op. Bank Ltd	15.73	3.98
Konnagar Samabay Bank Ltd.	4.06	.525
Nabagram Peoples Co-op. Bank Ltd.	5.09	.81
Baidyabati Sheoraphuli Co-op. Bank	24.95	3.34
Hooghly Co-op. Bank Ltd.	17.44	2.05

Correlation Coefficient
r = 0.82

Comment: The correlation co-efficient (r) is used to measure the strength or degree of relationship between two variables namely average loans and advances and the amount of average Gross NPA of surveyed UCBs. Here I have



found a positive value of r i.e 0.82 which shows that the movements of the loans and advances and the Gross NPA are in the same direction i.e high value of loans and advances is associated with high value of Gross NPA and vice-versa. It may be concluded that higher loans & advances may lead to higher gross NPA due to some reasons like loan appraisal, loan policy, lack of recovery etc.

Correlation & Regression Analysis between Loans & Advances (X) and Gross NPAs (Y) of each Surveyed

Correlation co-efficient (r)

1	Uttarpara Co-op. Bank Ltd
2	Konnagar Samabay Bank Ltd.
3	Nabagram Peoples Co-op. Bank Ltd.
4	Baidyabati Sheoraphuli Co-op. Bank
5	Hooghly Co-op. Bank Ltd.

Comments: the Correlation Coefficient (r) between the loans & advances and the GNPA of individual co-operatives are computed. It is found that all the UCBs, have +ve relationship between loans & advances and Gross NPA. It may be

concluded that proper loan policy is a must to restrict gross NPA. Bank wise Regression equation analysis found that most banks have a tendency of GNPA at any level of Loans & Advances. The possible reasons for loan default as stated by the directors are one or more of the factors as such willful default, loss of job, change in

1	Uttarpara Co-op. Bank Ltd
2	Konnagar Samabay Bank Ltd.
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It is observed that most of the UCBs are managed by the Board of Directors (BOD). No Directors are nominated by the State Govt. to the BOD of any bank in the form of a Govt. nominee. No Govt. Officers are deputed in any capacity to manage the affairs of the banks. Everything is managed by the officials and staffs under the control of BODs. It is not possible for RBI or R.C.S. as Regulatory Authority to ensure efficient management because the management of a

Co-operative bank are elected through a democratic election mechanism where any share holder irrespective of his academic background can compete for election as a delegate and ultimately as a Director of a bank. And may win in the election for managing the affairs of the bank. It is found that in case of some of the UCBs the BODs although democratically elected has eventually become a one man show with other Directors assuming a passive role for themselves. It is true that often majority of the Directors have little knowledge about the guidelines, rules and regulations of the regulatory authority and the statutes related to banking function. To manage the affairs of the bank vis-à-vis to supervise the works of the officers and the staffs of the banks, members of the BODs have to have sufficient knowledge about the working principles of a bank as a controlling authority. The Directors are sometimes not properly briefed prior to taking decisions in the field of investment

UCBs (2005-06 to 2010-11)

Here Gross NPA (Y) is treated as a dependent variable of Loans & Advances (X) which is treated as an independent variable as loans & advances leads to gross NPA.

Table 10

Correlation & Regression Analysis between Loans & Advances (X) and Gross NPAs (Y)

Sl. No	Bank Name	Regression Equation
		$Y = .65x + 6.38$
		$Y = .08x + 0.18$
		$Y = .42x + 1.35$
		$Y = .13x + 2.75$
		$Y = .07x + .73$

financial condition, wrong loan appraisal and inflation.

(ix) Board of Directors

Table 11

Directors' Information of Surveyed UCBs

Sl. No.	Bank Name	No. Of Directors & Qualification			
		Existing Strength	Graduate	Post Graduate	Professionally Qualified
1	Uttarpara Co-op. Bank Ltd	15	11	4	2
2	Konnagar Samabay Bank Ltd.	15	5	1	1
3	Nabagram Peoples Co-op. Bank Ltd.	12	8	2	2
4	Baidyabati Sheoraphuli Co-op. Bank	3	1	0	1
5	Hooghly Co-op. Bank Ltd.	15	4	2	1

of surplus fund, loans and advances, cost of fund, CD ratio, yield on assets, staff cost etc. from the officers of higher strata. Often vital decisions are taken based on their personal thinking and experience of the Directors which have sometimes put the Banks in very serious trouble. In other words the BOD control over the management of the Banks has been lacking and, in extreme cases, has contributed to mismanagement and imprudent decision making. In some cases it is observed that many banks now turned weak because of indiscriminate sanction of loans and advances by flouting the loan policy of the bank, unwise investment of funds in such institution which should not have been relied upon and above all by creation of non banking assets which are now lying idle and cannot be disposed off due to lack of clear title of land and building. It is opined that members of BODs have to share equal responsibility for imprudent banking decisions.



The summarized findings are

1. It is apparent that the swelling NPA has become a major problem of the urban co-operative banks.
2. Poor resource base is the main constraint of the urban co-operative banks.
3. Most of the UCBs follow conservative credit policy.
4. Another problem, which vitiates co-operative movement, is the interference of the politicians in the organization.
5. Urban co-operative banks are suffering from the lack of professional management and in most of the cases approach is very much casual.

Recommendations

1. The management should keep NPAs under control and reduce the net NPAs to the expected level so that the bank does not fall in lower category. It should adopt the strategies at two stages, i.e. Pre-sanction in depth scrutiny and Post-sanction supervision and follow up.
2. It is advised to the management to develop more effective credit appraisal policy and loan recovery strategy.
3. The bank needs to prepare a comprehensive perspective plan for product diversification to maintain a competitive edge in the market.
4. The urban co-operative banks, with their new formed emphasis on prudential norms, need a high degree of professionalism in management.

Conclusion

Every authority concerned with Co-operative sector will have to play its part in ensuring that the aspirations of the Urban Co-operative Banking sector are nurtured in a manner that depositor interest and the public interest at large is protected. The role of RBI could, thus, be to

frame a regulatory and supervisory regime that is multi-layered to capture the heterogeneity of the sector and implement policies that would provide adequate elbowroom for the sector to grow in a non-disruptive manner. The State and Central Governments could recognize that the UCBs are not just co-operative societies but they are essentially banking entities whose management structure is that of a cooperative. They should recognize the systemic impact that inefficient functioning of the entities in the sector could have. Consequently, it would be in the interest of the sector if they support, facilitate and empower the RBI to put in place mechanisms and systems that would enable these UCBs to perform their banking functions in a manner that is in the overall interest of the depositor and the public at large.

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