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Exploring the Significance of Strategic Agility in Building Sustainable Competitive Advantage for Retail Banks

Gayathri Sampath

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Exploring the Significance of Strategic Agility in Building Sustainable Competitive Advantage for Retail Banks

Gayathri Sampath *

Abstract:

In today's hypercompetitive global financial services market, traditional sources of sustainable competitive advantage are rare. In the retail banking sector, the challenge is gaining momentum as the rapid pace of consumers' adoption of mobile technologies and social media is transforming the face of traditional banking. Banks around the world are quickly realizing that they need to adapt quickly to avoid being 'disrupted' and are exploring ways to respond to the needs of a changing consumer universe that is more mobile, more digitally adept and more demanding. Strategic agility is about being adaptive to changes in the business context, spotting both opportunities and risks and launching new strategic initiatives rapidly and repeatedly.

This paper discusses the results of the qualitative research carried out on strategic agility in the retail banking sector in India. It discusses insights gained into various dimensions of strategic agility, the key influencers of strategic agility and the impact of strategic agility in building a sustainable competitive advantage for banks.

Keywords: Strategic agility, Sustainable Competitive Advantage, Retail Banking, Dynamic Capabilities

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1. Introduction

Powerful forces are transforming the retail banking industry. Amongst the significant forces are regulations which are impacting business models and operational economics and technology which has morphed from a transaction and business support solution into a potent enabler of both customer experience and effective operations. Many banking products and services are now completely 'digitisable' and can be marketed without face-to-face contact and also be delivered without the need for a physical product, [1] e.g. Digital wallets.

A new and non-traditional set of competitors such as telecom companies, Google, etc., are challenging the banking industry with various customer-centric innovations. They are improving on conventional banking processes and services such as payments, commercial lending, and financial advisory using advanced data analytics and leveraging on technology for faster, efficient and more cost effective transactions[2]. The future of the traditional bank is being questioned as disruptive new entrants win share by offering a better customer experience through new products and channels[3].

The traditional banking industry faces a number of challenges today ranging from customer acquisition to keeping existing customers satisfied. A survey carried out by leading consulting company PwC[3] amongst over 500 executives from leading financial institutions across 17 markets highlighted that nearly all bankers surveyed, view attracting new customers as one of

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[1] Deutsche Bank Research - Fintech – The digital (r)evolution in the financial sector (Nov 2014)
[2] Digital Banking – Opportunity for extraordinary gains in reach, service and productivity in next 5 years – FIBAC 2014
[3] PwC report - Retail Banking 2020 - Evolution or Revolution?

their top challenges in the short to medium term. The large amount the large amount of financial industry information freely available on the Internet has led to customers expecting highly personalized and higher-quality advisory services from their bank than they used to[4]. Banks, therefore, are constantly under pressure to widen their range of activities and services and provide services in the most cost effective manner (Baskerville & Pries-Heje, 2010).

In the rapidly developing Asian and other emerging markets, where big, established banks have less dominance, bankers report that attracting talent and retaining existing customers in face of fierce competition and new market entrants is a significant challenge[3]. In emerging economies like India, the demographic skew towards the youth or 'Generation Y' poses a challenge as they are likely to have a completely different view of not only what a bank should be but also the nature and level of services expected. The future growth of banking services may well hinge on giving the customers what they want as opposed to selling them what the banks have. Anticipating and providing services to a technology savvy, networked and demanding customer requires a shift from the traditional product/ service centric model to a customer centric one.

The paradigm shift in the banking sector is causing many banking organizations to re-evaluate business models, core product and service offerings, and revenue sources. With the rapidly

[4] Digital Banking in Asia - Winning approaches in a new generation of financial services – Report by McKinsey (2014)

increasing pace of change banks need to do even more to ensure they are well-positioned to succeed in the future. Executives of leading banks[3] concur on the need to develop a customer-centric business model, simplify operating models, obtain an information advantage and enabling innovation capabilities to anticipate and overcome challenges. While banks understand that the operational complexity of the past needs to be addressed to provide the efficient, effective platform for the future, fewer than 20% of executives feel that they are adequately prepared to action these priorities as they are constrained by financial, talent, technology and organisational issues[3].

Strategic agility is about being adaptive to changes in the business context, spotting both opportunities and risks and launching new strategic initiatives rapidly and repeatedly. It takes businesses into a domain where fundamental and time-tested assumptions are challenged (Kidd, 1994). This paper explores the concept of strategic agility in the context of fast changing business environments and discusses findings of research carried out in the retail banking sector in India. The research sought to evaluate if strategic agility was prevalent within banks and if it had yielded them a sustainable competitive advantage.

2. Literature review

In today's turbulent environment, the generally accepted rules and norms that governed business conduct have become uncertain and volatile. Under these conditions, the ability to sense market changes and respond quickly to these changes is imperative to firm's success and a potential enabler to organization's competitiveness (Mathiassen & Pries-Heje, 2006; Overby, Bharadwaj, & Sambamurthy, 2006). The traditional planning model, that assumed that products and markets move through their life cycles in a sequential, orderly manner has been overturned and replaced by the need for agile strategic thinking[5]. Fast-changing markets require the ability to reconfigure the firm's asset structure and accomplish the necessary internal and external transformation (Amit & Schoemaker, 1993).

Strategic agility (SA) means that an organization can take quick, decisive, and effective actions and that it can trigger, anticipate, and take advantage of change (Doz & Kosonen, 2007; Jamrog et al., 2006). It is described as flexibility and speed that gives organizations the ability to change the business in order to respond to changes in their markets and face substantial risks (D'Aveni, 1994). Implementing strategic agility involves new concepts concerning strategies, organisation, people and technologies. It implies a paradigm shift in that old ideas need to be re-evaluated, modified and in some cases abandoned, in order to find new avenues to create value for stakeholders.

Strategic agility research is an emerging area of focus in strategic management research and there is limited research in this area beyond the supply chain, manufacturing and software development industries. In addition, the drivers and impact of strategic agility are also emerging areas of research and hold great significance in the implementation of this capability. We examine the concept of strategic agility using the dynamic capability theory to construct a suitable research framework.

[5] Shifting From Strategic Planning to Strategic Agility – (http://www.forbes.com/sites/work-in-progress/2011/05/28/shifting-from-strategic-planning-to-strategic-agility/)

2.1 Dynamic capability (DC) theory

Dynamic capability (DC) is the ability and capacity of a firm to integrate, build, and reconfigure internal and external competences and resources to address rapidly changing environments (Helfat et al., 2007; Teece, Pisano, & Shuen, 1997a). They capture the change oriented capabilities of an organisation that helps it to redeploy and/ or reconfigure resources to meet changing customer demands and competitive action (Zahra & George, 2002). Eisenhardt & Martin, (2000) clarify that dynamic capabilities are organisational and strategic routines by which firms achieve new resource configurations. Teece's (1997) concept of dynamic capabilities essentially says that what matters for business is the capacity to (1) sense and shape opportunities and threats, (2) seize opportunities, and (3) maintain competitiveness through enhancing, combining, protecting, and, when necessary, reconfiguring the business enterprise's intangible and tangible assets.

The dynamic capability theory focuses on renewal of competencies and how specific capabilities can be a source of competitive advantage. Dynamic capabilities contribute to developing a new resource base for an organisation which allows the firm to maintain or enhance its sustainable competitive advantage (Ambrosini & Bowman, 2009). The ability to renew firm-specific capabilities is directly related to the firm's business processes, market positions and expansion paths and therefore a major source of competitive advantage (Teece et al., 1997a). Few examples of DC identified in research include R&D capability (Helfat, 1997), acquisition process (Karim & Mitchell, 2000), product innovation (Danneels, 2002), organisational structure reconfiguration (Karim, 2006) and resource divestment (Moliterno &

Wiersema, 2007). Strategic agility has also been noted as a dynamic capability (Goldman, Nagel, & Preiss, 1995; Sambamurthy, Bharadwaj, & Grover, 2003).

2.1.1 Conceptual Framework

A conceptual research model was developed based on the dynamic capability literature and guided further literature review on strategic agility. This model was refined after the literature review and then tested using qualitative research. We present the conceptual research model as Exhibit 1

Exhibit 1: Conceptual Framework

2.2 Antecedents of Strategic Agility

Based on the dynamic capabilities theory and prior research on strategic agility, a set of drivers of strategic agility, it's dimensions and its impact were researched. Study of existing literature helped to clarify the constructs and help construct a tentative research framework to guide the study.

2.2.1 Market Acuity (MA)

Menor & Roth (2007) identify that to be innovative the ability to clearly assess the competitive environment and create services that perform better than competitors in the market is needed. Market Acuity (MA) can be defined as the ability of a firm to see the competitive environment clearly and to anticipate customer needs (Menor & Roth, 2007; Rosenzweig & Roth, 2007; Roth & Jackson, 1995). Market acuity is a valuable competency as it requires a service firm to continuously search for information on customer needs and competitor offerings, and, at the same time, have the capability to use this information to create superior new services (Kirca, Jayachandran, & Bearden, 2005). Market acuity also makes a firm aware of exogenous market factors such as competitors, the general business environment, and regulation (Kohli & Jaworski, 1990; Sambamurthy et al., 2003). Thus, a firm can take appropriate actions to nullify or buffer against any competitive or environmental threats.

2.2.2 Change Disposition (CD)

Change is unavoidable whether organizations are ready for it or not. Change disposition is defined as organisation's readiness to accept and implement change (Rosenzweig & Roth, 2007; Teece, Pisano, & Shuen, 1997b). Jones (2005) further elaborated that this concept refers to the extent to which employees believe in the need for change and as well as the extent to which they believe that such changes are likely to have positive implications for themselves and the wider organization (Jones, Jimmieson, & Griffiths, 2005). This readiness to accept change is key to the effectiveness and efficiency with which organisation transformations related to strategy, structure, processes, culture etc. take place (Armenakis & Harris, 2002; Rosenzweig & Roth, 2007). In the dynamic capability context, capability of timely and market oriented decision-making as well as capability to change resources base are affected by the firm's readiness for change (Pathak, 2013). Lack of change readiness is often cited as the main reason for organizations failing in their attempts to manage change successfully (Armenakis, Harris, & Mossholder, 1993). Hence it is vital for an organization to be change ready before attempting to implement and manage any kind of change (Armenakis et al., 1993; Armenakis & Harris, 2002).

2.2.3 Learning Organisation, Organisation learning and Organisation Learning Capability

Few authors have referred to learning as a specific type of process underlying dynamic capabilities, which is based on repetition, experimentation and identification of new opportunities (Bowman & Ambrosini, 2003; Teece et al., 1997b), while yet other have argued that learning mechanisms are an attribute (Zott, 2003) or driver of dynamic capabilities (Eisenhardt & Martin, 2000; Winter, 2003). We base our discussion on the considerations of learning as a driver of dynamic capabilities as suggested by Zollo & Winter, (2002). In the ensuing paragraphs we discuss the inter-related concepts of organisation learning, learning organisations and organisation learning capability.

Organisation learning: Learning can basically be seen as the process through which an individual acquires knowledge, skills, attitudes and opinions (Idowu, 2013). In the face of unpredictable and unstable business environments, continuous learning is a key driver of an organisation's ability to remain adaptive and flexible so as to survive and effectively compete (Burke, 2006). Organisational learning occurs when an organisation is skilled at creating, acquiring, and transferring knowledge, and at modifying its behaviour to reflect new knowledge and insights (Garvin, 1993).

Learning organisation: Senge in his seminal book, 'The Fifth Discipline: The art and practice of the learning organization', defines learning organisations as organisations where people continually expand their capacity to create the results they truly desire, where new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured, where collective aspiration is set free, and where people are continually learning to learn together (Senge, 1990, p. 3). Senge also identified five principles and practices that underpin the learning organisation - Personal mastery, Mental models, Shared vision, Team learning and Systems thinking.

Organisational learning capability (OLC) - refers to the organizational and managerial characteristics that facilitate the organizational learning process or allow the organisation to learn (DiBella, Nevis, & Gould, 1996; Goh & Richards, 1997). OLC is based on a learning culture that promotes the acquisition, creation, and transfer of knowledge as fundamental values (Garvin, 1993; McGill, Slocum, & Lei, 1992; Stata, 1989). Research suggests that strong learning capability also results in non-financial outcomes such as employee innovation, efficiency, job satisfaction and organizational innovation or innovativeness (Goh, Elliott, & Quon, 2012). In fact de Geus summed up the significance of OLC when he stated that "the only competitive advantage the company of the future will have is its managers' ability to learn faster than their competitors" (de Geus, 1988, p. 74).

2.2.4 Information Technology Capability

The unstable economic conditions of the last few years have helped to create a challenging business environment and an economic imperative for information technology (Rockart & Morton, 1984). Technological advancements have resulted in increased connectivity, facilitated transmission of large amounts of information and lowered costs of processing information (Voelpel, Leibold, & Tekie, 2004). This in turn has opened up a wide array of options for business in terms of how, where and when to find and seize new product/ market opportunities (Viscio and Paternack, 1996).

Across most industries and businesses, the basic transaction processing and decision support IT infrastructure is already in place, providing a base on which systems for competitive advantage can be built and leveraged (Bakos & Treacy, 1986). When every leading firm in an industry has access to the same IT resources, the way that these IT resources are managed will determine the competitive advantages or disadvantages of firms (Keen, 1993) In other words, a firm's distinguishable way in managing its IT activities is believed to be a source of organizational competitiveness.

2.2.5 Business Continuity Planning

Business Continuity Planning (BCP) identifies the organization's exposure to internal and external threats and synthesizes assets and resources to provide effective prevention and recovery for the organization, whilst maintaining integrity of the value chain and providing a competitive advantage (Elliot 1999). The Business Continuity Plans are plans to keeps a business up and running after it has been damaged (Morganti, 2002).

2.3 Strategic agility

Strategic Agility is described as flexibility and speed that gives organizations the ability to change the business in order to respond to changes in their markets and face substantial risks (D'Aveni, 1994). It enables a firm to initiate and apply flexible, nimble, and dynamic competitive moves in order to respond positively to changes imposed by others and to initiate shifts in strategy to create new marketplace realities (McCann, 2004). Strategic agility lays emphasis on a firm transforming itself into a knowledge factory – a more refined and evolved version of a learning organization (Roth, 1996).

It then follows that strategically agile companies would be able to make sense of the environment and be able to interpret the large inflow of diverse information and see how it impacts the organization and formulate requisite response and action (McCann, Selsky, & Lee, 2009). The management literature increasingly refers to this ability as a dynamic capability- the potential to sense opportunities and threats, solve problems, and change the firm's resource base.

2.3.1 Dimensions of strategic agility

According to Doz & Kosonen, (2008) there are three dimensions to strategic agility: strategic sensitivity, collective commitment and resource fluidity. Strategic sensitivity means being open to as much information, intelligence and innovations as possible by creating and maintaining relationships with a variety of different people and organizations (Doz & Kosonen, 2008) . Collective commitment means making decisions together with the whole management team so that in the end all the team members commit to collective success instead of promoting their own personal agenda. Resource fluidity means being able to flexibly move resources from one place to another as needed (Doz & Kosonen, 2008; Sull, 2009). Each of the constructs (strategic sensitivity, collective commitment and resource fluidity) comprise sub-constructs which further contribute to our understanding of strategic agility.

Exhibit 2: Dimensions of Strategic Agility

Source: Fast Strategy (Doz and Kosonnen, 2008)

Long (2000) further built on the SA construct by providing a six (6) dimensional measure of strategic agility including the above discussed dimensions. The six dimensions considered by them are —Clarity of Vision, Knowledge of Clients, Understanding Core Capabilities, Selecting Strategic Targets, Shared Responsibility, Knowledge of Competitors and Taking Action. This covers the 3 major dimensions suggested by Doz and Kosonen. However, this scale has not been tested and validated extensively.

As strategic agility implies an ability to mobilise and leverage upon organisation wide resources as quickly and efficiently as possible to respond to customer needs (Roth, 1996), we also considered other strategic abilities associated by researchers with firm's abilities to respond to change and establish its competitive bases. Some of the capabilities identified in research across manufacturing and supply chain contexts include responsiveness, anticipation, adaptation or reconfiguration, efficiency, flexibility, quickness, innovation, knowledge management, learning (Dove, 2002; Kidd, 1995; Sharifi & Zhang, 1999, 2001; Yusuf, Sarhadi, & Gunasekaran, 1999). Shafer (1997) suggests that these can be synthesized into three key and interrelated organizational capabilities. The first capability is the organization's aptitude to mobilize a rapid response to change, the second capability is the aptitude to read the market and the third capability is the aptitude to integrate organizational learning.

2.4 Interface of Strategic Agility with Sustainable Competitive Advantage (SCA)

Sustainable Competitive Advantage (SCA) represents a firm's success in continually seizing competitive opportunities for enhancing performance, defending itself again rivals' competitive moves, as well as erecting barriers to the erosion of its prevailing competitive advantage (Piccoli & Ives, 2005; Reed & DeFillippi, 1990). An important aspect of sustainable competitive advantage is the ability of an enterprise to develop strategies that cannot or will not be imitated by competitors (Bharadwaj, Varadarajan, & Fahy, 1993).

A wide variety of drivers of SCA has received attention in the literature, including resource based drivers such as economies of scale and scope, brand equity, and reputation, and skills-based drivers such as the skills underlying the innovativeness and superior quality of a business's offerings (Bharadwaj et al., 1993). In addition to resources, organizations also possess capabilities or competences - that is the capacity to change and/ or deploy resources, usually in combination, in order to effect a desired end (Amit & Schoemaker, 1993; Ulrich & Lake, 1991).

The key characteristics of capabilities are that they are firm specific and developed over time (Amit & Schoemaker, 1993; Grant, 1991; Prahalad & Hamel, 1990) and cannot be traded or acquired by firms, unlike resources.

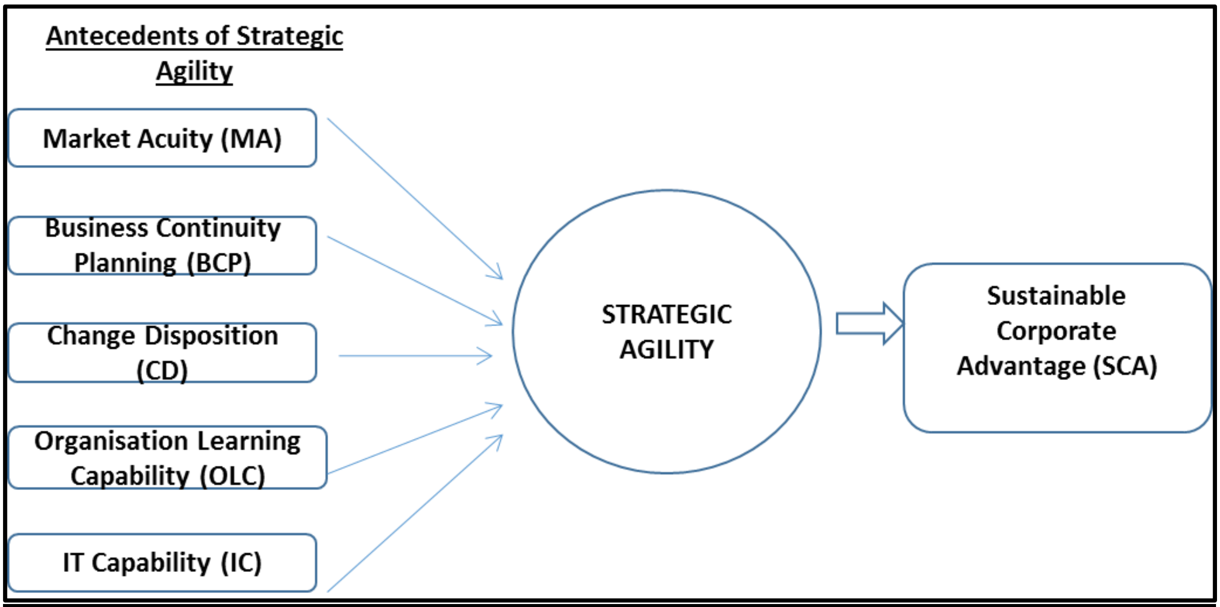
Strategic agility prepares organizations to embrace relentless change by generating a range of resource and capability alternatives; developing skills at aligning, realigning and mobilizing resources; taking resolute action; and removing barriers to change (Brown & Eisenhardt, 1997). Possessing a high level of strategic agility, therefore implies, that a firm is able to demonstrate a consistent capacity for concentrating resources on key strategic issues, accumulating new resources efficiently and effectively, complementing and combining resources in new ways, and redeploying resources for new uses (Hamel & Prahalad, 1993). Hence, firms demonstrating strong agility are able to maintain their strategic supremacy despite market fluctuations (D'Aveni, 1999; Thomas, 1996). This research aimed at furthering our understanding of the impact of strategic agility on SCA.

3. Methods

3.1 Research design

Based on the literature review a research model, presented in Exhibit 3, was constructed which guided the research. An exploratory research approach was adopted for this study as this research approach is viewed as appropriate when a study has a clear purpose in lieu of a hypothesis or propositions (Yin, 2003).

Exhibit 3 : Research model



3.2 Data Collection

The sample frame was made up of banks with at least 10 years of experience in Indian markets. Fifty (50) managers with minimum ten (10) years of experience were randomly approached across all functions and all types of banks. Almost all the candidates approached were functional/ business/ departmental heads and well versed with their functional areas as well as the larger banking domain. Of the fifty (50) managers, thirty six (36) managers agreed to participate in the study. Almost all the respondents had been in the banking sector for close to a decade and more than two-thirds for over twenty years. At least 75% of the respondents had worked with more than one bank in their careers. The summary of banks and the profile of the respondents is provided below in Exhibit 4.

The semi-structured interviews were designed to draw upon their experiences in the banking sector and where possible share insights from their current employment. The purpose of the interviews was to examine the understanding of strategic agility as a key capability, drivers of strategic agility and the impact of strategic agility on building a competitive advantage. The discussion guide covered these questions and also had two questions pertaining to the overall banking environment and challenges faced by banks to provide a context to the discussions.

The design of the interview questions were designed to encourage participants to share their experiences and to elaborate and explore their meanings (Seidman, 1998, p. 76). All participants were reassured of both anonymity as well as confidentiality of the information shared at the outset of the interview. This was particularly appreciated as the banking sector in India had recently witnessed a couple of high profile media led exposes on few malpractices in leading banks. Due to the sensitive nature of the matter, all banks had laid down many polices regarding interviews and interactions with third parties. It was observed that, given this background, the initial reassurance about confidentiality and neutrality and complete transparency with respect to the objectives of the meeting, enabled the respondents to be forthcoming with their views.

During the discussion, as most of the respondents had worked at more than one bank, they were encouraged to share their experiences across their banking career and not limit themselves to their current employment. With the interviewee’s consent, the interviews were recorded for accurate and effective transcription. Most of the interviews lasted for approximately one (1) hour. All recorded interviews were transcribed and the transcriptions were checked with the original audio recording to ensure completeness, clarity and coherence

Exhibit 4: Summary of Respondents

SUMMARY OF RESPONDENTS - PHASE I		
Type of Bank	**No. Of Interviewees**	**Expertise covered**
Foreign/ MNC	9	Risk Management, Treasury, Retail Banking (various)
Private	17	Treasury, Compliance, Corporate Credit, Branch Banking, Retail Banking (various), Operations, IT and HR
Public	8	Operations, Business Development, Retail Banking, Branch Banking
Co-operative	1	Branch Banking
Others	1	Treasury
Total	**36**	

3.3 Data analysis

The data analysis combined primary and secondary research. Articles from leading banking journals (both Indian and international) and other reputed publications like The Economist, spanning a 5 year period from 2007 – 2012 were analysed to identify dominant themes in banking strategy formulation and key management concerns. The policy documents and working papers on banking operations prepared by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) were also analysed to obtain deeper insights into the banking environment and indicative future direction of banking regulation and policies. This analysis done prior to the interviews great enhanced the interactions and improved the quality of discussions.

All the interview transcripts were read and the relevant responses were coded. The coding structure adopted is shown in Exhibit 5. After the coding, the generated codes were reviewed to identify categories. Connecting codes is the process of discovering themes and patterns in the data (Crabtree & Miller, 1999).

Exhibit 5 - Illustrative coding procedure followed

Interviewee Details (Name, bank, date)	Bank Type -	Raw text data	Code
Axxxn_Indusind_02092013	2	Everyone has realized that if you change you have to figure out the segment that you want to go after so we for example stay in the upper end affluent segments we are not mass market, I think HDFC does a better job at the mass market	Market segmentation for growth
Mkxxxx_Sbi_24042013	1	there has to be a mechanism for training them also and bring the competence development otherwise what happens that everybody poaches on large banks like State Bank of India which has a very large work force	Training is very important with the increase in the number of banks to build quality staff
Sameerk_dbs_08052013	3	If you use management jargon I would say continuously revisit your processes - don't take anything for granted. The moment you take everything for granted and say it's not required it becomes an issue. So keep crosschecking, even if the going is good, that is the best time to do the crosschecking	Continuous process improvement to build strategic agility

After the coding, the generated codes were reviewed to identify categories. Connecting codes is the process of discovering themes and patterns in the data (Crabtree & Miller, 1999). During the categorization process, it was observed that categories related to the questions asked emerged naturally but there were also a number of other related categories which emerged. A total of 17 categories encompassing almost all the codes were identified in the first phase of analysis. The second phase consisted of reviewing the categories individually to identify similarities, overlaps and differences. This led to the combining and renaming of few categories so that they could be distinctively different.

The next step in the analysis was to identify dominant themes within the categories and explore relationships. A theme answers the question ‘How?’ and creating themes is a way to link the underlying meanings together in categories (Krippendorff, 1980). Analysis of categories identified revealed 18 clearly identifiable themes which could be used for further analysis. The raw data was read and re-read three times over a period of three (3) months to eliminate researcher fatigue and loss of objectivity. Each reading helped to provoke further thought into the variables and themes and the final output at the end of the third round was felt to be most representative of the research questions and the data itself. A sample of the process is given as Exhibit 6.

4. Key findings

In the following sections we discuss the findings with reference to the antecedents of strategic agility, its impact and the dimensions of strategic agility. The key findings on antecedents of strategic agility is discussed first.

4.1 Market acuity/ insight

Understanding the market including both customers and competitors was viewed as a key responsibility of all managers. Regular customer feedback, market research, customer complaint analysis were all used to build customer and market insights. All the respondents said that banks generated lots of transactional data and customer profile data through Know your customer (KYC) compliance, which if analysed using sophisticated data analytic solutions, would yield huge business opportunities. One respondent said, *"Big data analytics would throw up names of customers who have Fixed Deposits maturing in a particular month. These customers could then be targeted for other investment products by respective managers."*

All the respondents felt that market acuity would be very important in strategy and business planning. The head of the Retail Risk department of a large foreign bank linked Market Acuity to strategy when he said, *"what the banks needs to realize is where to draw the line on what they are trying to do, which are the key markets and the desired market share that they are going to go after and how do go about getting that market share".*

With relation to strategic agility, there was no definitive assertion of a relationship but all the managers again concurred that market insight and customer proximity contributed to an organisation being agile. As one of the Managers in charge of Banking Channels at a fast growing private sector bank put it, *"you have to be able to change seeing the circumstances. Yes you may not want to be first to market with a innovative product say mobile payment some e-wallet payment, because there is risk in it but you should be able to come up quickly if somebody launches something and in a better way than that person."*

Exhibit 6: Illustrative Thematic Analysis

Codes	Categories	Themes
Acceptance of change Resistance to change Organisation amenability to change Change to survive and grow	Organisation readiness to accept change	Change disposition
Change readiness among people, processes and technology Role of leadership in driving change Change readiness comes from people at the top Change in leadership brings change in values Build business case for change Rapid pace of change Key drivers of change	Organisational ability to handle change	Change disposition
Coping mechanisms of change include quality of staff and participative style of functioning Difference between continuous and sudden change Change in banking channels Change in how people interact with banks Operational changes required due to regulation Operational change driven by customer requirements	Different types of change	Change disposition
Return on investments in technology Technology important component of being strategically agile New technologies will throw up more opportunities	Technology Strategy	Organisation Technology Capability
Increasing shift towards online channels Technology as an enabler of innovation and differentiation Technology in front end strategy not merely as a support function	Utility of IT	Organisation Technology Capability
Using technology as a differentiator Building competitive advantage using technology Technology and customer servicing Technology to improve turnaround times Building efficient, flexible and effective systems Technology integration is a major issue Intelligent use of technology to improve customer experience and cut costs Digitization to be balanced with risk and cost to be successful Type and scalability of technology important in building agility	Technology support to operations	Organisation Technology Capability

4.2 Change Disposition

Willingness or readiness to change was not viewed as a problem by any of the respondents. The significance of change for an organisation was highlighted by this opinion of a senior manager from the Retail Risk management department of a leading MNC bank – "*You need to proactively change and navigate yourself and land in a position for your best competitive advantage much before changes are forced upon you."*

In case of the foreign/ MNC and private sector banks, the respondents said they anticipated and planned for change on a regular basis through process reviews, keeping the organisation structure flat and recruiting the right profile of people. They cited the age of the organisation and the profile of its people which kept them flexible. As a Business head of a foreign/ MNC bank put it – *"there is willingness to change and there is ability to change. There are a very few organizations which are always looking ahead and constantly trying to readapt, readjust, realign, and most of the time when there is forced change they will be able to adapt to those changes quickly"*.

Respondents from public sector (PSU) banks on the other hand said change had not been easy for them. Most PSU banks were large and had multi-layered organisation structures when the first private banks came into being in 1998. One senior banker from a PSU bank said, *"Unlike the private sector banks, for us change was and is a matter of survival. All PSU banks faced setbacks after the advent of ICICI and HDFC Bank but then because of some strong and visionary leadership we decided to change"*. The ex-Chairman of India's largest PSU bank shared that initial resistance to change, giving the context of computerisation, was very high in PSU banks due to trade unionism and complacency. He said, *"I used a carrot and stick policy* *to bring the unions over to my way of thinking. We used to give monetary incentives to our people to learn to use computers and we also spent a lot of time in explaining the reasons for the same, the benefits and more importantly addressing their fears of becoming redundant. Once we crossed those hurdles, there was no turning back".*

All the respondents concurred on the importance of people and organisation culture in making an organisation change ready and change readiness itself being a key aspect to building agility.

4.3 Organisation Learning Capability (OLC)

All the respondents viewed OLC as an important organisational competence. The respondents while discussing this variable touched upon three distinctive areas – training, learning culture and organisation culture. All the respondents were unanimous in the stress laid on training by their organisations across all levels. A respondent from one of the largest banks in India said they were constantly benchmarking themselves with global banks to identify areas of improvement in both operations as well as in customer servicing. Almost all the PSU banks have their own staff training colleges which provide their employees adequate training support. The private sector and foreign banks also follow elaborate and structured training programs across all levels ranging from induction to operational to leadership building programmes. They use a mix of in-house training resources and external faculty including specialist programmes at some of the world's best business schools for this purpose.

An interesting aspect of OLC was highlighted by a PSU banker, when he said, *"Job rotation is an important aspect of learning. In a PSU bank, once a candidate is selected, he is rotated across different functions across the country as part of training and we also rotate people every* *couple of years. A PSU bank officer in a branch will be an all-rounder, well versed in all areas of banking, as we do not create any silos"*. Surprisingly, all foreign and private sector bank respondents concurred with this and this (creation of silos) was indeed a problem faced by them. They used measures like online training, shadow training etc. to address these.

A senior banker articulated that learning is a very important factor in everybody's life - a continuous process from womb to the tomb. He further opined that this would bring about ability to change and organisational agility. Few respondents brought an interesting dimension when they stated that organisation humility was key to building a learning organisation. They felt that if the organisation openly discussed past mistakes as well as good decisions, they would learn more. A senior manager emphasised the need to go beyond structured training and always be on the lookout to learn from the business environment including customers, competitors and related/ unrelated industries.

All respondents used the term empowerment and culture in the context of organisation learning. As the Managing Director of a foreign bank put it *"that is where the leadership can play positive role by encouraging people to try to experiment to look at new things to stretch themselves. Identify people who need to empowered and who are going to use that empowerment otherwise very often we see that people are empowered, but they don't use it, so for that you need to give them the trust and the confidence, they need to be comfortable using that".* The Head of Human Resources at a private sector bank provided another dimension to how learning is related to organisation culture when he said *"if you look at it from a individual excellence point of view there should be a process in the organization that individual excellence* *leads to collective excellence and then leads to business excellence and then organization excellence".* The respondents said that few leaders fostered a culture of empowerment during their tenure which in turn lead to a 'can do...will do' culture. This would lead to a period of strong growth for the bank as people would be willing to innovate and they had a buy-in in the organisation vision. The words "tone at the top" was used to express the impact of senior management on organisation learning.

4.4 Information Technology (IT) Capability

Discussions on IT capability led to very interesting findings. All the banks who participated in the research have implemented Core Banking Solutions (CBS). All respondents opined that any advantage derived from technology was short-lived. However, what differentiated the banks was how they used technology to meet customer expectations. Here there were two important findings which emerged – a) foreign banks have a slight edge over domestic banks due to their global parent and deep pockets for investments b) private banks are willing to go an extra mile using custom software or in-house software patches to meet customer requirements. A foreign bank respondent cited a global IT budget running into billions of dollars for their technological superiority while a private bank respondent highlighted the efforts made by the bank to integrate their Cash Management Software (CMS) with their customer's ERP software for seamless data transfer and access to information as a reason for dominance in their niche market.

All respondents stated firmly that investments in IT would be driven by the strategic direction of the bank. A retail focused bank would have to look at different customer servicing avenues and channels for distribution and delivery of banking products in addition to the branch infrastructure. Mobile banking is poised to become a favoured banking channel in the near future and almost all the respondents with retail focused banks admitted to developing and testing various innovations on this platform. Cashless payment systems are being tested and worked upon by number of banks to meet concerns associated with rural banking and financial inclusion. In case of wholesale/ corporate banking IT investments are more about providing real time and accurate information to the customer. This could be through software, web portals, seamless communication and transfer of data.

An interesting insight was provided by a respondent who said "*While there may be no real differentiation through technology, banks are nonetheless trying to differentiate their offerings by highlighting/ exploiting some features selectively. E.g. HDFC bank calls their ATMs fast ATMs. The actual difference is only a few seconds but a whole marketing campaign has been built around it. The campaign has been built around a feature in the ATM asking users to set their favourite menu options which promises to save you time. In fact, most users don't do it because anyways keying in options doesn't take time but yet the bank has pitched it as a key differentiator. Similarly, another private bank touts that its ATMs allow you to choose various denominations during withdrawal – a basic feature of the ATM but yet something which has been used to create a differentiation.*"

Respondents opined that enhancing customer experience, providing a secure transaction environment and safety of customer data would be critical in IT strategies of banks. All the respondents concurred that efficient and effective use of technology would lead to a competitive advantage and contribute to building agility. However, it was important that organisations recognize IT as a strategic function and not operational, which has happened to a large extent in the private and foreign banks but to a lesser extent in PSU banks. A sample of responses regarding technology is provided below to further highlight the views expressed

"The next big challenge is going to come from technology. I don't think brick and mortar structures the classic form of banking that we all have grown up with is the form that will make the country fully banked and fully served in a limited amount of time. I think technology will have a big role to play." (Foreign banker response)

"Technology significantly impacts the customer experience and I think that is the litmus test for your strategy. Critical customer touch points have to be enabled with technology only then you can talk about strategic agility" (Foreign banker response)

"Technology is a very, very important component - a lot of thought has to go when you apply technology because it can be a serious impediment to agility if it is not suitable or structured properly. I think people do put in lot of thought when you are deploying a technology." (Private banker response)

4.5 Business Continuity Planning (BCP)

BCP is a critical aspect of supply chain and manufacturing agility. This research wanted to test the applicability and relevance of this construct in the banking context. BCP is an important aspect of the Business as Usual (BAU) philosophy of banks. All banks have very clear and well documented processes and procedures for BCP – which is often equated with Disaster Recovery Management (DRM). All respondents concurred that BCP was critical in banking but it did not contribute to their agility. It was an operational issue wherein banks have no choice but to comply with mandatory requirements. While there may be minor variations in recovery time after disasters, all banks have almost similar procedures and systems in place, which are tested regularly.

4.6 Understanding strategic agility

Most of the respondents were familiar with the concept of agility but not with the concept of strategic agility. The researcher did not provide them with a definition but asked them to define it in their own words. Few of the definitions provided are listed below as a sample of responses.

"Strategic Agility is the ability to be able to manoeuvre and give the right response to the environment".

Strategic agility is the ability to change ahead of times, navigate yourself to a position of strength such that you can serve all your stakeholders - shareholders, customers, employees in the best manner possible"

"I see strategic agility as the ability of an institution to respond to changes/events/opportunities in a way that it gives as a sustainable competitive advantage. I do not see it like a short term game here or small profit here, what I see is the ability of the organization to process, analyse and come out with a behaviour which gives us a sustainable advantage over the longer term which is something which will stay with you forever. It kind of provides a cushion and to me that is the cushion which protects you, which is the entry barrier for competitors".

In addition, all respondents unanimously concurred on the role of leadership as a key enabler in the success of the bank. As a senior manager in a foreign bank said *"I think strategic agility* *starts from very top. If it does not exist there, there's nothing I can do to bring it in anywhere."*

PSU bankers cited examples of visionary leaders who helmed the bank successfully, often turning them around from bad situations. They said charismatic leadership and clear vision helped the bank. But they also regretted that PSU banks did not have continuity of leadership at the top. A CEO/ MS would at best be in position for around 2-3 years and it was not uncommon for a new CEO to completely reverse his predecessors' actions, often leaving the bank confused and struggling for direction. Interestingly, similar feedback was also shared by one foreign bank respondent. Other foreign bank respondents said that clarity of vision at local leadership was what mattered; the overall strategy was laid out a global level. Private bank respondents all agreed that the quality of leadership and tenure of the CEO was what made HDFC Bank or ICICI Bank successful. Other private banks contacted for this study had few leadership changes and hence they did not comment on the impact of tenure of CEO on strategy and competitive advantage.

The relationship between strategic agility and corporate vision and strategy was brought out when senior managers talked about strategic agility being guided by vision and corporate objectives. As a senior manager in a foreign bank said, *"Strategic agility is not changing the strategy but being agile in execution. It is really to do with how I identify a business opportunity and am agile in my strategy to offer it as quickly as possible. If am not fast in the market somebody else will identify the opportunity and go first into the market. Bureaucracy should not come in the way of strategic agility. That is what I call it as being agile on your strategy but corporate strategy I will not touch, that is cast in stone"*

4.7 Impact of Strategic Agility (SA) on Sustainable Competitive Advantage (SCA)

One of the objectives of the research was also to understand if there was any relationship between strategic agility (SA) and Sustainable Competitive Advantage (SCA). All the concurred on the importance of SA and the importance of building the capability. All the respondents said that strategic agility could provide a competitive edge and lead to SCA in the long run. One respondent opined that being strategically agile could lead to a favourable reputation. All the respondents agreed that reputation could prove to be a key differentiator amongst banks and a favourable reputation could provide a SCA, as it was something, which had to be built up over a long period of time. Figure 7 provided below provides a summary of the insights gained by analysis of the responses.

5. Discussions of findings

The aim of this study was to understand the construct of strategic agility, its drivers and its impact using qualitative research. There are few localised studies in Africa, USA and Europe that have contributed to existing literature but there is limited evidence of large scale studies to clarify the construct and provide frameworks. Studies in the service sector, in general, and banking in particular are limited both in the global and Indian context. Using the dynamic capability perspective and related literature we identified a set of competencies and capabilities that are relevant to the construct of strategic agility. This research reviewed the dimensions of strategic agility, applicability of some of the antecedents to the banking sector and assessed their impact on strategic agility using qualitative methodology. We discuss the implications of our findings in the ensuing paragraphs.

5.1 Antecedents of strategic agility

Organisation learning - The significance of organisational learning in building a competitive advantage has been supported in literature (S. Bharadwaj et al., 1993; Winter, 1998). Pfeffer (Pfeffer, 1994) found that investment in human resources through training and skill development could become a source of competitive advantage. Organisations that emphasize knowledge creation on an ongoing basis are likely to develop dynamic and unique capabilities that underpin continuous organisational learning (Tsoukas & Mylonopoulos, 2004). Knowledge and learning capabilities assist organisations to recognise new information, assimilate it and apply it towards new ends thus improving fit between an organisation and its changing environment (Boal & Hooijberg, 2000). Training was one of the key aspects touched upon during the semi-structured interviews. Creating a sense of ownership amongst employees, fostering and encouraging openness in cross functional communication as well as rewarding innovation are the key to building agile banks.

Research has also found a link between innovation, flexibility and organisational learning (Barney, 1986; Williams, 1992). Innovation is usually the outcome of new knowledge arising out of research and development activities and is driven by people (Kong, Chadee, & Raman, 2013). Innovation is essential for firms to survive in today's hyper-competitive global environment. Further, in creative organisations, senior managers encourage autonomy and experimentation (Pearson, 1988). It has also been found that banks that invest in activities aimed to promote knowledge tend to be more efficient than banks that do not emphasize such activities (Menor et al., 2001; Oliveira, Roth, & Gilland, 2002)

IT Capability - IT has often been termed as the backbone of the banking industry due to the high information intensity within its product and value chains. Hence, the effective use of IT can be a source of SCA particularly when information is an important asset (Clemons, 1986). In our research, all the respondents agreed that banking is an information intensive and technology driven industry and innovative uses of IT can be vital to profitable growth. Industry experts opined that after the implementation of core banking solutions across all banks, there is very little to differentiate between different types of banks in terms of basic service offerings. However, the integration of IT with the business and its deployment as a strategic resource rather than an operational tool is what would differentiate between banks. Further, not just current operations but also new products, markets and distribution channels are all technology driven and the emergence of new banking models is likely to be based around technological differentiation (Parada & Bull, 2014).

Market acuity - Market acuity compels firms to constantly seek information from their product/ service markets enabling better understanding of not only the demands of clients but also the initiatives of competitors (Froehle & Roth, 2004). In this research, industry experts opined that banking was not like FMCG where the first mover got a competitive edge. Here, improving on what the competition had already done by doing it better and faster led to competitive edge. Further, our research also indicated that while there is no sustained or significant advantage due to new products/ services, there is a high degree of importance given to understanding the market better than the competition and more importantly knowing the competition well. Most banks in India today have identified segments of interest and are focused on increasing their presence and share of wallet within these segments. In this context, strategic agility would be demonstrated in their ability to service, retain and acquire customers in the most cost effective and efficient manner. Innovating for this is a challenge faced by most banks.

Change disposition: Discussions on change readiness covered aspects like process reviews, keeping the organisation structure flat and recruiting the right profile of people. Respondents cited the age of the organisation and the profile of its people, which kept them flexible. All the respondents emphasised the importance of people and organisation culture in making an organisation change ready.

Business Continuity Planning: Business Continuity Planning involves the use of risk management approaches and scenario planning to avoid business disruptions. Williamson (2007) found that in business continuity planning, financial organizations are ahead of other types of businesses. Due to the nature of banking operations and the need to have continuity in banking services, the Basel Committee 2 on Banking Supervision (BCBS) has mandated that that all banks should have in place contingency and continuity plans to ensure that they could continue to operate on an on-going basis and limit losses in the event of a severe business disruption. Hence having a BCP in place is an important operational issue but not a strategic issue and not perceived as a driver of strategic agility.

5.2 Dimensions of strategic agility

The strategic agility construct has been defined in various researches as comprising of strategic sensitivity, resource fluidity and collective commitment (Doz & Kosonen, 2008). It comprises organisational structures and processes, information systems and employee mind-sets. This research submits that there is a possibility of different definitions of strategic agility at a business level within the overarching definition. This research had various instances where respondents cited examples of visionary leaders who had long term vision for the bank and who brought about a significant change in the bank. Further, they also opined that strategic agility of a bank would depend on its risk philosophy, which would both enable as well as temper its agility. In conclusion, they also emphasised that a bank could not be called strategically agile if it did not have its pulse on customer needs and desires.

The dimensions of strategic agility provide a better understanding of the concept and also provide pointers on how organisations can plan to implement it. While, implementing agility is context dependent, nonetheless, firms can implement a variety of practices to achieve strategic agility (Goldman et al., 1995, p. 73). These practices are based on – Enriching the customer (based on market orientation), organising to master change and uncertainty (approach to risk and strategic orientation) and leveraging the power of human capital and information (leadership).

Based on prior research on strategic agility and insights gained from our research, we submit the following dimensions for strategic agility

Strategic orientation has been defined as the inclination of a firm to focus on strategic direction and proper strategic fit to ensure superior firm performance (Barney, 1986; Gatignon & Xuereb, 1997; Pleshko & Nickerson 2008).

Learning orientation influences the degree to which an organization is satisfied with its theory in use and, hence, the degree to which proactive learning occurs. In this respect, learning orientation affects the information that it attends to, interprets, evaluates, and ultimately accepts or rejects (Argyris and Scht~n 1978; Dixon 1992; Hedberg 1981). Three organizational values routinely associated with the predisposition of the firm to learn are commitment to learning, open-mindedness, and shared vision (Day 1991, 1994; Senge 1990, 1992; Tobin 1993).

Market orientation - In an unpredictable landscape, market orientation creates the necessary behaviours for the creation of a superior value for buyers by acquiring knowledge about the market and responding to it, and continuously delivering superior performance for the business (Baker & Sinkula, 1999; Kohli & Jaworski, 1993; Narver & Slater, 1990). Market orientation comprises three behavioural components of which only two components have been deemed relevant for this study - customer orientation and competitor orientation (Slater & Narver, 1995).

Entrepreneurial orientation - An entrepreneurial firm "engages in product market innovation, undertakes somewhat risky ventures and is first to come up with proactive innovations, beating competitors to the punch" (Miller, 1983, p. 770). Entrepreneurial orientation has five dimensions: autonomy, innovativeness, risk taking, pro-activeness, and competitive aggressiveness (Lumpkin & Dess, 1996).

Transformational leadership - Transformational leaders create a culture that embraces change (Brown & Eisenhardt, 1997). This is accomplished through the "four i's" of transformational leadership: idealized influence wherein leaders provide a clear vision and mission instilling pride, respect, and trust by possessing a high level of morals and ethics; inspiring the followers by holding high expectations and adding meaning to goals to keep individuals motivated; intellectual stimulation by fostering creativity and encouraging alternative perspectives on assumptions by promoting problem solving; and individual consideration for followers by showing personal interest in their well-being and lives (Bass, 1985, 1990, 2008).

Resource Re-configurability is a dynamic capability that enables managers to create new productive configurations of functional competencies by detecting new opportunities and recombining existing resources in innovative ways (Pavlou 2003).

5.3 Impact of strategic agility

There are many factors that are critical to an organization's future such as organisation goals, policies, scope and diversity of businesses, organization structure etc., (Agarwal & Helfat, 2009; Rumelt, Schendel, & Teece, 1994). However, recent scholarship suggests that critical resources (tangible and intangible assets), capabilities, routines and other processes, and people (individuals and teams) also affect an organisation's ability to succeed in the future and hence should also to be added to the list of success factors (Helfat & Winter, 2011; Winter, 2007).

Our research found that currently, the basic differentiation across different banks is attained through quality of service and the delivery channels that are adopted. While there have been product and service level innovations with the increase in the number of players in the banking sector, the focus of innovations has been more directed towards delivery channels - ATM transactions, phone and internet banking. Hence, retail banks have realised that traditional means of differentiation based on infrastructure, financial, operations and risk management are basic competitive necessities. For a sustainable competitive advantage (SCA) banks must identify, invest in and develop additional capabilities that will truly set them apart. Further, cost effective operations brought about by effective use of technology, collaborative and efficient processes, trained and committed people and lastly, all this backed by deep understanding of the operating environment including customer needs and competitive intensity, contribute to bottom-line optimisation and better return on equity. Indeed, literature and qualitative research emphasised the significance of focused efforts and initiatives on building customer satisfaction, as it is costlier to acquire new customers as opposed to servicing existing ones, with smarter use of technology for creation and distribution of products and services.

The dynamic capability theory suggests that the success of a firm relies on its ability to integrate, build, and reconfigure internal and external competencies to achieve new forms of competitive advantage (Teece et al., 1997a). Further, the capability embeddedness perspective of this theory suggests that this i.e. capability embeddedness, helps to create barriers to imitation due to the isolating mechanism (Grewal & Slotegraaf, 2007; Rumelt, 1984). This could explain why differences in performance or competitive advantage exist within firms with apparently similar capabilities. Our research suggests a positive impact of strategic agility on sustainable competitive advantage (SCA) further substantiating this proposition.

6. Conclusion

This research presents a clear and implementable set of antecedents that are not only theoretically informed but also practically implementable. Our research outlines factors that drive strategic agility, hence providing a direction for organisation focus. Furthermore, the antecedents of strategic agility are operationally valid as they are based on functional experts' inputs and literature, thereby providing managers with levers that they can manipulate and invest in to achieve strategic agility. This research also suggests that while the operating environment may have an impact on banking strategies, being strategically agile would help them to manage their responses.

While conducting this research, we observed that there are other possible antecedents of strategic agility that if explored further could provide interesting insights. Organisational culture has a significant impact on the structure, which in turn influences the behaviours and actions of people (Nerur, Mahapatra, & Mangalaraj, 2005). Neither culture nor mind-sets of people can be easily changed, which makes the move to become strategically agile a formidable challenge. Therefore, the role of organisation structure and culture in enabling a structure conducive to innovation and consequently the strategic agility of the firm are an interesting direction of future research. We submit that further research on the people component of SA in terms of workforce characteristics (e.g., behaviours and personal competencies) and the HR principles, policies, and practices that shape these characteristics (Wright, McMahan, & McWilliams, 1994) would add significant depth to our understanding of strategic agility and its antecedents.

Exhibit 7 - Summary of Qualitative Analysis

ANTECEDENTS

Market Insight
- Market insight
- Customer insights

Change Disposition
- Change readines
- Promoter/ top management agility in responding to new opportunities

Technology
- Appropriate technology
- Data availability for analysis
- Malleable technology
- Data analytics capability

Risk Management
- Risk management approach
- Risk appetite
- Sound business decisions

Organisation
- Organisation ability
- Involvement of stakeholders
- Strong organisation core including systems and
- Flat organisation structures
- Age of organisation
- Learning from past mistakes
- Organisation values
- Continous process improvement
- People profile
- Empower staff
- Operational structure
- Decision making speed
- Suitable human capital

LEADS TO

STRATEGIC AGILITY

WHAT IT CONSISTS OF
- Ability to change ahead of time
- Managing risk
- Spotting something in the environment and
- Identifying latent customer needs
- Appropriate use of bank capital
- Having long term goals
- Having flexible organisation structures
- Reinvention for relevance
- Being dynamic to deal with change
- Finding organisation strength in dealing with
- Being responsive to the environment
- Adopting cross functional and collaborative
- Finding right way to differentiate
- Clear vision
- Being agile in strategy
- Being agile in execution
- Having appropriate and flexible technology
- Reading early warning signals
- Decision making agility
- Is to be built over time
- Is willingness to do something different
- People agility
- Being nimble to capitalise on small windows of
- Is not abstract and is dynamic
- Is being customer centric - delivering value to
- Right kind of leadership
- Clear business objectives
- Having organisation alignment to vision

IMPACT AND RELATIONSHIPS

STRATEGIC AGILITY

IS NEEDED TO
- To match competition
- To correct service issues
- To grow
- To have competitive edge

IS DIRECTLY CORRELATED TO
- Favourable reputation (easy to be agile with good reputation)
- Risk management

LEADS TO
- Sustainable competitive advantage
- Consistent performance
- Good turnaround time
- Speed of delivery across product channels
- Ability to withstand reputational damage
- An entry barrier

DRIVES
- People, passion and commitment

CAN BE AFFECTED BY
- Lack of skilled human capital
- Improper technology
- Organisation silos
- Size of the organisation
- Rigid internal processes
- Conservative outlook of the organisation
- Favourable reputation - puts pressure on the organisation
- Approach to risk management
- Adverse reputation - makes it difficult to execute agility
- Not sharing learning/ knowledge across the organisation

IS NOT JUST
- Delivering customer needs quickly
- Regulatory compliance

HAS NO RELATION WITH
- Business Continuity Planning

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