The Post-Merger Performance: Evidence From Italy

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The objective of this paper is to investigate whether mergers create value for shareholders in both the short and long term. For this purpose, 120 announcements of mergers that were registered in Italy during the period 1994-2006 among listed companies were examined. The short-term analysis was conducted using the event study methodology in order to estimate the cumulative abnormal returns (CARs) in the time window around the announcement date (-10, +10). In this work, the sample of 120 mergers was divided into two sub-samples: the first considers the mergers that were carried out in all sectors of the economy, and the second focuses only on bank mergers. From the results obtained it would appear that, while the sub-sample of all mergers registered a statistically significant value creation for the shareholders of both the bidder and target companies, values also confirmed by combined analysis, the second sub-sample registered negative values for bidder companies and positive values for target companies. Negative values also seem to be confirmed by the results of the combined analysis both at the date of announcement and throughout the entire period of observation. For the long-term analysis, the Buy and Hold Abnormal Returns (BHARs) methodology was used, with which it was possible to observe the returns for three years. In the 36 months following the merger, the portfolios showed a significant destruction of value.

Keywords: post-merger performance, Buy and Hold Abnormal Returns (BHARs), Cumulative Abnormal Returns (CARs), banks, Italian stock market, event study

Introduction

In Italy, the market for Mergers and Acquisitions (M&As) has shown an upward trend during 1990s, continuing more slowly during the last decade. In particular, there has been a significant trend during the time period 1994-2000 and another more restrained trend in the period 2001-2006. In the period under study, a “liveliness” was detected in the banking sector in the midst of a reorganization process which began in the early 1990s.

From 1994 to 2006, the value of M&As has varied from 20,000 million to 140 billion euros in 1999. From 2000 to 2006 it rose from 129 billion to 100 billion euros (KPMG, Annual report). The average value of transactions stood between 30 million and 260 million euros in the period examined. The market value of the targets amounted to 208,068 million euros and that of the bidders around 467,484 million euros. The relative size assumed values of 44.51% (see Table 1).
The market value of the bank targets stood at over 53,000 million euros and that of the bidders at 251,714 million euros, for a relative size equal to 21.26%.

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Announcements</th>
<th>MV_B</th>
<th>MV_T</th>
<th>Relative Size</th>
<th>MV_B+T/MV</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2,993</td>
<td>981</td>
<td>32.76%</td>
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<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>10</td>
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<td>2,187</td>
<td>45.12%</td>
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<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>15,165</td>
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<td>81.11%</td>
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<tr>
<td>1997</td>
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<td>5,539</td>
<td>4,703</td>
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<td>3.25%</td>
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<td>1998</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>41,006</td>
<td>10,140</td>
<td>24.73%</td>
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<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>75,069</td>
<td>19,753</td>
<td>26.31%</td>
<td>13.05%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>18,017</td>
<td>7,011</td>
<td>38.91%</td>
<td>3.06%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>122,175</td>
<td>30,546</td>
<td>25.00%</td>
<td>25.78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>66,966</td>
<td>18,892</td>
<td>28.21%</td>
<td>18.75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2,886</td>
<td>19,523</td>
<td>676.39%</td>
<td>4.60%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>34,869</td>
<td>37,529</td>
<td>107.63%</td>
<td>12.46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>43,577</td>
<td>6,068</td>
<td>13.93%</td>
<td>7.34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>34,375</td>
<td>38,437</td>
<td>111.81%</td>
<td>9.48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994-2006</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>467,485</td>
<td>208,069</td>
<td>44.51%</td>
<td>10.49%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Descriptive statistics of the sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Announcements</th>
<th>MV_B</th>
<th>MV_T</th>
<th>Relative Size</th>
<th>MV_B+T/MV</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>35,960</td>
<td>16,005</td>
<td>99.76%</td>
<td>9.89%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Median</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>34,375</td>
<td>12,300</td>
<td>38.91%</td>
<td>9.48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Min</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2,886</td>
<td>981</td>
<td>13.93%</td>
<td>2.55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Max</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>122,175</td>
<td>38,437</td>
<td>676.39%</td>
<td>25.78%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Sixteen announcements were subtracted from the 120 initial announcements because of a lack of data. The market value of bidder and target refer to the last year prior to the merger announcement. MV is the overall market value.

On average, the total value of the companies involved in the merger process has affected 9.89% of the total market value. In the period 1994-2006, their weight was equal to 10.49% of the total capitalization of the Italian stock market and the highest value was recorded in 2001 and 2002 with a number of transactions equal to 10 and 16 and an average of 8. The MV average of bidders and targets amounted to around 35,960 and 16,005 million euros, respectively. During the reporting period, average (9.89%) and median (9.48%) took on very similar values.

The objective of this work is to investigate the value created (or destroyed) by the merger transactions in both the short and long term. In particular, starting from 120 merger announcements registered during the period 1994-2006, the equity performance of bidders and targets were investigated in the period around the announcement date of the deal. The total sample was divided into two sub samples (banking and non-banking), which were examined during the 20 days around the announcement date with the event study methodology for the short term and the Buy and Hold Abnormal Returns methodology (BHARs) for the long term. The post-merger performance of 40 bidders was observed in the three years following the merger.

The short-term results indicate a destruction of value for the bidders of the banking sector and statistically significant and positive cumulative abnormal returns for the targets. The non-banking sample, on the contrary, shows a significant value creation for shareholders of both bidder and target companies.

The long-term analysis, however, shows a high and statistically significant destruction of value for both samples,
and the tendency of the portfolio of non-banking bidders to increase losses compared with the banking portfolio.

**Literature Review**

M&As are one of the most explored areas of research. The majority of empirical studies examines M&As together, with no differentiation between the two types of transactions. The results found do not allow to come to a clear conclusion\(^1\). For example, Dodd and Ruback (1977), Kummer and Hoffmeister (1978), Bradley\(^2\) (1980), Jarrell and Bradley (1980), Asquith, Bruner, and Mullins (1983), Bradley, Desai, and Kim (1988) and Franks and Harris (1989), found significantly positive values for both bidder and target companies.

Smith and Kim (1994) examined 177 bidders and targets in the period 1980-1986 in the 10 days around the announcement date and found negative and significant values for the bidders equal to -0.23%. Walker (2000), on a sample of 278 M&As during the period 1980-1996 in the four days around the announcement date, found negative and significant values (-0.84%) for the acquiring companies.

Sudarsanam and Mahate (2003), after examining a sample of 519 buyers in the period 1983-1995, found negative and significant values in both the short and long term. The abnormal returns in the following 750 days range from -8.71% to -21.89% and are all statistically significant regardless of the methodology used\(^3\).

Campa and Hernando (2004) investigated 262 M&As announcements involving EU companies in the period 1998 to 2000 and concluded that the targets, on average, registered positive and statistically significant cumulative abnormal returns of 9%, the CARs of the bidders, in contrast, do not appear significantly different from zero, and, in relation to cross-border M&As, in certain cases assume negative values.

Instead, Martynova and Renneboog (2006), after examining a sample of 3,216 M&As announcements of 25 European countries, during the period 1993-2001, found in most cases positive values for both companies in almost all time frames observed.

Sudarsanam and Mahate (2006), after examining a sample of 519 buyers in the period 1983-1995 and considering multiple methods and multiple contexts (friendly, hostile, white knight, and multiple hostile) confirmed negative values throughout the pre and post acquisition period.

With regard to the short term results on mergers, there are the works of Asquith (1983), Eckbo (1983), Asquith, Bruner, & Mullins (1983), which found abnormal positive values for both bidder and target companies in the month from the date of announcement of the mergers. Dodd (1980) instead examined a sample of 151 merger proposals during the period 1971-1977 and found that at the announcement date the abnormal return for the target was more than 13% while for the bidder it was negative and equal to -1.09%\(^4\).

Jensen and Ruback (1983) examined the results of several studies and concluded that the target companies recorded values of 20%, while the bidders accomplished zero in the case of successful mergers. On the contrary, in the case of unsuccessful mergers, both companies registered negative values.

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\(^1\) For a thorough review, please refer to Agrawal and Jaffe (2000), Bruner (2003), Tuch and O’Sullivan (2007).

\(^2\) Dodd and Ruback (1977), Kummer and Hoffmeister (1978), Bradley (1980) divide the sample into successful and unsuccessful transactions.

\(^3\) Sudarsanam and Mahate (2003) use four different methods: market adjusted, mean adjusted, size-adjusted, and market to book value adjusted. The observation period varies from -1 +1 +41 to +750 days.

\(^4\) Dodd’s study differs from the others for two reasons. On the one hand, the author establishes the event date as the date of announcement and not of completion of the transaction, and on the other hand, it is the first work that uses daily returns instead of monthly ones.
Franks, Harris, and Titman (1991) and Servaes (1991) found positive and statistically significant values for the target companies and negative values for the bidders.

Healy, Palepu, and Ruback (1992), during the 10 days around the announcement date in the period 1979-1983 on a sample of 50 large U.S. industrial mergers, found positive, high and statistically significant values for the target companies equal to +45.6% and negative but not significant values for the bidders (-2.2%). From the combined analysis they found positive and statistically significant values of +9.1%.

N. Kohers and T. Kohers (2000) examined a sample of 1,634 mergers between high-tech companies in the period 1987-1996 and found positive and statistically significant values (+1.37%) for bidder companies between the announcement date and the day following the announcement, regardless of the method of payment of the merger. Andrade, Mitchell, and Stafford (2001), on a sample of 4,256 mergers completed between 1973 and 1998, found positive and significant values for the target companies and negative but not significant values for the bidders. The combined analysis of values shows a significant creation of value equal to 1.8% in the three days around the announcement date.


Malatesta (1983), for example, after examining 336 mergers during the period 1969-1974, found negative and significant average abnormal returns (-5.4%) for acquiring companies in the six months following the public announcement of the merger, while during the same period, the acquired companies experienced positive and significant abnormal returns equal to 7.0%. In the 12 months post-merger, considering the date of approval of the merger, the average abnormal returns were highly negative (-13.7%) and statistically significant.

Franks and Harris (1989), on a sample of more than 1,800 mergers in the UK in the period 1955-1985, found that the acquiring companies registered significant and negative abnormal returns (-12.6) in the two years following the completion of the merger.

Franks, Harris, and Titman (1991) investigated a sample of 399 acquisitions in the U.S. during the period 1975-1984, using different dates of announcement and in the following 36 months found values with different signs depending on the benchmark used. While confirming the presence of negative post-merger performance, the authors attribute this phenomenon to “benchmark errors”.

Loughran and Vlijh (1997) investigated a sample of 788 U.S. mergers during the period 1970-1989 and in the five years post-merger found size and book-to-market adjusted BHARs equal to -15.9%.

Gregory (1997) observed a sample of 452 M&As in the UK during the period 1984-1992 using six different benchmarks and pointed out negative and statistically significant and variable CARs between -11.8% and -18%.

Rau and Vermaelen (1998), in the period 1980-1991 in the U.S., observed a sample of 3,169 mergers and found negative and statistically significant values equal to -4.04% in the three years following the merger. In the same period for a sub sample of glamour buyers, they found negative and significant abnormal returns of -17.26%. The authors concluded by confirming the underperformance in the long run for mergers and small but significant positive abnormal returns for buyers in the tender offers.

Mitchell and Stafford (2000) examined a sample of 2,068 acquiring companies during the period 1961-1993
and through the construction of two different Equal-Weight (EW) and Value-Weight (VW) portfolios found negative and significant abnormal returns in the three years’ post-merger varying between -5% and -9% for the EW portfolio and an abnormal but not significant return of -1.4% for the VW portfolio.

N. Kohers and T. Kohers (2000) examined a sample of 304 mergers between high-tech firms in the period 1984-1995 and found negative (-37.39%) but not statistically significant values in the five years after the merger.

Black, Carnes, and Jandik (2001) during the period 1985-1995 examined 361 successful U.S. bidders and found BHARs ranging between -13.2% and -22.9% for the following three and five years, respectively.

Ferris and Park (2002) investigated a sample of 56 mergers in the telecommunications sector in the period 1990-1993 and found negative (-19.80%) and statistically significant values in the five years following the merger.

With regard to the banking sector next to the event study methodology, it is common to use the accounting approach and the analysis shifts to the observation of the evolution of fiscal indicators (ROE, ROA, operating income, cost/income ratio, etc.) monitoring them throughout the period before and after the transaction. For example, Berger, Demsetz, and Strahan (1999) considered the static and dynamic analysis of the effects of M&As. The case of economies of scale and scope of the transactions under consideration are the focus of static research, while the observation of accounting ratios, the search for efficiency and increased profitability achieved through cost reductions and/or revenue growth, are elements that characterize the dynamic analysis.

Vander Vennet (2002) and Focarelli and Panetta (2003) found that the efficiency resulting from risk diversification can be achieved in the short term, while the benefits to be gained through economies of scope and cost reduction calls for a longer period of time to achieve them.

Piloff (1996) examined 48 banks during the period 1982-1991, using both the first and second approach, and did not find significant changes in performance in the two years following the merger.

DeLong (2003) investigated 54 bank mergers during the period 1991-1995 and found that the only variable that can explain the differences in long-term performance is the relative volatility of earnings. This shows that banks mergers get small benefits from the diversification strategy.

Gupta and Misra (2007) examined 503 mergers during the period 1981-2004 in the three days around the announcement date and found significant losses for the bidder banks (CARs -1.84%) and significant and positive returns for the target banks (CAR +16.12%). In the long term, they examined 214 transactions and in the following 24 months they found positive and significant values (BHAR +4.64%).

More solid evidence to support the benefits of M&As can be found in the work of Haynes and Thompson (1999), who after examining a sample of 93 British companies in the period 1981-1995, found significant and substantial returns in terms of efficiency in the five years after the event.

With regard to the event study methodology, the contributions of Neely (1987) are noted, who after observing a sample of 26 transactions in the period 1979-1985 found positive but not statistically significant values for the bidders. Becher (2000) examined 558 bank mergers in the period 1980-1997 and also found positive and significant values for the targets (CAR +22.64%) and insignificantly positive values for the bidders (CAR -0.1%). In the same work, however, after observing the sub-period 1986-1990, he found negative and significant values for the bidders (CAR -2.14%)5.

5 Becher (2008) examined 619 operations which were carried out between 1993 and 1994 and found confirmation in the previous results. During this period, the banking sector, however, subject to the reformation, showed insignificantly negative values for the bidders (-0.61%).
The results achieved by Baradwaj, Fraser, and Furtado (1990), Cornett and Teharian (1992), DeLong (2001), Houston, James, and Ryngaert (2001) seem more solid, they found high and significantly positive values for the targets and significantly negative values for the bidders. Similarly to the work of Becher (2000), Houston, James, and Ryngaert (2001) also found significantly negative and higher values for the bidders by examining the sub-period 1985-1990.

Conversely, the results that emerge from an examination of the M&As in the European banking sector prove to be more fragmented.

Cybo-Ottone and Murgia (2000), for example, investigated 54 transactions in the period 1988-1997 and found significantly positive values for both bidders (CAR +2.19%) and targets (CAR +15.30%).

Among the studies that examine M&As in Italy it is noted the work of Bigelli and Mengoli (1999), who after examining the acquisition announcements of 56 listed companies in the period 1989-1996, found values insignificantly different from zero (CAR + 0.48 %) for the bidders in the 30 days around the announcement.

Rossi (2005) studied 12 events of M&As involving 29 large Italian companies during the period 1999-2003, and overall found results that were in line with other works: a loss of value for the bidders and an increase for the targets in the 30 days around the announcement. Unlike the bidders, however, on the day of the announcement, the abnormal returns of the targets were significantly positive (+2.86%)6.

With reference to the Italian banking sector, some works dwell on the operational (or accounting) approach, and others on the event study approach and still others on both.

Resti (1998), for example, found an improvement in the efficiency and productivity of merged banks compared with a similar sample that was not involved in M&As during the period 1988-1998.

Resti and Siciliano (1999) restricted the analysis to a sample of acquisitions on 14 Italian banks (nine acquired and five buyers) in the period 1992-1997 and observed the behavior of the returns in three time windows, finding positive cumulative abnormal returns for both buyers and acquired companies, and for the latter even negative values in one of the three time windows. The two authors also proceed, through some fiscal indicators, with a check on the possible link between stock market performance and fundamentals and concluded that there is albeit weak correlation between CARs and fundamentals.

Ferretti (2000) examined 75 announcements for bank takeovers in the period 1994-2000, out of these, 35 were Italian banks and 40 were banks in European countries. The author observed the reaction of the market in three time windows, considering the bidders only, and concluded that the negative abnormal returns of Italian banks are more substantial than those of banks in other European countries.

Savona (2002) also examined the bidders only, considering the period 1989-1997, and found close to zero values in two time windows out of three. Considering the period that goes from the date of the announcement, the one in which the boards of directors have deliberated, until the 50 day after, he found negative CARs and concluded that on average the transactions examined did not create value.

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6 The sample examined was initially composed of 29 transactions involving multiple industrial sectors which involved bidders and targets. Only for seven operations was it possible to examine the targets, because in the other cases, they were not listed or there was not any data, this latter case being frequent in mergers where the merged company disappears from the list. Therefore, it is clear that the reduced sample size and the inability to examine all targets do not allow to formulate a completed opinion, but simply allows to express a broad opinion.
Focarelli, Panetta, and Salleo (2002) found an improvement in ROE due to a more efficient use of capital and the utilization of tax benefits. The acquired company showed an increase in profitability which, according to the authors, is related to the improvement of the quality of the loan portfolio.

Intrisano and Rossi (2012) examined a sample of 72 M&As in the banking sector during the period 1994-2005 and found values in line with literature: the bidders registered negative and statistically significant abnormal returns and the targets positive and highly significant values. The results of the combined analysis point to a statistically significant value destruction.

Data and Methodology

The sample examined was made up of 120 mergers transactions carried out during the period 1994-2006. Its construction required the fulfilment of at least four requirements:

1. knowledge of the announcement date of the merger7 and its retrieval through the database of Il Sole 24 Ore, an Italian financial newspaper;
2. the presence of listed ordinary shares both for the bidder and target companies;
3. the continuous time series of prices of the ordinary shares which was acquired by Datastream;
4. the presence of a significant number of bidders for the whole period 1994-20068.

The data relating to the merger transactions were acquired by the Commissione Nazionale per le Società e la Borsa (CONSOB) and from the Bollettini di Vigilanza di Bankitalia.

The abnormal returns in the short term were calculated using the market adjusted model (or index model) for the full sample9 and the MIBTEL index10 was used as a benchmark. For the statistical significance the methodology of Brown and Warner (1985) was used.

The abnormal returns were estimated as follows:

\[ AR_{it} = R_{it} - R_{mt} \]  

where \( R_{it} \) and \( R_{mt} \) are respectively the return of the \( i \)-th security and of the “portfolio” at time \( t \) during the monitoring period, considering 234 days as the estimate range (-244, -11)11.

The Cumulative Abnormal Returns Standardized (CARs) were calculated as follows:

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7 The sample made up of bank shares was also analyzed using the method of Fama, Fisher, Jensen, and Roll (1969). The different methods lead to similar estimates (Brown & Warner, 1985).
8 During the period of analysis two events were frequently registered: (1) that the bidders, in turn, became targets and were delisted; (2) that on the same day, the bidders announced their merger with multiple targets. However, in view of 120 announcements, it was not possible to examine a symmetric sample. The post-merger performances, however, were observed up to the delisting of the bidder.
9 The sample made up of bank shares was also analyzed using the method of Fama, Fisher, Jensen, and Roll (1969). The different methods lead to similar estimates (Brown & Warner, 1985).
10 The MIBTEL index is a general basket which includes all the shares listed on the stock exchange and has been active since January 3, 1994. It is a value weighted index that is calculated every minute during the continuous trading phase on the basis of prices. It is preferred to use this index, representative of all securities listed on the Italian stock market, because it is larger and closer to the “market portfolio”. It is important to note, finally, that in calculating the returns, all the adjustments (dividends, stock splits, etc.) have been taken into account. Hence, the prices for both the securities and the basket are “Official Price” and “Price Index”, respectively, and were taken, as mentioned above, from Datastream. Currently, it is no longer active as it has been replaced by the FTSE Italy all-share.
11 The sample of bank mergers was also observed in the time window of 120 days around the announcement date but using different time windows including that of 20 days around the announcement date (-10, +10), through which it was possible to compare the results with those obtained from the sample of total mergers. The decision to investigate the bank sample in a longer time window comes from the fact that the procedure for bank mergers is more complex at the procedural level.
Assuming a “buy and hold” strategy for the entire event period.

In order to investigate the market reaction to the announcement of the merger, two different time windows around the date of the event have been identified t (-10, +10) and t (-5, +5) as well as other asymmetric periods with respect to this date. In particular t (-1, 0), the banking sector has also used the window t (-60, +60) and t (-30, +30) for the following period.

Finally, to quantify the value created or destroyed by the transactions as a whole, the combined values of the ARs, and similarly of the CARs, were calculated using the following formula:

$$\text{CAR}_{it} = \text{CAR}_{it-1} + \text{AR}_{it}$$ (2)

$$\text{AR}_i(t) = \frac{M_{V_{B,j}}}{M_{V_{B,j}} + M_{V_{T,j}}} \times \text{AR}_{B,i}(t) + \frac{M_{V_{T,j}}}{M_{V_{B,j}} + M_{V_{T,j}}} \times \text{AR}_{T,i}(t)$$ (3)

where $\text{AR}_i(t)$, $\text{AR}_{B,i}(t)$, and $\text{AR}_{T,i}(t)$ represent the abnormal returns at time $t$ for the transaction $i$, $M_{V_{B}}$, and $M_{V_{T,j}}$ the capitalizations of the bidder and target companies, respectively of the last day of estimate.

To estimate the long-term abnormal returns, the Buy and Hold Return methodology was used, as suggested by Barber and Lyon (1997).

The returns of the sample firms were calculated as follows:

$$BHR_{i,T} = \left[\prod_{t=1}^{T} (1+R_{i,t})\right] - 1$$ (4)

where $R_{i,t}$ is the return of the firm $i$ in the month of event $t$ and $T$ is the holding period ($T = 12, 24, 36$ months for a total of 756 days). For an equally-weighted portfolio of stock the returns are calculated as:

$$BHR_{P,T} = \frac{1}{n} \sum_{i=1}^{n} BHR_{i,T}$$ (5)

where $BHR_{P,T}$ is the average BHR of the portfolio, $n$ is the number of stocks in the portfolio, and $T$ is the time period for which the BHR is calculated.

The next step consisted in estimating the Buy and Hold Abnormal Returns and the Buy and Hold Average Abnormal Returns as follows:

$$BHAR_{i,T} = \prod_{t=1}^{T} (1+R_{i,t}) - \prod_{t=1}^{T} (1+R_{\text{benchmark},t})$$ (6)

$$BHAAR_{i,T} = \frac{1}{n} \sum_{i=1}^{n} \left[\prod_{t=1}^{T} (1+R_{i,t}) - \prod_{t=1}^{T} (1+R_{\text{benchmark},t})\right]$$ (7)

The statistical significance of $BHAR_{i,T}$ was calculated as follows:

$$t_{BHAR} = \frac{BHAR_{i}}{\sigma(BHAR_{i,T})/\sqrt{n_i}}$$ (8)

Similarly for $BHAAR_{i,T}$:

$$t_{BHAAR} = \frac{BHAAR_{i}}{\sigma(BHAAR_{i,T})/\sqrt{n_i}}$$ (9)
Where $\sigma(BHAR_{it})$ and $\sigma(BHAAR_{it})$ represent the cross-sectional sample standard deviation of the returns of $n$ firms and $n_i$ is the number of Mergers in month $t$.

Results and Discussion

Table 2 shows how the bank mergers registered negative values for bidder companies and positive values for the targets. With the exception of the three days around the announcement date, the values of which are not significant, in the remaining cases, the values are negative and statistically significant for the bidders, while for the target companies they are always positive and statistically significant. In a single sub-period, the bidder company recorded positive (0.81%) and statistically significant abnormal returns.

Table 2
Cumulative Abnormal Returns Standardized (CARs) of Bidders and Targets for Mergers (1994-2006)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>CAARS$_B$</th>
<th>Z-test</th>
<th>%Pos</th>
<th>CAARS$_T$</th>
<th>Z-test</th>
<th>%Pos</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(-5, +5)</td>
<td>-0.63%$^b$</td>
<td>-2.31</td>
<td>38.2</td>
<td>4.40%$^c$</td>
<td>5.17</td>
<td>70.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(-10, +10)</td>
<td>-0.57%$^a$</td>
<td>-2.01</td>
<td>55.8</td>
<td>5.06%$^c$</td>
<td>7.98</td>
<td>60.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(-1, +1)</td>
<td>-0.14%</td>
<td>-0.33</td>
<td>44.1</td>
<td>3.98%$^c$</td>
<td>5.61</td>
<td>80.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(-30, +30)</td>
<td>-2.96%$^c$</td>
<td>-10.55</td>
<td>54.5</td>
<td>6.78%$^c$</td>
<td>10.87</td>
<td>70.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(-1,0)</td>
<td>-0.34%</td>
<td>-1.25</td>
<td>44.1</td>
<td>2.91%$^c$</td>
<td>2.94</td>
<td>50.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(-60, 0)</td>
<td>-3.13%$^c$</td>
<td>-14.50</td>
<td>38.2</td>
<td>4.58%$^c$</td>
<td>7.31</td>
<td>60.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(0, +60)</td>
<td>0.81%$^c$</td>
<td>2.86</td>
<td>44.1</td>
<td>1.95%$^b$</td>
<td>2.40</td>
<td>50.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(-60, +60)</td>
<td>-2.60%$^c$</td>
<td>-12.50</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>4.13%$^c$</td>
<td>6.90</td>
<td>60.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: Z-test significance at the 10%, 5%, and 1% levels are denoted by $^a$, $^b$ and $^c$, respectively. The table shows the results of the event study for 34 mergers in the Italian banking market between Italian banks within the period 1994-2006. The number of bidder companies is 34 and the number of Targets is 10.

The analysis of the combined values shown in Table 3 confirms the trend of negative abnormal values. With the exception of the window including the 20 days around the announcement date in which the values are close to zero and not statistically significant, in all the other intervals, the mergers were destructive of value in line with the results produced from literature. The highest and statistically significant loss was recorded in the 10 days following the date of the announcement (-3.01%).

Table 3
Combined Cumulative Average Abnormal Returns Standardized (CCAARs) for Mergers (1994-2006)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>CCAARS$_B$</th>
<th>Z-test</th>
<th>%Pos</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(-60, +60)</td>
<td>-1.10%</td>
<td>-1.45</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(0)</td>
<td>-1.41%$^b$</td>
<td>-1.87</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(0, +10)</td>
<td>-3.01%$^c$</td>
<td>-3.98</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(-10, +10)</td>
<td>0.63%</td>
<td>0.24</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: Z-test significance at the 10%, 5%, and 1% levels are denoted by $^a$, $^b$ and $^c$, respectively. The table shows the results of the event study for 34 mergers in the Italian banking market between Italian banks within the period 1994-2006. The number of bidder companies is 34 and the number of Targets is 10.

From the results shown in Table 4, it is easy to notice that unlike the sample made up only of bank mergers, the sample which includes all mergers registered positive and statistically significant cumulative average abnormal returns throughout the period observed for both the bidders and the targets.
The analysis of the combined values shown in Table 5 confirms the trend towards creating value for the non-banking sample. Within the 20 days around the announcement date, in fact, there was a statistically significant creation of value equal to 3.05%.

Table 4
Cumulative Average Abnormal Returns Standardized (CAARs) of Bidders and Targets for Non-banking Mergers (1994-2006)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>CAARs_{\text{NB}}</th>
<th>Z-test</th>
<th>%Pos</th>
<th>CAARs_{\text{TNB}}</th>
<th>Z-test</th>
<th>%Pos</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(-5, +5)</td>
<td>1.65%</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>53.85</td>
<td>4.70%</td>
<td>5.44</td>
<td>62.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(-10, +10)</td>
<td>2.49%</td>
<td>5.28</td>
<td>66.66</td>
<td>5.55%</td>
<td>8.69</td>
<td>64.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(-1, 0)</td>
<td>2.22%</td>
<td>7.95</td>
<td>53.85</td>
<td>2.48%</td>
<td>19.06</td>
<td>61.19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes. Z-test significance at the 10%, 5%, and 1% levels are denoted by a, b, and c, respectively. The table shows the results of the event study for 70 mergers in the Italian Stock Market within the period 1994-2006. The number of bidder companies is 39 and the number of targets is 67.

Table 5
Combined Cumulative Average Abnormal Returns Standardized (CCARs) for Non-banking Mergers (1994-2006)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>CCAARs_{\text{NB}}</th>
<th>Z-test</th>
<th>%Pos</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(-10, +10)</td>
<td>3.05%</td>
<td>7.65</td>
<td>53.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(-10, 0)</td>
<td>2.58%</td>
<td>6.07</td>
<td>53.84</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes. Z-test significance at the 10%, 5%, and 1% levels are denoted by a, b, and c, respectively. The table shows the results of the event study for 28 mergers in the Italian stock market within the period 1994-2006.

In the short term, the results are different depending on the sample examined. For the banking sector, the values obtained are in line with Becher (2000), Ferretti (2000), DeLong (2001), Houston, James, and Ryngaert (2001), Intrisano and Rossi (2012).

Instead, with regard to the total sample, the results show a significant value creation for the shareholders of both the bidder and target companies, also confirmed by the combined analysis. These results are in line with the work of Asquith (1983), Eckbo (1983), Malatesta (1983), Asquith, Bruner, and Mullins (1983), Loderer and Martin (1990), N. Kohers and T. Kohers (2000), Martynova and Renneboog (2006), who found positive abnormal returns for both companies. The results of the combined analysis, instead, are in line with Malatesta (1983), Franks, Harris, and Titman (1991), Servaes (1991), Healy, Palepu, and Ruback (1992), who found positive and statistically significant combined values.

Long-term Performance

The long-term results appear to conflict with short-term results in relation to the total sample examined. In Table 6, in fact, negative results emerge for both portfolios examined. In the 36 months following the merger, the portfolios showed a significant destruction of value (BHAARs_{\text{B}} -1.72% -24.64% BHAARs_{\text{NB}}). In particular, the highest and most significant losses were registered in the two years following the merger in the banking sector (BHAARs_{\text{B}} -4.61%). The results found in this work are contrary to those of Gupta and Misra (2007), who found positive and significant values (BHAR +4.64%). In a single sub-period, the bidders’ stocks registered positive but not statistically significant values in the order of 1.35%. The portfolio of non-banking mergers, however, always registered negative and statistically significant abnormal returns and between the second and third year it registered the greatest losses (BHAARs_{\text{NB}} -45.90%). For both samples there was a tendency to increase the losses
in the two years following the merger with the difference that while the portfolio of bank mergers contained the losses after two years, the non-banking portfolio registered the greatest part of the loss between the second and third year.

Table 6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Months</th>
<th>BHAAR$_{B}^a$</th>
<th>Z-test</th>
<th>%Pos</th>
<th>BHAAR$_{NB}^c$</th>
<th>t-test</th>
<th>%Pos</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-6</td>
<td>-0.32%</td>
<td>-2.96</td>
<td>33.33</td>
<td>-2.04%</td>
<td>-4.82</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-12</td>
<td>-1.91%</td>
<td>-3.55</td>
<td>16.66</td>
<td>-4.78%</td>
<td>-5.16</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13-24</td>
<td>-4.61%</td>
<td>-11.79</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-23.24%</td>
<td>-12.80</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-36</td>
<td>1.35%</td>
<td>1.71</td>
<td>66.66</td>
<td>-45.90%</td>
<td>-51.40</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-36</td>
<td>-1.72%</td>
<td>-2.13</td>
<td>27.77</td>
<td>-24.64%</td>
<td>-6.00</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes. t-test significance at the 10%, 5%, and 1% levels are denoted by a, b, and c, respectively. The number of bidders is 21 for the banking sector and 19 for the non-banking sector. The test of significance is calculated using the Barber and Lyon (1997) procedure.

The total returns of portfolio shown in Table 7 confirm the results previously found. The highest and most statistically significant losses were recorded in the three years following the merger. In the following 36 months, the BHAAR$_{TS}$ amounted to -11.78%. This confirms the trend to increase the losses between the first and third year with the prevalence between the second and third year (BHAARs -19.90%).

Table 7

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Months</th>
<th>BHAAR$_{TS}$</th>
<th>t-test</th>
<th>%Pos</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-6</td>
<td>-1.14%</td>
<td>-6.73</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-12</td>
<td>-3.08%</td>
<td>-6.76</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13-24</td>
<td>-12.35%</td>
<td>-21.40</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-36</td>
<td>-19.90%</td>
<td>-99.98</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-36</td>
<td>-11.78%</td>
<td>-9.69</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes. t-test significance at the 10%, 5%, and 1% levels are denoted by a, b, and c, respectively. The number of bidder firms is 40. The test of significance is calculated using the Barber and Lyon (1997) procedure.

Figure 1. The trend of Buy and Hold Average Abnormal Return (BHAAR$_T$). $T = 1, 2, 3, \ldots, 36$ months for three portfolios; Banking (B); Non-Banking (NB); Total Sample (TS).
In no sub-period is there a sign reversal in the values. The Figure 1 shows the trend for BHAARs following 36 months.

Right from the start, the market perceives the merger as not generating value and maintains a negative reaction for the following 36 months. Apart from the portfolio of bank bidders which seems to show a zero trend with a substantial rise between the 31 and 36 month, the other portfolio assumes a persistent and consistent negative trend throughout the entire period. The total portfolio instead assumes an intermediate trend while showing a negative persistence.

**Conclusions**

A sample of 120 merger announcements was the subject of study in this work during the period 1994-2006 in the short and long term. In particular, two equally weighted portfolios composed of stocks of banking and non-banking bidders were formed. In the short term, the sample made up of banking stocks registered a significant loss for the bidder companies and positive and significant abnormal returns for the target companies. The portfolio consisting of non-banking securities, on the contrary, registered positive and statistically significant abnormal values for both the bidder and target companies.

The long-term analysis, however, showed that mergers do not create value, and that the portfolio of non-banking mergers tends to register greater significant losses than banking mergers. The trend is seen particularly between the second and third year where the abnormal returns are higher and more statistically significant in all periods examined. The banking portfolio shows a tendency to recover the losses between the second and third year, ending the period with a loss of -1.72%. Unlike the banking portfolio, the non-banking portfolio shows a tendency to increase the losses significantly between the second and third year, closing the observation period with a statistically significant loss (BHAARsNB -24.64%).

The examination of the total portfolio composed of two sub portfolios confirms a significant loss of value in the 36 months following the merger (BHAARsTS -11.78%).

In Italy, mergers are not “good news” and the results obtained both in the short and long-term analysis is in line with literature. With regard to the long term, as in the work of Agrawal, Jaffe, and Mandelker (1992), Loughran and Vijh (1997), Rau and Vermaelen (1998), Jaffe and Agrawal (2000), Park and Ferris (2002), N. Kohers and T. Kohers (2000), Black, Carnes, and Jandik (2001), Ferris and Park (2002), Sudarsanam and Mahate (2003, 2006), in this one also negative results are confirmed, and in particular that mergers do not appear to generate value for shareholders. The results obtained in this study confirm those found by Intrisano and Rossi (2012) for the short term in the banking sector.

Most of the works examined showed negative abnormal returns before and after the merger regardless of the methodology and the statistical techniques used. In this regard, a number of possible hypotheses can be formulated:

- The market is inefficient and therefore the abnormal returns represent the “price of inefficiency”. This explanation, however, remains weak, as Malatesta (1983) and Agrawal and Jaffe (2000) have noted;
- The synergies are overestimated (and overpaid) compared with their full extent and therefore there is the phenomenon of “Hubris Hypothesis” (Roll, 1986);
The estimation models are inadequate to investigate this phenomenon and this explains the presence of abnormal returns. In this case, as Rau and Vermaelen (1998) pointed out, “Such tests should be used with caution” (p. 252).

The fact remains that further investigations are needed to provide more solid explanations for the continual presence of this anomaly that exists regardless of (1) the country; (2) the sector of the economy; (3) the size of the samples examined; and (4) the time horizon observed.

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