Chapter 4
Flexible Strategy Framework for Managing Continuity and Change in E-Government

S. Nasim and Sushil

1 Introduction

The current era of compulsive change has driven organizations to focus excessively on "change and transformation," and government is no exception. However, despite immense focus on change, the record of change success is startlingly low, both in business organizations (Kotter 1995; Beer and Nohria 2000) and in the context of e-government projects (Heeks 2003; Ruth and Doh 2007). This calls for the need to explore the emerging alternatives beneath and beyond change (Sturdy and Grey 2003).

Reviews on organizational change literature have reiterated the fact that "managing change is invariably managing paradoxes" (Nasim and Sushil 2011). As a result, various approaches to managing such dualities and paradoxes have emerged as a possible solution for enhancing change outcomes. One such approach that seems to have gained considerable attention recently calls for "managing continuity and change concurrently" for better change outcomes (Brown and Eisenhardt 1997; Huy 2002; Leana and Barry 2000; Sturdy and Grey 2003; Sushil 2005; Graetz and Smith 2009).

The domain of e-government, on one hand, calls for radical changes embracing new technologies and processes, while "government," as an entity, on the other hand, is largely driven by rules, norms, and laws strengthening forces of continuity. This had led researchers to explore the context of e-government from the dual perspective of managing continuity and change. Based on experts' opinion, researchers have concluded that the e-government domain is highly affected by both continuity and change forces and have even identified these forces (Nasim and Sushil 2010).

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Further studies have also explored the hierarchical relationships among these forces and have suggested possible linkage with the performance factors (Nasim 2011).

This chapter is divided into five sections. The first section introduces the theme of this chapter followed by the background literature on managing continuity and change, in general, and also in the context of e-government domain. The third section presents the hierarchical modeling of continuity and change forces affecting e-government performance in India. Further, in the fourth section, the flexible strategy framework is proposed and illustrated with the help of a case project from the e-government domain in India, followed by the concluding section.

2 Background Literature

Continuity and change in strategy discourses have been traditionally treated as mutually exclusive, as an either–or situation. Till 1970s and 1980s when the environment was relatively stable and the pace of change was comparatively slow, organizations focused on "incremental strategies" (Quinn 1978, 1980) with greater thrust on continuity. The organizations used to form strategies so as to survive and grow by maintaining continuity in their business domain. However, in the last two decades, the waves of change have compelled businesses to evolve a more "flexible approach" (Volberda 1998; Sushil 2000) for managing change and transformation.

Despite plethora of literature on strategic change and transformation, the voyage of change has not been smooth enough for a large number of leading organizations with strong legacy – who have actually ended up in greater turbulence and chaos. This has given rise to a growing interest in the concept of "confluence of change and continuity" (Sushil 2005), i.e., managing continuity and change simultaneously. Apparently it may seem paradoxical, but there is ample research evidence of application of such a concept in spheres like corporate governance, organizational identity, and industrial relations.

Continuity, Change, and Management Rhetoric

An analysis of management literature on change and transformation reveals that restructuring discourse is highly dependent on the rhetoric of "turbulent times". Authors demonstrate the gap between managerial rhetoric and business reality. Eccles et al. (1992) point out that management writers and practitioners talked of turbulence and transformative changes even in the supposedly past and less competitive context of the 1950s. They further demolish the rhetoric of Drucker and Tofler for making the same stirring announcements of impending change in nearly all their writings spanning decades. Huczynski (1993) observed that all the gurus gained the currency for their relevance to the changing times. Thompson and Davidson, too, strongly refute the claims of such managerial rhetoric and state that there is no paradigm shift or complete break as these modern gurus ably demonstrate. Bureaucracies continue to evolve and develop new forms of hierarchy, rules, and

control. They further establish that it is in fact important to retain a sense of "continuity." Several other researches too have pointed to the need for both "change and continuity" in organizations (Ashforth and Mael 1996; Barney et al. 1998; Collins and Porras 1994; Eisenhardt 2000; Pettigrew 1985).

Strategic Change Versus Continuity

The organizations must realize that people are not Chameleons – they cannot change stripes and colors at the drop of a hat (Hart 1993). Most people have past accomplishments of which they are proud of and valuable strengths to bring forward. If they feel they are being told those things are to be discarded, they will not support the change efforts. According to Tannenbaum and Hanna (1985), changes in organizational identity have been experienced as painful and have been resisted by organizational members. Stability in organizational identity is seen as providing members with psychological anchors in times of change (Gustafson and Reger 1995). It has also been established that sense of sameness over time is necessary for psychological health (Albert and Whetten 1985; Shamir 1990). Christensen and Cheney (2000) indicate that spokespersons need to show that organizations are stable yet responsive entities with an inspiring history and a reliable presence. Thus, every organization needs some stability or continuity for if everything about an organization were to be always in flux, it would be crippled by chaos (Volberda 1998). Yet some aspects of the organization must change so that it can survive and even exploit the shifts and turns of the environment.

Continuity and Change: A Case of Confluence

Leana and Barry (2000) argue that tension between stability and change is inevitable and is a part of organizational life. Others suggest that change leadership must balance continuity and change (Burke and Trahant 2000; Pettigrew et al. 2001). Bianco and Schermerhorn (2006) reiterate that organizational leadership should allow for coexistent states of both "continuity and change." Strangelman (1999) demonstrates this through his case study on British Rail that many reform-minded managers and policy makers (who understand the emotive and political importance of nostalgia) deploy nostalgia as a proactive change-directed discourse rather than as reactionary force. Sturdy and Grey (2003), elaborating on how to manage continuity and change, state that "continuity and change be managed not as alternative states but as co-existent ones." They further add that it is imperative for managers today to embrace stability and learn to manage continuity if they want to survive. What can be a better testimony than the statement of a CEO cum change agent of a 125-year-old retail giant in his narration on the transformation of his company (Sears Roebuck and Co.) in which he admits that "Managing change and continuity simultaneously – is a task far more delicate than managing change alone." Martinez (1997) further suggests the questions to be posed in order to identify the elements of continuity or things to be preserved. Further, a revisit to the organizational change literature reiterates that "managing change is invariably managing paradox,"

especially the paradox of managing the confluence of both continuity and change forces (Luscher and Lewis 2008; Nasim and Sushil 2011).

2.1 Strategic Framework for Managing Continuity and Change

Though hosts of management writers have emphasized the need for managing "change and continuity," very few of them have actually attempted to present a framework for doing so. Mintzberg's (1988) notion of "reconciling change and continuity" in strategy making represents one of the earliest thinking on how to manage the two forces. In his excerpts on "Crafting Strategy," Mintzberg, however, proposed that the reconciliation between change and continuity forces should be done alternatively, a departure from the current thinking calling for concurrent management of the forces.

Volberda's (1997) "Paradox of Flexibility" emphasizes the need of an organization to manage change and continuity simultaneously via the flexibility route. Huy (2002) suggested an inductive model to resolve the tension between continuity and change at the micro/individual level. Drawing from "Systems thinking," Burchell and Kolb (2006) too emphasized the need to change and the need for stability to create sustainable organizations for future. The "Flowing Stream Strategy framework" for managing continuity and change, as put forward by Sushil (2005, 2012a, b, c), provides a detailed approach to "consciously manage the vital and desirable areas of continuity along with change." Graetz and Smith (2009) have recently proposed a "dualities aware perspective" as a potential way forward in balancing the contradictory forces of continuity and change.

Since the "Flowing Stream Strategy" approach is quite comprehensive and provides methodological details, it has been used as a basic approach for proposing the flexible strategic framework for managing continuity and change in e-government domain in this chapter. Thus, it becomes imperative to delve a little deeper into this approach and is explained in the next subsection.

Flowing Stream Strategy Approach

This approach rests on the philosophy that the strategic management of change could be better leveraged with a clear understanding of continuity of the organization (Sushil 2005, 2012a). The metaphor of a "flowing stream" is proposed by the author for depicting the management of continuity and change concurrently. According to him, organizations are acted upon by both forces of change and forces of continuity which need to be balanced concurrently, just like a flowing stream which exhibits continuity (being a stream) and change (as characterized by continuous flow of water) at the same time. While the major forces for change largely emanate from change situations, the "continuity forces" are generally

linked with the actors and processes and hold back an organization from change by creating inertia in the current business domain (Sushil 2005). The continuity and change forces, however, would be different for different contexts and would vary across domains.

2.2 Managing Change and Continuity in E-Government

ICT, in general, and Internet in particular, has ushered in new horizons for both the government and the governed, subjecting the domain of e-government to continual change (Stojannovic et al. 2006). However, despite the impressive growth of e-government in making information and services available to people, the intra-governmental changes have been slow, ad hoc, and plagued by poor planning, inadequate application of strategic management principles, and weak leadership (Moon 2002; Sundberg and Sandberg 2006). Researchers have consistently highlighted that e-government is more of an organizational change issue and that the need for managing constant change is central to e-government research (Li 2003; Gupta et al. 2004; Rose and Grant 2010).

E-Government in India

Paradoxically, India, recognized as a leading power in information technology, has a poor e-government index. Far behind in the overall e-government performance, its global ranking has fallen from 87 in 2005 to 125 in 2012. The e-government readiness index too has registered a decline from 0.40 in 2005 to 0.38 this year lagging behind countries like Sri Lanka and Maldives (UN E-government Readiness Report 2005, 2012). With massive investments made by the government in these projects and with dismal success rate (15–17 %) (World Bank 2004; Suri 2005), it becomes all the more important to explore approaches that may enhance the outcomes of such projects.

An integrated nationwide implementation of e-government in India has been launched with NEGP (National E-Governance Plan) providing the way forward. Previous studies and researches in e-government in Indian context not only suggest the significance of managing change in the domain (Kumar 2005; Suri 2009), but also highlight the issues and gaps in planning and implementation (Suri 2009), which are largely due to the presence of continuity forces like culture. Further, a comprehensive review of e-government literature undertaken by researchers, with the objective of identifying change and continuity forces, resulted in seven forces of change (*Globalization, New Opportunities, Pressures of Good Governance, Stakeholders' Needs and Expectations, New Technology, The E-platform, Government Policies and Legislation, and Public–Private Partnership)* and five forces of continuity (*Large Number and Heterogeneity of Citizen Base, Established*

Traditional Infrastructure, Existing Process of Service Delivery, Legacy Databases, and Existing Culture) (Nasim and Sushil 2010). A detailed explanation of these forces and their references is provided in Appendices 1 and 2.

3 Modeling Continuity, Change, and Performance in E-Government

Continuity and change forces being newer constructs, their relationship with the performance variable in the e-government domain, as assumed in the Flowing Stream Strategy framework, did not have strong evidence from e-government literature. Hence, it was deemed important to undertake a preliminary exercise to verify that the forces of continuity and change, as identified from the literature, do lead to better project performance, before proceeding for case-based illustration of the framework in the next section. For this, a qualitative method of interpretive structural modeling (ISM) based on the expert's views has been used to verify the proposed relationships between forces of change, continuity, and e-government performance. Subsequent subsections provide a brief introduction to the methodology followed by the preliminary model developed broadly depicting the hypothesized relationship among the variables.

3.1 Introduction to ISM Methodology

Identification of structure within a system is of great value in dealing effectively with the system and better decision-making. Interpretive structural modeling (ISM) is defined "as a process that transforms unclear and poorly articulated mental models of systems into visible, well-defined models useful for many purposes" (Saxena et al. 2006). ISM methodology helps to impose order and direction on the complex relationships among elements of system. The philosophical basis and the subsequent conceptual and analytical details have been provided by Warfield (1973, 1974). The user of this technique with the help of experts identifies and interprets the relationship between a complex set of factors. After a series of iterations, a hierarchical structure of relationship among the variables is extracted and depicted in the form of a digraph.

For a complex problem, like the one under consideration, where an attempt is made to study continuity and change management – a new frontier, and that too in a new domain like e-governance, ISM technique is bound to add clarity and value in developing conceptual constructs. This methodology has been adopted to obtain a structural hierarchy of relationship between the factors affecting (change or continuity) e-governance in Indian context and their relationship with e-government performance. The steps involved in using ISM technique for the context defined above may be enumerated as follows:

i. Forces driving change and continuity in e-government domain are identified by undertaking literature review.
ii. A contextual relationship among the factors is established (by taking cues from the experts).
iii. A structural self-interaction matrix (SSIM) is developed indicating pair-wise relationship among factors.
iv. From the SSIM matrix, reachability matrix is derived and is then checked for transitivity of relationship among factors.
v. The reachability matrix as obtained in the above step is partitioned further to obtain various levels/hierarchy of factors.
vi. Based on the levels identified in the above step, a digraph is prepared which is then converted into an ISM.
vii. In the end, the ISM model is checked for any inconsistency and eventually interpreted in the context defined.

3.2 Hierarchy of Continuity and Change Forces Affecting Performance

As a result of the iterations of the final reachability matrix, the hierarchy of continuity and change forces affecting "performance" in e-government domain is depicted in Fig. 4.1, and its interpretations are discussed as follows.

Interpretations

As depicted in the Fig. 4.1, the hierarchy of forces affecting e-government performance in India, the forces at the top are interpreted to be more dependent ones and are driven by the forces at the lower end of the hierarchy. It includes both the forces driving change in favor of e-government and the continuity forces.

A closer look at the hierarchical model indicates that forces of continuity are affecting e-government more than the forces of change as they are mostly clustered at the bottom. The most critical forces driving change in e-government domain in India are globalization and stakeholders' needs and expectations leading to new opportunities and new technologies enhancing pressures for good governance, resulting in greater proliferation of e-business/e-platform, public–private partnership, and government policies and legislations finally leading to better performance of e-government projects.

Some of the continuity factors that have emerged out to be significantly affecting e-government are large citizen base, existing culture, existing physical infrastructure, and traditional system of service delivery. Eventually, all the continuity forces lead to better e-government performance. Since all these continuity forces are at the lower level of hierarchy, there seems to be more of an indirect relationship with the performance factors as compared to the change forces which are mostly clustered in the middle and at the top. This perhaps points out the possibility of change forces mediating the relationship between continuity forces and performance factors.

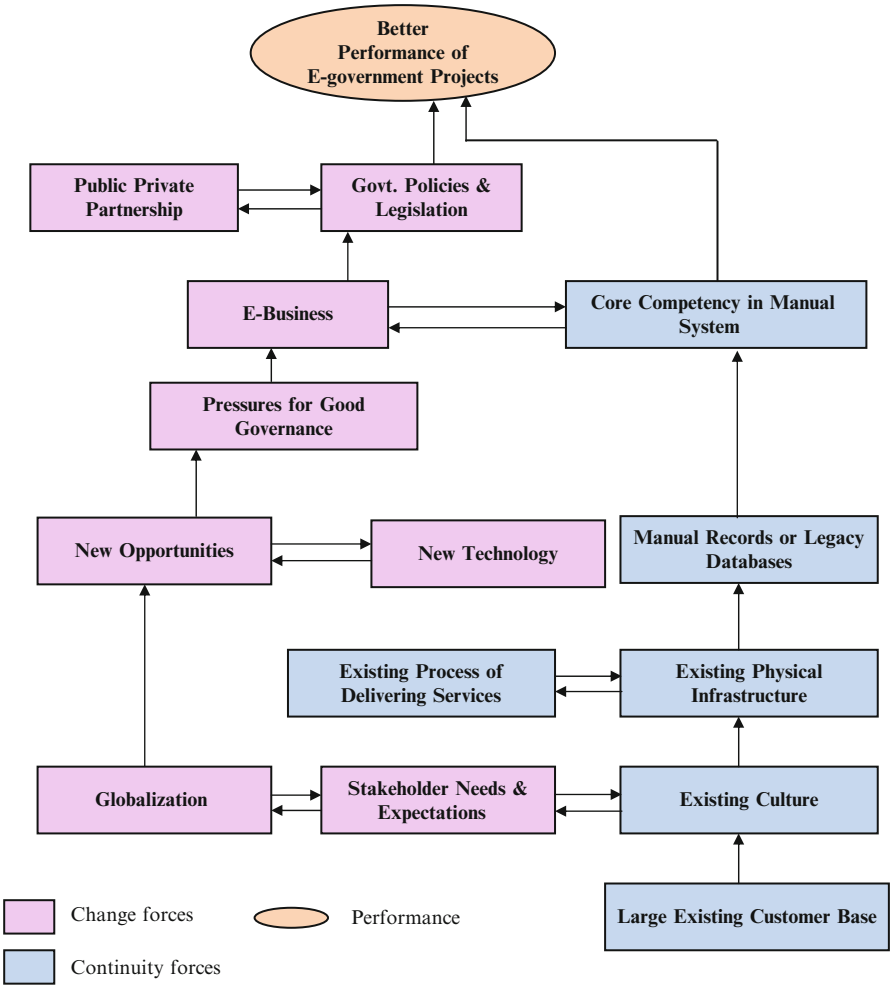

Fig. 4.1 Hierarchy of factors driving change and continuity in e-government in India

Having modeled the continuity, change, and performance factors, it seems imperative to present the flexible strategy framework for managing the continuity and change forces for better outcomes.

4 Flexible Strategy Framework for Managing Continuity and Change in E-Government Domain

As against the popular notion of e-government being change centric – calling for radical change – a more incremental approach is recommended taking into consideration the legacies or the inertia of the pre-e-government era. Drawing

predominantly from the Flowing Stream Strategy, the following flexible strategic framework may be proposed to resolve the paradox of continuity and change in e-government:

- Implementers of e-government projects should identify the key factors driving change and also the critical factors obstructing positive change in the context of a specific project.
- Continuity–change template should be developed for each project, facilitating a deeper understanding of the factors in consultation with experts in the field. Higher weights may be assigned to more critical factors affecting the project, and the scores may be used further to map the project on the continuity–change matrix.
- Given the fast pace of change in e-government context, it is expected that both forces of continuity of change will be high in almost all projects, thus calling for a strategy managing the confluence of these factors.
- "Flowing Stream Strategy" (Sushil 2012c) is recommended for strategic management of confluence of continuity and change in e-government domain, the methodology for which includes:
  - VDB (Vital, Desirable, and Burdensome) analysis of continuity forces.
  - Impact analysis of change forces affecting the e-government project.
  - Assess and landscape the performance factors relevant for the e-government project.
  - Suggest strategic actions for improving low performance areas by leveraging continuity with change forces.

The flexible strategy framework for the e-government domain, as proposed above, can be further depicted in Fig. 4.2.

Methodology for Case Illustration

In order to illustrate the flexible strategy framework proposed above, a case-based approach is used. A mission mode Government-to-Citizen (G2C) project called Online Filing of RTI Complaint and Appeal (also known as CIC online) has been selected to demonstrate the Flowing Stream Strategy methodology as it had been rated high on both continuity and change forces. The inputs for analyzing the case have been elicited from the key planners and implementers of the case project, as a part of the doctoral research at IIT Delhi (Nasim 2010). The continuity, change, and performance factors used in case analysis are derived from the literature (Refer Appendices 1 and 2).

4.1 Case Background: Online Filing of RTI Complaint and Appeal (CIC Online)

RTI Complaint and Appeal System (also referred to as Chief Information Commission-CIC online) is a nonprofit initiative under the National Portal of India project and aims to bring the ICT benefits in the government functioning so as to

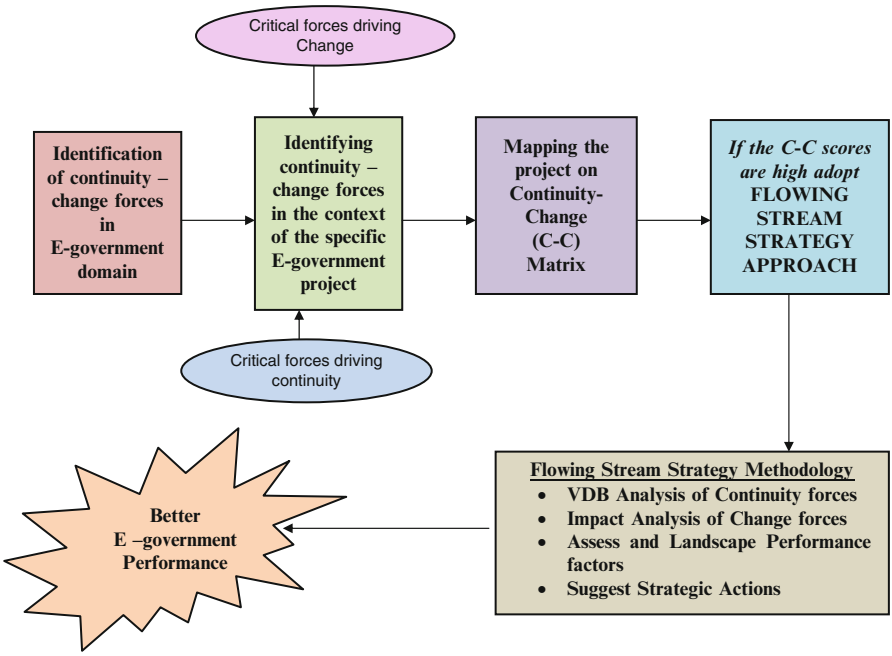

Fig. 4.2 Proposed flexible strategy framework for managing continuity–change

effectively disseminate information to the citizens as per the landmark Indian Right to Information Act (RTI), 2005. The hallmark of the RTI Act, 2005, is that the citizens can have access to information, which so far has been under the control of public authorities (PA), in order to promote transparency and accountability in the matters concerning the public authorities in particular and the government in general. The online filing of RTI complaint and appeal has, thus, institutionalized the convergence of ICT with the Right to Information Act, 2005 in India.

Project Scope and Coverage

Implementation of the initial 3 years (2005–2008) of RTI Act revealed that there is a huge gap between demand and supply side of information. This may largely be attributed to the poor records management, lack of automation, and the inefficient usage of the computerization in the government organizations. Given these problems, it was envisaged to enable the RTI complaint and second appeal process through an ICT-based system providing equal opportunity to the citizens at large. The portal (http://rti.india.gov.in) has nationwide content coverage in terms of information on the complaint and second appeal, which facilitates its target audience and beneficiaries that include the citizens of India of all age groups and demographic backgrounds, the Ministries, Departments and associated offices, Central Government offices, Legislative and Judicial Institutions of government, and public sector enterprises/organizations.

Project Stakeholders and Timeline

This project is a key initiative driven by Central Information Commission and National Informatics Centre in accordance with the National e-Governance Plan (NeGP), which sought to acquire the key benefits of ICT and deliver the RTI system over the digital network for the citizens. The key project stakeholders include representatives of Central Public Authorities (Public bodies falling under the jurisdiction of central government), citizens of India (including the nonresident Indians), and the Civil Society Organizations. While the front-end RTI Complaint and Appeal System had been operational since July 2008 as envisaged, the back end migrated to the new system (with consolidated database) fully by December 2008. All the project timelines were successfully adhered to as planned by the team.

The Front-End Process (Citizen Module)

This front-end module facilitates the citizens to submit their complaints and/or second appeals to the CIC online. A citizen can visit the site http://rti.india.gov.in, fill up the desired form, and submit his/her complaint/appeal online. A choice is made available to the visitor either to submit the form at one go or save the form as a draft mode for final submission at a later date. Once it is finally submitted, the complainant/appellant is prompted by the system to take a print out of the filled form, sign the form, and send the signed form to the CIC in view of requirements of the rule framed under the Act for further processing of the petitions. While generating a hard copy, the system also generates a unique registration number, which can also be used by the citizens for further correspondence or tracking the status of the complaint/appeal online. While filling the forms, information regarding priority category, if any, is also being captured to help CIC dispose the petitions within stipulated period as laid down in the RTI Act. The citizens can access this module by visiting http://cic.gov.in and the National Portal as well.

Major Back-End Process and Technology Architecture

The back-end module aligns on the deliverables at the office end in compliance with the provisions regarding time schedules enacted in the RTI Act. A total of 12 stages have been devised with multiple substages/options to proceed through the life cycle of a complaint/appeal. All actions or decisions taken by the respective officials at different stages in the process flow of complaints/appeals are captured. It also facilitates auto-generation of hearing notices, electronic dispatch of the decisions through e-mail to the concerned stakeholders. This system not only facilitates easy tracking of cases but also monitors the workflow for speedy disposal of cases. This module also assists in generating various documents like official notes, daily cause list, disposal reports, and generation of designer reports comprising of various dynamic queries which may be used by various statutory organizations and by the parliament as an indicator for monitoring the implementation of RTI Act as mandated.

The RTI Complaint and Appeal System is hosted in the Internet Data Centre of NIC and leverages upon the National Portal of India infrastructure with a primary

objective of ensuring 24×7×365 support, scalable, secure, accessible, manageable, and highly reliable systems. Disaster Recovery Center, NIC infrastructure allows for a robust physical and technical environment. The Data Centre is ISO 27001 (Information Security Management System) certified with a disaster recovery center at Hyderabad. The project management team comprised of team members from CIC and NIC with a dedicated project manager, system architect, software developers, and implementation support professionals. Secretary, CIC lead the overall team and the Joint Registrar held the responsibility of the entire coordination so as to ensure the completion of the project as scheduled. The Chief Information Commissioner and Information Commissioners provided useful guidance whenever required.

User Experience and Feedback

Online applications have been showing increasing trend as against the conventional mode of filing applications. Since the status of the cases at various stages is available in public domain, request for information at CIC is showing a decreasing trend. Prior to launch of this system, only basic information could have been generated. But now reports on much diverse information are being generated for use by the policy makers in drawing future roadmap regarding RTI implementation in the country. There are several users whose observations and experiences are on record:

- One of the users has filed more than 100 appeals/complaints since the inception of the commission. More than 60 % of all have been filed online. With the help of the features of this module (customer feedback), he used to send emails for classifying the nature of the petitions and requesting for clubbing the similar matters. This has resulted into speedy disposal of most of his cases.
- Civil Society Organizations have made considerable amount of pressure on the government of the day to appoint more numbers of the Information Commissioners by only following the monthly disposal and pendency figures.
- At another occasion one of the appellants brought to the notice of the commission that one of its important orders stand unimplemented by the public authority and this he could do by just following the status of that case.
- Most of the public authorities are following the module to see as to how many appeals/complaints have been filed against them and make themselves prepared well in advance for appearance or the disposal of the cases.
- In yet another case, the complainant filed a case online and left for USA. He kept on checking the status, and when his case came up for hearing, he sent a mail to the commission requesting to hear him through video conference and was accordingly heard.

4.2 VDB Analysis of Continuity Forces

The forces of continuity have been found to be significantly high in the context of CIC online project, the aggregate score for continuity force being 4.14. Out of the

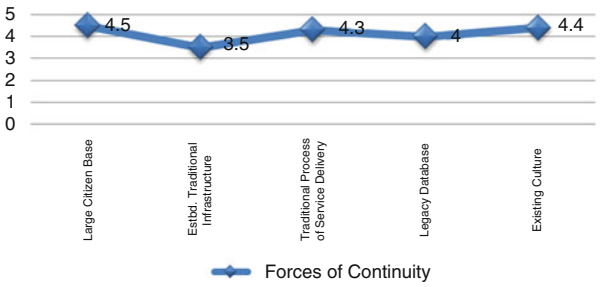

Fig. 4.3 VDB analysis of continuity forces (CIC online)

five continuity forces, three have been identified as vital, one desirable, and one does not seem to be very relevant for this case (Refer Fig. 4.3). The vital continuity forces include large and heterogeneous citizen base, existing process of service delivery, and the existing culture. The critical nature of these continuity forces has made them vital rather inevitable continuity forces.

In the context of all e-government projects, addressing the needs of the citizen base is indispensable, irrespective of size. However, in this case context, this continuity force becomes vital given their strategic response. Being web based, it is not only accessible 24×7, but is also more inclusive due to its accessibility in Hindi language and to people who are physically challenged. Further, some of the states have taken the initiative of setting call centers to facilitate the access to the illiterate masses. The *Jaankari* project of the state of Bihar has been recently awarded for such an innovation promoting the inclusivity of the RTI project. The continuity force of "traditional process of service delivery," though partly burdensome, is critical due to its legal nature. Thus, while most part of the traditional process is facilitated by law, some obstructive part of the law like rigid mode of payment (check, draft, cash) is to be reviewed for speedy delivery of service. Further, the cultural (issues though very resistive initially) are paving way for easier implementation of the project and hence act as a vital force to leverage on for effective outcome.

The continuity force of "legacy data base" does not pose much of a problem as its migration has been enforced by law, though technological issues of file noting do obstruct the workflow. The continuity force of "established traditional infrastructure" does not directly affect the CIC (Chief Information Commission) which is a body constituted recently after the enactment of RTI Act in 2005. However, the public authority, with whom the CIC office coordinates, is definitely faced with the issue of utilizing or leveraging the traditional infrastructure for facilitating information dissemination.

4.3 Impact Analysis of Change Forces

As explained before, the inputs regarding the extent of impact of change forces were taken from the case experts on the basis of pre-designed templates.

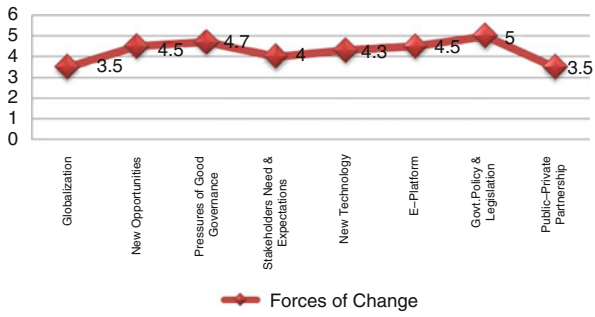

Fig. 4.4 Impact analysis of change forces (CIC online)

An analysis of the impact of change forces in the context of CIC online project reveals that five of these forces, namely, perceived new opportunities, pressures of good governance, new technology, e-platform, and government policies and legislation, have significantly high impact on the project, while globalization and public–private partnership have modest impact (Fig. 4.4).

Discussion on Impact Analysis

The force of "globalization," as per the key officials of the case project, does not seem to have a direct impact on this project as the Indian RTI Act is more comprehensive and stringent compared to the information laws of even the developed nations (like Canada, and the USA). According to them, it is the information dissemination drive within the country pioneered by the RTI Act that has been the major imperative for the project. Adding on to this force has been the "pressures of good governance" and the "perceived new opportunity" related to the "new technology" which acted as the driving force for the project. Such pressures and the lookout for opportunity and new technology-related option were in turn triggered by a huge number of pending cases in just 3 years of enactment of the Act. The proliferation of the e-platform in the country too added on to the imperative to go online. The public–private partnership, however, has little impact as the technical implementation is handled by NIC (National Informatics Centre) – the technical wing of the government, thus, requiring minimal intervention from the private sector unlike the other cases.

4.4 Strategic Factor Assessment and Landscaping

As indicated earlier, this section deals with assessment of the project and citizen-related performance factors (drawn from literature), based on the opinion of the key officials of the project, as depicted in Fig. 4.5. Further, these factors are used for landscaping against the aspired level of service to highlight the areas of improvement.

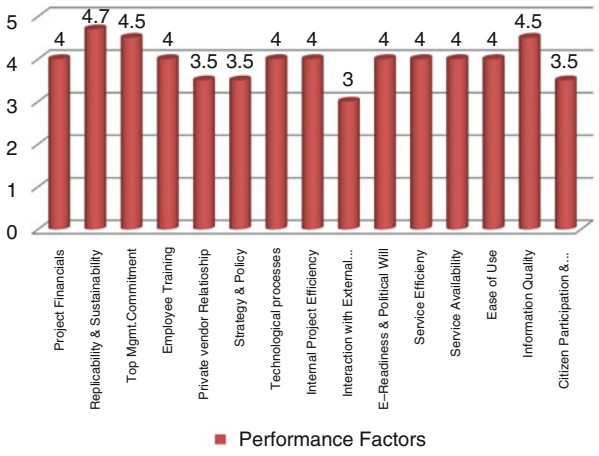

Fig. 4.5 Strategic factor assessment (CIC online)

Strategic Factor Assessment

An analysis of the scores attributed by the case officials to the project and citizen factors indicates that project deliverables are comparatively lower than the citizen-related factors.

Given the project factors, the case project stands out in terms of replicability and sustainability followed by top management commitment. Factors like project financials translating into cost and time saving, project's technological process and architecture, and employee training and involvement have had a fair score of 4 indicating some room for future improvement. The factors requiring attention, however, include the process of strategy and policy and the interaction with and awareness among the external stakeholders like NGOs and Civil society organization, which seem to be rather weak in this project context. Lack of adequate awareness and the limited interaction with such external stakeholder groups have been highlighted in the secondary data sources as well. Private vendor relationship has not been accorded much score given the limited role played due to their involvement of NIC in technical implementation of the project.

As regards the citizen-related performance factors, the contribution to information quality and transparency has been scored the highest. The other factors related to service efficiency, i.e., cost and time savings to the citizens, ease of use, and availability, have been scored well. The only concern area is the citizen participation which is rather low and seems to be largely a fallout of low level of awareness as indicated in the project factors.

Landscaping Performance Factors

Inputs from the experts were obtained regarding their perception of the current status of the project as compared to the aspired level with respect to the performance parameters for both the project- and citizen-related factors.

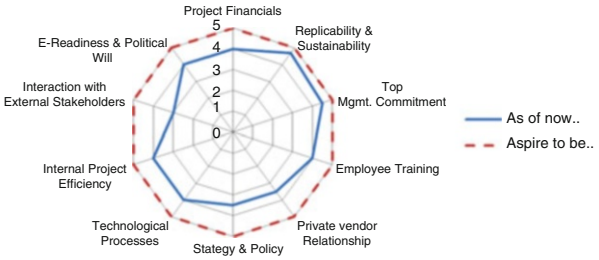

Fig. 4.6 Strategy landscape for project performance factors (CIC online)

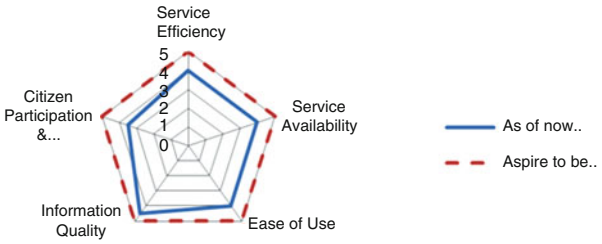

Fig. 4.7 Strategy landscape for citizen performance factors (CIC online)

As evident from Fig. 4.6, project factors like "interaction with external stakeholders" and the "strategy and policy" require greater intervention for aspired level of performance exhibiting the maximum gap between the current and aspired levels. The rest of the factors also provide scope for improvement in future, if strategized.

As depicted in Fig. 4.7, the performance factor related to "information quality" does stand out almost reaching the aspired level. There is, however, considerable scope for improvement in the rest of the citizen-related factors, specifically "citizen participation" which is quite behind the aspired level.

4.5 Strategic Actions Suggested: LAP (Learning–Action–Performance) Synthesis

In order to synthesize the key learnings and suggest strategic actions to attain the aspired level of performance for the project deliverables, the background information on the case and the subsequent analysis of the case have been utilized. Table 4.1 summarizes the strategic actions suggested for performance factors with low scores only. The practitioners may adopt the same approach for strategizing ahead for better performing strategic factors in order to sustain their performance.

Table 4.1 Strategic actions suggested for low performing factors for CIC online project

S. No.	Strategic factor with low performance scores(≤3)	Learnings from case analysis (Key predictors for the strategic factor)	Strategic actions suggested for aspired level of performance (score: 5)
1	Interaction with external stake holders (EXST) *(Project-related performance factor)*	The influence of the change forces "pressures of good governance" (PGG) has important bearing for this strategic factor Internal project/business efficiency (BSEF) also affects it positively Technological process (TECH) may affect through internal project/ business efficiency (BSEF)	Integrate the change force of "pressures of good governance" (PGG) with the right kind and level of technological processes enhancing project efficiency thus strengthening the interactions with external stakeholders
2	Strategy and policy in place (STGP) *(Project-related performance factor)*	Cultural (CUL) forces have negatively affected the strategy and policy for the project Project factors like employee training (ETNG) and technological process (TECH) have a positive effect on STGP Change forces like new technology (NTG) and pressures for good governance (PGG) indirectly affect through the project factors of ETNG and TECH	Delineate the negative aspects of the cultural forces (e.g., public authorities) and leverage or integrate it with suitable employee training and the technological process
3	Citizen participation and empower-ment (CTP) *(Citizen-related performance factor)*	This citizen factor is directly affected by one continuity force of culture (CUL) and three project factors like internal project efficiency (BSEF), e-readiness (ERED), and interactions with external stakeholders (EXST) as per the empirical model Efficiency, either at the back end or in service delivery, is a strong predictor of citizen participation. Both being average in this case, low rating of CTP is expected	Strengthen the efficiency of the project and integrate it with positive cultural forces (CUL) as part of the strategy and policy for the project may enhance CTP
4	Private vendor relationship (PVR) *(Project-related performance factor)*	"Established traditional infrastruc-ture" (ETIN) strongly affects private vendor relationship. Since CIC online being a newly conceived project, this link has not found to be very relevant While CIC may not have inherited established infrastructure, the public authorities do confront this issue	While NIC (National Informatics Centre) has successfully implemented the project at the CIC level, to address the problem of traditional form of data storage and retrieval at the public authority level, PPP mode may be recommended to further provide a boost to the project

5 Conclusion

This chapter reiterates the need for a flexible approach for managing the confluence of continuity and change in e-government domain. Drawing from change, strategy, and e-government literature, it proposes a flexible strategy framework for managing such a confluence. A hierarchical modeling of continuity and change forces establishes their relationship with e-government performance, at the outset. Later, a step-by-step demonstration of the proposed strategic framework is undertaken with the help of a case study from e-government domain in India. Most of the continuity and change forces that were found to be significant as per the hierarchical model were also found to be valid in the specific context of the select CIC online case project. Further, based on the insights from the case analysis, strategic actions were suggested for strategic factors with comparatively low performance ratings.

This chapter not only proposes the strategic framework for managing e-government projects for better change outcomes but also illustrates with real case example, thus, providing a roadmap for the practitioners in the domain. From academic perspective, it attempts to add value by proposing a new strategic framework for the domain besides demonstrating the use of techniques like ISM and Flowing Stream Strategy approach.

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