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ACCELERATING AND MEASURING OF SOCIAL CHANGE IN RURAL AREAS: FACTORS, POLICIES AND TECHNIQUES

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Abstract
The study accelerating and measuring social change in rural areas focuses on a multi-faceted approach that addresses various factors contributing to social change. Utilizes effective policies and employs appropriate techniques that can be used to accelerate change toward a common goal in rural areas. It explores the meaning of change and social change in agriculture. The study also discusses ways to measure the impact of change and ensure a positive effect. Social change encompasses changes in the basic as well as superficial structures of society, the way of living, and people's behavior. We will discuss factors, policies, and techniques to accelerate and measure social change in rural areas. To measure change successfully, it's necessary to involve the right people and present the plans in the best way possible.

KEYWORDS: Social Change, Change and Rural Areas

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INTRODUCTION

In today's fast-changing world, where globalization and technological advancements have become the norm, effective change plays a vital role in the growth and sustainability of any society (Shaiky, 2020). Change is a process that can significantly impact an institution or an individual in terms of their offerings, strategies, and innovation. Therefore, it requires careful consideration and planning. Society can change at a rapid pace and their stability can be relative. Nevertheless, change is a definitive issue that can profoundly affect institutions. For instance, the suffrage movement paved the way for women's right to vote, which is now a global phenomenon. This demonstrates how change can take time but have a lasting impact. Changes in production methods can also alter the structures and relationships of society. In a feudal mode of production, serfs were the lower class and the kings were the upper class. In contrast, after the advent of the capitalist mode of production, the bourgeoisie became the masters and the proletariat became the exploited class (Das, 2022). Change is an inevitable aspect of today's global market. Take, for instance, the rapid changes that COVID has forced organizations of all sizes to make. When organizations do not respond effectively to change or change initiatives, the likelihood of successfully implementing that change is quite low.

Social change is a way of bringing about a transformation in society by changing social customs, values, cultures, and structures. It involves transitioning from one form of society to another. These changes can be observed at various stages of societal development. Social change is a universal phenomenon that takes place in all societies, although it may be slower in primitive and folk societies and faster in complex and modern societies. Whether gradual or rapid, social change is inevitable and occurs regardless of the type or location of human society.

Social change in agriculture is shifting towards modern, innovative, and scientifically informed farming technologies. Agricultural practice recommendations, also known as production recommendations, are technologies designed for farmers, whether they use indigenous or modern methods. The introduction of modern agricultural technology has led to changes in social values and norms among rural communities. This is due to the gradual abandonment of traditional agricultural practices, such as collective land tenure and gender-based farming roles, which are incompatible with modern methods.

According to a report by Walkme in 2023, change techniques are a set of strategies, processes, and practices used to achieve a smooth and effective transition from one state to another. These techniques take into account both the societal and individual components to maximize an institution's potential for transformation. Change techniques for acceleration are a group of change management tools used to speed up the change process towards a common goal. In simpler terms, these are principles and tools designed to accelerate implementation and increase the success of social change. They help in assessing the political, strategic, and cultural environment of society and enable planning for action, which can estimate the potential of a change initiative in achieving success with existing processes.

Measurement for Change proposes an integration of monitoring, evaluation, and learning into decision-making systems that support the sustainable transition of interventions to scale. Measuring change means understanding how people are impacted by the change and based on that identifying the signs of progress or risk that are worth monitoring. Measurement of change refers to the assessment of variability on the one hand and the assessment of change in a narrower sense on the other hand. Variability is characterized by fluctuations that are of short duration and reversible (e.g., variability of mood states). In contrast, change in the

narrower sense is persistent and often irreversible (e.g., development of language skills).key. Measuring change is key to determining and communicating the success of the process both across an organization to encourage adoption and for upward communication on the success of the initiative. Many organizations struggle with how to do this effectively (ALLISON TODD, 2018).

SOCIAL CHANGE IN AGRICULTURE

Agriculture is not just about cultivating land; it is about managing crops and animals for food and other processes. It is the foundation upon which stable human communities such as villages and towns have depended in many parts of the world. The transition from gathering and hunting to agriculture (herding and tilling) was perhaps the single most powerful and influential change in human history (Sakketa, 2023)

Farmers have been practicing agriculture for several millennia before the advent of science. They have tilled the soil, conserved its fertility, selected seeds and varieties for better crops for the next season, invented various mechanical implements, built irrigation networks, developed methods of pest and disease control, domesticated animals, and discovered different methods of processing and storing their farm produce for future usage and to avoid spoilage. These practices emerge from folk knowledge and experience now known as traditional knowledge, Indigenous technical knowledge, rural knowledge, and ethno science (World Bank, 2023)

Changes in technology have led to the development of new techniques in agriculture. Agricultural production has increased due to modern equipment and improved seeds in both quantity and quality. This has greatly affected the rural community. As India is predominantly an agricultural country, its future depends upon the progress of agriculture. From the above analysis, we can deduce that the development of technology leads to constant changes in different areas, which are becoming more stable.

FACTORS OF SOCIAL CHANGE IN RURAL AREA

Social change takes place in all societies and all periods. Various factors contribute to social change, as stated by Darlong (2022).

1. Technological Factors:

Technological advancements have had a significant impact on social change. The continuous development of new machines and methods resulting from discoveries has greatly affected social relationships. Society's structure is transforming as a result of the invention of electric, steam, and petrol-driven machines used for production, transportation, communication, and various mechanical appliances used in everyday life. Even institutions like family and marriage have not been immune to the effects of these developments. The explicit effects of technological advances include labor organization, division of labor, specialization, a fast pace of life, increased production, and more. In the modern age, technological factors are among the primary causes of social change.

2. Urbanization Factors:

Urbanization has had significant impacts on various aspects of social, political, and economic life. The first cities were established during ancient times when horticultural and pastoral

societies emerged, allowing people to settle in one place instead of constantly moving to find food. However, these ancient cities had no sanitation facilities, and people often disposed of their waste in the streets or outside the city walls, leading to widespread disease and high death rates. In later centuries, some cities developed better sanitation procedures, such as Rome's sewer system (Sakketa, 2023).

When urbanization occurs too quickly, the infrastructure may not be able to support the growing population, leading to issues such as inadequate transportation, public health problems, insufficient housing, schools, emergency services, and jobs. This can ultimately result in poverty and class conflicts. Additionally, large urban areas may suffer from job losses, which can further exacerbate poverty and class conflicts.

3. **Cultural Factors:**

Social change is primarily driven by cultural factors. Changes in culture are often accompanied by corresponding changes in society. Max Weber provided evidence for this idea through his comparative study of religious and economic institutions. Culture plays a crucial role in determining the speed and direction of social change, as well as the limits beyond which it cannot occur. However, it should be noted that social change and cultural change are not interchangeable terms.

4. **Biological Factors:**

Biological factors have an indirect impact on social change. One of these factors is the quality of the population, which is influenced by heredity. This quality is determined by the presence of powerful and influential individuals whose birth is largely dependent on genetic factors. Moreover, the biological principles of natural selection and survival of the fittest constantly bring about changes in society.

5. **Population Factors:**

Changes in population, quality, and size have a notable impact on various aspects of society, such as customs, traditions, institutions, and associations. Social relationships are affected by fluctuations in population, including changes in the ratio of men vs. women, young vs. old, and more. Economic institutions and associations are immediately impacted by changes in population. The ratio of men to women in a society has an impact on marriage, family, and the status of women in society. Additionally, the birth and death rates also contribute to social change.

6. **Environmental Factors:**

Geographers have highlighted the influence of the geographical environment on human society. Huntington has even claimed that climate changes are the only reason for the evolution and decline of civilizations and cultures. Although some may reject these claims, it is undeniable that natural events such as floods, earthquakes, and excessive rain can have a significant impact on society.

7. **Psychological Factors:**

Psychological factors are considered crucial by most sociologists in bringing about social changes. The root cause of social changes is the inherent nature of human psychology. Man is naturally inclined towards change, always seeking new experiences, and constantly discovering new things in every aspect of his life. As a result, the customs, traditions, and

mores of every society are in a perpetual state of change. However, this does not mean that man always perceives the new to be better than the old. While he is always seeking novelty, he also values the preservation of the old. Social relationships continue to evolve as a result of the interplay between these two forces. While old traditions are respected, the changing times demand adaptation and transformation. Change is an inevitable part of life, and when it does not occur at the appropriate time, it can lead to conflicts, revolutions, wars, epidemics, and other violent disruptions.

8. **Political Factors:**

Law is a powerful tool for initiating social, economic, and political change in society. It plays a critical role in safeguarding the interests of the weaker sections of society, particularly those belonging to the scheduled caste, scheduled tribe, and other backward castes in India. Law also extends its protection to women, children, and other disadvantaged sections of society. In 1829, a law was passed to ban the practice of Sati, followed by another law a century later that set the minimum age for marriage. Later still, another law was enacted to prohibit the practice of giving and taking dowry. Article 17 of the Indian constitution has abolished untouchability, and the law's role as an agent of social change is most evident when it confronts social customs. The role of elections is also vital in driving social change, as the right to vote generates interest in public affairs and is an effective tool for educating the masses. It instills a sense of self-respect and responsibility among citizens.

POLICIESTO ACCELERATE SOCIAL CHANGEIN RURAL AREA

OECD, (2019) opted that the policies that are formulated to bring about rural change are stated as follows:

1) Law And Order Policies

Establishing law and order in rural communities is crucial for enabling individuals to organize their tasks and activities according to the rules and policies. Law and order are essential to maintain peace and tranquillity, which is mandatory for citizens to obey the law of the land. Unfortunately, discriminatory treatment, criminal acts, and violence are prevalent within rural communities. Through the implementation of law and order, individuals who break the law are subjected to disciplinary action. Therefore, the main objective of law and order is to ensure that individuals have equal rights and opportunities regardless of their gender, caste, creed, race, religion, ethnicity, or socio-economic background. Individuals must follow moral and ethical principles, which can lead to progress for both themselves and the community as a whole.

2) Training Programs policies

Training programs are vital for rural communities to progress and increase productivity. Agriculture is the main occupation in rural areas. Enrolling in training programs that teach modern and innovative methods and strategies can help enhance productivity. Training centers have been established to provide knowledge in healthcare, nutrition, child development, handicrafts, and more.

3) Environmental Conditions policies

Individuals must develop the skills and abilities to make efficient use of resources provided by the natural environment. It is also important for them to generate awareness regarding various techniques and measures necessary for environmental preservation. Curbing different forms of pollution is of utmost significance in this regard. Rural individuals should be

familiar with various techniques and methods for keeping water bodies and environmental conditions clean. Moreover, they should learn how to make the best use of resources to improve living conditions.

4) **Community Engagement and Empowerment Policies**

Hoffman, (2019) stated that the Active involvement of community members plays a vital role in building strong relationships and ensuring long-term engagement in a community change process. Such involvement creates better opportunities for positive outcomes. In rural communities, building excitement, a sense of togetherness, and hope for the future can engage community members. Leaders can encourage residents to take an active role in effecting change, share their voices, attend events, take on leadership roles, and make their changes. Rural community members depend on one another to succeed.

5) Ecological Settings

Understanding the ecological setting is crucial in determining the composition, structure, and function of an ecosystem over a long period. It refers to the biophysical characteristics at different scales that describe and distinguish it ecologically. Ecological characteristics such as wetness, soil depth, temperature, solar exposure, and wind exposure need to be taken into account while analysing the ecosystem. For those involved in rural activities like agriculture and farming, having adequate knowledge about these traits is vital.

6) Technology Policies

Rural individuals have recognized the significance of technology. They are aware that making use of technical methods would make their tasks and activities manageable. In the present existence, they are making use of technical methods in the agriculture sector, farming practices, and production and manufacturing of goods. In addition to the use of technology in the implementation of tasks and activities, individuals are also making use of it, in the form of mobile phones and computers to augment their knowledge and information. Elderly individuals and homemakers usually make use of it for leisure and recreational purposes.

7) Infrastructure Policies

Infrastructure development is crucial for improving rural areas and enhancing the quality of life. Essential facilities like roads, transportation, communications, power and water supplies, public services, and telecommunications need to be developed. This is essential for progress and prosperity in rural areas.

8) Self-Reliance Policies

When it comes to improving rural areas, it's essential to focus on developing the individuals living there. Most rural residents are illiterate, lacking awareness, and living in poverty with traditional perspectives. Their lives revolve around their views and beliefs. To improve their quality of life, it's crucial to encourage self-reliance through the mobilization of resources, local initiatives, and participation in various social, political, cultural, economic, and religious activities.

9) Distributive Justice Policies

Distributive justice involves power and access. Access opportunities are shaped by power distribution in society. Power and authority are both important. Legal systems focus on access institutions, not dispute institutions.

10) Medical And Healthcare Access Policies

The establishment of healthcare centers is crucial as people of all ages and backgrounds need to take care of their health. When individuals are healthy, they can effectively engage in various tasks and activities, such as managing household responsibilities, child development, agricultural and allied activities, taking care of elderly family members, participating in social, political, religious, economic, and cultural programs, as well as carrying out daily routine activities. It's important to pay adequate attention to your healthcare needs and obtain regular medical check-ups, especially in old age.

TECHNIQUES FOR ACCELERATING CHANGE IN RURAL AREA

The Change Acceleration Process is an effective strategy for driving change in rural areas. By engaging the community in dialogue, it leads to quick and sustainable changes. To achieve this, follow eight accelerators.



The Eight Accelerators techniques of change

1. **Create a sense of urgency around a single big opportunity.**

Urgency is key to bringing about change. People resist change, especially if it disrupts their habits. Establish the need to change by acknowledging the current system's inadequacy and respecting past efforts. Urgency prompts action to stop further damage and make necessary changes.

2. **Build and maintain a guiding coalition.**

A guiding coalition in a rural community is respected leaders of change initiatives. They bring expertise and energy across various areas and form the core of a strategy network. The coalition comprises volunteers from throughout the community, selected to represent each society with a broad range of skills. The social dynamics may be uncomfortable at first, but once the team learns to operate well, members enjoy being part of it.

3. **Formulate a strategic vision and develop change initiatives designed to capitalize on the big opportunity**.

A clear vision should focus on a big opportunity, be achievable and emotionally appealing, and provide information and direction for on-the-fly decisions. Every successful change project needs a clear vision of the desired future state, which serves as a picture of the change's impact on the community. The concept helps connect essential steps and actions for achieving the desired outcome.

4. **Communicate the vision and the strategy to create buy-in and attract a growing volunteer army**.

A strong vision and strategy, well-communicated by a guiding coalition, creatively and authentically, can spark conversations without cynicism. This can attract like-minded individuals and create a shared commitment to the message.

5. Accelerate movement toward the vision and the opportunity by ensuring that the network removes barriers.

The first part of removing barriers is to know exactly what the barriers are and the impact of such restrictions. The identification of barriers may be completed by leadership, the guiding coalition, or perhaps, the army of volunteers that were enlisted to help carry out the initiatives.

6. Celebrate visible, significant short-term wins.

A short-term success, according to John Kotter, is a milestone or event that the entire team deems "huge" and helps the transformation vision come to pass. Celebrating Short-term successes and Creating a Sense of Urgency can both be started at the same time as the process of recognizing short-term successes. Throughout each stage of the change management process, quick victories can accumulate. The best short-term victories should be visible, clear, and connected to the vision to guarantee success. Honoring those victories will inspire the volunteer army and encourage more individuals to join. Success is contagious.

7. Never let up. Keep learning from experience. Don't declare victory too soon.
To maintain strategic initiatives and develop new ones, rural towns must adapt to changing circumstances and strengthen their competitive positions. Resistance on the cultural and political levels appears when a community lets up. Again, this demonstrates why urgency is so essential to the dual operating system's strategy. People continue doing so. The volunteer army's resolve will wane and the temptation to slow down or halt will become overwhelming if it is weak from the start or neglected. The hierarchy will once again rule as the volunteers begin to concentrate on their tasks within it.

8. Institutionalize strategic changes in the culture.

No strategic project, no matter how little, is finished unless it is integrated into daily operations. If the program yields observable benefits and propels your rural town towards a more advantageous future strategically, it will do so. A new direction or approach must become ingrained in the community's culture. Make clear the links between new behaviors and community success, and encourage them to persist until they are powerful enough to supplant old routines. Make sure management practices support the new behaviors, mindsets, and working methods you invested in by evaluating systems and processes (Kotter, 2021).

MEASUREMENT OF CHANGE IN RURAL AREA

Change measurement in rural areas often involves a specific process to help rural communities succeed. The ultimate goal of change measurement is to help changes stick in your community and create effective strategies for the ever-present need to adapt and adjust in rural areas. Individuals will be excited about implementing and progressing with changes when effective change measurement happens.

I. Define the end goal: Understanding the end goal is crucial to effective change measurement. You need to define what you want to measure, what data you need to collect, and how you will use the data. This will provide a clear benchmark for success and failure. Additionally, it will help ensure that any changes you make align with your goals. Finally, it's important to create a timeline and set milestones to ensure that the goal is met on time.

II. Understand the impact of your changes: When you are preparing for a change, it's important to understand exactly who this will impact, and how it will impact them. It's important to understand how this will impact everyone so you can know the best way to prepare and train them. Even small changes are important to understand and be prepared for.

III. Identify key change leaders: In every successful change measurement process, there are champions or key change leaders who help drive success. Getting different team members to buy off and understand the changes will help positively impact the team. They can be extremely helpful in creating a plan that will be a positive experience for others.

IV. Get your team excited about the change: To have a successful change, you'll need to get the people impacted all on board. Start with a great kickoff meeting that can get everyone excited about the potential the change has. If you can point out the great pros and rewards that come from the change, more of your team will be able to get on board quickly.

V. Plan for open communication: Make a plan from the beginning to communicate to your team how the change is going. Weekly email updates or meetings can be a great way to make sure your team is all on the same page. Transparency is crucial to team members feeling invested and a part of the change, and if you can help people feel confident in what they are learning about the change, they will likely have better outcomes.

VI. Look for roadblocks and ways around them: An important part of change measurement is looking out for roadblocks. As every part of the change comes, it's important to think about what barriers could be in the way of success. When you're able to identify barriers, you can find a way around them before they become huge problems. If you're able to tell teams that you understand that this could be a problem, but you already are working out a solution, they'll feel more confident as well.

VII. Set specific goals and milestones: Change can feel ambiguous and frustrating to people, so specific goals and milestones can help take the ambiguity out of change. Team members will know what they are working toward and will feel confident that they can reach their goals and milestones. It will also set timelines which can help people feel more secure in what is expected of them, and when it's expected. Being as specific as you are able is greatly beneficial for change management.

VIII. Utilize effective training: Training will be crucial for a successful change in rural communities. Leaders may need training on new programs, or systems. New leaders may need to be trained; people may need to connect with their new leader, etc. Planning for effective training will make sure that your changes are successful, that everyone understands how the new process works, and that everyone has the opportunity to ask questions if needed.

IX. Find a big win quickly: It's important to get a big win quickly when a change is happening in your society. Find a positive victory that you can share with your team to help them feel confident about the changes. Finding a big win will help your leaders feel engaged and happy about the change.

X. Monitor your performance and adjust if needed: It's important to know that if changes will be effective, you'll need to regularly monitor and adjust. See how the changes are going and regularly ask your team how they are feeling. You may need to make adjustments for the changes to continue to be impactful over time. Utilize reports to understand how the changes impact people and the community, and adjust as needed to ensure you continue to make the change impactful.

XI. The Multi-purpose measure: The rural development approach within the country began with the multi-purpose approach. It had the main objective of promoting the development of material and human resources through the cooperative efforts of the individuals and assistance available from the state. It was regarded as an educational and organizational process. Since, it also aimed at bringing about changes in the practices and procedures, which proved to be barriers within the course of implementation of desired objectives. The major objective was social and economic improvement. Therefore, it can be stated that the development of welfare and livelihood opportunities was one of the primary objectives of the multi-purpose measurement.

XII. Growth-Oriented measure: The growth-oriented measure was based on rural individuals. Though rural individuals are residing in the conditions of poverty and

backwardness, they also possess sharp mindsets and can make wise decisions. The main objective of rural individuals is to enhance their living conditions and to achieve this purpose. Therefore, it can be stated that the implementation of opportunities that would promote growth of the individuals in an efficacious manner is referred to as growth-oriented strategies. However, this strategy assisted wealthier farmers. On the other hand, the deprived farmers remained in a backward state.

XIII. Target Group measure: In the target group measure, strategies for rural development are being researched. Therefore, conditions may be analyzed for small and marginal farmers, as well as wealthier farmers. They are residing in the conditions of poverty and backwardness and therefore are unaware of modern and innovative strategies and methods that are considered essential to augment production. They are instead making use of traditional farming practices and methods in the production processes.

XIV. Area Development measure: The area development measure prioritizes the development of backward regions, focusing on resource and infrastructure deficiencies. Implementing strategies and strategies for tribal areas is crucial for promoting individual well-being and ensuring the allocation of resources effectively (OECD, 2019).

CONCLUSION

Accelerating and measuring social change in rural areas requires a holistic approach that considers the unique context and challenges of each rural community. The factors of social change in rural areas are proving to be major impediments within the course of achievement of the desired objectives. However, the Cultural factor plays a crucial role in determining the speed and direction of social change, as well as the limits beyond which it cannot occur.In rural communities, individuals have recognized the significance of education. The main purpose of policies is to promote the development of various areas. These include education, training programs, technology, etc. Generating information in terms of techniques for accelerating change is the first and foremost aspect. They have also generated information that making use of modern and scientific methods and technology in the production processes will lead to an increase in productivity and profitability. Implementing effective policies and employing appropriate measurements and techniques are crucial to achieving sustainable and meaningful social progress. Hence, the main purpose of other measures is to form the overall rural environmental conditions in such a manner that would lead to the effective growth and development of individuals and communities.

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