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Jajmani System and Jajmani Relations: Introduction and How It Functions

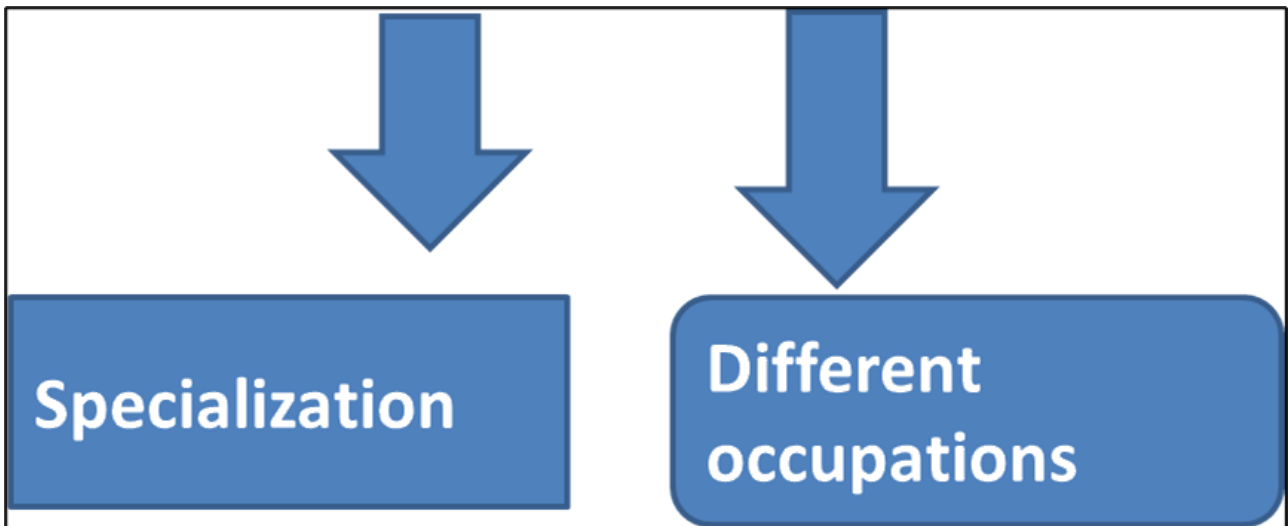
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Introduction

- Important Rural social institution
- Emerged in ancient India
- Important in medieval India but declined in colonial India
- Sociologists who studied – William Wiser, S. C. Dube, Lewis, K. Ishwaran

What is Jajmani System?

Villagers



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- Owners and non-owners
- Specialization of services
- Recipient of specialized services
- Network of alliances
- Socio-economic and ritual ties with castes
- Relationship between two castes – Upper caste or Patrons and Landless caste or service class

- Patron caste – Rajputs, Bhumiars, Patels, etc.
- Service caste- Brahmins (Priest) , blacksmith, etc.
- Service class offers services
- Paid in cash and kind by Patrons

The bond is:

- Permanent
- Enduring (hereditary)
- Exclusive (family to family)
- Multiple (economic, social and ritual)
- There is barter system – goods against services e. g. Grains

How It Functions

- Exists at family level
- Family of service caste offers its services to specific families of Jajmans
- Service caste depends on livelihood and the dominant caste
- Generation to generation relationship
- Therefore, villagers are bound in the system of exchange of services
- Client relationship extends to neighboring villages (patrons can be from outside villages)
- Problems are settled in Panchayats
- Gifts given to service providers on occasions like marriages

Conclusion

- Wisner said, “The various castes of a Hindu village in North India are interrelated in a service capacity. Each in turn is Master. Each in turn is Servant. Each has its own clientele comprising members of different caste which is Jajmani.”
- The Hindu Jajmani System (1936)
- Uttar Pradesh villages
- Inter-dependence reciprocity and cooperation between caste and families in villages

Conflicts View

- Dominance, exploitation and conflict by Lewis and Biedleman
- Rich exploit the poor to maintain the dominance system
- Superior and inferior
- Supported caste system
- Hurdle to caste mobility
- It is weak now due to commercialization of agriculture, wage labour, education, migration etc.

MCQs

Q. 1. Rampur village study conducted by Oscar Lewis was about

- (a) Caste system in Indian village
- (b) Jajmani system
- (c) Redistribution in village economy
- (d) Agricultural production

Ans. (b)

Q. 2. Jajmani system can best be explained by

- (A) Mutual trust and co – operation of the people
- (B) Conflicting interest of the people
- (C) Oppression and suppressive measures adopted by the Jajmans
- (D) Conflicting interest and distrust of the people

Answer: (A)

Q. 3. Who among the following explained for the first time in sociological literature Jajmani system as patterned interaction among the caste groups?

- a) William Wiser
- b) Oscar Lewis
- c) R. Desai
- d) Yogendra Singh

Ans. a

#JajmanisystemandJajmanirelations

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-Manishika

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