

JAJMANI SYSTEM: FACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR CHANGES IN INTER-CASTE RELATIONSHIP

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Abstract

The present study attempts on certain aspects of the caste system in contemporary rural society in Karimpur village, Uttar Pradesh. Researcher has examined in particular the factors which lead to the changes in inter-caste relationship. This paper is based on the data collected from the village Karimpur using interview schedule and keen observation of daily life practices of the villagers. Out of 769 households researcher has selected 260 households as a sample with the help of research formula. Findings of the study reveal that there are some factors like; education, occupational mobility, modernization, industrialization & new technology, transport and communication, cash payment, change in caste system and many more, which are directly or indirectly responsible for bringing changes in the Jajmani system.

Key words: Jajmani system, Occupational Mobility, Inter-caste Relationship, Modernization, Industrialization.

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Introduction:

The term Jajmani system was first used by one of the renowned social scientist named William Wiser in his book “The Hindu Jajmani System”. The Jajmani system is a labour system, in which landlords use the power derived from their control of the principal means of production, land, to exploit their worker (**Caldwell B., 1991**). **Beidelman** has defined the term “Jajman” originally referred to the client for whom a Brahmin priest performed ritual, but it is generally used to refer a patron or recipient of specialized services and the term Jajmani refer to the whole relationship. The provider of goods or services is called by a variety of terms, kamin, parjan, pradhan, Balutedar (**Mandelbaum D.G., 1972**). **Oscar Lewis (1958)** has also defined the Jajmani system “under Jajmani system each caste group within a village is expected to give certain standardized services to the families of other castes”.

Traditional Jajmani system is one of the most important parts of Indian agrarian social structure. Jajmani system reflects inter-caste relationship, particularly Jajmani and working caste (Kameen). After independence, for the socio-economic development Indian Government introduced several programs and policies. These programs and policies have great impact on Indian social system particularly on Jajmani system. In last two decades Jajmani system declined rapidly and new inter- caste relationship is emerging. These emerging inter-caste relationships have great concern to sociologists; there is a need to identify the emerging inter-caste relationship and its responsible factors.

Jajmani system is based on inter-caste relationship witnessed in Indian Social System. In early India, our society was divided into different caste strata. There was an economic inter-dependence as well. At that time, each and every caste had its own occupation and they were skilled workers but these castes were restricted by the society to follow the same occupation and occupy same status in society. In early rural society, an individual wasn't capable of fulfilling his/her basic life necessities. Thus, they had to depend up on each other to get their work done. This inter-dependence upon the other person settled in providing services to each other and they used barter system (exchange of goods and services) to fulfill their basic necessities of life.

Jajmani system underwent a lot of changes in the past few years. The Jajmani system also changed because the affect of caste system weakened and there were changes found in the system of land-ownership when land reform act came into existence. In the present day society Jajmani system is experiencing changes in the Indian society. Due to inflexible caste system, the base of Jajmani system became stronger. But this trend changed when there was breakdown of caste system, due to creation of factions and caste struggle. All this led to vanishing of Jajmani system from Indian society. Another reason for the disintegration of Jajmani system was that people have lost faith in religion and there is negligence in the performance of rites and rituals.

Several studies are available on the changing patterns of inter-caste relationship in rural society. Through this, changes in Jajmani system and inter-caste relationship can be witnessed but fewer studies are available on the factors responsible for bringing those changes in Jajmani system.

Review of Literature

In this research study researcher presents a review of literature related to different aspects of Jajmani system and its changing factors which includes caste system, inter-caste relationship, exploitation within Jajmani system and more.

Murdoch (1977) in his book “**Review of Caste in India**” mentioned that the Brahmins are considered as the superior caste and are given the preference in any share. **Majumdar (1944)** has presented in his book “**Races and Culture of India**” the inter-caste relationships. He mentioned that the high caste people are heavily dependent on the lower caste people as they have to get their work done through them and in return the kamins get their share in cash or kind. **Marriott, M. (1952)** has emphasizes in his paper “**Social change in Indian villages**” that Jajmani system is a non-commercial Hindu system between members of a village that binds people in customs, sanctions and traditions to perform services for their patrons. **Wiser W. (1958)** explained that the inter caste solidarity is clearly evident in the Jajmani system. But there is a lack of symmetrical interrelationship between the members participating in the Jajmani system. **Orenstein H. (1962)** observed in his study “exploitation or function in the interpretation of Jajmani” that in many villages of India an economic system known as the Jajmani system is prevalent. He found that the service caste gets a minimal amount for the services rendered by them. **Gould H. A. (1986)**

describes the traditional relationship based on economy. In his paper “**The Hindu Jajmani System: A case of Economic Particularism**” he described that the peasant-village culture is widespread. The determining feature of the economic relation is complexity in the division of labour.

Objectives of the Study

1. To know the changes that has taken place in the Jajmani system.
2. To know the main factors responsible for the changes in the Jajmani system.

Material and Methods

In this research study, **Descriptive Research Design** was used for the fulfillment of the objectives. Area of the study is Karimpur village situated in district Mainpuri of Uttar Pradesh. The village has 21 different castes. Universe of the study was 769 households of Karimpur village from different castes. All the sample of the respondents was taken from universe and the number of respondents (family as a unit) was selected through a research formula to get a perfect sample size as stated below:-

$$\frac{N}{1+N(e)^2}$$

$$\frac{769}{1+769(0.05)^2}$$

$$= 262.90$$

$$= \mathbf{260} \text{ (Round off)}$$

Researcher has used face-to-face interview with the respondents using detailed mixed structure interview schedule regarding Jajmani system. While secondary data was collected from various books, journals, and other relevant things regarding Jajmani system.

Results and Outcome:

Caste wise respondents (household)

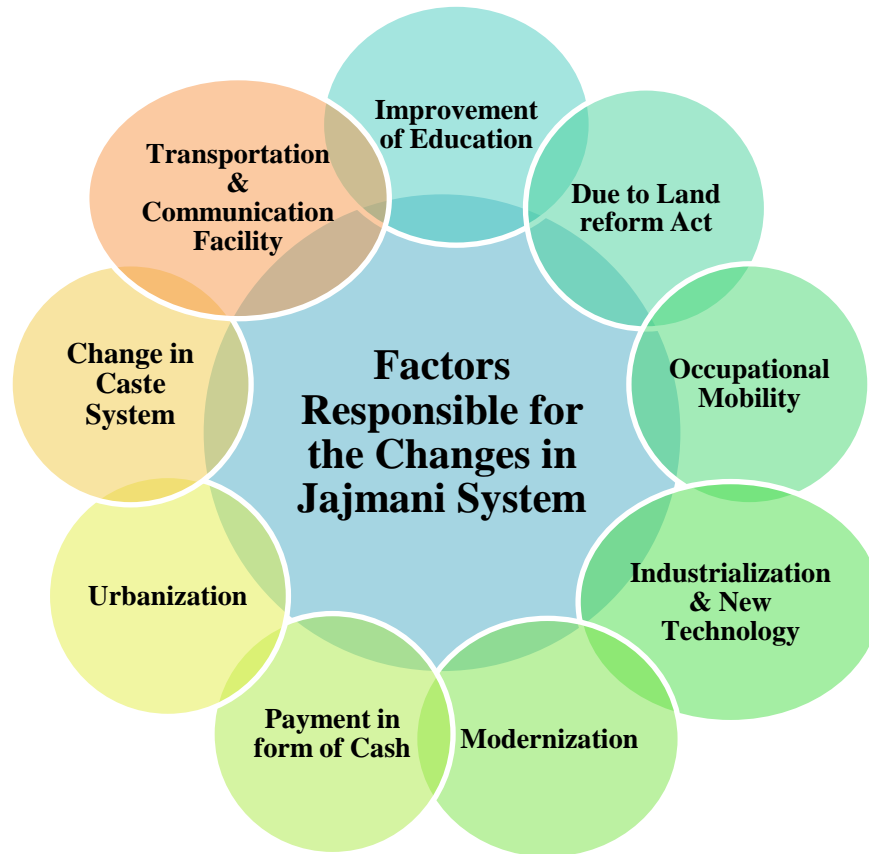
S.N.	Caste	Frequency of respondent	%	S.N.	Caste	Frequency of respondent	%
1.	Brahmin	46	17.69%	12.	Kumhar	01	0.38%
2.	Bhat	01	0.38%	13.	Mahajan	05	01.92%
3.	Kayast	02	0.77%	14.	Teli	09	03.46%
4.	Mali	02	0.77%	15.	Daubhi	03	01.15%
5.	Kachhi	51	19.62%	16.	Dhanuk	33	12.69%
6.	Lodha	02	0.77%	17.	Chamar	10	03.85%
7.	Barhai	12	04.62%	18.	Bhangi	08	03.08%
8.	Kahar	40	15.38%	19.	Faqir	06	02.31%
9.	Gadariya	14	05.38%	20.	Manihar	05	01.92%
10.	Bharbhuja	04	01.54%	21.	Dhuna	04	01.55%
11.	Darzi	02	0.77%	Total		260	100%

Above table represents the number of families from different castes that is the unit of the study was family. There are 21 castes in the study area (village Karimpur) at present. Brahmin and Bhat comes under the upper caste among all of the other castes and Kayast, Mali, Kachhi, Lodha, Barhai, Kahar, Gadhariya, Darzi, Kumhar, and Teli comes under the middle caste while Dahubhi, Dhanuk, Chamar, Bhangi, Faqir, Manihar, Bharbhuja and Dhuna comes under lower caste in this village. Brahmin is said to be the dominant caste. Brahmin was second highest in percentage (17.69%), living in Karimpur village after Kachhi (19.61%). Kumhar and Bhat were in the lowest in percentage living in the study area.

Factors Responsible for the Changes in Jajmani System:

There are so many factors that bring changes in Jajmani system. Some of them are improvement of education, occupational mobility, land reform legislative acts, industrialization, urbanization, changes in caste system, payment in form of cash, economic weakness of traditional system, invention of new technology, introduction commercial crops, contacts with towns, out migration, transport and communication, increasing land fragmentation, market forces, weakness of traditional practices, social and culture awareness, dependency upon towns and cities, despite modern improvements, governments developmental policies, reformist movements and political

ideologies. These factors affect the social, economic and political aspect of an individual's life in the village.



There are numerous factors which are directly or indirectly responsible for bringing changes in the Jajmani system and inter-caste relationship.

The Major factors responsible for the changes in Jajmani System:

Factors	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Cannot say
Through Improvement of Education	98 (38%)	109 (42%)	17 (06%)	36 (14%)
Occupational Mobility	141 (54%)	94 (36%)	12 (05%)	13 (05%)
Due to Industrialization & New Technology	83 (32%)	94 (36%)	31 (12%)	52 (20%)
Availability of Transportation & Communication Facilities	86 (33%)	124 (48%)	26 (10%)	24 (09%)
Due to Modernization	71 (27%)	138 (53%)	24 (09%)	27 (11%)
Due to Urbanization	93 (36%)	122 (47%)	19 (07%)	26 (10%)

Changes in caste system	148 (57%)	92 (35%)	08 (03%)	12 (05%)
Process of Cash on Payment	137 (53%)	96 (37%)	12 (04%)	15 (06%)
Due to Land Reform Act	92 (35%)	124 (48%)	18 (07%)	26 (10%)

Above table shows the response of the respondents regarding impact of education on Jajmani system. Data reveals that out of total 260 respondents, 38% respondents strongly believe that education system has brought changes in the Jajmani system. While only 17 (06%) of the respondents disagreed that education is not a factor to change Jajmani system. Rest of the respondents didn't respond for the same.

Data also indicates that majority of the respondents (54%) strongly agreed and 94 (36%) of the respondents agreed that occupational mobility was a factor which changed Jajmani system. While only 05 percent of the respondents denied that occupational mobility was not a factor to change the Jajmani system. Rest of the respondents didn't respond for the same.

Data related to impact of industrialization in Jajmani system reveals that 32 percent of the respondents strongly believed that Industrialization has put its effect on Jajmani system and people have denied to do their traditional work. Where, 36% of the respondents also agreed that due to industrialization Jajmani system as well as traditional practices has been changed. But another side, only 12% of the respondents disagreed to the point that industrialization hasn't brought any changes in the Jajmani system and this system is still going continuing in the same manner. 20% of the respondents were not able to give their response for the same.

The factor of availability of transportation facilities which has changed Jajmani system reveals that 81% of the respondents believed strongly that transportation facility was the major factor to change the occupations and Jajmani system. While only one-tenth (10%) of the respondents disagreed and said that transportation made our life easy but didn't affect our Jajmani system. Rest of the respondents had no idea regarding the same.

Due to the impact of modernization, the Jajmani system is getting disintegrated. Above data also reveals that higher percent (80%) of the respondents believed that modernization has replaced our traditional occupation to modern way. Modernization has replaced from traditional to a

modern society like; occupations became more skilled, barter system is replaced by the money system, process of urbanization has increased, equality gradually replaced in hierarchy and more. While only 09 percent of the respondents disagreed that modernization hasn't brought any changes in inter-caste relationship and Jajmani system. Rest of the respondents had no idea regarding the same.

Effect of urbanization on Jajmani system indicate that 93 (36%) of the respondents strongly agreed with this fact. Where majority of the respondents (47%) agreed nominally to the factors that urbanization have an impact on Jajmani system, while only 07 percent disagreed that urbanization do not any impact on Jajmani system. There was 10 percent who were unable to answer the same.

There are two types of Panchayat in every village i.e., Caste Panchayat and Gram Panchayat but after the provision of Panchayati Raj in constituting the role of caste system became limited. Above data presents the flexibility of caste panchayat and gram panchayat in term of caste based occupation in Jajmani system. 148 (57%) of the respondent strongly agreed that due to limited roles of caste system and its flexibility has weaken the Jajmani system. There was another reason of decline in the Jajmani system that was the constitutional provision of Panchayati Raj Institution where reservation is provided to the lower caste. 92 (35%) of the respondents nominally agreed that due to changes in caste system and caste occupation the nature of Jajmani system also changed. Only 08 (03%) respondents disagreed with this statement and rest of the respondents didn't respond the same.

Above data show the affect on Jajmani system due to process of cash on payment. Data clearly indicate that 53% (137 nos.) of the respondents strongly agreed that payment on cash for economic exchange has ruined the Jajmani system and people have neglected their barter system which was the major part of Jajmani system. 37% (96 nos.) of the respondents' nominal agreed that cash payment has changed the nature of Jajmani system. A very few respondents disagreed that cash on payment has never affected Jajmani system. There were only 06 percent of the respondents unable to answer the same.

Due to land reform act came into existence, 92 (35%) respondents strongly agreed that due to distribution of land ownership that have changed the nature of Jajmani system. The Jajman could sell the produce of his land instead of sharing it with his Kamin who supplied goods and services (**Djurfeldt and Lindberg, 1975**). 124 (48%) of the respondents nominal agreed for this statement because they believed that there are another factor was also responsible including land reform for changing the structure of Jajmani system. 18 (07%) respondents disagreed that land reform has any changes in Jajmani system. Rest of the respondents didn't give their response for the same.

Conclusion

There is no doubt that education has made different resources for occupational mobility. Occupational mobility is a major factor to change of Jajmani system. In the Jajmani system occupations were almost hereditary and associated with caste system where interest, ability, enterprise and achievement were having no space and they occupy their worked on the basis of caste system. But after the industrialization, education, market expansion and reaching capacity of individual in the market, occupational mobility increased drastically. Occupational mobility and movement from the compact ancestral village started breaking down those caste norms which did not concern marriage (**Ahuja R., 1993**). Modern economic system measures everything in terms of economy. The decline of belief in caste system and hereditary occupation has given a strong blow to the system. In the Jajmani system, agrarian society is likely to be disturbed by the availability of industrial employment because they have certain degree of traditional expertise which is essential for the performance of their work (**Badgaiyan, S.D., 1992**). Industrialization also created new transportation facilities, specially crowded trains and buses, which threw together millions of people of all castes and left little room for the niceties of ceremonial purity (**Ahuja R., 1993**).

Transportation mode has made it easy to move from one place to another in a short span of time. Modern means of transportation such as train, bus, ship, airplane, trucks etc, are of great help for the movement of men and materials. When industrialization came in India the mode of payment also changed from barter system to cash payments and now the amount is digitally transferred. Due to this people have started buying through cash mode instead of exchanging goods in return.

Jajmani system was based on agricultural practices based on caste hierarchy. After land reform, land holding capacity of lower caste people and farmer increased and they used this land for their own livelihood and other business. Due to this their dependency reduced and gradually they came out of the Jajmani system.

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