

SPATIAL DISTRIBUTION OF KANI TRIBAL SETTLEMENT AND LAND USE DYNAMISM IN KODAYAR RIVER BASIN IN WESTERN GHATS REGION OF KANYAKUMARI DISTRICT, TAMILNADU – INDIA- A GIS PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract:

Tribal Geography would demand a more systematic study of tribes, both spatially and temporally. Tribal in India from the very early segments of the Indian society with their traditional skills. A tribe inhabits and remains within a definite and common topography. The study area Kodayar river basin in the Western Ghats Region of Kanyakumari District is located in the southern most part of India, in Tamilnadu state. It lies between 8^o 21' N to 8^o 43' N and 77^o 12' 35" E to 77^o 20' E. It is bordered on the west and north by Kerala state with an area of 331 km² in Tamilnadu respectively. The 1981 total tribal population of about 1635 persons in Kodayar river basin. However, 2001 the total tribal population of about 1946 persons. The main objectives of the present study is To analyzing the spatial and temporal distribution of Kani tribal during 1967 to 2005 and To understanding the Land use dynamism and settlement pattern of Kani tribes. The Kodayar river basin is covered by forests having varying canopy densities, forest Plantation, Open Scrub, Grass land, Crop land, Rock out crop and Water bodies. The dense forests are spread over the entire Kodayar basin in patches. The Kodayar River is divided into two catchments areas, that is, the Upper Kodayar and Lower Kodayar. The river has been harnessed mainly for electricity generation at the Upper Kodayar region and for irrigation a dam has been constructed at Pechiparai and three other dams constructed across Lower Kodayar, Chittar – I and Chittar – II. There are 30 Kani settlements in the forests of the Western Ghats Region of Kanyakumari district. It covers an area of 6.85 km², which is about 1.4 per cent of the Kanyakumari District. Between 1967 and 1997, the Cropland area has declined from 25.4 per cent to 22.1 percent, but the Plantation area increased from 17.6 per cent to 25 per cent. The main reason for the selection of the present study named "Kani tribal Settlement and Land Use Dynamism in Kanayakumari District specifically.

Nagalar Sub-watershed is a micro-watershed lying in the Varaha Watershed of Vaigai River Basin in southern Tamil Nadu, India. The areal extent of the watershed is about 338 Sq.km.