Relation between water availability and human population of an area, by taking water pollution into account

Pilamo S Kikon

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Abstract

The population of a human settlement in an area depends on the water availability and water pollution of that area. The paper aims to explain the relationship among them with a new law and give a mathematical formula for calculating the relation. The range of physico-chemical parameters of the water bodies are temperature (14.8 °C-17 °C), pH (6.05-7.4), alkalinity (115.5 mg/L-122.5 mg/L), total hardness (40 mg/L-167 mg/L), chloride (23.5 mg/L-118 mg/L), DO (4.6 mg/L-17.2 mg/L), TDS (49 mg/L-580 mg/L).

The study revealed that parameters of water samples from uninhabited areas were within the permissible limit given by BIS (2012) and WHO (2017). But the pH, DO and TDS values of the water samples from inhabited areas were not within the permissible limit.

Keywords: water pollution, human settlement, population, water availability, kikon equation, klopp threshold, kikon law

Introduction

The feasibility and survivability of human settlement in an area depend on the water available in that area. There are about two billion people in the world who do not have access to clean drinking water [4]. The availability of water, dictate the number of the human population that can settle and survive in that area. While the human population, in turn, causes water pollution thereby decreasing water availability. This in turn decreases the capacity of the area to sustain the human population, a cyclic relation thus occurs. An increase or decrease in the human population will have varied effects on the water availability and thereby the status of the human settlement. If the human population or water pollution of an area goes on increasing, a limit will be reached when the area will not be able to support the human settlement leading to its disintegration.

A physico-chemical analysis of water bodies in uninhabited and habited areas of Wokha Town was done to understand this relation. The results were compared with the drinking water permissible limit given by BIS (2012) [2] and WHO (2017) [10]. Wokha Town is the Headquarters of Wokha District, Nagaland, and is located about 80 km north of the state capital Kohima [9].

By taking into account the water pollution along with water availability and the human population of the area, a new law and a mathematical equation have been given.

Materials and Method

Sampling and Analysis

Eight samples were collected from four rivulets/streams inside and outside the settlements of Wokha Town. From the two streams inside the town three samples; Upstream (uninhabited, located beyond any human settlements), Midstream (inhabited, located at highly concentrated human settlements.), Downstream (after it had flown through the densely inhabited Town); each were collected along their route of flow. And one sample each from the two streams on the opposite ends of the town (uninhabited area), away from any human settlement.

The water samples were collected in 2L polyethylene bottles and were analyzed for pH and Temperature by using a digital pH and Temperature meter; alkalinity by titrimetry; total hardness by EDTA –Titrimetry; Chloride was determined by using Argentometric method, Dissolved Oxygen by Winklers titrimetric method, TDS was determined using gravimetric method.
Results and Discussion

Table 1: Sampling Sites

| Sites     | Location/Name     | Code |
|-----------|-------------------|------|
| 1         | Near Vankhosung   | Van  |
| 2         | Upstream of Dr. Jükhà | Doc1 |
| 3         | Midstream of Dr. Jükhà | Doc2 |
| 4         | Downstream of Dr. Jükhà | Doc3 |
| 5         | Upstream of Niropen | Nir1 |
| 6         | Midstream of Niropen | Nir2 |
| 7         | Downstream of Niropen | Nir3 |
| 8         | Santsüphen        | Sat  |

Table 2: Physico-chemical parameters of the water bodies in Wokha Town

| Location | Temperature (in °C) | pH  | Alkalinity (mg/L) | Total Hardness (mg/L) | Chloride (mg/L) | Dissolved Oxygen (mg/L) | TDS (mg/L) |
|----------|--------------------|-----|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|-------------------------|------------|
| Van      | 14.8               | 7.02| 115.5             | 42                    | 23.5            | 17.2                    | 49         |
| Doc1     | 16.7               | 7.33| 116.5             | 53                    | 26.7            | 16.3                    | 52         |
| Doc2     | 15.8               | 6.22| 120.3             | 160                   | 102             | 5.3                     | 531.2      |
| Doc3     | 15.6               | 6.05| 122.5             | 167                   | 116.2           | 4.6                     | 570        |
| Nir1     | 16.4               | 7.4 | 117               | 45.6                  | 36.26           | 16.9                    | 56         |
| Nir2     | 17                 | 6.42| 119.2             | 149                   | 114             | 5.5                     | 545        |
| Nir3     | 16.8               | 6.2 | 121               | 156.8                 | 118             | 4.8                     | 580        |
| Sat      | 16.5               | 7.34| 116.8             | 40                    | 26.8            | 17                      | 53.5       |

Temperature
The temperatures of the water samples ranged from 14.8 °C at site Van to 17 °C at site Nir2. There is no permissible limit given by BIS (2012) [2] and WHO (2017) [10] for temperature. Temperature is important for aquatic life and affects the chemical and biological reaction taking place in water [7].

pH
The pH of the water samples ranged from 6.05 at site Doc3 to 7.4 at site Nir1. Sites that were located in uninhabited areas had pH values within the permissible limit given by BIS (2012) [2] and WHO (2017) [10] while the sites in uninhabited areas do not fall under the permissible limit.

Alkalinity
The alkalinity of the water samples ranged from 115.5 mg/L at site Van to 122.5 mg/L at site Doc3. The alkalinity of all the water samples is within the permissible limit given by BIS (2012) [2] and WHO (2017) [10]. There is an increase in alkalinity in the mid-stream and down-stream of the rivulets; this indicates that pollutants were added when it flowed through the human settlements.

Total hardness
Total hardness is due to the presence of divalent metallic cations such as calcium, magnesium, strontium, ferrous ions, and manganese ions [11]. Total hardness of the water samples ranged from 40 mg/L at site Sat to 167 mg/L at site Doc3. The Total hardness of all the water samples is within the permissible limit given by BIS (2012) [2] and WHO (2017) [10]. There is an increase in total hardness in the mid-stream and down-stream of the rivulets; this can be due to domestic sewage [3] added when it flowed through the human settlements.

Chloride
Chloride present in the water samples ranged from 23.5 mg/L at site Van to 118 mg/L at site Nir3. The chloride value of all the water samples is within the permissible limit given by BIS (2012) [2] and WHO (2017) [10]. There is an increase in chloride value in the mid-stream and down-stream of the rivulets; the increase in chloride is due to municipal and domestic sewage [8]. This indicates that pollutants were added when it flowed through the human settlements.

Dissolved Oxygen (DO)
DO is essential for the survival of fishes and other aquatic life [3]. The DO present in the water samples ranged from 4.6 mg/L at site Doc3 to 17.2 mg/L at site Van. Sites located far from any human settlements, have DO values within the permissible limit given by BIS (2012) [2] and WHO (2017) [10]. But DO values in the mid-stream and down-stream of the rivulets decreases below the permissible limit. Oxygen in water is reduced by decomposition of organic matter, presence of oxygen demanding waste, and inorganic reductant [16]; this indicates that pollutants were added when it flowed through the human settlements.

Total dissolved solids (TDS)
TDS present in the water samples ranged from 49 mg/L at site Van to 580 mg/L at Nir3 site. Sites located far from any human settlements have TDS values within the permissible limit given by BIS (2012) [2] and WHO (2017) [10]. But TDS values in the mid-stream and down-stream of the rivulets increases above the permissible limit; this indicates that pollutants were added when it flowed through the human settlements.

From the result, we can see that the water samples from uninhabited areas were within the permissible limit given by BIS (2012) [2] and WHO (2017) [10]. But the water sample from the mid-stream and down-stream of the rivulets flowing through the densely populated town showed deteriorating water quality compared to their respective up-streams, their TDS, DO and pH values were beyond/below the permissible limit; and although the alkalinity, total hardness, and chlorides values were within the permissible limits, there was an increase in their values as the rivulets flowed through the densely populated human settlements. This shows that the
population of a human settlement is responsible for water pollution which in turn affects the water available to the human population of that area. To explain the relationship between water availability and the human population of an area, by taking water pollution into account; a new mathematical equation and a law are given.

**Mathematical equation**

Kikon equation = \[ \left( \frac{\psi_T - \psi_P}{\Phi \times \text{N}} \right) - 1 \] X 100

Or = \[ \left( \frac{\Delta \phi}{\Phi \times \text{N}} \right) - 1 \] X 100

Where, \( \psi_T \) = Total water available in the area for the period under study.
\( \psi_P \) = Polluted water in the area for the period under study.
\( \Phi \) = Water requirement per person for the period under study.
\( \text{N} \) = Total number of person/ population in the area under study.
\( \Delta \phi \) = Total water available for use for the period under study.

Three scenarios arise from this equation:

1. **When the value of the equation is positive**
   This indicates that the area has excess water than required. There is no water deficit in the area.

2. **When the value of the equation is zero**
   This represents an ideal situation in which the water requirement of the population is equal to the usable water present in the area. There is no water deficit in the area.

3. **When the value of the equation is negative**
   This indicates that the area has less water than required. There is a water deficit in the area.

   The value of the equation “\( v \)” also corresponds to the percentage of population “\( v \)” % of N.

   A positive value “\( +v \)” will indicate the percentage of population “\( v \)” % of N that can be added to the settlement without causing a water crisis in that area.

   A negative value “\( -v \)” will indicate the percentage of population “\( v \)” % of N that is more than the population that can be sustained by the water available in the area.

**Law**

From the mathematical equation a new law is given; Kikon Law. This states that “An area will not be able to sustain a human settlement if the water deficit is equal to or greater than the water required by 10% of the population. In other words for an area to sustain a given population of a human settlement with the water available in that area, it should give a value of greater than -10 in the Kikon’s equation i.e. it should not reach the Klopp Threshold.”

The Kikon equation value of -10 is known as the “Klopp Threshold”, and is defined as the limit at and beyond which human settlement is not possible in an area.

When the value of the equation is greater than or equal to \( \geq -10 \) it indicates an excess population of \( \geq 10 \) % of N that cannot be sustained by the water available in the area. In this case, the water available cannot support the human population of the area and it will lead to the disintegration of the human settlement of the area.

**Mathematical proof**

Hypothetical Case I: The period under study is one day, for an area with 14,000,000 liters of total water available (\( \psi_T \)), 365,000 liters of polluted water (\( \psi_P \)), and a population (N) of 1 lakh. Taking water requirement per person (\( \Phi \)) as 135 liters.

We have, Kikon equation = \[ \left( \frac{\psi_T - \psi_P}{\Phi \times \text{N}} \right) - 1 \] X 100

= \[ \left( \frac{14,000,000 - 365,000}{100,000 \times 135} \right) - 1 \] X 100

= 1

**Inference**

1. The positive value indicates that there is no water deficit or there is a water surplus.
2. “1” indicates that “1” % of N (population of the area) can be added to the settlement without causing a water crisis in that area.

i.e 1% of 100,000 = 1000.

Therefore 1000 people can be added to the human settlement according to the water available in the area.

Hypothetical Case II: The period under study is one day, for an area with 13,000,000 liters of total water available (\( \psi_T \)), 850,000 liters of polluted water (\( \psi_P \)), and a population (N) of 1 lakh. Taking water requirement per person (\( \Phi \)) as 135 liters.

We have, Kikon equation = \[ \left( \frac{\psi_T - \psi_P}{\Phi \times \text{N}} \right) - 1 \] X 100

= \[ \left( \frac{13,000,000 - 850,000}{100,000 \times 135} \right) - 1 \] X 100

= -10

**Inference**

1. The negative value indicates that there is a water deficit.
2. “-10” indicates that “10” % of N (population of the area) is more than the population that can be sustained by the water available in the area.

i.e. 10 % of 100,000 = 10,000 (people).

As the value has reached the Klopp threshold (\( \geq -10 \)); therefore according to Kikon law, the area will not be able to sustain a human population and will lead to the disintegration of the human settlement.

**Conclusion**

The study revealed that there is a stark contrast in the water quality of the rivulets before and after flowing through densely populated human settlements. It showed that human activities were responsible for degrading the water, establishing the cyclic relationship among water pollution, human populations, and water availability; the water available in an area determine the human population that can settle in that area while the human population is responsible for water pollution which in turn impacts the water available to the human population of that area. The Kikon equation can be used to assess the real-time impact of polluted water on human settlements. And help in taking necessary actions to check water pollution and excess population than that is permitted by the water availability of that area. A new human settlement can be modeled using this equation, to assess if the water available will support the human population and keep the
water pollution at a level permitted by the Kikon law. This equation can be used to create a study model of an extraterrestrial human settlement based on the water need of such a human population; to calculate how much water will be needed by such a human population in the short run and long run.

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