

A Study on the Effects of Earth Surface and Metrological Parameters on River Discharge Modeling Using SWAT Model, Case Study: Kasillian Basin, Mazandaran Province, Iran

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Abstract: In order to design and construct many of the hydraulic structures such as dams, there is a need to determine the amount of river discharge. In rivers without gauging stations, it is necessary to calculate their inflows by using the hydrological models. SWAT is one of the numerical models that are widely used for this purpose.

For calculating the basin discharge, the model requires effective metrological data such as precipitation, temperature, wind speed, solar radiation and relative humidity on the one hand, and the data related to the basin surface such as curve number and roughness coefficient on the other hand.

In this research, Kasillian River discharge has been calculated as a case study and has been verified using data from Valikben hydrometric station, which is placed at the basin outlet. Furthermore, the impact of each input data on the calculation of water flow has also been studied.

Keywords: SWAT, River Discharge, Precipitation, Solar Radiation, Wind Speed, Temperature

1. INTRODUCTION

In order to construct dams, the monthly and annual inflow of rivers is an important factor in determination of the dam reservoir volume. The input water flow can be calculated by the hydrometric stations. In some regions with the lack of hydrometric stations, numerical models such as SWAT can be used in order to estimate the runoff flowing into the dam. These models perform complicated and very accurate calculations in a very short time.

2. MATERIALS

The study area is located in the northern forests of Alborz, which includes the villages of Sangdeh, Darzikol, Soutkola, Valik Chal and Valik Ben. Kasillian basin is itself one of the sub-basins of Haraz basin and is the second basin that has been equipped by the Ministry of Energy in Iran. The area of Kasillian basin is about 66.81 square kilometers and the length of the main river is 16.8 kilometers. The basin of this river is located at the geographic coordinates of 36°-02' to 36°-11' of latitude and 53°-10' to 53°-26' of longitude. The gradients being used in this study in percent include -2, 1, 2-5, 8-12, 12-20, 30-60 and >60.

There is a hydrometric station at Valikben on the Kasillian River that has been established since 1970 with a longitude of 53°-17' and a latitude of 36°-10', which measures the river discharge. **Figure 1** shows the location of the Kasillian basin.

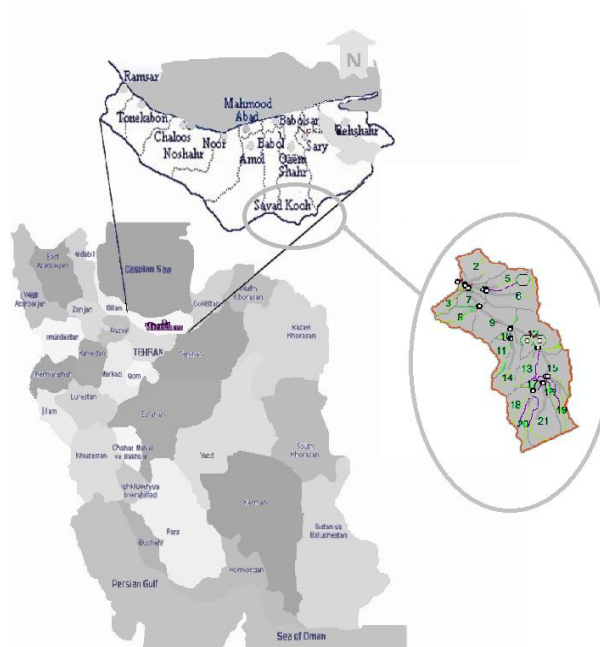


Figure1. Position of Kasillian Basin

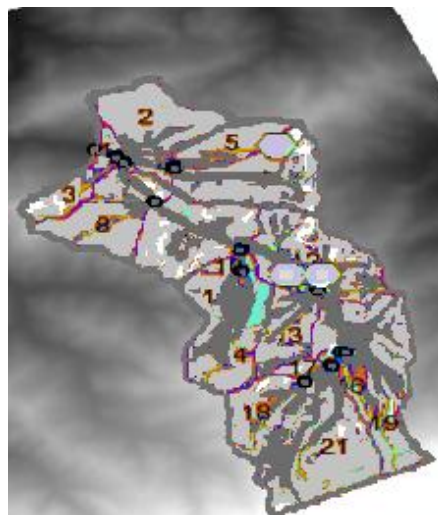


Figure2. Digital Elevation Model for Kasillian River Basin of Savadkooh Region (Dem)

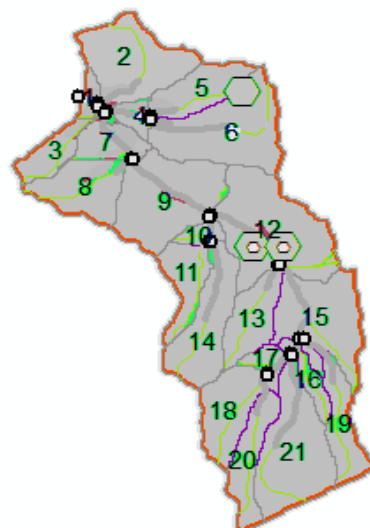


Figure3. Land Use Map for Kasillian River Basin of Savadkooh Region (Land Use)

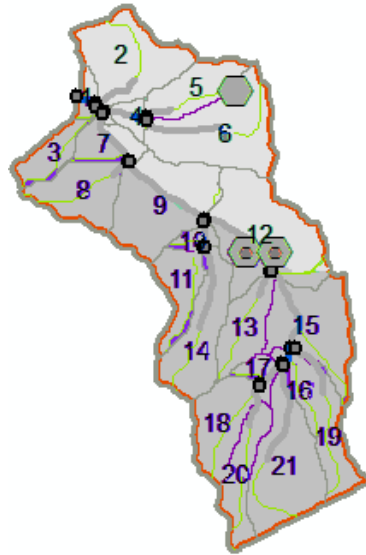


Figure4. Map of Soil for Kasillian River Basin of Savadkooh Region (Soil)

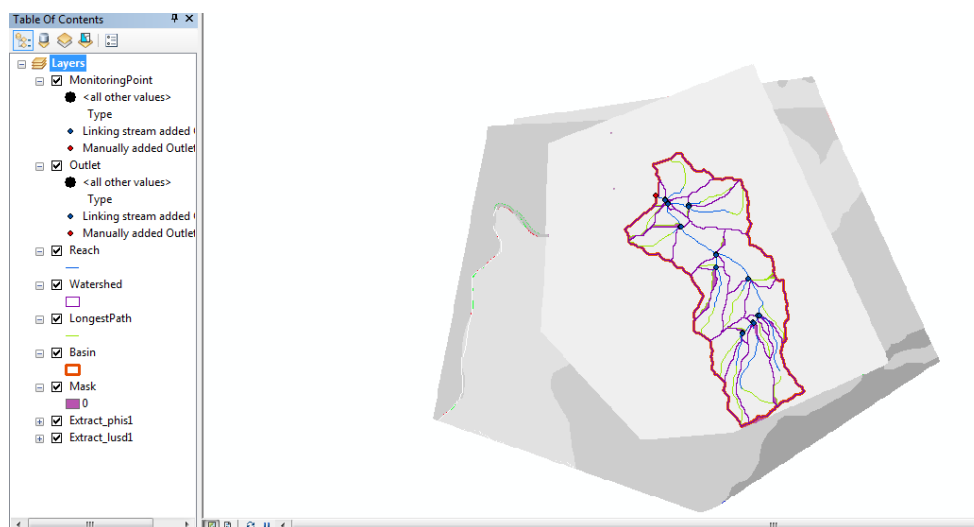


Figure5. End of zoning the region under consideration

In this model, the data including precipitation, temperature, solar radiation, wind speed, and relative humidity has been used in a statistical period of February 1978 to February 1989 to simulate the runoff. The mentioned statistical parameters of the Pole Sefid synoptic station data and Sangdeh and Darzikola climatology stations, Valik Chal rain gauge station and Valikben hydrometric station have been used.

2.1. An Introduction To SWAT Model

SWAT model was developed by The Agricultural Research Service (ARS), The US Department of Agriculture, (Grassland Soil and Water Research Laboratory) in Texas. This model simulates the river discharge. In order to estimate the river discharge, it is in need of climatic data such as precipitation, temperature, solar radiation, wind speed and relative humidity. This software requires at least temperature and precipitation data. The rest of the data can be simulated by the software. The necessary maps in the software include the soil, land use and Digital Elevation Model (DEM) maps. The SWAT model is performed in Arc GIS software.

Among the existing hydrologic models, the SWAT model is the most comprehensive model in simulation of the ruling processes on the basin surface. SWAT is a conceptual-distributive model, which has been initially designed for the large basins and has gradually been expanded for different purposes. The system of SWAT model has three main parameters including model inputs, model outputs and model main program.

The SWAT model includes 9 main parameters and about 22 secondary parameters, which simulates the following six hydrologic and biologic phenomena (Arnold et al, 1990).

1. Daily stream flow [discharge]
2. Daily sediment yield
3. [Monthly and Yearly] Water balance
4. Water [quality] pollution
5. Producing the agricultural product
6. Estimation of the production of pasture plant coverage through application of management of cattle grazing systems (Gholami, 1998)

For modeling objectives, one basin might be divided into many sub-basins. By dividing one basin into many sub-basins, SWAT model simulates the place details. In this model, each basin is divided into many sub-basins and each of the sub-basins into many Hydrologic Reaction Units (HRU), which are homogenous from the land use viewpoint and the soil features.

For measuring the monthly discharge in the SWAT method, there is a need to the measured monthly quantities in Synoptic, Climatology and rain gauge and hydrometric stations (such as daily rain, minimum and maximum of daily temperature, sun ray, wind speed, and relative humidity which in these cases in SWAT it is read in dbf).

2.2. Model Implementation Method

The SWAT software that specifies the river zoning and direction of the rivers and river discharge simulation has been used for the concerned project. In SWAT, there is a need to topography map and DEM map, the map of land use, the soil map and soil data for the concerned region and the data of Synoptic, Climatology and Rain gauges' stations and provision of look up table. (The necessary maps are for GIS and SWAT software and the smaller scale maps would be better. In addition, better results will be achieved for a larger number of years of data collection in Synoptic, Climatology and Rain gauges' stations).

All the three maps should have the same scale and unit so that in the SWAT software they could overlap. The metrological data should be stored in DATABASE of SWAT software (SWAT 2009.mdb). (It can be inserted into SWAT program) and data could be such as USERSOIL, WGN and ... in SWAT 2009.mdb.

The followings steps should be taken:

1. Determination of the method of input data preparation into the model;
2. Modeling stages in ARCSWAT;
3. Model performance, data storage and output data.

The files of Arcsw at_documentation in Arcsw at help describe the performance methods and the files of swat-input-output.pdf and theoretical swat 2009 has been used.

The files should be in Excel form and to be inserted into part of SWAT database (swat2009.mdb). Then for the application in SWAT model, they should be used in form of dbf and txt files. The ending and beginning years of all input data into SWAT model should be equal. The quantity of rain data is in millimeter and it can be inserted in form of less than daily, monthly and annually. The data of Abali Synoptic Station has been used instead of Pole-Sefid Synoptic station, whose data is similar to the area under consideration.

These images have been cut due to the high capacity of DEM main files and land use and soil data so that they could better show the results in SWAT [1-24].

The cell-size of the map was considered as 50 in order to have all three maps in agreement with each other.

The type of land use and their numbers in the map should be noted down for connection to the SWAT. We considered two types of land use in the concerned basin including:

1. FRSD

2. FRSE

In addition, the type of soil and their numbers in the map should be noted down for connection to the SWAT.

Soil data should be taken by Soil Lab in the region and with regard to the type of soil in the map to be connected to it. Then, the soil data from the Soil Lab should be connected to the type of soil in the map. As soil data was not available, the world map of soil data was used.

The data related to Synoptic station was inserted. Because of the similarity in weather conditions in Abali and Pole-Sefid Synoptic Stations, and due to the fact that the Pole-Sefid data was not available, so Abali data was inserted for Pole-Sefid.

In addition, the daily rain data of two Climatology stations and two Rain gauge stations and the daily maximum and minimum temperature of SWAT of the two climatology stations (with the conversion into dbf or txt files) from 1979 to 1989 (11 years) was inserted and finally, the latitude and longitude of the concerned locations was inserted.

Then, the soil and land use and Synoptic map data should be connected to the map.

Using SWAT 2009 INPUT-OUTPUT file, land use data was connected to SWAT. Then, Synoptic data was inserted (it should be in agreement with the geographic legends of the land use, soil and DEM maps). The concerned files should be converted into dbf for conversion into SWAT.

For drainage gradient of the basin, the SCS method was used which divides the gradients into 5 classes (Table 4).

Table1. Sample of Soil General Data

OBJE CTID	MU ID	SE QN	SN AM	S5I D	CMPP CT	NLAY ERS	HYD GRP	SOIL_Z MX	ANION_E XCEL	SOL_ CRK	TEX TUR E
203			Soil _1			2	C	1000	0.5	0.5	LOA M
204			Soil _2			2	C	1000	0.5	0.5	LOA M

Table2. Sample of Data related to each of the Soil Horizons

SO L_ Z1	SOL_ BD1	SOL_A WC1	SOL_ K1	SOL_C BN1	CLA Y1	SIL T1	SAN D1	ROC K1	SOL_A LB1	USLE _K1	SOL_ EC1
30 0	1.3	0.175	9.23	1.7	21	49	30	0	0.0184	0.3108	0
30 0	1.3	0.175	9.23	1.7	21	49	30	0	0.0184	0.3108	0

The data which are surely needed includes the followings:

Number of layers= (NLAYERS)

Soil hydrologic groups (using infiltration and use) =HYDGRP

Soil depth related to all existing horizons(millimeter) (SOL_ZM)

Soil Texture=Texture

Note: The following data should be provided for all existing horizons in the basin soil units:

Thickness of Horizon 1 in millimeter=SOL_Z1

Soil Volume Density in Horizon 1(gram per cubic centimeter)

Water Accessible Capacity in Horizon 1 (mm) =SOL_AWC1

Saturation Electrical Conductivity in Horizon 1 (mm per hour) =SOL_K1

Organic Materials in Horizon 1 (%) =SOL_CBN1

Clay in Horizon 1(%) : CLAY 1

Silt in Horizon 1(%) =SILT1

SAND1=Sand in Horizon 1(%)

Table3. Data related to Sputnik station and land use and soil

ID	NAME	LAT	LONG	ELEVATION
1	POLSEFID	36.05	53.10	1350
VALUE	LANDUSE	LANDUSE		
19	mix(bagh_lowforest)	FRSD		
24	denseforest	FRSE		
VALUE	NAME			
13	SOIL_1			
24	SOIL_2			

Table4. Gradient classification in SCS suggested method

Gradient in percent	Gradient class
5-0	1
10-5	2
20-10	3
40-20	4
>40	5

Soil and land use data and gradient in HRU should be in agreement with each other. The data related to Synoptic station, temperature and rain was inserted in the write input table in the weather station section. Rain and temperature data are inserted on a daily basis. In the sub-basin data part, all the changes related to sub-basins can be applied and other changes related to SWAT can be applied in SWAT input edit part. In the last part, SWAT simulation can be performed upon the software data being completed and saved. All the saved data can be found in Table shoot at the SWAT output section.

2.3. The Effect of Soil Type

In this research, the optimum curve number and over land roughness coefficient of the basin surface has been studied. Out of the required metrological parameters, only precipitation data has been used first to obtain the optimum curve number and roughness coefficient of the flow in the basin. In the beginning, SWAT model was ran considering a curve number of CN2= 67 and an over land roughness coefficient of OV_N=0.1. The results can be seen in Figure 6.

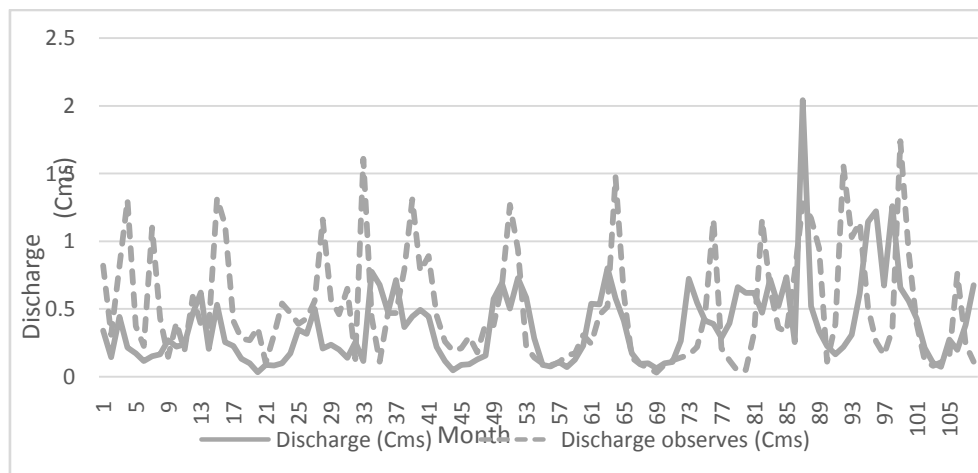


Figure6. Simulated average discharge of SWAT model and average discharge being observed in Kasillian basin

In order to optimize the parameters, different curve numbers (CN) and over land roughness coefficients have been used. The discharge equations using these parameters are shown in Tables 5 and 6, and Figs. 7 to 10. In a comparison to the recorded discharges in the gauging station and the calculated discharge, an optimum curve number of 67 and an over land roughness coefficient of 0.1

was obtained for the basin. Then, considering the two mentioned values, other input parameters of SWAT model in river discharge simulations were studied. The effect of metrological parameters on river discharge simulation in SWAT model was investigated separately or together and the results were compared to the observed discharges. It is worth noting that at this stage of calculations, only the precipitation data has been used as the model input data [25-56].

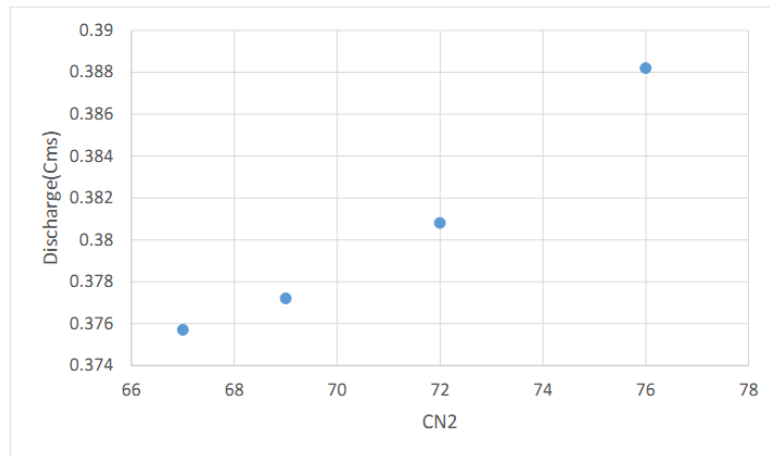


Figure7. Changes of curve number as compared with the simulated discharge

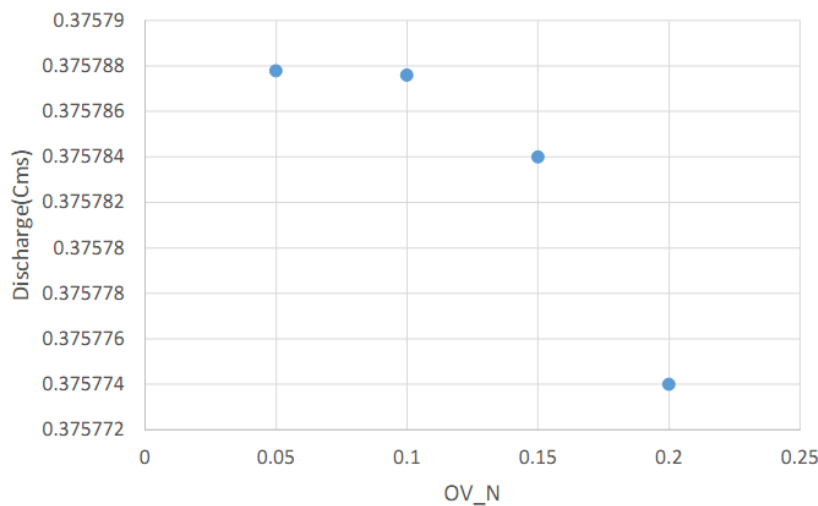


Figure8. Changes of roughness coefficient as compared with the simulated discharge

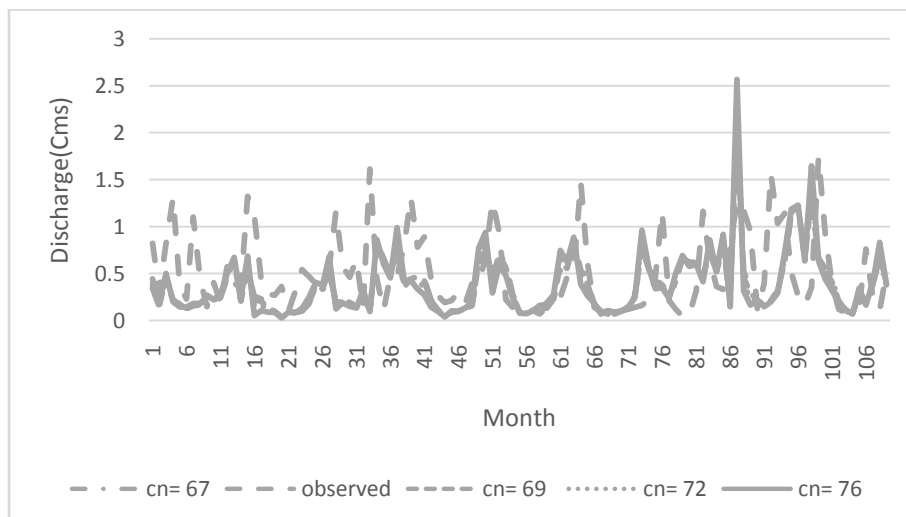


Figure9. River discharge average from different curve number as compared with the observed discharge

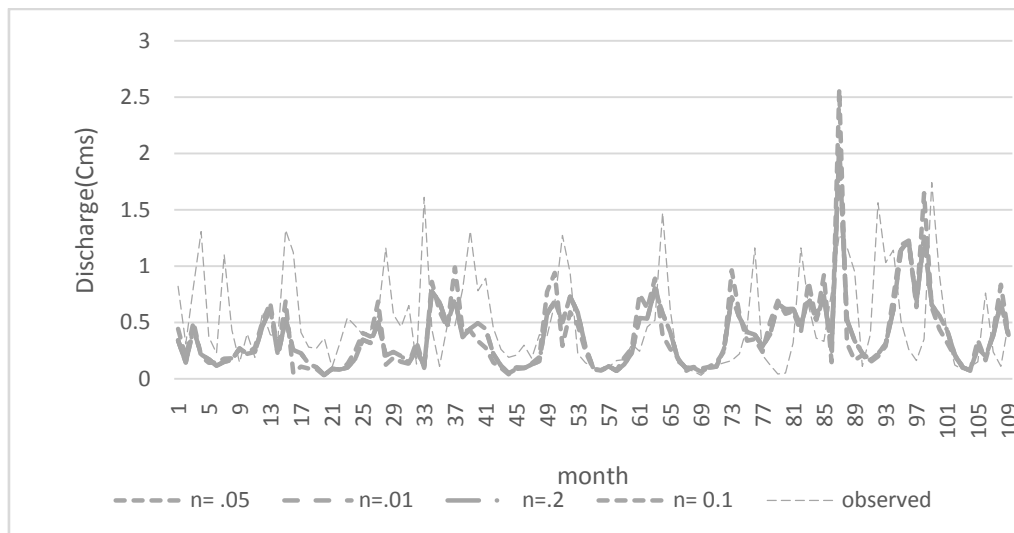


Figure10. River discharge average with different basin over land roughness coefficient as compared with the observed discharge

Table5. The study of the impact of curve number on the calculated discharge average

Curve Number	67	69	72	76
Simulated discharge average (m3/s)	0.475787	0.477227	0.38084	0.388203
Observed discharge average (m3/s)	0.4989532	0.4989532	0.4989532	0.4989532
Calculations errors (m3/s)	0.123166	0.121726	0.118113	0.11075

Table6. The study of the impact of roughness coefficient on the calculated discharge average

Basin Over land roughness coefficient	0.05	0.1	0.15	0.2
Simulated discharge average (m3/s)	0.375787	0.375787	0.375784	0.375774
Observed discharge average (m3/s)	0.498953	0.498953	0.498953	0.498953
Difference between the observed and simulated discharge average (cubic meter per second)	0.123166	0.123166	0.123169	0.123179

2.4. Running the Model Considering Other Metrological Parameters

At this stage, in addition to precipitation data, other metrological parameters including temperature, relative humidity, wind speed and solar radiations have been entered to SWAT model and an average discharge of $0.5704 \text{ m}^3/\text{s}$ has been obtained, as can be seen in the first row of Table 7. As can be seen from the Table 7, the recorded discharge in the gauging station in the modeling period (February 1998 to February 1989) has been $0.4989 \text{ m}^3/\text{s}$ and the calculation error was $0.0714 \text{ m}^3/\text{s}$ corresponding to 14.32%.

Table7. The observed and simulated monthly discharge average changes in the application of SWAT model with each of the input data

Row	Input data	Simulated discharge	Observed discharge	Difference of observed and	Error Percentage
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		average (cubic meter per second)	average (cubic meter per second)	simulated discharge average (Cubic meter per second)	
1	(Prc., Temp.,Rad.,Win.,RH)	0.5704225	0.498953704	0.071468796	14.32
2	(Pre. , Temp, Win, RH)	0.588334	0.498953704	0.089271	17.89
3	(Pre. Temp, Rad., Win)	0.293554	0.498953704	-0.205399	41.16
4	(Pre., Temp.,RH, Rad)	0.569122407	0.498953704	0.070168703	14.06
5	(Pre., Rad., Win., RH)	0.722399	0.498953704	0.447829	89.75
6	(Temp, Rad, Win, RH)	0.086537	0.498953704	-0.412416	82.65
7	(Temp, Rad, RH)	0.090831	0.498953704	-0.182043	36.48
8	(Temp, Rad, Win)	0.0254080	0.498953704	-0.473545	94.9
9	(RH, Rad, Win)	0.149367	0.498953704	-0.349586	70.6
10	(Prc., Temp, Win..)	0.298773889	0.498953704	-0.200179815	40
11	(Pre., Temp., RH)	0.582392315	0.498953704	0.083438611	16.72
12	(Prc, Temp, Rad)	0.296394444	0.498953704	-0.20255926	41
13	(Prc, Temp)	0.300483333	0.498953704	-0.198470371	39
14	(Prc. , RH)	0.666655	0.498953704	0.167702	33.61
15	(Rad, RH)	0.154092	0.498953704	-0.344861	69.12
16	(Rad.,Win)	0.04151318	0.498953704	-0.457439	91.68
17	(Pre.)	0.388740926	0.498953704	-0.110212778	22.08
18	(Temp.)	0.121320904	0.498953704	-0.3776328	75.68
19	(Rad.)	0.044181033	0.498953704	-0.4547719	91.14
20	(Win)	0.251754	0.498953704	-0.247199	49.54
21	(RH)	0.482683	0.498953704	-0.01627	3.26

In order to study the effects of all the necessary metrological parameters on the calculated discharge in SWAT model, every input parameter to the model was removed. Model results are presented in other rows of Table 7. For example, row 2 of Table 7 shows that when the solar radiation data was not inserted into the model, the average calculated discharge was 0.588 and the calculation error increased to 17.89 percent. The third row of this table shows that when the relative humidity data was not inserted, the average of mean discharge of the period decreased and the calculation error was 41.16 percent. The fifth row shows that when the temperature data was not inserted to the model, discharge significantly increased and the error was 89.75 percent compared with the calculated value [57-98].

The sixth row shows that when the precipitation data was not inserted, the average of mean discharge of the period decreased and the error was 82.65 percent. The seventh row shows that when the precipitation and wind speed data was not inserted to the model, the average of mean discharge of the period decreased and the error was 36.48 percent.

The eighth row shows that when the precipitation and relative humidity data was not inserted, the average of mean discharge of the period decreased and the error was 94.4 percent. The ninth row shows that when the precipitation and temperature data was not inserted, the average of mean discharge of the period decreased and the error was 70.06 percent. In the eleventh row, by omission of the solar radiation and wind speed data, the average calculated discharge showed an error of 16.72 percent [99-115].

In the twelfth row, by omission of the relative humidity and wind speed data, the average of mean discharge decreased and the error was being 41 percent.

The thirteenth row shows that by inserting the precipitation and temperature data, the average of mean discharge of the period decreased and the error was 39 percent.

In the fourteenth row, by omission of the temperature, solar radiation and wind speed data, the average of mean discharge of the period increased and the error was 33.61 percent.

In the fifteenth row, by the omission of the temperature, relative humidity and wind speed data, the average of mean discharge of the period decreased and the error was 13.28 percent.

In the eighteenth row, by inserting the temperature and solar radiation input data, the average of mean discharge of the period decreased with an error of 94.8 percent.

In the twentieth row, by inserting the temperature and solar radiation input data, the average of mean discharge of the period decreased with an error of 4.66 percent.

In the twenty-third row, by inserting the precipitation data, the average of mean discharge decreased with an error of 22.08 percent.

In the twenty-fourth row, by inserting the temperature data, the average of mean discharge of the period decreased with an error of 75.68 percent.

In the twenty-seventh row, by inserting the relative humidity input data, the average of mean discharge of the period decreased with an error of 3.26 percent. The negative and positive values of the column before the last column show the decreased and increased simulated values of the discharge in comparison to the observed discharge values, respectively.

In Figure 11, the values of average monthly discharge that were calculated at eight different conditions of Table 7 are compared with the recorded discharge values in the gauging station. Figs. 12 and 13 show the plot of the calculated and recorded discharge values in the first to seventeenth rows of Table 7 [116-123].

3. RESULTS

1. With an increase of 13.43 percent in the curve number, the simulated value of the average monthly discharge got 2.52 percent closer to the observed average discharge value.
2. With an increase of 0.15 in the over land roughness coefficient of the basin, the simulated discharge got 0.01 percent closer to the observed discharge.
3. According to Figs. 12 and 13, the precipitation, temperature and relative humidity data have a greater impact on the calculated discharges compared with the solar radiation and wind speed data.
4. Using all the metrological parameters, the average of mean discharge of the period increased with an error of 14.32 percent.
5. Figs. 12 and 13 show the effect of inserting the relative humidity input data on the average of mean discharge compared with other parameters (separately). By applying the (RH) and (Win, RH) parameters, the simulated average discharge by the model got closer to the observed value.
6. Figs. 12 and 13 show the effect of inserting the temperature input data on a decrease in the average of mean discharge.
7. With insertion of the temperature, rain, relative humidity, solar radiation and wind speed input data, the average of the observed monthly discharge decreased by 16 percent in comparison to the simulated average monthly discharge.
8. With insertion of the temperature and rain input data, the average of the observed monthly discharge increased by 38 percent in comparison to the simulated average monthly discharge.
9. With insertion of the temperature, rain and wind speed input data, the average of the observed monthly discharge increased by 40 percent in comparison to the simulated average monthly discharge.
10. With insertion of the temperature, rain, relative humidity and solar radiation input data, the average of the observed monthly discharge decreased by 14 percent in comparison to the simulated average monthly discharge.
11. With insertion of the temperature, rain, and relative humidity input data, the average of the observed monthly discharge decreased by 18 percent in comparison to the simulated average monthly discharge.
12. With insertion of the temperature, rain and solar radiation input data, the average of the observed monthly discharge increased by 40 percent in comparison to the simulated average monthly discharge.
13. With insertion of the temperature input data, the average of the observed monthly discharge increased by 75 percent in comparison to the simulated average monthly discharge.
14. With insertion of the rain input data, the average of the observed monthly discharge increased by 22 percent in comparison to the simulated average monthly discharge.
15. SWAT software presented an almost suitable results in the estimation of the average monthly discharge with regard to the input data of rain, temperature and other necessary data.

4. DISCUSSION

In 2012, Bastani Allah Abadi evaluated the SWAT2009 model in Kordan River and achieved acceptable results by river simulation and understanding the basin using SWAT model.

In 2003, Gholami used the SWAT model to simulate the monthly average discharge of Emameh basin, one of the Sub-basins of Jajerood River. The results showed that the model has a high sensitivity to the roughness of the land surface.

In 1933, Babaei and Sohrabi evaluated the SWAT model in calculation of Zayandehrood basin flow (1), (6). Omani et al. (1931) used the SWAT model for

simulation of the river flow in Qareh Sar sub-basin in the North-West of Karkheh River and showed a higher sensitivity analysis for the curve number parameter [1-7].

In 2005, Lin et al. calibrated the SWAT model for Atrova river basin in Kaneon with an area of 1680 square kilometers. The calibration results of the daily and monthly flows were satisfactory. The results showed that the model has a good performance in flow prediction.

In 1996, Binger simulated the runoff rate by the SWAT model in a basin in the north of Mississippi for 10 years. The SWAT model indicated acceptable results in simulation of daily and yearly runoff from some sub-basins with the exception of one sub-basin full of affluent trees.

In 2002, Khalil Ahmad et al. employed SWAT model in a research site near Nashra, which the results showed that the model has a high potential to forecast the undersurface flows under different climatic conditions, slant and soil.

In 2003, Van Lou and Garberch estimated the runoff under change of weather conditions for three sub-basins in experimental watershed of Little Vashina River in the south-west of Oklahoma by SWAT model. The results showed that SWAT can forecast the rate of runoff in dry, mean and humid conditions sufficiently.

In 2016, Ye Tuo et al. tested the same model. The outcome of the study cleared that precipitation is the main source of uncertainty and different precipitation datasets in SWAT models lead to the best different estimable ranges for the calibrated parameters.

In 2016, Sun Sook et al. used SWAT in Haeon highland agricultural catchment (62.8 Km²) which was the best area to test uplands above 600 m of elevation and it happened by using SWAT (soil and Water Assessment Tool). The result showed the RSM BMP indicating the sediment reduction of 3.0% for 6.0% runoff reduction up to 14.1% for 17.0% runoff reduction and T-P reduction of 1.3% for 6.0% runoff reduction up to 6.8% for 17% runoff reduction along with negative effect of total nitrogen (T-N) up to -3.7% for 12% runoff reduction.

The main focus of Bingqing Lin et al. (2015) using SWAT was on the Runoff responses to land use change with daily measurement. Jinjiang, as a natural area for collecting rainwater in southeast China with a humid sub-tropical climate, was used for simulations. Three stations lead to the reproduction of annual, monthly and daily runoff processes over nine years (2002-2010) and the result was satisfying.

Simly Dam watershed in Saon basin in the north-east of Islamabad was another place SWAT was applied for the Hydrology by Shimaa, M. Ghoraba in 2015. The model was calibrated from 1990 to 2001 and evaluated from 2002 to 2011. The aim of whole process was to simulate the stream flow. The evaluation resulted in a good performance for both calibration and validation periods between measured and simulated values of both annual and monthly scale discharge.

The Xedone River basin in an area of 7,224,61 km² in the southern part of Laos was evaluated by Bounhieng Vilaysane et al. who used SWAT model to predict stream flow in the river basin. The model was tested for two periods of 1993-2000 and 2001-2008 and the result was satisfactory both in monthly and daily phases of simulation and also in measured calibration and validation [124-193].

5. CONCLUSIONS

Application of SWAT model, its accuracy and scaling of Hydrological stream flow modeling in the Kasillian River was prospering and the results of the time period between February 1978 and February 1989 fulfills the accuracy and scaling expectancy. The SWAT modeling indicates signs of

success in simulation for a period of one month and it would be applicable in the basin while shows capability of investigating climate and land changes. Moreover, projecting for probable dam construction and flood in future and managing them is possible by this model. Such management will not be separated from managing water resource in Kasillian River. Therefore, the SWAT model will be effective in the sustainable development of the country.

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