



Influence of riparian vegetation on living organisms: a case study of Dharabi watershed and Kallar Kahar Regions in Pakistan

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Key words: Kallar Kahar, Dharabi, Riparian vegetation, Diversity, ICARDA.

<http://dx.doi.org/10.12692/ijb/14.2.361-373>

Article published on February 27, 2019

Abstract

This study examined the influence of riparian vegetation on living organisms in Dharabi watershed and Kallar Kahar Lake. Riparian vegetation playing a key role in the maintains of biodiversity, such as providing: strengthens stream bank, captures fine sediment, filters out pollutants, increases infiltration, utilizes excess nutrients, provides food and shelter for fish and wildlife and reduces flood damage. The results show that Riparian vegetation in the area consists of typha *elephantine*, *Phragmites kiraka*, *Saccharum spontaneum*. The objective of the study was to find out the influence of riparian vegetation and the role of Riparian vegetation in the water cleaning process of Dharabi watershed and Kallar Kahar Lake. 84 species reported in the study area and five plant communities recognized in the Dharabi watershed on the basis of IVI by using line transect sampling methods which are Crysopogon, Cynodon, Gymnosporea, Acacia, and Conyza. However, the top three highest IVI value plant community Schoenoplectus, Phragmites and Cynodon was identified in western of the Kallar Kahar Lake. The studies also revealed that in the recreational area there was a major contribution of garbage disposable material such as Paraffin, Plastics of soft drinks and disposable meals packages. However, in the domestic area, the waste of material and garbage were daily home used material like shopping bags, newspaper or other household things. The overall effect of the garbage on the vegetation is very significant. The study also points out that bird diversity is less in that place where the relative garbage ratio is greater.

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Introduction

Riparian zones represent areas of strong biological, physical and chemical interaction between terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems (Gregory, Swanson, *et al.*, 1991). These areas are usually typed by high diversity of fauna, flora and environmental processes (Pusey and Arthington, 2003). The importance of the riparian zones to the aquatic environment is well recognized, as the terrestrial primary productivity derived from riparian zone is known as an important source of energy to riverine food webs (Junk, Bayley, *et al.*, 1989, Vannote, Minshall, *et al.*, 1980). The influence of the riparian zone on aquatic systems also includes thermal buffering, provision of shade, nutrient interception, storage and release and enhancement of bank stability (Arthington and Pusey, 2003, Beltrão, Medeiros, *et al.*, 2009, Junk, Bayley, *et al.*, 1989).

One of the most important roles of the riparian zone is the provision of coarse woody material as habitat and substrate for the aquatic fauna, such as invertebrates (Richards, Haro, *et al.*, 1997) and ash (Jungwirth, Muhar, *et al.*, 1995). The aquatic habitat has been found to be associated with the riparian vegetation or other correlated variables, such as turbidity and shading of the margins (Beltrão, Medeiros, *et al.*, 2009). Therefore, the state of this living space will influence the biotic structure and organization within aquatic systems (Allan and Flecker, 1993, Khan, Saeed, *et al.*, 2016, Mugodo, Kennard, *et al.*, 2006, Tait, Li, *et al.*, 1994).

The physical habitat of many aquatic environments worldwide has been degraded by human activities (Khan, Saeed, *et al.*, 2016, Mugodo, Kennard, *et al.*, 2006). Given the great number of links between riparian vegetation and the aquatic ecosystems, it is not surprising that fish assemblage's diversity and the composition and structure of their habitat have been linked to variations in the riparian cover (Vono and Barbosa, 2001). Riparian land is important because of their role in soil conservation, biodiversity, and the influence they have on aquatic ecosystems (Dudgeon, Arthington, *et al.*, 2006). In addition to being

productive, riparian land is often a vulnerable part of the landscape susceptible to damage the agricultural and urban development, weed invasion and natural events such as floods so there will be need careful management of riparian lands is vital to the conservation of both biodiversity and economic productivity (Tockner, Bunn, *et al.*, 2008).

However, vegetation contributes to unique ecosystems that perform a large variety of ecological functions. When riparian zones are damaged by construction, agriculture or silviculture, biological restoration can take place, usually by human intervention in erosion control and vegetation (Christensen, Bartuska, *et al.*, 1996, Council, 1992). Riparian vegetation directly adjacent to watercourses plays an important role in providing strengthens stream bank, captures fine sediment, filters out pollutants, increases infiltration, utilizes excess nutrients, provides shade for the stream, provides food and shelter for fish and wildlife, slows runoff and reduces flood damage and control temperature and light (Khan, Saeed, *et al.*, 2016, Palone and Todd, 1998).

Riparian vegetation and watershed land use are important factors determining the health and integrity of stream ecosystems (Hrodey, Sutton, *et al.*, 2009). Intact riparian vegetation has been related to healthy stream conditions as it traps and filters runoff that may contaminate streams and provides important resources (e.g., leaf litter) for aquatic organisms (Naiman and Decamps, 1997). However, little is known about the role of these variables in determining the integrity of urban streams and even less about tropical urban streams (Naiman and Decamps, 1997).

Natural riparian ecosystems are important components of the landscape and serve as a vital link between aquatic and upland ecosystems (Lake, Bond, *et al.*, 2007). Riparian ecosystems are also major transition zones of matter, energy, and information transfer between aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems. Riparian ecosystems have important functions in

water purification and non-point pollution control (Khan, Saeed, *et al.*, 2016, Lowrance, 1998, Zhao, Xu, *et al.*, 2009). Many studies have suggested that riparian vegetation may decrease N and P concentrations in both overland flow and in groundwater. However, changing the land use of riparian areas, such as converting forests into row crops, pastures, or lawns, can induce deterioration in river water quality. Thus, the establishment and management of riparian buffer zones are considered a viable option for controlling agricultural non-point source pollution in stream water (Wenger, 1999). Other studies have shown that the effects of land-use change on the environment are complex and difficult to predict and so, evaluating the effects of changes in riparian vegetation patterns on soil nutrient distribution and environmental pollution is imperative.

Therefore, improving water quality by reducing non-point source pollution is a big challenge in a developing country like Pakistan. One of the major reasons for soil surface runoff and loss in the associated nutrient is inappropriate land use and high-density fertilizer use (Khan, Shahnaz, *et al.*, 2013). The eco-service value of riparian vegetation buffers along the rivers has been underestimated and as such, a large amount of natural riparian vegetation was reclaimed which meet the increasing demand for food in the past 5 decades (Wang, 2012).

However, the main purpose of this research is to examine the influence of riparian vegetation on the living organisms. The specific objectives of the study are as follows; a) to assess the solid contaminant retained by the riparian vegetation; b) to examine the role of riparian vegetation on pollution, and c) to assess the role of riparian vegetation in water.

Materials and methods

Description of the study area

This study was conducted on riparian vegetation in Dharabi watershed and Kallar Kahar in 2017, which is located in district Chakwal at latitude of 32° 42' to 32° 55' N and longitude 72° 35' to 72° 48' E.

Dharabi reservoir was constructed in 2007 by Small Dams Organization of Irrigation department, Government of Punjab, for irrigation purposes. It is located at the downstream boundary of the study area (watershed). Its gross and live water storage capacities are 45.6 and 15.6 million cubic-meters. The annual withdrawals for irrigation and evaporation losses were estimated are 7.2 MCM and 8.4MCM respectively. The reservoir will supply irrigation water to about 2600 ha, of arable land.

Riparian vegetation in Dharabi watershed covers 200 km² drainage areas at the outlet of Dharabi dam. Elevation varies between 466 and 800 meters. Slope varies from 2 % in plain areas to more than 30 % along hill sides. Land degradation in the watershed area dominantly exists in the form of water erosion, soil fertility depletion and soil structure deterioration. Minimum temperature varies from -0.5°C in January to 16°C in July/August and the maximum temperature range from 24°C in January to 48°C in June. The average annual rainfall varies from 600 – 700 mm. The main vegetation type was scrub forest dominated by *Acacia modesta* (phulai) and *Olea ferruginea* (kaho). Most palatable grasses were *Cenchrus ciliaris* (Dhaman), *Cynodon dactylon* (Khabbal) and *Elusine flagelifera* (Chimber). The main land uses included the grazing land, rain fed agriculture on terrace fields, irrigated lands (by wells and dams), unused lands and wet lands (Khan, Saeed, *et al.*, 2016).

The Kallar Kahar is located between left and right limbs in the upper catchments of the watershed. The lake surface area varies between 1 and 1.5 km sq. and its depth varies between 3 and 6 meters. Two natural springs in the nearby hills feed the lake. The lake water is brackish, because of sulfur salts, and is not used for drinking or agricultural processes. Nevertheless, this water spills into freshwater perennial stream. This lake is a tourist attraction and eco-system development is planned in the region. The lake was used as effluent disposal pond for the nearby Kallar Kahar town that has caused wild vegetative growth and reduced the effective lake area. Recently,

the Government has planned to restore the lake integrity and diverted the town disposal from the lake to other place. It is a part of efforts to develop the lake as attractive tourists (Khan, Saeed, *et al.*, 2016, Sheikh, Month, *et al.*).

Sampling Site

The whole riparian vegetation in watershed area will to be divided into different zones, and sampling sites was being selected on the basis of this division. The representative sampling sites from each zone would to be selected randomly after visiting the target area for collection of data. Riparian area of the lake about 200 m away from the water boundary of Kallar Kahar.

Phytosociological attributes analysis

Line transect method were to be used for the assessment of plant communities, vegetation cover and carrying capacity (Kent and Coker, 1992). Under this technique, 100m long transect line were to be laid down on ground using the measurement tape quadrat of 1m² will be laid at an interval of 25m on alternate side of the line.

(a) Measurement of Vegetation Cover

Vegetation cover percentage of riparian vegetation will be determined by using following equation:

$$\text{Percent Cover} = \frac{(\text{Sum of int ercepts by a species on all the tran sec ts})}{(\text{Total length of all the tran sec ts})} \times 100$$

(b) Measurement of Vegetation composition

Riparian vegetation composition percentage will be assessed by following formula:

$$\text{Percent Compositoin} = \frac{(\text{Sum of int ercepts by a species on all the tran sec ts})}{(\text{Sum of int ercepts by different species on all the tran sec ts})} \times 100$$

(c) Measurement of Density and Frequency

Following formulae will be used to calculate density and frequency percentage:

$$\text{Density} = \frac{(\text{Number of individuals of species in all quadrates})}{\text{Total area sampled}}$$

$$\text{Frequency (\%)} = \frac{\text{Number of quadrates in which a species occurred}}{\text{Total number of quadrates sampled}} \times 100$$

(d) Measurement of Relative Density, Relative Frequency and Relative Cover

With the help of following formulae we can calculate Relative Density, Relative Frequency and Relative Cover.

$$\text{Re lative Density} = \frac{\text{Total individuals of a species}}{\text{Total individual of all species}} \times 100$$

$$\text{Re lative Frequency} = \frac{\text{Frequency of a species}}{\text{Total frequency value of all species}} \times 100$$

$$\text{Re lative Cover} = \frac{\text{Total int ercepts length of a species}}{\text{Total int ercept length of all species}} \times 100$$

$$\text{Re lative Cover} = \frac{\text{Total int ercepts length of a species}}{\text{Total int ercept length of all species}} \times 100$$

Importance value

Importance value was the sum of relative density, relative frequency, and relative cover. It will be determined by the following formula.

$I.V = \text{Relative Cover} + \text{Relative Frequency} + \text{Relative Density}$

$I.V.I = I.V / 3$ or $(\text{Relative Cover} + \text{Relative Frequency} + \text{Relative Density}) / 3$.

On the basis of importance value, sampled of riparian vegetation were to be divided into different plant communities. The community within each stand was to be named as the species having highest importance value irrespective of its habit. When two or more species closely approach each other in order of Importance Value then the communities share the names of these dominant species.

Results and discussion

Phytosociological attributes analysis results (Dharabi water shed)

Transect area-1

This transect area is located in the riparian zone of Dharabi dam about 100 m from the water level.

Table 1 Floristic inventory data of study area.

| S. No | Botanical Name | Habit | S. No | Botanical Name | Habit | S. No | Botanical Name | Habit | S. No | Botanical Name | Habit |
|-------|------------------------------|----------------------|-------|-------------------------------|-------|-------|----------------------------------|-------|-------|------------------------------|----------------|
| 1. | <i>Acacia modesta</i> | Tree | 22 | <i>Conyza canadensis</i> | Herb | 43 | <i>Imperata cylindrica</i> | Grass | 64 | <i>Prosopis cineraria</i> | Tree |
| 2. | <i>Acacia nilotica</i> | Tree | 23 | <i>Cryspogon spp.</i> | Herb | 44 | <i>Imperata cylindrica</i> | Grass | 65 | <i>Ranunculus</i> | Herb |
| 3. | <i>Achyranthus aspera</i> | Shrub | 24 | <i>Cuscuta reflexa</i> | herb | 45 | <i>Lantana camara</i> | Shrub | 66 | <i>Ricinus communis</i> | Shrub |
| 4. | <i>Adhatoda zeylinica</i> | Shrub | 25 | <i>Cynodon dactylon</i> | Grass | 46 | <i>Lythrus aphyca</i> | matri | 67 | <i>Rumex dentatus</i> | Herb |
| 5. | <i>Aeriva jawanica</i> | Shrub | 26 | <i>Cynodon dactylon</i> | Grass | 47 | <i>Malvestrum coromendelinum</i> | Herb | 68 | <i>Saccharum bengalensis</i> | Grass |
| 6. | <i>Albizia lebbeck</i> | Tree | 27 | <i>Dalbergia sisso</i> | Tree | 48 | <i>Medicago polymorpha</i> | Herb | 69 | <i>Saccharum spontaneum</i> | Grass |
| 7. | <i>Alternanthera purgans</i> | Spiny prostrate herb | 28 | <i>Desmostachya bipinnata</i> | Grass | 49 | <i>Melilotus indica</i> | Herb | 70 | <i>Schoenoplect us sp.</i> | Grass |
| 8. | <i>Amaranthus viridis</i> | Herb | 29 | <i>Desmostachya bipinnata</i> | Grass | 50 | <i>Morus alba</i> | Tree | 71 | <i>Setaria media</i> | Herb |
| 9. | <i>Anagalus arvensis</i> | Herb | 30 | <i>Dicanthium annulatum</i> | Grass | 51 | <i>Morus nigra</i> | Tree | 72 | <i>Sissoria hitromala</i> | Herb |
| 10. | <i>Artemisia</i> | Herb | 31 | <i>Dichanthium annulatum</i> | Grass | 52 | <i>Nerium olenander</i> | Shrub | 73 | <i>Solanum incanum</i> | Herb |
| 11. | <i>Bacopa monnieri</i> | Hydrophyte herb | 32 | <i>Dodonae viscosa</i> | Shrub | 53 | <i>Octochloa compressa</i> | Grass | 74 | <i>Solanum nigrum</i> | Herb |
| 12. | <i>Bracheria reptans</i> | Shurb | 33 | <i>Eleusine compressa</i> | Grass | 54 | <i>Opuntia delnii</i> | Shrub | 75 | <i>Solanum surratense</i> | Prostrate herb |
| 13. | <i>Calotropis procera</i> | Herb | 34 | <i>Eucalyptus globules</i> | Tree | 55 | <i>Oxalis corniculata</i> | Herb | 76 | <i>Tamarix aphylla</i> | Tree |
| 14. | <i>Cannabis sativa</i> | Herb | 35 | <i>Euphorbia helioscopia</i> | Herb | 56 | <i>Panicum</i> | Grass | 77 | <i>Taraxicum officinalae</i> | Herb |
| 15. | <i>Capparis decidua</i> | Shrub | 36 | <i>Euphorbia hirta</i> | Herb | 57 | <i>Parthenium hysterophoris</i> | Herb | 78 | <i>Themeda cyliata</i> | Grass |
| 16. | <i>Capparis decidua</i> | Shurb/ Tree | 37 | <i>Euphorbia prostata</i> | Herb | 58 | <i>Phragmites karka</i> | Grass | 79 | <i>Typha</i> | Hydroph ytes |
| 17. | <i>Carthamus oxycantha</i> | Herb | 38 | <i>Euphorbia thymifolia</i> | Herb | 59 | <i>Poa annua</i> | Grass | 80 | <i>Withania somnifera</i> | Shrubby herb |
| 18. | <i>Cencherus ciliarus</i> | Grass | 39 | <i>Fagonia indica</i> | Herb | 60 | <i>Polygonum pleygium</i> | Herb | 81 | <i>Xanthium indicum</i> | Shrub |
| 19. | <i>Cenchrus segitarus</i> | Grass | 40 | <i>Ficus bengalensis</i> | Tree | 61 | <i>Polypogon fugax</i> | Grass | 82 | <i>Xanthium indicum</i> | Shrub |
| 20. | <i>Chenopodium album</i> | Herb | 41 | <i>Ficus carica</i> | Tree | 62 | <i>Populus deltodies</i> | Tree | 83 | <i>Ziziphus mauritiana</i> | Tree |
| 21. | <i>Circium arvensis</i> | Herb | 42 | <i>Fumaria indica</i> | Herb | 63 | <i>Prosopis glandulosa</i> | Shrub | 84 | <i>Ziziphus numularia</i> | Shrub |

The area have physiognomic dominance of grass (*sirala*) and the results of transect showed that *the Cryspogon* posse's highest ground cover (65 %), follow by *Cynodon dactylon* (26 %). The *Cryspogon* had highest IVI value (56.6), while *Cynodon dactylon* and *Gymnospora royleanae* had 34.5 and 2.47 respectively. Therefore, *Cryspogon*, *Cynodon*, and *Gymnospora* in this transect are the top three plant community with highest importance value (Fig.1a).

Transect area- 2: This transect area is located in the riparian zone of Dharabi dam and the results of this transect shows that *the Cryspogon* posse's highest ground cover (32.36 %), while *Acacia modesta* have highest canopy cover (34.94 %). The *Cynodon dactylon* had highest IVI value (46.7), while

Cryspogon and *modesta* with 27.1 and 14.9 IVI values respectively. Therefore, *Cynodon*, *Cryspogon* and *Acacia* in this transect are the top three plant community with maximum standing value (Fig.1b).

Transect area- 3: This transect area is located in the riparian zone of Dharabi dam and the results shows that *the Acacia modesta* posse's highest ground cover (34.48 %), while *Cynodon dactylon* have cover (30.9%) and *Cryspogon spp* have 24.67 % cover. It showed that *Cynodon dactylon* had highest IVI value (41.17), while *Cryspogon* and *Acacia modesta* with 27.8 and 15.03 respectively. Therefore, *Cynodon*, *Cryspogon* and *Acacia* in this transect are the top three plant community with premier status value (Fig.1c).

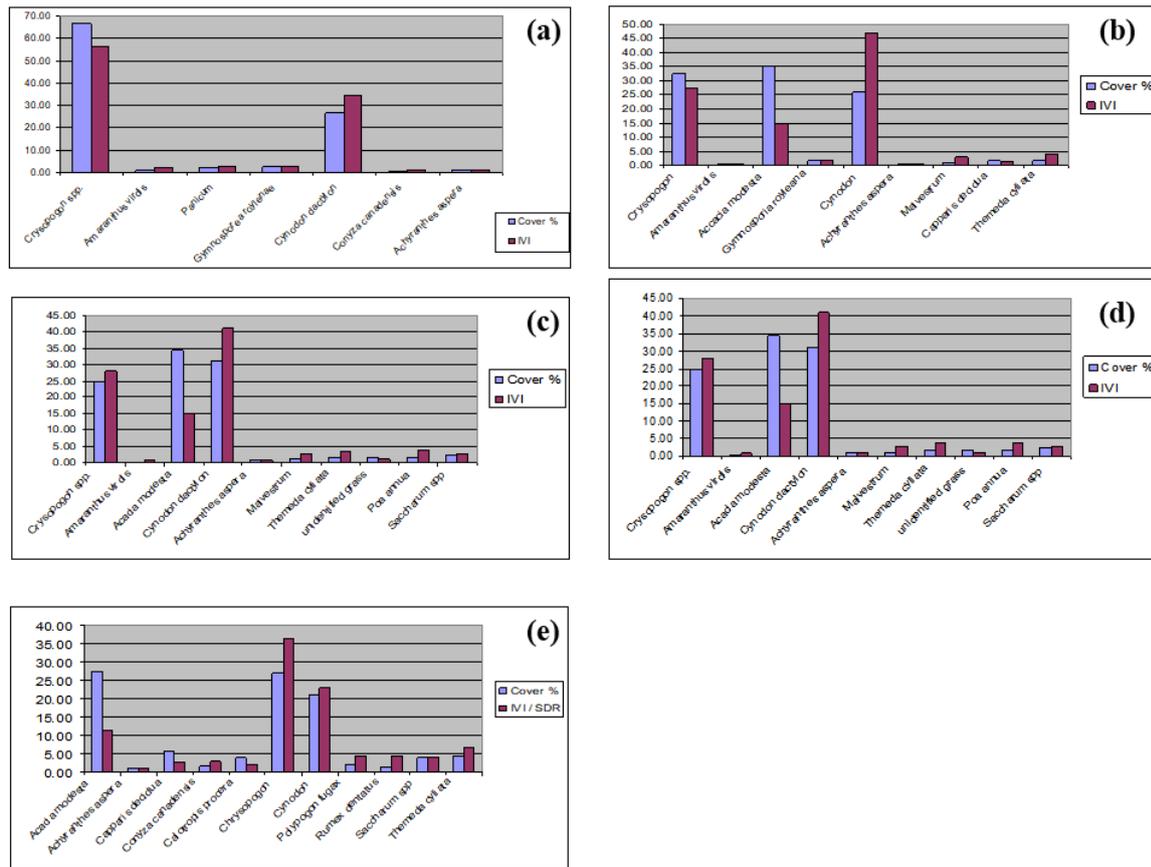


Fig. 1. Phytosociological parameters of Dharabi Watershed in different transects.

Transect area- 4: This transect area is located in the riparian zone of Dharabi dam and the results of transect 4 as shown in shows that *the Chrysopogon* posse's highest ground cover (30.42 %), while *Cynodon dactylon* have cover (19.17%) and *Conyza spp* have 17.67 % cover. *Chrysopogon* had highest IVI value (30.42) while *Cynodon* then *Conyza* with 19.17 and 17.67 respectively based on the presented results (Fig.1d).

Transect area- 5: The result from transect 5 findings shows that the percentage cover of *Acacia modesta* is 27.51%, *Chrysopogon spp* 27.04% and *Cynodon dactylon* 20.93 % cover. It showed that *Chrysopogon* had highest IVI value (36.61), *Cynodon* had IVI value (22.90) and *Acacia* had 11.59 IVI value.

Therefore, *Chrysopogon*, *Cynodon* and *Conyza* in this transect are the top three plant community with highest importance value (Fig.1e).

Phytosociological attributes analysis of Kallar Kahar Lake

In this area, two Zone of Kallar Kahar Lake was studied using quadrat method.

The zones (western and eastern side) were chosen because of clear physiognomic dominance of the different species and the result from this side is explained as follows;

Western side of Kallar Kahar Lake

The findings from Western side of Kallar Kahar lake shows that most of the area under study were covered by *Schoenoplectus sp.* with about 25.0%, *Phragmites karka* with about 23.1 % and *Cynodon dactylon* with 10.2 %. The results as presented in (Fig.2a).

Further shows that *Phragmites karka* was most frequent with R.F (15.6), *Schoenoplectus sp.* (12.5), *Amaranthus viridis* (9.4), *Cynodon dactylon* (9.4) and *Typha spp* with 9.4 relative frequency. It showed

that the top three highest IV value are *Schoenoplectus*, *Phragmites* and *Cynodon* plant communities with IVI value of 20.9, 20.6 and 12.7 each respectively.

Eastern Side of Kallar Kahar Lake

The findings from this side shows that most of the area under consideration were covered by *Cynodon*

dactylon (22.82%), *Phragmites charka* (20.2%) and *Typha* spp with 11.9 % relative cover. The results shows that *Cynodon dactylon* was most frequent with R.F (15.6) while *Typha Phragmitis carica*, *Cynodon dactylon* and *Xanthium indicum* with 9.4 relative frequency each. It showed that *Cynodon*, *Phragmites*, and *Typha* plant community were with the highest IVI value with 24.3, 14.5 and 10.0 each in eastern side of the Kallar Kahar Lake respectively (**Fig.2b**).

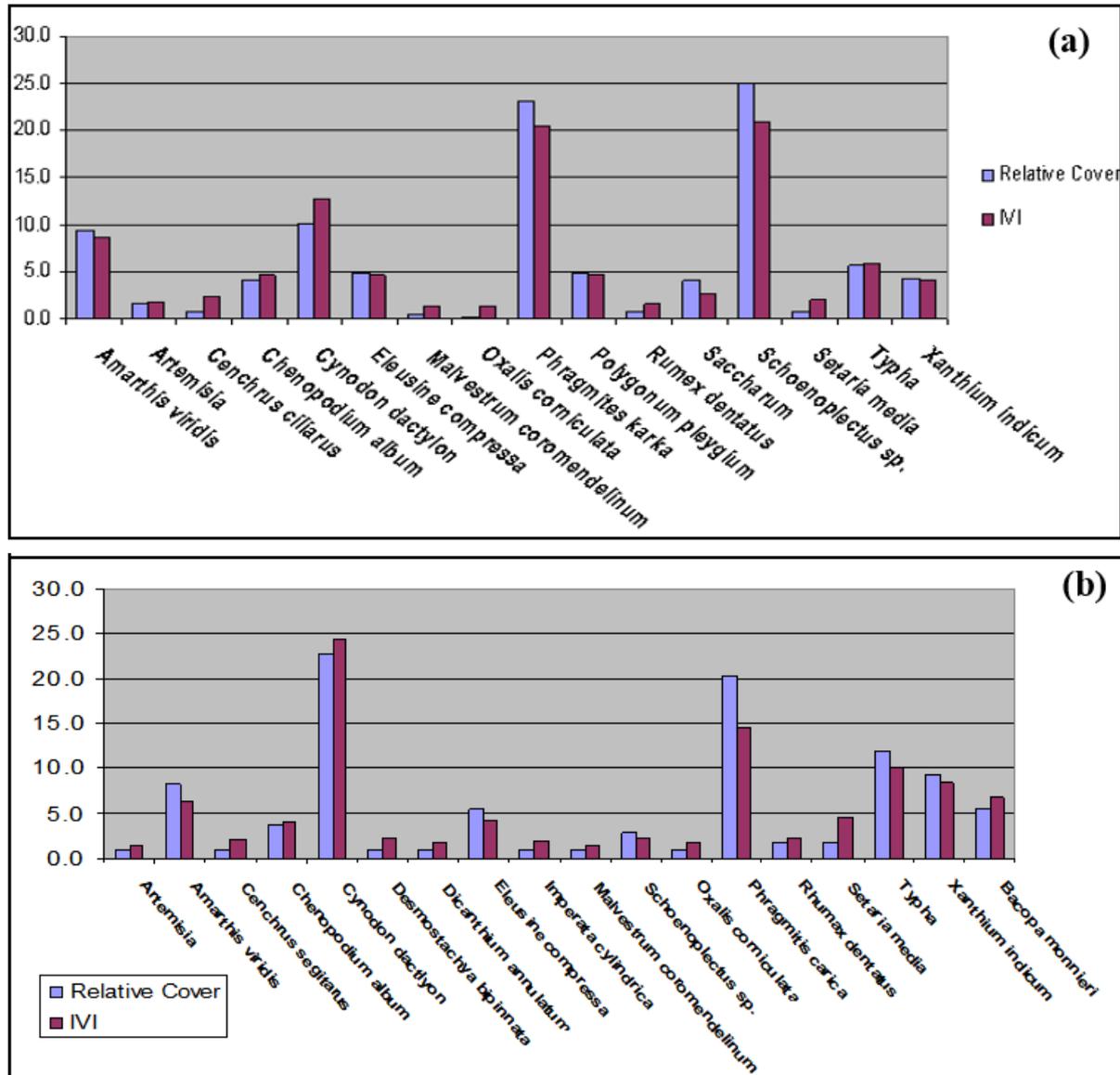


Fig. 2. Phytosociological parameters of Kallar Kahar Lake in different transects.

Effect of contamination on vegetation coverage and vegetation weight biomass in Dharabi watershed area

The current findings showed that the recreational site mostly contain disposed garbage of tourist, near

community and hotel garbage, and the garbage much affected the area's beauty and pollute the water quality, and also affected the habitat and quantity of aquatic species. The findings from this study showed that recreational site (Fig.3a) had more garbage as

compare to domestic site (Fig.3b). So, we can say that domestic site of this area contain low garbage as compare to recreational site because the people on this site are living permanently and dislike damaging the beauty of nearby areas of Lake. Here most of the garbage was due to wind or unconsciously disposed

material and it was evidenced from the findings that the site has less garbage cover ratio. However, the comparison between recreational and domestic sites, in which we can easily differentiate between vegetation and garbage covers of both site of this area (Fig.3c).

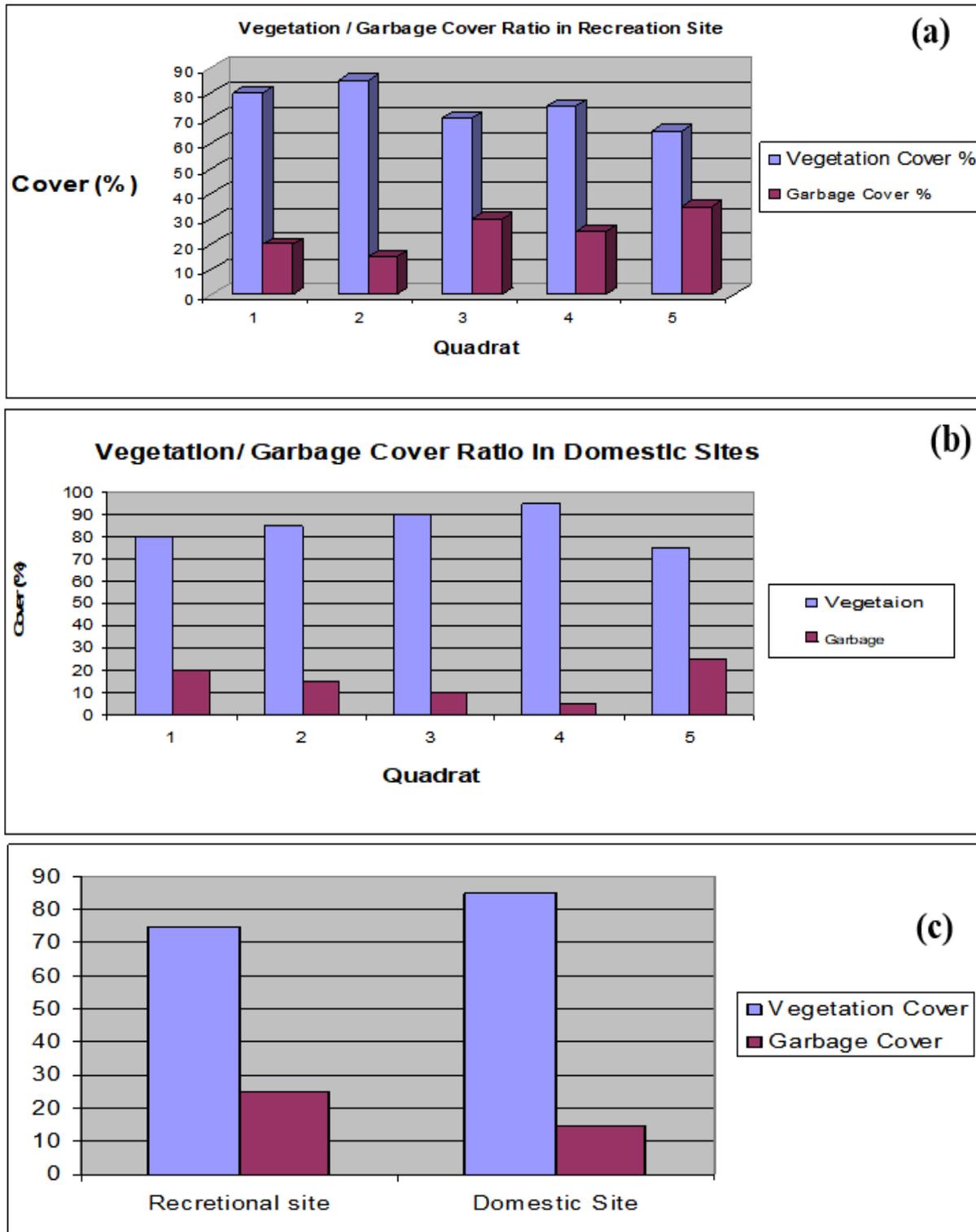


Fig. 3. Effect of contamination on vegetation coverage and vegetation biomass in Dharabi watershed.

Effect of Contamination on Vegetation Biomass Weight in Kallar Kahar

From the findings as presented showed that recreational site contain mostly disposed garbage of tourist, near community and of hotel garbage, this

garbage much affected the area’s beauty and pollutant the water quality. The recreational site garbage were mostly in solid form and also heavy in weight which affected the habitat and quantity of aquatic species much (Fig.4a).

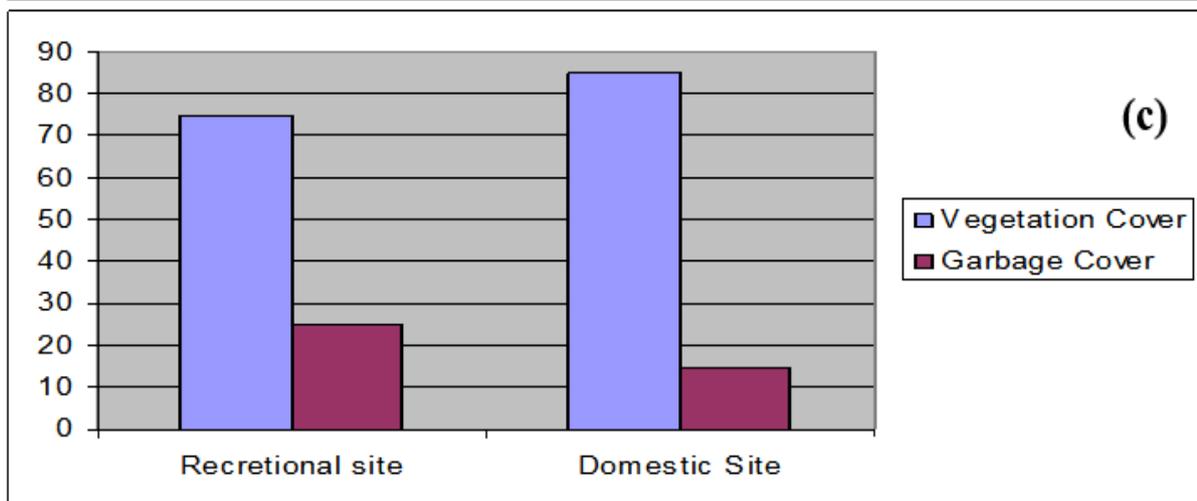
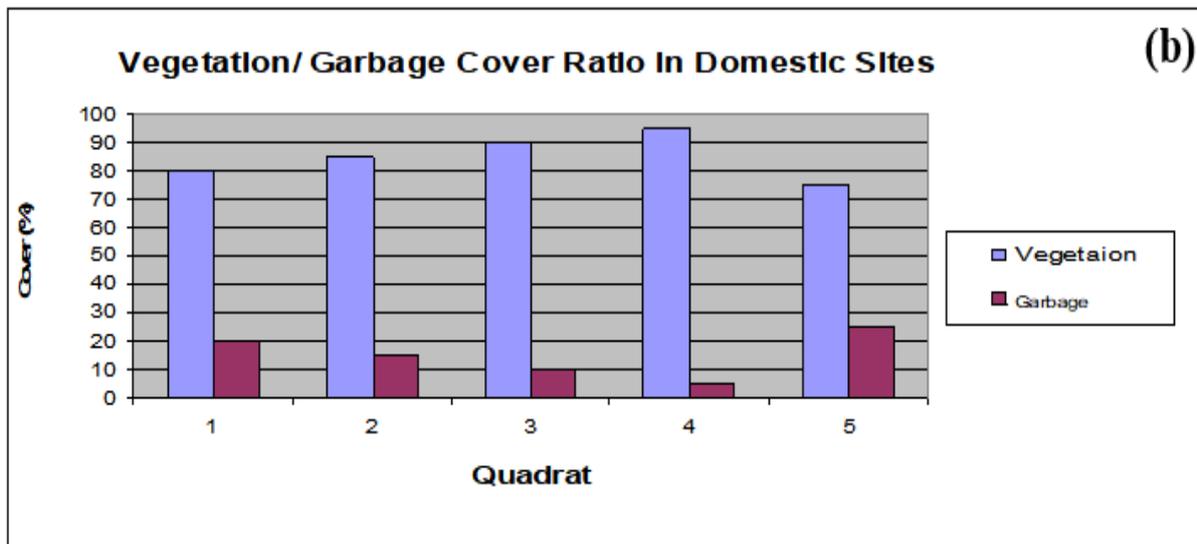
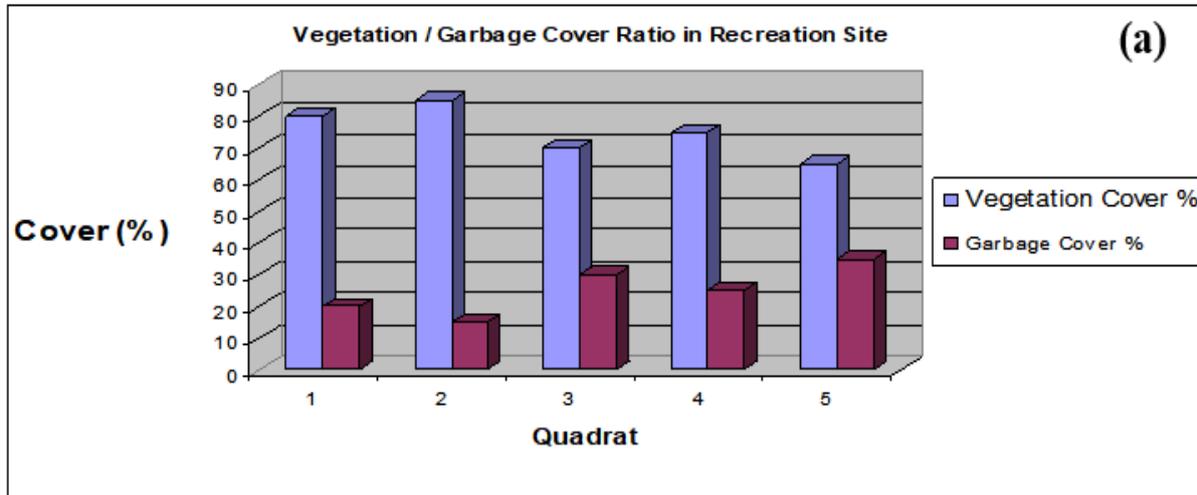


Fig. 4. Effect of Contamination on Vegetation Biomass Weight in Kallar Kahar.

In the domestic site of this area contains low garbage as compare to recreational site because the people living here permanently and dislike damaging the beauty of nearby areas of Lake. In this site, the garbage is in light weight which can fly with wind, this type of garbage also affected the beauty of the area and also most of garbage was due to wind or unconsciously disposed material. However, the figure shows less garbage weight ratio as compare to recreational site (Fig.4b) The comparison between recreational and domestic sites, in which it clearly differentiate between the vegetation and garbage weight of both site of this area (Fig.4c).

Phytosociological assessment of riparian vegetation in study area

Floristic inventory of study Areas

Floristic composition is the variety of individual species that occur in a stand or region. Knowledge of the floristic composition and structure of communities is critical to understanding the greater dynamics of ecosystems. Floristic checklists are often the only source of botanical information for a particular area and may serve as a useful starting point for more detailed study (Keith, 1988). Because of their conciseness, the listing of species is easy to handle and less time consuming (Saima *et al.*, 2009) that aids in the identification and correct naming of species, essential resources for biodiversity estimates and biogeographic studies. Furthermore, this information provides important public outreach and fundamental information to use in addressing the biodiversity crisis (Funk *et al.*, 2007).

Study area scars vegetation of different life form grasses, herbs, shrubs, and trees represents the typical arid zone vegetation. The common flora of this regions compromise of, *Eucalyptus globules*, *Prosopis glandulosa*, *Albizza lebbeck*, *Dodonae viscosa*, *Tamarixindica*, *Nerium oleander*, *Tephrosia purpuria*, *Opuntiadilnii*, *Fagoniaindica*, *Solanumincanum*, *Saccharum bengalensis*, *Accacia nilotica*, *Ziziphus mauritiana*, *Acacia modesta*, , *Dalbergiasisso*, *Calotro pisprocera*, *Dichanthium annulatum*. *Prosopis juliflora*, *Saccharum*

spontaneum, *Capparis decidua*, *Ziziphus nummularia*.

Mostly hilly arid area with scars vegetation dominated by cacti plants and thorns plants which are well adapted to the environmental and climatic conditions. The north of the study points is very humus and soil is perfect for the agriculture point of view, that why going to destination we observed that there are several crops, vegetable and fruits are cultivated. The vegetation compromised of *Prosopis glandusa*, *Typha noducifolia*, *Opuntia delnii*, *Accacia modesta*, *Calotropis procera*, *Cannabis sativa* and *Prosopis cineraria* etc.

Riparian areas are important because most human settlements have historically developed along these rivers and there is therefore a need to treat their pollutant loading to protect the quality of river water. Moreover, in addition to improving water quality, restoring wetlands reclaims lost habitats and protects coastlines (Council, 2002, Fan, Chang, *et al.*, 2009, Khan, Saeed, *et al.*, 2016, Novotny, 2003). However, an inevitable feature of these systems in tropical and subtropical areas is natural disturbance brought about by the occurrence of hurricanes (or typhoons, as they known in the north-west Pacific area). Massive amounts of sediment can be accumulated as a result of flooding after a single tropical storm and an Australian study has shown that the function of wetlands in retaining phosphorus can be significantly compromised by such storms (Bonell, Hufschmidt, *et al.*, 2005, Fan, Chang, *et al.*, 2009). This is because of the prolonged forestry activity and the frequent, intensive fire regime. Frequent fire causes the soil to become water repellent which in turn accelerates erosion and could carry a serious environmental and economic cost. Hot fires also destroy most soil-stored seed and, return of seed is slow because seed dispersal distances for most Fynbos plant species are very short being moved either by ants or, following seed release after fire, tumbling across the soil surface in the wind (Currie, Milton, *et al.*, 2009). It is necessary to sow seed on sites where the natural seed bank has been lost and the transformed site exceeds

50 m in diameter because natural re-colonization will not occur beyond the dispersal ranges of seeds (Currie, Milton, *et al.*, 2009). The lack of natural vegetation leaves the soil surface exposed allowing erosion gullies to form after the pines were removed (Le Maitre, Gaertner, *et al.*, 2011, Richardson, Holmes, *et al.*, 2007, Zhang, Yang, *et al.*, 2004).

Our result show that riparian areas protect water quality by capturing, storing, and treating water that flows through their soils. A thick growth of diverse vegetation, plant residues covering the soil surface, and porous, non-compacted soil facilitate water capture. High stream banks with high water tables provide water storage capacity (Allan and Castillo, 2007). Vigorously growing plants take up nutrients transported into riparian areas while active populations of both aerobic and anaerobic soil organisms degrade many contaminants that flow into these areas. Chemicals in soil minerals and soil organic matter also capture or facilitate biological detoxification of contaminants (Bolan, Kunhikrishnan, *et al.*, 2014). Understanding these components of healthy riparian areas can help guide land management practices that protect riparian areas and water quality (Gilliam, 1994).

Our study also revealed that riparian vegetation are the main source of moisture for plants and wildlife within watersheds, especially in arid regions or during the dry season in more temperate climates, with a high density and diversity of foliage, both vertically and horizontally, can provide habitat and food for a diversity of birds and other terrestrial wildlife, including many endangered and threatened species. Many animals also use these moist areas as travel corridors between feeding areas. Riparian vegetation growth, soil fertility and porosity, water quality, and stream flow conditions all affect the ability of fish and wildlife to thrive in streams and their associated riparian areas (Gilliam, 1994, Khan, Saeed, *et al.*, 2016).

Conclusion

Chakwal District is located in the south east of the

Rawalpindi district and having two sub administrative units (Tehsil) Chakwal and Talagang. Dharabi water reserve, Khai Dam and Kallar Kahar Lake are most common and well known water bodies of the Chakwal. The major land used is for the agriculture and livestock. The Riparian vegetation consists of Typha elephantine, Phragmites kiraka, Saccharum spontaneum. The study trip was comprised of two phases according to the objective of the study i.e. the influence of riparian vegetation and role of Riparian vegetation in cleaning process of Dharabi watershed and Kallar Kahar Lake.

There are 84 species reported in the study area and there are five plant communities recognized in the Dharabi water shed on the basis of IVI by using line transect sampling method which are Crysopogon, Cynodon, Gymnosporea, Acacia, and Conyza

However, the findings revealed that the top three highest IV value were Schoenoplectus, Phragmites and Cynodon plant community was identified in western of the Kallar. The studies also revealed that in the recreational area there was major contribution of the garbage disposable material such as Paraffin, Plastics of soft drinks and disposable meals packages. However in domestic area the waste material and garbage were daily home used material like shopping bags, newspaper or other house hold things. The overall effect of the garbage on the vegetation is very significant. The study also point out that the bird diversity is less in that place where the relative garbage ratio is greater.

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