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ECOLOGICAL AND HYDRAULIC ASPECTS OF RIVER AND WATERSHED RESTORATION

G.Rahul Indivar, M.Tech
Department of Civil Engineering
NIT, Rourkela, Orissa, India.

ABSTRACT

The term "river restoration" refers to the process of restoring rivers in order to improve their health and ecological integrity. The study reach suffered from decreasing morphological and ecological diversities arising from human actions. The primary contribution of this study is the proposal of a new quantitatively-based strategic strategy for river restoration. The study's overarching objectives are to (1) characterize the geomorphic and morphologic characteristics of the river in the study area both historically and at present; (2) create a hydraulic modelling approach to detect these changes using a two-dimensional model; and (3) propose and evaluate four restoration alternatives to improve the river channel's hydraulic efficiency. By removing sediment deposition (through the dredging process), the study reach's hydrodynamic conditions can be improved, allowing for more consistent and predictable water levels, flow velocities, and hydraulic channel conditions to be maintained over time. Accelerated sediment deposition hotspots were located and the flow pattern in the study area was mapped using a two-dimensional hydrodynamic model. Water velocity values and distributions were found to be slightly enhanced on the western bank of the study reach and the secondary channel, as predicted by the model. In terms of the relative efficiency of the hydraulic properties, the third plan was the best. The idea includes removing barriers that prevent rivers from resuming their normal patterns, reversing the course of a river's channel to follow the path of natural succession, and maintaining hydrological and morphological equilibrium.

Keywords *: Ecological, Hydraulic, River, Watershed, Restoration, Environmental, Biodiversity*

1. INTRODUCTION

The biological importance of rivers and watersheds is what motivates restoration efforts. There is a wealth of life and connections in rivers and watersheds, making them ecological powerhouses. They serve as home to several aquatic and terrestrial species, ranging from fish and invertebrates to birds and mammals. In addition, they improve the health of the ecosystems around them by regulating water quality and facilitating the cycling of nutrients. These delicate ecological balances are disturbed by the degradation of these systems, which is typically driven by human activities like urbanization and agriculture. The goal of these initiatives is to return these systems to their original condition, which will increase biodiversity and ecological resilience.

The revitalization of riparian zones and aquatic habitats is an important ecological component of river and watershed restoration. The land beside rivers and streams, known as riparian zones, is essential to their survival. They filter pollution, stabilise banks, and provide home for a wide variety of animals, all while bridging the gap between terrestrial and aquatic environments. Replanting native vegetation, constructing meanders to simulate natural flow patterns, and reintroducing items like woody debris in the water are all common components of restoration projects intended to improve the quality of life for aquatic organisms. Restoration aids in the recovery of aquatic animals like fish and macro invertebrates by improving their habitats and bolstering biodiversity.

Improving water quality is dependent on the restoration of rivers and watersheds, particularly their hydraulic components. Important hydraulic measures to restore aquatic ecosystem health include sedimentation control, erosion prevention, and pollution management. Damage to aquatic ecosystems can result from erosion and sedimentation because it can cover up habitats, make the water less clear, and decrease the amount of oxygen in the water. In order to keep the water clean and hospitable to aquatic life, proper hydraulic engineering can assist alleviate these problems. Water quality and aquatic life must be protected through careful management of pollutants like fertilisers and toxins from agricultural runoff. Properly constructed restoration projects contain hydraulic elements that minimize pollution and promote conditions for healthy ecosystems.

1.1.River Restoration

The most common way of reestablishing rivers has extended from being the domain of a select gathering of experts to incorporate public associations, confidential organizations, and scholastic establishments. With a yearly total expense of more than $1 billion, the quantity of restoration projects has extended dramatically beginning around 1990, coming to 37,099 by 2005. Water quality improvement, replanting of riparian vegetation, upgrade of oceanic environment, and decrease of exorbitant disintegration and statement are just a portion of the shared objectives shared by the different restoration projects. Be that as it may, with yearly costs assessed at $16 billion because of river bank disintegration, reestablishing rivers is a savvy monetary move assuming the ventures are effective. Not many rivers are checked after restoration, and the information that are gathered seldom relate to the first undertaking's points. Post-restoration observing information were seldom utilized as an evaluation to prompt the task group or the more prominent local area of restoration trained professionals, as per the Public River Restoration Science Amalgamation drive. As far as post-restoration observing. (a) reporting the restoration task's objectives; (b) gathering information from before the restoration to use as a standard; (c) leading long term post-restoration observing; and (d) sharing disappointments as significant data to illuminate future plan. Disappointment examination is utilized to further develop designing plans by and large, not simply river restoration projects. In this review, we present the consequences of checking a river after a restoration project was finished to reduce how much residue that advanced into a repository that provisions drinking water to New York City. To try not to spend the expected $6 billion on building a New York City water treatment office, this task was embraced as a feature of an extravagant watershed restoration program. Rules from the Government Interagency or others might be utilized in restoration drives.

1.2.Historical Development of River Restoration

For very nearly a really long period, individuals have molded rivers for tasteful and sporting purposes. Rivers are frequently controlled for tasteful purposes to look like a solitary string, wandering riverbed encompassed by moderately open riparian vegetation. Restoration of rivers for sporting purposes can be followed back to nineteenth century in stream developments worked to work with trout fishing.

However, river manipulation for aesthetic and recreational purposes remained the uncommon until the end of the 20th century, when it became part of a more comprehensive approach to river management focused on improving navigation and decreasing threats to life and property. Across Eurasia and North America, river corridors were heavily transformed under this management paradigm, with the typical cumulative impact of making river corridors more homogeneous, structurally simplified, and ecologically less diversified and functional. The increase in river restoration can be traced back to a growing awareness of how severely and broadly river engineering in the past has changed rivers.

Initially, restoration concentrated on physical adjustment of channel structure, with construction of fish habitat generally persisting as a primary priority, and quickening during the. Bioengineering with either live or dead plants, as well as other alterations to the morphology of the channel, was a common tactic. Newer efforts to improve channel-floodplain communication and other process-based restoration methods are mentioned below.

The second major school of river restoration, concerned mostly with bettering water quality, joined the form-based restoration approach to fish in the second part of the 20th century. The Clean Water Act of 1972 and growing public awareness of water pollution in the United States sparked a renewed focus on water quality; in the European Union, the Water Framework Directive of 2000 and studies showing that riparian corridor management can affect nutrient flux to rivers provided additional impetus. Restoring riparian corridors and floodplains to increase retention of incoming contaminants is only one example of how restoration goals have expanded in response to water quality standards.

1.3.Current Scope of River Restoration

Over the past three decades, countries including the United States, Europe, and Australia have ramped up their efforts to restore rivers. There have been numerous demands from academics in the last decade for restoration efforts to place more emphasis on river function or process rather than river shape alone. Channel-floodplain connectedness, longitudinal connectivity, and the partial restoration of water and sediment fluxes are all examples of restoration strategies that have been implemented. Increasingly, biotic response metrics are used to assess the success of these process-based restoration strategies. At the same time, river restoration has broadened its focus beyond the traditional pool-riffle meandering river to include other forms of rivers. huge drainage networks, huge rivers, and large lowland rivers are all examples of waterways that may require extensive multidisciplinary efforts to restore.

1.4.Small to Medium-Sized Rivers

Restoration endeavors have moved upstream, to more modest, commonly more extreme streams in the seepage organization. Counterfeit advances planned in view of step-pool morphological measures have been acquainted as an option with check dams for settling mountain rivers and diminishing trash stream risks, with noticed ecological advantages including natural matter maintenance and expanded macro invertebrate wealth and variety contrasted with conventional grade-control strategies. Research discoveries on the hydraulics and morphology of step-pool channels have been incorporated into plan standards for the restoration of steep directs in metropolitan and provincial conditions, with mathematical connections like the proportion of step height:length:slope being applied from regular step-pool streams to man-made ones. As a result of its flexibility to disintegration and channel change during weighty streams, coarse-grained step-pool diverts are likewise designed in metropolitan regions that would somehow have lower-slope headwater streams.

1.5.Medium-Sized to Large Rivers

Bigger rivers have been reestablished further down the seepage network utilizing both primary and interaction based techniques. With an end goal to diminish flood gambles and reestablish river-floodplain natural surroundings network and related natural and geomorphic processes, levees have been changed on various bigger rivers by difficulties, scoring, or expulsion. Mishaps or deliberate breaking of portions of old, falling apart levees along rivers in the Focal Valley of California, USA, (for example, the widely levied and rip rapped Sacramento River) have privately reestablished arrangement of sand-spread buildings during floods, further developing natural life environment and conceivably decreasing flooding gambles. Inside a couple of long periods of the task's finish, 33% of the wild coho salmon (Oncorhynchus kisutch) smolts took advantage of the new natural surroundings laid out by the reconnection of off-channel territory along the Chilliwack River in English Columbia, Canada. Reconnection restoration has been concentrated on broadly on the Kissimmee River in Florida, USA. In the wake of being channelized by the U.S. Armed force Corps of Specialists somewhere in the range of 1962 and 1971, a larger number of than 70 kilometers (km) of the Kissimmee were gotten back to a wandering river in 1992, reconnecting it to the floodplain. Various biological system parts, like water quality, benthic living space and macro invertebrates, food web construction and environment capability, and overflow and species extravagance of swimming birds and waterfowl, have gone through ecologically tremendous changes because of restoration, as definite in an exceptional issue of Restoration Biology distributed in 2014. In spite of the fact that reconnection endeavors are still in their early stages on a worldwide scale, they are promising occasions of restoration that mitigates chances and consolidates experiences from geomorphic and biological system processes.

1.6.Ecological Considerations in River and Watershed Restoration

The desire to improve and restore natural ecosystems is what motivates river and watershed restoration efforts. These activities encompass a range of ecological concerns that play a significant role in attaining their goals. The ecological health and vitality of these aquatic ecosystems is improved by the combined efforts of two basic parts of this restoration process: biodiversity protection and habitat repair.

1.6.1. Biodiversity Conservation

The conservation and restoration of biodiversity is an important goal in river and watershed restoration. From fish and invertebrates to riparian plants, aquatic habitats are home to a wide variety of life. However, these ecosystems have suffered damage from a number of human activities, including urbanization, agriculture, and industrialization. Because of this, numerous species have seen their habitats degraded or even destroyed.
Reversing this tendency is the goal of river and watershed restoration projects, which strive to create habitats that sustain a diverse array of aquatic and riparian species.

- Diverse habitats, including pools, riffles, and meanders, offer a variety of conditions that are favorable to various species. By altering river beds and riparian areas, more diverse habitats can be created.
- Oftentimes throughout the restoration process, native plant communities are replanted to provide essential habitat for a wide range of species. Numerous species rely on riparian zones because of the variety of plants that thrive there.
- Restoration of water quality through natural filtering processes has positive effects on aquatic life by lowering pollution levels and increasing the availability of clean, oxygenated water. Many aquatic creatures rely on this for their survival.
- Free fish migration is only one example of how restoring connectedness in aquatic ecosystems can help keep populations healthy by preserving genetic variety.

1.6.2. Habitat Rehabilitation

Rehabilitation of habitats is an essential part of ecological restoration projects since it helps maintain and even increase biodiversity. This entails mending and bettering habitat qualities that fish, invertebrates, and other aquatic animals rely on for survival. Important parts of habitat restoration include:
Improved Framework: Creating pools and riffles by altering the river and streambed architecture helps give shelter and foraging opportunities for aquatic animals. Fish species, in particular, greatly benefit from these characteristics.
The addition of woody waste, such as trees and branches, to river channels simulates natural processes and increases the diversity of habitats available to aquatic animals.

Areas for Breeding and Raising Young: The success of fish populations can depend on the availability of suitable spawning sites and nurseries. These places are usually well planned and guarded.

Bank Stabilisation: Preventing erosion and stabilizing riverbanks helps safeguard riparian habitat and protects water quality. Planting native vegetation along banks is one form of stabilization.

Restoration of rivers and watersheds, taking ecological factors into account, is crucial to maintaining aquatic ecosystems in their natural state of balance and health. These actions are important for the environment, but they also benefit local communities and the larger society.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Schirmer, M. (2014) gives an outline of the organic construction and capability of rock bed rivers across an order of scene sizes described by particular spatial and worldly qualities. Trading water and dregs over longitudinal connections from transfers to rivers, sidelong associations among river and floodplain frameworks, and vertical surface and underground (hypothetic) water trades are significant interconnections inside the gigantic, alluvial river frameworks of the western US. River extends inside a gorge are bound to have longitudinal associations than those in an open floodplain. In floodplain extends, a unique scene is made by hydro geomorphic processes driven by river power and cut and fill alleviation; we call this a Moving Environment Mosaic (SHM). High territory variety, biotic local area lavishness, and ecological intricacy are undeniably encouraged by the SHM's insurances. Utilizing a georeferenced hyper spectral picture delivered by an airborne spectrophotometer and ground truth estimations of river hydraulics, river profundity, riparian vegetation, and other surface qualities, we break down the elements of a progression of floodplains along a 90 km river scene. We utilized this data to decide the hydrological and hydrographic systems expected to remake the river SHM's elements through the activation of channel and riparian residue. We additionally broke down resulting variety in amphibian and riparian environment highlights. Assessment of these components, which decide connections between the river channel and the neighboring river-riparian hall, allowed us to develop a restoration plan focused on regulating variety among the numerous physical and biotic cycles adding to biological system respectability.

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Ramos-Merchante (2018) makes a significant and noteworthy contribution to environmental science and river basin management. Environmental assessments of river basins provide a larger framework for this study, as they are essential to our ability to comprehend and protect aquatic ecosystems. The Guadalquivir River Basin in southern Spain is the primary area of investigation because of the region's natural richness and the effects of human activities on the ecosystem. In order to evaluate the ecological and conservation state of the river basin, this study takes a novel approach by using a fish-based multimetric index, which is both comprehensive and integrative. This method takes into account multiple indices of environmental health, such as the characteristics of fish communities. By taking this approach, the study hopes to illuminate the biological state of the Guadalquivir River Basin as a whole. This research also has wider implications for river basin management, as integrated assessments are becoming increasingly valued for their role in ecological preservation and policymaking. This study highlights the necessity of using novel approaches to understand and address these complex issues at a time when river basins around the world are facing increasing threats such habitat degradation, pollution, and climate change.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The method was developed to meet the below goals, and consisted of the following components :

- Aerial photographs, bathymetric maps, and geomorphic condition data are only few examples of the types of physical, hydrological, and hydraulic field data that will be collected.
- Analysis of the river's geomorphology and morphology, including present and historical descriptions of river bed levels and other geophysical variables impacting river morphology, is necessary for assessing the physical restrictions to restoration in the stretches.
- A hydrologic study of the various study reach river flow conditions (a crucial requirement in river engineering design).
- Potential river restoration options along the area under investigation.
- Constructing a two-dimensional hydrodynamic model of the study reach to analyse the hydraulic pressures present in both natural and restored states.
- Evaluate the impacts of selected restoration alternatives and related actions on channel processes.

3.1.Data collection

Multiple sources of information are essential to this study's overarching goal of gaining a complete comprehension of the river system and its dynamics. In order to fully understand the river ecosystem, it is necessary to collect and analyse a wide range of data, including hydrographic (bathymetric), hydrologic, hydraulic, and sediment information.

First and foremost, hydrographic data, and in particular bathymetric data, can shed light on the riverbed's undersea morphology. Differential Global Positioning System technology is used in these surveys to provide accurate data on the river's depths, contours, and other aspects. Creating precise bathymetric maps is made feasible by the use of a Universal Transverse Mercator projection and the World Geodetic System coordinate system.

On the other hand, understanding the river's flow and discharge patterns is made possible by hydrologic data. With a measured discharge of almost 70,000,000 cubic meters per day, this study area provides invaluable insight into the volume of water flowing through the river system. This information is crucial for understanding the river's hydrology and its response to changing conditions.

Understanding how water flows within a river system is impossible without hydraulic data. Detailed cross-sectional studies, covering over 100 cross sections of the principal channel and 50 cross sections of the secondary closed channel, provide a thorough view of the river's geometry. It is essential for hydraulic modelling and flood risk assessments that field velocities be recorded at different cross sections to characterize flow patterns and turbulence.

The study of the river bed material makes sediment data just as important. Bed material's grain size distribution suggests that medium sand is the most common type. The riverbed's response to varying flows can be better understood with the aid of this information. Water quality and the movement of tiny particles can also be evaluated by measuring the concentration of suspended silt in the water, which can be done with vertically integrated water samples.

This plethora of information serves as the study's backbone, allowing researchers and environmental engineers to create precise hydraulic models, simulate sediment movement, and get a comprehensive comprehension of the river's behaviour and its interactions with its surroundings. This comprehensive image of the river system is a result of the careful methodology used in this study.

4. DATA ANALYSIS

Using information collected from gauge stations, we conducted the hydrological study to map out the area's changing water levels and discharges over time. Varanasi Gauge Station, situatednear the historic city of Varanasi(upstream the study reach) and Prayagraj Gauge Station(downstream the study reach) were employed as gauge stationslocated 150 kilometers upstream of Varanasi.

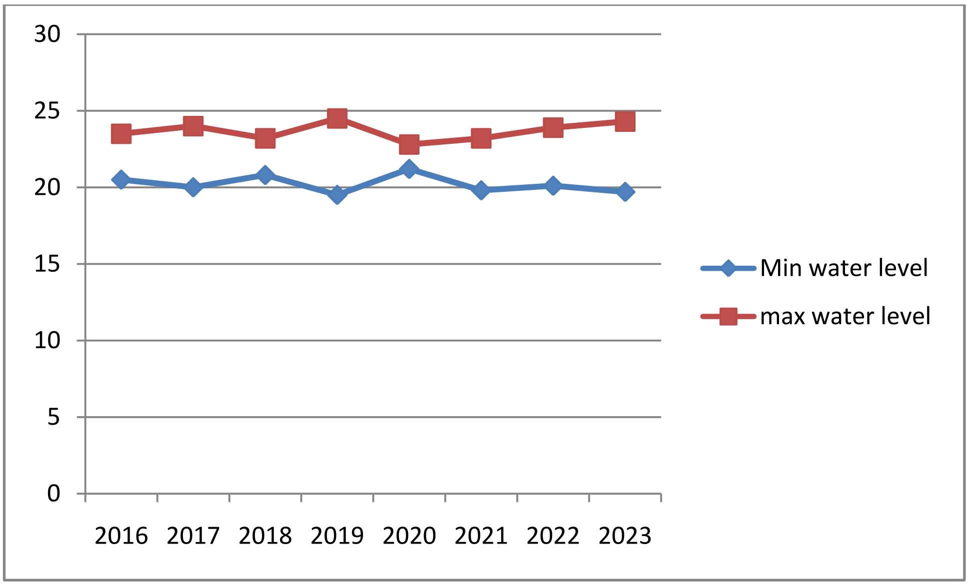

Fig 1: The minimum and maximum of water levels at the study area

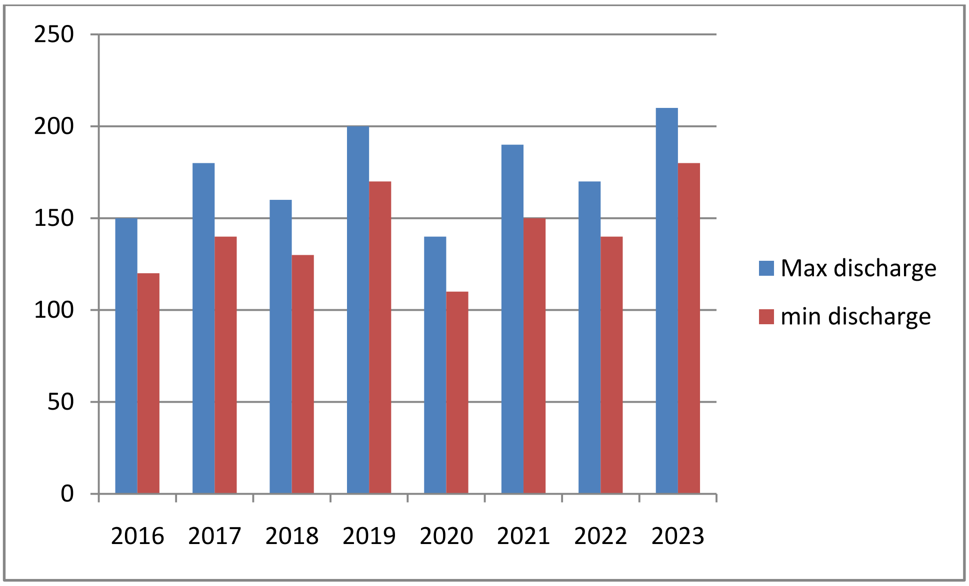

Fig 2 : The minimum and maximum of water discharge of river flow at the study area

Varanasi Gauge Station, situated near the historic city of Varanasi, where the river stream was observed. The examination shows that the littlest recorded release was 30.20 million m 3/day (338 m3/sec) in year 2018, the best recorded release is 190.40 million in year 2019. As should be visible in figure (2), the base water level at the review site is equivalent to (100) m, and the greatest water level is (200) m. High flood levels in the years (2016-2023) are responsible for the elevated water levels observed during this time. Future discharge releases of 350 million m^3 /day (4130 m^3 /sec) are equivalent to a water level of (200) m in the research area.

4.1.Initial and Boundary Conditions

Table 1 : Utilizing Water Level and Discharge Data for Calibrating, Validating, and Simulating Hydrological Models

Model	**Initial Flow discharge**		**Water**	**Levels (m)**
Scenarios	Million m³ / day	m³ / s	Down Stream	Up Stream
Calibration	80	800	22.24	22,880
Verification	190.42	2642	23.10	24.50
Simulation	30.5	440	20.1	20.9

The x, y, and z coordinates of the initial water levels and bed elevation formed the study area's initial boundary condition. In order to mimic the flow characteristics, the initial water levels were employed. Calibration simulation inflow discharge is defined as 80.00 million m^3 /day in table (1), whereas verification simulation inflow discharge is defined as 190.42 million m^3 /day.

4.2.Model Development

A mesh, a finite element network composed of triangles and quadrilaterals, is used to define the research region geometrically. Hydraulic features break lines, river boundaries, and topography variations were all represented by pieces that were scaled and positioned accurately. Nodes at the element's corners and midpoints establish the topology of the river reach and correspond to points in space (X, Y, and Z). The original mesh was built using the bathymetric survey during year 2016. The total number of mesh elements is 12479, while the total number of nodes is 49094. Various land uses and roughness characteristics (such as dense vegetation, grassland, sandbars, and so on) were used to classify the material types inside each element in the river reach. Using aerial imagery and field data, the elements in the finite element mesh were categorized according to the materials they were made of.

5. CONCLUSION

Rather than relying exclusively on qualitative assessment, we propose a new quantitatively-based strategy plan for river restoration. The study presents findings from a comprehensive hydraulic analysis of potential shoreline restoration options for thestudy area is located in the northern region of India, along the banks of the Ganges River.The river's morphological history was laid out, however the results were equivocal in terms of a clear upward or downward tendency along this section of the river. In light of the observed morphological and hydrological shifts over time, the research area was deemed an unstable region. A two-layered hydrodynamic model was utilized to inspect the four restoration choices. The model discoveries show a consistent improvement from the primary option in contrast to the fourth option in the dissemination and upsides of water speeds along the northern bank of the exploration region and Indian channel.All the restoration options have been calculated with higher water surface heights and water velocities compared to the current state of affairs. The third concept is deemed the most optimal because to its low cost, high efficiency, and low volume of dredging needed. Additionally, it should plan for the use of innovative eco-friendly materials to regulate urban expansion patterns and safeguard the underwater islands and Indian channel banks. To lessen river incursions, it is suggested that other considerations (environmental, social, economic, and urban planning) be taken into account.

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