GIS-Based DRASTIC and Composite DRASTIC Indexes for Assessment Groundwater Vulnerability in Baghin Aquifer, Kerman, Iran

Mohammad Malakootian[1], Majid Nozari[2,*]

Manuscript Authors details:

1. Mohammad Malakootian, Department of Environmental Health, School of Public Health, Kerman University of Medical Sciences, Iran. E-mail: m.malakootian@yahoo.com. https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4051-6242.

2. Majid Nozari, Department of Environmental Health, School of Public Health, Kerman University of Medical Sciences, Iran. Tel: 98-9383921819, E-mail: nozari.m@kmu.ac.ir. https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2319-1930.

ABSTRACT

The present study estimated the Kerman–Baghin aquifer vulnerability using DRASTIC and composite DRASTIC (CDRASTIC) indexes. Factors affecting the transfer of contamination, including water table depth, soil media, aquifer media, impact of vadose zone, topography, hydraulic conductivity, and land use, were ranked, weighted, and integrated, using a geographical information system (GIS). A sensitivity test was also performed to determine parameters sensitivity. Results showed that the topographic layer displays a gentle slope in the aquifer. Most of the aquifer was covered with irrigated field crops and grassland with a moderate vegetation cover. In addition, the aquifer vulnerability maps indicated very similar results, recognizing the northwest parts of the aquifer as areas with high to very high vulnerability. The map removal sensibility analysis (MRSA) reveal that the impact of vadose zone (in the DRASTIC index) and hydraulic conductivity (in the CDRASTIC index) as the most important parameters in the vulnerability evaluation. In both indexes, the single-parameter sensibility analysis (SPSA) showed net recharge as the most effective factor in the vulnerability estimation. From this study, it could be concluded that vulnerability maps could be used as a tool to control human activities for protection and sustainable usage.

Keywords: Vulnerability; Sensitivity Analyses; DRASTIC; Composite DRASTIC; Kerman–Baghin Aquifer

1. Introduction

Groundwater is a significant and principal freshwater resource in most parts of the world, especially for arid and semi-arid areas. Water quality has been emphasized more in groundwater management (Neshat et al., 2014; Manap et al., 2013; Manap et al., 2014a; Ayazi et al., 2010). The potential groundwater contamination by human activities at or near the surface of groundwater has been considered the major base to manage this resource by implementing preventative policies (Tilahun and Merkel, 2010).

Groundwater vulnerability is a measure of how easy or how hard it is for pollution or contamination at the land surface to reach a production aquifer. In other words, it is a measure of the “degree of insulation” that natural and manmade factors provide to keep pollution away from groundwater (Sarah and Patricia, 1993; Neshat et al., 2014). Vulnerability maps are commonly performed at the sub-region and regional scales. Normally, they are not applied to site-specific evaluations, including zones smaller than a few tens of square kilometers (Baalousha, 2006; Tilahun and Merkel, 2010). Various techniques have been developed to assess groundwater susceptibility with great precision (Javadi et al., 2010; Javadi et al., 2011). Most of the methods are based on analytic tools to associate groundwater contamination to land operations. There are three types of evaluation methods: the process-based simulations, the statistic procedures and, and the overlay and index approaches (Neshat et al., 2014; Dixon, 2004).

Process-based approach involves numerical modeling and is useful at the local but not the regional level. Statistical approach involves correlating actual water quality data to spatial variables and requires a large amount of site specific data (National Research Council, 1993). Overlay and index procedures affirm the incorporation of various zonal maps by allocating a numeral index. Both procedures are simple to use in the geographic information system, especially on a zonal measure. Hence, these methods are the most popular procedures applied to vulnerability estimation (Neshat et al., 2014). The overlay and index methods have some significant advantages; firstly, they have become popular because the methodology is fairly straightforward that can be easily implemented with any GIS application software. The concept of overlaying data layers is easily comprehended even by less experienced users. In addition, the data requirement could be considered as moderate, since nowadays most data come in digital format. Hydrogeological information is either available or could be estimated using relevant data. Consequently, these methods give relatively accurate results for extensive areas with a complex geological structure. Lastly, the product of this approach could be easily interpreted by water-resource managers and could be incorporated into decision-making processes. Even a simple visual inspection of the vulnerability map can reveal important contamination hotspots. Probably the most important and obvious disadvantage of these methods raised by scientists and experts is the inherent subjectivity in the determination of the rating scales and the weighting coefficients (National Research Council, 1993).

The most extensively used methods for the groundwater vulnerability evaluation are GODS (Ghazavi and Ebrahimi, 2015), IRISH (Daly and Drew, 1999), AVI (Raju et al., 2014), and DRASTIC (Neshat et al., 2014; Baghapour et al., 2014; Baghapour et al., 2016).

The DRASTIC index, proposed by Aller et al (1985), is considered as one of the best indexes for groundwater vulnerability estimation. This method ignores the influence of zonal properties. Thus, identical weights and rating values are utilized. In addition, this technique fails to apply a standard validation test for the aquifer. Therefore, several investigators developed this index using various techniques (Neshat et al., 2014). The higher DRASTIC index represents the greater contamination potential and inversely. After calculating the DRASTIC index, it should be possible to identify the zones that are more prone to pollution. This index only provides a relative estimation and is not created to make a complete assessment (Baalousha, 2006).

Many studies have been conducted using DRASTIC index to estimate the groundwater vulnerability in different regions of the world (Jaseela et al., 2016; Zghibi et al., 2016; Kardan Moghaddam et al., 2017; Kumar et al., 2016; Neshat and Pradhan, 2017; Souleymane and Tang, 2017; Ghosh and Kanchan, 2016; Saida et al., 2017); however, there are still a number of studies that used the CDRASTIC index for groundwater vulnerability evaluation (Baghapour et al., 2016; Baghapour et al., 2014; Secunda et al., 1998; Jayasekera et al., 2011; Shirazi et al., 2012; Jayasekera et al., 2008). Boughriba et al. (2010) utilized DRASTIC index in geographical information system environment to estimate the aquifer vulnerability. They provided the DRASTIC modified map prepared from total DRASTIC indexes and small monitoring network maps including high and medium classes. Then, authors integrated the map with land use map to provide the contamination potential map. They reported the new obtained groundwater vulnerability map, including three various classes, namely very high, high, and medium. Babiker et al. (2005) used the DRASTIC index to determine point's prone to contamination from human activities in the aquifer. They reported that the western and eastern parts of the aquifer fall in the high and medium classes, respectively in terms of vulnerability. The final aquifer vulnerability map represented that the high risk of pollution is in the eastern part of aquifer due to agriculture activities. They also observed that net recharge inflicts the largest impact on the aquifer vulnerability, followed by soil media, topography, the impact of vadose zone, and hydraulic conductivity.

The average annual precipitation in Iran is 257 mm (namely less than one-third of the average annual precipitation at the global level). Water scarcity is a very critical and serious problem in Iran (Chitsazan and Akhtari, 2006; Modabberi et al., 2017). In addition, the groundwater reduction makes the problem even worse. Groundwater is the only freshwater resource in the Kerman province, due to the lack of surface water. The Baghin aquifer is located in the central part of Kerman province of Iran. Due to recent droughts, this aquifer has been under heavy pumping stress to irrigate crops, which caused a graduated drop of water level. Consequently, this could increase contamination potential in the aquifer. Therefore, the aim of this research was to provide a vulnerability map for the Kerman–Baghin aquifer and performing a sensitivity analysis to identify the most influential factors in vulnerability assessment.

2. Methods and Materials

2.1. Study Area

Kerman Province covers both arid and semi-arid lands. The present study included a 2023 km2 area (29◦ 47′ to 30◦ 31′ N latitude and 56◦ 18′ to 57◦ 37′ E longitude) located in the central part of Kerman Province, Iran (Figure 1). The study area is mostly covered with agricultural lands (Neshat et al., 2014). The mean annual rainfall is 108.3 mm (during 2017) in the study area; the highest and lowest topographic elevation is 1,980 and 1,633 m above sea level; and eventually, the mean, minimum, and maximum annual temperatures are 17◦C, -12◦C, and 41◦C, respectively (during 2017).

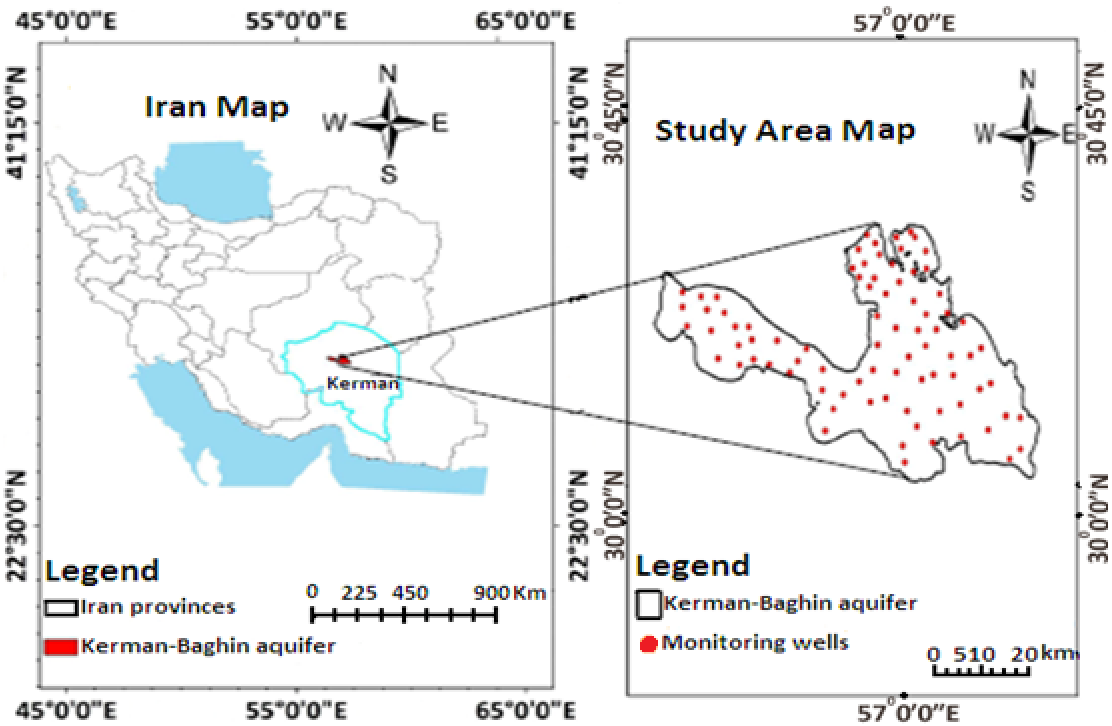

Figure 1. Location map of the Kerman–Baghin aquifer

2.2. DRASTIC and CDRASTIC Indexes Computation

DRASTIC is a procedure developed by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (U.S EPA) to evaluate the groundwater pollution (Aller et al., 1985). The DRASTIC index is obtained using the following relation (Kardan Moghaddam et al., 2017; Neshat and Pradhan, 2017):

$$\text{DRASTIC index} = D_r D_w + R_r R_w + A_r A_w + S_r S_w + T_r T_w + I_r I_w + C_r C_w, \quad (1)$$

where DRASTIC comprises the effective factors in the DRASTIC index. D, R, A, S, T, I, and C stand for water table depth, net recharge, aquifer media, soil media, topography, impact of vadose zone, and hydraulic conductivity, respectively. In addition, "*r*" and "*w*" are the rating and weight of each factor, respectively. The ratings and weights of factors are presented in Table 1. A high DRASTIC index corresponds to a high vulnerability of the aquifer to pollution. In the DRASTIC index, each parameter is rated on a scale from 1 to 10 that shows the relative contamination potential of that parameter for that area. In addition, in the DRASTIC index, one weight (1 to 5) is assigned to each of the parameters. Weight values show the relative significance of the parameters with respect to each other. Ranges of vulnerability corresponding to the DRASTIC index are presented in Table 2.

Table 1 Rating and weight related to DRASTIC index factors (Aller et al., 1985)

DRASTIC parameters	Range	Rating (r)	Weight (w)
Water table depth (m)	0.0-1.5	10	
	1.5-4.6	9	
	4.6-9.1	7	
	9.1-15.2	5	5
	15.2-22.9	3	
	22.9-30.5	2	
	>30.5	1	
Net recharge	11-13	10	
	9-11	8	
	7-9	5	4
	5-7	3	
	3-5	1	
Aquifer media	Rubble and sand	9	
	Gravel and sand	7	
	Gravel, sand, clay, and silt	5	3
	Sand and clay	4	
	Sand, clay, and silt	3	
Soil media	Rubble, sand, clay, and silt	9	
	Gravel and sand	7	
	Gravel, sand, clay, and silt	6	
	Sand	5	2
	Sand, clay, and silt	3	
	clay and silt	2	
Topography or slope (%)	0-2	10	
	2-6	9	
	6-12	5	1
	12-18	3	
	>18	1	

The impact of the vadose zone	Rubble, sand, clay, and silt	9	
	Gravel and sand	7	
	Gravel, sand, clay, and silt	5	5
	Sand, clay, and silt	3	
Hydraulic conductivity (m/day)	0-4.1	1	
	4.1-12.2	2	3
	12.2-28.5	4	
	28.5-40.7	6	
	40.7-81.5	8	

Table 2 Range of vulnerability related to the DRASTIC index

Vulnerability	Ranges
Very low	23-46
Low	47-92
Moderate	93-136
High	137-184
Very high	>185

To obtain the CDRASTIC index, an additional factor (land use) is added to the above relation. Thus, the CDRASTIC index was obtained as follows:

$$\text{CDRASTIC index} = D_r D_w + R_r R_w + A_r A_w + S_r S_w + T_r T_w + I_r I_w + C_r C_w + L_r L_w, \quad (2)$$

where L_w and L_r are the relative weight and rating related to land use, respectively. Ratings and weightings applied to the pollution potential are shown in Table 3 which are related to land use based on the CDRASTIC index. The final outputs of CDRASTIC relation range from 28 to 280.Vulnerability ranges based on the CDRASTIC index are presented in Table 4.

Table 3 Ratings and weighting applied to pollution potential related to land use based on CDRASTIC index (Aller et al., 1985)

Land use	Rating	Weight
Irrigated field crops + Urban areas	10	
Irrigated field crops + Grassland with poor vegetation cover + Urban areas	9	
Irrigated field crops + Grassland with moderate vegetation cover + Urban areas	8	
Irrigated field crops	8	
Irrigated field crops + Fallow land + Grassland with poor vegetation cover	7	
Irrigated field crops + Grassland with poor vegetation cover	7	
Irrigated field crops + Grassland with moderate vegetation cover	6	

Irrigated field crops + Rocky + Urban areas	5	5
Irrigated field crops + Grassland with poor vegetation cover + Woodland	5	
Irrigated field crops + Woodland	5	
Irrigated field crops + Rocky	4	
Fallow land	3	
Fallow land + Grassland with poor vegetation cover	3	
Fallow land + Grassland with moderate vegetation cover	3	
Grassland with poor vegetation cover	2	
Grassland with moderate vegetation cover	2	
Grassland with moderate vegetation cover + Woodland	1	
Sand dune +Grassland with moderate vegetation cover	1	
Sand dune	1	

Table 4 Vulnerability ranges related to CDRASTIC index

Vulnerability	Ranges
Very low	<100
Low	100-145
Moderate	145-190
High	190-235
Very high	≥235

2.3. Factors Affecting Transfer of Contamination

Water table depth is the distance of water table from ground surface in a well (Baghapour et al., 2016). Eighty-three wells were utilized in the Kerman–Baghin aquifer to obtain this factor. The interpolation procedure was used to provide a raster map of the water table depth, which was categorized based on Table 2.

Net recharge is the amount of runoff that penetrated into the ground and reaches the groundwater surface (Singh et al., 2015; Ghosh and Kanchan, 2016). This research used the Piscopo method (Chitsazan and Akhtari, 2009) to provide net recharge layer for the Kerman–Baghin aquifer according to the following equation and Table 5:

$$\text{Net recharge slope } (\%) + \text{ rainfall} + \text{soil permeability}. \qquad (3)$$

In the above equation, the percentage of slope was calculated from a topographical map, using a digital elevation model. In addition, a soil permeability map was created using the Kerman–

Baghin aquifer soil map (with scale 1:250000) and the drilling logs of 83 wells. In the end, a map of rainfall rate in the area was compiled based on annual average precipitation. Ratings and weights of net recharge are presented in Table 5.

Table 5 Weight, rating, and range of net recharge (Aller et al., 1985)

Slope (%)		**Rainfall**		**Soil permeability**		**Net Recharge**		
Range (%)	**Factor**	Range (mm/year)	**Factor**	Range	**Factor**	Range (cm/year)	**Rating**	**Weight**
<2	4	>850	4	High	5	11-13	10	
2-10	3	700-850	3	Moderate to high	4	9-11	8	
10-33	2	500-700	2	Moderate	3	7-9	5	4
>33	1	<500	1	Low	2	5-7	3	
				Very low	1	3-5	1	

Aquifer media controls the movement of groundwater streams in the aquifer (Aller et al., 1985; Singh et al., 2015). To obtain this layer, drilling log data of 83 wells were used. Data were collected from Kerman Regional Water Office (KRWO). The range of the aquifer media layer is shown in Table 2.

Soil media has a considerable impact on the amount of water surface that can penetrate into the aquifer. Therefore, where the soil layer is thick, the debilitation processes such as absorption, filtration, degradation, and evaporation may be considerable (Singh et al., 2015). A soil media raster map was provided using the Kerman–Baghin aquifer soil map and the wells drilling logs. The range of the soil media layer is presented in Table 2.

Topography controls the residence time of water inside on the soil and the degree of penetration (Singh et al., 2015). To obtain this layer, the percentage of the slope was provided from the topographical map, using a digital elevation model. Data were collected from the KRWO. The range of the topographic layer is presented in Table 2.

Vadose zone is the unsaturated area located between the topographic surface and the groundwater level (Singh et al., 2015). It plays a significant role in decreasing groundwater contamination by pollutant debilitation processes such as purification, chemical reaction, and dispersal (Shirazi et al., 2012). This study used the lithologic data of 83 observation and exploration wells to design the impact of vadose zone raster map of aquifer. Data were collected from the KRWO. The range of the impact of vadose zone layer is depicted in Table 2.

Hydraulic conductivity refers to the capability of the aquifer to transfer water. High hydraulic conductivity areas demonstrate a high potential for groundwater contamination (Singh et al., 2015; Aller et al., 1985). To prepare this layer, data derived from pumping tests of wells were used. The range of hydraulic conductivity layer is shown in Table 2.

Land use influences groundwater resources via variation in recharge amount and by changing freshwater demands for water. Land use is obligatory since it is required by the CDRASTIC index. The Indian remote sensing satellite information was utilized to provide land use raster map. The weight and rating related to land use layer are presented in Table 3.

2.4. Sensitivity Analyses

One of the main advantages of the DRASTIC index is the evaluation performance because, a high number of input data are used, and this allows to restrict the effects of errors on final results. Nevertheless, some authors, namely Babikeret al. (2005), Barber et al.(1993), and Merchant (1994), reported that similar results could be obtained using fewer data and at lower costs. The unavoidable subjectivity related to the choosing seven factors, ranks, and weights used to calculate the vulnerability index has also been criticized. Therefore, in order to eliminate the aforementioned criticisms, two sensitivity analyses were performed as follows (Napolitano and Fabbri, 1996):

A. Map Removal Sensibility Analysis (MRSA)

MRSA value indicates the vulnerability map sensibility to removal of one or more maps from the suitability analysis. MRSA is calculated as follows (Babiker et al., 2005; Martínez-Bastida et al., 2010; Saidi et al., 2011; Modabberi et al., 2017):

$$S = \left[\left| \frac{\frac{V}{N} - \frac{V'}{n}}{V} \right| \right] \times 100, \qquad (4)$$

where S stands for the sensibility value expressed in terms of variation index, V is the intrinsic vulnerability index (real vulnerability index) and V′ is the intrinsic vulnerability index after removing X; N and n are the number of data used to calculate V and V′, respectively (Babiker et al., 2005; Martínez-Bastida et al., 2010; Saidi et al., 2011; Modabberi et al., 2017).

B. Single-Parameter Sensibility Analysis (SPSA)

SPSA was first introduced by Napolitano and Fabbri (1996). This test shows the effect of each DRASTIC factor on the final vulnerability index. Using this test derived from Equation 5, the real and effective weight of each factor, compared to the theoretical weight assigned by the analytical model was calculated by Babiker et al(2005), Martínez-Bastida et al (2010), Saidi et al(2011) and Modabberi et al (2017);

$$W = \left[\frac{P_r P_w}{V} \right] \times 100, \qquad (5)$$

where W is the effective weight of each factor. P_r and P_w are the rank and weight assigned to P, respectively. V is the intrinsic vulnerability index (Martínez-Bastida et al., 2010; Babiker et al., 2005; Saidi et al., 2011; Modabberi et al., 2017).

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. DRASTIC and CDRASTIC Parameters

Based on data shown in Table 2, the assigned rating of water table depth varies from 1 to 10. In addition, based on the results presented in Table 6, water table depth in the aquifer varies from

4.6 to >30.5 m (rating 1 to 7). About 27.55% of the aquifer has a depth greater than 30.5 m, and 66.16 % of the aquifer has a depth ranging from 9.1 m and 30.5 m. Less than 7% of the aquifer has a depth between 4.6 m and 9.1 m. The Kerman–Baghin aquifer rated map of water table depth is presented in Figure 2(A). According to Figure 2(A) and Table 6, the minimum impact of water table depth on aquifer vulnerability occurs in the central parts (6.39%), whereas the maximum impact occurs in the north, south, northwest, and southeast parts (27.55%).

According to the results presented in Table 6, 75.81% of the aquifer has a net recharge value from 7 to 9 cm/year. Anet recharge value between 9 and 11 cm/year was found for 11.74% of the aquifer. The Kerman–Baghin aquifer rated map of net recharge is shown in Figure 2(B). According to Piscopo's method, the Kerman–Baghin aquifer was divided into three classes, with regard to net recharge. The highest net recharge value was observed in the north, northeast, south, southwest, parts of the northwest, parts of the center, and parts of the southeast (75.81%), whereas the least net recharge value appeared in parts of the northwest and center (11.74%), as shown in Figure 2(B) and Table 6.

As observed in Table 6, the majority of the Kerman–Baghin aquifer media is composed of sand, clay, and silt (75.21%). The Kerman–Baghin aquifer rated map of aquifer media is presented in Figure 3(A). Parts of the aquifer in the north, northwest, northeast, center, and southeast are composed of sand, clay, and silt. Parts of the aquifer in the northwest are composed of rubble and sand (5.58%). Parts of the aquifer in the south and northwest are composed of gravel and sand (8.95%), and gravel, sand, clay, and silt (10.26%).

The Kerman–Baghin aquifer rated map of soil media is presented in Figure 3(B). The soil map depicts six different soil classes. The highest rank (rank = 9) was assigned to rubble, sand, clay, and silt (a combination of rubble, sand, clay and silt soils). In addition, the lowest rank

(rank = 2) was assigned to clay and silt(a combination of clay and silt soils). Most of the aquifer soil media is covered with silt, sand, and clay (about 80%).

The Kerman–Baghin aquifer rated map of topography is shown in Figure 4(A). The topographical layer shows a gentle slope (0 to 6%) over most of the aquifer, hence gaining ranks of 9 and 10. A slope range of 0 to 2% includes 34.72% of the study area, and its rating (slope range = 0–2%) is 10. In addition, 65.28% of the aquifer has a slope range of 2 to 6% (parts of the northwest) as shown in Figure 4(A) and Table 6. As the gradient increases, the runoff increases as well (Israil et al., 2006) leading to less penetration (Jaiswal et al., 2003). According to Madrucci et al. (2008), the gradients higher than 35° are considered restrictions on groundwater desirability because of the lack of springs.

The Kerman–Baghin aquifer rated map of the impact of vadose zone is indicated in Figure 4(B). According to the results, the soil with a rank of 5 (gravel, sand, clay, and silt) is more effective in aquifer vulnerability (35.47%). Other various types of soils such as sand, clay, and silt (parts of the north, northeast, south, and southeast), gravel and sand (parts of the center and northwest), and rubble, sand, clay, and silt (parts of the northwest) cover 34.24%, 20.39%, and 9.9% of the aquifer, respectively, as shown in Figure 4(B) and Table 6. Sandy soil is effective on groundwater occurrence because of the high rate of penetration (Srivastava and Bhattacharya, 2006). However, clay soil is arranged poorly because of low infiltration (Manap et al., 2014b).

The Kerman–Baghin aquifer rated map of hydraulic conductivity is presented in Figure 5(A). Hydraulic conductivity shows high variability. Our study results show that hydraulic conductivity of the Kerman–Baghin aquifer varied from 0 to 81.5 m/day. The potential for groundwater contamination was greater in zones with high hydraulic conductivity (38.27%). As shown in Figure 5(A) and Table 6, 29.51%, 23.93%, 5.98%, and 2.31% of the study areas have hydraulic conductivity in the ranges of 0 to 4.1 m/day, 12.2 to 28.5 m/day, 28.5 to 40.7 m/day, and 40.7 to 81.5 m/day, respectively.

The Kerman–Baghin aquifer rated map of land use is presented in Figure 5(B). Our results show that the majority of the Kerman–Baghin aquifer is covered with irrigated field crops and grassland with moderate vegetation cover (20.45%). Less than 4% of the study area is irrigated field crops and urban areas (3.61%), and 58.47% of the study area is irrigated field crops with urban areas, grassland with poor and moderate vegetation cover, fallow land, woodland, and rocky ground. In addition, 10.17% of the study area is fallow land with poor grassland and moderate vegetation, and 13.72% of the study area is sand dunes with poor grassland and moderate vegetation cover and woodland as shown in Figure 5(B) and Tables 3 and 6.

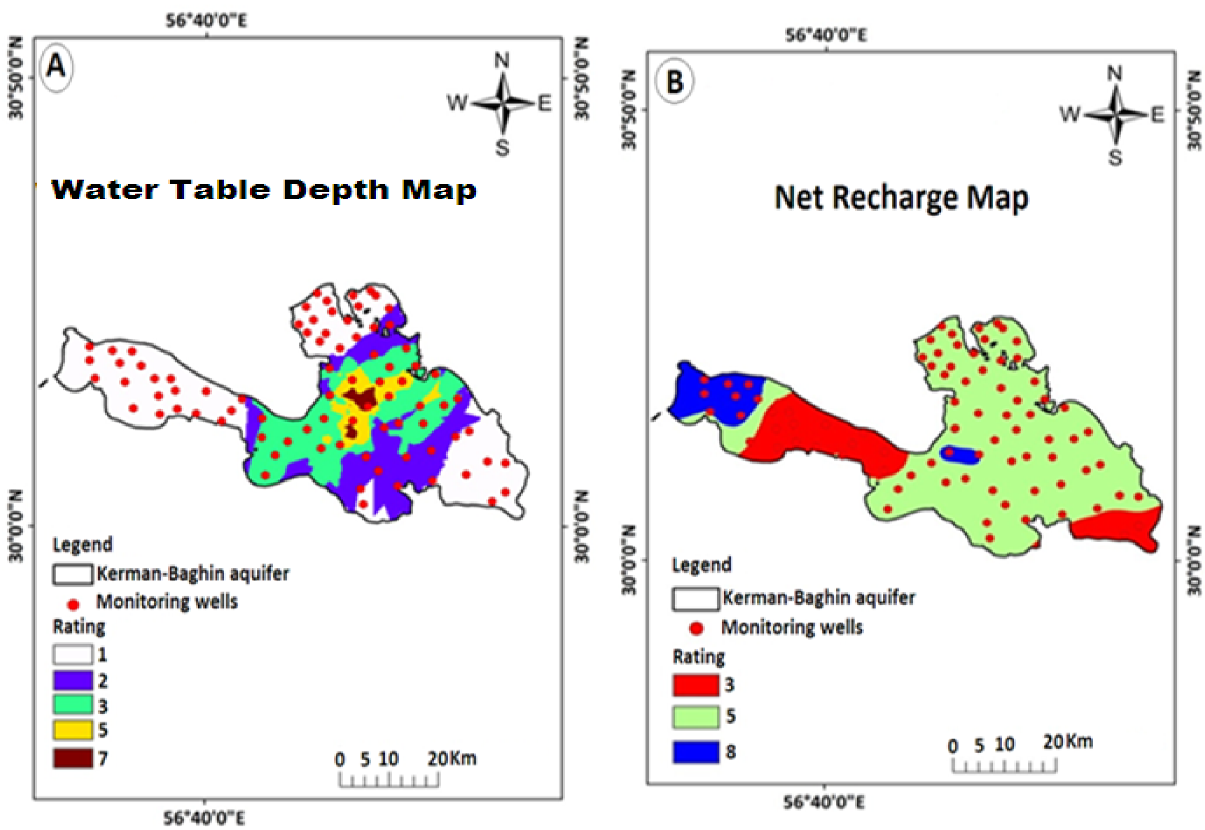

Figure 2. Kerman–Baghin aquifer rated maps of A) water table depth and B) net recharge

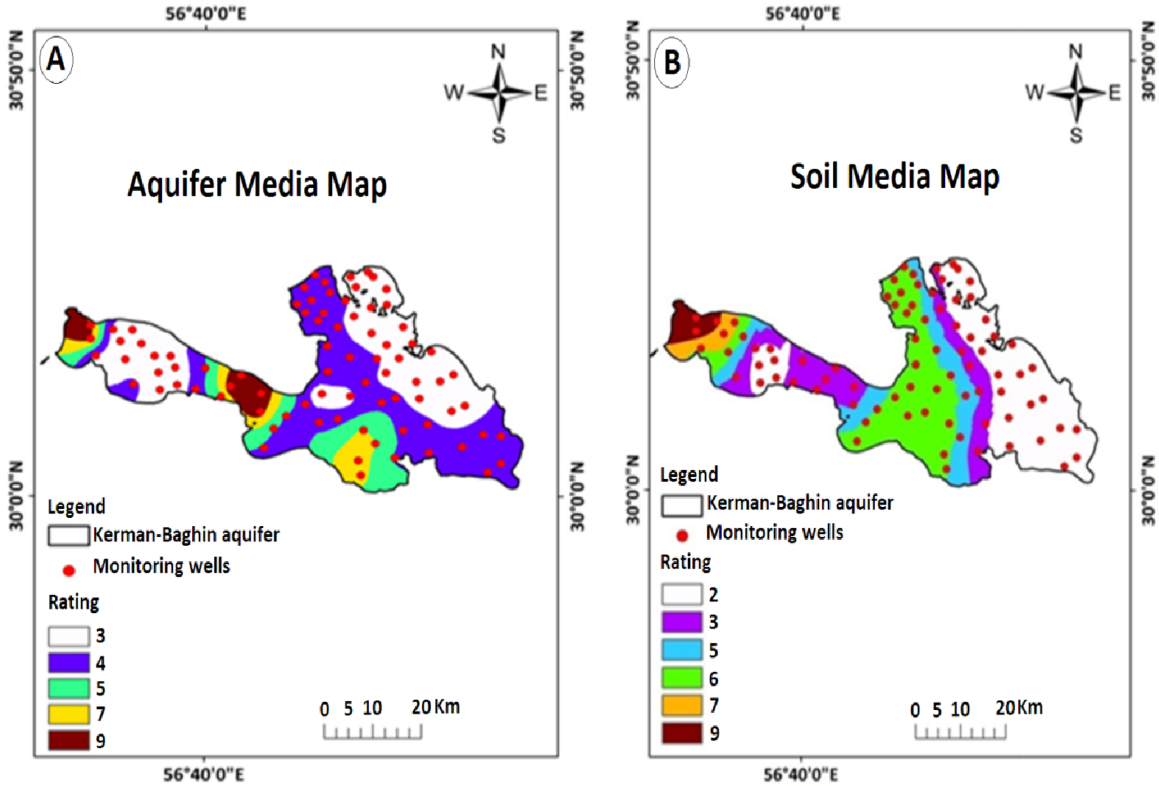

Figure 3. Kerman–Baghin aquifer rated maps of A) aquifer media and B) soil media

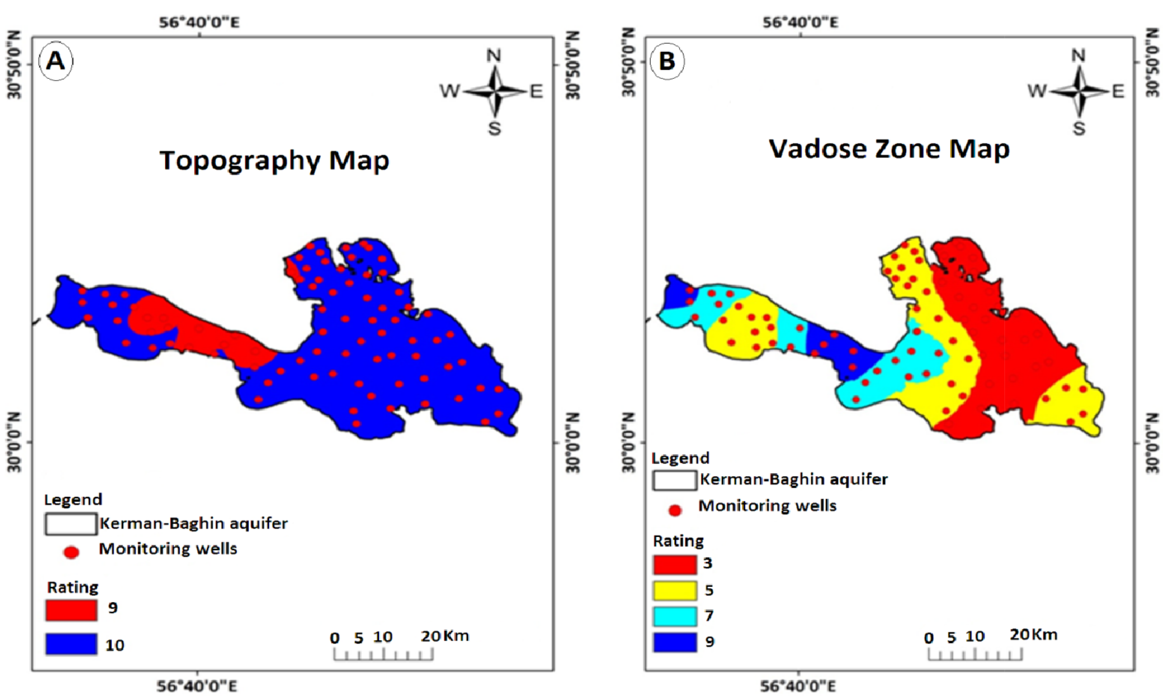

Figure. 4. Kerman–Baghin aquifer rated maps of A) topography and B) vadose zone

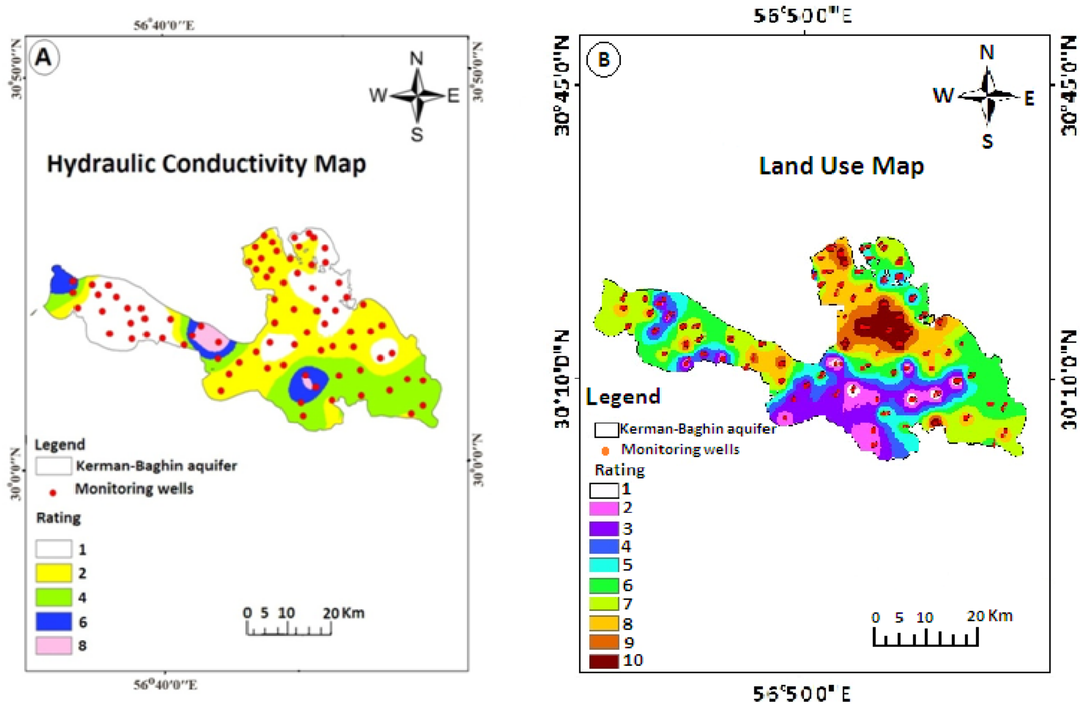

Figure. 5. Kerman–Baghin aquifer rated maps of A) hydraulic conductivity and B) land use

Table 6 Area of rating (km2 and %) of DRASTIC and CDRASTIC parameters

DRASTIC and CDRASTIC indexes parameters	Rating	Area (km^2)	Area (%)	The aquifer geographic directions covered by the respective rating in the parameters rated maps
Water table depth	1	557.73	27.55	Parts of the north, south, northwest, and southeast
	2	472.18	23.34	Parts of the north, south, and center
	3	469.78	23.29	Parts of the center
	5	395.00	19.53	Parts of the center
	7	129.14	6.39	Parts of the center
Net recharge	3	252.04	12.45	Parts of southeast, and northwest
	5	1534.15	75.81	North, northeast, south, southwest, and parts of the northwest, center, southeast
	8	237.6	11.74	Parts of the northwest and center
Aquifer media	3	743.18	36.72	Parts of the north, northwest, northeast, and center
	4	779.01	38.49	Parts of the north, northwest, southeast, and center
	5	207.81	10.26	Parts of the south, and northwest
	7	181.02	8.95	Parts of the south, and northwest
	9	112.76	5.58	Parts of the northwest
Soil media	2	658.5	32.53	Parts of the north, northwest, northeast, and southeast
	3	399.72	19.75	Parts of the north, northwest, south, and center

	5	297.44	14.69	Parts of the north, northwest, south, and center
	6	538.77	26.62	Parts of the northwest, center, and southwest
	7	67.56	3.33	Parts of the northwest
	9	61.79	3.08	Parts of the northwest
Topography	9	702.74	34.72	North, northwest, northeast, south, southeast, southwest, and center
	10	1321.07	65.28	parts of the northwest
The impact of the vadose zone	3	692.87	34.24	Parts of the north, northeast, south, and southeast
	5	717.91	35.47	Parts of the north, northwest, south, southeast, and center
	7	412.49	20.39	Parts of the center, and northwest
	9	200.53	9.9	Parts of the northwest
Hydraulic conductivity	1	597.11	29.51	Parts of the northeast, northwest, southeast, and center
	2	774.52	38.27	parts of the northwest, south, southeast, and center
	4	484.17	23.93	Parts of the northwest, south, and southeast
	6	120.99	5.98	Parts of the south, and northwest
	8	46.7	2.31	Parts of the south, and northwest
Land use	1	112.48	5.56	Parts of the south
	2	165.02	8.16	Parts of the south
	3	205.65	10.17	Parts of the south, and center
	4	357.06	17.64	Parts of the south, southwest, northwest, and center
	5	234.86	11.61	Parts of the southeast, northwest, and center
	6	413.86	20.45	Parts of the southeast, northwest, northeast, and center
	7	182.63	9.02	Parts of the north, northwest, and northeast
	8	169.4	8.37	Parts of the north, northwest, and northeast
	9	109.42	5.41	Parts of the north, northwest, and northeast
	10	73.09	3.61	Parts of the north

3.2. DRASTIC and CDRASTIC Vulnerability Indexes

The Kerman–Baghin aquifer vulnerability map obtained using DRASTIC and CDRASTIC indexes is shown in Figure 6. In the studied aquifer, the vulnerability falls under very high, high, moderate, low, and very low vulnerable areas. It is found that in both indexes, the north, northeast, northwest, south, southwest, southeast and center parts come under low and very low vulnerability. This could be attributed to low water depth, hydraulic conductivity, and net recharge characterizing these aquifer areas; another reason might be that the aquifer media is mostly clay, sand and silt soils. The vulnerability area, identified by investigated indexes, is illustrated in Table 7. Low and very low vulnerable zones cover 25.21% and 38.31%of the Kerman–Baghin aquifer respectively using DRASTIC index. Very low and low vulnerable zones cover 24.95% and 40.41%, respectively, using the CDRASTIC index. This is primarily due to water table depth and relatively low permeability of vadose zone in such aquifers (Colins et al., 2016).About 26% of the studied aquifer had moderate groundwater pollution potential, using DRASTIC and CDRASTIC indexes. This does not mean that such areas are without pollution; rather, they are relatively prone to pollution when compared to other areas (Colins et al., 2016). From the DRASTIC index values, it was found that 10.4% of the study aquifer was under high (8.46%) and very high (1.94%) vulnerability. The results of the study showed that 8.75% of the aquifer is in the ranges of 190 to 235 and greater than 235 in the CDRASTIC index (Table 7). According to these two indexes, the vulnerability maps indicated very same findings, showing the northwest portion of the aquifer as high and very high vulnerable zones. The high vulnerability can be attributed to great water depth, hydraulic conductivity, and net recharge in these aquifer areas. In addition, this can due to the great slope in this area.

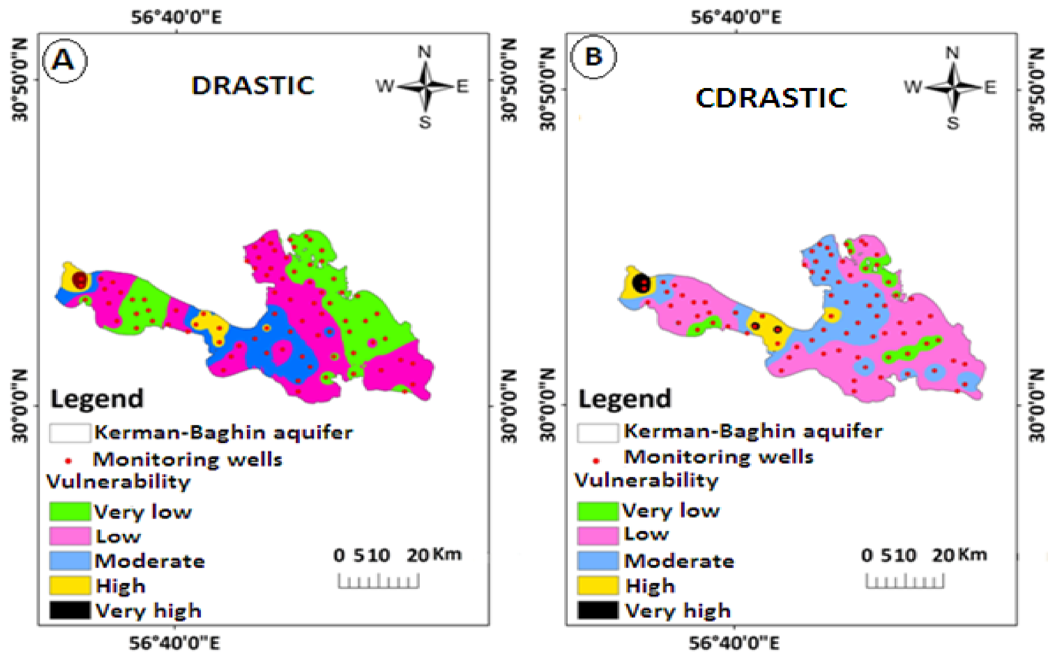

Figure 6. Vulnerability maps of Kerman–Baghin aquifer by DRASTIC and CDRASTIC indexes

Table 7 Area of vulnerability (km2 and %) identified by DRASTIC and CDRASTIC indexes

Vulnerability	DRASTIC				CDRASTIC			
	Ranges	Area (km^2)	Area (%)	The aquifer geographic directions covered by the respective vulnerability	Ranges	Area (km^2)	Area (%)	The aquifer geographic directions covered by the respective vulnerability
Very low	23-46	510.25	25.21	Parts of the south, north, northwest, and northeast	<100	505.02	24.95	Parts of the southeast, north, northwest, and northeast
Low	47-92	775.14	38.31	Parts of the south, southwest, southeast, north, northwest, northeast, and center	100-145	817.70	40.41	Parts of the south, southwest, southeast, north, northwest, northeast, and center
Moderate	93-136	527. 85	26.08	Parts of the south, southwest, northwest, and center	145-190	524.06	25.89	Parts of the south, southwest, southwest, northwest, and center
High	137-184	171.02	8.46	Parts of the northwest	190-235	126.91	6.28	Parts of the northwest and center
Very high	>185	39.23	1.94	Parts of the northwest	≥235	49.79	2.47	Parts of the northwest

3.3. Sensitivity of DRASTIC Model

The MRSA, the DRASTIC index, is performed by eliminating one layer data at a time as indicated in Table 8. The results showed a high variation in vulnerability index when the impact of vadose zone was removed, so that, the average variation index was 1.88%. This shows that the factor is more effective in vulnerability assessment using the DRASTIC index. When this parameter is removed from the overlay process, this leads to a significant decrease in vulnerability index. This could be due to the high theoretical weight assigned to this factor (weight = 5). These findings are similar to those obtained by Dibi et al. (2012) who have shown that, in addition to this parameter, topography, net recharge, and water table depth have a high impact on the vulnerability index. In addition, in Samake et al. (2011), the impact of vadose zone and hydraulic conductivity had a significant impact on vulnerability index, that appears to have a moderate sensitivity to deletion of water table depth (1.48%), net recharge (1.36%), and hydraulic conductivity (1.25%). The minimum menu variation index was achieved after eliminating the aquifer media (0.44%), as indicated in Table 8.

To estimate the effect of individual factors on aquifer vulnerability, the SPSA was performed. A summary of results of SPSA in the DRASTIC index are shown in Table 9. The SPSA compares the effective and theoretical weights. The average effective weight of net recharge was 43.26% and its theoretical weight (%) was 17.4%. This shows that the factor is more effective in vulnerability assessment using the DRASTIC index. The results reported by other studies (Babiker et al., 2005; Doumouya et al., 2012) are similar to those of the present study. The impact of vadose zone and water table depth had high theoretical weights (21.74%); they have been dedicated with an effective weight with average value such as 8.33% and 25.55%. The remaining factors showed an average effective weights of 14.91% (aquifer media), 9.89% (soil media), 11.35% (topography), and 7.01% (hydraulic conductivity). The theoretical weights assigned to water table depth, net recharge, topography, and hydraulic conductivity were not in agreement with the effective weight. The highest and lowest impact on aquifer vulnerability was related to net recharge and hydraulic conductivity, respectively (Table 9).

Table 8 Statistical results of MRSA in the DRASTIC index

The sensitivity of variability index (S) (%)				Removed parameters
SD	Min.	Max.	Ave.	
0.414	0.05	2.36	1.36	D
0.775	0.07	3.06	1.48	R
0.311	0.05	1.31	0.44	A
0.486	0.00	1.65	0.73	S
0.339	0.03	1.31	0.51	T
0.894	0.25	3.84	1.88	I
0.550	0.03	1.98	1.25	C

Table 9 Statistical results of SPSA in the DRASTIC index

Effective weight (%)				Theoretical weight (%)	Theoretical Weight	Parameters
SD	Min.	Max.	Ave.			
6.179	3.23	28.46	8.33	21.74	5	D
11.998	14.06	73.47	43.26	17.4	4	R
3.190	7.26	22.13	14.91	13.04	3	A
2.916	4.49	14.29	9. 89	8.7	2	S
2.222	6.45	14.71	11.35	4.3	1	T
5.367	15.79	37.31	25.55	21.74	5	I
3.738	2.42	18.75	7.01	13.04	3	C

3.4. Sensibility of CDRASTIC index

The MRSA in the CDRASTIC index was performed by eliminating one data layer at a time as indicated in Table 10. The mean variation index of hydraulic conductivity was 4.13%. Hydraulic conductivity had a greater effect on the aquifer vulnerability followed by water table depth (4.05%), soil media (3.82%), topography (3.68%), aquifer media (3.28%), net recharge (2.72%), the impact of vadose zone (2.33%), and land use (1.99%).

The effective weight derived from the SPSA to the CDRASTIC index is shown in Table 11. The average effective weight of net recharge was 32.62%. This shows that the factor is more effective in vulnerability assessment using CDRASTIC index. Hydraulic conductivity displays the lowest effective weights (5.32%). Topography, net recharge, and land use had upper effective weights toward the theoretical weights specified by CDRASTIC index. The average effective weight of land use was 24.82%. This shows that the parameter was the second effective parameter in aquifer vulnerability, using the CDRASTIC index (Table 11).

Table 10 Statistical results of MRSA in CDRASTIC index

The sensitivity of variability index (S) (%)				Removed parameters
SD	Min.	Max.	Ave.	
1.403	0.50	6.48	4.05	D
1.617	0.11	10.91	2.72	R
1.541	0.06	5.99	3.28	A
1.508	0.67	6.60	3.82	S
1.353	0.87	5.87	3.68	T
1.439	0.06	5.12	2.33	I
1.480	0.55	6.72	4.13	C
0.375	1.23	3.00	1.99	L

Table 11 Statistical results of SPSA in CDRASTIC index

Effective weight (%)				Theoretical weight (%)	Theoretical Weight	Parameters
SD	Min.	Max.	Ave.			
4.849	2.63	26.88	6.27	21.74	5	D
10.672	10.4	66.67	32.62	17.4	4	R
3.026	6.29	20.00	11.23	13.04	3	A
2.621	3.31	12.96	7.5	8.7	2	S
1.609	5.2	12.82	8.45	4.3	1	T
4.648	10.87	32.05	19.2	21.74	5	I
3.134	2.1	14. 88	5.32	13.04	3	C
10.122	3.88	42.37	24.82	17.85	5	L

4. Conclusions

Evaluations of vulnerability indexes for the Kerman–Baghin aquifer were conducted using the GIS-based DRASTIC and CDRASTIC indexes. Seven hydro–geological factors (as the letters of the acronym show) were considered in the determination of aquifer vulnerability using DRASTIC, and eight parameters were considered in the CDRASTIC approach. From the DRASTIC index values, it was determined that 10.4% of the aquifer is under high (8.46%) to very high (1.94%) vulnerability. From the CDRASTIC index values, it was determined that 8.75% of the aquifer is under high (6.28%) to very high (2.47%) vulnerability. In addition, we found that parts of the north, south, southeast, and northwest have low to very low vulnerability based on the DRASTIC and CDRASTIC indexes. The MRSA signifies the fact that hydraulic conductivity and the impact of vadose zone induce a high risk of aquifer contamination according to the DRASTIC and CDRASTIC indexes, respectively. For both methods, the SPSA analysis shows that net recharge has a high risk to aquifer contamination. The results of this study showed that parts of the Kerman–Baghin aquifer tend to be contaminate that needs to be considered by regional authorities. Regarding urban planning and the organization of agricultural activities in Kerman Province, the vulnerability map prepared in the study could be the most important when considering protection of groundwater quality. In areas with high and very high vulnerability to groundwater pollution, there should be restrictions on soil fertilization as well as permanent pasture, or afforestation should be introduced in the arable land. In addition, these areas should not be converted into housing developments. In addition, groundwater vulnerability maps of the Kerman–Baghin aquifer are ideal to be used in future land-use planning.

Data availability. Data cannot be shared at this stage as authors are currently analysing for further work.

Author contributions. MN constructed an idea, planned methodology, interpreted results, and then reached conclusions. MM supervised the whole process and provided personal, environmental, and financial support for the research work. MN took responsibility for literature review and finalising the whole paper and in the end critically reviewed the paper before submission.

Acknowledgments. The authors would like to thank the Environmental Health Engineering Research Center, Kerman University of Medical Sciences, for their scientific support.

Competing interests. The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

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