Integration of Remote Sensing, Geophysics and GIS to Evaluate Groundwater Potentiality – A Case Study in Sohag Region, Egypt

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Abstract

The present work performs an interpretation approach that integrates through a geographic information system (GIS), the data from remote sensing, geophysics and other hydrogeologic phenomena to characterize groundwater resources for the identification of candidate well locations. The area between longitudes 31o 15' and 32o 15'E and latitudes 26o 00' and 27o 00'N, located in Sohag region, Egypt, was considered as a case study. The area is characterized by arid climate of low rainfall and high evaporation. The sands and gravels of Pleistocene age cover the surface of the old alluvial plains, which are subject to the new reclamation activities.

The lithostratigraphic section represents units belonging to Lower Eocene, Pliocene, Pleistocene and Holocene times. Structurally, the area is affected by faulting, folding and major joints. The prevailing trends of the faults are N-S, E-W, NE-SW and NW-SE.

Methodologically, the available remote sensing data (Landsat TM images), the 1:50,000 scale topographical maps and Bouguer gravity map in Sohag region are used for analyzing slopes, lineaments and the hydrogeomorphologic attributes of the drainage basins dissecting the Eocene plateaus and draining towards the Nile valley. These are carried out to reveal the opportunities for downward recharge to the existing aquifer and/or flooding probabilities.

As well, subsurface information inferred from geoelectrical survey can give more realistic picture of groundwater potentiality. Four major geoelectrical zones with subsurface structure could be detected from the interpreted geoelectrical model sections of the 203 VES stations executed in the investigated area. The second zone, which is represented by water bearing layers related to the Quaternary aquifer, has been concerned. This aquifer, which is consisting of Pleistocene sand and gravels of semi-confined or free water table conditions, is the main water bearing formation existed in Sohag region. Accordingly, contour maps for the depth, thickness and true resistivity of the aquifer were constructed.
Hydrogeologic phenomena, including soil composition, soil infiltration, water flow, hydraulic conductivity and transmissivity of the aquifer besides the hydrochemical properties distribution maps based on the data from 107 drilled wells have been constructed and studied. The positions of boreholes and VES stations were accurately plotted on the Landsat imagery, aerial photographs and thematic maps using GPS receivers.

To find out the more realistic ground water potentiality map of the area, the relevant layers which include lineaments, slopes, hydrogeomorphologic drainage attributes as well as the aquifer depth, thickness and true resistivity were integrated in ArcGIS 8.3 and ILWIS 3.2 grid environment. Criteria for GIS analysis have been defined on the basis of ground water conditions and appropriate weightage has been assigned to each information layer according to relative contribution towards the desired output. The ground water potential zone map generated through this model was verified with the yield data to ascertain the validity of the model developed.

Three groundwater potentiality zones in the Quaternary aquifer in Sohag region could be demarcated from integration of the previously discussed thematic layers using a model developed through Geographic Information System (GIS) technique. The verification showed that the demarcated ground water potential zones through the model are in agreement with the bore well yield data.

The study has evidently demonstrated the capabilities of the integrated approach in delineation of the different ground water potential zones. Significant recommendations towards improving the efficiency of desert reclamation are also acquired to accomplish the sustainable development plan in Sohag region. As a result, the given approach can be successfully used elsewhere with appropriate modifications for identifying candidate well locations and in creating a GIS-based hydrogeologic model of a selected area.

Keywords: Geographic Information System (GIS), Remote Sensing (RS), Groundwater Resources, Vertical Electrical Sounding (VES), Hydrogeologic Model.

Introduction

1. Study Area

Sohag governorate constitutes an important hydrographic part in the Upper Egypt Nile Valley. It occupies a region including both the floodplain and the desert fringes between longitudes 31° 15’ and 32° 15’E and latitudes 26° 00’ and 27° 00’N (Fig. 1) and has a total area of ~ 11022 km². The Nile valley, in Sohag area, is bounded from east and west by the Eocene Limestone plateau which is dissected by many wadis draining towards the Nile Valley (about 30 catchments in the eastern side and 32 catchments in the western side).

2. Purpose and Scope

Most of the flood plain areas in Sohag have 60–70 m elevation range; part of these is susceptible to flooding. In the past several decades,
urbanization, reclamation land, and other projects spread over low desert lands. The new development extends to include up to 160 m elevation and part of these are initially took place in flood free zones. This necessitates more exploration activities for groundwater resources.

The overall goal of this work is to show how GIS technique can assist with remote sensing and geophysics for evaluating groundwater resources in Sohag Governorate. This could be achieved by determining the hydrogeologic potentiality map for the study area using thematic information layers (the geomorphology, drainage, lineaments, geoelectrical and other spatial distributed hydrogeologic phenomena) and weighted index overlay via GIS environment.

In weighted index overlay, the individual thematic layers and also their classes are assigned weightage on the basis of their relative contribution towards the output. The classes with higher values indicate the most favorable sites for groundwater potentiality. This is followed by verification of results and finally suggesting appropriate locations for drilling new wells.

Geologic Setting
The area under consideration represents a part from the Nile valley zone of Egypt. Geologically the area has been studied by a variety of authors (e.g. Wendorf and Said, 1967; Wendorf and schild, 1976; Said, 1975, 1981, 1983, 1990; Issawi et al., 1978; Paulissen and Vermersch, 1987; Issawi and McCauley, 1992; Omer, 1996; Omer and Issawi, 1998). Generally, the geology of Sohag area can be outlined as follows (Fig. 2):

1) Thebes Formation (Eocene); the widely used formal name (Thebes Formation) was first introduced by Said (1960) for the lower Eocene limestone of the Nile Valley. He described the Thebes Formation as massive to laminated limestone with flint bands or nodules and marl rich with Nummulites and planktonic foraminifera. Amer et al. (1970) and Said (1971), subdivided the Eocene rocks exposed between Luxor and Assiut into two formations, namely the Thebes Formation at the base and the Manfalut Formation at the top. The Thebes Formation includes the massive to laminated limestone with flint bands and concretions. The exposed part of the formation decreases gradually toward the north due to the regional gentle sloping northward.

2) Muneiha Formation (Pliocene); Issawi et al., 1978, mentioned that Muneiha formation includes the estuarine fine clastic sediments accumulated due to the invasion of the Mediterranean Sea which create a long gulf from Cairo to Aswan in Pliocene time, these sediments are equivalent to the Madmoud Formation (Said, 1981). Omar 1996 divided this formation into two main divisions (lower and upper members) according to the facies and the depositional environment.

3) Issawia Formation (Pliocene/Pleistocene); Said (1981 and 1990) mentioned that, by the end of the Pliocene and beginning of the Pleistocene, arid climatic conditions prevailed over Egypt causing the cessation of the revering activities. This left local depressions, which received water only during seasonal rainy storms; lacustrine sediments were accordingly accumulated within these depressions. These lacustrine sediments were treated as the Issawia Formation (Issawi et al., 1978; Omar, 1996). Sediments of the Issawia
Formation include two inter-fingered facies: the carbonate facies and clastic facies.

4) The Pleistocene Sands; they consist of a thick succession of the Pleistocene sand-gravel association, which is widely distributed along the Nile valley in both the surface and subsurface. These sediments have been studied by many authors (e.g. Wendorf and Said, 1967; Said, 1975, 1981; Paulissen and Vermeersch, 1987; Issawi and McCauley, 1992; Omer, 1996; Omer and Issawi, 1998). The porosity and permeability of the Pleistocene sandy sediments of the Nile basin are generally high that is because these sediments are friable.

5) Dandara Formation; During the Late Middle Pleistocene, the Ethiopian water coupled with the dry phase in Egypt resulted into an exotic suspended-load river depending mostly on the seasonal rainfall in Ethiopia (Said 1975; Omer, 1996; Omer and Issawi, 1998). Sediments accumulated during this stage (Dandara Formation) were thus entirely derived from the upper reaches of the Nile in Ethiopia and southern Sudan. These sediments are formed mainly of fluviatile fine sand-silt intercalation and accumulated at low-energy environment.

6) Recent Wadi Deposits; Generally, the intermittent activities of the transverse channels led to the accumulation of flashflood deposits covering the surface of the older sediments throughout the desert areas outside the cultivated land. These deposits vary greatly in both the thickness and texture depending upon the land morphology and the intensity and regime of the flashflood rainfall. They range in thickness from few centimeters to more than 30 meters. They are formed of the disintegrated product of the nearby Eocene carbonates, in addition to the reworked material from the pre-existing sediments.

Fig. (1): Location map of the study area. Fig. (2): Geological map of Sohag Governorate (after the Egyptian Geological Survey and Mining Authority 1989).
Hydrogeologic Setting

1 Climatic Characteristics

Climatologically, Sohag Governorate belongs to the arid belt of Egypt where it characterized by long and hot summer, warm winter, and scarce rainfall except the occasional storms. Rain is generally rare and is randomly precipitated over the area. During the period between 1960 and 1998, the average value of precipitation in Sohag Governorate, was recorded as 2.25 mm/year (MAE, 2000).

2 Ground Water Conditions

In the floodplain of the River Nile, the Quaternary aquifer system consists of fluvial sands with minor conglomerate and clay (Prenile, Qena Formation). It is capped with the Neonile silt and fine-grained sands that constitutes the base of the cultivated lands. Along the eastern and western fringes, the Neonile silty layer is replaced by the recent sediments. Therefore, the aquifer system in the floodplain is under semi-confined condition (silty cap), but in the desert fringes it is under unconfined condition. The penetrated thickness of the aquifer system varies from 150 m in the central part of the flood plain to about 50m in the desert fringes. The average hydraulic conductivity of the aquifer is about 70 m/day; while it reaches 4 cm/day for the silty top layer (Omran et al., 2006).

The Quaternary aquifer is recharged mainly from the dominant surface water, especially from the irrigation canals that play an essential role in the configuration of its water table. Some wadis having high bifurcation ratio and low drainage density and drainage frequency may have good chance for downward recharge to the existing aquifer. The discharge of the groundwater from this aquifer is taken place through: the underlying aquifer, the river that acts as an effluent stream in most of its parts, the irrigation drains, the irrigation canals during the winter closure period in addition to the evapotranspiration processes.

The main flow direction in the floodplain is to the northwest. On the other hand, the second trend of groundwater flow is oriented in the direction from west and east to the River Nile due to the influence of canals recharging.

In the old cultivated lands, the piezometric surface ranges between 50 and 65 m above sea level, but it ranges between 65 to 85 m in the reclaimed areas. The hydraulic gradients are relatively moderate and regular, except the areas of water depressions, where these gradients become steeper in north-eastern and south-western portions.

3 Hydrochemical Characteristics and Quality Evaluation

The groundwater chemistry in the considered area (Korany et al., 2006) shows that the pH value of groundwater ranges from 7.1 to 7.8 indicating the alkaline nature of water. The total dissolved solids (TDS) ranges from 524 to 5131 ppm and increase generally toward the Eocene scarp.

Groundwater of the studied aquifer has two chemical types. The first type reflects groundwater of mixed water facies. The second type is detected in all the remaining water wells with dominance of HCO3 — Na and SO4 —Na, reflecting water of continental origin.
The comparison between the groundwater chemistry in the area of study and the WHO drinking water standards indicated that water in the area is generally suitable for drinking; meanwhile the groundwater located near the limestone scarp shows high chemical concentration of the different chemical components and is not suitable for drinking purposes. Evaluation of groundwater suitability for irrigation based on the US Salinity Laboratory diagrams, SAR and RSC indicated that water in the area is generally suitable for use except at some localities where it is suitable for plants of moderate salt tolerance.

Analysis and Discussion

1 Generation of thematic layers

In order to demarcate the groundwater potential zones of the study area different thematic layers (maps) were derived (i.e. hydrogeomorphology, lineaments, drainage, slope, geology, subsurface maps of aquifer geometry and quality). The remote sensing, topography, geology, gravity, geoelectrical sounding interpretation and well log correlation are used. The methodology adopted in the study is represented schematically (Fig. 3) and described as follow:

1.1 Hydrogeomorphologic map

The studied area is bounded from east and west by the limestone plateau in which there are many wadis dissect the plateau and has a main direction NE-SW; follow these plateau inwards, there are low desert land areas then the agricultural areas surrounding the River Nile. The main geomorphological features found in the area include four main units (Fig. 4) and each unit has its own characteristics, shape, pattern, and relief. The geomorphology of Sohag area can be summarized as follows:

1) The Nile flood plain; the cultivated lands are in both east and west side of the River Nile, represent the Nile flood plains. They include mud and silt deposits at the top surface dissected by the irrigation canals and drains. The most characteristic feature of the flood plain that is almost flat and sloping very gradually from south to north, its altitude ranges between 55 and 65m above mean sea level. The River Nile is running from south to north more close to the eastern margin of its valley. The cultivated lands on the western side of the river are generally much wider than those on the east side.
Fig. (3): Flow chart showing data flow and different GIS analysis operations followed in the present study.

2) The low land desert areas; the low land desert areas are fringing along both sides of the Nile flood plain and form gently elevated areas located between the agricultural lands and the edges of the Limestone Plateau. These areas form the old alluvial plains and represented by a series of old Nile terraces mixed with alluvial fans and terraces of desert drainage basins with different altitudes. These low land deserts are located at an altitude ranging between 70 and 160 m above mean sea level.

3) The Limestone plateau; the Limestone plateaus, in Sohag district, border the low land desert from west and east and represent part of the major Eocene Limestone plateau of the Eastern and Western Deserts of Egypt. It rises about 200 to 300 m above sea level and generally decreases toward the north. The surface of this plateau on both sides of the river is irregular owing to the effect of the weathering and the structures.
4) The transverse channels; the surfaces of the limestone plateau are dissected by dry drainage channels (*wadies*) that filled by sands and gravels and generally run toward the floodplain areas.

![Fig (4): The main geomorphological features in the area.](image)

**1.2 Surface Lineaments map**

Figure (5) clearly distinguish major fractures and/or faults (heavy lines), and minor fractures (light lines) which affected the study area as traced by Phillobbos et al. (2000) from the geological map of Egypt, scale 1:500 000 (EGPC and CONOCO, 1986, 1987).

**1.3 Subsurface Lineaments map (Gravity detected faults)**

Subsurface faults (contacts) (Fig. 6) were traced by Omran et al. (2000) at zones of maximum horizontal gravity gradients (*Vxz*<sub>max</sub>) from the Bouguer anomaly map of the study area (Fig. 7) established by the General Petroleum Company of Egypt (GPC) in 1980, with scale 1:500,000 and contour interval 1 mGal. The subsurface lineaments have been traced again using the digitized gravity field.
Fig. (5): Surface lineaments (fractures and/or faults) traced from geological map of Egypt after EGPC and CONOCO (1986 & 1987).

Fig. (6): Subsurface lineaments (gravity detected faults) in the study area as interpreted from Bouguer gravity map (after Omran et al., 2000).
1.4 Morphometric Analysis and Hydrologic Aspects of drainage basins

a- The drainage basins, drainage networks, and their geomorphometric parameters were analyzed from the topographic maps (scale 1:50000), where all the elements have been digitized, coded, measured, and extracted using GIS programs (ArcGIS 8.3 and ILWIS 3.2). These elements were verified using Landsat TM image 30 m resolution (Figs. 8, 9, 10 and 11). The following characteristics have been used to describe each basin:

1) The estimated linear drainage basin characteristics include stream ordering (Strahler 1952); mean of the bifurcation ratio; total drainage length; drainage frequency (Horton 1945); and drainage density (Melton 1957).

2) Areal drainage basin characteristics include drainage basin area, length, width, perimeter, and length of the overall flow (Horton 1945). In order to evaluate the hazardous probability of the different basins in the area, the drainage basins boundaries were digitized, the area (Fig. 11-a), includes nearly 62 drainage basins. Same thing happened for the drainage networks (Fig. 11-b),

Detailed analyses of the studied morphometric parameters of the considered drainage basins indicate that some wadis have high bifurcation ratio and low drainage density and drainage frequency. They have good chance for downward recharge to the existing aquifer that may form important water resource. On the other hands, most of the other wadis show low bifurcation ratio and high drainage density and drainage frequency. These wadis involve areas of moderate groundwater potentiality and high flooding probabilities.
Fig. (8): Color-composite image including Wadi Beir El-Ain and Wadi Ayoub basins, East Sohag. Image based on Landsat-7 ETM bands 7, 4, and 2 as RGB, of subscene.

Fig. (9): Drainage lines of the Wadi Beir El-Ain and Wadi Ayoub basins, East Sohag.

An exceptional rate of precipitation occurred in the area in November 1994 where the average rate of precipitation reached about 25 mm (Geological Survey of Egypt, 1994). It caused a flood in the region and led to huge loss of property and cultivated lands. The runoff in the considered area causes also subsurface effects resulted from the infiltrated water. The infiltrated water increases the recharge regime of the aquifer. The surface fractures joints and faults as well as the alluvial cover dominated by loose and gravelly constituents activate the infiltration and percolation processes. Thus it is expected to affect the groundwater quality.

On the other hand, the hydrometric attributes as well as a quantitative analysis of the hydrologic elements of the rainstorm of November 1994 have been calculated and analysed (Abdel Moneim et al., 1999). The result indicated that about 50.96 % (41.385 x 10⁶ in³) of the total precipitated water (81.2 x 10⁶ in³) resulted in runoff. The infiltrated water is about 35.1 % (28.5 x 10⁶ in³) whereas the evaporated water is estimated to be 13.9% (11.333 x 10⁶ in³) (Abdel Moneim et al., 1999).
The hazardous probability of the different basins in the area was determined using El-Shami’s model (1992b) considering the relation between bifurcation ratio, drainage density, and drainage frequency. Two different diagrams were used to determine the hazard degree for each basin in the area.
The first diagram shows the relation between bifurcation ratio and drainage density and the second diagram represents the relation between bifurcation ratio and drainage frequency (Fig. 12). Both diagrams include three fields A (high possibility for floods), B (moderate possibility for floods), and C (low possibility for floods).

b) Flash flood hazard map of the area

Flash flood prone wadis (dry channels cut into the terrain) can be assessed and delineated through the use of GIS. This methodology was used to determine the hazard of flash floods in each basin in Sohag area. For the analysis and creation the hazard map, Youssef et al. (2005) used the drainage basin maps with the extracted data and Fig. (12). The attribute table for the drainage basins was added to the GIS database in building the drainage basin hazard map and is classified into high, moderate, and low hazard basins (Fig. 13-a).

From the hydrological point of view the following points can be deduced:

1- The study area is classified as an active catchment for enabling the formation of sizable quantities of runoff and a plan is required to make use of the rainfall water, which could lead to flood hazards if it is mismanaged.

2- Runoff in the area is an exceptional case, but this event should be kept in mind to avoid the occurrence of such. In November 1994 rainstorm event, the value of runoff in the study area was about 50.96 % of the total volume of the precipitated water (81.2 x 106 in³).

3- The study area is classified according to the potential for flood hazard, deduced from the geomorphometric attributes, into three zones; the strongly hazard, hazard and non-hazard zones. The location of these zones was considered in constructing the groundwater potentiality map given later (Fig. 19).

c) Vulnerability Maps for the study areas

Using map calculator in GIS, the isolation of the most prone areas to flash floods has been done. The determination of the vulnerability degree is according to two factors 1) final landuse and future projected maps 2) the hazard map for the drainage basins. The resultant vulnerability map was divided into three classes: high, moderate, and low vulnerable areas (Fig. 13-b).

1.5 Topographic and Slope maps

Slope map was prepared from digital elevation data.
1.6 Subsurface aquifer configuration maps from electrical survey

The geophysical exploration for groundwater resources in the study area was carried out using the electrical resistivity technique. A total of 203 VES soundings were carried out applying the Schlumberger electrode configuration and using GPS instrument for detecting their locations (Fig. 15). Interpretation of the VES data were carried out using the software of Zohdy (1989) to get the preliminary parameters of geoelectrical layers (true resistivity and thickness). Subsequent adjustment of the deduced layer parameters from all soundings was made using the IPI2Win computer software (Bobachev et. al., 2001). The interpreted layered models of drilled sites were then carefully correlated with the lithologic logs.

Based on the above correlation, lithology was inferred at other sounding locations for identifying horizontal and vertical variation in subsurface lithology and estimating depth to the aquifer and to the hard bed rock. Using these parameters at respective locations, aquifer layer thickness and depth maps were prepared through GIS.

Generally, the results from the geoelectrical interpretation indicated that five to eight geoelectrical layers are detected in the investigated area. They are grouped into four main zones (Table 1). These are (from top to bottom) (see also Fig. 14):
The surface zone, characterized by high resistivity values and variable thickness (semi-permeable zone). This zone belongs to Holocene period.

The second zone is characterized by resistivity values ranging from 2.8 to 9.4 ohm-m. This zone, which has different thickness varying from 2 to 15 m, corresponds to silt deposits that belong also to the Holocene period.

Table (1): Geoelectrical Parameters and Their Hydrogeological Significance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resistivity Stratification</th>
<th>Inferred Lithology</th>
<th>Hydrogeological Significance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Resistivity (Ωm)</td>
<td>Thickness (m)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>409 – 10065</td>
<td>1 – 35</td>
<td>Silt and clay in the cultivated land, changed laterally to be wadi deposits (fanglomerates consisting of sand, gravel and rock fragments)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.5 – 40</td>
<td>2.4 – 51.3</td>
<td>Shale or intercalations of sand and shale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.5 – 192</td>
<td>12 – 289 (in desert fringes 12-15 in the east and 17-85 in the west)</td>
<td>Sand and gravels intercalated with lenses of clays belonging to Quaternary (Pleistocene aquifer, Qena Fm)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; 395</td>
<td>Indeterminate (Bottom layer)</td>
<td>Pliocene clay or Eocene limestone in areas near to scarps in the desert fringes.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The third geoelectrical zone has resistivity value ranging from 25 to 180 Ohm-m, and its thickness varies from 47 to 240 m. It is characterized by the presence of sands and gravels and corresponds to the Pleistocene period. It is considered as the main water bearing formation in the study area. The interpretation results are presented as subsurface maps of depth, thickness and resistivity of the expected water bearing zone (Figs. 16, 17 & 18).
Fig. (14): Geoelectrical cross sections C-C' and H-H', Sohag Governorate.

Fig. (15): VES and cross sections location map.

Fig. (16): Contour map of depth to the Quaternary aquifer in Sohag area.

Fig. (17): Thickness Contour map of the Quaternary aquifer in Sohag area.

Fig. (18): True resistivity contour map of the Quaternary aquifer in Sohag area.
Finally, the fourth zone is characterized by low resistivity values corresponding to the Pliocene clay and is considered as the impermeable base of the Pleistocene aquifer. Sometimes this zone shows very high resistivity values, particularly in the localities adjacent to the Eocene scarps, corresponding to the dry limestone.

2 Integration of thematic layers and modeling for Groundwater Prospects and Potentials through GIS

In the initial stage of GIS spatial database development various analogue maps, which were in different scales obtained from different organizations, were converted into digital format by using manual digitization method in ILWIS 3.2 software. All primary input maps (hydrogeomorphology, lineament, spot elevation, drainage and geo-electrical sounding location) were digitized. Slope map was prepared from digital elevation data DEM.

All the above themes were brought into ArcGIS 8.3 for further processing and integrated analysis of multi-disciplinary data sets to construct composite information set to explain various queries in the spatial context.

The different polygons in the thematic layers were labeled separately and then they were registered. In the final thematic layer initially each one of the polygons were qualitatively visualized into one of the categories like (i) very good (ii) good to very good (iii) good (iv) moderate and (v) poor in terms of their importance with respect to groundwater occurrence and suitable weights have been assigned.

Weighted overlay analysis is a simple and straightforward method for a combined analysis of multi-class maps. The efficacy of this method lies in that human judgment can be incorporated in the analysis. A weight represents the relative importance of a parameter vis-à-vis the objective. Weighted index overlay method takes into consideration the relative importance of the parameters and the classes belonging to each parameter. There is no standard scale for a simple weighted overlay method. For this purpose, criteria for the analysis should be defined and each parameter should be assigned importance (Saraf and Choudhury, 1997 and Saraf and Choudhury, 1998).

Determination of weightage of each class is the most crucial in integrated analysis, as the output is largely dependent on the assignment of appropriate weightage. Considering the hydro-geomorphic conditions of the area weighted indexing have been adopted (Table 2) to delineate groundwater prospective zones considering different parameters namely hydrogeomorphology, slope, drainage, soils and lineaments.

Finally thematic layers were converted in to grid with related item weight and then integrated and analysed, using weighted aggregation method. The grids in the integrated layer were grouped into different groundwater potential zones by a suitable logical reasoning and conditioning. The final ground water potential zone map thus generated was verified with the yield data to ascertain the validity of the model developed.

The weights assigned to different classes of all the thematic layers are given in Table (2). To cite an example, the maximum weight assigned for the aquifer thickness was 5 for thickness greater than 35m, whereas the lower weight of value 1 was assigned to thickness less than 6 m. On the other hand,
in a hydrogeomorphology layer, a maximum weight of 5 was assigned for Nile flood plain and a minimum weight of 1 for Limestone plateau (Table 2).

The thematic layers which include hydrogeomorphology, lineament, slope, drainage, depth to aquifer and aquifer thickness were converted into grid with related item weight and integrated with one another through ArcGIS 8.3 grid environment. As per this analysis, the total weights of the final integrated grids were derived as sum of the weights assigned to the different layers based on suitability.

In the present study, groundwater prospects map has been generated by integration of hydrogeomorphology, lineament, slope, drainage and depth to water bearing zone. However, groundwater potential map generated by integration of aquifer thickness, with hydrogeomorphology, lineament, drainage, water bearing zone and slope gives the more realistic picture. The delineation of groundwater potential zones was made by grouping the grids of final integrated layer into different potential zones, very good, good to very good, good, moderate to good, moderate, poor to moderate and poor.

Table 3 gives the way in which the upper and lower limits of the weights derived for demarcation of the groundwater potential areas. Theoretically, the upper weight 25 and lower weight 7 could be possible, and derived by combining all the upper and lower categories in all layers. However, in the study area, 22 was the highest and 5 was lowest value obtained. By utilizing the above discussed model a map showing different groundwater potential zone was prepared (Fig. 19).

3 Model Evaluation and Results

The validity of the model developed was checked against the bore well yield data which reflects the actual groundwater potential. Groundwater potential zones prepared through this model are in good agreement with yield data and pumping tests.

Conclusions and Recommendations

In order to delineate the groundwater potential zones, in general, different thematic layers viz: hydrogeomorphology, lineaments, slope, drainage and depth to aquifer are integrated without considering aquifer thickness. This provides a broad idea about the groundwater prospect of the area. Presently groundwater potential zones have been demarcated by integration of aquifer thickness derived from surface electrical resistivity survey and drilling data with above thematic layers, using a model developed through GIS technique.
### Table (2): Weightage of Different Parameter for Groundwater Prospects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No.</th>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Classes</th>
<th>Weight</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nile flood plain</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Transverse channels</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low land desert areas</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Limestone plateau</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Slope (degree)</td>
<td>0 – 0.5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.6 – 2.0</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2.1 – 5.0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5.1 – 10.0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>&gt; 10.0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Surface Lineament</td>
<td>Present</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Absent</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Subsurface Lineament</td>
<td>Present</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Absent</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Drainage</td>
<td>High possibility for floods (A)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Moderate possibility for floods (B)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Low possibility for floods (C)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Depth to water bearing zone</td>
<td>&gt; 25 m</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6.0 – 25.0 m</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>&lt; 6.0 m</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Aquifer thickness</td>
<td>&gt; 35 m</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>26.0 - 35.0 m</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>16.0 – 25.0 m</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6.0 – 15.0 m</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>&lt; 6.0 m</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table (3): Integrated Groundwater Categories For Groundwater Potential With Lower And Upper Weight Value (Integration of aquifer thickness with other parameters: hydrogeomorphology, lineament, slope, drainage and Depth to water bearing zone).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Groundwater Category</th>
<th>Lower &amp; Upper weight Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Very Good</td>
<td>20 – 22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Good to very good</td>
<td>17 – 19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>15 – 16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Moderate to good</td>
<td>13 – 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>11 – 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Poor to moderate</td>
<td>9 – 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>5 – 9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The final groundwater potential map (Fig. 18) emphasizes that the area of Sohag Governorate could be classified into three zones:
The first zone occupies the central part and is more or less coincident with the old cultivated land bounded in both the northeast and southwest by Prenile sediment (Nile fringes). This is characterized by: (a) shallow water bearing zone, (b) the highest potentiality and (c) the good quality of groundwater that is suitable for the different purposes of use. The aquifers are consisted of the Pleistocene sand and gravels of semi-confined conditions. It is non-hazard for flood, except in places in the south-eastern part of this zone.

The second zone, which is generally represented by intermittent parts on both sides of the first zone, is generally characterized by: (a) soil suitable for reclamation (most of the land reclamation activities are restricted to this zone), (b) medium groundwater potentiality and acceptable water quality groundwater exists under unconfined conditions (brackish groundwater) and (c) non-hazard, hazard and, in places, strongly hazard for flood.

The third zone is normally overlooked by the limestone plateau in both sides of the study area. It is characterized by: (a) the lowest groundwater potentiality of high salt contents and bounded by no water zone that located adjacent to the limestone scarp, (b) soil, which are not suitable for reclamation, (highly brackish groundwater) and (c) non-hazard and strongly hazard, in some localities, for the flood. Careful considerations should be regarded in carrying
out any development activities in these areas, especially those with strong hazards floods.

The groundwater potential zone map generated through this model was verified with the yield data to ascertain the validity of the model developed and found that it is in agreement with the bore wells yield data. This illustrates that the approach outlined has merits and can be successfully used elsewhere with appropriate modifications.

The present study has demonstrated the capabilities of using remote sensing, geophysical data and Geographical Information System for demarcation of different ground water potential zones, especially in diverse geological setup. This gives more realistic groundwater potential map of an area which may be used for any groundwater development and management program.

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