

Water Quality and Heavy Metals Concentrations in River Taraba at Bali

Haruna Ibrahim¹, Nasiru Yahaya Ahmed² and Abdulrahman Adamu³

¹Department of Science Laboratory Technology, School of Science and Technology,

²Department of Agricultural and Bio-Environmental Engineering, School of Engineering Technology,

³Department of Animal Science, School of Engineering Technology, Federal Polytechnic Bali, PMB 05 Bali, Taraba State.

Corresponding Author harunaibrahim41@gmail.com +2348102130327

Abstract: Basically the pollutants accumulated in the river bed sediment affect the bio-community through food chain for a long period of time, and this is as a result of suspended sediment adsorbs pollutants from flowing water in rivers and deposits onto the bed. To study this problems the concentration of heavy metals (Cr, Cd, Cu, Zn, and Pb) in water and sediment were investigated in River Taraba at Bali, from September 2018 to February 2019. The potential sources of water contamination are geological conditions, industrial and agricultural activities, and water treatment plants. Poor water quality affects not only aquatic life but the surrounding ecosystem as well. The mean value of the water quality parameters at the study area are; temperature is 28.16 °C, pH is 8.18, conductivity is 38.55, DO is 7.11 and TDS is 3.05. The values of water quality parameters collected from different point of the river were found to be within the recommended limits of WHO and NDWQS. The concentrations of the heavy metals were also measured and found to be well below the standard maximum concentrations. Similarly, the mean value of heavy metal concentration in the sediment were as follows; Cr = BLD, Cd = 0.059 mg/kg, Cu = 17.52 mg/kg, Zn = 1.753 mg/kg, and Pb = 0.025 mg/kg. Hence the result revealed that heavy metals concentration in the sediment were within Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO)/WHO limit. Concentrations of heavy metals in the sediment and the water were within the recommended limit for fish and fish products. Therefore, these metals have no immediate health threat on the consumers of fish and fish products from River Taraba at Bali, but periodic monitoring of heavy metals in River Taraba is recommended since the river serves as a source of fish and water for all-year-round irrigational farming. These measurement efforts of water quality can also assist in restoration projects or ensure environmental standards are being met. Thus, the results of the present study can serve as baseline data for these species and for comparisons with future studies.

Keywords: Water Quality, Sediment pollution, Heavy Metals, River Taraba,

I. INTRODUCTION

Heavy metals are persistent environmental contaminants that are very harmful because of their potentials to accumulate in different body parts. Most are extremely toxic because of their solubility in water, and even at lower concentrations they may have damaging effects because of the lack of good mechanisms for eliminating them, [23], [27]. Prolonged intake of heavy metals through foodstuffs may lead to chronic accumulation in the kidney and liver of humans and animals causing disruptions of numerous biochemical processes, leading to cardiovascular, nervous, kidney and bone diseases [12], [39]. Some heavy metals such as Cu, Zn, Mn, and Co act as nutrients for the growth of animals and humans when present in small quantities, whereas others such as Cd, As, and Cr act as carcinogens [32], and, Hg and Pb are associated with the development of abnormalities in children [22]. Aquatic systems enable hydrological cycling, climate regulation, and habitat provision for aquatic organisms. Heavy metal pollution in the aquatic environment has attracted global attention because of the environmental toxicity, persistence, and bioaccumulation of heavy metals, which can pose adverse effects on living beings and the entire ecosystem [8], [41]. Sediment is considered as the largest pool of heavy metals in the aquatic environment. About 99% of the heavy metals load in aquatic systems has been found to ultimately precipitate onto the sediment. Heavy metal concentrations in the sediment are usually four or five times higher than that found in the overlying water [20] [40]. Thus, sediment quality can reflect the heavy metal pollution status of the whole ecosystem.

Consequently, it is of great importance to measure the amount of heavy metals in the sediment to provide information on the heavy metal contamination of the entire aquatic ecosystem [9] [18].

Heavy metals enter aquatic ecosystem sediment via natural processes, including atmosphere deposition, rock weathering and erosion, and hydrodynamic alteration, as well as via anthropogenic activities, such as industrial wastewater discharge and agricultural fertilizer leaching [31]. In addition to heavy metals, large amounts of organic materials are released into water bodies and may be broken down by bacterial activities resulting in reduction of oxygen level or anaerobic conditions in the variety of the effluents [17], [30]. All over the world, rivers and sea bodies end up as receptacle for chemicals, organic and heavy metal pollutants. This is mainly because most industries and factories are located near the bank of the river (WHO/UNEP). This has resulted in several cases of pollution in aquatic environments. Typical instances of river pollution in Nigeria have been reported: Challawa River in Kano, pollution of Calabar River, pollution in Aba River and a lot of others [34]. The concentration of heavy metals in cases of river pollution depends on annual and seasonal fluctuations. River Niger is the third largest river in the world stretching 2,610 miles (4200 km) from Guinea through Mali and into Nigeria [18], [27]. It harbours about 250 species of fish. River Niger serves as veritable source of large quantity of fish production for human consumption. Fish is highly valued for food and it contains a balanced level of amino acids, vitamin B12, cholesterol, high polyunsaturated fatty acids and accounts for about 40% of animal protein in the diet of Nigerians [29]. Fish have been noted for their notorious ability to concentrate heavy metals in their muscles and other part of their body. Accumulated of heavy metals in organisms such as plankton can be transferred to fish, and from the fish to scavenger birds and man which are higher in the food chain [25]. This leads to a progressive increase in the concentration of a substance in the food chain (biomagnifications) more intake of liquid than its excretion from an organism ([bioconcentration](#)). Heavy metals are associated with so many health risks and the effect such as nausea, diarrhoea, cancer, effects on haemoglobin synthesis etc., the health effects depend on the heavy metal in question, the route of exposure, duration of exposure; the age of the individual exposed and the dosage during exposure [37], [34].

Heavy metal pollution in sediment is one of the most serious problems in water bodies, including rivers, which can cause secondary pollution when environmental conditions change. Suspended sediment adsorbs pollutants from flowing water in rivers and deposits onto the bed. However, the pollutants accumulated in the river bed sediment may affect the bio-community through food chain for a long period of time [37]. It is also reported that heavy metals entering into the rivers from various sources are adsorbed onto suspended particulates and form free metal ions and soluble chemical complexes that are available for uptake by aquatic organisms. Many toxic metals such as arsenic, lead, nickel, cadmium, copper, mercury, zinc, and chromium present in untreated or allegedly treated industrial effluents are carried by rivers in variable amounts [17], [29]. Aquatic systems enable hydrological cycling, climate regulation, and habitat provision for aquatic organisms. Heavy metal pollution in the aquatic environment has attracted global attention because of the environmental toxicity, persistence, and bioaccumulation of heavy metals, which can pose adverse effects on living beings and the entire ecosystem [8], [41]. Sediment is considered as the largest pool of heavy metals in the aquatic environment. About 99% of the heavy metals load in aquatic systems has been found to ultimately precipitate onto the sediment. Heavy metal concentrations in the sediment are usually four or five times higher than that found in the overlying water [16], [40]. Thus, sediment quality can reflect the heavy metal pollution status of the whole ecosystem. Consequently, it is of great importance to measure the amount of heavy metals in the sediment to provide information on the heavy metal contamination of the entire aquatic ecosystem [9]. Heavy metals enter aquatic ecosystem sediment via natural processes, including atmosphere deposition, rock weathering and erosion, and hydrodynamic alteration, as well as via anthropogenic activities, such as industrial wastewater discharge and agricultural fertilizer leaching [3], [15].

A heavy metal is a member of a loosely defined subset of element that exhibits metallic properties. It's mainly includes the transition metals, some metalloids, lanthanide and actinides. Many different definitions have been proposed, some based on density, some based on atomic number or atomic weight and some on chemical properties or toxicity [12]. Certain heavy metals are nutritionally essential for healthy life when present in small quantities and are refer to as the trace-elements (e.g. iron, copper, manganese and zinc). While some heavy metals are toxic or poisonous to the body (e.g. lead, mercury, cadmium, Chromium and Arsenic) [5], [6], [27]. These elements enter into water through weathering, industrial activities and through agricultural activities. Heavy metals are also used in industrial application such as in the manufacture of pesticides, batteries, alloys, electroplated metal parts, textile dyes, steel etc. [18]. Heavy metal pollution is a great concern to the environment is widespread and non-degradable. It seems to be man's worst endeavor in his attempt to augment industrial development [33], [34]. Heavy metals are bio-accumulative and relatively stable as well as toxic/carcinogen and therefore require close monitoring. Increasing human influences through

heavy metal pollution have over the years led to the depletion of our aquatic biodiversity. As a result, several important endemic fish species have become threatened. Realizing this, concern for the assessment of heavy metals in fish species of most water bodies have increasingly been gaining ground throughout the world [19], [27]. Fish accumulate toxic metals directly from water and diet, and contaminant residues may ultimately reach concentrations hundreds and thousands of times above those measured in the water, sediment and food. These metals are known to be environmentally stable, non-degradable and induce toxic effect. Heavy metals are normal constituents of aquatic environment that occur as a result of pollution principally due to discharge of untreated wastes and agricultural activities into the rivers [28], [18]. The aim of this research is to determine the quality of water and level of heavy metals pollution in River Taraba at Bali.

II. MATERIALS AND METHOD

Study Site

The study was carried out at River Taraba in Bali town, Bali Local Government Area of Taraba State, Nigeria. The town lies between latitude $7^{\circ}46'$ and $7^{\circ}54'$ of the equator and longitude $10^{\circ}30'$ E and $11^{\circ}00'$ E of the prime meridian (Topographic sheet, 1968). Bali is the largest Local Government in Taraba State with an estimated land area of 11.540 km² and a population density of about 211.024 (NPC 2006). The town is found in dry guinea savannah, with a tropical climate marked by two seasons; dry and rainy seasons. The rainy season starts around April and ends in November occasionally, with 1350 – 1350 mm rainfall annually, while the dry season starts from December to March.

Samples collection and analysis

Samples were collected in River Taraba at Bali for six month from September 2018 to February 2019 at an interval of fifteen 15 days. Sediments and water sample were collected from three 3 samplings points of the River. The water samples were collected from 0.5 m below the water surface. The upper 10 cm of the bottom layer sediment samples were taken. Each sediment core was packed separately in acid soaked clean polyethylene packets and brought to the Soil Science Laboratory of Department of Agricultural Technology FPB for analysis. In the laboratory the sediment samples were dried at 105°C to constant weight, ground and the fraction passing a BS20 sieve was stored in clean acid-soaked polyethylene packets at 20°C prior to digestion and the heavy metal analysis. The sample was weighed into a digestion tube and digest reagent was added. The mixture was digested completely by obtaining a clear solution. The solution was cooled and filtered through a Whitman filter paper. The mixture was used to analyze the heavy metals contents using AAS, based on the manufacturers' instructions for each heavy metal [25], [28].

Statistical analysis

The data were statistically analyzed by the statistical package, SPSS 16.0. The analysis was conducted to determine the quality of water and level of heavy metals pollution in River. The means value of the heavy metal concentrations in water and sediments were calculated by Microsoft Office Excel 2010.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

The table 1 below present the monthly record of water quality parameters (Temperature, pH, Conductivity, Dissolve Oxygen and Total Dissolve Solid) of River Taraba at Bali. The result revealed that the mean value of the water quality parameters at the study area are; temperature is 28.16 °C, pH is 8.18, conductivity is 38.55, Dissolve Oxygen is 7.11 and Total Dissolve Solid is 3.05. Consequently, water quality testing is an important part of environmental monitoring.

Table 1: Mean Value of Water Quality Parameters of River Taraba at Bali

Month	Temp. (°C)	pH	Conductivity	DO	TDS
September	29.89	9.03	40.17	5.82	2.33
October	29.78	9.25	46.11	6.37	3.33
November	28.99	8.15	39.41	7.07	3.00
December	28.26	8.35	33.10	9.38	3.33
January	27.72	7.25	39.41	7.53	3.00
February	28.26	7.05	33.08	9.50	3.33
Mean value	28.81	8.18	38.55	7.11	3.05

The comparison for Heavy Metal Concentration (mgkg^{-1}) of Soil from the River with the International Standards is shown in table 2. The result show that the concentration of metals in the soil as compared with the international standard (FAO, WHO, and USEPA) were within the acceptable limit. It is reported that heavy metal pollution in sediment is one of the most serious problems in water bodies, including rivers, which can cause secondary pollution when environmental conditions change [37].

Table 2: Heavy Metal Concentration (mgkg^{-1}) of Soil from River Taraba at Bali as Compared with the International Standards.

Month	Pb	Cu	Cr	Cd	Zn
September	0.020	21.20	BDL	0.025	6.815
October	0.024	16.31	BDL	0.030	1.004
November	0.029	27.89	BDL	0.012	0.880
December	0.021	3.650	0.054	0.012	0.494
January	0.026	14.32	BDL	0.022	0.648
February	0.028	22.04	BDL	0.254	0.675
Mean value	0.025	17.52	BDL	0.059	1.753
WHO Std. 2004	-	-	0.009	6	123
USEPA 1990	40	-	25	0.6	110
FAO 1985	5	0.2	0.1	-	0.05

Discussion

The values of water quality parameters collected from different point of the river were found to be within the recommended limits of WHO and NDWQS. The mean value of the water quality parameters at the study area are; temperature is $28.16\text{ }^{\circ}\text{C}$, pH is 8.18, conductivity is 38.55, DO is 7.11 and TDS is 3.05. The concentrations of the five heavy metals (Cu, Zn, Cd, Pb, Cr,) were also measured and found to be well below the standard maximum concentrations. The parameters that affect the quality of water in an environment is classified into three properties namely; physical, chemical or biological factors. Physical properties of water quality include temperature and turbidity. Chemical characteristics involve parameters such as pH and dissolved oxygen. Biological indicators of water quality include algae and phytoplankton [1], [3]. These parameters are relevant not only to surface water studies of the ocean, lakes and rivers, but to groundwater and industrial processes as well. Water quality monitoring can help researchers predict and learn from natural processes in the environment and determine human impacts on an ecosystem. Heavy metal pollution in sediment is one of the most serious problems in water bodies, including rivers, which can cause secondary pollution when environmental conditions change. Suspended sediment adsorbs pollutants from flowing water in rivers and deposits onto the bed. However, the pollutants accumulated in the river bed sediment may affect the bio-community through food chain for a long period of time [38], [39]. It is also reported that heavy metals entering into the rivers from various sources are adsorbed onto suspended particulates and form free metal ions and soluble chemical complexes that are available for uptake by aquatic organisms. Many toxic metals such as arsenic, lead, nickel, cadmium, copper, mercury, zinc, and chromium present in untreated or allegedly treated industrial effluents are carried by rivers in variable amounts [26], [29].

Aquatic systems enable hydrological cycling, climate regulation, and habitat provision for aquatic organisms. Heavy metal pollution in the aquatic environment has attracted global attention because of the environmental toxicity, persistence, and bioaccumulation of heavy metals, which can pose adverse effects on living beings and the entire ecosystem [7], [11], [41]. Sediment is considered as the largest pool of heavy metals in the aquatic environment. About 99% of the heavy metals load in aquatic systems has been found to ultimately precipitate onto the sediment. Heavy metal concentrations in the sediment are usually four or five times higher than that found in the overlying water [36], [40]. Thus, sediment quality can reflect the heavy metal pollution status of the whole ecosystem. Consequently, it is of great importance to measure the amount of heavy metals in the sediment to provide information on the heavy metal contamination of the entire aquatic ecosystem [2], [9]. Heavy metals enter aquatic ecosystem sediment via natural processes, including atmosphere deposition, rock weathering and erosion, and hydrodynamic alteration, as well as via anthropogenic activities, such as industrial wastewater discharge and agricultural fertilizer leaching [23], [24].

IV. CONCLUSION

Contaminants in the water can affect the water quality and consequently the human health. The potential sources of water contamination are geological conditions, industrial and agricultural activities, and water treatment plants. The mean value of the water quality parameters at the study area are; temperature is 28.16 °C, pH is 8.18, conductivity is 38.55, DO is 7.11 and TDS is 3.05. The values of water quality parameters collected from different point of the river were found to be within the recommended limits of WHO and NDWQS. The concentrations of the five heavy metals (Cu, Zn, Cd, Pb, Cr,) were also measured and found to be well below the standard maximum concentrations. Therefore, the quality of water in River Taraba is not poor for aquatic life. These measurement efforts of water quality can also assist in restoration projects or ensure environmental standards are being met. Therefore, the results of the present study can serve as baseline data for these species and for comparisons with future studies.

The concentrations of the heavy metals were also measured and found to be well below the standard maximum concentrations. Similarly, the mean value of heavy metal concentration in the sediment were as follows; Cr = BLD, Cd = 0.059 mg/kg, Cu = 17.52 mg/kg, Zn = 1.753 mg/kg, and Pb = 0.025 mg/kg. Hence the result revealed that heavy metals concentration in the sediment were within the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO)/WHO limit. Concentrations of heavy metals in the various species were within the recommended limit for fish and fish products. Hence, these metals have no immediate health threat on the consumers of fish and fish products from River Taraba at Bali but periodic monitoring of heavy metals in River Taraba is recommended since the river serves as a source of fish and water for all-

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