



1 **Study on the effects of storm movement on rainfall-runoff modelling at the basin scale**

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7 **Abstract:** A number of studies have emphasized the effects of rainfall movement on runoff
8 simulation; nevertheless, due to the lack of rain gauges inside sub-basins, a method using a
9 hyetograph of the nearest gauges to a sub-basin is usually employed. This study investigated
10 the negative effects of neglecting rainfall movement on overland simulation results in even a
11 middle-sized basin. Simulations were carried out under two conditions: (1) stationary
12 conditions where the nearest gauge hyetograph was used and rainfall movement was ignored,
13 which is quite common in case of a lack of data; (2) moving conditions where a shifted
14 hyetograph based on hyetograph timing recorded in the basin was used. The simulation
15 results were compared with the measured discharge at the outlets. The results revealed that
16 using the shifted hyetograph, which could consider the rainfall movement over sub-basins,
17 decreased the mismatches between the simulated and observed hydrograph. In some of the
18 cases, the shifted hyetograph reduced the relative difference more than 20%.



19 **1. Introduction**

20 Since the first reports in the 1960s (Maksimov, 1964; Yen and Chow 1969) emphasized that
21 higher peak flows are generated whenever the precipitation moves from upstream toward
22 downstream, and conversely, rainfalls passing from down to upstream result in a rounded
23 hydrograph, a great deal of research has investigated the effects of rainfall movement on the
24 shape of the runoff hydrograph in the past half century. Most studies (Ngirane et al., 1985;
25 Singh, 1997, 1998) have applied mathematical approaches to obtain a better understanding of
26 the effects of storm speed and direction characteristics on the hydrograph shape. Their results
27 showed that hyetograph characteristics, such as rainfall pattern, duration, intensity, direction
28 and speed, significantly affected the hydrograph shape. Some researchers (Singh, 1998;
29 Mizumura, 2011) adopted a kinematic wave equation to model the hydrograph in the case of
30 a moving rainstorm. Their results showed that the maximum flow depth was generated when
31 the rainstorm speed equalled the flood movement toward the outlet, and the speed of the
32 storm had a greater impact for larger Manning's roughness coefficients. Recent studies have
33 preferred dynamic wave models based on Saint Venant equations to obtain flexible results
34 under varying conditions (Costabile, 2012). Kim and Seo (2013) applied a dynamic wave
35 model base on shallow water equations to study the effects of storm movement on runoff
36 generation in a V-shaped watershed experimentation system. The results revealed that storm
37 movement could generate a loop in the stage-discharge curve, and changes in storm
38 movement direction could invert the rotation of the loop. In addition, there has been some
39 research (De Lima et al. 2002) using rainfall simulators at laboratory scale to investigate the
40 effects of storm movement. Laboratory portable rainfall simulators and flumes were used to
41 simulate the hydrograph response to moving storms and subsequently soil erosion (De Lima
42 et al. 2003). They applied different hyetograph patterns to study the effects of rainfall
43 characteristics on the runoff hydrograph. The simulation outputs of hypothetical storms



44 moving upward and downward over a laboratory impervious plane revealed that the peak
45 discharges and hydrograph shape were highly affected by storm movement. Saghafian et al.
46 (1995) used a two-dimensional runoff model and a Monte Carlo method to investigate storm
47 movement effects on runoff. The results indicated that when storm movement is slow, a
48 stationary rainstorm could be used in simulations; while when storm movement is fast, a
49 stationary rainstorm was not acceptable. Ogden et al. (1995) showed that the runoff
50 hydrograph was more sensitive to storm speed than direction in two-dimensional basin
51 topography. Base on Manning's equation, the peak maximum occurred when the storm
52 moved toward downstream at a critical speed equalling half the flow velocity.

53 Although there is well-known background on the effects of moving storms on overland
54 flow generation, most of the interest has focused on laboratory experiments (Singh, 1997,
55 1998; De Lima et al. 2002, 2003) or mathematical approaches (Costabile, 2012; Kim and Seo
56 2013; Saghafian et al., 1995, Ogden et al., 1995). These studies emphasized the effects of
57 movement on runoff generation via a synthetic hyetograph whose direction, speed and
58 intensity were well-controlled by the researchers. However, few studies are available about
59 rainstorm movement effects on runoff in natural environments of real basins, especially in the
60 case of data deficiency. The objective of this study was to (1) precisely examine the effects of
61 moving storms on hydrograph simulation at the basin scale using natural recorded rainfall-
62 runoff; (2) provide an approach to determine the rainfall characteristics under the conditions
63 of data shortage in ungauged basins.

64 **2. Materials and methods**

65 **2.1 Study area and data availability**

66 Barandoozchay basin, one of the Urmia Lake sub-catchments, is located in the northwest of
67 Iran. The study area lies in between Urmia Lake and the Iran-Iraq-Turkey international



68 border from 44° 45' E to 45° 14' E and 37° 06' N to 37° 29' N. The area of the basin is about
69 1146 km².

70 The basin is divided into 7 sub-basins (B1 to B7), based on the river branches and
71 topographic features. Fig. 1 shows the Barandoozchay map and hydrometeorological gauges.
72 This mountainous basin is mostly covered by grasslands, followed by farmland and orchard
73 land. The humid air often (not always) comes from the west, originating from the
74 Mediterranean Sea.

75 There are 6 daily rain gauges and 4 stream gauges inside the basin (Fig. 1), and 3 hourly
76 rain gauges (35010, 34013 and 34019) around the basin.

77 [Fig. 1 is here]

78 Seven typical storm events were selected during 1995 to 2014. These events have
79 recorded rain data (daily and hourly) available from the nearby rain gauges and the
80 hydrometric runoff data from the stream gauges.

81 **2.2 Estimation of sub-basin hyetograph**

82 When the cloud is stationary, most of sub-basins that are covered by the cloud react to the
83 rainfall simultaneously, implying that the start time and end time of the rainfall event is
84 approximately the same for all sub-basins; while in the case of a moving cloud, the sub-
85 basins that are located in the wind direction start to generate runoff earlier than the others
86 (Fig. 2).

87 [Figure 2 is here]

88 Since there is no record from the rain gauge inside the basin, the start and end time of the
89 events were unknown. Therefore, the residence time of the storm cloud over each sub-basin
90 and its role in outlet runoff generation were estimated and examined.



91 As the first step, the total daily rainfall of each sub-basin was estimated using Kriging
92 and IDW (Inverse Distance Weighted) methods, based on the rain gauges inside the basin.
93 Fig. 3 shows the raster map of generated rainfall for the event on May 12th, 2010.

94 [Fig. 3 is here]

95 The total daily rainfall was then disaggregated into hourly rainfall. Since there is no
96 hourly recording gauge inside the basin, the nearest recording gauges at Urmia, Oshnavieh
97 and Naghadeh (35010, 34013 and 34019) were used. The hourly rainfall was obtained by
98 multiplying the estimated total daily rainfall by the ratio of hourly rainfall to the daily rainfall
99 (Choi, 2008; Gyasi-Agyei et al. 2005, 2007). Fig. 4 illustrates the procedures to disaggregate
100 the daily rainfall into each sub-basin's hyetograph.

101 [Fig. 4 is here]

102 Due to dynamic motion of the cloud, the rainfall duration, start and end time, and
103 intensity as well as other characteristics change. To determine the cloud arrival time of each
104 sub-basin, the recorded hyetograph was concentrated to a unique time named the Time of
105 Gravity Centre of Hyetograph (TGCH) (Khalighi 2009). Then the rainfall time over each sub-
106 basin TGCH was obtained through the following procedures:

107 (1) TGCH for recorded rainfall was calculated as a moment of the rainfall component
108 around the horizontal and vertical axis (Fig. 5). The figure shows that the recorded event in
109 station 35010 started at 4:00 am and ended at 2:30 pm, and the calculated TGCH was at 9:00
110 am (8.981).

111 (2) As there are only 3 recording gauges around the basin, a flat plane passes through the
112 stations (Fig. 6). Therefore, the equation of the plane ($TGCH=aX+bY+c$) was applied to
113 calculate the TGCH at each point (X,Y).

114 (3) The coordinates of the sub-basin centroids were placed in the above equations to
115 determine the TGCH of each sub-basin.



116 (4) The previously derived hyetograph was shifted as its gravity centre conformed to the
117 TGCH of each sub-basin centroid (Fig. 7).

118 [Fig. 5 is here]

119 [Fig. 6 is here]

120 [Fig. 7 is here]

121 For example, the TGCH for event 95/04/22 was recorded at 8.98, 6.48 and 5.33 at the
122 stations 35010, 34019 and 34013 respectively (table 2), then the equation of the TGCH plane
123 of this event was: $TGCH = 0.000077 * X + 0.000069 * Y - 317.457$. Based on this
124 equation and the coordinates of the B1 sub-basin centroid, the TGCH was 8:00 am, implying
125 that the TGCH at B1 occurred almost one hour earlier than at station 35010, which was 8:59
126 am.

127 **2.3 Rainfall-runoff modelling**

128 The HEC-HMS model (TR-55, 1986) was used to investigate the effects of storm movement
129 on hydrograph simulations. The model was calibrated by considering the most sensitive
130 parameters such as curve number (CN) and initial abstraction (I_a), via events 1995, 2002,
131 2003, 2006 and 2008. The validation was conducted using the events 2010 and 2014. After
132 the calibration and validation, the simulations were carried out for all events using two
133 hypotheses: (1) stationary cloud where the sub-basin hyetograph timing is equal to the nearest
134 recording gauge; (2) moving cloud where the sub-basin rainfall hyetograph shifted base on
135 cloud movement direction and sub-basin location.

136 A Taylor diagram (Taylor, 2001, 2005; Sigaroodi et al., 2014) and root mean squared of
137 relative difference (RD) were used to compare the results of two hypothesized conditions.

$$RD = \sqrt{\left(\frac{P_O - P_S}{P_O}\right)^2} * 100$$

138 where the P_O and P_S are observed and simulated peak discharge respectively.



139 **3. Results**

140 Fig. 8 shows the planes of TGCH for different events. Although the basin is mainly affected
141 by the humid Mediterranean air, the results indicated that each selected rainfall event had
142 unique characteristics.

143 [Fig. 8 is here]

144 Based on the gauge locations and TGCH of each event, a plane equation $TGCH = aX +$
145 $bY + c$ was obtained for each event. Table 1 shows the equation coefficients.

146 [Table 1 is here]

147 The gravity centre coordinate of each sub-basin is used in the equations to calculate the
148 TGCH for the sub-basin centroid of each event. Fig. 9 shows how the sub-basin hyetograph is
149 shifted to obtain the TGCH for the event on April 3rd, 2003. The measured TGCH at the
150 gauges and the calculated TGCH for sub-basins are shown in Table 2.

151 [Fig.9 is here]

152 [Table 2 is here]

153 Fig. 10 presents the HEC-HMS modeled results for the event on April 22nd, 2014 at the
154 gauge 35005. The right part shows the model performance under stationary conditions where
155 all sub-basins react to the hyetograph simultaneously. The hydrograph is sharp and the time
156 to peak is quite different compared to the observed hydrograph. The left part presents the
157 modeled result using a shifted hyetograph, which matches better with the observed
158 hydrograph.

159 [Fig. 10 is here]

160 For comparison, the modeled peak discharges of the 7 selected events under the two
161 conditions are presented together with the observations in Table 3.

162 [Table 3 is here]



163 Fig.11 displays the standard deviation (SD) and correlation coefficient R^2 of the modeled
164 results under stationary and moving conditions on the Taylor diagram. It is clearly seen that
165 the moving condition results are closer to the observation points than the stationary condition
166 results.

167 [Fig. 11 is here]

168 4. Discussion

169 To achieve accurate hydrological modeling, high quality and spatially-explicit rainfall data
170 should be accessible; however, in many cases uniform hyetographs are used for all sub-basins
171 due to lack of sufficient gauges. If the cloud motion is neglected, it means that the differences
172 between the times of runoff generation are ignored. In this case, to compensate for the
173 difference and achieve better matching between simulated and observed runoff, other basin
174 factors such as curve number (CN) have to be modified, which most probably cause artifacts
175 in the coefficients (Khalighi et al., 2006, 2009).

176 When the cloud movement is slow, consideration of movement is more important
177 compared to fast movement conditions. In the event of April 22nd, 2014, the time difference
178 between gauges 35010 and 34019 (Table 2) shows that the cloud movement is very low, thus
179 the sub-basin B1 generates runoff much earlier than B7. This result was not consistent with
180 the findings of Saghafian (1995), who stated that a stationary rainstorm could be used in low
181 speed storms. This study showed that for small basins or laboratory scales where the cloud
182 covers the whole basin, the storm motion effect can be ignored; while in the case of middle-
183 size to large basins, the runoff of low speed storms has an obvious role in determining
184 hydrograph shape. It can then be concluded that when the time difference between the
185 recorded rainfalls around the area is small, the differences between stationary and moving
186 runoff simulations are slight. These results were consistent with the findings of previous
187 studies, which showed the impacts of cloud motion on hydrographs by using rainfall



188 simulators at different laboratory scales (Sing, 1997, 1998; de Lima and Singh, 2002; de
189 Lima et al., 2003; Marzen, 2015) or the kinematic wave method (Mizumura, 2011).

190 The results of this study also revealed that longer rainfalls are less affected by cloud
191 movement. In other words, for rapid and short rains, the runoff hydrograph is more strongly
192 affected by cloud movement speed and direction. These results were consistent with the
193 findings of previous studies (de Lima and Singh, 2002; Khalighi, 2009; Dae-Hong Kim, 2013)
194 in laboratory.

195 However, it should be noted that the effects of cloud movement on hydrograph modeling
196 become visible only when the study area is divided into smaller sub-basins. In addition, a flat
197 plane is used to calculate the TGCH for the sub-basins in this study due to a lack of gauges;
198 but other interpolation methods such as IDW and Kriging could be more appropriate to obtain
199 surface data from the point data.

200 In conclusion, although there are many laboratory experiments on the effects of rainfall
201 movement on runoff simulation, more studies are necessary to determine how the spatial-
202 temporal dynamics of rainfall can be considered at the real watershed scale, in particular for
203 ungauged areas.

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Tables

Table 1. Obtained coefficients for the TGCH flat plane

Coefficient / Time	95/04/22	02/04/21	03/04/03	06/04/18	08/04/07	10/05/12	14/04/22
a	0.000077	0.000256	0.000222	0.000244	0.000047	-7.3E-05	-8.9E-05
b	0.000069	0.000008	0.000095	-3.4E-05	-0.00003	0.000074	-0.00019
c	-317.457	-144.736	-485.298	30.743	127.119	-236.65	855.542

271



272 Table 2. TGCH measured at the gauges and calculated for the sub-basins

		Precipitation Events						
Location		95/04/22	02/04/21	03/04/03	06/04/18	08/04/07	10/05/12	14/04/22
Gauges	35010	8.98	20.4	7.3	14.7	3.0	8.3	15.9
	34019	6.48	26.7 ^a	6.2	23.4	6.2	1.6	25.5
	34013	5.33	20.7	1.1	17.3	4.8	4.0	25.9
Sub-basins	B1	8.0	21.1	6.3	16.1	3.7	6.8	18.7
	B2	6.5	17.2	4.5	12.6	3.1	7.6	20.9
	B3	5.6	16.6	3.7	12.5	3.3	6.9	23.2
	B4	4.5	14	2.8	10.1	3	7.3	24.9
	B5	4.4	14.8	2.9	11.1	3.3	6.7	25.5
	B6	4.8	16.4	3.2	12.7	3.6	6.1	25.2
	B7	6.6	20.5	5.1	16.3	4.1	5.6	22.3

273 a: The numbers over 24 refer to the next day.



274

Table 3. Modelled peak discharges under two conditions and differences

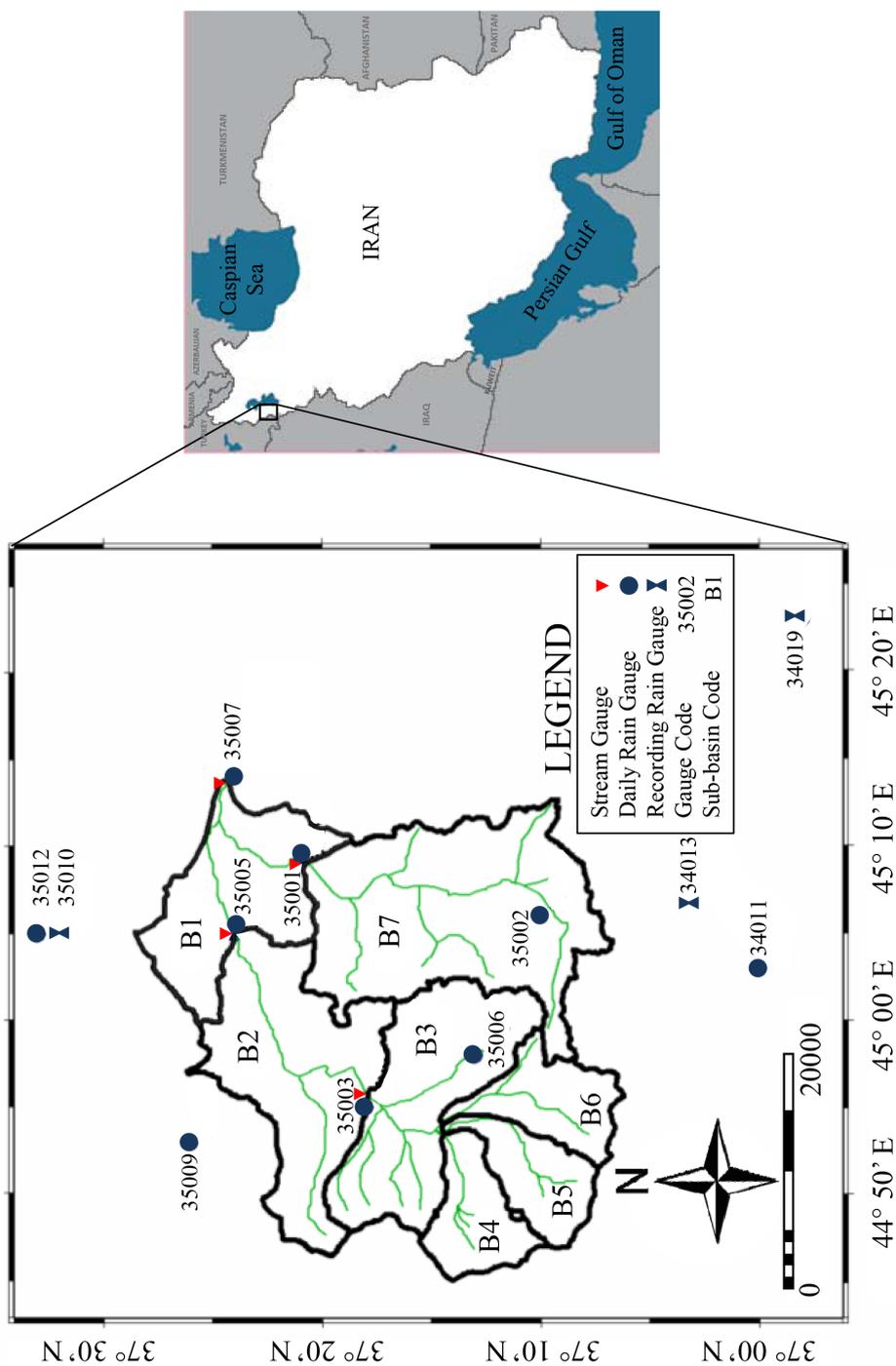
		Peak Discharge			Difference (%)	
Hydrological						
Date	Station	Obs.	Stationary	Moving	Stationary	Moving
2014/04/22	35005	297.9	352	315.3	18.2	5.8
2010/05/12		34.8	31.5	34.4	9.5	1.1
2008/04/07		61.4	70.15	65.6	14.3	6.8
2006/04/18		96.15	100.5	100.13	4.5	4.1
2003/04/03		20.1	20.4	20.3	1.5	1
2002/04/21		65.9	42.9	41.6	34.9	36.9
1995/04/22	35003	37.45	51.2	42.58	36.7	13.7
2010/05/12		12.2	14.4	13.4	18	9.8
2008/04/07		51.9	65.16	63.4	25.5	22.2
2006/04/18		85.4	93.8	93.57	9.8	9.6
2003/04/03		3.7	3.5	3.8	5.4	2.7
2002/04/21		24.3	28.8	26.1	18.5	7.4
1995/04/22	35001	113.2	127.7	127.3	12.8	12.5
1995/04/22		83	83.3	83.3	0.4	0.4

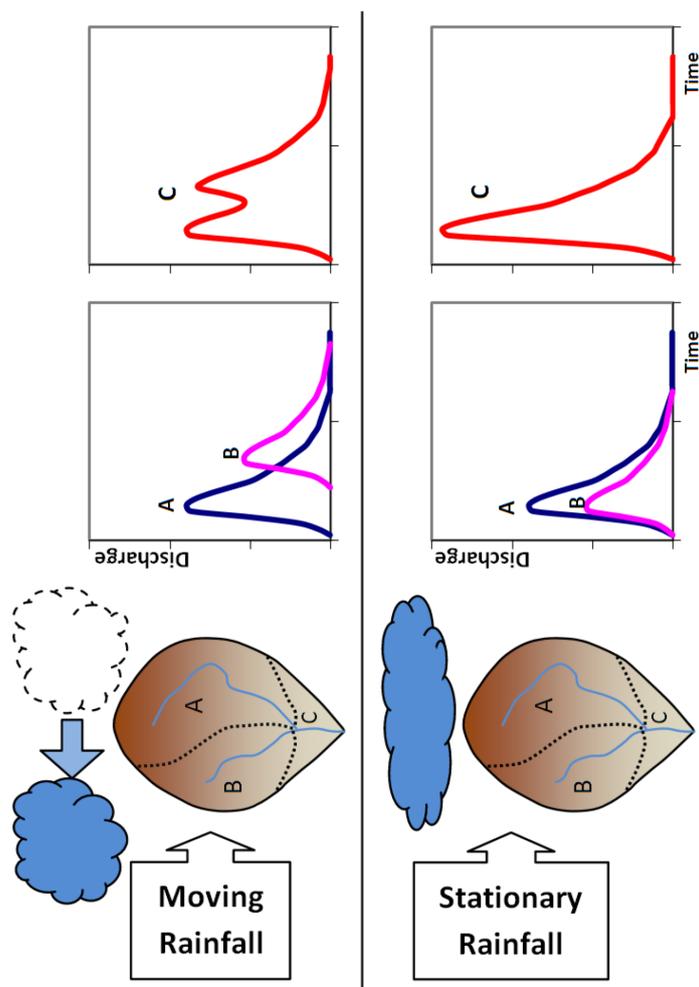
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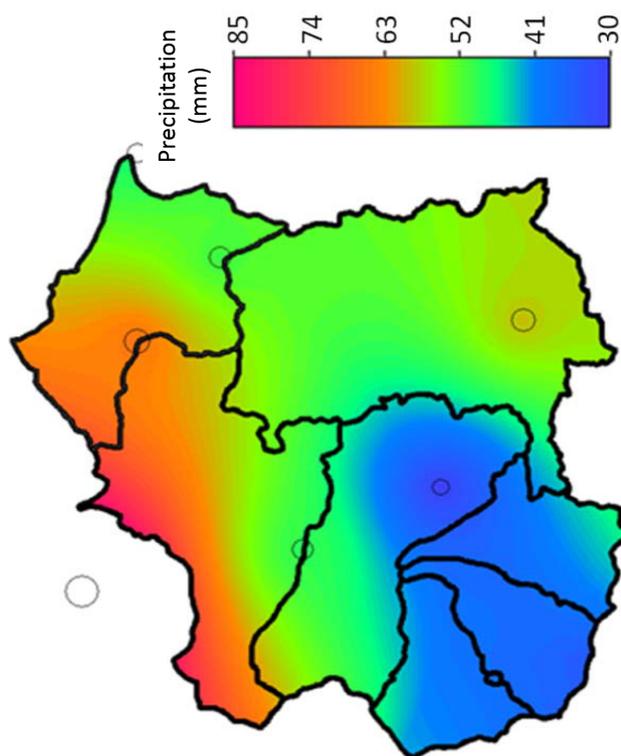


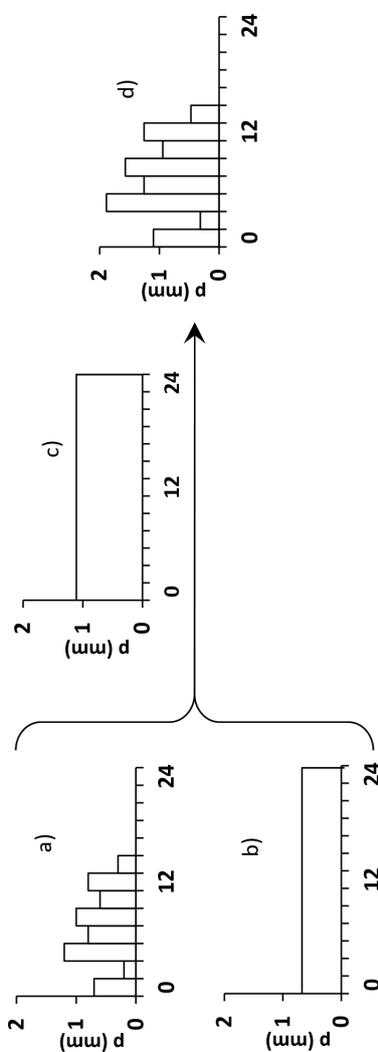
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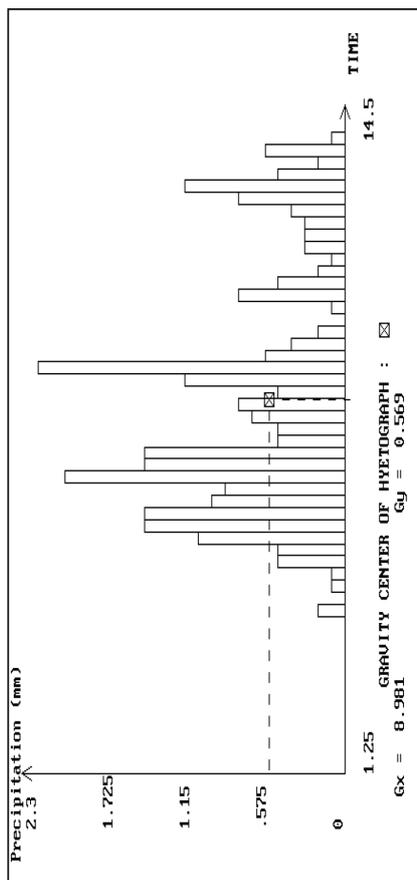
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278 Figure 1. Barandoozchay basin and hydrometeorological gauges
- 279 Figure 2. Schematic of rainfall movement effect on runoff formation
- 280 Figure 3. Spatial distribution of rainfall event 2010/05/12
- 281 Figure 4. Schematic of rainfall hyetograph determination in sub-basin centroid. a) Daily
282 precipitation at nearest gauge, b) Hourly hyetograph at nearest gauge, c) Daily precipitation
283 in sub-basin centroid d) derived hyetograph for sub-basin
- 284 Figure 5. HYGCC output for calculation of hyetograph centroid at 95/04/22 in station 35010
285 (Gx: Temporal coordinates of concentrated event, Gy: Average of incremental rainfall)
- 286 Figure 6. Flat plane passing through the TGCH for the event 1995/04/22
- 287 Figure 7. Shifting the hyetograph to the estimated TGCH
- 288 Figure 8. Precipitation time occurrence plane in different events
- 289 Figure 9. Hyetograph of sub-basins before shift (left) and after shift (right). (Red arrows show
290 the timing position of TGCH before and after shifting)
- 291 Figure 10. HEC-HMS output for rainfall event 2014/04/22, under two different conditions,
292 moving simulation (left) and stationary simulation (right)
- 293 Figure 11. Scatter plot of the simulated peak discharge for stationary and moving conditions
294 on a Taylor diagram

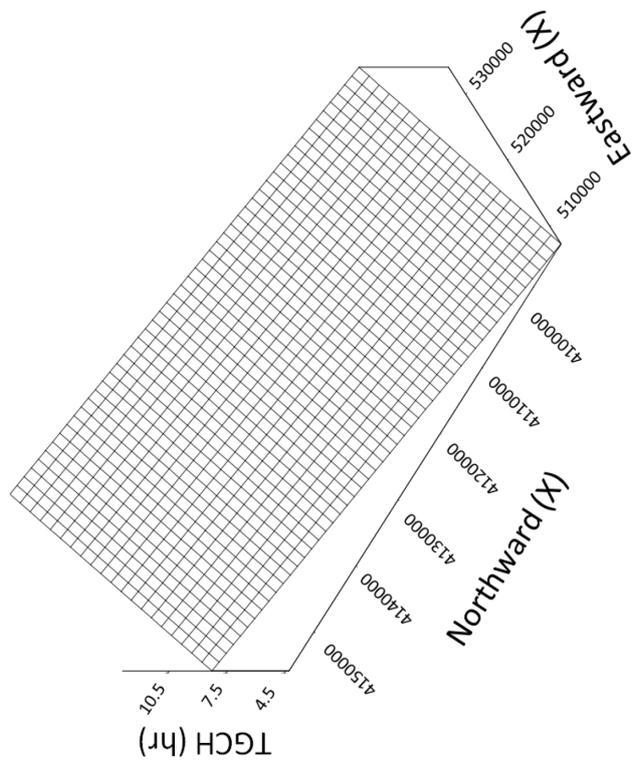


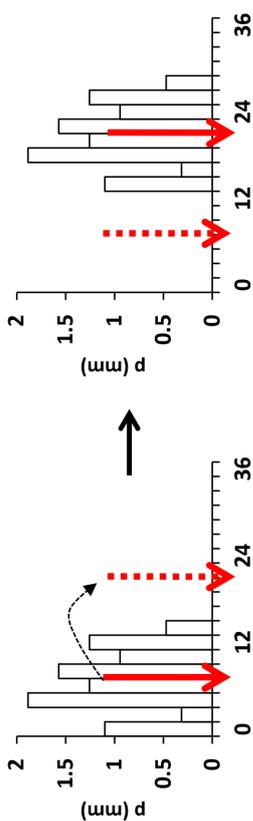


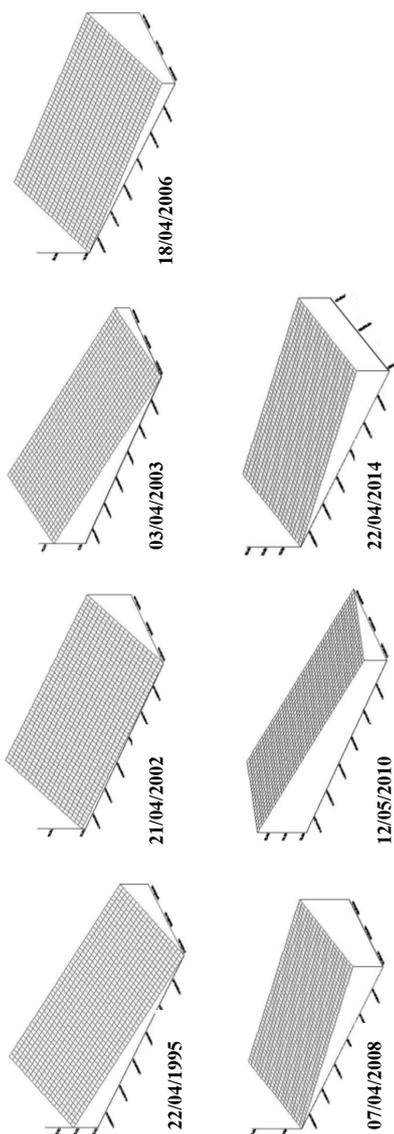


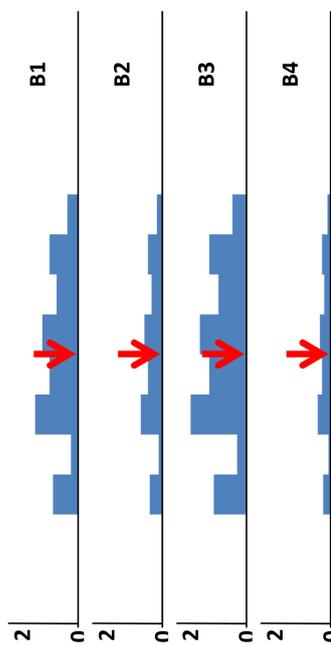
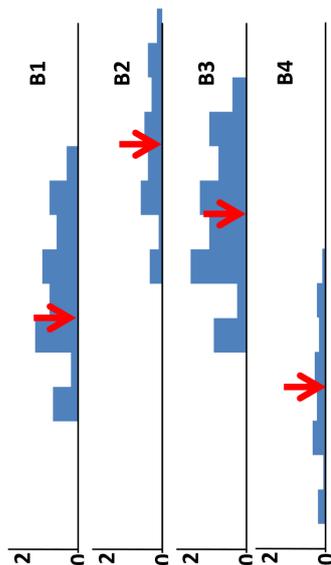






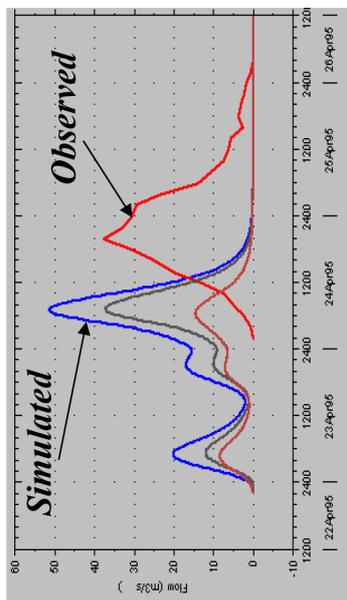








Stationary Simulation



Moving Simulation

