# Check the status of health indicators of water quality swimming pools in Kermanshah

Abstract: Water hygiene in swimming pools is paramount knowing that it affects the swimmer's health. Failure to meet hygiene standards in swimming pools increases the risk of several diseases in swimmers. The present study is aimed at examining hygiene indices of swimming pools water located in Kermanshah City-Iran. The study was carried out as a descriptive and cross-sectional study in 21 public swimming pools in 2015. Free residual chlorine, PH, turbidity, heat resistant coliform and HPC were examined and the results were compared with Iran National Standard (11230). The results showed that residual chlorine, PH, turbidity, heat resistant coliform and HPC were desirable in 92.2%, 100%, 99.7%, 91.3% and 91.7% of the cases respectively. Highest levels of residual chlorine, heat-resistant coliform and HPC were observed during fall and these indices were at minimum level during winter. In addition, highest levels of residual chlorine, heat-resistant coliform and HPC were obtained in August-September. The results showed that quality of water in swimming pools located in Kermanshah city was at average level and there was a need to improve quality of water of swimming pools in this city. It is possible to improve quality of swimming pools water by permanently monitoring free residual chlorine and PH levels.

Key word: Water, swimming, pool, swimming, Kermanshah

## INTRODUCTION

Because of direct contact between the human's body and water inswimming pools, they have high potential of being a source of contamination (Rasti *et al.*, 2011; ISIR, 2008). Increase in popularity of the swimming pool in absence of a reliable monitoring and maintenance services may lead to several risks to the public health. Swimming is a sport and leisure activity from physical and psychological viewpoint and it can be a great help in improvirtigealth and welfare of individuals provided that health concerns of these facilities are addressed properly. One of the mairhygiene concerns is quality of water in swimming pools (Mansoorianet *al.*, 2013). From health standard viewpoint, swimming water, like drinking water, need to have specific physical, chemical and microbial specifications; otherwise, this joyful hobby or sport might

lead to outbreak of variety of diseases (Panyakapo et al., 2008; Lourencetti et al., 2010). The swimming waters are prone to be polluted by body hair and oil of the swimmers, microbes of reproductive system, digestion, respiratory system microbe and other bacteria and unwanted materials from the swimmer's body. The more a swimming pool is used by individuals, the higher the rate of pollutions in the water and higher the health risks for the swimmers. Therefore, public swimming pools are a potential threat to health of the users (Zazouli et al., 2015; Abedi et al., 2014). These risks are categorized in three categories of physical, chemical and microbial risks and in general, microbial risk and the diseases are more serious (Zangiabadi et al., 2011; Abedi et al., 2012). Among the communicable diseases under consideration, typhoid fever, dysentery, trachoma, leptospirosis, ringworms, skin infections, s chis to s om i as is, itching,



respiratory diseases, sinusitis and ear and throat infection are notable. For instance, mycobacterium momium causes eyes, ears and skin infections which leads to granuloma (Moeinian et al., 2016; Farzianpour et al., 2014). Several studies have been conducted on swimming pool water in Iran and other countries. Among many, studies in Isfahan (Nikaeen et al., 2010), Shiraz (Neghab et al., 2004), Ouromieh (Nanbakhsh et al., 2004), Zanjan (Nourian et al., 2006), East of Greece (Nichols, 2006), Sant Galen in Sweden (Barben et al., 2005), Naples-Italy (Guida et al., 2009), Munich and Lipzing Germany (Schoefer et al., 2008) and Eman in Jordan (Rabi et al., 2007) are notable. All these studies have reported relative contamination indifferent sections of public pools with funguses like dermatotitis (Azizjalali and Behrangi, 2009; Kazemi-Fard et al., 2006), index microorganism like pseudomonas and specially aeruginosa (Schoefer et al., 2008), coliforms (Rabi et al., 2007), streptococcus (Nikaeen et al., 2010; Neghab et al., staphylococcus (Yousefi 2009) and variety of parasites (Nanbakhsh et al., 2004) imparticular. Studies have highlighted necessity of codifying pools hygiene controls and standards to avoid communicable and prevalent diseases. Therefore, implementation of an efficient management and permanent monitoring system in swimming pools is essential to make sure that the water used in the pools is hygienic, treated and inline with public health codes (Hambly et al., 2010). Microbial indices such as Heterotroph Pallet Count (HPC) and coliform bacteria are the mainindices of effectiveness of disinfection measures; coliform and fecal streptococcus are the main fecal contamination indexes; and staphylococcus aureus and pseudomonas aueroginosa are the main health risk indices of swimming pools (Bahmani et al., 2015). Taking into account importance and diversity of communicable diseases and microorganisms inswimming pools, microbial quality control in swimming pools is of great importance.

Therefore, the present study is an attempt to survey hygiene indices in swimming pools water in Kermanshah City.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study was carried out as a descriptive cross sectional study on 21 active public swimming pools in Kermanshah. Parameters like turbidity, PH, residual chlorine and microbial residual were examined in 2013 in a 12 months period. Two or three samples were collected from each pool every month and the samples were tested in a health center. The samples for microbial assessment were collected insterilized bottles with wide opening (250 mL) containing 10 drops of sodium thiosulfate. The samples were handled ince and analyzed immediately in laboratory. Residual chlorire and pH were measured at the site. Turbidity was measured by a turbiditymeter and the rest of the tests were carried out in laboratory based on available standard methods (APHA et al., 2005). The data was analyzed in SPSS and the findings were compared with the standards (ISIR, 2008).

#### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the measurements and the standards are listed in Table 1 for comparison. Table 2 and 3 list the results based on the sampling month.

As listed in Table 2, the highest and lowest levels of residual chlorine, health-resistant coliform and HPC were observed in fall and winter respectively.

As listed in Table 3, highest levels of residual chlorine, heat-resistant coliform and UPC were observed in September and October. Increasing popularity of swimming pools and poor supervising and monitoring measures can create a serious threat to the public health (Mansoorianet *al.*, 2013). Literature review showed that

Table 1: Frequency (%) of different hygiene samples in public pools located in Kermanshah City (n = 21)

	Number of sampl	e			
Variables	in 12 month	Desirable	Undesirable	Iran national standards (11203)	WHO standard
Residual chlorine (ml/L)	760	793 (92.2%)	67 (7.8%)	0.6-1	s1
PH	794	794 (100%)	0	7. 2-7. 8	7/2-7/8
Turbidity (NTU)	428	427 (99.7%	1 (0.3%)	Max: NTU0.5	
Heat resistant coliform	437	399 (91.3%)	38 (8.7%)	<1 per ml	
(MPN/100m1				(Iran national standard, No. 3759) based Iran	
				national standard (9412) and WHO standard	
HPC	437	401 (91.7%)	36 (8.3%)		>200

Table 2: Frequency (%) of physical, chemical and microbial parameters based in season (N = 21)

HPC	Heat resistant coliform C (MPN/100 mL)		Turbidity (NTU)		РН		Residual chlorine (ml/L)			
Undesirable	<u>Desirable</u>	Undesirable	Desirable	Undesirable	e Desirable	Undesirable	Desirable	Undesirable	Desirable	Season
5 (5.5%)	87 (94.5%)	5 (5.5)	87 (94.5%)	1 (1.1)	91 (98.9)	0	198 (100%)	9 (4%)	195 (96%)	Spring
10 (7.9%)	118 (92.1%)	11 (8.6%)	117 (91.4%)	0	119	0	265 (100%)	15 (5.7)	250 (94.3)	Summer
18 (14.4%)	107 (85.6%)	19 (15.2%)	106 (84.8%)	0	125	0	207 (100%)	29 (14%)	178 (86%)	Fall
3 (3.3%)	89 (96.7%)	3 (3.3%)	89 (96.7%)	0	92	_ 0	124 (100%)	14 (7.6%)	170 (92.4%)	Winter



Table 3: Frequency (%) of physical, chemical and microbial parameters based in months (N = 21)

Heat resistant coliform										
HPC (MPN/100 mL)		Turbidity (NTU)		PH		Residual chlorine (ml/L)				
	,		• • •							
Desirable	Undesirable	Desirable	Undesirable	Desirable	Desirable	Undesirable	Desirable	Undesirable	Desirable	Months
3 (10%)	27 (90%)	3 (10%)	27 (90%)	0	30 (100%)	0	54 (100%)	4 (6.7%)	56 (93.3%)	Mar. Apr.
2 (5.5%)	35 (94.5%)	2 (5.5%)	35 (94.5%)	1 (2.7%)	36 (97.3%)	0	74 (100%)	5 (6.8%)	69 (93.2%)	Apr. May
0	25 (100%)	0	25 (100%)	0	25 (100%)	0	70 (100%)	0	70 (100%)	May Jun.
3 (8.9%)	31 (91.1%)	3 (8.9%)	31 (91.1%)	0	25 (100%)	0	74 (100%)	1 (1.4%)	73 (98.6%)	Jun. Jul.
4 (8%)	46 (92%)	4 (8%)	46 (92%)	0	50 (100%)	0	101 (100%)	6 (6%)	95 (94%)	July. Aug.
3 (6.9%)	41 (93.1%)	4 (9.1%)	40 (90.9%)	0	44 (100%)	0	90 (100%)	8 (8.9%)	82 (91.1%)	Aug. Sep.
13 (30.3%)	30 (69.7%)	11 (25.6%)	32 (74.4%)	0	43 (100%)	0	43 (100%)	15 (34.1%)	29 (65.9%)	Sep. Oct.
5 (12.2%)	36 (87.8%)	7 (17.1%)	34 (82.9%)	0	41 (100%)	0	82 (100%)	9 (11%)	73 (89%)	Oct. Nov.
0	41 (100%)	1 (2.5%)	40 (97.5%)	0	41 (100%)	0	82 (100%)	5 (6.2%)	76 (93.8%)	Nov. Dec.
1 (3.2%)	31 (96.8%)	1 (3.2%)	31 (96.8%)	0	32 (100%)	0	32 (100%)	4 (6.3%)	60 (93.7%)	Dec. Jan.
0	28 (100%)	0	28 (100%)	0	(100%)28	0	28 (100%)	3 (5.4%)	53 (94.6%)	Jan. Feb.
2 (6.3%)	30 (93.7%)	2 (6.3%)	30 (93.7%)	0	32 (100%)	0	64 (100%)	7 (11%)	57 (89%)	Feb. Mar.

hygiene of swimming pool water was effective on controlling disease among swimmers. A study by Paul Roy in the USA showed that measuring PH, residual chlorine and number of users of a pool gives a reliable measure (confidence level of 95%) of microbial contamination (Mehdnejacl, 2003). The present study indicated that residual chlorine was at desirable level in 92.2% of the cases and 7.8% of the cases failed to meet the standards (Table 1). Residual chlorire level less than the standards leads to higher turbidity, which in turn accelerates growth of algae and microorganisms. This problem can be solved by increasing the level of residual chlorine and adjust pH level (Mansoorianet al., 2013). A study by Ghaneian in Yazd showed that 44.18% of the samples met the standards of residual chlorine while in 55.82% of the cases, residual chlorine was higher than the standards (Ghaneian et al., 2012). Rabi et al. (2007) showed that residual chlorine in 49.4% of public pools in Aman- Jordan met the standards (Rabi et al., 2007). Khodadadi et al. (2009) carried out a study in Birj and-Iran and reported the residual chlorine inpublic pools was in undesirable level in 5% of the samples. Comparison of the obtained results and those of other studies indicates that residual chlorine level in our study was inbetter condition than that reported by other studies. The results also indicated that residual chlorine in the swimming pools under study was inbetter condition during spring (Table 2). Consistently, shahriari in Gorgan measured residual chlorine level based on seasons and reported that during spring, the index was in the best condition (Shahriari et al., 2011). Our results showed that the samples were at standard level regarding PH level (Table 1). Similar studies in Oroumieh, Zahedan isfahan and Shahrekord indicated that mean PH level was at standard level (Nikaeen et al., 2010; Nanbakhsh et al., 2004; Sohrabi et al., 2003; Fadaei et al., 2005,). Low pH level of water accelerates decay process of the installation, causes eyes and skin irritation and reduces chlorine in water and quality of water (Nikaeen et al., 2010;

Borgmann-Strahsen, 2003). Sodium carbonate can be used to adjust pH level; while, excessive use of sodium carbonate increases the risk of respiratory and allergic problems and increases sediments and turbidity of water. To reduce pH, diluted muriatic acid and sulfuric acid can be used (Uyan et al., 2009). Our results showed that 99.7% of the samples were at desirable level regarding turbidity and only 0.3% of the samples failed to meet the standards. Taking into account importance of turbidity in microbial hygiene of water, standard level of turbidity for swimming pool is 0.5 NTU (ISIR, 2008). The purpose of measurmturbidity is to determine transparency of water. High turbidity causes problems such as decrease in performance of disinfection process and reduction in effectiveness of disinfection agents (Mansoorianet 2013). Ghanian in Yazd reported that 13.6% of the samples had turbidity higher than the standards (Ghaneian et al., 2012). Other studies have emphasized on necessity of examining public pools water with regard to microbial pollutions (Mansoorianet al., 2013). Our results from 21 public swimming pools in Kermanshah showed that 8.7% and 8.3% of the smples were in undesirable condition regarding heat-resistant coliform and HPC, respectively (Table 1). Mansourian et al. (2013) carried out similar study in Kerman City and found that 82% of the samples were indesirable condition from microbial contamination viewpoint; this figure inour study was 92%. Results of microbial quality examination showed that heat-resistant coliform and HPC levels were at minimum levels during winter (Table 2). Shahriari et al. (2011) reported that swimmmgools in Gorgan had no microbial contamination arms spring. In addition, the results showed that heat-resistant coliform and UPC were at highest level during Summer and fall between September and November (Table 2 and 3). Shahriari et al. (2011) reported inheir study in Gorgan that highest coliform and pseudomonas aeruginosa level was observed in fall and the highest facal streptococcus level was in Summer. Chlorine measurement showed that highest residual

chlorine concentration was observed in fall; apparently, lack of residual free chlorine is a great contributor in higher microbial contamination. In this regard, our results are consistent with (Shahriari et al., 2011; Zazuli et al., 2015; Rakestraw et al., 1994) in addition, Martins et al. (1995) found a negative relationship between residual chlorine and bacteria contamination. Some of the risk assessment methods must be used in water pool for assessing health risk factor (Yarmohammadi et al., 2016). Technical committee of nosocomial infections is useful in management of pollution of water pool, etc (Vatankhah et al., 2014). knowledge, attitude and performance of staff of water pools in relation to job's environmental health must be useful in pollution of water pool (Almasi, 2016).

## CONCLUSION

Knowing that the highest concentration of free chlorine residual was observed in fall, it appears that lack of free residual chlorine explains higher microbial contamination in this season. Therefore, free residual chlorine is an effective factor in reducing microbial agents and turbidity, which needs to be monitored continuously. To have better control over disinfection agents, PH level must be monitored regularly. we recomended Effects of Administrative Interventions on Improvement of Safety and Health in Workplace is proven must be done in water pool (Ebrahimi *et al.*, 2016).

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