



**An integrated
ArcMAP tool for
bivariate statistical
modeling in geo-
science applications**

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An integrated user-friendly ArcMAP tool for bivariate statistical modeling in geoscience applications

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Abstract

Modeling and classification difficulties are fundamental issues in natural hazard assessment. A geographic information system (GIS) is a domain that requires users to use various tools to perform different types of spatial modeling. Bivariate statistical analysis (BSA) assists in hazard modeling. To perform this analysis, several calculations are required and the user has to transfer data from one format to another. Most researchers perform these calculations manually by using Microsoft Excel or other programs. This process is time consuming and carries a degree of uncertainty. The lack of proper tools to implement BSA in a GIS environment prompted this study. In this paper, a user-friendly tool, BSM (bivariate statistical modeler), for BSA technique is proposed. Three popular BSA techniques such as frequency ratio, weights-of-evidence, and evidential belief function models are applied in the newly proposed ArcMAP tool. This tool is programmed in Python and is created by a simple graphical user interface, which facilitates the improvement of model performance. The proposed tool implements BSA automatically, thus allowing numerous variables to be examined. To validate the capability and accuracy of this program, a pilot test area in Malaysia is selected and all three models are tested by using the proposed program. Area under curve is used to measure the success rate and prediction rate. Results demonstrate that the proposed program executes BSA with reasonable accuracy. The proposed BSA tool can be used in numerous applications, such as natural hazard, mineral potential, hydrological, and other engineering and environmental applications.

1 Introduction

Techniques to predict a response variable given a set of characteristics are required in several scientific regularities. Numerous applications have been implemented in various areas of geosciences. Bivariate analysis is one of the simplest methods of statistical analysis, and is popular in numerous fields of study. Mathematicians, statisticians,

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biologists, and hydrologists use this method to perform their analysis. Different types of bivariate statistical analysis (BSA) have been established, for example, frequency ratio (FR), weights-of-evidence (WoE), and evidential belief function (EBF) (Pradhan et al., 2014a). Although each of these methods requires specific mechanisms for calculation, all of these methods operate by using the same concept. Environmental scientists model various natural conditions by using the BSA statistical method. For instance, Moghaddam et al. (2013) used FR to generate the groundwater spring potential map of the Taleghan Watershed in Iran. Manap et al. (2014) and Ozdemir (2011) employed this technique for the same purpose. The results of the analysis were plotted in ArcGIS after computation in other programs. Mineral potential mapping is also aided by BSA techniques. Carranza (2004) used WoE modeling to map the mineral potential in the administrative province of Abra in northwestern Philippines. Their achievements indicate the plausibility of WoE in the mineral potential mapping of large areas with a small number of mineral prospects. Researchers have applied WoE in mapping mineral potential (Bonham-Carter et al., 1989) and remains popular in this area of research (Carranza et al., 2008).

BSA is in demand in hazard studies because its procedure is simple and efficient. This technique is has been used in natural hazard applications by researchers to predict the spatial distribution of events. Extensive literature on different BSA techniques and their proficiency assessment are also available. BSA techniques can be used as a simple geospatial analysis tool to determine the probabilistic correlation among dependent variables (produced by using the inventory map of a hazard incidence) and independent variables (conditioning factors) containing multi-categorized maps (Oh et al., 2011). In BSA, the overlay of conditioning factors and computation of hazard densities, the significance of each factor, or the particular mixture of factors can be investigated individually. Bivariate statistical analysis functions by using a dependent variable and one conditioning factor. Hence, the significance of each factor is investigated separately (Pradhan and Lee, 2010a, b).

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In BSA, each conditioning factor is overlaid with the dependent variable. On the basis of the event density, weights are measured for each class of each factor. By using normalized weights (the correlation between the event density in each class of conditioning factor and the event density of the entire region), each conditioning factor is reclassified and the hazard map is produced. By using the acquired weights, decision rules can be produced on the basis of the knowledge of experts. Conditioning factors can also be combined to generate a map with uniform units, which is then overlaid with the inventory map to provide the density per class. The BSA approach has been used in landslide mapping (Akgun et al., 2008; Lee and Pradhan, 2006, 2007; Pradhan and Lee, 2010a, b; Pradhan et al., 2010a), earthquake studies (Xu et al., 2012b), flood susceptibility mapping (Tehrany et al., 2013), land subsidence (Kim et al., 2006; Lee and Park, 2013), and risk analysis (Hu et al., 2009). Numerous studies have been conducted to exploit the potential application of BSA in the hazard domain.

This research examined the efficiency of statistical analysis, particularly bivariate analysis, in landslide studies in the Cuyahoga River watershed (Nandi and Shakoor, 2010). In another study, FR and WoE were applied in the Sultan Mountains of south-western Turkey to map areas that are susceptible to landslides (Ozdemir and Altural, 2013). According to Nandi and Shakoor (2010) and Ozdemir and Altural (2013), the BSA model is simple and its input, computation, and outcome procedures are effortlessly understood. Althuwaynee et al. (2012) investigated the application of EBF in the area of landside studies. Their research showed that four functions, namely, degree of belief (Bel), degree of disbelief (Dis), degree of uncertainty (Unc) and degree of plausibility (Pls), are calculated separately to determine EBF.

Each of these functions produces valuable information. However, each function requires individual computations with specific formulas. Tien Bui et al. (2012) used EBF and fuzzy logic methods in their research and found that the landslide susceptibility map derived from EBF has the highest prediction ability. They also established the efficiency of BSA in landslide mapping.

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BSA is also popular in hydrological research. Flood susceptibility maps assist in mitigation strategies. Lee et al. (2012) used the statistical method of FR to produce a map of flood-prone regions in Busan, Korea, in GIS. Tehrany et al. (2013) proposed an ensemble method of FR and LR to detect regions with high flood probability in Kelantan, Malaysia. The conditioning factors were reclassified on the basis of the weights acquired from the FR technique. These factors were entered in LR processing to obtain the MSA result. If the calculation time for these statistics can be reduced, the efficiency of the developed ensemble method will be enhanced. Hence, producing a tool that is capable of performing BSA calculations will help reduce the calculation time of ensemble methods.

The BSA model has been widely used in land subsidence susceptibility mapping. In a study by Lee and Park (2013), the FR model was applied and compared with the machine learning of DT. The BSA is a method that is commonly used in natural hazard investigations. Although this method is not novel, the use of BSA has increased in recent years. RS and GIS have revolutionized the domain of natural hazards (Jebur et al., 2013a, b). Spatial database consists of different data types that are required to be transferred from one format to another because specific programs accept only specific data formats. Scientists have started to develop new programs in hazard studies because of the vital role of early warning systems in such applications (Osna et al., 2014; Pradhan et al., 2014b). The creation of tools that automatically implement susceptibility mapping was applied by Akgun et al. (2012). Akgun et al. (2012) proposed “MamLand,” a program in MATLAB, to create landslide susceptibility mapping by using fuzzy inference system. ArcGIS allows users to produce specific tools for spatial analysis (Stevens et al., 2007). For instance, Pradhan et al. (2014b) developed a tool in ArcGIS to apply texture analysis for high-resolution radar data.

The current research aims to reduce the processing time of BSA by introducing an easy-to-use ArcMap tool. On the basis of the aforementioned problem statement regarding the required processing time and difficulties for BSA, a program that is capable of calculating BSA automatically should be developed. Hence, a tool programmed in

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Python and based on the BSA technique is proposed. This tool automatically extracts the correlation among each class of conditioning factor and event occurrence, reclassifies the factors on the basis of the acquired weights in a GIS environment, and saves each correlation in separate folders. A simple graphical user interface (GUI) improves the model operation because Python knowledge is not required. The entire process can be performed in ArcGIS without any requirement for another program. The proposed tool was tested to generate a landslide susceptibility map of Bukit Antarabangsa, Ulu Klang, Malaysia.

2 Methodology

The procedural and theoretical perspectives of BSA applied in this research include several steps (Fig. 1). In the methodology flowchart, the BSA tool was developed and integrated into ArcGIS. To apply BSA, the conditioning factors should be provided in raster format and classified with the proper scheme by the user. The BSA recognizes the effects of each class of conditioning factor on event occurrence. Hence, this step cannot be eliminated in the BSA process. As a second stage, a dependent variable (training layer) should be constructed by using the inventory map and other resources. This layer should contain a pixel value of one to represent the existence of an event. Once the conditioning factors are classified and the training layers are prepared, FR, WoE, and EBF can be applied automatically. The developed program reclassifies each conditioning factor by using the attained weights and saves them in a separate folder. The group of conditioning factors that have been assessed by BSA are ready to be entered in the raster calculator to derive the corresponding hazard map. The following sub-section represents the overall information on the scheme and functionality of the developed tool.

2.1 Overall information on scheme and functionality

The program is developed by using ArcGIS and Python for BSA. The tool can be used in ArcGIS 9 and 10 versions. Figure 2 displays the interface of the tool in GIS toolbox.

The ArcToolbox provided in this research is used to enter the proposed tool in ArcMap. The user defines the source of the Python files of each model from the properties menu of the script (Fig. 3).

The program is partitioned into three sections: FR, WoE, and EBF. The theoretical concept and graphic interface of each tool is discussed in the following sections.

2.1.1 FR

The theoretical expression of FR, as well as its usage in landslide susceptibility, flood mapping, and groundwater potential analysis, has been reported in the studies conducted by Regmi et al. (2014), Tehrany et al. (2013) and Manap et al. (2014), respectively. The FR method has a simple and understandable structure compared with other probabilistic methods. FR is described as the proportion of the region where an event occurred over the entire area; FR is also defined as the proportion of likelihood of an event occurrence to a nonoccurrence for a particular attribute (Pradhan and Lee, 2009). FR can be calculated by using the following equation:

$$FR = \frac{\frac{N_{\text{pix}}(SX_i)}{\sum_{i=1}^m SX_i}}{\frac{N_{\text{pix}}(X_j)}{\sum_{j=1}^n N_{\text{pix}}(X_j)}} \quad (1)$$

where $N_{\text{pix}}(SX_i)$ is the number of pixels, which contain an event in class i of the independent variable; X , $N_{\text{pix}}(X_j)$ is the number of pixels and exist in independent variables X_j ; m is the number of categoris of the independent variable X_j . Furthermore, n is the total number of independent variables in the whole area (Regmi et al., 2014). Most of the researchers performed these calculations manually by using Microsoft Excel or

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other programs. Once the weights were obtained, these values were used to reclassify the independent variables by using the spatial analyst tool in ArcGIS. The raster calculator in ArcGIS was used to obtain the final susceptibility map. The proposed tool in ArcMap can apply the FR automatically and reclassify the independent variables on the basis of the gained weights.

The graphic interface of the FR tool consists of one window containing four fields (Fig. 4). Each field is user-defined in ArcGIS. The first field is the input raster, which is related to the desired conditioning factor. The training layer or dependent variable, which is predefined and saved prior to analysis, is selected for the second field. The cell size of the output and its location are specified by the user in the third and fourth fields, respectively. The developed tool has a simple structure, thus providing BSA for each conditioning factor within a few seconds. In manual calculations, this procedure usually requires considerable amount of time to be implemented. The proposed tool reclassifies the analyzed conditioning factor based on the attained weights and saves it in the selected folder by the user.

2.1.2 WoE

The WoE method is a data-driven technique based on the Bayesian probability framework (Beynon et al., 2000; Neuhäuser and Terhorst, 2007; Porwal et al., 2006; Pradhan et al., 2010b). This characteristic provides additional advantages to the proposed tool compared with other statistical methods. To implement WoE, two important parameters of positive weight (W^+) and negative weight (W^-) are computed (Pourghasemi et al., 2013b). This technique calculates the weight for each independent variable (B) on the basis of the existence or non-existence of the event (A) within the study area (Xu et al., 2012a) by using the following equations:

$$W_i^+ = \ln \frac{P\{B|A\}}{P\{B|\bar{A}\}} \quad (2)$$

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$$W_i^- = \ln \frac{P\{\bar{B}|A\}}{P\{\bar{B}|\bar{A}\}} \quad (3)$$

where P represents the probability, \ln is the natural log. B , and \bar{B} reveals the existence and nonexistence of the independent variable. A and \bar{A} show the existence and nonexistence of the event. A positive weight (W^+) determines the presence of the specific independent variable at the event, and the amount of positive weight represents the positive correlation between the presence of the independent variable and event, respectively. A negative weight (W^-) indicates the nonexistence of the independent variable and shows the amount of negative correlation.

The weight contrast is the difference between the two weights of W^+ and W^- :

$$C(C = W^+ - W^-) \quad (4)$$

The size of the weight contrast demonstrates the spatial relationship between the independent variable and the event. The C value is positive in the case of a positive relationship and is negative in the case of a negative relationship.

The SD of W is calculated as follows:

$$S(C) = \sqrt{S^2W^+ + S^2W^-} \quad (5)$$

where $S(W^+)$ and $S(W^-)$ are the variance of the positive and negative weights, respectively. These variances can be calculated by using the following equations:

$$S^2W^+ = \frac{1}{N\{B \cap A\}} + \frac{1}{B \cap \bar{A}} \quad (6)$$

$$S^2W^- = \frac{1}{N\{\bar{B} \cap A\}} + \frac{1}{\{\bar{B} \cap \bar{A}\}} \quad (7)$$

pixels in class C_{ij} ; and $N = (L \cap C_{ij})$ is the number of pixels affected by the event in C_{ij} . Therefore, the data-driven measurement of EBF can be calculated by using the following equation (Tien Bui et al., 2012):

$$\text{Bel}(C_{ij}) = \frac{W_{C_{ij}(\text{event})}}{\sum_{j=1}^n W_{C_{ij}(\text{event})}}, \quad (8)$$

where the C_{ij} is shown by $W_{C_{ij}(\text{event})}$ and supports the belief that the presence of the event is more than its nonexistence. The detailed mathematical calculation of each function has been discussed in several studies, such as Lee et al. (2013) and Althuwaynee et al. (2012). Figure 6 represents the interface of the EBF tool, and contains three more fields compared with the two other methods because each EBF function should be applied and saved in a separate folder. Hence, after the selection of the conditioning factor, training layer, and output cell size, the location to save each function should be defined.

2.2 Test area and data

Although the developed program can be used in any application that employs BSA, the proficiency of the tool was tested in the hazard domain. To examine the capability and efficiency of the developed program, landslide susceptibility analyses were performed by using the developed ArcMAP tool with three BSA models, namely, FR, WoE, and EBF. The program was tested for the landslide susceptibility mapping of Bukit Antarabangsa, Ulu Klang, Malaysia (Fig. 7).

A spatial database was constructed and analyzed on the basis of the altitude, aspect, curvature, slope, stream power index, topographic wetness index, distance from the river, distance from the road, and geological layers. Comprehensive overview of the usage of BSA for landslide susceptibility mapping has been reported in numerous studies (Pradhan and Lee, 2010a, b; Yalcin et al., 2011). Studies conducted by Mohammady et al. (2012) and Pourghasemi et al. (2013a) provide additional knowledge on the

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high as EBF. This result is caused by the greater proficiency and capability of EBF compared with WoE. Recognizing the best method for modeling is possible because any comparative study is restricted and the best method for a specific data set is significantly related to the characteristics of that dataset. Figure 9 illustrates the computed accuracies.

The design and interface of the developed tool show that the BSA is simple to execute by using the proposed program compared with manual calculation. The derived susceptibility maps and their AUC values suggest that the tool is precise and reliable. Previous research has established that because of the nature of BSA, the obtained results are imprecise compared with machine learning and rule-based methods (Pradhan, 2013; Tehrany et al., 2014). Therefore, the measured accuracies are acceptable for these simple statistical methods.

4 Conclusion

To perform hazard studies, several requirements, such as constructing the precise spatial database, obtaining high-resolution imagery, and providing a reliable inventory map, should be fulfilled. Users can be confronted with the insufficiency of appropriate and free tools to perform various analyses. This condition makes such studies complex and in some cases, time consuming. The BSA is one of the fundamental methods in hazard mapping. Hence, developing a tool that manages a large number of factors with an automatic statistical and classification performance is essential. Users commonly have to apply the BSA calculation manually and within separate software. The results have to be entered in a GIS environment and used to reclassify each conditioning factor one after another. The proposed BSM tool can be used to automate the BSA procedure and to facilitate the generation of the probability index. BSM is developed as a tool in ArcGIS, which is capable of performing the three BSA models of FR, WoE, and EBF. This tool can also manage large amounts of conditioning factors with reduced calculation time, thus allowing the replication of various trials. As an example, a significant

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characteristic of BSM is the reclassification of the conditioning factors on the basis of the acquired weight from BSA. The GUI also allows the application of RF, WoE, and EBF without entering any code from Python, thus helping the user in model operation. The application to landslide susceptibility mapping in Bukit Antarabangsa in Ulu Klang, Malaysia provides significant outcomes. All three methods are applied and landslide susceptibility maps are created. FR, WoE, and EBF acquired success rates of 68, 63, and 76 %, respectively. AUC values for prediction rates are 71, 75, and 80 % for FR, WoE, and EBF, respectively. In conclusion, the proposed tool can transform the BSA procedure into a simple and fast technique. This tool can assist scientists in performing statistical analyses for any environment and mathematical application.

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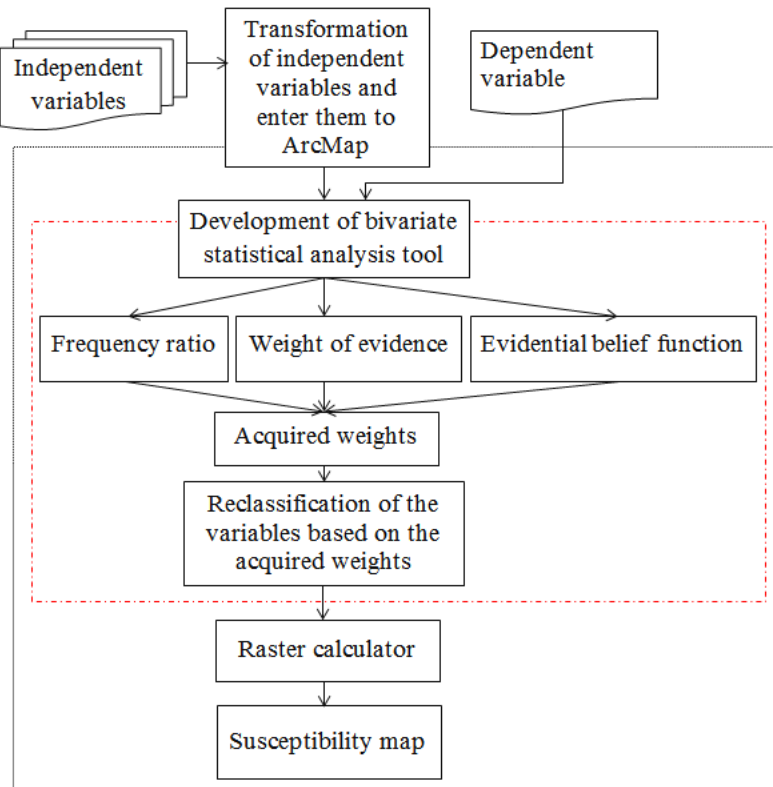


Figure 1. General design of the methodology and BSA tool.

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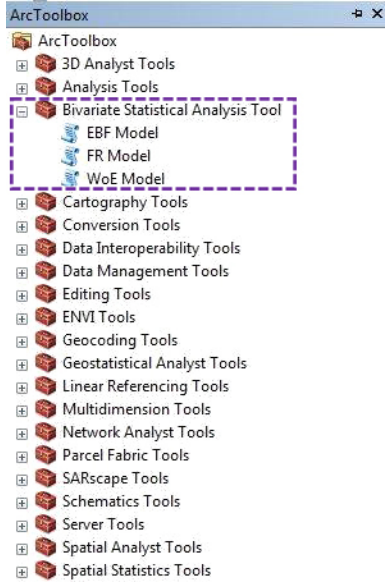


Figure 2. BSA tool interface.

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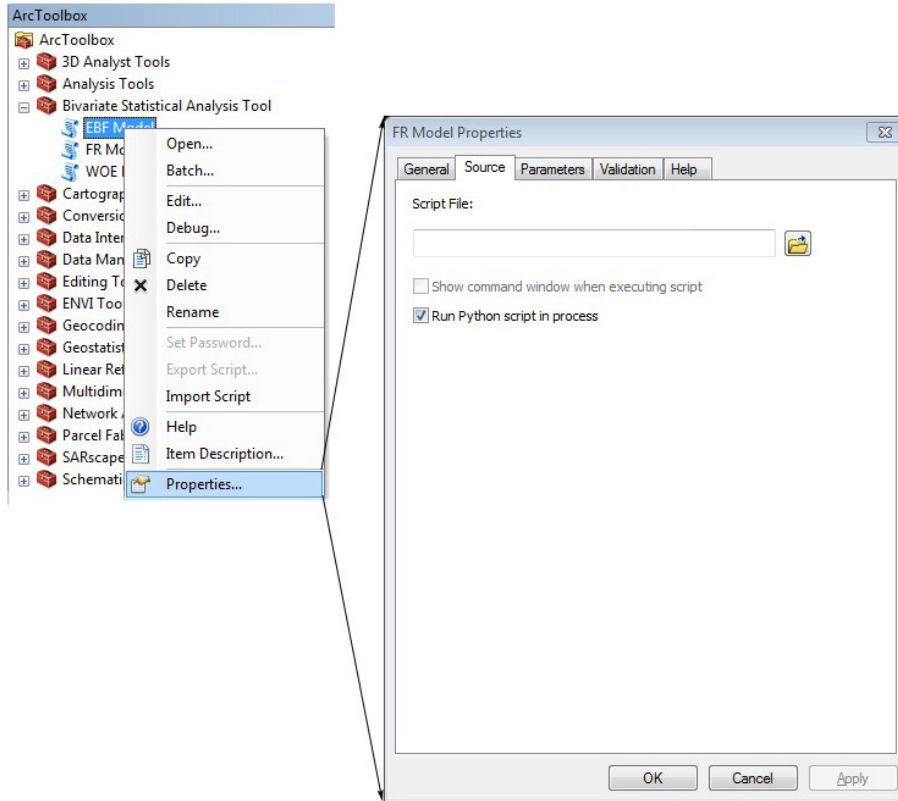


Figure 3. Procedure to add the BSM tool in ArcGIS.

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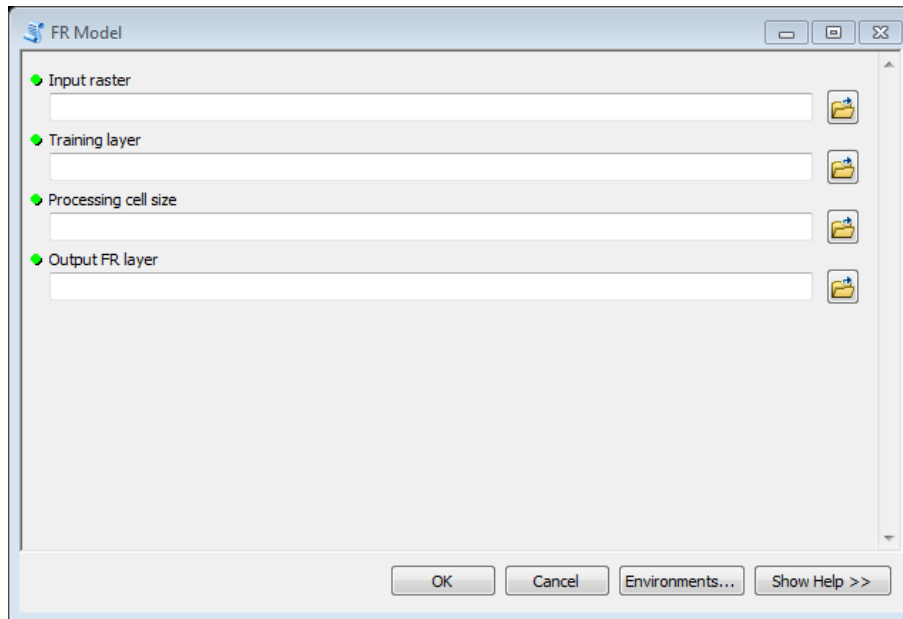


Figure 4. Graphic user interface of the FR tool.

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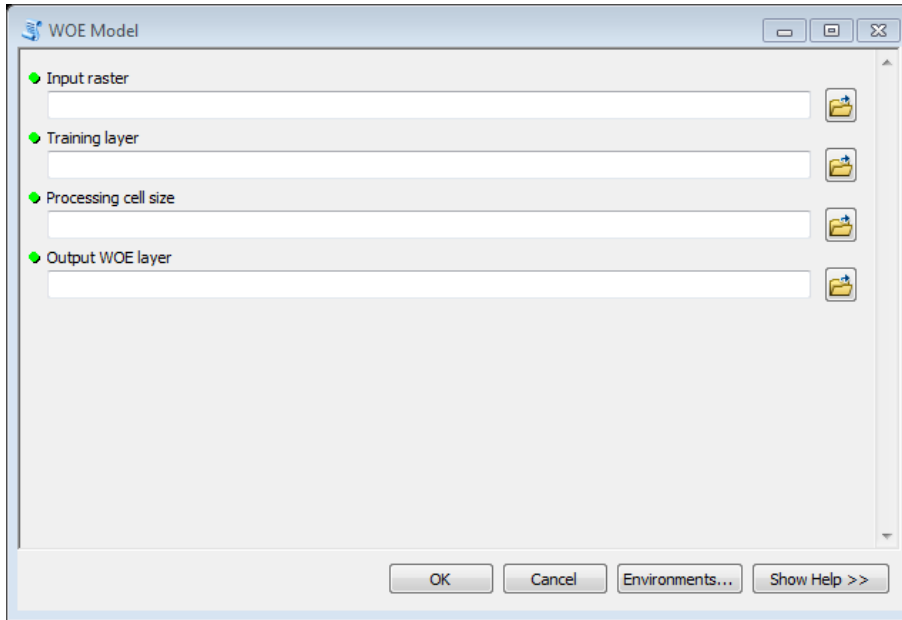


Figure 5. Graphic interface of the WoE tool.

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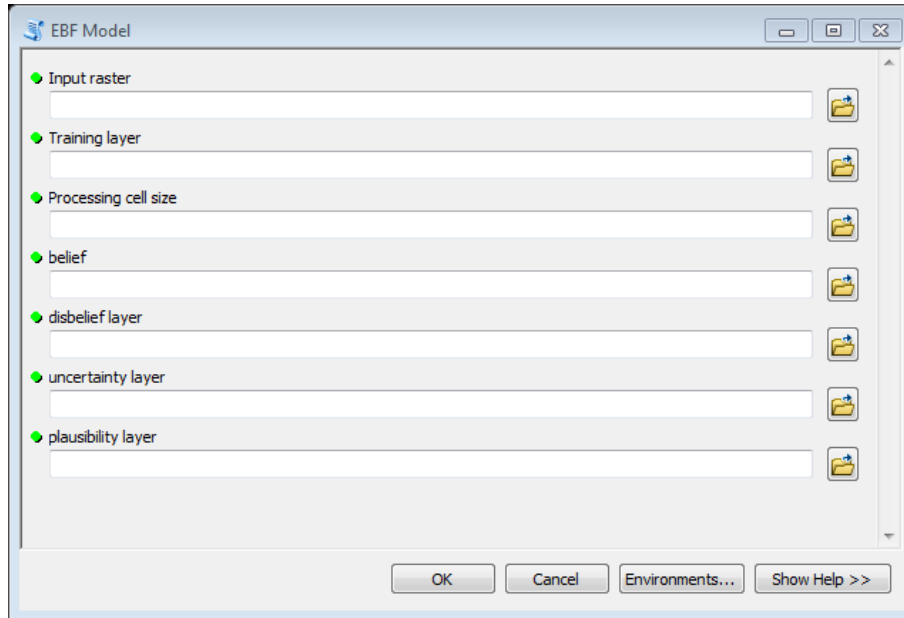


Figure 6. Graphic interface of the EBF tool.

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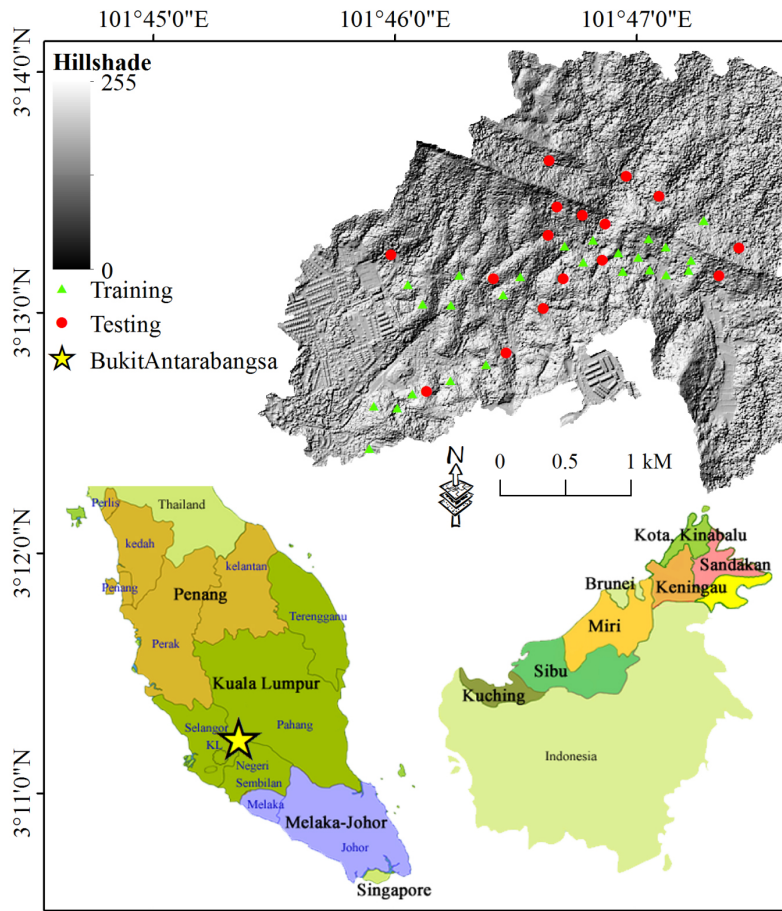


Figure 7. Location of the pilot study area for testing the proposed ArcMAP tool.

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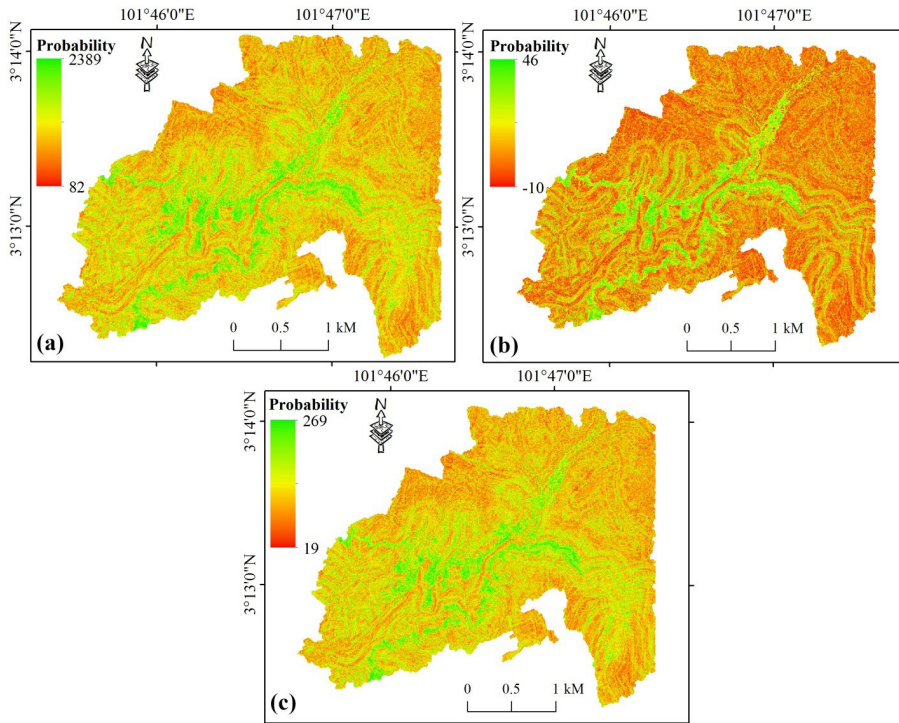


Figure 8. Landslide susceptibility maps derived from (a) FR, (b) WoE, and (c) EBF.

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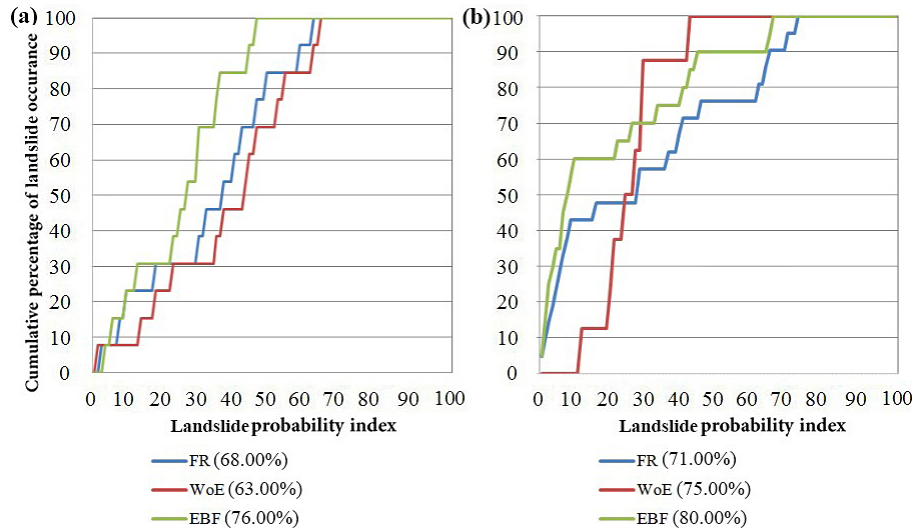


Figure 9. Graphic representation of the cumulative frequency diagram presenting the cumulative landslide occurrence (%; y axis) in landslide probability index rank (%; x axis): **(a)** success rate, and **(b)** prediction rate.

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