

Recognition of Gold Mineralization Potentials Based on Rock Samples Utilizing Staged Factor and Fractal Models, Bardaskan District (NE Iran)

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Article Info

Abstract

Received 31 August 2021 Received in Revised form 1 November 2021 Accepted 16 November 2021 Published online 16 November 2021

DOI:10.22044/jme.2021.11156.2096 Keywords

Gold mineralization

Concentration–number fractal model Staged factor analysis Rock samples Bardaskan

The purpose for this research is to define the gold mineralization potentials by the concentration-number fractal and staged factor analysis modeling based on rock samples at the Bardaskan area (NE Iran). Two main gold mineralization types are epithermal and disseminated systems in this district. First, the staged factor analysis is carried out at four stages. The stepwise factor analysis was applied in three stages to remove noise elements. Moreover, staged factor analysis was applied in the fourth step based on metallic elements including Au, Ag, Cu, As, Fe, Mo, Bi, La, S, Zn, and Cd were grouped. These elements are grouped at four factors, and related factors for gold mineralization are F1-4 (first factor in the fourth stage) which is consisting of As, Mo, S and Fe and F3-4 (third factor in the fourth stage) includes Au and Ag. The concentration-number log-log plots for factor scores of F1-4 and F3-4 were generated, and their threshold values were calculated to create the factor score's geochemical maps. Based on these results, the gold mineralization potentials are positioned in the NE, northern and SE sections of the district, which indicate a correlation among alteration zones, including chloritization, sericitization, and silicification alteration zones and faults and fault's intersections. Main Au mineralization occurred in silicified-sulfidic veins/veinlets in NE and northern portions of the region. However, high grade F3-4 anomalies are located in intersection of faults and neighboring fault zones especially at the northern part of this district. Moreover, Samples with Au \geq 100 ppb were situated in major anomalous parts of F3-4 (Au-Ag) and marginal parts of the F1-4, which include pathfinder of gold mineralization.

1. Introduction

Geochemical exploration modeling is a greatly complex decision-making operation. Two key risk factors, the quality of geochemical data and robustness of the underlying conceptual targeting model, have a strong impact on the effectiveness of this decision-making for generation of mineral prospectivity mapping (MPM) [1-2]. Rock samples are widely used for geochemical exploration of different types of ore deposits. Lithogeochemical anomalies are essential for the further exploration and design of grid drilling. It is essential for the detection of mineralization potentials [3-7]. Many methods were utilized for the recognition of anomalous geochemical areas such as classical statistical analysis and nonlinear techniques [8-10]. Variation of methodology is wide from statistical parameters (e.g., mean and standard deviation) to fractal models, such as concentration-area, concentration-number and fractal-wavelet [11-15].

Multivariate analysis is widely utilized for geochemical exploration for defining paragenesis of ore elements. Stepwise and staged factor analysis can be utilized to find optimum paragenesis proposed by Yousefi et al. (2012) [16] and Yousefi et al. (2014) [17], respectively. This methodology is an advanced technique for multivariate analysis. However, fractal analysis is applied for the categorization of geochemical zones and anomalies [16-19]. Multivariate analysis with fractal modeling was used for the delineation

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of ore elemental potentials based on better interpretation of geochemical data [22-24].

This paper aims to model geochemical anomalies related to gold mineralization by the staged factor analysis and concentration-area fractal method in the Bardaskan area, NE Iran, based on rock samples.

2. Geological setting

Bardaskan district has an area of about 7.5 km², which is located approximately 16 km north of Bardaskan city (NE Iran). This region is positioned at the Taknar zone that is one of the subdivisions of the Iranian central structural zone in the north Darouneh fault [25-26]. Metallic mineralization, specifically gold consist of epithermal and disseminated types [27]. The studied district is mostly included Ordovician metamorphic, volcanoplutonic, and volcanoclastics units from Taknar zone. Volcanoplutonic units are rhyodacite, rhyolite, spillite, and diabase. Besides, the metamorphic lithological units are schist, metasandstone especially sericite schist, chlorite schist and slates. Furthermore, schists and tuffaceous sandstones are extended in the district [27].

The major faults have two E-W and NE-SW trends, and feather-type joints and fractures are strong in several parts of this area, as depicted in Figure 1. Major alteration zones include chloritization, sericitization, and silicification types. Major ore minerals include chalcopyrite,

pyrite, and gold particles within silicic veins and sericite alteration zones [26-27].

There are several gold mineralization and deposits such as Sebandoon, Bijvard and Damanghor as epithermal gold ores in the north of Bardaskan region [28-30]. The study gold ore is located in Khorasan Razavi and in the central domain on the volcano plutonic belt of north of Daruneh fault and Taknar zone. Some of the units of upper and lower parts of Taknar formation in this area have outcrop. The igneous rocks of this area involved rhyolite and rhyodacite are related to the lower part of Taknar formation and volcanoclastic rocks involved tuffaceous sandstones and also metamorphic rocks of this area involved shist and filit are related to upper part of Taknar formation. The mineralization in this area has been seen in two forms of veines/veinlets and disseminated. The mineralization in form of vein has been occurred in the fractures and faults and has seen in form of the veins of quartz and quartzsulfide that in the quartz-sulfide veins, sulfide frequently is chalcopyrite and occasionally pyrite. The mineralization in form of dispersed also has seen in form of distributed inside the altered host rocks (the metamorphic tuffaceous sandstones and shists) of this area. Based on the studies of the fluid inclusions, isotopic and other witnesses discussed in this paper, could introduce the gold deposit of Bardaskan area similar to the epithermal low sulfidization type gold deposits such as mentioned gold deposits in this region.



Figure 1. Location of Bardaskan area in Iranian structural map (Alavi, 1994) and Geological map of the area (Hashemi and Afzal, 2013).

3. Methodology

3.1. Staged factor analysis

The multivariate numerical analysis, specifically staged factor analysis, is an appropriate method. This methodology is used to categorize and decrease the number of geochemical variables and finding paragenesis of ore elements. This analysis is an applied instrument to combine several correlated variables (elements in this study) into a single variable and based on correlations of variables or covariance [31-32]. On the other hand, a large dataset of elements are hybrid into a few groups (factors) [16, 17, 33, 34]. The staged factor analysis is an advanced multivariate method to remove noise elements and defining elemental paragenesis for a different scale of mineral exploration [13, 17]. After removing noise elements, target factors are separated and regrouped. It is used for gold and related elements factors in this paper based on rock samples.

Multivariate approaches are used to decrease the dimensionality, so that the procedure and variability of the dataset can be better interpreted by reduced data. The principal component analysis is an orthogonal linear transformation that transmits the data to the original coordinate system. The first component among the principal components which is indicated by y1, is generated as a linear combination of the initial variables x1 to xp:

 $Y1 = a11x1 + a12x2 + a13x3 + ... + a1_p x_p$

The above equation can be characterized in the following form of matrix:

 $Y1 = [a1]^T [x]$

There is most variance and variability along the axis. Meanwhile, the different values are the similar to diffraction of the principal components. For the evaluation of the first variable, the first component or the yl variable is estimated as following form:

 $S_{2y1} = [a_1]^T [S][a_1]$

The [S] is the covariance matrix with the principal variables [16]. Following the first

component, the second component has the most variability, and these two components are noncorrelated. This number of principal components are based on the number of original correlated variables. The staged factor analysis is a developed form of the factor analysis [17].

3.2. Concentration-Number Fractal

Fractal methodology has a commonly applied tool in various branches of geology and mining engineering. This methodology was proposed by Mandelbrot (1983) [35] as a fundamental method entitled number-size (N-S). Consequently, the concentration–number (C-N) fractal model is improved based on N-S method by Sadeghi et al. (2012) [18] as follows:

$$N(\geq C) \propto C^{-\alpha} \tag{1}$$

 $N(\geq C)$ is the number of the studied regionalized variable greater than the α value, and α is a fractal dimension. These data are modeled as raw data without any estimation or simulation [3, 22]. C-N log-log plot denotes grade distribution and the relationship between anomalous areas [4]. Thus, there is an association among different ore grades and their sample cumulative number based on the ore grades at a case study [32].

4. Discussion

4.1. Dataset

There are 483 collected rock samples in a symmetrical grid (Figure 2). ICP-MS analyzed them for elements that relate to gold mineralization. Statistical parameters for gold are equal to 38 ppb, 18 ppb, and 8 ppm for mean, median, and maximum values, respectively. Statistical characteristics for gold and related elements were shown in Table 1. The gold distribution is not normal and has a wide range's variation between maximum and minimum (Figure 3).

Table 1 Statistical parameters of Au, Cu, As, and Sb in the Bardaskan area

Element	Au (ppb)	Cu (ppm)	As (ppm)	Sb (ppm)
Mean	38	437	10.3	1.72
Median	18	41	21	7
Standard Deviation	357	3000	28.3	1.83
Maximum	8,540	46,730	1,060	39
Minimum	1	1	5	5



Figure 2. Rock sampling grid in the Bardaskan area



4.2. Results

These rock samples' data were transformed by an Ln transformation for the staged factor analysis. For decreasing variables' number, staged factor analysis was achieved in different geochemical data. The staged factor analysis was used for 34 elements of bardaskan area, which were classified by applying SPSS software to the related groups; for an improved representation of the extracted factors, the factor plot at rotated space is indicated in Figure 4. The stepwise factor analysis was used to the three steps of rock samples data for removing noisy elements (Table 2). These elements were removed from the dataset, and factors were cleaned for staged factor analysis in the fourth stage. Hence, scores for the noisy elements are lower than 0.5. The threshold value of 0.5 was utilized for loading at the staged factor analysis to identify highly contributing elements in the factors, according to the rotated matrix [13]. Based on the stepwise factor analysis, noisy elements were removed, as depicted in table 1. Finally, 11 elements include Au, As, Ag, Cu, Mo, Zn, Fe, S, Bi, La, and Cd were selected for the final step for staged factor analysis based on gold mineralization (Tables 3; Figure 4). Finally, Au and As (main pathfinder element for gold mineralization) were grouped in the first and third factors in the fourth stage (F1-4 and F3-4). The gold is grouped with silver in F3-4 and As with Mo, Fe and S had existed in the F1-4.

Based on C-N log-log plots of these factors, four geochemical populations of F1-4 and F3-4 are existed, as depicted in Figure 5. Main populations start from 0.63 and 0.35 for F1-4 and F3-4, respectively. Furthermore, extremely anomalous parts commence from 2.51 and 3.16 for F1-4 and F3-4, respectively.

5. Discussion

Major anomalies of these factors are positioned in the eastern and NE parts of this region to each other, and small parts for F3-4 at the central and SE portions of the Bardaskan district (Figure 6). For validation, collected further samples from the trenches of detailed exploration were used. Samples with Au≥ 100 ppb were situated in major anomalous parts of F3-4 (Au-Ag) and marginal parts of the F1-4, which include pathfinder of gold mineralization, as shown in Figure 6. Alteration zones have an appropriate relationship with these factors' anomalies. Major anomalies of these factors are associated with chloritization. sericitization, and silicification alteration zones. The chloritization alteration zone is associated with Cu anomalies, as shown in Figure 7. Main alteration zones are silicification in the northern part of this area which is correlated with main anomalies. Sericitizations are existed in several parts of the north of this area (Figure 7). Comparison of the main characteristics of this deposit with epithermal gold deposits reveals that the geology, alteration, mineralography and geochemical characteristics are similar to the epithermal deposits.



(b) (d) Figure 4. Component plots in rotated space in first (a), second (b), third (c) and fourth (d) stages of staged factor analysis

Table 2. The three stages of stepwise factor analysis of Bardaskan rock samples. Bold	values indicate existing
elements in each factor (Based on absolute threshold of 0.5).	

	First stage												
		Component											
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11		
Ag	032	.135	041	.040	076	.792	.138	.007	.056	067	.039		
AĪ	.396	279	.186	.721	.278	150	.068	007	.019	010	081		
As	027	.770	078	.126	.027	049	.152	.098	001	147	097		
Ba	111	003	.849	.012	090	070	.066	.027	.014	041	.012		
Be	.016	213	.535	.595	108	048	.172	027	.115	003	.025		
Bi	037	025	005	090	104	.498	084	.112	.622	.044	.021		
Ca	.710	068	049	302	.009	021	.092	036	045	116	.163		
Cd	.023	018	.042	033	.033	.192	.749	051	064	013	069		
Co	.167	.010	046	.025	.050	096	024	.009	.029	.779	.061		
Cr	.278	120	.030	.071	.136	.087	089	.742	054	.106	112		
Cu	099	008	069	085	100	.236	.090	.454	.583	.161	025		
Fe	.046	.690	141	124	239	.068	013	046	.017	.290	.299		
Ga	.219	.197	.027	.770	.007	.205	094	083	.008	.081	.079		
K	139	115	.853	.255	251	.030	008	.031	.014	095	023		
La	.096	.029	.055	.125	.006	116	021	097	.770	033	033		
Mg	.434	.047	526	.298	287	084	.193	173	.044	040	.074		
Mn	.157	004	084	178	166	048	.392	157	.044	.265	.566		
Mo	213	.693	148	027	148	.160	113	.025	033	.041	.071		
Na	.248	166	182	.092	.811	162	034	.066	010	.006	139		
Ni	.443	008	067	.353	.007	074	.220	.298	.002	.474	115		
Р	.701	.046	054	.208	.003	009	071	105	.113	.368	020		
Pb	006	.037	.097	.048	.094	.608	.304	.082	006	010	031		
S	.005	.773	.046	137	.054	.183	116	196	.023	.021	088		

			Ta	ble 2. C	Continu	es of T	able 2				
Sb	.099	.470	.204	.171	077	044	.365	.167	.121	187	023
Sc	.880	087	111	.233	.005	080	.014	.083	.009	.000	.133
Sr	.697	.280	.173	182	.303	.059	087	163	.036	.129	012
Th	234	.160	.119	.074	.449	071	076	222	.375	332	.159
Ti	.867	145	123	.180	028	051	011	.041	009	.111	.078
T1	.216	.009	.025	.107	.094	.039	056	.120	041	057	.773
U	098	073	154	010	.776	.023	025	.022	103	.054	.090
V	.863	058	154	.285	057	023	.023	.136	063	.127	.069
W	177	.088	.093	121	043	042	091	.660	.062	072	.171
Zn	036	002	.000	.048	068	.079	.784	079	.007	.030	.108
Au-ICP21	138	.198	293	002	328	.520	150	102	.011	130	.009
Extraction M	ethod: Pr	incipal C	omponent	t Analysi	s.						

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.^a

a. Rotation converged in 10 iterations.

 Table 2. Continues of Table 2

	Second stage									
					Com	ponent				
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Ag	023	.151	049	.040	057	.200	.746	.176	.036	.083
Al	.398	314	.194	.700	.279	.046	133	031	046	091
As	038	.724	033	.144	.037	.119	.020	063	.038	110
Ba	113	022	.844	.007	113	.063	074	010	.044	.004
Be	.020	248	.536	.587	104	.145	054	.096	062	.040
Bi	037	.000	001	064	061	051	.407	.719	.077	.070
Ca	.691	100	020	332	.004	.056	.065	122	062	.140
Cd	.026	007	.043	028	.020	.796	.109	045	030	060
Co	.258	.088	151	.022	006	.058	422	.197	.156	.140
Cr	.291	132	.024	.063	.162	066	.049	.017	.738	093
Cu	079	007	071	072	092	.105	.122	.645	.420	.008
Fe	.083	.725	164	095	256	.021	059	.081	.023	.322
Ga	.256	.213	.025	.776	005	038	.148	.031	032	.056
K	138	121	.862	.251	257	.008	.043	.003	.047	043
La	.083	.013	.082	.149	.008	042	157	.697	176	076
Mg	.450	.018	509	.283	323	.177	042	054	170	.015
Mn	.169	003	101	177	178	.346	130	.062	158	.637
Mo	191	.724	134	001	158	066	.129	006	.071	.056
Na	.228	176	176	.085	.827	054	156	028	.011	122
Р	.734	.084	074	.200	.023	037	150	.195	085	.035
Pb	.013	.077	.072	.055	.076	.420	.482	.094	.170	054
S	.021	.814	.067	118	.046	056	.143	.045	156	101
Sc	.883	118	102	.222	.002	.007	065	045	.084	.096
Sr	.701	.291	.175	196	.308	070	.009	.059	155	.016
Ti	.876	148	125	.173	014	.001	085	007	.053	.076
T1	.187	.002	.053	.125	.132	101	.081	056	.078	.770
U	108	039	156	001	.788	007	017	069	.018	.109
V	.874	075	159	.276	033	.023	053	046	.137	.082
W	173	.080	.091	098	074	053	063	.034	.707	.060
Zn	033	.001	.009	.057	077	.797	.003	.006	085	.129
Au-ICP21	128	.202	283	013	322	130	.579	.051	088	.018
Extraction M	ethod: Pr	incipal C	omponent	t Analysis	3.					

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.^a

a. Rotation converged in 10 iterations.

	Third stage									
					Comp	onent				
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Ag	033	.125	.020	.054	002	.201	.815	.085	.022	.034
Al	.395	305	.169	.709	.263	.052	186	001	037	084
As	040	.743	045	.146	.038	.147	013	031	.065	109
Ba	109	024	.845	.019	118	.064	102	011	.039	001
Be	.018	243	.517	.594	117	.146	092	.117	054	.048
Bi	035	008	.034	067	026	035	.491	.676	.100	.048
Ca	.689	093	015	320	.015	.085	.050	119	045	.127
Cd	.027	.002	.060	019	.041	.821	.116	046	013	074
Cr	.295	128	.039	.065	.175	060	.064	010	.742	106
Cu	072	001	058	085	077	.109	.190	.628	.445	.008
Fe	.091	.715	158	113	257	010	.027	.062	.004	.335
Ga	.252	.203	.031	.777	.003	046	.182	.008	043	.045
K	140	120	.856	.266	262	.012	010	.008	.048	046
La	.081	.030	.042	.143	021	049	176	.752	147	042
Mg	.446	.029	531	.275	329	.187	029	027	153	.027
Mn	.181	007	094	191	170	.343	041	.050	156	.640
Mo	191	.724	127	008	149	067	.156	015	.072	.056
Na	.230	167	187	.089	.817	048	208	003	.018	117
Р	.737	.074	081	.195	.009	073	096	.187	107	.050
S	.019	.811	.077	114	.052	059	.147	.041	161	103
Sc	.882	109	116	.226	002	.019	068	031	.097	.099
Sr	.703	.283	.186	185	.311	076	.021	.046	166	.009
Ti	.878	143	138	.174	022	001	082	.004	.059	.086
T1	.178	.009	.041	.133	.130	091	.047	043	.090	.773
U	103	041	144	.000	.795	004	029	077	.015	.098
V	.875	073	164	.277	033	.027	024	050	.139	.080
W	173	.095	.078	101	085	064	098	.049	.714	.080
Zn	033	.017	.005	.060	072	.816	008	.031	060	.133
Au-ICP21	133	.183	229	011	268	097	.669	021	083	030
Extraction M	lethod: Pr	incipal C	omponen	Analysis	5.					
Rotation Met	thod · Var	imax with	Kaiser N	Iormaliza	tion ^a					

 Table 2. Continues of Table 2

 Table 3. The final stage of staged factor analysis of Bardaskan rock samples. Bold values indicate existing elements in each factor (Based on absolute threshold of 0.5).

	Rotated Component Matrix ^a								
_	Component								
=	1	2	3	4					
Ag	.102	.168	.765	.231					
As	.745	.003	033	.115					
Bi	.001	.739	.420	053					
Cu	.000	.737	.180	.029					
Fe	.760	.043	.110	016					
La	.057	.686	320	.012					
Mo	.759	.009	.230	070					
S	.784	.009	.093	031					
Zn	.024	.025	.007	.840					
Au-ICP21	.220	.013	.751	087					
Cd	023	025	.077	.852					
Extraction Metho	od: Principal C	omponent Anal	ysis.						
Rotation Method	l: Varimax witl	n Kaiser Norma	lization. ^a						

Rotation converged in 5 iterations.

a. Rotation converged in 9 iterations.

F1-4 (As-Fe-Mo-S)

88,500





Figure 5. C-N log-log plots for F1-4 and F3-4

Easting

987,98

Figure 6. Correlation between geochemical maps of F1-4 and F3-4 in the Bardaskan area with further rock samples (black stars are further samples)



Figure.7. Correlation between geochemical map of F3-4 in the Bardaskan area with alteration zones (polygons) and faults (red lines)

6. Conclusion

The multivariate fractal modeling was achieved to recognize anomalies of related factors for gold mineralization in the Bardaskan district, NE Iran. These anomalies have a proper correlation with different alteration zones and faults, especially faults' intersections. Besides, this multivariate fractal analysis can be a valuable technique for the exploration of mineralization potentials. The this methodology advantages basically rely on its accuracy based on removing noises from geochemical data and better separation of factors target mineralization. related to Main mineralization potentials for gold are situated in the NE, eastern and central parts of this area. These potentials were validated for faults, alteration zones, and further collected samples from trenches. These results show that this hybrid method is appropriate for geochemical exploration based on rock samples. Major Au mineralization happened in silicified and sulfidic veins/veinlets at the northern part of this region. However, highintensity F3-4 anomalies are located at near fault and fault intersections zones specifically in the north of the Bardaskan area. In addition, Samples with Au \geq 100 ppb were situated in major anomalous parts of F3-4 (Au-Ag) and marginal parts of the F1-4, which include pathfinder of gold mineralization.

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تعیین پتانسیل های طلازایی براساس نمونه های سنگی با استفاده از آنالیز فاکتوری مرحلهای و مدل فرکتالی در منطقه بردسکن (شمال خاوری ایران)

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ارسال ۲۰۲۱/۰۸/۳۱، پذیرش ۲۰۲۱/۱۰/۳۶

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چکیدہ:

هدف اصلی این نوشتار تعیین پتانسیل های طلازایی براساس نمونه های سنگی با استفاده از آنالیز فاکتوری مرحله ¬ای و مدل فرکتالی عیار-تعداد در منطقه بردسکن (شمال خاوری ایران) می باشد. در این منطقه دو تیپ کانه زایی اپی ترمال و پراکنده برای طلا دیده می شود. آنالیز فاکتوری مرحله ای در چهار مرحله صورت پذیرفت که در سه مرحله نخست هدف حذف عناصر مزاحم بود. در مرحله چهارم بر روی عناصر مربوط به کانه زایی طلا شامل طلا، آرسنیک، مس، آهن، روی، کادمیوم، نقره، مولیبدن، بیسموت، گوگرد و لانتانیوم صوت پذیرفت. عناصر در نهایت در چهار فاکتور دسته بندی شدند که گروه اول شامل مولیبدن، آرسنیک و گوگرد و گروه سوم شامل طلا و نقره هدف نهایی برای مدلسازی فرکتالی در نظر گرفته شدند. مدلسازی فرکتالی روی امتیازات فاکتوری ایندو گروه صورت گرفت و حدود آستانهای هر دو فاکتور جدا شدند. پتانسیلهای حاصله بر این اساس در شمال خاوری، شمال و جنوب خاوری منطقه تعیین شدند. این پتانسیل ها با آلتراسیون های اصلی بخصوص سیلیسی شدن، سریسیتی شدن و کلریتی شدن در تطابق است. همچنین در همسایگی با گسلها و مطابق با تقاطع گسلها نیز می باشند. اصلی ترین پتانسیل در شمال خاوری منطقه است که با رگه و رگچه های سیلیسی، نمونه های مجدد برداشت شده با عیارهای بیش از PT

كلمات كليدى: كانه زايي طلا، روش فركتالي عيار-تعداد، أناليز فاكتورى مرحله اي، نمونه هاى سنكي، بردسكن.