

From: Barbara Holland onbehalf@manuscriptcentral.com
Subject: Australian & New Zealand Journal of Statistics - Decision on Manuscript ID ANZJS-24-11-003.R1 [email ref: DL-RW-2-a]
Date: 22 September 2025 at 1:42 pm
To: stephanie.kobakian@gmail.com
Cc: stephanie.kobakian@gmail.com, dicook@monash.edu

BH

21-Sep-2025

Dear Ms. Kobakian:

Manuscript ID ANZJS-24-11-003.R1 entitled "Comparing the Effectiveness of the Choropleth Map with a Hexagon Tile Map for Communicating Patterns in Australian Spatial Statistics" which you submitted to Australian & New Zealand Journal of Statistics, has been reviewed. The comments of the referee(s) are provided to you separately.

The referee(s) have recommended some revisions to your manuscript. These are minor and the paper is unlikely to need a further round of review once they are dealt with. Therefore, I invite you to respond to the referee(s)' comments and revise your manuscript accordingly.

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When submitting your revised manuscript, please attach a separate document containing a list of itemized responses to the comments made by the referee(s). In order to expedite the processing of the revised manuscript, please be as specific as possible in your responses.

Because we are trying to facilitate timely publication of manuscripts submitted to Australian & New Zealand Journal of Statistics, your revised manuscript should be uploaded as soon as possible. In any case, the revised version must be submitted within six months from the date that you were invited to revise, which is most likely to be the date of this letter. Otherwise, your revised version may be treated as a new submission.

Therefore, if it is not possible for you to submit your revision within the specified time, please contact the editorial office and discuss the possibility of extending the due date for your revised version.

Our invitation to you to submit a revised version does not entail a commitment on the part of the journal or the editors to accept the revised version. Your revised version will be reviewed, and the editorial team will make a decision based on its suitability for publication in Australian & New Zealand Journal of Statistics.

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Once again, thank you for submitting your manuscript to Australian & New Zealand Journal of Statistics and I look forward to receiving your revision.

Sincerely,
Dr. Barbara Holland
, Australian & New Zealand Journal of Statistics
Barbara.Holland@utas.edu.au

Associate Editor

Comments to the Author:

Both reviewers are happy with the revision made, and I commend the authors for addressing the comments in a thoughtful manner. There are a few outstanding both reviewers raised that need to be addressed, before a final decision is confirmed.

Referee(s)' Comments to Author:
Referee: 3

Comments to the Author
Dear Authors,

Thank you for your revisions to the manuscript, "Comparing the Effectiveness of the Choropleth Map with a Hexagon Tile Map for Communicating Patterns in Australian Spatial Statistics."

I am pleased to say that the manuscript has improved significantly with your revisions. The paper is a valuable contribution to the field, and I recommend its acceptance for publication.

and I recommend its acceptance for publication.

I have a few minor suggestions for further refinement that you may wish to consider before final publication. These are not critical for acceptance but could enhance the clarity and impact of your work:

Section 4.3 Certainty:

Figure 6: I interpret Figure 6 as a stacked bar plot where the width of the bar depicts the number of respondents for each certainty level. I wonder if the message of the figure would be clearer if the axis distinguished between choropleth and hexagon tile maps, and the filling represented the certainty levels. In its current state, the plot seems to show the percentage of "certain" respondents who rated a hex or choropleth tile.

Related to the above, the statement "The distribution of certainty chosen by participants when viewing hexagon tile map or choropleth displays" would be more effective if it allowed for a direct comparison of the percentage of hexagon viewers who were certain versus the percentage of choropleth viewers who were certain.

Section 5 Discussion:

Lines 469-475: The digression in these lines discussing spatial data displays might fit more appropriately in Section 4 Spatial Data Displays.

Line 494: Please clarify the reference to "Table II". Is this Table 2 from your manuscript, or another table? Also, a difference of 0.1 is mentioned – could you be more specific if you are referencing that specific result for the NW-SE trend?

Line 495: Regarding "The differences seen in the Figure 4 plot," please clarify whether this paragraph summarizes the model results from Table 1 or describes Figure 4. I would personally prefer the first variant, summarizing the model results.

Line 507: There is a reference to Table 3 here; however, I assume this paragraph actually refers to Figure 6. The summary provided in this paragraph further strengthens my suggestion for a modified plot in Section 4.3.

Thank you again for your hard work on this manuscript. I look forward to seeing it published.

Referee: 2

Comments to the Author

SUMMARY

This paper contributes a lineup protocol study that assesses the utility of the hexagon tile map (as an alternative to the choropleth map) for communicating Australian spatial statistics. Unlike choropleth maps, hexagon tile maps represent each geographic/administrative area with the same amount of space on the map. In turn, densely populated areas of interest, which are small geographically (and thus hard to see), become more visible to the map reader. Ultimately, the study provides compelling evidence to support the use of the hexagon tile map as an alternative to the choropleth map, in the context of communicating spatial statistics in Australia.

COMMENTS

Thank you for addressing my previous comments. Overall, this is a substantial improvement from the last draft I read. Below are some issues/changes to address/consider.

Line 17. The sentence "This type of display may be useful for other countries..." is confusing, as you have not yet mentioned a particular country at that point in the main text.

Line 47. Remove "The" before "Section 3".

Line 49. Change to "summarised" for consistency.

Line 67. Fix "Figure 1 a" to be "Figure 1a" (and fix this throughout).

Line 109. Typo.

Line 116. Typo.

Line 174. Typo.

Line 225. I prefer "choropleth map" compared to just "choropleth."

Line 233. Typo.

Line 260. Add apostrophe.

Line 261. Add commas.

Line 286. What does "trained using three test displays" mean?

Lines 302 & 313: The big gap between these two is confusing.

Lines 323-324. Add a verb.

Figure 5. Please choose colors for the two larger average dots that are easier to see. Alternatively, you could make them opaque.

Figure 6. I struggled with this figure a lot. It was hard for me to glean any meaningful insights from it.

Line 431. Fix \$.

Line 471. Fix citation link.

Line 493. Why is a roman numeral used?

Line 495. I am confused by the first sentence.

Line 500. Capitalize.

Line 504. Remove apostrophe.

