

Geographic Information Systems Applications in Business Decision-Making

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Abstract. The recent advancements in Geographic Information Systems (GIS) techniques and their applications across various business domains provide an overview of cutting-edge GIS methodologies, including spatial analytics, machine learning integration, and advanced visualization tools. The study sheds light on how these techniques enhance decision-making processes in industries such as retail, service, and manufacturing. Challenges encompass the complexity of integrating diverse datasets, issues of data usage, and ensuring the interpretability and efficient use of machine learning algorithms within GIS frameworks. In response to these challenges, the primary objective of this study is to address the limitations of current GIS methodologies by understanding their capabilities while ensuring the effective use of advanced technologies, and optimizing business decision-making processes.

1 Introduction

It (GIS) is a framework for gathering, managing, and analyzing spatial and geographic data. GIS integrates various types of data, such as maps, satellite images, and statistical data, allowing users to visualize, interpret, and understand patterns, relationships, and trends in the data. It provides a powerful tool for decision-making in areas such as urban planning, resource management, environmental monitoring, and business analysis. The technology is widely used in government, businesses, and research to support informed decision-making processes by providing a spatial context to the data.

Early systems focused on digitizing maps and creating databases to manage geographic information. Today, GIS has become an integral part of numerous fields, influencing decision-making processes across industries. The continuous development of satellite technology, GPS, and remote sensing has further enhanced GIS capabilities, allowing for real-time data collection and dynamic mapping. As GIS continues to evolve, it remains a powerful tool for understanding and analyzing the world's spatial relationships.

GIS is instrumental in mapping land use, infrastructure development, and zoning to enhance city planning. Environmental management benefits from GIS by monitoring and managing

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natural resources, tracking environmental changes, and assessing the impact of human activities on ecosystems. GIS plays a crucial role in public health, aiding in disease mapping, healthcare planning, and epidemiological studies to understand health trends and patterns. Emergency management utilizes GIS for disaster preparedness, response, and recovery by mapping vulnerable areas and coordinating emergency services. In transportation planning, GIS optimizes networks and traffic management, while in natural resource management, it helps analyze forestry, agriculture, water resources, and biodiversity for sustainable practices. Businesses use GIS for site selection, market analysis, and customer profiling, integrating spatial data into business intelligence.

In the contemporary landscape of decision-making, the integration of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) stands out as a transformative force, permeating diverse industries and lending an invaluable spatial dimension to analyses [1]. The pervasive nature of GIS applications in business decision-making is underscored by the attention it has garnered [2]. Their exploration delves into the nuanced interplay of GIS within the realm of business administration, emphasizing the multifaceted role it plays beyond mere location selection.

While venturing into the intricate landscape of consumer behavior analysis GIS serves as a strategic ally for businesses, unraveling patterns and insights within consumer behavior that might elude conventional analytical approaches [3]. This expanded role of GIS in decoding consumer intricacies not only amplifies its relevance in decision-making but also positions it as an indispensable asset for businesses navigating the complexities of a dynamic market.

The retail sector has witnessed a paradigm shift with GIS playing a pivotal role in location-based strategies. The importance of GIS in shopping mall location selection, emphasizes the need for a comprehensive approach that considers various factors influencing consumer choices [4].

Its widespread adoption faces notable challenges, especially in regions like India [4]. The study illuminates that GIS adoption in certain areas, such as India, is still in its nascent stage, indicating a considerable gap between the technology's inherent potential and its practical implementation.

The actual incorporation of this technology into routine practices faces hurdles that must be addressed. One primary challenge is likely to be related to infrastructural limitations, including access to reliable and updated spatial data, which is fundamental for GIS functionality. The intricate nature of GIS tools demands a robust spatial database, and the absence or inadequacy of such data sources can impede the seamless integration of GIS into decision-making processes.

Moreover, there might be a perceptual barrier wherein organizations or decision-makers might not fully comprehend the diverse applications and advantages that GIS offers. Education and awareness initiatives are crucial in overcoming this challenge, emphasizing the potential returns on investment and the efficiency gains that GIS can introduce to decision-making processes.

Additionally, economic considerations, including the costs associated with acquiring and maintaining GIS technology, could pose significant barriers, particularly for smaller businesses or those in regions with limited resources. Overcoming these economic hurdles

may require innovative solutions, such as collaborative ventures, public-private partnerships, or governmental support programs.

The cultural and organizational readiness for embracing GIS also plays a pivotal role. Resistance to change or a lack of understanding of how GIS integrates into existing workflows can hinder its adoption. Therefore, strategies that facilitate a smooth transition, possibly through pilot programs or gradual implementation, could prove beneficial.

By delving into the analysis of the telecommunication market, the remarkable versatility of GIS across various business domains is showcased [5]. The study unfolds the multifaceted utility of GIS beyond traditional domains, emphasizing its adaptability and effectiveness in addressing the complex dynamics of the telecommunication sector.

Focused on the Serbian post retail scenario, the study is distinctive in its integration of theoretical considerations with practical applications of GIS, offering a holistic view of the complexities inherent in this decision-making process. By combining theoretical insights with GIS's analytical capabilities, this technology can efficiently address challenges related to business results analysis, market potentials, and the judicious selection of retail outlet locations [7].

The following sections delve into various studies exploring GIS applications, shedding light on their methodologies, findings, and theoretical underpinnings, while also addressing existing limitations. The overarching objective is to provide a comprehensive understanding of the current landscape of GIS in business decision-making and to identify avenues for future study and improvements.

2 Literature Review

Omar Aboulola's pioneering work provides a deep dive into the intricate process of retail site selection, introducing a novel methodology that integrates GIS spatial analysis into decision-making processes for small retail facilities, marking a significant advancement in the field [8]. The study underscores the critical importance of optimal site selection in determining the success and competitiveness of retail businesses, acknowledging that the location decision is a strategic one with enduring consequences.

Aboulola's meticulous review of existing literature on spatial location suitability contributes to a nuanced and comprehensive understanding of the subject. By synthesizing and critically evaluating prior research, the study provides a valuable synthesis that not only consolidates existing knowledge but also lays the groundwork for further exploration in the field.

An innovative aspect of Aboulola's research lies in the incorporation of social media activity variables into the model, reflecting a forward-looking perspective that recognizes the evolving landscape of data sources available for decision-making in the digital age. This recognition of the importance of social media dynamics in influencing retail outcomes showcases the author's keen awareness of contemporary trends and their impact on the retail landscape.

Beyond theoretical contributions, the study significantly adds practical value by providing a software solution tailored for end-users. The incorporation of social media activity variables into the model not only enhances the analytic power regarding store sales but also positions the research as a practical guide for strategic planners and decision-makers. The emphasis on

usability and end-user satisfaction aligns with the contemporary need for accessible and effective decision-making tools in the dynamic and competitive retail sector.

In essence, Aboulola's work represents a pivotal contribution to the evolving discourse on retail site selection. By integrating GIS spatial analysis, reviewing existing literature, incorporating social media dynamics, and providing a practical software solution, the research stands as a comprehensive and forward-looking guide for academics, practitioners, and decision-makers navigating the complexities of retail site selection.

Cabello, Manabat, Zamora, and Blanco's study delves into the intricate realm of kiosk placement within the UP Diliman campus, with a specific focus on achieving an equal probability of customer turnout, marking a critical contribution to the domain of spatial decision-making within educational institutions [9]. The authors bring to the forefront a robust methodology underpinned by geospatial techniques, including Geographic Information Systems (GIS), remote sensing, and Global Positioning System (GPS) technologies (fig1, fig2, fig3 depict spatial clusters of businesses in Hyderabad, Delhi, and Mumbai respectively). This amalgamation of advanced geospatial tools reflects a forward-thinking approach to addressing the complex challenges associated with optimal facility placement.

One of the standout features of the research is its consideration of multifaceted factors influencing kiosk placement decisions. The inclusion of slope grade, proximity to amenities such as waiting sheds and parking lots, and customer counts per building reflects a holistic approach towards achieving optimal spatial distribution. This approach aligns with contemporary spatial decision-making paradigms, emphasizing the need to account for diverse factors that impact facility placement.

The utilization of Python code for the iterative identification of candidate locations adds a layer of methodological rigor to the study. This commitment to precision in achieving the research objectives resonates with the broader discourse on the importance of accuracy and reliability in geospatial analyses. The iterative process not only showcases the technical prowess of the researchers but also underscores their dedication to ensuring that the derived recommendations for kiosk placement are well-founded and data-driven.

The findings of the study underscore the untapped potential of geospatial technologies in optimizing decision-making related to facility placement within educational institutions. By achieving an equal probability of customer turnout, the research has implications for enhancing space utilization efficiency and, consequently, elevating customer engagement. This has far-reaching consequences for the management of campus spaces, aligning with the broader trend towards leveraging technology for smarter and more informed decision-making in educational environments. In essence, Cabello et al.'s study stands as a testament to the transformative power of geospatial technologies in shaping the spatial dynamics of educational campuses.

Singla and Rai's contribution to the field of retail agglomeration and its impact on store attractiveness is substantial, providing a nuanced understanding of the complexities involved in consumer purchase behavior attributes within agglomerated retail settings [10]. The study marks a significant advancement in unraveling the intricate linkage between these attributes and the overall attractiveness of stores, particularly in the context of diverse agglomerated environments.

The comparative study conducted in two distinct agglomerations, namely a street shopping area and a shopping mall, adds a layer of practical relevance to the research. The authors delve into the factors that significantly influence individual store selection decisions, emphasizing the critical role of merchandise characteristics, pricing strategies, and accessibility. This level of granularity in dissecting the components of store attractiveness enhances the applicability of the findings for retailers aiming to optimize their store location strategies.

The research does not merely stop at identifying influencing factors but extends its impact to contribute to the broader discussion on the dynamics of retail agglomeration. The acknowledgment of the varying influences of retail agglomeration on consumer behavior, contingent upon geographic locations, is a noteworthy revelation. This underscores the need for nuanced and location-specific strategies in the realm of retail, challenging the one-size-fits-all approach that might not be applicable in diverse retail landscapes.

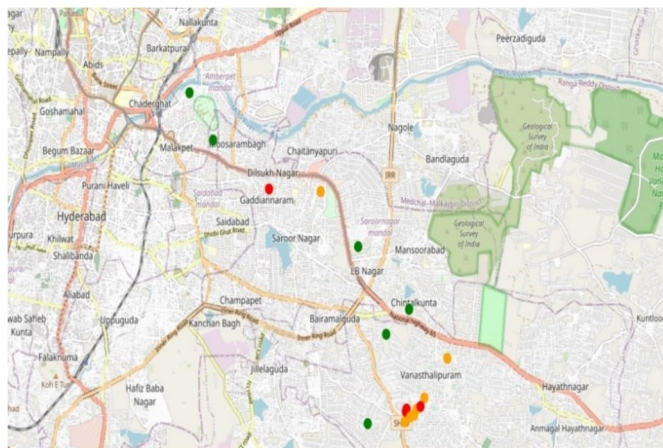


Fig. 1. spatial clusters of businesses in Hyderabad

In essence, Singla and Rai's study transcends the conventional understanding of retail agglomeration, offering valuable insights into the intricacies of consumer behavior within different agglomerated settings. The findings have practical implications for retailers, urging them to tailor their strategies based on the specific dynamics of the geographic locations they operate in. The research, therefore, stands as a pivotal contribution to the evolving field of retail management, where a deeper understanding of consumer behavior is increasingly becoming central to strategic decision-making. In their comprehensive exploration, Abdulkareem Umar, Matthew Adepoju, Ekundayo Adesina, and Michael Bamgbose delve into the intricate domain of optimal location determination for public facilities within Minna Metropolis, employing a sophisticated array of geospatial techniques [11]. The study takes a holistic approach by seamlessly integrating remote sensing, Geographic Information Systems (GIS), and Global Positioning System (GPS) technologies, showcasing a forward-thinking and technologically advanced strategy to tackle the multifaceted challenges associated with the appropriate siting of public facilities.

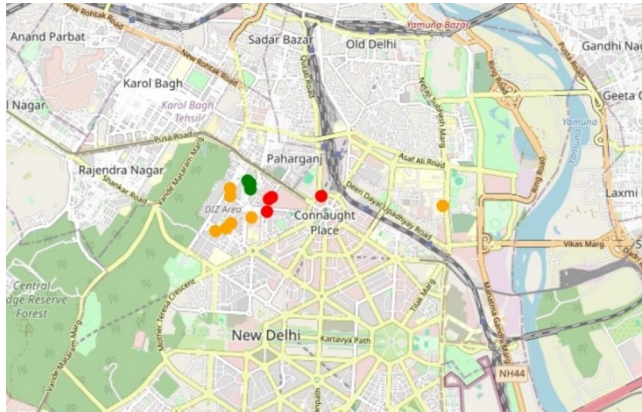


Fig. 2. spatial clusters of businesses in Delhi

The meticulous creation of a geodatabase, coupled with the application of Euclidean-distance geometry, adds layers of precision to the spatial analysis. This, in turn, enables a nuanced examination of the existing locations of facilities, critically evaluating their alignment with a set of standard criteria. The fusion of these advanced geospatial technologies does not merely serve as a methodological choice but stands as a testament to their efficacy in addressing spatial decision problems, especially in the complex urban landscape of Minna Metropolis.

The research findings transcend the theoretical realm, providing practical insights into the prevailing patterns of school locations. The revelation of haphazard patterns in the distribution of schools underscores the need for a systematic and criterion-based approach in facility location decisions. Furthermore, the successful application of geospatial techniques in generating optimal location indexes represents a noteworthy advancement in the field. It not only provides decision-makers with a strategic tool but also contributes significantly to the growing body of literature on geospatial applications in urban planning.

In essence, Umar et al.'s work serves as a beacon in highlighting the potential of geospatial technologies to enhance decision-making processes in the spatial domain. Through a combination of innovative methodologies and advanced technologies, the study contributes meaningfully to the discourse on optimal location determination for public facilities, emphasizing the indispensability of precision and technological integration in spatial decision-making processes. The researchers provide details about machine learning techniques for image classification in [12] [13].

In their forward-looking research, Mukrimo'az Hashim and Nabilah Naharudin present a comprehensive and innovative conceptual framework that extends the frontier of optimal location determination for Uniqlo stores, integrating advanced spatial analysis techniques [14]. The research begins by meticulously identifying a set of criteria that wield significant influence over the selection of optimal locations for Uniqlo stores. These criteria span a spectrum of considerations, including the intricacies of the target market, the availability of facilities, the efficiency of transportation networks, safety and security parameters, and the competitive landscape, particularly the presence of competitors in the vicinity.

What sets this research apart is the methodological rigor employed in computing the weights assigned to each of these criteria, accomplished through the robust Analytical Hierarchical Process (AHP). This not only adds a layer of sophistication to the research but

also underscores a commitment to ensuring that the criteria are not just identified but are assigned due importance based on their contextual relevance.

Moving beyond theoretical underpinnings, the research takes a significant leap into practicality through its spatial analysis endeavors. A model, thoughtfully developed through a model builder, automates and streamlines the laborious process of location-finding. This marks a substantial contribution by showcasing how technology, specifically in the form of model builders, can be wielded to enhance and expedite decision-making processes related to retail store locations.

The application of the weighted overlay technique within the spatial model provides a tangible demonstration of how various criteria, with their assigned weights, interact spatially. This, in turn, offers a visual representation of optimal locations based on the weighted criteria, effectively translating theoretical considerations into actionable insights. In essence, Hashim and Naharudin's work not only extends the theoretical framework for optimal location determination but also furnishes a practical roadmap for the application of spatial analysis in decision-making processes related to retail store locations.

The work spearheaded by Aleksandar Rikalovic, Ilija Cosic, and Djordje Lazarevic stands as a notable and commendable contribution to the dynamic field of industrial site selection, particularly through its innovative deployment of GIS-based multi-criteria analysis [15]. At the heart of this research lies a fundamental concern in the realm of business development — the strategic determination of the most suitable site for industrial systems. In addressing this critical challenge, the study introduces a contemporary approach by seamlessly integrating Geographic Information Systems (GIS) into the framework of multi-criteria decision-making (MCDM). This integration represents a significant departure from conventional decision-making processes, harnessing the inherent power of spatial analysis to inform and enhance the decision-making process.

A distinctive feature of this research is its ability to create a synergistic relationship between GIS, decision support systems (DSS), and MCDM, showcasing a novel and efficient pathway toward conducting spatial analysis. The authors argue convincingly for the efficacy and quality improvements that can be achieved through the judicious integration of these methodologies. The paper, in essence, emerges as a comprehensive guide, offering a successful solution for spatial decision support and underscoring the need for a nuanced understanding of the diverse criteria that contribute to defining optimal locations for industrial setups.

One of the pivotal strengths of this research lies in its practical application, exemplified by its focused exploration in the Vojvodina region. By grounding the theoretical framework in the concrete realities of Vojvodina, the authors not only validate the real-world applicability of GIS-based approaches in industrial site selection but also provide insights that can be extrapolated to diverse geographical and industrial contexts. In doing so, this research makes a substantial and enduring contribution to the discourse on spatial decision-making tools, effectively emphasizing the indispensable role that GIS plays in mitigating challenges associated with industrial site selection.

Norat Roig-Tierno, Amparo Baviera-Puig, Juan Buitrago-Vera, and Francisco Verdú embark on a comprehensive exploration of the intricate process of the retail site location decision, seamlessly integrating Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and the analytical hierarchy process (AHP) [16]. The study's practical relevance is underscored by its specific

marketing decisions. In a world inundated with data, the study underscores the critical need for marketing professionals to judiciously select visualizations that align with the objectives of their decision-making processes. In essence, the work of Ozimec and her colleagues augments our comprehension of GIS applications in marketing, underscoring how the strategic deployment of visualizations can significantly enhance decision quality in this dynamic domain.

Table 1. Literature Review Table

Reference	Authors	Year	Title	Key Focus
[1]	Ismael, A., & Bashir, M. S.	2014	Applications of GIS in Business Decision Making: The Case of Egypt	GIS in business administration and site selection
[2]	Cheng, E., Li, H., & Yu, L.	2007	A GIS approach to shopping mall location selection	GIS application for shopping mall location
[3]	Kranjac, M.	2016	GIS in Business Management	GIS for improving internal communication in companies
[4]	Mishra, S.	2009	GIS in Indian Retail Industry-A Strategic Tool	GIS as a strategic tool in the Indian retail industry
[5]	Maurya, N., & Dahima, V.	2020	Geo-Spatial Analysis and Retail: Bringing Satellite Data and Consumer Details to Indian Retail	Use of satellite data and consumer details in retail through geospatial analysis
[6]	Hess, R. L., Rubin, R. S., & West, L. A.	2004	Geographic information systems as a marketing information system technology	GIS as a marketing information system
[7]	Trubint, N., Ljubomir, O., & Nebojša, B.	2006	Determining an optimal retail location by using GIS	GIS for optimal retail location determination
[8]	Aboulola, O.	2018	GIS Spatial Analysis: A New Approach to Site Selection and Decision Making for Small Retail Facilities	GIS spatial analysis for site selection in small retail
[9]	Cabello, K. A., Manabat, M., Zamora, M. B. A., & Blanco, A.	2019	Ideal Kiosk Placement in UP Diliman for Equal Probability of Customer Turnout	GIS for optimizing kiosk placement in an educational institution
[10]	Singla, V., & Rai, H.	2016	Investigating the effects of retail agglomeration choice behavior on store attractiveness	Effects of retail agglomeration on store attractiveness
[11]	Umar, A., Adepoju, M.,	2015	Optimal Location Determination of Some Public	GIS for optimal location determination of public facilities

	Adesina, E., & Bamgbose, M.		Facilities within Minna Metropolis: A Geospatial Technique Approach	
[12]	Hashim, M., & Naharudin, N.	2020	Conceptual Framework on Finding Optimal Locations of Uniqlo Stores using Spatial Analysis	Conceptual framework for optimal location of Uniqlo stores
[13]	Rikalovic, A., Cosic, I., & Lazarevic, D.	2014	GIS Based Multi-Criteria Analysis for Industrial Site Selection	GIS-based multi-criteria analysis for industrial site selection
[14]	Roig-Tierno, N., Baviera-Puig, A., Buitrago-Vera, J., & Verdú, F.	2013	The retail site location decision process using GIS and the analytical hierarchy process	Retail site location decision process using GIS and AHP
[15]	Ozimec, A.-M., Natter, M., & Reutterer, T.	2010	Geographical Information Systems—Based Marketing Decisions: Effects of Alternative Visualizations on Decision Quality	GIS-based marketing decisions and effects of alternative visualizations

3 Observations and Findings

The profound impact of GIS in business expansion strategies, particularly in optimizing location selection processes is clearly conveyed. Alexandria, a city in Egypt, was selected to act as a case study; this conveyed that GIS-enabled geospatial databases empower decision-makers to visualize and analyse potential locations effectively, streamlining the decision-making process. It is observed that GIS has wide range of applications; for instance, the usefulness of GIS in the retail sector, particularly in the context of shopping mall location selection is enhanced by the capabilities of GIS in generating interactive multi-layer maps, which serve as invaluable tools for resolving diverse location-based challenges. Through this, the importance of integrating spatial and non-spatial data to derive actionable insights for optimal location decisions is acknowledged.

The transformative potential of GIS in enhancing internal communication and decision-making processes within companies is made possible by leveraging GIS technology. GIS plays a crucial role within the Indian retail industry; particularly in the critical areas of trade area analysis and store location decisions. As the retail landscape in India grows, GIS has a pivotal role to play in shaping retailers' strategies and optimizing their market presence. Retail businesses can rely on satellite data and geospatial insights to minimize errors and maximize sales opportunities. It offers retailers a strategic advantage in understanding consumer behaviour and optimizing their operational efficiency.

Integration of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) into Marketing Information System (MKIS) technologies, highlights its capacity to amalgamate data from diverse sources and address multiple decision domain. It uncovers GIS's potential for marketing intelligence.

GIS's ability to analyse demographic trends enables retailers to make informed decisions about store placements and market expansions

The critical aspect of kiosk placement within the UP Diliman campus, with a specific focus on achieving an equal probability of customer turnout while maximizing customer engagement and optimizing service delivery can be extended to educational institutions around the world. By integrating remote sensing, GIS, and GPS technologies the accessibility and efficiency of public services can be enhanced. Thus, GIS plays an important role in urban planning and infrastructure development too.

Spatial data can be used in identifying locations that align with a store's target audience, facilities, transportation infrastructure, safety, security, and competitor presence. GIS-based multi-criteria analysis can be utilised in industrial site selection. The potential industrial sites are identified based on multiple criteria, such as accessibility, infrastructure, environmental considerations, and proximity to resources. A comprehensive exploration of the retail site location decision process can be achieved by integrating GIS and the analytical hierarchy process (AHP). The combination provides a systematic framework for evaluating potential retail locations based on multiple criteria, such as demographics, competition, accessibility, and market potential.

Marketing decisions can be improved by focusing on Geographical Information Systems (GIS) and alternative visualizations. delves into the effects of different symbolizations for quantitative geospatial data on decision quality, offering valuable insights into the application of GIS in marketing contexts. Through a large-scale experimental study, the significant impact of symbolization types on decision performance is conveyed. Notably, the effectiveness of graduated circles as symbolizations for thematic maps stands out, providing actionable insights for marketing planners utilizing GIS. Moreover, it is evident that in nations where the usage of GIS is still in its early stages, educating the concerned personnel is necessary to make proper use of the technology.

4 Conclusion

In the tapestry of business decision-making, Geographic Information Systems (GIS) emerges as a versatile and potent tool, as revealed through a synthesis of studies spanning various sectors. Investigations into retail site selection, industrial site determination, telecommunications analysis, and public facility placement collectively spotlight GIS as an instrumental cog in strategic decision-making.

The studies in retail site selection position GIS as indispensable, offering a comprehensive framework for optimal location decisions. The integration of GIS with analytical processes imparts a nuanced understanding of success factors that underlie judicious retail site choices. Furthermore, the incorporation of dynamic social media variables in innovative approaches recognizes and adapts to the evolving data landscape.

Meticulous investigations into optimal location determination for public facilities and insightful explorations of industrial site selection showcase GIS as a robust decision support system, amplifying the quality and efficiency of spatial analysis. Comprehensive analyses of the telecommunication market resonate with GIS's adaptability, emphasizing its transformative potential across diverse business domains. Collectively, these studies underscore GIS as an indispensable tool, equipping decision-makers with a holistic understanding of the intricate complexities that characterize modern markets.

However, persistent challenges in the widespread adoption of GIS, as evidenced by its nascent stage in the Indian retail industry, necessitate a profound examination. Bridging the gap between the vast technological potential of GIS and its pragmatic implementation emerges as a critical frontier for future research. These challenges, rather than serving as roadblocks, become catalysts for refining GIS applications, ensuring its full realization as an indispensable and transformative force across diverse industries.

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