Review of: "Water Pollution and Administrative Division Adjustments: A Quasi-natural Experiment in Chaohu Lake of China"

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The manuscript is quite long. I will write rather a short review. I can simply separate this manuscript into two different parts. The first one may be about the importance of the administrative division adjustments. The second one would be applying the specified methodology to the study area. More explicitly, I mean much effort has been presented to prove the impact of environmental effects are significant for administrative division adjustment which is unnecessary. Simply the first pages and literature studies on these theme should be stated using a few sentences.

In my opinion, the authors should be much informative about the application and results of the employed synthetic control method. Discussion of the literature studies of this method and similar other methodology is poorly conducted. However, I believe the main findings are quite sufficient for this manuscript. My recommendation would be improving the discussions about the main findings of this study and other similar studies.

On the other hand, I really enjoyed about the placebo test which considerable increase the value of the applied work in this study. I found the conclusion is much informative and conceive than abstract. A quite successful conclusion section has been written. However the same is not valid for the abstract. Many important points have been disregarded here. The background, methodology, the main findings, etc. considerations should be explicitly noted in the abstract.

I don't want to write a long review. Consequently, the manuscript can be summarized to be a couple of pages. Regional discussions would be reported in another study. Also, more studies on the water footprint and pollution indicators within administrative boundaries should be cited.

I appreciate the authors for this informative and detailed case study.