UNMANNED AERIAL VEHICLE PHOTOGRAMMETRIC PRODUCTS ACCURACY ASSESSMENT: A REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

Digital photogrammetry is an effective way for gathering data for DEM extraction, and recent advances in recording techniques and data processing have allowed for higher resolution and faster rapid generation of photogrammetric 3D models result. The model has a spatial and spectral high-resolution advantage with good geometrical positioning accuracy. The DEM quality is the primary requirement for any application and must satisfy users’ requirement. The DEM quality is usually affected by several factors during acquisition and processing stages. Considerable researches have been conducted on several parameters influencing the DEM accuracy. The review focused on discussions on topics related to unmanned aerial vehicle DEM accuracy assessment. Five parameters were considered: UAV technology; UAV Georeferencing; UAV and computer vision; UAV and LiDAR; and UAV flight parameters. Summary of the methods, their strength, weakness and regions of the most recent articles are presented. Based on this review conclusion was drawn on the UAV DEM accuracy challenging issues that need more attention from the geospatial community and suggestions for future work are offered. But there might be other possible factors that are not treated in this paper.

1 INTRODUCTION

There are a variety of techniques for mapping that can be employed in the field of geoinformation science. Theodolite surveying is one of the techniques used, although it is laborious, time-consuming, labor-intensive, dangerous, and requires several personnel. Total station equipment, developed in the 1990s to replace theodolite-based data collection, processing, and results, is labor-intensive, time-consuming, and hazardous if not used properly (Ajayi & Ajulo, 2021), The Global Positioning System (GPS) study does not provide comprehensive or precise data (Zolkepli et al., 2021). Time-consuming, expensive, with a blind spot, and low-quality mapping is laser scanning survey (Chatzistamatis et al., 2018). Manned aircraft take a long time, are expensive, and don't do a good job of mapping large areas (Fernández et al., 2016).

Knowing the physical characteristics of the earth's surface is critical since human interference changes the form, texture, and pattern of natural resources. DEM depicts the actual surface of the planet and aids in understanding the terrain's characteristics (Lakshmi & Yarrakula, 2018). Digital elevation and terrain models (DEMs) are obtained from several different sources. Ground survey, aerial photographs, radar satellite data and optical satellite data are among the sources.

Recent advancements in digital photogrammetry recording and data processing have allowed for an increase in resolution and a quicker turn-around of results. Polidori, 2020 further stated that, it is still not clear how accurate DEM assessments should be conducted. This is because there are no set (standard) rules in place. According to Mesa-Mingorance & Ariza-López, (2020), the process of evaluating DEMs for quality and documentation is hard and needs more attention from the geospatial community.

The accuracy of these models depends on a number of variables, including flight design, camera quality, camera calibration, SfM algorithms, and georeferencing strategy (Sanz-Ablanedo et al., 2018). Aerial photogrammetry (manned aircraft) has had limitations in the past, such as the necessity for a competent pilot to fly the aircraft and inability to fly on cloudy days (Darwin et al., 2014). UAVs provide several benefits, including low cost, survey automation, high repeatability and direct video return (Laporte-Fauret et al., (2019). The newest automation and development in surveying engineering, combining unmanned aerial systems (UAS) and structure from motion (SfM) with multi-view stereo (MVS) photogrammetry, give high-resolution topographic data (Deliry & Avdan, 2021).

Drones will generate a new market that the next generation will be dependent on (Singhal et al., 2018). UAVs are currently used for jobs that were thought to be impossible just a few years ago (Beloev, 2016). A popular topic is a 3D reconstruction algorithm based on UAV aerial photos (Zhang, 2021). Future technologies should concentrate on enhancing payload, endurance, and human-UAV interaction. The issue of mistakes is crucial to all scientific endeavors, and one tenet of scientific techniques is to push the bounds of "truth" through improving tools and minimizing errors (Wechsler, 2007).

2 UAV TECHNOLOGY

If you let them fly, they'll create a new remote sensing market in your nation (Colomina & Molina, 2014). Unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) are aircraft that can fly without a competent pilot and can quickly and cheaply cover a small area to create maps with sub-meter accuracy. Compared to traditional aerial photogrammetric techniques, an accurate large-scale topographic map can be created quickly (Ahmad et al., 2018).

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The efficient method of producing very high-resolution spatial datasets for mapping and spotting changes in land cover across a very limited region at a low cost is UAV photogrammetry technology (Jumaat et al., 2018). Land use planning can be accompanied by UAV pictures generated by DEM to reduce time and achieve high accuracy (Aleshin et al., 2020). A UAV system has advantages for recording cultural assets, including the ability to use mobile mapping in close-range applications without the need for terrestrial imaging (Eisenbeiss, 2004).

Products made by UAVs can be used for mapping the sustainable path of a railway track (Sammartano & Spanò, 2016) and tracking environmental changes in extreme polar environments (Lamsters et al., 2020). It is reliable, flexible, and cost-effective for keeping an eye on oil and gas pipelines for safety, maintenance, and security (Gómez & Green, 2017).

UAV systems are simple to operate, can be utilized in hazardous and inaccessible locations, can cover small areas, can fly along projected flight paths, and can do so at a low cost with quick data collection and high-accuracy mapping output (Krenz et al., 2019). Their view from above gets around the fact that surveyors using ground-based methods can only see. UAV photogrammetry used to fill the gap between visual and satellite remote sensing measurements (Fraser et al., 2016).

UAV accuracy is equivalent to measurements made on the ground (Blistan et al., 2016). UAV is a portable and highly dynamic data collection tool, efficient, flexible, affordable, labor-saving, and secure, suitable for accurate mapping and monitoring (Kentsch et al., 2021). UAV models used in traffic analysis are greatly improved by the UAV cameras' bird's-eye perspective (Outay et al., 2020).

Topographic surveys have been conducted using stereoscopic vision of aerial pictures and topographic map reading. Building inspection and monitoring can benefit from UAV technology, especially when it comes to accuracy and speed while looking for fractures in structures (Bohari et al., 2021). UAVs serve as a foundation for the execution of the most appropriate cadastral mapping methodologies (Crommelinck et al., 2016). UAS-based remote sensing data can be useful in giving precise information (Liu et al., 2021; Yaacob et al., 2022). Summary of the most recent articles is presented in Table 1.

3 UAV GEOREFERENCING

Control point positioning and measurement in the field are limited or constrained by a variety of environmental factors. Using more GCPs will assure redundancy and improve estimates of the camera's interior orientation parameters, different solutions can be adopted for the UAV imagery georeferencing without the use of any GCP (i.e., direct georeferencing approach) (Colomina & Molina, 2014).

Aerial photography accuracy is dependent on the quantity and placement of GCPs; they must be evenly dispersed over the area (Handayani et al., 2017). The distance of the reference point from the points affects DEM height inaccuracy (Aleshin et al., 2019). The best results from the RPAS photogrammetric survey are obtained when combined with GCP measurements made by highly accurate topographic instrumentation. According to Menegoni et al., (2020), the use of GCPs can eliminate the uncertainty brought on by the direct approach. According to Ferrer-González et al., (2020), just 5 GCPs are required to achieve RMSExy, less than two times the project's GSD. The accuracy of XYZ UAV photogrammetry is about the same as that of RTK GPS.

UAVs are an alternative to conventional image acquisition techniques that allow for flexible, high-resolution image acquisition while bridging the gap between terrestrial and aerial photogrammetry (Babatunde et al., 2021). The NRTK method provides quick survey operations with a few centimeters of 3D positional accuracy. While NRTK requires a robust GSM network, the PPK strategy needs an operational CORS station and DRTK demands more work in the field with faster processing (Losè et al., 2020).

The number and location of GCPs are employed as a function of the accuracy of the UAV and SfM photogrammetry surveys (Baiocchi et al., 2021). Until a specific GCP density is attained, an increase in GCP numbers boosts the DSM's accuracy. The practice of manually fixing the coordinates in the GCP's center has an impact on both the horizontal and vertical accuracy (Gindraux et al., 2017). Lower points make more projections, but the location of their locations affects how many projections they have (Sanz-Ablanedo et al., 2018). A sufficient number of GCPs must be taken into account in the data georeferencing workflow in order to provide highly accurate geospatial outputs (Mirko et al., 2019). A photogrammetric product with decimeter-level accuracy can be produced using UAV direct georeferencing results (Eker et al., 2021). The error of the computed camera locations was not significantly impacted by the use of GCPs. UAV photogrammetry makes it possible to acquire DTMs with a high degree of accuracy and spatial resolution (Jiménez-Jiménez et al., 2021).

There aren't enough studies that examine the connection between errors and their separations from the nearest GCPS (Deliry & Avdan, 2021). The inaccuracy only increased with distance from GCPs, according to the majority of researchers. This issue needs in-depth statistical investigation because it is not fully addressed or clarified. Additional research is also necessary to assess the accuracy of UAV-SfM in surveying applications, such as profiles, cross-sections, and volumetric analyses. Sensor resolution, image overlap, flight height, GCPs-numbers, distribution, and accuracy are the key determinants of DEM accuracy as well as Processing software also plays a significant role There is no published research on how the quantity of GCPs affects the accuracy of a UAV SfM analysis, and a number of results are either ambiguous or ambiguous, if not conflicting (Elsheshtawy & Gavrilova, 2021). Summary of the most recent articles is presented in Table 1.

4 UAV AND COMPUTER VISION

It is encouraging that UAV offers unbeatable prices for its performance, services, and goods in modest projects. Techniques in computer vision are the means of achieving this level of automation (Colomina & Molina, 2014). UAVs and SfM algorithms can be used to shorten acquisition times and assign them to unskilled operators (in terms of 3D skills). The fact that the 3D specialists do not need to be there is a significant benefit (Alessandri et al., 2020). Flexible spatial and temporal resolution is available in the UAV data generated (Śledź & Ewertowski, 2022). SfM approach uses a high-redundancy bundle adjustment based on matching features in numerous overlapping, offset images to automatically solve the camera pose and scene geometry (Westoby et al., 2012). When comparing vertical photogrammetric results to oblique photographs, more accurate surfaces are produced (Cordova & Azambuja, 2018). Tan & Li, (2019), stated that the oblique photos when taken along with the nadir photos lessen "the bowling effect."

A digital camera needs to be calibrated for accurate measurements or results. For achieving an accurate measurement, laboratory and field calibration are the most effective and dependable methods of calibration (Darwin et al., 2013). Oblique pictures are added to the network, which dramatically lowers systematic DEM inaccuracy (James & Robson, 2014). This eliminates the practical requirement for chalkboards to be printed for camera calibration (Herrera et al., 2016). With enough input photos, the planar system achieves the same precision as a known-target calibration. Without risky correlations, the Canrady-Brown calibration parameters and camera internal orientation were accurately determined (Molina et al., 2017). An accurate model can be created from vertical-only photos using either a robust pre-calibration or a robust self-calibration, and adding oblique photography may enhance the results (Harwin et al., 2015). Self-calibration and more redundant image matching (Sadeq, 2018) led to the better result.

The use of UAVs is a cost-effective and efficient method for large-scale aerial mapping (Wang et al., 2021), more accurate and easier than other methods (Laporte-Fauret et al., 2019). Aerial images with a spatial resolution of less than 10 cm can be produced by the UAV-based remote sensing system (Rokhmana & Utomo, 2016). Variation in camera resolution affect the precision, while the accuracy remained constant Even in the most remote and difficult geographic areas, GPS PPP enables large-scale photogrammetric mapping from UAVs (Handayani et al., 2017).

When compared to the centimeter-level accuracy of UAV photogrammetry and MLS, the 3D data from the Topcon GLS-2000 scanner (mm level) is sufficient to serve as a reference point cloud (Abbas et al., 2021). The spectral response of various features can be used to modify the weights of R, B, and G (Chaudhry et al., 2021). The spatial resolution of the photos is directly linked to how well the model works (Jakovljevic et al., 2020; Xu et al., 2020). GPS PPP enables large-scale photogrammetric mapping from UAVs since it removes all spatial operational constraints related to a GPS reference station network (Stott et al., 2020).

Direct georeferenced UAV platform ensures mapping placement capabilities even in GCP-free environments that requires immediate attention (Tsai et al., 2010). Image resolutions, camera types, side overlap, and terrain slope were not statistically different from each other. Model accuracy increased when using the RGB camera and finer image resolution, while the NIR camera and coarser resolution decreased model accuracy, but no statistically different models' absolute prediction error around the mean was found (Domingo et al., 2019). When compared to the similar product resulting from nadir-viewing images, the acquisition geometries greatly improve upon it (Kyriou et al., 2021). combined usage of orthophoto and oblique photography lessen the negative consequences of faulty camera models (Menegoni et al., 2020). Summary of the most recent articles is presented in Table 1.

5 LIDAR AND UAV

Low-cost UAVs and advances in traditional sensors and battery technology are improving remote sensing and 3D surface modelling. For monitoring, inspection and updating topographic maps, UAV imagery has the potential to be a good replacement for cloud cover imagery at a better ground resolution and more reasonably priced (Rossi et al., 2018).

In places like hilly or high-risk environments where it is impossible to undertake GPS surveys, TLS-derived point clouds can be used as GCPs (Tong et al., 2015). UAV imaging gives good information on forest parameters for the assessment of canopy height with an accuracy less precise than LiDAR due to the canopy (Gressin et al., 2020). Due to the vegetation, the UAV had a few blind spots on the roof, whereas some of the façades had the opposite problem (Chatzistamatis et al., 2018). A large region could be scanned with extreme precision and under darkness thanks to a LiDAR system, but the technology is incredibly pricey and difficult to employ in small places (Alessandri et al., 2020).

Compared to the generated LiDAR slope, the UAV-generated slope (40 and 60 m alt) is better classified. Less point cloud in UAV photos results in a clear slope that can be observed on a decent slope map (Mokhtar et al., 2019). UAV allows the production of DSM with a comparable level of accuracy (Long et al., 2016). Both the resolutions of the data sets obtained by UAV are improved. UAV data is less expensive and simpler to use while still enabling the production of DSM with a comparable level of accuracy.

The average measurement percentage derived from the UAV-CRP data was discovered to be less than 1% when compared to the terrestrial LiDAR data (Congress & Puppala, 2021). UAV DTM's vertical accuracy was comparable to a LiDAR bare ground DTM, the amount of error may be decreased by enhancing aircraft stability and camera calibration (Ajayi & Palmer, 2019). When compared to the laser scanning method, both temporal and spatial aspects have high-quality, affordable, and produced levels of detail that are very impressive (Zolkepli et al., 2021). Summary of the most recent articles is presented in Table 1.

6 UAV FLIGHT PARAMETERS

The flight parameters considered in this article are percentage overlap and flight height.

6.1 Percentage Overlap

A minimum of 60% forward and 30% lateral overlaps are needed to ensure a stereoscopic view of a scene and prevent gaps for a successful photogrammetric results (Rau et al., 2012).

Table 1. Summary of Most Recent Articls

Citation	Parameter	Method	Dataset	Strength	Weakness	Region
(Laporte-Fauret et al., 2019) (Singhal et al., 2018) (Ahmad et al., 2018) (Gbopa et al., 2021) (Aleshin et al., 2020) (Gong et al., 2019) (Yao et al., 2019) (Krenz et al., 2019) (Outay et al., 2020) (Kentsch et al., 2021) (Liu et al., 2021) (Yaacob et al., 2022) (Bohari et al., 2021)	UAV Technology	Noninvasive technique. Point-to-point validation. Linear regression model. Least square estimation. Multi-scale model to model cloud compare (M3C2). Model uncertainty estimation.	UAV	Can fly at cloudy day. Large scale mapping. Create new markets. Affordable and easier to operate. Used in task considered unthinkable in the past few years ago. No need of professional pilot onboard. Portable and dynamic platform. Bird-eye view perspective.	Not suitable for large areas. Regulations restricting it operation.	Asia Europe America Australia
(Babatunde et al., 2021) (Teppati Losè et al., 2020) (Losè et al., 2020) (Mirko et al., 2019) (Ekaso et al., 2020) (Eker et al., 2021). (Jiménez-Jiménez et al., 2021) (Deliry & Avdan, 2021) (Elsheshtawy & Gavrilova, 2021) (Lakshmi & Yarrakula, 2018) (Polidori, 2020) (Menegoni et al., 2020) (Mesa-Mingorance & Ariza-López, 2020) (Sanz-Ablanedo et al., 2018) (Nagendran et al., 2018)	UAV Georeferencing	NRTK, PPK and DRTK approaches. Non-invasive Survey Techniques. MATLAB-Based System. Image matching. Machine learning. Point cloud segmentation. SURF and BRISK algorithms. SfM. Object based image analysis (OBIA). Point-to-point validation.	UAV GNSS-GPS	Fast survey operations without GCP. Increase in number of GCPs increases the accuracy. Surface deformation monitoring. Direct georeferencing produce result with decimeter accuracy.	NRTK-Require strong GSM network, PPK-Require active CORS station and DRTK-Require additional effort. Dependency on GCP require further studies. Relationship between errors and distances from the nearest GCP is not sufficiently address.	Asia Africa Europe America Australia
(Śledź & Ewertowski, 2022) (Tan & Li, 2019) (Wang et al., 2021) (Kyriou et al., 2021) (Abbas et al., 2021) (Stott et al., 2020) (Chaudhry et al., 2021) (Xu et al., 2020) (Jakovljevic et al., 2020) (Tsai et al., 2010) (Menegoni et al., 2020)(Domingo et al., 2019)	Computer Vision/ SfM	Image matching. Image fusion. Structure from Motion. Deep Learning Non-intrusive approach. Direct Georeferencing Camera Calibration. Image Matching. M3C2. OBIA.	UAV	Achieve level of automation. Efficient workflow. Flexible spatial and temporal resolution. Suitable for emergency cases. High resolution spatial data. Large scale mapping. Alleviate spatial operating constrains. Reduce bowling effect.	Spatial resolution is directly related to the model accuracy. Indirect georeferencing is more accurate.	Asia Europe America Australia
(Chatzistamatis et al., 2018) Cordova & Azambuja, 2018) (Rossi et al., 2018) (Gressin et al., 2020) (Chatzistamatis et al., 2018) (Alessandri et al., 2020) (Mokhtar et al., 2019) (Congress & Puppala, 2021) (O. G. Ajayi & Palmer, 2019) (Zolkepli et al., 2021)	UAV and LiDAR	Point cloud number, density, matching and variation. Radiometric transformation. DAP technique. Limit Equilibrium Method (LEM). NAMD. ML	UAV TLS MLS	UAV is alternative to RS platforms Suitable replacement of cloud cover area at higher resolution. Bridges the gap between terrestrial and aerial data collection. Better resolution data. Cheaper and impressive level of detail in the outputs.	LiDAR-Blind Spot, expensive, low quality. UAV-Suffers from canopy in forest area. LiDAR allowed scanning of wide areas in total darkness.	Asia Europe America Australia
(Sadeq, 2018) (Karantanellis et al., 2020) (Muhammad & Tahar, 2021) (Chaudhry et al., 2020) (Jumaat et al., 2018) (Yusoff et al., 2018) (Ajayi, 2019) (Sharan Kumar et al., 2018) (Casella et al., 2020) (Ćmielewski et al., 2021) (Mugnai & Tucci, 2022)	UAV Flight Parameters	Comparative measure of efficiency. Linear regression model. Visual interpretation analysis. Median tie point. Cloud-to-cloud	UAV	Prevent occurrence of gaps in the model. Increases the accuracy of the products and enhance building shapes. Eliminates mismatching problem. Complete coverage of the stereo pair. Ability to fly at low altitude. High resolution image. Precise information.	Require more disk space and increase processing time. The decision on applying higher or lower flying altitude should be reviewed.	Asia Europe America Australia

Low-overlapping UAV images can be used to accurately generate photogrammetric products, but this produces models with visible gaps. Topographical maps can be updated and revised using UAS photos with a low number of GCPs and a high percentage of forward and side overlap (Daramola et al., 2017). Image overlaps are affected by the external flight conditions (Graça et al., 2014).

A UAV is designed to fly in a straight line, but because of the wind speed, it experiences crabbing when taking aerial photos in the form of strips. Increased percentage overlap improves building shapes and boosts product accuracy (Sadeq, 2018). Since there will be no more mismatches between true points, a high percentage of overlap will become more stable.

Each pair of images has a 60% overlap and a 30% side lap. overlap virtually eliminate occlusion (Karantanellis et al., 2020). It is important for the photos to have enough overlap in order to be processed (Siebert and Teizer, 2012). The accuracy of RMSExyz does not increase or decrease in proportion to the percentage of overlaps (Muhammad & Tahar, 2021).

The median of the tie points increases logically as the forward overlap increases, and a logical increase in the side and forward percentage overlaps leads to an increase in the number of point clouds. Changes in the forward and side overlap settings do not reveal any overarching pattern in how the datasets behave. Chaudhry et al., (2020) stated that the trade-off between UAV surveying parameters can give very accurate results at a low cost of computation.

6.2 Flying Height

Images of a specific area of the earth's surface can be obtained using UAV photogrammetry at specific altitudes. Lower altitude produces sharper images, whereas greater altitude enhances UAV control. UAVs have several benefits, including the ability to fly at low altitudes; low cost; quick data collection and processing for identifying changes in the coastline; and precise results. UAV systems for low altitude have an advantage and have considerable development potential (Junqing et al., 2012). As a low-flying UAV can acquire precise data, especially in steep terrain, it has an edge over satellites. At different elevations (20m, 40m, and 60m), the combined error of X, Y, and Z is at centimeter level (Nagendran et al., 2018). The produced DSMs are all quite similar and are not significantly affected by variations in flight altitude (Ajayi, 2019). Increase in altitude increases the area coverage and number of tie points (Yusoff et al., 2018). Flat areas mapped more accurate than mountainous (Syafuan et al., 2021).

The flying height of the vehicle during recording determines the spatial resolution of the aerial photogrammetric (Anurogo et al., 2017). Various flying altitudes revealed no gaps or errors in the overlapping image regions, but they did highlight some technical issues with the matching process, such as edge matching, spatial continuity, and radiometric consistency (Udin & Ahmad, 2014). Incorporating photographs captured at various flight altitudes increases the number of unique survey sites and, as a result, contributes to substantial image overlap (Ćmielewski et al., 2021). A doming effect associated with UAV photogrammetry image processing lowers the quality of the outcomes outside the area (bounded by GCPs) (Casella et al., 2020). In locations with GCP boundaries, changing altitude or camera types has no discernible impact on the accuracy of the final DEMs. Plans and sections that don't have a lot of detail can benefit from accurate surveys done by low AGL missions (Mugnai & Tucci, 2022). Summary of the most recent articles is presented in Table 1.

7 CONCLUSION

UAV photogrammetry is the newest technique for generating DEM/DTM/DSM widely accepted as a result of its high level of automation. It enables the generation of accurate, high-resolution DEM at minimal cost.

Previous UAV research: Can fly on cloudy days, used in tasks that were unthinkable only a few years ago, and does not require a professional pilot onboard**.** Its bird's-eye view perspective overcomes surveyors' positional view limitations. But its major drawback is that it is not suitable for large areas and there are regulations restricting its operation.

Research about UAV Investigation: can be used for fast survey operations without GCP, but an increase in the number of GCPs increases the accuracy. The relationship between errors and distances from the nearest GCP is not sufficiently addressed. More research is needed to determine the accuracy of UAV-SfM in surveying applications. Different numbers and distributions of GCPs need to be investigated.

UAV Image Processing and Computer Vision: UAV achieves a high level of automation. It’s flexible and efficient for spatial and temporal resolution, suitable for emergency cases. Spatial resolution is directly related to model accuracy. Indirect georeferencing is more accurate.

UAV and UAV LiDAR: UAV is an alternative to RS platforms, suitable for replacement of cloud cover areas at higher resolution. It bridges the gap between terrestrial and aerial data collection. UAV-Suffers from canopy in forest area. LiDAR allowed scanning of wide areas in total darkness.

UAV Flight Parameters: Its ability to fly at low altitude eliminates mismatching problems and guarantees complete coverage of the stereo pair. Requires more disc space and increases processing time. The decision on applying higher or lower flying altitude should be reviewed.

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