International Journal on Science and Technology (IJSAT)



E-ISSN: 2229-7677 • Website: <u>www.ijsat.org</u> • Email: editor@ijsat.org

Design and Implementation of an Advanced Color Sensor for Precision Manufacturing Applications

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Abstract

Increased demands for very accurate color detection in different industrial and scientific applications have resulted in the development of sophisticated color sensors. This paper describes the design, development, and testing of a new color sensor with enhanced performance in terms of accuracy, sensitivity, and adaptability to different environmental conditions. Unlike typical sensors, which easily get puzzled with the level of change in light and complex color variation, this sensor applies an array of photodiodes combined with its proprietary calibration algorithm that makes precise measurements across a wide span of conditions. This is described in a paper for the design of the sensor, testing methodology, and performance comparison against existing commercially available sensors. Test results thus indicate that the developed sensor could outperform those of the competition, and it is one highly promising tool for an entirely different segment of industrial applications, among which are quality control and color matching applications. It might also be used in the implementation of digital imaging.

Keywords: Color Sensor, Accurate Measurement, Sensor Technology, Application In Industries W.R.T. Accuracy, Calibration Algorithm

1. Introduction

Color sensors have many important applications in day-to-day life, starting from using them industrially in many manufacturing quality control and shade matching to scientific research where the subject involves digital imaging together with material analysis [5]. Generally, these color sensors are devices allowing the detection and measurement process of an object's color by capturing reflected light, usually from an object, and the conversion of the light back into digital data.

While earlier models of color sensors, including RGB sensors, have done their job, they always lack precision, especially in cases of changeable lighting conditions or subtle color detection. The main goal of the research is to come up with a color sensor that would not only avoid these problems but also allow it to deliver its performance with consistency across different environmental conditions [2]. This paper describes the design, test, and calibration of a newly developed sensor with a photodiode array coupled with an advanced calibration algorithm to achieve high accuracy and robustness. This research tries to contribute to sensor technology, giving an in-depth study of the sensor's performance and its possible applications within industrial and scientific environments.



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2. Literature Review

2.1 Advancing Color Sensor Technologies

Color sensor technology has undergone huge development in recent decades. RGB sensors were very early ones, providing major technology for color measurement. RGB sensors detect the intensity of reflected red, green, and blue light from the object. Although RGB sensors are relatively inexpensive and quite simple to work with, their disadvantages have gradually become evident, especially for color-sensitive applications where high color accuracy and precision are required. This is particularly true for industrial fields such as the manufacture of pharmaceuticals, textiles, and processed foods, where even slight color imperfections may have major effects on quality and control.

Limitations of RGB sensors motivated the development of more advanced systems such as spectrophotometers, which measure light across the whole visible spectrum with the necessary resolution to get a very accurate depiction of color. However, spectrophotometers are very expensive and sensitive, involving exhaustive calibration processes, and thus cannot be used for many applications in large volumes. However, in projects in which spectrophotometery is required, recent developments have allowed the incorporation of organic photodiodes into spectrophotometer designs. This has reduced the costs without sacrificing accuracy, which is so essential for the tasks it performs: color matching [3]. Where hyperspectral sensors take hundreds of narrow bands of light, opening completely new perspectives in certain fields like remote sensing or environmental monitoring, where minute color shade detection is important. These sensors provide extreme color accuracy but are still very expensive and

require specialized data processing; hence, the device is limited to particular usage only. Multispectral sensors, on the other hand, measure in a fewer number of bands and have had wide acceptance based on their combination of high performance and relatively much better affordability. Examples of newer use applications include all types of assessments of plant health in agricultural applications or outputs from the image generated by a Mars Rover and are numerous. [7].

Another huge development in color sensing technology is the rise to prominence of fiber-optic sensors. These sensors have a lot more flexibility and can function under conditions that would normally destroy regular sensors. As one example, in chemical factories or at high temperatures associated with industrial processes, the use of fiber-optic sensors enables real-time color monitoring without sensor degradation from traditional optical sensing. Because of their very small size and their potential to be embedded into tight spaces, these devices are particularly relevant to industrial process monitoring [2]. While rare, fiber-optic sensors represent one of the most important innovations in sensor technology, especially for those applications that require robustness and flexibility.

Another major trend in recent years is the development of printed structural color sensors. These sensors are based on nanostructured materials for color generation through physical patterns, rather than traditional pigments or dyes. Such structural color is more durable, environmentally friendly, and cost-effective compared to traditional color detection technologies. Besides, with the development of printable electronics, the integration of such sensors into consumer electronics, packaging, and wearables has become highly feasible and is a very promising route for low-cost, flexible, large-area color detection [5].

2.2 Technological Trends and Applications

In fact, miniaturization and multimodal sensing are emerging as trends in the development of color sensors because color detection should be both very precise and cheap in the next few years for most



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industries. Their miniaturization is extremely important for consumer electronics, wearables, and smart packaging because of great constraints in space and power. Thus, this is a challenge in developing small-sized and more efficient sensors without sacrificing accuracy, but advances in organic photodiodes and silicon photonic devices are helping meet this demand [3].

A further promising trend is the development of multisensory sensors that, besides color detection, have several other sensory capabilities. Besides identifying color, these sensors can measure other environmental factors such as temperature, humidity, and gas concentrations. This type of integrated sensing offers a holistic approach to monitoring and control systems, enabling applications in fields such as food safety, healthcare, and environmental monitoring. Multimodal sensors are particularly useful in smart cities, where they can monitor air quality, traffic flow, and even urban vegetation health in real time [6]. Another development trend in the market involves the development and application of self-healing sensors. These are sensors that could heal after certain damages or wears, very useful in extreme conditions and systems where long-term monitoring might be necessary; they employ a self-repairing material with which the performance can maintain functionality over a long time without performance degradation [4]. These aspects have made them of interest for space explorations, marine sensing, and industrial monitoring, areas where equipment may stay for an extended period under extreme conditions with no degradation.

3. Methodology

3.1 System Design and Integration

This present development of the color sensor will cope with the full visible light spectrum, from 400 nm up to 700 nm. Large coverage enables the detection of all colors in view by a human eye and enables very essential, detailed, and correct color measurements needed for numerous applications. The sensor includes a high-resolution photodiode array in which every single photodiode is handpicked for its sensitivity to specific wavelengths of light. This configuration enables the sensor to capture a wide spectrum of color data all at once for more precise color detection, while many of the traditional systems are based on either a small number of photodiodes or narrower spectral bands.

Also integrated is a microcontroller, which complements the photodiode array in processing raw analog signals from the photodiodes into a digital format for further analysis. It employs advanced foundry signal processing algorithms, ensuring this sensor provides very reliable and accurate color reads in real time. Special added value of this kind of design involves applications such as instantaneous color feedback for quality control at manufacture, monitoring of the environment, and even medical diagnoses, which really want very large amounts of precision and speed.

Besides broad spectral and high-resolution capability, the setup is designed against power efficiency challenges. Most practical applications of colored sensors, primarily consumer electronics and portable devices, must be minimal against power consumption for enhanced battery life on the system work. The minimization of energies by the sensor is met through a slew of power managers that are advanced, including the use of low-power microcontrollers utilizing almost negligible energy during operation and power-efficient sensor interfaces through which even minimal energy use becomes possible by this sensor. Thanks to all these power-saving measures, this is a high-performance sensor for most applications, reaching low power consumption levels that are appropriate for mobile platforms, wearables, and remote sensing, with reduced power availability.



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3.2 Calibration Algorithm for Environmental Adaptability

Among its many innovations, the sensor's calibration algorithm enables the sensor to be much more adaptive under changing light conditions. Real-world lighting is going to be just about as non-uniform or constant as possible on many occasions, with changes in illumination intensity and light spectrum due specifically to time of day and weather conditions. Think, for example, of the extreme variation across natural sunlight, everything from overcast to full sun outdoors, while perhaps industrially indoors transitioning suddenly between fluorescent, LED, or incandescent. This represents a relatively immense shock to the color-measuring processes when these lights change suddenly without a sensor being adapted quickly enough in reading them. The calibration algorithm constantly keeps monitoring all these environmental changes and normalizes the sensor output so as to make it consistently present similar kinds of color measurement values, independent of ambient light conditions.

For example, it can be dynamically adjusted to the particular spectral characteristics of the light source in industrial factories where lighting conditions vary during the day. Whether it is a sensor in open fluorescent lighting, LED lighting, or natural lighting through windows, this calibration algorithm makes sure the readings from the sensor are not skewed by changing illumination.

Calibration with material specifics handles any discrepancy in the type of material that involves the way that the sensor views reflective surfaces or translucent materials. Otherwise, just some other matter surface absorbs and reflects the light.

Reflective materials—plastics or metals with a shiny finish—can only reflect light from the surface and hence provide erroneous color measurements. Light may pass through or be scattered by certain translucent materials, like specific plastics or glass, influencing the apparent color. Material-specific properties are considered by the calibration algorithm to make the sensor emit reliable color measurements even against the most varied surfaces that have different optical properties [4].

3.3 Real-to-Life Testing

A Holistic Approach Extensive real-to-life testing of the developed sensor was performed in various environments to make sure it performs well for a wide range of practical applications. While laboratory testing is very useful for understanding theoretical performance capability, it may not catch all the complexities and variabilities occurring in real deployment situations. Therefore, testing in manufacturing plants, outdoor agricultural fields, and other dynamic environments has been crucial to assess the robustness and performance of the sensor in realistic conditions. The dynamic variables tested include changes in lighting conditions, the type of material surfaces, and even temperature affecting the sensor. Tests within the factory environment required subjecting the sensor to various lights: the switch from fluorescent lights to LED or sometimes exposition to sunlight.

These include tests of the sensor with varied surface textures, which range from matte and glossy to reflective surfaces that would further cause variation in normal color detection and its processing by a sensor. Further, very varied conditions under which the sensor performance could be assessed are created, ranging from quality control at production lines to environmental monitoring in outdoor applications.

Moreover, the long-term stability of the sensor was also tested. This was an important test, as it would be able to determine how well the sensor could sustain its accuracy after long-term use and also in cases when it was exposed to environmental stressors of extreme temperatures, dust, or moisture. For example, outdoors around farms, the sensor will be exposed to changing sunlight, humidity, and temperature from



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day to night. This means that in these dynamic environments, testing of the sensor was able to show how well the calibration algorithm adjusted for these fluctuations so that performance remained consistent even when conditions were changing rapidly. Other than this highly controlled environment, the sensor has been tested on an industrial site where a number of other sources of interference could easily affect performance. Such complicated environmental conditions would not prevent the sensor from performing with very high accuracy, unmistakably signaling its application in continuous monitoring areas like automotive, food processing, and agriculture. The robust design of this sensor also carries an adaptive calibration system to operate it within those usually unpredictable and sometimes cruel environments. The test results showed that, under extreme conditions, the sensor maintained its performance in terms of stability and accuracy over time. Its practicality and effectiveness have been proven in real applications to show consistent color measurements despite changes in lighting, material properties, and environmental stressors [3][4].

4. Results

4.1 Accuracy and Sensitivity

We can determine the accuracy of the sensor by cross-checking it with known references from a standard color measurement tool. This is expressed as a percentage and calculated using the following: Accuracy = (Number of correct readings \div Total number of readings) \times 100

Accuracy could, for instance, be if the sensor correctly identified 992 color samples out of 1000:

Accuracy = $(992 \div 1000) \times 100 = 99.2\%$

This result reflects the fact that the sensor will be able to recognize colors with quite a high degree of precision [6].

4.2 Error Margin and Precision

The error margin is calculated from the reading of the sensor against the expected value for each color sample. The precision of the sensor is calculated through determination of the standard deviation of the readings over several trials.

Standard Deviation (SD) = sqrt ((Σ (Xi - μ)²) \div N)

Where:

Xi is each one reading.

 μ = the average of all the readings.

N = Number of trials.

For example, if the sensor's readings for a particular color are 452, 453, 451, 450, and 454, then the mean,

 μ is: $\mu = (452 + 453 + 451 + 450 + 454) / 5 = 452$

Then, the standard deviation would be calculated by use of the formula above.

4.3 Performance Metrics

The accuracy of a sensor was evaluated in different lighting conditions and with various materials by comparing its readings against a wide range of reference color samples. These tests were conducted in varied environmental settings: in controlled laboratory and real-life environments. The results indicated that the sensor exhibited high accuracy generally, usually keeping the error margin below 1%. Such performance indicates the possibility of the sensor providing accurate color measurements while



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exposed to variable lighting intensities or material reflectance's. It is crucial that the sensor performs at this accuracy level since color variations, even slight ones, might matter in fields such as quality control. In addition, the sensitivity of the sensor was evaluated using a test speed in detecting minimal color variations. Even when color change was infinitesimal, the sensor showed a standard deviation of ± 0.2 nm to detect such small shifts in color as deterministic. Such sensitivity is important within photography, textile manufacture, and medical diagnostics, wherever subtle color changes may denote serious material changes about the object in question. Such high sensitivity allows the sensor to be applied in places where detailed color discrimination is required [8].

4.4 Statistical Analysis and Reliability

For assessing the reliability of the sensor further, regression analysis and root mean square error (RMSE) were used in determining how consistent the performance of the sensor was when operating under different conditions. The regression model demonstrated high correlation between the readings of the sensor and the actual color values of the reference samples. This provides more proof for the reliability of the medium. The high correlation indicates that the sensor will perform consistently upon exposure to different ambient light sources or varying materials in a real setting.

4.5 Table. Sensor remaine Comparison				
Sensor Model	Accuracy (%)	Error Margin (%)	Sensitivity (nm)	
Developed Sensor	99.2%	0.5%	±0.2 nm	
Commercial	96.7%	1.2%	±0.5 nm	
Sensor A				
Commercial	97.8%	1.0%	±0.3 nm	
Sensor B				

4.5 Table: Sensor Performance Comparison

Lighting	Measured Color	Measured Color	Error Margin (%)
Condition	Value (Sensor A)	Value (Sensor B)	
Low Light	475 nm	478 nm	0.64%
High Intensity	450 nm	452 nm	0.44%
Light			
Fluorescent Light	463 nm	461 nm	0.43%
LED Light	470 nm	469 nm	0.21%

4.6 Table: Sensor Performance Under Different Lighting Conditions

5. Conclusion

The present study describes a novel color sensor that will meet all the challenges existing in a color detection system regarding high precision, sensitivity, and adaptability to various kinds of light. They are already proving their worth in quality checking, color matching, and digital imaging, soon to be adopted for industrial use within the automotive, textile, pharmaceutical, and food-processing domains [4]. The sensor would prove very robust in particular commercial applications, especially automated quality control and real-time environmental monitoring, whereby different types of materials and levels of ambient light must be anticipated in order to provide accurate measurements.



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While the sensor is performing relatively excellently, improvements under low-light conditions should be targeted in further development. Future modifications will focus on adding to the sensor's capabilities for a wider dynamic range and enhancing its application possibilities for surroundings, such as environmental monitoring. In conclusion, this research advances the domain of sensor technology, marking a big step in the development of an innovative and accurate means to measure color that will certainly impact many different industries that desire reliable and versatile color detection.

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