
Efficient and Learnable Transformed Tensor Nuclear Norm with Exact Recoverable Theory

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Abstract

1 The tensor nuclear norm represents the low-rank property of tensor slices under
2 a transformation. Finding a good transformation is crucial for the tensor nuclear
3 norm. However, existing transformations are either fixed and not adaptable to
4 the data, leading to ineffective results, or they are nonlinear and non-invertible,
5 which prevents theoretical guarantees for the transformed tensor nuclear norm.
6 Besides, some transformations are too complex and computationally expensive. To
7 address these issues, this paper first proposes a fast data-adaptive and learnable
8 column-orthogonal transformation learning framework with an exact recoverable
9 theoretical guarantee. Extensive experiments have validated the effectiveness of
10 the proposed models and theories.

11 1 Introduction

12 In real-life scenarios, many high-dimensional tensor data, such as hyperspectral images (HSIs),
13 multispectral images (MSIs), and multi-frame videos, exhibit strong low-rank properties. Leveraging
14 such low-rank structures of tensor data is crucial for solving tensor data restoration tasks, including
15 but not limited to tensor completion (TC) [1, 2] and tensor robust principal component analysis
16 (TRPCA) [3, 4]. Numerous methods have achieved outstanding results in practical applications by
17 exploiting the low-rank property of tensors, such as video processing [5, 6], hyperspectral denoising
18 [7, 8, 9], classification [10, 11].

19 There are various definitions of tensor rank, which differ from the rank used for matrices [12, 1].
20 Two well-known types of tensor decomposition are based on the CANDECOMP/PARAFAC (CP)
21 and Tucker decompositions, which define the CP rank and Tucker rank, respectively [12]. These
22 decompositions have been widely studied and have demonstrated competitive performance in low-
23 rank tensor recovery. Computing the CP rank is known to be NP-hard, and a clear convex surrogate for
24 this rank has not been established. On the other hand, computing the Tucker rank involves unfolding
25 tensors along each mode into matrices, which may result in the loss of intrinsic high-order interactive
26 information. In addition to these two ranks, the tensor tubal rank is also commonly used for tensor
27 decomposition [13]. This rank is computed via tensor singular value decomposition (t-SVD), which
28 was initially derived from a novel definition of the tensor-tensor (t-t) product [14]. Unlike other
29 methods, t-SVD can operate on an integral third-order tensor without reshaping it into matrices, by
30 using the discrete Fourier transform (DFT). For a third-order tensor $\mathcal{A} \in \mathbb{R}^{n_1 \times n_2 \times n_3}$, assuming that
31 its third mode has a low-rank property, the transformed tensor $\bar{\mathcal{A}}$ can be obtained as follows:

$$\bar{\mathcal{A}} = \mathcal{A} \times_3 \mathbf{L}, \quad (1)$$

32 where \times_3 denotes mode-3 tensor product [12], and $\mathbf{L} \in \mathbb{R}^{n_3 \times n_3}$ is corresponding DFT matrix which
33 satisfies $\mathbf{L}\mathbf{L}^T = \mathbf{L}^T\mathbf{L} = n_3\mathbf{I}$. Then the definition of the tensor tubal rank of \mathcal{A} is $\text{rank}_t(\mathcal{A}) =$

Table 1: The characteristics of different transformed TNN.

Methods	TNN [2]	DCTNN [28]	UTNN [30]	WTNN [29]	CTNN [32]	FTNN [31]	S2NTNN [23]	Q-rank [24]	SALTS [25]	Ours
Transform	FFT	DCT	Unitary	Wavelet	Couple	Framelet	DNN	Unitary	Unitary	COM
Learnable?	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓
Theory?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗	✓	✗	✓
Speed	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Slow	Slow	Fast	Very slow	Very slow	Fast

34 $\sum_{i=1}^{n_3} \text{rank}(\overline{\mathcal{A}}(:, :, i))$, where $\overline{\mathcal{A}}(:, :, i)$ is the frontal slice of $\overline{\mathcal{A}}$. Since the minimization of the tubal
 35 rank is an NP-hard problem. Zhang et al. [15] built a convex surrogate of the tensor tubal rank,
 36 named the tensor nuclear norm (TNN) by summing the matrix nuclear norm of each frontal slice
 37 under DFT. Thus the DFT-transformed TNN is defined as:

$$\|\mathcal{A}\|_* = \sum_{i=1}^{n_3} \|\overline{\mathcal{A}}(:, :, i)\|_* = \sum_{i=1}^{n_3} \|\overline{\mathcal{A}}^{(k)}\|_*. \quad (2)$$

38 Based on the DFT transformed TNN, Zhang and Aeron [2] and Lu et al. [3] give the exact recovery
 39 theorem for TC and TRPCA task by minimizing the TNN norm, respectively. Since then, many
 40 variants of DFT transformed TNN are proposed, such as weight TNN [16], partial sum of TNN
 41 (PSTNN) [17], Schatten-p norm TNN [18], p-shrinkage TNN [19], and many others [20, 21, 22].

42 Referring to Eq. (1), if we substitute the DFT matrix with another transform matrix/operator \mathbf{L} ,
 43 we can obtain a transformed tensor and corresponding induced TNN norms that differ from those
 44 obtained using DFT. Hence, a crucial question arises: what type of transform matrix/operator is
 45 appropriate? Intuitively, a suitable transform operator should satisfy the following three criteria:

- 46 1) **Data adaptation.** The design of transform operators must depend on the data to better
 47 utilize its characteristics, which is a recent viewpoint. Works such as S2NTNN [23], Q-rank
 48 [24], and SALTS [25] have employed various methods to learn transform matrices from
 49 data. S2NTNN uses deep neural networks, Q-rank introduces a new algebraic definition,
 50 and SALTS uses SVD decomposition. Although only Q-rank has theoretical guarantees,
 51 updating the transform matrix and tensor recovery are independent processes that take a
 52 long time, making it impractical for real-world tasks.
- 53 2) **Theoretical guarantee** Theoretical guarantees are crucial for both models and algorithms.
 54 Currently, the exact recoverable guarantees are based on fixed linear invertible transforms,
 55 such as DFT, discrete cosine transform (DCT) [26, 27, 28], wavelet transformation [29], and
 56 unitary transformation [30], but they lack adaptability to data. In addition, there are fixed
 57 complex transforms that do not have recoverable theoretical guarantees, such as framelet
 58 transform [31], and couple transform [32].
- 59 3) **Good Performance** Good transforms should improve restoration performance.

60 To achieve these objectives, this paper leverages the tensor structure and exploits the low-rank
 61 property of the third mode of the tensor to learn an adaptive column-orthogonal matrix (COM)
 62 transform for each data instance. Specifically, we model the low-rank tensor to be restored as the
 63 product of a smaller-sized factor tensor and a COM. This modeling approach effectively captures the
 64 low-rank structure of the tensor and facilitates the learning of the COM transform. Moreover, due to
 65 the reduced size of the factor tensor compared to the original tensor, our proposed model achieves
 66 accelerated computation. Additionally, we provide theoretical guarantees for the recoverability of
 67 our proposed model. To facilitate comparison, we present some classical transform-based tensor
 68 nuclear norm (TNN) approaches in Table 1. It can be observed from the table that only our modeling
 69 approach can stand out by simultaneously considering data adaptability, theoretical guarantees, and
 70 computational efficiency. In summary, this article first presents an efficient learnable transformed
 71 tensor nuclear norm (TNN) model with recoverable theoretical guarantees.

72 2 Notations and Preliminaries

73 2.1 Notations

74 In this paper, we denote tensors by boldface Euler script letters, e.g., \mathcal{A} . Matrices are denoted
 75 by boldface capital letters, e.g., \mathbf{A} ; vectors are denoted by boldface lowercase letters, e.g., \mathbf{a} , and
 76 scalars are denoted by lowercase letters, e.g., a . We denote \mathbf{I}_n as the $n \times n$ identity matrix. For a
 77 3-order tensor $\mathcal{A} \in \mathbb{R}^{n_1 \times n_2 \times n_3}$, the frontal slice $\mathcal{A}(:, :, i)$ is denoted compactly as $\mathcal{A}^{(i)}$. The tube

78 is denoted as $\mathcal{A}(i, j, :)$. The mode- n unfolding matrix of \mathcal{A} is denoted as $\mathbf{A}_{(n)} = \text{unfold}_n(\mathcal{A})$, and
79 $\text{fold}_n(\mathbf{A}_{(n)}) = \mathcal{A}$, where fold_n is the inverse of unfolding operator. The mode- n product of a tensor
80 $\mathcal{X} \in \mathbb{R}^{I_1 \times I_2 \times I_3}$ and a matrix $\mathbf{A} \in \mathbb{R}^{J_n \times I_n}$ is denoted as $\mathcal{Y} := \mathcal{X} \times_n \mathbf{A}$ (see definition in [12]).
81 Some norms of vector, matrix and tensor are used. We denote the $\|\mathcal{A}\|_1 = \sum_{ijk} |a_{ijk}|$, the infinity
82 norm as $\|\mathcal{A}\|_\infty = \max_{ijk} |a_{ijk}|$ and the Frobenius norm as $\|\mathcal{A}\|_F = \sqrt{\sum_{ijk} |a_{ijk}|^2}$, respectively.

83 2.2 Adaptive Transformation

84 For a third-order tensor $\mathcal{A} \in \mathbb{R}^{n_1 \times n_2 \times n_3}$, assuming that its third mode has low-rank property, it can
85 be factorized as

$$\mathcal{A} = \mathbf{U} \times_3 \mathbf{V}, \quad (3)$$

86 where \times_3 denotes mode-3 tensor product, $\mathbf{U} \in \mathbb{R}^{n_1 \times n_2 \times r_3}$, $\mathbf{V} \in \mathbb{R}^{n_3 \times r_3}$ ($r_3 \leq n_3$) satisfying
87 $\mathbf{V}^T \mathbf{V} = \mathbf{I}$ and $r_3 = \text{Rank}(\mathbf{A}_{(3)})$. According to low-rank tensor decomposition (3), we have.

$$\mathbf{U} = \mathcal{A} \times_3 \mathbf{V}^T \iff \mathbf{U}_{(3)} = \mathbf{U}_{(3)} \mathbf{V}^T \mathbf{V} = \mathbf{A}_{(3)} \mathbf{V}. \quad (4)$$

88 Therefore, if we regard \mathbf{U} as a transformed tensor $\overline{\mathcal{A}}$, then \mathbf{V}^T can be regarded as the transform
89 matrix \mathbf{L} , and \mathbf{V} is the inverse transform of \mathbf{V}^T . Then we denote the TNN under the COM learned
90 from the data as the Adaptive TNN (ATNN), which can be reformulated as:

$$\|\overline{\mathcal{A}}\|_* = \sum_{k=1}^{r_3} \|\overline{\mathbf{A}}^{(k)}\|_* = \sum_{k=1}^R \|(\mathcal{A} \times_3 \mathbf{L}^T)^{(k)}\|_*, \text{ s.t. } \mathcal{A} = \mathcal{A} \times_3 \mathbf{L}^T \times_3 \mathbf{L}. \quad (5)$$

91

92 **Remark 1** It should be noted that comparing Eq. (5) and Eq. (2), it can be seen that ATNN has faster
93 solution efficiency than DFT-transformed TNN since the transformed tensor under COM transform
94 has fewer slices. The stronger the low rank of the tensor, that is, the lower the r_3/n_3 value, the
95 higher the solution efficiency of ATNN can be obtained. However, since we want to ensure that the
96 information of \mathcal{A} with a rank of $\text{Rank}(\mathbf{A}_{(3)})$ before and after the transform will not be lost, i.e.,
97 $\mathcal{A} = \mathcal{A} \times_3 \mathbf{L}^T \times_3 \mathbf{L}$ is established, the condition $r_3 \geq \text{Rank}(\mathbf{A}_{(3)})$ must hold.

98 2.3 T-product and T-SVD

99 Here, we give the definitions of t-product and t-SVD based on COM transform.

100 For $\mathcal{A} \in \mathbb{R}^{n_1 \times n_2 \times n_3}$, $\mathcal{B} \in \mathbb{R}^{n_2 \times n_4 \times n_3}$, the COM \mathbf{L}^T transformed tensor of \mathcal{A} , \mathcal{B} are $\overline{\mathcal{A}} = \mathcal{A} \times \mathbf{L}^T \in$
101 $\mathbb{R}^{n_1 \times n_2 \times R}$, $\overline{\mathcal{B}} = \mathcal{B} \times \mathbf{L}^T \in \mathbb{R}^{n_2 \times n_4 \times R}$, respectively, via Eq. (1), then we define

$$\overline{\mathcal{A}} = \text{bdiag}(\overline{\mathcal{A}}) = \begin{bmatrix} \overline{\mathbf{A}}^{(1)} & & & \\ & \overline{\mathbf{A}}^{(2)} & & \\ & & \ddots & \\ & & & \overline{\mathbf{A}}^{(R)} \end{bmatrix}, \overline{\mathcal{A}} = \text{bfold}(\overline{\mathcal{A}}). \quad (6)$$

102

103 **Definition 1 (T-product)** Let $\mathcal{A} \in \mathbb{R}^{n_1 \times n_2 \times n_3}$, $\mathcal{B} \in \mathbb{R}^{n_2 \times n_4 \times n_3}$ and COM $\mathbf{L}^T \in \mathbb{R}^{r_3 \times n_3}$, ($r_3 \leq$
104 n_3) satisfying $\mathbf{L}^T \mathbf{L} = \mathbf{I}_R$, then the t-product under transform \mathbf{L}^T is defined as

$$\mathcal{C} = \mathcal{A} *_L \mathcal{B} = \text{bfold}(\text{bdiag}(\overline{\mathcal{A}}) \text{bdiag}(\overline{\mathcal{B}})) \times_3 \mathbf{L} = \text{bfold}(\overline{\mathcal{A}} \overline{\mathcal{B}}) \times_3 \mathbf{L} \in \mathbb{R}^{n_1 \times n_4 \times n_3}, \quad (7)$$

105 where $\overline{\mathcal{A}} = \mathcal{A} \times_3 \mathbf{L}^T \in \mathbb{R}^{n_1 \times n_2 \times r_3}$ and $\overline{\mathcal{B}} = \mathcal{B} \times_3 \mathbf{L}^T \in \mathbb{R}^{n_2 \times n_4 \times r_3}$.

106 According to the Definition 1, we have $\mathcal{C} = \mathcal{A} *_L \mathcal{B} \iff \overline{\mathcal{C}} = \overline{\mathcal{A}} \overline{\mathcal{B}}$ since $\text{bfold}(\overline{\mathcal{C}}) = \overline{\mathcal{C}} =$
107 $\mathcal{C} \times_3 \mathbf{L}^T = \text{bfold}(\overline{\mathcal{A}} \overline{\mathcal{B}}) \times_3 \mathbf{L} \times_3 \mathbf{L}^T = \text{bfold}(\overline{\mathcal{A}} \overline{\mathcal{B}}) \times_3 (\mathbf{L}^T \mathbf{L}) = \text{bfold}(\overline{\mathcal{A}} \overline{\mathcal{B}})$.

108 The t-product enjoys many similar properties to the matrix-matrix product. For example, the t-product
109 is associate, i.e., $\mathcal{A} * (\mathcal{B} * \mathcal{C}) = (\mathcal{A} * \mathcal{B}) * \mathcal{C}$. We also need some other concepts on tensors.

110 **Definition 2 (Transpose)** The transpose of a tensor $\mathcal{A} \in \mathbb{R}^{n_1 \times n_2 \times n_3}$ is the tensor $\mathcal{A}^T \in$
111 $\mathbb{R}^{n_2 \times n_1 \times n_3}$ obtained by transposing each of the frontal slices.

112 **Definition 3 (Identity tensor)** A third-order tensor $\mathcal{A} \in \mathbb{R}^{n \times n \times n_3}$ is called identity tensor if it
 113 satisfies that each frontal slice is identity matrix, i.e., $\mathcal{A}^{(i)} = \mathbf{I}$ for all $i = 1, \dots, n_3$.

114 **Definition 4 (Orthogonal tensor)** A third-order tensor $\mathcal{Q} \in \mathbb{R}^{n \times n \times n_3}$ is called orthogonal tensor
 115 if it satisfies that $\mathcal{Q}^T *_L \mathcal{Q} = \mathcal{Q} *_L \mathcal{Q}^T = \mathcal{I}$.

116 **Definition 5 (F-diagonal tensor)** A tensor is called f-diagonal if each of its frontal slices is a diago-
 117 nal matrix.

118 **Theorem 1 (T-SVD)** Let $\mathcal{A} \in \mathbb{R}^{n_1 \times n_2 \times n_3}$. Then it can be factorized as

$$\mathcal{A} = \mathbf{U} *_L \mathbf{S} *_L \mathbf{V}^T, \quad (8)$$

119 where $\mathbf{U} \in \mathbb{R}^{n_1 \times n_1 \times n_3}$, $\mathbf{V} \in \mathbb{R}^{n_2 \times n_2 \times n_3}$ are orthogonal, and $\mathbf{S} \in \mathbb{R}^{n_1 \times n_2 \times n_3}$ is f-diagonal.

120 By replacing DFT transform with COM transform \mathbf{L}^T , we can prove the above Theorem [3].

121 **Definition 6 (Tensor tubal rank [14] & TNN [3])** For $\mathcal{A} \in \mathbb{R}^{n_1 \times n_2 \times n_3}$, the tensor tubal rank,
 122 denoted as $\text{rank}_t(\mathcal{A})$, is defined as the number of nonzero singular tubes of \mathbf{S} , where \mathbf{S} is from the
 123 t-SVD of $\mathcal{A} = \mathbf{U} *_L \mathbf{S} *_L \mathbf{V}^T$. We can write

$$\text{rank}_t(\mathcal{A}) = \#\{i, \mathbf{S}(i, i, :) \neq \mathbf{0}\}. \quad (9)$$

124 And its tensor nuclear norm (TNN) is defined as

$$\|\mathcal{A}\|_* = \sum_i \|\mathbf{S}(i, i, :)\|_1 = \|\mathbf{S}\|_1. \quad (10)$$

125 Using the t-product definition, we can get $\mathcal{A} = \mathbf{U} *_L \mathbf{S} *_L \mathbf{V}^T \iff \bar{\mathcal{A}} = \bar{\mathbf{U}} \bar{\mathbf{S}} \bar{\mathbf{V}}^T$, thus we have

$$\|\mathcal{A}\|_* = \|\mathbf{S}\|_1 = \|\bar{\mathbf{S}}\|_* = \|\bar{\mathcal{A}}\|_* = \|\mathcal{A}\|_* \quad (11)$$

126 by combing Eq. (5), Eq. (6) and Eq. (10).

127 3 Tensor Recovery via ATNN Minimization

128 3.1 Models

129 The observed tensor and the tensor that needs to be recovered are denoted as \mathcal{Y} and \mathcal{X}_0 , respectively.
 130 For the tensor completion (TC), the observation \mathcal{Y} has the support set $\Omega \sim \text{Ber}(\rho)$, i.e., $\mathcal{P}_\Omega(\mathcal{Y}) =$
 131 $\mathcal{P}_\Omega(\mathcal{X}_0)$. For the tensor robust principal component analysis (TRPCA), the observation \mathcal{Y} is
 132 corrupted with a sparse component \mathcal{E}_0 (which may represent foreground and sparse noise), denoted
 133 as $\mathcal{Y} = \mathcal{X}_0 + \mathcal{E}_0$.

134 If the COM \mathbf{L}^T satisfying Eq. (5) is known, we can obtain the following two models:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{(TRPCA)} : \max_{\mathcal{X}, \mathbf{S}} \|\mathcal{X} \times_3 \mathbf{L}^T\|_* + \lambda \|\mathbf{S}\|_1, \quad s.t. \mathcal{Y} = \mathcal{X} + \mathcal{E}, \\ \text{(TC)} : \max_{\mathcal{X}} \|\mathcal{X} \times_3 \mathbf{L}^T\|_*, \quad s.t. \mathcal{P}_\Omega(\mathcal{Y}) = \mathcal{P}_\Omega(\mathcal{X}). \end{aligned} \quad (12)$$

135 Actually, it is often not possible to obtain \mathbf{L}^T that satisfies Eq. (5) in advance. Recall Eq. (5), where
 136 the constraint $\mathcal{A} = \mathcal{A} \times_3 \mathbf{L}^T \times_3 \mathbf{L}$ shows that the information of \mathcal{A} after the change and inverse
 137 change will not be lost, as long as \mathbf{L} is obtained from the SVD decomposition of \mathcal{X} , Eq. (5) can be
 138 satisfied. Hence, we can learn a suitable COM \mathbf{L} from the data. By decomposing \mathcal{X} as $\mathcal{X} = \bar{\mathcal{M}} \times_3 \mathbf{L}$
 139 and setting $\mathcal{M} = \mathcal{X} \times_3 \mathbf{L}^T$, we can obtain the following alternative model to Eq. (12):

$$\begin{aligned} \text{(TRPCA)} : \max_{\bar{\mathcal{M}}, \mathbf{S}, \mathbf{L}} \|\bar{\mathcal{M}}\|_* + \lambda \|\mathcal{E}\|_1, \quad s.t. \mathcal{Y} = \bar{\mathcal{M}} \times_3 \mathbf{L} + \mathcal{E}, \mathbf{L}^T \mathbf{L} = \mathbf{I}, \\ \text{(TC)} : \max_{\bar{\mathcal{M}}, \mathbf{L}} \|\bar{\mathcal{M}}\|_*, \quad s.t. \mathcal{P}_\Omega(\mathcal{Y}) = \mathcal{P}_\Omega(\bar{\mathcal{M}} \times_3 \mathbf{L}), \mathbf{L}^T \mathbf{L} = \mathbf{I}. \end{aligned} \quad (13)$$

140 3.2 Incoherence Conditions

141 The incoherence condition is one of the most vital theoretical tools in low-rank recovery [33, 3, 4].
 142 Below, we define $\hat{\mathbf{e}}_i$ as the tensor column basis and the tensor incoherence conditions similar to [3].

143 **Definition 7 (Tensor Incoherence Conditions)** For $\mathcal{X}_0 \in \mathbb{R}^{n_1 \times n_2 \times n_3}$ with t-SVD rank R , it has
 144 the skinny t-SVD $\mathcal{X}_0 = \mathbf{U} *_L \mathbf{S} *_L \mathbf{V}^T$. Then \mathcal{X}_0 is said to satisfy the tensor incoherence conditions
 145 with parameter μ if

$$\max_{i \in [1, n_1]} \|\mathbf{U}^T *_L \hat{\mathbf{e}}_i\|_F \leq \sqrt{\frac{\mu R}{n_1}}, \quad \max_{j \in [1, n_2]} \|\mathbf{V}^T *_L \hat{\mathbf{e}}_j\|_F \leq \sqrt{\frac{\mu R}{n_2}}, \quad \|\mathbf{U} *_L \mathbf{V}^T\|_F \leq \sqrt{\frac{\mu R}{n_1 n_2}}. \quad (14)$$

Algorithm 1 ADMM for solving ATNN-RPCA model (13)

Input: Observation $\mathcal{Y} \in \mathbb{R}^{n_1 \times n_2 \times n_3}$, $\lambda = 1/\sqrt{\max(n_1, n_2)}$, $\mu = 1/\|\mathcal{Y}\|_*$, $\rho = 1.25$, $\mu_m = 1e^7\mu$, and the column number of learnable COM matrix r_3 .

- 1: Initialize $\mathbf{\Lambda} = \mathbf{\mathcal{E}} = \mathcal{O}$, $\overline{\mathcal{M}} = \text{bdiag}(\mathbf{U})$ and $\mathbf{L} = \mathbf{V}$, where \mathbf{U}, \mathbf{V} is the low-rank tensor decomposition of among mode-3, i.e., $\text{unfold}_3(\mathcal{Y}) = (\mathbf{U}) \times_3 \mathbf{L}$
- 2: **while** not convergence **do**
- 3: Update $\overline{\mathcal{M}} := \text{SVD}_{1/\mu}((\mathcal{Y} - \mathcal{E} + \mathbf{\Lambda}/\mu) \times_3 \mathbf{L}^T)$.
- 4: Update $\mathbf{L} := \mathbf{B}\mathbf{D}^T$, where $[\mathbf{B}, \mathbf{C}, \mathbf{D}] = \text{svd}(\text{unfold}_3(\mathcal{Y} - \mathcal{E} + \mathbf{\Lambda}/\mu)^T \text{unfold}_3(\text{bdiag}(\overline{\mathcal{U}})))$.
- 5: Update $\mathcal{X} := \overline{\mathcal{M}} \times_3 \mathbf{L}$
- 6: Update $\mathcal{E} := \mathcal{S}_{\lambda/\mu}(\mathcal{Y} - \mathcal{X} + \mathbf{\Lambda}/\mu)$.
- 7: Update multipliers $\mathbf{\Lambda} := \mathbf{\Lambda} + \mu(\mathcal{Y} - \mathcal{X} - \mathcal{E})$;
- 8: Let $\mu = \min\{\rho\mu, \mu_m\}$.
- 9: **end while**

Output: recovered tensors $\mathcal{X} = \overline{\mathcal{M}} \times_3 \mathbf{L}$ and \mathcal{E} .

146 3.3 Main results

147 We now demonstrate that both the model (12) and (13) possess exact recovery capability.

148 **Theorem 2 (TRPCA Theorem)** Consider ATNN-based TRPCA model (12) and (13). Suppose that
 149 $\mathcal{X}_0 \in \mathbb{R}^{n \times n \times n_3}$ obeys the tensor incoherence conditions (14) and \mathcal{E}_0 's support set, denoted as Ω_0 , is
 150 uniformly distributed among all sets of cardinality m . Then, there exist universal constants $c_1, c_2 > 0$
 151 such that $(\mathcal{X}_0, \mathcal{E}_0)$ is the unique solution to model (12) and (13) when $\lambda = 1/\sqrt{n}$ with probability at
 152 least $1 - c_1(nn_3)^{-c_2}$, provided that

$$\text{rank}_t(\mathcal{X}_0) \leq \rho_r \mu^{-1} n \log^{-2}(n) \text{ and } m \leq \rho_s n^2 n_3, \quad (15)$$

153 where $\rho_r, \rho_s > 0$ are some numerical constants.

154 **Theorem 3 (TC Theorem)** Consider ATNN-based TC model (12) and (13). Suppose that $\mathcal{X}_0 \in$
 155 $\mathbb{R}^{n \times n \times n_3}$ obeys the tensor incoherence conditions (14) and $\Omega \sim \text{Ber}(p)$. Then, there exist universal
 156 constants $c_0, c_1, c_2 > 0$ such that \mathcal{X}_0 is the unique solution to model (12) and (13) with
 157 probability at least $1 - c_1(nn_3)^{-c_2}$, provided that

$$p \geq c_0 \mu R n^{-1} \log^2(n). \quad (16)$$

158 **Remark 2** It should be noted that although the model (12) and (13) are slightly different, they are the
 159 same in the proof of the exact recoverable theory. Assume that the optimal values of models (12) and
 160 (13) are $(\hat{\mathcal{X}}, \hat{\mathcal{E}})$ and $(\hat{\overline{\mathcal{M}}}, \hat{\mathbf{L}}, \hat{\mathcal{E}})$, respectively. A recoverable theory of model (12) requires proving
 161 $(\hat{\mathcal{X}}, \hat{\mathcal{E}}) = (\mathcal{X}_0, \mathcal{E}_0)$ under the given \mathbf{L} in advance. A recoverable theory of model (13) requires
 162 proving $(\hat{\overline{\mathcal{M}}} \times_3 \hat{\mathbf{L}}, \hat{\mathcal{E}}) = (\mathcal{X}_0, \mathcal{E}_0)$ under the final learned $\hat{\mathbf{L}}$.

163 3.4 Solving Algorithm

164 This subsection derives efficient algorithms for solving the ATNN-based TRPCA and TC problem
 165 via the Alternating Direction Method of Multipliers (ADMM) framework [34].

166 We first write the augmented Lagrangian function of the TRPCA problem in Eq. (13) as:

$$\min_{\overline{\mathcal{M}}, \mathcal{E}, \mathbf{\Lambda}, \mathbf{L}^T \mathbf{L} = \mathbf{I}} \|\overline{\mathcal{M}}\|_* + \lambda \|\mathcal{E}\|_1 + \frac{\mu}{2} \|\mathcal{Y} - \overline{\mathcal{M}} \times_3 \mathbf{L} - \mathcal{E} + \mathbf{\Lambda}/\mu\|_F^2, \quad (17)$$

167 where μ is the penalty parameter and $\mathbf{\Lambda}$ is the lagrange multiplier.

168 Due to page limitation, we provide Algorithm 1 for solving Eq. (17) using the soft-thresholding
 169 operator $\mathcal{S}_\tau(\cdot)$ [35] and the singular value soft-thresholding operator $\text{SVD}_\tau(\cdot)$ [36]. Additionally, for
 170 the ATNN-TC model (13), we provide Algorithm 2 directly. For more detailed information, please
 171 refer to the supplementary material.

Algorithm 2 ADMM for solving ATNN-TC model (13)

Input: Observation $\mathcal{Y} \in \mathbb{R}^{n_1 \times n_2 \times n_3}$ with support set Ω , $\mu = 0.1$, $\rho = 1.05$, $\mu_m = 1e^7 \mu$, and the column number of learnable COM matrix r_3 .

- 1: Similar initialization with Algorithm 1.
- 2: **while** not convergence **do**
- 3: Update $\overline{\mathcal{M}}, \mathbf{L}, \mathcal{X}, \Lambda$ via the similar way in Algorithm 1.
- 4: Update $\mathcal{E} := \mathcal{P}_\Omega(\mathcal{Y} - \mathcal{X} + \Lambda/\mu)$, where \mathcal{P}_Ω is projection operator.
- 5: Let $\mu = \min\{\rho\mu, \mu_m\}$.
- 6: **end while**

Output: recovered tensors $\mathcal{X} = \overline{\mathcal{M}} \times_3 \mathbf{L}$.

172 3.5 Computational Complexity Analysis

173 As depicted in Algorithm 1 and 2, each iteration of the algorithm involves updating $\overline{\mathcal{M}}$ through small-
174 scale SVD computations, updating \mathbf{L} through small-scale SVD computation, updating \mathcal{E} through soft
175 thresholding operations, and some matrix multiplications. For a third-order tensor $\mathcal{X} \in \mathbb{R}^{n_1 \times n_2 \times n_3}$,
176 the time complexity of the soft threshold operator is $\mathcal{O}(n_1 n_2 n_3)$, the time complexity of solving \mathbf{L} is
177 $\mathcal{O}(n_3 r_3^2)$, and the time complexity of solving $\overline{\mathcal{M}}$ is $\mathcal{O}(r_3 n_1 n_2^2)$. Thus, the overall time complexity of
178 Algorithm 1 and 2 is $\mathcal{O}(r_3 n_1 n_2^2 + n_3 r_3^2 + n_1 n_2 n_3)$. Similarly, for the DFT-transformed TRPCA and
179 TC models, the time complexity is $\mathcal{O}(n_3 n_1 n_2^2 + n_1 n_2 n_3)$. By comparing the two time complexities
180 mentioned above, it can be observed that their ratio is positively correlated with r_3/n_3 . Therefore,
181 as the low-rank property of the tensor in the third dimension becomes stronger, the acceleration
182 capability of the proposed algorithm in this paper also becomes stronger.

183 4 Experiments

184 In this section, we present numerical experiments to validate the main results stated in Theorems 2
185 and 3. Following the suggestion of Theorem 2, we set $\lambda = 1/\sqrt{\max\{n_1, n_2\}}$ for the TRPCA task in
186 all experiments. However, it should be noted that further performance improvements can be achieved
187 by carefully tuning the value of λ . The suggested value in the theory provides a useful guideline in
188 practical applications. All simulations were conducted on a PC equipped with an Intel(R) Core(TM)
189 i5-10600KF 4.10GHz CPU, 32 GB memory, and a GeForce RTX 3080 GPU with 10 GB memory.

190 4.1 Simulated Experiments

191 In this section, we will verify the correct recovery guarantee of Theorem 2 and 3 on randomly
192 generated problems. We generate a tensor with tubal rank R as a product $\mathcal{X}_0 = \mathcal{P} *_L \mathcal{Q}^T$, where \mathcal{P}
193 and \mathcal{Q} are $n \times R \times n$ tensors with entries independently sampled from $\mathcal{N}(0, 1/n)$ distribution and
194 the COM $\mathbf{L} \in \mathbb{R}^{r_3 \times n}$ is generated by orthogonalizing the random matrix with entries independently
195 sampled from $\mathcal{N}(0, 1)$. For the TRPCA task, the support set Ω (with size m) of \mathcal{E}_0 with independent
196 Bernoulli ± 1 entries is chosen uniformly at random, and the observation tensor is set as: $\mathcal{Y} = \mathcal{X}_0 + \mathcal{E}_0$.
197 For the TC tasks, the observation \mathcal{Y} is set as $\mathcal{Y} = \mathcal{P}_\Omega(\mathcal{X}_0)$.

198 Next, we investigate how the tubal rank of \mathcal{X}_0 and the sparsity of \mathcal{E}_0 (and missing ratio of \mathcal{X}_0
199) affect the performance of model (12) and (13). We consider $n = 50$ and two values of r_3 , i.e.,
200 $r_3 = 5, 20$. We vary the sparsity ρ_s of \mathcal{E}_0 as $[0.01 : 0.01 : 0.5]$, the missing ratio ρ of \mathcal{X}_0 as
201 $[0.01 : 0.02 : 0.99]$, and tubal rank of \mathcal{X}_0 as $[1 : 1 : 50]$, respectively. For each combination of
202 (R, ρ_s) and (R, ρ) , we perform 10 test instances and declare a trial successful if the recovered tensor
203 $\hat{\mathcal{X}}$ satisfies $\|\hat{\mathcal{X}} - \mathcal{X}_0\|_F / \|\mathcal{X}_0\|_F \leq 0.01$. The fraction of successful recoveries are plotted in Figure
204 1. From Figure 1, we observe that there is a significant region where the recovery is correct for both
205 models. Furthermore, two notable phenomena can be observed from the figure:

- 206 1) The phase transition diagram in the first row of Figure 1 closely resembles the second row,
207 indicating that even if we don't know the correct COM \mathbf{L} in the model (12), we can learn
208 the COM \mathbf{L} through model (13).
- 209 2) The phase transition diagram of $r_3 = 5$ is much better than that of $r_3 = 20$ for both TRPCA
210 and TC tasks, which shows that it is necessary to consider the low-rank property of mode 3.

Table 2: Quantitative comparison of all RPCA-based competing methods under salt-and-pepper noise with the variance of **0.6**. The best and second results are highlighted in bold italics and underline.

Methods	WDC			PaviaU			Beans			Cloth		
	PSNR	SSIM	Times	PSNR	SSIM	Times	PSNR	SSIM	Times	PSNR	SSIM	Times
RPCA	32.08	0.5223	28.99	24.98	0.8264	6.59	17.88	0.5920	17.92	18.47	0.5418	18.28
SNN	26.02	0.7178	136.2	31.34	<u>0.9492</u>	121.1	16.14	0.5238	176.2	16.77	0.5297	176.7
KBR	22.64	0.6438	167.2	20.91	0.4477	58.63	20.26	0.4162	252.1	20.91	0.5454	162.9
TNN	19.619	0.3728	419.2	17.09	0.2345	120.2	20.39	0.2572	322.4	15.51	0.1744	324.8
CTNN	17.21	0.2036	485.7	15.38	0.1163	130.7	15.64	0.1218	363.4	14.55	0.1162	353.9
CTV	<u>33.85</u>	<u>0.9454</u>	170.2	<u>31.91</u>	0.8872	41.85	29.35	0.7770	103.8	27.33	<u>0.7721</u>	102.2
TCTV	32.12	0.9090	815.2	29.62	0.8554	172.5	32.85	0.9204	641.3	27.36	0.7534	627.9
Ours	39.82	0.9913	21.34	35.31	0.9721	5.32	<u>29.46</u>	<u>0.9108</u>	<u>29.22</u>	27.53	0.8563	<u>19.30</u>

Table 3: Quantitative comparison of all competing methods under missing ratio with **0.95**. The best and second results are highlighted in bold italics and underline, respectively.

Methods	WDC			PaviaU			Beans			Cloth		
	PSNR	SSIM	Times									
LRMC	18.53	0.4623	24.38	15.17	0.2834	2.93	15.96	0.3972	7.61	13.11	0.1902	10.95
HaLRTC	22.09	0.6676	<u>54.37</u>	18.87	0.3912	<u>30.34</u>	20.62	0.4542	<u>64.48</u>	19.01	0.3570	<u>92.65</u>
KBR	31.42	0.9022	1589	29.92	0.8591	725.7	26.06	0.7208	1253	24.14	0.6422	1292
TNN	30.01	0.8824	1019	26.43	0.7126	207.9	26.10	0.6712	419.2	23.46	0.6012	441.2
CTNN	33.36	0.9432	378.9	31.69	0.9172	114.4	27.61	0.8041	129.6	25.71	0.7362	136.2
UTNN	27.89	0.8652	487.6	21.80	0.5982	156.3	17.28	0.4131	116.6	16.27	0.3183	117.9
FTNN	34.87	0.5320	4376	32.56	0.9092	1263	28.48	0.8143	1587	25.25	0.7253	2054
OITNN	32.92	0.9396	838.2	28.46	0.8142	292.4	27.28	0.7442	448.6	24.06	0.6516	391.8
TCTV	33.33	0.9391	2116	31.81	0.8960	861.4	31.77	0.9143	1570	<u>28.38</u>	<u>0.8442</u>	1488
S2NTNN	<u>37.36</u>	<u>0.9749</u>	168.7	35.15	0.9431	40.78	27.44	0.7589	104.2	31.28	0.8679	113.2
Ours	38.06	0.9793	232.4	<u>33.94</u>	<u>0.9293</u>	58.34	<u>28.83</u>	<u>0.8164</u>	156.3	25.81	0.7146	142.4

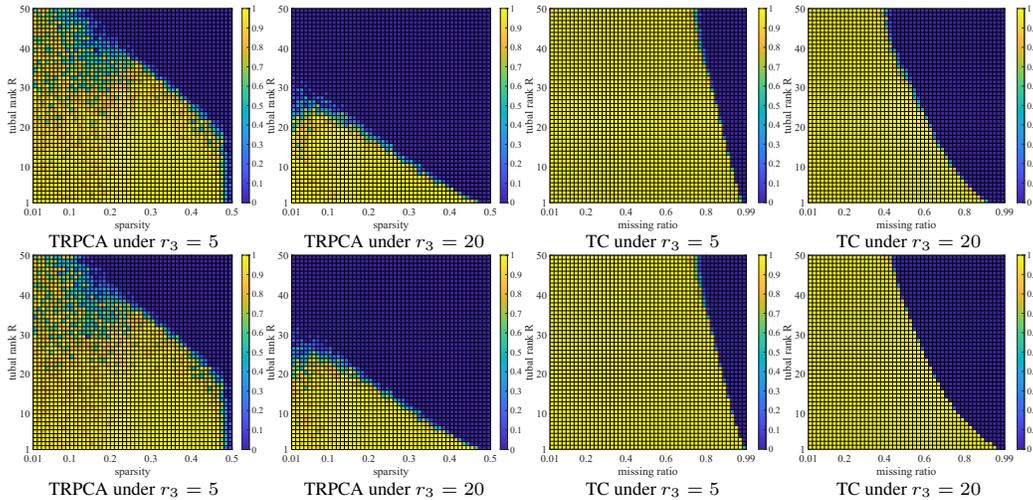


Figure 1: TRPCA and TC phase transition diagrams for varying tubal ranks of \mathcal{X}_0 and sparsities of \mathcal{E}_0 or missing ratio of \mathcal{X}_0 . The first and second rows show the phase transition diagrams based on models (13) and (12), respectively, under different r_3 settings.

211 4.2 Real Experiments

212 To validate the effectiveness of the proposed ATNN model in tensor recovery task, we conducted
 213 experiments on various datasets, including hyperspectral images (HSI), multispectral images (MSI),
 214 color video images, and surveillance videos. Due to page limitations, we have included the results of
 215 robustness analysis, parameter settings for robustness, convergence verification, and more detailed
 216 experimental outcomes in the Supplementary Material.

217 For comprehensive comparison, we have included additional state-of-the-art methods except those
 218 listed in Table 1. These methods include CTV [42] and TCTV [4] for the TRPCA task, LRMC [33],
 219 HaLRTC [1], UTNN [29], and OITNN [43] for the TC task, and GODEC [37], DECOLOR [38],
 220 OMoGMF [39], RegL1 [40], and PRMF [41] for background modeling. Before conducting this
 221 experiment, the gray value of each band was normalized into [0, 1] via the max-min formula.

Table 4: AUC comparison of all competing methods on all video sequences in the Li dataset. The best and second results in each video sequence are highlighted in bold italics and underline, respectively.

Methods	data										Time /s
	airp.	boot.	shop.	lobb.	esca.	curt.	camp.	wate.	foun.	Average	
RPCA [33]	0.8721	0.9168	0.9445	0.9130	0.9050	0.8722	0.8917	0.8345	0.9418	0.8991	2.37
GODEC [37]	0.9001	0.9046	0.9187	0.8556	0.9125	<u>0.9131</u>	0.8693	<u>0.9370</u>	0.9099	0.9023	0.64
DECOLOR [38]	0.8627	0.8910	0.9462	0.9241	0.9077	0.8864	0.8945	0.8000	<u>0.9443</u>	0.8952	8.29
OMoGMF [39]	0.9143	<u>0.9238</u>	0.9478	0.9252	0.9112	0.9049	0.8877	0.8958	<u>0.9419</u>	0.9170	3.92
RegL1 [40]	0.8977	0.9249	0.9423	0.8819	0.4159	0.8899	0.8871	0.8920	0.9194	0.8501	10.74
PRMF [41]	0.8905	0.9218	0.9415	0.8818	0.9065	0.8806	0.8865	0.8799	0.9166	0.9006	13.68
CTV [42]	<u>0.9178</u>	0.9107	0.9541	<u>0.9337</u>	<u>0.9148</u>	0.8710	0.8814	0.9386	0.9383	0.9180	10.28
TNN [2]	0.5218	0.5694	0.6605	0.6311	0.5981	0.5823	0.5464	0.6642	0.5781	0.5947	16.87
CTNN [28]	0.6859	0.6176	0.6835	0.6613	0.6582	0.6988	0.5881	0.5272	0.5450	0.6295	17.39
ATNN	0.9185	0.9227	0.9484	0.9362	0.9158	0.9162	0.8912	0.9152	0.9456	0.9233	2.32

Table 5: Quantitative comparison of all competing methods on color video under missing ratio with 0.95. The best and second results are highlighted in bold italics and underline, respectively.

Methods	Akiyo			Foreman			Carphone			News		
	PSNR	SSIM	Times									
LRMC	10.81	0.2626	8.06	8.79	0.1192	7.21	11.57	0.2713	6.92	13.27	0.3660	13.41
HaLRTC	17.66	0.5327	<u>61.04</u>	15.55	0.3336	<u>44.87</u>	14.20	0.3448	<u>42.46</u>	16.43	0.4890	87.63
KBR	29.76	0.9118	689.2	23.97	0.7193	668.2	26.49	0.8164	798.2	26.42	0.8480	1043
TNN	31.94	0.9343	217.5	23.15	0.6052	181.5	26.27	0.7658	493.6	28.56	0.8660	249.6
CTNN	28.63	0.8463	192.0	22.13	0.5779	152.7	25.06	0.7263	196.2	25.59	0.7740	174.7
UTNN	21.72	0.7237	172.4	16.51	0.2587	167.6	20.24	0.5394	202.7	21.21	0.7060	162.6
FTNN	30.74	0.9252	1258	22.97	0.6781	1123	25.43	0.7778	1335	28.77	0.8770	1494
OITNN	32.68	0.9533	397.5	23.89	<u>0.7206</u>	296.7	27.14	0.8340	472.3	29.43	0.9010	322.3
TCTV	<u>33.41</u>	<u>0.9542</u>	874.8	26.69	0.8071	821.4	29.10	0.8747	1103	30.65	0.9170	772.2
S2NTNN	33.16	0.9520	168.7	23.57	0.6091	83.98	27.33	<u>0.8093</u>	100.7	29.11	0.8872	90.61
Ours	33.74	0.9574	95.89	<u>24.16</u>	0.6252	78.21	<u>27.44</u>	0.7773	80.11	<u>29.72</u>	<u>0.9021</u>	<u>78.94</u>

222 4.2.1 Hyperspectral and Multispectral Image Recovery

223 Two HSI images, i.e., WDC¹ and PaviaU² datasets are used. The sizes of the two data are
 224 $256 \times 256 \times 191$ and $256 \times 256 \times 93$, respectively. Two MSI images in CAVE dataset³, i.e., Cloth
 225 and Beans are used. The size of the two data is $512 \times 512 \times 31$.

226 For the TRPCA task, we conducted experiments with six different levels of salt and pepper noise
 227 variance: 0.1, 0.2, 0.3, 0.4, 0.5, and 0.6. Table 2 reports the performance metrics of each method
 228 under a variance of 0.6, demonstrating that our ATNN outperforms all competing methods. Notably,
 229 our method achieves superior performance despite only utilizing the low-rank property of tensors,
 230 surpassing the performance of CTV and TCTV, which additionally exploit the local smoothness and
 231 low-rank property of images. Furthermore, our method exhibits comparable computational efficiency
 232 to RPCA, indicating that the introduction of the learnable COM matrix effectively reduces the time
 233 complexity of the model. To better visualize the comparison, we choose three bands of HSI to form a
 234 pseudo-color image to show four representative competing methods' visual restoration performance,
 235 as shown in Figure 2. From the images, it is evident that our proposed ATNN model can effectively
 236 remove noise and preserve more detailed information.

237 For the TC task, since all the methods achieve very accurate recovery results when the sample ratio
 238 (SR) is high, we test four different SRs: 0.01, 0.05, 0.1 and 0.2. The metric of each tested algorithm
 239 under an SR of 0.05 is placed in Table 3. As can be seen from the metrics in the table, our proposed
 240 method excels in recovery performance and running time.

241 4.2.2 Background Modeling from Surveillance Video

242 The aim of this task is to separate the background and foreground from Surveillance Video. We
 243 choose nine video sequences in Li dataset⁴ with the known foreground of size $144 \times 176 \times 20$ for
 244 testing, as shown in Table 4. It can be seen from the table that our proposed model is far ahead in

¹<https://engineering.purdue.edu/~biehl/MultiSpec/>

²<https://www.ehu.es/ccwintco/index.php/>

³<https://www.cs.columbia.edu/CAVE/databases/multispectral/>

⁴<http://perception.i2r.a-star.edu.sg/bkmodel/bkindex.html>

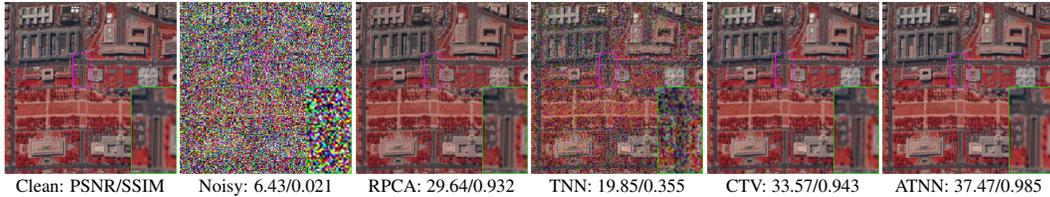


Figure 2: Denoised images of all competing methods with bands 58-27-9 as R-G-B under sparse noise with missing percent is 0.6 on simulated WDC dataset.



Figure 3: Recovered images of all competing methods under sample ratio of 0.05 on the 10th frame of Akiyo data.

245 terms of evaluation metrics and running time. Even compared to the CTV model that simultaneously
 246 utilizes local smoothness and low-rank priors, our method outperforms it. It is worth noting that
 247 although tensor-based models have a higher performance ceiling than matrix-based models due to
 248 their ability to capture more complex structures, for TNN regularization, if the variation matrix is not
 249 well defined, the results can even be worse than matrix-based methods. This further highlights the
 250 necessity of learning the transform matrix.

251 4.2.3 Color Video Completion

252 We selected four color video sequences, namely Akiyo, Foreman, Carphone, and Mobile, from the
 253 open-source YUV video dataset⁵. To ensure efficient comparison, we considered the first 100 frames
 254 of each color video sequence. As the color video is represented as a fourth-order tensor in RGB
 255 format with dimensions $144 \times 176 \times 3 \times 100$, we reshaped it into a tensor of size $144 \times 176 \times 300$. We
 256 adopted similar sample ratio (SR) settings as mentioned in Subsection 4.2.1. The performance metrics
 257 of all competing methods are presented in Table 5. It is evident that our proposed model consistently
 258 ranks within the top three, outperforming TCTV even under the Akiyo dataset. In comparison to
 259 other TNN models with fixed transform matrices, our model exhibits superior performance and
 260 remarkable computational efficiency. Furthermore, we provided the recovered images of some
 261 competing methods in Figure 3 for better visual comparison. For the convenience of observation, we
 262 have enlarged a part of the picture and placed the repair indicator below the picture. It can be seen
 263 that our proposed ATNN model has a strong ability to preserve the local information of the data.

264 5 Conclusion

265 In this paper, we introduce an efficient and learnable transformed tensor nuclear norm (TNN) model
 266 with a provable recovery guarantee. Our approach leverages the low-rank property of the third
 267 mode of the tensor to represent the tensor to be repaired as a combination of a small-sized tensor
 268 and a column-orthogonal matrix. The column-orthogonal matrix serves as an adaptively learned
 269 transform matrix derived from the data. By employing the nuclear norm on the small-sized tensor,
 270 our model achieves higher computational efficiency compared to existing methods. Additionally,
 271 we provide a theoretical framework that guarantees exact recovery for our proposed model with a
 272 column-orthogonal transform matrix. Extensive experimental results demonstrate the effectiveness of
 273 our approach and the validity of our theoretical findings.

274 **Limitations** There are two shortcomings in our work. Firstly, the recoverable theory does not
 275 explain how the low-rank property of the third dimension of the tensor affects the model’s restoration
 276 performance. Secondly, the ATNN model only learns the low-rank property of the tensor, without
 277 incorporating image priors. These two points will be the focus of our future research.

⁵<http://trace.eas.asu.edu/yuv/>

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