Structural and Morphological Study of Nickel Doped Tin Oxide Nanoparticles Synthesized Via Sol-Gel Technique

Virender Singh\(^1\)*, Davender Singh\(^2\), Suresh Kumar\(^1\), A.S. Maan\(^2\)

\(^1\) Department of Electronic Science, Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra - 136 119, India
\(^2\) Department of Physics, Maharsahi Dayanand University, Rohtak - 124 001, India

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In the present paper nickel doped tin oxide nanoparticles were synthesized by using simple sol–gel technique. The as-synthesized sample was characterized by means of X-ray powder diffraction (XRD) spectroscopy and Energy-dispersive X-ray spectroscopy (EDX) techniques for its structural analysis. XRD spectrum reveals that all the nanoparticles are highly polycrystalline in nature and five major peaks were clearly observed. Ni-doped SnO\(_2\) crystals existed mainly as tetragonal rutile structure. The average particle size of the nanoparticles was calculated from the Bragg reflection peaks at different angles, which can be indexed to (110), (101), (200), (002), (310), (112), and (202) plane reflections. The morphology of the nanoparticles confirms the presence of Nickel. No other impurities were found. The morphology of the nanoparticles was analyzed by using scanning electron microscope (SEM). The SEM image of the studied sample confirms the existence of very small, homogeneously distributed, spherical and crystalline nanoparticles.

Keywords: Nickel doped SnO\(_2\) Nanoparticles, Sol-Gel, XRD, EDX, SEM.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Tin oxide is a widely used, a stable and intensively studied n-type semiconductor with many potential applications in various nanodevices. The success in many of its applications depends on crystalline SnO\(_2\) with a uniform nano-size pore structure [1]. It is a well-known fact that materials at the nanoscale behave differently than their bulk counterparts because of large surface to volume ratio. Efforts toward the development of tin oxide nanomaterials with high sensitivity, excellent selectivity, quick response, and recovery behavior has been done over the years by using different synthesis techniques and various dopants. Tin oxide is used widely to control air pollution and to detect toxic or smelling gases at low levels in the air and in the field of domestic and industrial applications [2]. The tin oxide nanomaterials exhibit superior mechanical, thermal, chemical, electrical, and optical properties [3]. The doped SnO\(_2\) nanoparticles with different dopants are synthesized by various techniques such as sol–gel, hydrothermal, co-precipitation, mechano-chemical, combustion route, spray pyrolysis, electrochemical deposition laser ablation, micro-emulsions technique etc. [4-10]. Among all the above mention techniques the sol gel method is most suitable for the synthesis of nanomaterial due to its comparatively low processing cost and better control over the particle size of the crystallite. It was observed that the solvent used in the sol-gel process played very important role on the particle size of nano-crystalline SnO\(_2\) [11]. The aim of the present study is to synthesize and characterize nickel doped tin oxide nanoparticles [12] via sol-gel method.

2. EXPERIMENTAL DETAILS

The nickel doped tin oxide nanomaterials were prepared by sol-gel method. The xNi-(1-x)SnO\(_2\) (x = 0.01) nano-powders were successfully prepared by means of dissolving tin chloride (hydrous SnCl\(_2\)2H\(_2\)O (98% merck)) and nickel chloride (hydrous NiCl\(_2\)6H\(_2\)O (98% merck)) in distilled water, this was followed by the addition of sufficient amount of aqueous ammonia to the above solution which was then stirred for 2h. The dropping rate must be well controlled for the chemical homogeneity. The resulting precipitate were collected, washed in distilled water, and then dried at 100°C for several hours. Heating treatment of the synthesized nanoparticles was conducted in air for 2h at 350°C. The detailed characterization of the obtained sample was carried out using XRD, SEM and EDX spectroscopy. The XRD pattern was acquired by Cu K\(_{\alpha}\) radiation (1.5406 Å; 45 kV, 30 mA) and the surface morphology was observed by Scanning Electron Microscope (SEM).

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The XRD pattern of as-synthesized nickel doped tin oxide nanoparticles was recorded and shown in Figure 1. The nickel doped tin oxide nanoparticles shows number of strong Bragg reflections peaks at different angles, which can be indexed to (110), (101), (200), (211), (002), (310), (112), (202) and (312) planes. All these diffraction peaks were perfectly indexed to the rutile SnO\(_2\) structure (JCPDS File No. 77-0451, a=4.758Å and c=3.18Å). No additional characteristic peaks were observed, indicating that the Ni-doped tin oxide nanoparticles under study are highly crystalline and pure. The particle size (D) of Ni-doped SnO\(_2\) nanoparticles was calculated from the width of the XRD peaks using the Scherrer formula [15].

\[
D = \frac{0.94\lambda}{\beta \cos \theta},
\]

where \(D\) is the average crystallite domain size perpendicular to the reflecting planes, \(\lambda\) is wavelength (0.15418 Å) of X-rays used, \(\beta\) is the broadening of...
The surface morphology of the nanoparticles was studied by SEM. Scanning electron microscopy (SEM) provided further insight into the morphology and size details of the nickel doped tin oxide nanoparticles. Figure 3 shows the SEM image of the as synthesized nickel doped tin oxide nanoparticles. SEM image of the studied nanoparticles confirms the existence of very small, homogeneously distributed and extremely crystalline nanoparticles.

4. CONCLUSIONS

The Mg- and Hg-doped nanostructured CdS thin films have been fabricated successfully from a low cost chemical bath deposition method at room temperature. The SEM studies reveal the leaf and seed type morphologies of the Mg- and Hg-doped nanostructured CdS thin films. The XRD study confirms the crystalline nature with cubic structure. The optical studies observed increased band gap of doped nanostructured CdS thin films in comparison with pure CdS thin film. The above studies reveal that Mg- and Hg-doped nanostructured CdS thin films with higher energy band gaps can be useful in future nanostructured solar cell and other optoelectronic devices.

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