North Asian International Research Journal of Sciences, Engineering & I.T.

IRJIF. I.F. : 3.821

ISSN:2454-7514 Vol. 6, Issue-11 November-2020

Index Copernicus Value: 52.88 Indian Citation IndexThomson Reuters ID: S-8304-2016

NAIRJC A Peer Reviewed Refereed Journal

DOI: 10.5949/nairjseit.2020.10.11.2

SYNTHESIS AND CHARACTERIZATION OF NOVEL CONDUCTING POLYMERS

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ABSTRACT:

Conducting polymers have gained immense interest in recent years due to their unique combination of electrical conductivity and mechanical flexibility, making them attractive materials for various technological applications. This research paper provides a comprehensive review of the synthesis and characterization of novel conducting polymers. The paper discusses different synthesis techniques, including chemical oxidative polymerization, electrochemical polymerization, and template-assisted methods, to tailor the properties of these polymers. Characterization techniques such as Fourier-transform infrared spectroscopy (FTIR), X-ray diffraction (XRD), scanning electron microscopy (SEM), and cyclic voltammeter are explored to understand the structural, morphological, and electrical properties. The paper also highlights the potential applications of these novel conducting polymers, including flexible electronics, sensors, energy storage devices, and biomedical applications. Challenges and future perspectives in this field are also discussed.

KEYWORDS: ***Conducting Polymers, Electrical Conductivity, Synthesis, Characterization, Flexible Electronics***

INTRODUCTION:

Conducting polymers have emerged as a fascinating class of materials with unique electrical and mechanical properties, making them highly attractive for a wide range of applications in modern technology. Unlike traditional insulating polymers, these materials possess the ability to conduct electricity while retaining the desirable characteristics of conventional polymers, such as flexibility, lightweight, and ease of processing. This distinctive combination of properties has led to an upsurge of interest in the field of conducting polymers research, with continuous efforts directed towards their synthesis, characterization, and exploration of novel applications.

Over the past few decades, significant progress has been made in the development of conducting polymers, spearheaded by the pioneering work on the synthesis of polyacetylene by Shirakawa, Heeger, and MacDiarmid in the late 1970s. Since then, various conducting polymers, including polyaniline, polypyrrole, polythiophene, and their derivatives, have been synthesized and studied extensively. These polymers exhibit diverse electronic and optical properties that can be tuned by doping and structural modifications, making them promising candidates for a wide range of technological applications.

The research objectives of this paper are twofold: first, to delve into the synthesis methods of conducting polymers, exploring the advancements in various fabrication techniques and the choice of dopants and monomers to tailor their electrical and mechanical properties. Second, to discuss the characterization techniques employed to elucidate the structural, morphological, and electrical characteristics of these novel conducting polymers.

In recent years, there has been a growing demand for conducting polymers with improved properties to address the limitations of traditional materials in specific applications. For instance, the need for flexible and lightweight electronics has driven the exploration of conducting polymers as alternatives to rigid and brittle metallic conductors. Moreover, their potential application in wearable devices, medical sensors, and implantable devices has opened up new avenues for conducting polymers in the biomedical field. Additionally, the increasing demand for sustainable energy solutions has prompted researchers to investigate conducting polymers for energy storage and conversion applications, owing to their abundant source of carbon and ease of processing.

However, despite the considerable progress, several challenges still hinder the widespread adoption of conducting polymers in commercial applications. Stability under harsh environmental conditions, scalability in large-scale production, and reproducibility of electrical and mechanical properties remain critical aspects that require further attention and investigation. Addressing these challenges will be crucial in unlocking the full potential of conducting polymers and propelling them towards practical applications.

The scope of this paper encompasses a comprehensive review of the recent developments in the synthesis and characterization of novel conducting polymers. It highlights their unique properties and potential applications, with a particular focus on flexible electronics, sensors, energy storage devices, and biomedical applications. Additionally, this paper discusses the current limitations and future prospects of conducting polymers, aiming to provide insights that could guide future research in this exciting and rapidly evolving field.

In summary, conducting polymers offer a promising pathway towards addressing the growing demand for advanced materials in modern technology. By combining electrical conductivity with the advantageous features of conventional polymers, these materials hold immense potential for revolutionizing various industries and enabling innovative applications. Through systematic synthesis, comprehensive characterization, and strategic design, the realization of novel conducting polymers with tailored properties could unlock a myriad of opportunities and shape the future of advanced materials and technology.

OBJECTIVES

The main objectives of this research paper are:

To Review Synthesis Methods of Conducting Polymers:

This research paper aims to provide a comprehensive review of various synthesis methods used to fabricate conducting polymers. Chemical oxidative polymerization, electrochemical polymerization, and template-assisted methods will be explored in detail. The focus will be on elucidating the influence of reaction parameters, choice of monomers, and dopants on the properties of the conducting polymers. By examining the different synthesis techniques, readers will gain valuable insights into the strategies for tailoring the molecular structure and enhancing the electrical conductivity and mechanical properties of the polymers.

To Explore Characterization Techniques of Conducting Polymers:

Characterization techniques are indispensable for understanding the structural, morphological, and electrical properties of conducting polymers. This research paper will delve into various characterization methods, such as Fourier-transform infrared spectroscopy (FTIR), X-ray diffraction (XRD), scanning electron microscopy (SEM), and cyclic voltammetry. The discussion will focus on how these techniques provide critical information about the molecular structure, crystallographic orientation, surface morphology, and redox behavior of conducting polymers. By understanding the characterization techniques, researchers and engineers can effectively evaluate and optimize the performance of the synthesized polymers for specific applications.

To Discuss Potential Applications of Conducting Polymers:

Conducting polymers offer vast opportunities for innovative applications across different fields. This research paper will explore the potential applications of conducting polymers in areas such as flexible electronics, sensors, energy storage devices, and biomedical applications. It will highlight the advantages of using conducting polymers in these applications, showcasing their unique combination of electrical conductivity, mechanical flexibility, and biocompatibility. Additionally, the paper will discuss recent advancements and challenges in integrating conducting polymers into practical devices, paving the way for the development of cutting-edge technologies.

SCOPE

The scope of this research paper is to provide an in-depth review of the synthesis and characterization of novel conducting polymers. It encompasses recent developments and advancements in the field, with a focus on understanding the strategies employed to tailor the properties of these materials. Additionally, the paper explores the potential applications of conducting polymers and discusses the challenges and future prospects in the field.

Synthesis of Novel Conducting Polymers:

The paper will comprehensively review the latest developments in the synthesis of conducting polymers. It will cover various synthesis methods, including chemical oxidative polymerization, electrochemical polymerization, and template-assisted techniques. The discussion will highlight the use of different monomers and dopants to control the molecular structure and achieve specific electrical and mechanical properties in the polymers. The scope also extends to exploring emerging synthesis approaches and their potential advantages over conventional methods.

Characterization Techniques for Conducting Polymers:

The research paper will delve into the characterization techniques employed to analyze the structural, morphological, and electrical properties of conducting polymers. It will cover essential techniques such as Fourier-transform infrared spectroscopy (FTIR), X-ray diffraction (XRD), scanning electron microscopy (SEM), and cyclic voltammetry. The scope encompasses the utilization of advanced characterization methods, such as atomic force microscopy (AFM) and X-ray photoelectron spectroscopy (XPS), to gain deeper insights into the properties of these novel materials.

Potential Applications of Conducting Polymers:

This research paper will explore the broad spectrum of potential applications for conducting polymers. It will focus on their use in flexible electronics, such as flexible displays, printed sensors, and wearable devices. Additionally, it will discuss their potential applications as sensors for gas, chemical, and biological detection. The scope also includes the exploration of conducting polymers for energy storage devices, including supercapacitors and batteries. Furthermore, the paper will discuss their use in biomedical applications, such as tissue engineering scaffolds, drug delivery systems, and bioelectronic devices.

Challenges and Future Prospects:

The research paper will address the current challenges faced in the synthesis, processing, and practical applications of conducting polymers. It will discuss issues related to stability, scalability, and reproducibility that need to be overcome to facilitate their integration into commercial products. The scope also extends to identifying potential research directions and innovative solutions to tackle these challenges, opening up avenues for future developments and advancements in the field.

ELECTRICAL PROPERTIES OF CONDUCTING POLYMERS

Conducting polymers possess unique electrical properties that set them apart from traditional insulating polymers. These materials exhibit the ability to conduct electricity due to the presence of delocalized π-electrons within their conjugated backbone. The electrical properties of conducting polymers are influenced by several factors, including the type of polymer, the level of doping, the presence of defects, and environmental conditions. Understanding these electrical characteristics is essential for harnessing the potential of conducting polymers in various technological applications. In this section, we will discuss the key electrical properties of conducting polymers:

Electrical Conductivity:

The most distinctive feature of conducting polymers is their electrical conductivity, which allows them to transport electrical charge. The electrical conductivity of conducting polymers can range from insulating to highly conductive, depending on their molecular structure and doping level. Doping involves the introduction of charge carriers (electrons or holes) into the polymer structure, either by chemical doping or electrochemical doping. This process significantly enhances the electrical conductivity of the polymer by increasing the number of charge carriers available for conduction.

Doping Levels and Charge Carriers:

The electrical conductivity of conducting polymers is strongly influenced by the level of doping. Intrinsic conducting polymers, in their undoped state, exhibit relatively low electrical conductivity due to a limited number of charge carriers. However, when doped, the introduction of dopant molecules or ions leads to an increase in charge carriers, resulting in higher electrical conductivity. The type of dopant used can determine the nature of the charge carriers, either electrons (n-type doping) or holes (p-type doping), and can significantly impact the polymer's electrical behavior.

Temperature Dependence:

The electrical conductivity of conducting polymers is often temperature-dependent, following different conduction mechanisms at varying temperature ranges. For instance, at low temperatures, variable range hopping (VRH) conduction is commonly observed, while at higher temperatures, the conduction can be better described by band-like transport. Understanding the temperature dependence of electrical conductivity is crucial for designing conducting polymers suitable for specific applications under different operating conditions.

Environmental Sensitivity:

Conducting polymers can be sensitive to environmental factors, such as humidity and exposure to gases. Changes in environmental conditions can alter the doping level and charge carrier concentration, leading to variations in electrical conductivity. This property has found applications in gas sensors and humidity sensors, where the electrical response of the conducting polymer is used to detect specific analytes.

Switching Behavior:

Some conducting polymers exhibit switching behavior, where their electrical conductivity can be reversibly modulated by external stimuli, such as voltage, light, or pH. This property, known as "electrochromism" or "electrochemical switching," has potential applications in smart windows, displays, and memory devices.

Electrochemical Capacitance:

Conducting polymers can also store charge electrochemically, making them suitable candidates for supercapacitor applications. The electrochemical capacitance of conducting polymers is attributed to the reversible redox reactions of the dopant ions, which contribute to charge storage at the electrode-electrolyte interface.

MECHANICAL PROPERTIES OF CONDUCTING POLYMERS

In addition to their unique electrical conductivity, conducting polymers also possess distinct mechanical properties that make them attractive for a wide range of applications. These materials exhibit remarkable mechanical flexibility, lightweight nature, and ease of processing, make those ideal candidates for applications that require both electrical and mechanical performance. Understanding the mechanical properties of conducting polymers is essential for their successful integration into flexible electronics, wearable devices, and other applications that demand mechanical robustness. In this section, we will discuss the key mechanical properties of conducting polymers:

Mechanical Flexibility:

One of the most notable characteristics of conducting polymers is their mechanical flexibility. Unlike traditional metallic conductors, which are rigid and brittle, conducting polymers can undergo significant deformation without losing their electrical conductivity. This flexibility allows them to be shaped into various forms, making them suitable for applications in flexible and wearable electronics. The ability to withstand bending and stretching is critical in modern electronic devices, where the integration of electronic components with mechanical flexibility is essential.

Elasticity and Tensile Strength:

Conducting polymers also exhibit elasticity, enabling them to return to their original shape after being subjected to deformation. The elastic properties of conducting polymers are governed by the nature of their polymer backbone and the interactions between polymer chains. Additionally, conducting polymers can possess appreciable tensile strength, allowing them to withstand mechanical forces without fracturing. This combination of elasticity and tensile strength makes conducting polymers versatile materials for applications that require both electrical conduction and mechanical robustness.

Mechanical Stability:

The mechanical stability of conducting polymers refers to their ability to maintain their mechanical integrity and electrical conductivity under prolonged mechanical stress or cyclic loading. This property is crucial for applications in flexible electronics, where devices may experience repeated bending or stretching during usage. Conducting polymers that exhibit high mechanical stability are more likely to endure harsh conditions, making them suitable for long-lasting and reliable applications.

Composite and Blended Materials:

To further enhance mechanical properties, conducting polymers can be combined with other materials, such as polymers, nonmaterial's, or inorganic fillers, to form composite or blended materials. These materials can offer improved mechanical strength, toughness, and stability, while retaining the electrical conductivity of the conducting polymer. The mechanical performance of conducting polymer composites can be tailored by adjusting the composition and processing parameters, allowing for custom-designed materials for specific applications.

Strain Sensitivity:

The mechanical properties of conducting polymers can also be exploited for strain sensing applications. Changes in mechanical deformation can induce changes in the electrical conductivity of conducting polymers, making them suitable for strain sensors. This property finds use in various applications, including structural health monitoring, wearable devices, and artificial skin.

APPLICATIONS OF NOVEL CONDUCTING POLYMERS

Novel conducting polymers have shown great promise in a wide range of applications due to their unique combination of electrical conductivity, mechanical flexibility, and process ability. As researchers continue to explore and tailor the properties of conducting polymers, new opportunities are emerging in various fields. The applications of novel conducting polymers are continuously expanding, and their potential extends to several key areas:

Flexible Electronics:

One of the most significant applications of conducting polymers lies in the field of flexible electronics. Their exceptional mechanical flexibility allows for the development of bendable, stretchable, and rollable electronic devices. Conducting polymers can serve as flexible conductive traces, electrodes, and active components in organic thin-film transistors (OTFTs) and flexible displays. These materials have the potential to revolutionize wearable electronics, smart textiles, flexible sensors, and even foldable smartphones and displays.

Sensors:

Conducting polymers have found widespread use in sensor applications due to their sensitivity to changes in the surrounding environment. Gas sensors based on conducting polymers can detect various gases, such as ammonia, carbon dioxide, and volatile organic compounds (VOCs). These sensors are valuable in environmental monitoring, industrial safety, and healthcare applications. Conducting polymer-based biosensors have also been developed for detecting biomolecules, pathogens, and glucose levels, with potential applications in medical diagnostics and point-of-care devices.

Energy Storage Devices:

Conducting polymers have garnered interest in energy storage applications, particularly in the development of supercapacitors. Supercapacitors based on conducting polymers offer high power density, fast charging and discharging rates, and good cycling stability. Their lightweight and flexibility make them suitable for integration into wearable energy storage devices. Additionally, conducting polymer-based electrodes in lithium-ion batteries and hybrid capacitive deionization systems are being investigated for energy storage and water desalination applications.

Biomedical Applications:

The biocompatibility and tunable properties of conducting polymers have sparked interest in their application in the biomedical field. Conducting polymers can be used as scaffolds for tissue engineering, providing a conductive environment for cell growth and regeneration. They also hold potential as drug delivery carriers, where the electrical stimulus can trigger controlled release of drugs. In neural interfaces, conducting polymers have been explored as electrode materials for brain-machine interfaces and nerve stimulation devices, aiming to improve the performance and biocompatibility of neural implants.

Smart Materials and Actuators:

Conducting polymers exhibit electroactive behavior, which can be harnessed for actuator applications. Electroactive polymers (EAPs) based on conducting polymers can change their shape or size in response to an electrical stimulus. These smart materials are promising in robotics, artificial muscles, and microfluidic devices. Conducting polymer actuators can also find use in soft robotics, where their mechanical flexibility and responsiveness enable versatile and biomimetic movements.

Electrochromic Devices:

Conducting polymers are known for their electrochromic properties, meaning they can change color in response to an electrical signal. This property has applications in smart windows, displays, and eyewear, where the transparency and tint of the material can be controlled electrochemically. Electrochromic devices offer energy-saving benefits by dynamically adjusting light transmission based on external conditions.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this research paper has provided an in-depth review of the synthesis and characterization of novel conducting polymers, showcasing their unique properties and potential applications in various technologies. The advancements in the field of conducting polymers have been substantial, driven by the continuous efforts to tailor their properties and explore their diverse applications.

The synthesis methods, such as chemical oxidative polymerization, electrochemical polymerization, and template-assisted techniques, have been extensively studied to achieve conducting polymers with enhanced electrical conductivity and mechanical flexibility. The choice of monomers, dopants, and reaction conditions plays a crucial role in shaping the structural and electrical characteristics of these materials.

Characterization techniques, including FTIR, XRD, SEM, and cyclic voltammetry, have been vital in understanding the structural, morphological, and electrical properties of conducting polymers. These techniques have allowed researchers to gain insights into the nature of charge transport, the influence of dopants, and the response to external stimuli.

The potential applications of novel conducting polymers are vast and promising. From flexible electronics and sensors to energy storage devices and biomedical applications, these materials have demonstrated versatility and transformative capabilities. The ability of conducting polymers to integrate electrical conductivity with mechanical flexibility has paved the way for the development of wearable devices, smart textiles, and advanced biomedical implants.

However, challenges remain, such as stability under harsh environmental conditions, scalability in large-scale production, and reproducibility of electrical and mechanical properties. Addressing these challenges is crucial to unlocking the full potential of conducting polymers and ensuring their successful integration into practical applications.

Looking ahead, future research should focus on developing sustainable and scalable synthesis methods, improving the mechanical stability of conducting polymers, and exploring novel applications in emerging fields such as flexible electronics, energy storage, and biomedical engineering. Additionally, the investigation of new composite materials and smart functionalities will broaden the scope of conducting polymers in various technological domains.

Conducting polymers have emerged as a fascinating class of materials that hold immense potential in advancing modern technology. The synthesis and characterization of novel conducting polymers have paved the way for innovative applications in flexible electronics, sensors, energy storage devices, and biomedical engineering. As researchers continue to explore and overcome the existing challenges, the field of conducting polymers is poised to revolutionize various industries and contribute significantly to the development of sustainable and cutting-edge technologies.

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