

ANALYSIS OF ELECTROCHEMICALLY DEPOSITION ZNO AS PHOTOANODE FOR SOLAR CELLS

AINA MAISARAH BINTI ZAMBERI

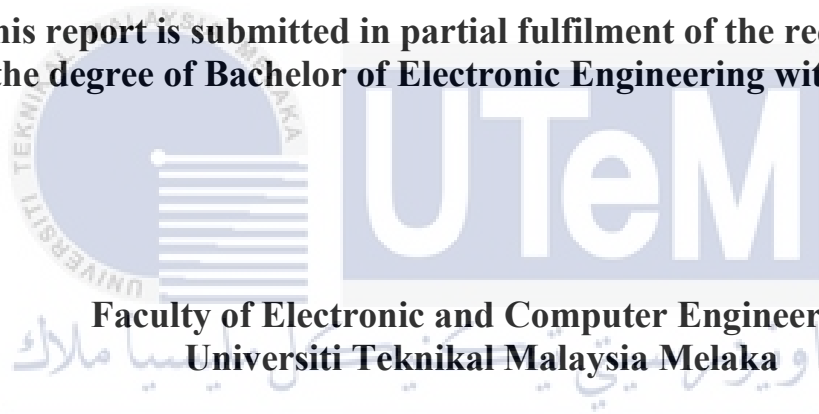


UNIVERSITI TEKNIKAL MALAYSIA MELAKA

**ANALYSIS OF ELECTROCHEMICALLY DEPOSITION
ZNO AS PHOTOANODE FOR SOLAR CELLS**

AINA MAISARAH BINTI ZAMBERI

**This report is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements
for the degree of Bachelor of Electronic Engineering with Honours**



**Faculty of Electronic and Computer Engineering
Universiti Teknikal Malaysia Melaka**

UNIVERSITI TEKNIKAL MALAYSIA MELAKA

2022

BORANG PENGESAHAN STATUS LAPORAN
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Sesi Pengajian : 2021/2022

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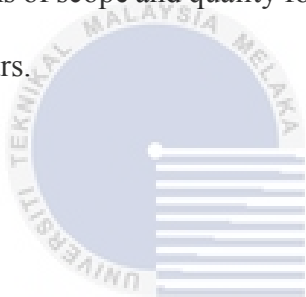
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DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my beloved parents and siblings, who have been my source

of encouragement.



اونيورسيتي تيكنيكل مليسيا ملاك

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ABSTRACT

A solar cell, also known as a photovoltaic cell, is one of the most promising renewable energy available. There are many methods to deposit a photoanode layer of DSSC, such as doctor blade, sputtering and spin coating; however, there are limitations to each of the methods. Electrochemical deposition, which is a three-electrode method, is a cost-effective method for depositing metal, metallic oxide, and composites. The three-electrode method can also control the coating's thickness and chemical composition by varying the deposition potential/current. Zinc Oxide (ZnO) is an n-type semiconductor with a wide bandgap energy value lying in the range of 3.37 eV. ZnO layers were deposited using an electrodeposition method by varying the solution's deposition time and molarity. The potential difference used in this experiment was -0.61V based on the cyclic voltammetry and chronoamperometry using a potentiostat and NOVA software. The qualities of the deposited ZnO have been studied using Scanning Electron Microscopy (SEM) and Ultraviolet-Visible Spectroscopy (UV-Vis) to find out their characterizations. This research emphasized the Analysis of Electrochemical Deposition ZnO as Photoanode for Solar Cells.

ABSTRAK

Sel suria, juga dikenali sebagai sel fotovoltaik, adalah salah satu tenaga boleh diperbaharui yang paling menjanjikan. Sel suria pemeka pewarna (DSSC) ialah sel solar generasi ketiga yang menukar tenaga suria kepada tenaga elektrik menggunakan bahan kos rendah dan prosedur fabrikasi mudah. Terdapat banyak kaedah untuk mendepositkan lapisan fotoanod DSSC, seperti “Dr.Blade”, “sputtering” dan “spin coating”; walau bagaimanapun, terdapat had untuk setiap kaedah. Pemendapan elektrokimia ialah kaedah kos efektif untuk mendepositkan logam, oksida logam dan komposit. Kaedah ini juga boleh mengawal ketebalan salutan dan komposisi kimia dengan mengubah potensi/arus pemendapan. Zink Oksida (ZnO) ialah semikonduktor jenis-n dengan nilai tenaga jurang jalur lebar terletak dalam julat 3.37 eV. Lapisan ZnO dimendapkan menggunakan kaedah elektrodeposisi dengan mengubah masa pemendapan dan kemolaran larutan. Beza keupayaan yang digunakan dalam eksperimen ini ialah -0.61V menggunakan perisian potensiostat dan NOVA. Kualiti ZnO termendap telah dikaji menggunakan Scanning Electron Microscopy (SEM), dan Ultraviolet-Visible Spectroscopy (UV-Vis).

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First and foremost, I would like to express my thankfulness to God, the Almighty, for giving me the insight and motivation to complete my Final Year Project. Without God's direction, this project would not have been finished on schedule. In addition, I would like to thank my parents, Zamberi bin Ahmad and Norazafiza binti Azhar, Nasrina binti Zolkifli and Mahayadin Shafie, for their emotional support in assisting me in completing the project.

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My supervisor, Dr. Muhammad Idzdiyar bin Idris, deserves my most profound appreciation for patiently teaching and leading me through my Final Year Project and supporting me in synthesizing dye-sensitized solar cells, and supplying the necessary equipment and chemicals for my Final Year Project.

Lastly, I want to thank everyone who directly or indirectly assisted me in finishing this project.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Declaration	
Approval	
Dedication	
Abstract	i
Abstrak	ii
Acknowledgements	iii
Table of Contents	iv
List of Figures	ix
List of Tables	xii
List of Symbols and Abbreviations	xiii
CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Project Introduction	1
1.2 Problem Statement	3
1.3 Project Aim and Project Question	4
1.3.1 Project Aim	4

1.3.2	Project Question	4
1.4	Objective & Scope	5
1.4.1	Objective	5
1.4.2	Scope of Work	5
1.5	Importance / Significant	7
CHAPTER 2 BACKGROUND STUDY		8
2.1	Renewable Energy Resources	8
2.1.1	Wind Energy	10
2.1.2	Tidal Energy	11
2.1.3	Hydro Energy	12
2.1.4	Geothermal Energy	12
2.1.5	Biomass Energy	13
2.1.6	Solar Energy	14
2.2	Solar Cell	15
2.2.1	Photovoltaic Effect	16
2.2.2	Three Generation of Solar Cells	18
2.2.3	First-Generation of Solar Cell	18
2.2.4	Second-Generation of Solar Cell	19
2.2.5	Third-Generation of Solar Cell	19
2.3	Dye-Sensitized Solar Cells (DSSCs)	20

2.3.1	Layers of DSSC	22
2.3.2	Working Principle	24
2.4	Perovskite Solar Cells	25
2.5	Zinc Oxide as Photoanode	27
2.6	Electrochemical Deposition Method	28
2.6.1	Two-Electrode System	28
2.6.2	Three-Electrode	30
2.7	Background Study of Electrochemical Deposition	31
CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY		38
3.1	Flowchart of Electrochemical Deposition	38
3.2	Research of Parameters	41
3.3	ITO Glass Preparation	46
3.3.1	Procedures for Preparing the ITO glass	46
3.3.2	Procedure for pH Calibration	47
3.4	Preparation Solution Zinc Nitrate Hexahydrate ($Zn(NO_3)_2 \cdot 6H_2O$) for Photoanode	48
3.5	Preparation Solution Sodium Hydroxide (NaOH)	48
3.6	Electrochemical Deposition of ZnO Photoanode	49
3.6.1	Setup for the potentiostat and NOVA software for electrodeposition	49
3.6.2	Electrochemical Deposition of ZnO	50

3.6.3	The Procedures of Electrodeposition ZnO using a Potentiostat	50
3.7	Material Characterizations of Photoanode	51
3.8	Preparation of the Nickel Oxide (NiO) and Potassium Hydroxide (KOH) for DSSC	52
3.9	Fabrication of Dye-Sensitized Solar Cell (DSSC)	53
3.10	Fabrication of Perovskite Solar Cell (PSC)	55
CHAPTER 4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION		56
4.1	Solution of Zinc Oxide by Varying the Deposition Time	56
4.2	Solution of Zinc Oxide by Varying the molarity and Deposition Time	57
4.3	Deposited Zinc Oxide Layer using Electrochemical Deposition	57
4.3.1	Deposited Zinc Oxide Layer by Varying the Deposition Time	57
4.3.2	Deposited Zinc Oxide Layer by Varying the Molarity and Deposition Time	58
4.4	Absorption Spectra of Zinc Oxide	58
4.4.1	Absorption Spectra of Zinc Oxide by varying the Deposition Time	58
4.4.2	Absorption Spectra of Zinc Oxide by Varying the Molarity and Deposition Time	61
4.5	Scanning Electron Analysis (SEM) Analysis	62
4.6	Fabrication of Solar Cells	65
4.6.1	Full Fabrication of Perovskite Sensitized Solar Cell (PSSC)	66
4.6.2	Full fabrication of Perovskite Solar Cell	67

CHAPTER 5 CONCLUSION AND FUTURE WORKS	69
5.1 Conclusion	69
5.2 Future Works	70
REFERENCES	71



LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1.1: Example of three-electrode	6
Figure 1.2: A sandwich form of DSSC	6
Figure 1.3: Structure of Perovskite Solar Cell	7
Figure 2.1: Type of renewable energy sources that exist nowadays	9
Figure 2.2: The blade of the wind turbine converts wind into electrical energy [15]	10
Figure 2.3: Tidal plant converts ocean wave into electrical energy [16]	11
Figure 2.4: The hydroelectric dam converts water into electrical energy [13]	12
Figure 2.5: The hot water from the earth's crust is converted into electrical energy [17]	12
Figure 2.6: The plant and animals wasted is generating the electricity [19]	13
Figure 2.7: Solar energy mechanism at the unit [12]	14
Figure 2.8: Solar energy at the small unit	14
Figure 2.9: Solar panels are made of individual solar cells that are connected together to create a panel or module [22]	16
Figure 2.10: Diagrammatic portrayal of PV generation from photons of sunlight absorbed near a junction between semiconductor layers a and b with different doping [21]	16
Figure 2.11: Outline of photovoltaic cells in a circuit. The diagram shows many cells assembled into a module [21]	17
Figure 2.12: The three generations of solar cells	18

Figure 2.13: National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) recorded the best efficiencies of best research solar cells worldwide for various photovoltaic technology [25]	21
Figure 2.14: The best efficiency of DSSC at 13% in the year 2020 [25]	21
Figure 2.15: Basic layers of DSSC [26]	21
Figure 2.16: Schematic representation of the components and the basic	22
Figure 2.17: Working principle of DSSC [28]	25
Figure 2.18: Layers of Perovskite Solar Cells	26
Figure 2.19: Simple schematic of two-electrode configuration where EA is the applied voltage and C and W are the counter and working electrodes, respectively [30]	29
Figure 2.20: Simple schematic of three-electrode configuration where EA is the applied voltage and C, W and R are the working and counter, and reference electrodes, respectively [30]	30
Figure 3.1: Flowchart of the process of electrochemical deposition	39
Figure 3.2: Flowchart of the process of fabricating DSSC	40
Figure 3.3: Flowchart of the process of fabricating perovskite	41
Figure 3.4: Process of sample cleaning	46
Figure 3.5: Process of the calibration on the pH meter	47
Figure 3.6: Process of the synthesis of ZnO solution	48
Figure 3.7: Process of the synthesis of NaOH solution	48
Figure 3.8: Parameters need to be changed in NOVA Software	49
Figure 3.9: Setup of the three-electrode system	50
Figure 3.10: Configurations of the SEM and UV-Vis machines	51
Figure 3.11: Process for the preparation of NiO	52
Figure 3.12: Procedure for assembling DSSC	53

Figure 3.13: Process of fabrication of Perovskite Solar Cells	55
Figure 4.1: The solution of zinc oxide was synthesized using a magnetic stirrer	56
Figure 4.2: The ZnO was deposited for a) 20 minutes, b) 30 minutes, c) 40 minutes, and d) 50 minutes, respectively, under deposition potentials of -0.61V at 90°C and pH of 5.74.	57
Figure 4.3: The ZnO was deposited for a) 15 minutes and 0.01M, b) 30 minutes and 0.01M, c) 150 minutes and 0.1M, and d) 30 minutes and 0.1M, respectively, under deposition potentials of -0.61V at 90°C and pH of 5.74.	58
Figure 4.4: Absorption spectra for deposited layers at 20, 30, 40, and 50 minutes.	59
Figure 4.5: Bandgap of deposited ZnO on ITO glass which different the deposition times as following a) 20 minutes, b) 30 minutes, c) 40 minutes, and d) 50 minutes.	60
Figure 4.6: Absorption spectra for samples with 0.1M at 15 minutes, 0.1M at 30 minutes, 0.01 at 15 minutes, and 0.01M at 30 minutes.	61
Figure 4.7: Bandgap of deposited ZnO on ITO glass which different in molarity and deposition times as follows a) 0.1M and 15 minutes, b) 0.1M and 30 minutes, c) 0.01M and 15 minutes, and d) 0.01M and 30 minutes.	62
Figure 4.8: The ZnO deposited varied -0.61V with the molarity 0.01M at 15 minutes of deposition time; a) magnification of 500 and b) magnification of 3000	63
Figure 4.9: The ZnO deposited varied -0.61V with the Molarity 0.01M at 30 minutes of deposition time; a) magnification of 500 and b) magnification of 3000	63
Figure 4.10: The ZnO deposited varied -0.61V with the Molarity 0.1M at 15 minutes of deposition time; a) magnification of 500 and b) magnification of 3000	64
Figure 4.11: The ZnO deposited varied -0.61V with the Molarity 0.1M at 30 minutes of deposition time; a) magnification of 500 and b) magnification of 3000	64
Figure 4.12: Comparison between 0.01M at 30 minutes and 0.1M at 30 minutes	65
Figure 4.13: The IV-Curve of Perovskite Sensitized Solar Cells assembled with various photoanode and counter electrodes.	65
Figure 4.14: Sandwich structure of the ZnO and CuO	66
Figure 4.15: Full Fabrication of Perovskite Solar Cell	67

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1.1: Weaknesses of spin coating, sputtering, and Dr. blade	3
Table 2.1: Specification of each component in DSSC	23
Table 2.2: Layers of Perovskite and its function [29]	26
Table 2.4: Comparison of research papers about the electrochemical deposition	31
Table 3.1: List of the previous articles that have been studied	42
Table 3.2: The parameters of the 0.1M ZnO electrochemical deposition by varying the deposition time at 20, 30, 40, and 50 minutes	44
Table 3.3: The parameters of the ZnO electrochemical deposition by varying the molarity into 0.1M and 0.01M and deposition time at 15 and 30 minutes	45

LIST OF SYMBOLS AND ABBREVIATIONS

For examples:

PV	:	Photovoltaic
DSSC	:	Dye-Sensitized Solar Cell
TCO	:	Transparent Conducting Oxide
Pt	:	Platinum
CuO	:	Copper Oxide
SEM	:	Scanning Electron Microscopes
UV-Vis	:	Ultraviolet-Visible Spectroscopy
PSC	:	Perovskite Solar Cell
ITO	:	Indium Tin Oxide
Ag/AgCl	:	Silver/Silver Chloride
IEA	:	International Energy Agency
DC	:	Direct Current
AC	:	Alternating Current
GaAs	:	Gallium Arsenide
CdTe	:	Cadmium Telluride
CIS	:	Copper Indium Diselenide
CIGS	:	Copper Indium Gallium Selenide

c-Si	: Crystalline Silicon
a-Si	: Amorphous Silicon
OPV	: Organic/Semi-organic PV panels
QD	: Quantum Dot
TiO ₂	: Titanium Dioxide
FTO	: Fluorine-Doped Tin Oxide
HOMO	: Highest Occupied Molecular Orbital
LUMO	: Lowest Unoccupied Molecular Orbital
ZnO	: Zinc Oxide
NiO	: Nickel Oxide
MoS ₂	: Molybdenum Disulfide
PET	: Flexible Polyethene Terephthalate
CV	: Cyclic Voltammetry
XRD	: X-Ray Diffraction
PCE	: Power Conversion Efficiency
FF	: Fill Factor
V _{oc}	: Open-Circuit Voltage
I _{sc}	: Short-Current Photocurrent
NaOH	: Sodium hydroxide
I-V	: Current-Voltage
HTL	: Hole Transport Layer
ETL	: Electron Transport Layer

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION



This chapter discusses the project introduction, problem statement, project aim, project question, objectives, and the scope of work. Discussion of all subtopics in this chapter is an initiative for this project.

1.1 Project Introduction

Our society requires energy to maintain our quality of life and underlie all other aspects of our economy. Renewable energy technologies promise plentiful, clean energy derived from self-renewing resources, including the Sun, Wind, Earth, and Plants. Solar energy is the radiant light and heat from the sun captured by various methods, including solar power generation, solar thermal energy, such as solar water heating, and solar architecture. A solar cell, also known as a photovoltaic cell, is an electrical device that uses the photovoltaic effect, a physical and chemical

phenomenon, to convert light energy directly into electricity using a semiconductor. Solar cells are divided into three generations based on the historical period and the types of materials utilized in their fabrication [1], [2], [3]. This research will investigate and discuss the electrochemical deposition of dye-sensitized solar cells (DSSC) under the third generation of solar cells. A DSSC is a low-cost solar cell that belongs to the thin-film solar cell family[4]–[7]. Zinc oxide (ZnO), one of the oldest known semiconductors, is a promising material among the numerous metal oxide materials for photovoltaic applications

Furthermore, toxic substances produce and process most semiconductors, causing environmental problems. Thus, research efforts have been made to develop materials that could guarantee optimal environmental compatibility, abundance, and photoactivity characteristics, especially in the last decade. As a result, developing novel materials and assembly processes for low-cost solar cells is a viable option. According to its low production cost and flexible manufacturing processes, dye-sensitized solar cells (DSSC) have received a lot of interest. Several synthesis methods, such as pulsed laser deposition, chemical vapor deposition, thermal oxidation, sol-gel, photochemical deposition, and electrodeposition, are often utilized to make ZnO thin films. The electrodeposition method has various benefits over other approaches: its simplicity, cheap equipment cost, ability to produce vast area of thin films, and control over film thickness [8]. There are two types of electrochemical deposition, which are two-electrode and three-electrode. This research used three-electrode deposition to deposit ZnO as photoanode for solar cells.

1.2 Problem Statement

Due to its low cost and good performance, dye-sensitized solar cells (DSSC) are gaining much attention as a future renewable energy source[9]. In DSSC, the dye takes the lead by ejecting electrons and activating the process when exposed to light. ITO-coated glass substrates, dye, photoanode, electrolytes, and the counter electrode are the main components of DSSCs [10].

Many methods to deposit a photoanode layer of DSSC, such as doctor blade, sputtering, and spin coating [11]; however, there are limitations for each method, such as in Table 1.1 below.

Table 1.1: Weaknesses of spin coating, sputtering, and Dr. blade

Method	Advantages	Limitations
Spin coating	Low cost and easy to deposit layer on a conductive glass	Easy to produce waste material because the spin coater cannot control the amount of the deposited layer
Sputtering	Use the RF-magnetron reactive to deposit layer, and the uniformity layer is good	High system cost and complexity
Doctor blade method	Low cost and simple method to deposit layer	The uniformity layer of the material is not good and cannot control the thickness of the deposited layer on the conductive glass

In this study, the solution proposed to deposit the ZnO layer as a photoanode was electrochemical deposition. Electrochemical deposition is a cost-effective method for depositing metal, metallic oxide, and composites. This method can also control the coating's thickness and chemical composition by varying the deposition potential/current. Due to its salient characteristics such as low cost, easy synthesis, non-toxicity, high stability, and good optoelectronic properties, ZnO has been widely used in organic solar cells (OSCs) and hybrid solar cells (HSCs) as an n-type inorganic semiconductor in organic solar cells (OSCs) and hybrid solar cells (HSCs).

1.3 Project Aim and Project Question

1.3.1 Project Aim

This project used a three-electrode system electrochemical deposition to deposit the metal oxide layer as a photoanode. Then, the metal oxide layer's qualities and structures were characterized using Scanning Electron Microscopes (SEM) and Ultraviolet-Visible Spectroscopy (UV-Vis). Next, the solar cell's performance was measured with solar simulation to measure the power conversion efficiency (PCE).

1.3.2 Project Question

1. How to deposit the ZnO layer as a photoanode on ITO glass using the three-electrode system?
2. What are the qualities of the layer deposited on ITO glass using electrochemical deposition?
3. What are the changes between the deposited layers if the molarity and deposition time were varied?