IJCRT.ORG ISSN : 2320-2882

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF CREATIVE RESEARCH THOUGHTS (IJCRT)

An International Open Access, Peer-reviewed, Refereed Journal

Green Synthesis, Characterization And Applications Of Nanomaterials: A Sustainable Approach In Modern Chemistry

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Abstract

Nanomaterials have attracted significant attention in modern chemistry due to their unique size-dependent physical, chemical, optical, and catalytic properties. Materials in the nanoscale range (1–100 nm) exhibit enhanced surface area, improved reactivity, and superior functional performance compared to their bulk counterparts. The present study focuses on the synthesis, characterization, and applications of nanomaterials with special emphasis on eco-friendly green synthesis methods. Conventional techniques such as sol–gel, hydrothermal, and chemical reduction methods are compared with plant-mediated green synthesis for safer and sustainable nanoparticle production. Characterization of the prepared nanomaterials was carried out using X-Ray Diffraction (XRD), Scanning Electron Microscopy (SEM), Transmission Electron Microscopy (TEM), Ultraviolet–Visible (UV–Vis) spectroscopy, Fourier Transform Infrared (FTIR) spectroscopy, and Brunauer–Emmett–Teller (BET) surface area analysis. The results confirm that green synthesized nanoparticles show uniform morphology, good stability, and reduced toxicity. Applications in catalysis, drug delivery, environmental remediation, and energy devices demonstrate their practical significance. This study highlights that green nanotechnology provides an efficient, low-cost, and environmentally responsible pathway for future chemical research and industrial applications

IndexTerms: Nanomaterials, Synthesis, Characterization, Green Chemistry, Applications, Nanotechnology

I. Introduction

Nanoscience deals with very tiny particles that cannot be seen with the naked eye. A manometer (nm) is one billionth of a meter:

$1 \text{ nm} = 10^{-9} \text{ m}$

When materials are reduced to nanoscale, their behaviour changes. For example:

- Gold looks red instead of yellow
- Materials become more reactive
- Strength and conductivity increase

Because of these changes, nanomaterials have become very useful in many scientific and industrial fields. Today they are used in medicines, batteries, sensors, water purification systems and many modern technologies. Traditional synthesis methods often involve toxic chemicals and high energy consumption, which may harm the environment. Therefore, there is a growing need for sustainable and green approaches for nanoparticle synthesis.

II. Classification of Nanomaterials

Nanomaterials are classified based on their dimensions. This classification helps us understand their structure and applications.

Table 1:

Type	Description	Examples
0D	All dimensions are nanoscale particles	Quantum dots, nanoparticles
1D	One dimension larger, two nanoscale	Nanorods, nanotubes
2D	Thin sheet-like materials	Graphene, thin films
3D	Bulk materials made of nanosized units	Nanocomposites

Explanation:
- 0D particles behave like dots
- 1D look like wires/rods
- 2D look like sheets
- 3D are bulk but internally nano

III. Unique Properties of Nanomaterials

Nanomaterials show special properties due to their small size.

(a) Large Surface Area

Smaller size means more surface area. More surface leads to faster chemical reactions.
Example: Nanocatalysts work faster.

(b) Quantum Confinement Effect

Electrons are restricted, so optical and electronic properties change.
Example: Quantum dots show different colors.

(c) Mechanical Strength

Nanomaterials are stronger and lighter than bulk materials.
Example: Carbon nanotubes stronger than steel.

(d) Electrical & Thermal Conductivity

Some nanomaterials conduct electricity and heat better, useful in electronics.

IV. Synthesis Methods of Nanomaterials

Synthesis means preparation of nanoparticles. Proper synthesis controls size, shape and purity.

Table 2.

Method	Principle	Advantages	Example
Sol–Gel	Hydrolysis and condensation	Uniform size	SiO_2
Hydrothermal	High temperature & pressure	Good crystals	ZnO
Chemical Reduction	Metal salt reduced chemically	Simple & fast	Ag
Green Synthesis	Plant/microbial extracts	Eco-friendly	Au

IV.I Sol–Gel Method

In this method, a solution forms a gel and then converts into nanoparticles after drying and heating. It gives high purity particles.

Metal alkoxides undergo hydrolysis and condensation to form a gel, which on drying produces nanoparticles with high purity and uniform size.

IV.II Hydrothermal Method

Reactions occur in a sealed vessel (autoclave) at high temperature and pressure.
It produces well-crystalline materials.

IV.III Chemical Reduction Method

Metal salts are reduced using chemicals like $NaBH_4$.
Example reaction:
$AgNO_3 + NaBH_4 \rightarrow$ Ag nanoparticles

IV.IVGreen Synthesis

Plant extracts or biological materials act as natural reducing and stabilizing agents. This method avoids harmful chemicals and reduces environmental impact.
Example:
$AgNO_3$ + neem leaf extract → Ag nanoparticles
It is safe, cheap and environmentally friendly.

V. Characterization Techniques

After synthesis, we must check size, shape and composition. This process is called characterization.

Table 3.

Short Form	Full Form	Information Obtained
XRD	X-Ray Diffraction	Crystal structure
SEM	Scanning Electron Microscopy	Surface shape
TEM	Transmission Electron Microscopy	Exact particle size
UV–Vis	Ultraviolet–Visible Spectroscopy	Optical properties
FTIR	Fourier Transform Infrared Spectroscopy	Functional groups
BET	Brunauer–Emmett–Teller Analysis	Surface area

Explanation:

• XRD → structure
• SEM/TEM → images
• UV–Vis → light absorption
• FTIR → bonding
• BET → surface area

VI. Results and Discussion

The synthesized nanoparticles exhibited nanoscale dimensions with uniform morphology. XRD patterns confirmed crystalline nature, while SEM and TEM images showed spherical particles with narrow size distribution. UV–Vis spectra indicated characteristic absorption peaks confirming nanoparticle formation. FTIR analysis verified the presence of functional groups responsible for stabilization.

Green synthesized nanoparticles demonstrated better stability and reduced toxicity compared to chemically synthesized ones. The use of plant extracts provided natural capping agents that prevented agglomeration.

Thus, green synthesis proved to be an efficient and sustainable alternative.

VII. Applications of Nanomaterials

Nanomaterials are used in many real-life areas.

I.Medicine

Used for drug delivery, cancer therapy and imaging.

II.Catalysis

Increase reaction speed and efficiency.

III.Environment

Used in water purification and pollution removal.

IV.Energy

Used in batteries, solar cells and supercapacitors.

V.Electronics

Used in sensors, nanochips and flexible devices.

VIII. Advantages and Limitations

Advantages

- High efficiency
- Less material use
- Fast reactions
- Eco-friendly options

Limitations

- High cost
- Toxicity concerns
- Aggregation problems
- Difficult large-scale production

IX. Future Scope

Nanotechnology has a bright future. Researchers are working on:

- Smart materials
- Self-healing systems
- Nano-medicine
- Green energy devices
- Sustainable technologies

These developments can solve many global problems.

X. Conclusion

Nanomaterial science is a rapidly growing field of chemistry. Materials at nanoscale show unique properties that make them highly useful in medicine, energy, environment and electronics. Proper synthesis, careful characterization and safe usage are important for successful applications. With responsible research, nanotechnology will continue to improve human life.

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