

## Advantages and applications of sustainable and green synthesis titania: A review

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### Abstract

*The methods that applicable to synthesis titanium dioxide (TiO<sub>2</sub>) nanoparticles have been thoroughly reviewed. In this review, the focus will be on both the chemical and green synthesis of TiO<sub>2</sub>. Presently, green synthesis innovated by various researchers to prepare TiO<sub>2</sub> nanoparticles due to their advantages offers where green synthesis does not require high quantity of chemical reagents and its offers sustainability. Green synthesis consists of and not limited to plant based, it can also originate from an aquatic animal, as well as enzymes where all of these categorized as natural resources that can be exploited for the green synthesis of nanomaterials coupled with the low cost and non-toxic final product. Although the chemical synthesis approach capable in producing large batch of nanoparticles, the disadvantages is it can harm the ecosystem due to their byproduct's formation. In addition, green synthesis will produce minimum chemical waste in comparison to chemical synthesis. Herein, details comparisons between these two approaches are properly reviewed.*

**Keywords:** titanium dioxide (TiO<sub>2</sub>), Green synthesis, chemical synthesis

### INTRODUCTION

Nanotechnology is a well-known branch of science and listed as one of the important parts nowadays. The nanoparticle that play crucial role in this field are classified into two: mineral and mineral oxide

nanoparticles. Nanoparticles can be easily defined as set of substances that has a single critical dimension less than 100 nanometers [1,2]. These nanoparticles possess distinctive biological, physical and also chemical properties which advances large number of applications mainly in medical application [3]. Mesoporous silica nanoparticles are an example of nanomaterial that have been applied in medical field [4]. Antimicrobial, magnetic, electronic and crystalline phase properties due to its high surface to volume ratio are key characteristics that attract numerous scientists to give attention to nanoparticles. Mineral oxides nanoparticles hold a crucial role in a large number of physics, chemistry as well as materials science. On top of that, the mineral oxides have been applied in the fabrication process of sensors, fuel cells, microelectronic circuit and coating for the passivation of surface against corrosion [5, 6]. However, instead of all of the advantages offers by metal oxide that been discovered, scientist is still struggled to understand on how nanoparticles move in different water media such as rivers, seawater and groundwater and contaminate the water sources [7]. So, in order to reduce the environmental impact of the nanoparticles, the chemical method of synthesis will be tune to green synthesis.

Titanium dioxide nanoparticle or  $\text{TiO}_2$  nanoparticles also sometimes been called as titanium pigment is categorized as metal oxides and the most efficacious photo catalyst for self-cleaning [8, 9].  $\text{TiO}_2$  been classified as binary metal oxide and this property is very important in the making of electronic devices such as thin film transistors [10]. It is also having profound impact on the performance where the tensile moduli of the composites increase [11].  $\text{TiO}_2$  is white in color, nonflammable, thermally stable and considered as non-hazard material [12-14]. Although  $\text{TiO}_2$  nanoparticles have many advantages,  $\text{TiO}_2$  is poorly soluble. Properties that possess by  $\text{TiO}_2$  nanoparticles have made it as an important nanomaterial in field of advanced materials. Recent trend focusses on the biosynthesis of  $\text{TiO}_2$  nanoparticles based on aquatic lives such as fish, algae and plankton and study its effect towards environment [15, 16].

In order to synthesize  $\text{TiO}_2$ , there are two main method namely green synthesize and chemical synthesize. Nowadays, green synthesize is preferable among the researchers due to its eco-friendly and low cost. So, it is more suitable to prepare the  $\text{TiO}_2$  nanoparticle via using green synthesize approach. Chemical synthesis required

many substances to produce a good TiO<sub>2</sub> nanoparticle for commercialization purposes and one of the methods is called sol gel method [17-18]. Both method either chemical or green synthesis process of nanoparticles will usually produce anatase structure of TiO<sub>2</sub> rather rutile phase [19-20].

### **Synthesis of TiO<sub>2</sub> via chemical methods**

Countless industry and companies nowadays prefer to use chemical methods in order to manufacture nanoparticles including TiO<sub>2</sub>. There are numerous techniques or methods that commonly used to manufacture TiO<sub>2</sub> such as hydrothermal, sol gel method, solution combustion, solvothermal, microwave assisted, co precipitation, electrospinning, sonoelectrochemical as well as chemical vapour deposition technique [3]. Hydrothermal process and sol gel process usually produce a very well-structured anatase TiO<sub>2</sub>. The difference of these process are the starting materials that required to manufacture anatase compound. Hydrothermal methods initiated with TiCl<sub>4</sub>, TiOCl<sub>2</sub> and amorphous TiO<sub>2</sub> solutions. On the other hand, sol gel method is based on the usage of titanium alkoxides[21]. One of the advantages that can be crucial for hydrothermal method is it has a very high purity end product and the product obtained from this method mostly in the form of anatase phase [22]. Besides that, solution combustion approach also globally chosen in many fields including materials production. Unfortunately, this method is quite complicated and required excessive quantities of chemicals such as phenol, glycine, acetic acid, nitric acid and hydrogen peroxide [23]. Solution combustion commonly dictate a self-sustained reaction in mixture of minerals nitrates and dissimilar fuels [24]. Basically, solution combustion is amalgam of ignition and solution that highly sensitive to other materials and it is include in the methods that required high temperature in order to produce nanoparticles especially TiO<sub>2</sub>.

Apart from solution combustion, sol gel method is basically tailored where one particle able to possess general monodisperses particles in large quantities. This phenomenon will occur when the initial process used fully potential of a condensed, high viscous hydroxide gel as a matrix for the process of growing particles to inhibit their coagulation [25]. Other than that, sol-gel method has been known as one of the best methods for the synthesis of noble

metal-dielectric nanocomposites and it had been applied countless in the past few years [26]. Microwave assisted process is a unique process that will involve the radiation in order to complete the synthesis. This process requires some chemical materials as well as at least typical microwave oven that operating at the frequency of  $2.450\text{s}^{-1}$ [27]. Instead of requiring chemical materials and radiation, this process is fast compared to the other processes. This is because it can perform under atmospheric pressures and doesn't require high pressure. Microwave-assisted process also been acknowledged as a high-quality process of synthesis for nanoparticles because the size of nanoparticles that needed can be easily controlled and crystallinity is high. In fact, high quality of nanoparticles [28]. The most complicated process and require high cost to produces nanoparticles is called chemical vapor deposition. This process required certain reactor such as radio frequency plasma enhanced chemical vapor deposition (RF PECVD) reactor. The middle tool of the reactor consists two parallel stainless-steel electrodes then divided by high glass cylinder. This process also needs high power of energy at least 300W and required controlled pressure during the process [29]. Besides that, production of high quality of thin film also required chemical vapor deposition. By applying this method, synthesis of  $\text{TiO}_2$  will produce a brookite phase of  $\text{TiO}_2$  with the morphology of it structures consisting a pyramidal feature and highly crystalline [30]. Solvothermal process is a very good process in order to require a good reactive and high quality of  $\text{TiO}_2$  in the form of anatase which mostly (001) surface [31]. Yet, same as other process, this method would produce a quite big average size of anatase but this event can be prevent by increase the ratio of alcohol/water to decrease the size of  $\text{TiO}_2$  nanoparticles [32]. Very recently, one promising method that been known as electrospinning have introduce among researchers. This method basically uses ethanol together with vinyl pyrrolidone and titanium tetraisopropoxide ( $\text{C}_{12}\text{H}_{28}\text{O}_4\text{Ti}$ ) with help the of electric field to produce amorphous  $\text{TiO}_2$ . To change the  $\text{TiO}_2$  into anatase phase, calcination is required and the temperature for calcination is about  $500^\circ\text{C}$  [33]. Sonoelectrochemical method is a new method and known as a fast process to fabricate  $\text{TiO}_2$ . This method required applied voltage in the range of 5-20V to collect a high quality of  $\text{TiO}_2$  and doubtless sonoelectrochemical can be used widely in industry that need fast production of  $\text{TiO}_2$  [34]. The main reason why chemical

techniques chosen in producing the nanoparticles by industries in order to have rapid production are due to simple and vastly applicable. Without doubt chemical methods are remarkable method that can help in order to synthesis the nanoparticles such as TiO<sub>2</sub>.

### TiO<sub>2</sub> synthesis via green approach

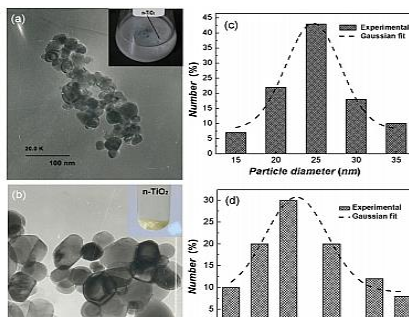
Scientist currently struggle to minimize the waste of chemical materials and implementation of sustainable processes through adoption of 12 fundamental principles in the process extraction of nanoparticles including TiO<sub>2</sub>. Those 12 fundamentals are prevention, atom economy, less hazardous chemical syntheses, designing safer chemicals, safer solvents and auxiliaries, use of renewable feedstocks, reduce derivatives, catalysis, design for degradation, real-time analysis for pollution prevention and inherently safer chemistry for accident prevention. [35]. Lately, countless experiments successfully conducted to use plant extract in producing nanoparticle such as silver, gold as well as TiO<sub>2</sub>. Table 1 shows several green extractions of TiO<sub>2</sub> from natural extract materials. Even though green synthesis been applied material production, results that obtained for TiO<sub>2</sub> may be different based on various properties especially when working with various green resources.

**Table 1. Review of green synthesis of the TiO<sub>2</sub> nanoparticles**

Sources	XRD	Type of TiO <sub>2</sub>	Grain sizes	FTIR	TEM	AFM	References
<i>Nyctanthes arbor-tristis</i> (Jasmine)	25.3° (101)	Anatase	100.00nm	-	-	Formation off uneven surface morphology due to presence of individual and agglomerated nanoparticles.	[36]
<i>Eclipta prostrata</i> (Bhangra)	27.8° (110)	Rutile	49.50nm	Alcohols (3427cm <sup>-1</sup> ) Phenols (2927cm <sup>-1</sup> ) Alkenes (2856cm <sup>-1</sup> ) Primary amines (1638cm <sup>-1</sup> ) Aliphatic amines (124cm <sup>-1</sup> )	-	-	[37]
<i>Euphorbia prostrata</i> (Prostrate spurge)	27.6° (110)	Rutile	83.22±1.50nm	Titania (2926cm <sup>-1</sup> ) O-H (3420cm <sup>-1</sup> ) C-H (2926cm <sup>-1</sup> ) NH (1618cm <sup>-1</sup> ) Phenols (1377cm <sup>-1</sup> ) Cyclic Ethers (1071cm <sup>-1</sup> ) Thioethers (649cm <sup>-1</sup> )	Spherical and quite polydisperse in shape.	-	[38]
<i>Psidium guajava</i> (Guava)	27.6° / 41.4° (110) / (111)	Anatase/Rutile	32.58nm	O-H (3420cm <sup>-1</sup> ) Alkenes (2922cm <sup>-1</sup> ) Carboxylic acid (1659cm <sup>-1</sup> ) Aromatic (1065cm <sup>-1</sup> )	-	-	[39]
<i>Catharanthus Roseus</i> (Madagascar periwinkle)	27.4°	Anatase	100.00nm	Titania (714cm <sup>-1</sup> ) Amines (1076cm <sup>-1</sup> ) N-H (1642cm <sup>-1</sup> ) O-H (3426cm <sup>-1</sup> )	Clustered and irregular shape, mostly aggregated	Formation of rutile and anatase, surface morphology is uneven due to the presence of some aggregates.	[40]

In order to utilize green synthesis methods, it requires some characteristics such that the materials produced are environmental friendly and nontoxic. Usually green synthesis used plant extract. Today, nanoparticles was successfully prepared from the extraction of microorganisms also considered as green synthesis since it involved ecofriendly and none of the of the byproducts is toxic [41]. For example, a fungus called *Fusarium oxysporum* can produce silica and titanium particles [42]. This finding has shown that scientists or researchers can take advantage on the microorganisms ability or capability in producing low cost and safe nanomaterials. Another example is microorganisms belongs to bacterium kingdom and called *Lactobacillus sp.* *Lactobacillus sp.* which was discovered by Moro in 1990 with properties such as non-sporeforming and non-flagellated rods found to be able producing  $\text{TiO}_2$  along with yeast which is categorized under kingdom of fungus. The outcome from the experiment was quite promising where anatase and rutile phase  $\text{TiO}_2$  been produced with different lattice parameters and the average particle sizes in the range of 30nm and 18nm for *Lactobacillus sp.* and yeast, respectively [43-44]. The figure 1 below is the TEM results showing the images and particle size distribution for *Lactobacillus sp.* and yeast respectively.

Figure 1; TEM images for *Lactobacillus sp.* and yeast respectively. Image taken from [45].



Based on this finding, it reveals that microorganism such as fungus and bacterium can be utilize in the production of nanoparticles and can be used in various field such as biomedical and engineering. Latest, enzymes based biosynthesis of  $\text{TiO}_2$  nanoparticles is one of the remarkable achievement that researcher explored. One of the enzymes that ever took in the process is called silicate and this

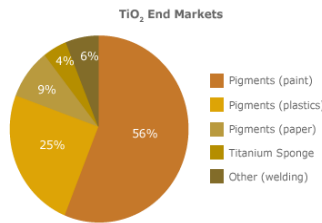
enzyme will undergo the process of purification from glassy skeletal element of a marine sponge [45]. Alpha amylase from *Aspergillus oryzae* is other enzymes that scientist used in the production of TiO<sub>2</sub> [46].

**Applications of TiO<sub>2</sub>**

Countless industries had realized that TiO<sub>2</sub> is a type of nanoparticles that may provide innumerable benefits or advantages for their products as well as things that involving cost. Table 2 and figure 2 shows the applications of TiO<sub>2</sub> widely in the world or in big industries.

**Table 2. Applications of TiO<sub>2</sub> in industries based on the types of TiO<sub>2</sub>**

No	Methods	Types of TiO <sub>2</sub>	Applications	References
1	- Microwave-Assisted - Sol gel method	Anatase	Photocatalyst, hydrogen evolution and pigment.	[48] [49]
2	- Hydrothermal -Typical synthesis	Rutile	Photodegradation and dye-sensitized solar cells.	[50] [51] [52]
3	-Sol gel method -Thermolysis	Brookite	Lithium ion batteries	[53] [54] [55]



**Figure 2: TiO<sub>2</sub> applications worldwide. Image adapted from [56].**

**CONCLUSION**

To conclude, various methods can be applied in producing TiO<sub>2</sub> based on the final aim of the end products and several other factors such as time taken in producing TiO<sub>2</sub>, the cost, the environmental impact and the vast production. Chemical process might provide rapid products for industries but at the same time will lead to the production of waste that might be harmful to the ecosystem not only to animals but also to mankind itself. So, green synthesis offers sustainability, ecofriendly and non-toxic TiO<sub>2</sub> which will open up the applications of TiO<sub>2</sub> into various medical and health sciences. Green synthesis also offers minimum consumption of toxic materials.

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