

Synergistic Effect of Nanocarbons and their Supported Single/Binary Transition Metal Oxides on Dye Removal

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Abstract

Nanocarbons such as nanopore-structured carbon, carbon nanotubes and graphene have inherently excellent conductivity, large specific surface area, and chemical and mechanical stability. The combination of single/binary transition metal oxides with nanocarbon materials provides synergistic effect on their applications such as in environment and energy aspects, superior to the individual component alone. This article briefly described the enhanced performance of the dye removal with nanocarbons and their supported single/binary transition metal oxides in recent literature.

Introduction

A significant volume of printing and dyeing effluent has been generating worldwide. The amount of discharged textile dye wastewater accounts for high percentage of total wastewater discharge, posing a serious danger to environmental security [1,2]. Additionally, the dyes are non-biodegradable, mutagenic and carcinogenic effects to humans. As a result, establishing modern and cost-effective techniques to meet stated criteria for remediating water and wastewater, as well as population needs, is now a requirement. Among developed methods, many researchers focused on the adsorption using metal oxide supported in single or binary form on different carbon materials as a promising method to overcome the previous shortcomings of adsorption by activated carbon (AC) alone, for example [3,4]. Accordingly, the combination of metal oxides with carbon materials can enhance the adsorption of dyes with further degradation operations according to type of these oxides including advanced oxidation processes (e.g., Fenton-oxidation, photo-oxidation as exposed to light source and wet oxidation with H_2O_2) [3-7]. Thus, a synergistic effect is obtained due to the presence of single/binary transition metal oxides (S/BTMOs) supported on carbon materials. Among them, binary transition metal oxides with spinel structures such as $CuMn_2O_4$, $MnCo_2O_4$, $ZnMn_2O_4$, $NiMn_2O_4$, $CuCo_2O_4$, $MnFe_2O_4$, and Mn_2CuO_4 have recently become an importance in industrial, environmental and energy applications [8-13].

Activated carbons and their supported single/binary transition metal oxides (S/BTMOs) for enhanced dye removal

In recent years, the loaded magnetic metal oxides on the AC gained much interest in order to improve the adsorption capacity and make the possible recovery of powdered adsorbents [3,4]. For example, some studies have prepared magnetic oxides in single/binary states using especially iron oxide for developing a magnetized activated carbon by simple economic separation. The adsorption and recovery by magnetic separation of AC loaded by Fe_2O_3 [14], $Au-Fe_3O_4$ [15], and $NiFe_2O_4$ [16] have greatly improved. Other oxides such as cerium dioxide

(CeO₂), zinc oxide (ZnO) [17], manganese dioxide (MnO₂) [18] titanium oxide (TiO₂) [19] and Ce-TiO₂ [20] have been supported on AC to increase the catalytic degradation of dyes. These oxides loaded on AC can increase the convenience of operation, recovery, and efficiency of adsorption processes as a result of a synergistic effect.

Carbon nanotubes and their supported S/BTMOs for enhanced dye removal

Carbonaceous nanostructures are a deterministic support in water treatment because of their functional properties such as large surface area, high mechanical strength, high porosity, a significant aspect ratio, strong thermal and electrical properties, good chemical stability, impressive hydrophobicity, simplicity of use, and separation characteristics [21,22]. In particular, magnetic oxides loaded on carbon nanotubes (CNTs) hold remarkable properties such as surface-volume ratio, higher surface area and convenient separation methods to be effective adsorbents in removal of heavy metals and dye [23]. Recently, the synthesis of manganese dioxide (MnO₂) loaded on multi-walled carbon nanotubes (MWCNTs) has attracted tremendous increasing research interest in dye removal via Fenton-reaction degradation [24,25]. The combination of both adsorption process and catalytic oxidation processes through MnO₂/MWCNTs nanocomposite system could be provided a simple, efficiently and environmentally friendly water treatment. Photodegradation of methylene blue dye enhanced significantly over fabricated CNTs-supported Mn-TiO₂ [5], CNTs/TiO₂/AgNPs/surfactant nanocomposites [7], as well as Fenton-catalyst based Cu₂S-TiO₂/MWCNTs nanocomposites [6]. NiO and Co₂O₃, NiCo₂O₄, and NiCo₂O₄/MWCNTs nanocomposites have been synthesized and studied for photodegradation of Reactive Red 120 dye [26], where NiCo₂O₄/MWCNTs enhanced largely the photodegradation.

Graphenes and their supported S/BTMOs for enhanced dye removal

Graphene has emerged as a useful nano-adsorbent for environmental applications because of its high theoretical specific surface area (~2630m²g⁻¹) [27]. Moreover, abundant oxygen-containing functional groups have been incorporated in graphene to get graphene oxide (GO) and reduced graphene oxide (RGO) to enhance their adsorption capability [28,29]. Maximum adsorption capacities of methylene blue dye on the MFe₂O₄@GO (M=Cu, Co or Ni) were 25.81, 50.15 and 76.34mg g⁻¹, respectively [30]. Hsieh et al. reported degradation of acid orange 7 (AO7) by Pt-TiO₂/G nanocomposites [31]. Pt-TiO₂ can be served as a charge-generating centre while graphene acted as an electron acceptor and transporter in the composite. Ultra large surface area and strong π-π interaction on the surface of graphene - based metal oxides are responsible for adsorption [28].

Conclusion

Nanocarbons such as nanopore-structured carbon, carbon nanotubes (CNTs) and graphene can be used as substrates for the loading of single/binary transition metal oxides to make nanocomposites. The combination of metal oxides with

nanocarbon materials gives synergistic effect on dye removal. The nanocomposites showed enhanced adsorption of dyes with further degradation processes according to type of these oxides, including advanced oxidation processes as reported in literature as Fenton-oxidation, photo-oxidation as exposed to light source and wet oxidation with H₂O₂. Among them, binary transition metal oxides with spinel structures such as CuMn₂O₄, MnCo₂O₄, ZnMn₂O₄, NiMn₂O₄, CuCo₂O₄, MnFe₂O₄, and Mn₂CuO₄ loaded on nanocarbons have recently become an importance in industrial, environmental and energy applications.

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Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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