

CONTENTS

Chapter 1: Introduction and Literature review

1.1 Introduction.....	3
1.2. Background and Development of Photovoltaics.....	3
1.2.1. Solar Radiation	3
1.2.2. Air Mass	5
1.2.3. History and Development of Photovoltaic	7
1.2.4. Shockley-Queisser limit.....	9
1.3. Classification of Solar cell.....	10
1.3.1 Conventional p-n Junction Solar Cells.....	11
1.3.1.1 First Generation Solar cells.....	12
1.3.1.2 Second Generation Solar Cells.....	14
1.3.1.3 Third Generation Solar cells.....	16
1.3.1.3.1 Organic Solar Cells.....	17
1.3.1.3.2 Perovskite Solar Cells.....	21
1.3.1.3.3 Dye Sensitized Solar Cells.....	23
1.3.1.3.4 Quantum Dots Sensitized Solar Cells.....	24
1.4 Device Structure and Working Principle of QDSSCs.....	26
1.4.1 Devices Components of QDSSCs.....	28
1.4.1.1 Photoanode.....	28
1.4.1.2 Counter Electrode.....	29
1.4.1.2.1 Platinum.....	29
1.4.1.2.2 Graphene.....	31
1.4.1.3 Electrolytes.....	32

1.4.1.3.1 Liquid Electrolyte.....	32
1.4.1.3.2 Solid State Electrolyte.....	34
1.4.1.3.3 Gel Electrolyte.....	35
1.4.1.3.4 Polyelectrolyte.....	36
1.4.1.3.5 Polyurethane Ionomer.....	37
1.5 Scope and Objectives of Present Work.....	38
1.6 Plan of the Present Work.....	40
Chapter 2: Experimental Section	
2.1 Synthesis of Quantum dots.....	45
2.1.1 Materials.....	45
2.1.2 Synthesis of the CdS Quantum Dots via Solution Mixing Method.....	45
2.1.3 Synthesis of the CdS Quantum Dots via SILAR Method.....	47
2.1.4 Synthesis of the CdSe Quantum Dots via Hot Injection Method.....	46
2.2 Deposition of the ZnSe Passivation Layer.....	48
2.3 Synthesis of the Graphene Oxide.....	49
2.4 Functionalization of MWCNTs.....	50
2.5 Synthesis of Polymer.....	50
2.5.1 Synthesis of the Thermoplastic Polyurethane Polymer.....	50
2.5.2 Synthesis of the Chemically GO-tagged Polyurethane Polymer.....	51
2.5.3 Synthesis of the Chemically f-MWCMTs- tagged Polyurethane Polymer.....	52
2.6 Functionalization of the Polyurethane Polymer.....	52
2.7 Preparation of the Ionomer Gel.....	52
2.8 Fabrication of QDSSCs.....	53

2.8.1 Preparation of Photoanode.....	53
2.8.2 Preparation Counter Anode.....	54
2.8.3 Solar Cell Measurement.....	54
2.9 Characterization Technique.....	55
2.9.1 ¹ H NMR Spectroscopy.....	55
2.9.2 FTIR Spectroscopy.....	55
2.9.3 UV-visible Absorption Spectroscopy.....	56
2.9.4 X-ray Diffraction (XRD).....	56
2.9.5 Dynamic Light Scattering (DLS).....	56
2.9.6 Scanning Electron Microscopy (SEM).....	57
2.9.7 Transmission Electron Microscopy (TEM).....	57
2.9.8 Cyclic Voltammetry (CV).....	57
2.9.9 Linear Sweep Voltammetry.....	58
2.9.10. Electrochemical Impedance Spectroscopy.....	58
2.9.11 Thermogravimetric Analysis (TGA).....	58
2.9.12 Differential Scanning Calorimetry (DSC).....	59
2.10 Measurement and Calculation.....	59
2.10.1 Degree of Sulfonation on Hard Segments Content in Polyurethane Ionomer.....	59
2.10.2 Calculation of the % Crystallinity.....	60
2.10.3 Calculation of Optical Band Gap and HOMO-LUMO Energy Levels.....	60
2.10.4 Calculation of HOMO-LUMO Energy Levels.....	61
2.10.5 Ionic Conductivity.....	61
2.10.6 Electron Conductivity.....	62

2.10.7 Electrolyte Uptake or Solvent Absorbent Power.....	62
2.10.8 Free Electron Lifetime Measurement.....	62
2.10.10 Theoretical Calculation of Open Circuit Potential.....	63
2.11 J-V Characteristics Measurements and its Photovoltaic Parameter.....	63
2.11.1 Short Circuit Current Density (Jsc).....	64
2.11.2 Open Circuit Voltage.....	64
2.11.3 Fill Factor.....	64
2.11.4 Photovoltaic Conversion Efficiency.....	65

Chapter 3: Functionalized Thermoplastic Polyurethane Gel Electrolyte for Cosensitized TiO₂/CdS/CdSe Photoanode Solar Cells with High Efficiency

3.1 Introduction.....	69
3.2 Results and Discussion.....	70
3.2.1 Attachment of Pendant Group and its Interaction with Polyurethane Chain.....	70
3.2.2 Thermal Stability of Polyurethane Ionomer.....	74
3.2.3 Electrochemical Analysis and Measurements of Polyurethane Ionomer.....	76
3.3 Quantum Dots Synthesis, Quantum Confinements and its Optimization.....	79
3.3.1 Electrochemical Response of CdS and CdSe Quantum dots.....	79
3.3.2 Particle Size, Optical Response and its Interaction.....	80
3.4 Fabrication of QDSSCs and its Photovoltaic Conversion Efficiency.....	82
3.4.1 Light Harvesting Efficiency (LHE), Energy Profile Diagram and Photovoltaic Reaction.....	82
3.5 Hole Transportation, Redox Reaction and PCE of QDSSCs.....	86
3.6 Conclusion.....	90

Chapter 4: Functionalized Polyurethane Composite Gel Electrolyte with Cosensitized Photoanode for Higher Solar Cell Efficiency Using a Passivation Layer

4.1 Introduction.....95

4.2 Results and Discussion.....97

 4.2.1 Chemical Tagging of Graphene Oxide and its Interaction with Polymer Chains.....97

 4.2.2 Molar Mass and Thermal stability of GO-Tagged Polyurethane Ionomer100

 4.2.3 Electrochemical Response of GO-Tagged Polyurethane Ionomer102

4.3 Quantum Dots Synthesis, Morphology, and Optical Properties107

4.4 Energy Levels Through Electrochemistry110

4.5 Energy Diagram, Passivation Effect and Hole Transports Mechanism112

4.6 Light-Harvesting Efficiency and Device Structure117

4.7 Photovoltaic Performance of QDSSCs119

4.8 Conclusion.....122

Chapter 5: Non-toxic CuInS₂ Quantum Dots Sensitized Solar Cell with Functionalized Thermoplast Polyurethane Gel Electrolyte

5.1 Introduction.....127

5.2 Results and Discussion.....129

 5.2.1 Synthesis of MWCNTs-Tagged Polyurethane and its Functionalized Ionomer.....129

 5.2.2 Electrochemical Behavior of the CNTs-tagged Polyurethane and its Ionomer.....136

5.3 Microscopic Characterization of CuInS₂ QDs140

5.4 Optical and Electrochemical Properties of Polymer and QDs142

5.5 Energy-Profile Diagram, Hole Transportation and Devices Structure144

5.6 Photovoltaic Performance149

5.7 Conclusion.....152

Chapter 6: The Effect of Chemical Tagging of Graphene Oxide in Thermoplastic Polyurethane on Gelation Behavior

6.1 Introduction.....157

6.2 Results and Discussion.....158

6.2.1 Interaction of GO with Polymer Chain in terms of Gelation, Structural, Morphology and Thermal properties158

6.3 Effect of Chemical Tagging on Rheological Behavior164

6.4 Viscous Flow Behavior165

6.5 Stress Relaxation Behavior167

6.6 Conclusion.....170

Chapter 7 Conclusion and Scope of Future Work

7.1 Conclusion.....171

7.2 Scope of the Future Work.....176

References.....177

List of Scheme

Scheme 1: Schematic reaction synthesis of the polyurethane ionomer.....	37
Scheme 2.1: Schematic synthesis of the CdS quantum dots via solution mixing method.....	46
Scheme 2.2: Schematic diagram of the growth of the CdS quantum dots via SILAR method.....	47
Scheme 2.3: Schematic diagram of the synthesis of CdSe quantum dots.....	48
Scheme 2.4: Schematic diagram for the deposition of ZnSe passivation layer.....	49
Scheme 2.5: Schematic preparation for the ionomer gel.....	53
Scheme 3.1: The synthesis of the pure polyurethane and its subsequent.....	71
Scheme 4.1: Reaction scheme for the synthesis of GO tagged polyurethane (PU-GO) in three stages and its subsequent functionalization (SPU-GO)	98
Scheme 5.1: Functionalization of MWCNTs and synthesis of f-MWCNT tagged polyurethane polymer (PU-CNT) and its subsequent functionalized polymer (SPU-CNT).....	130
Scheme 6.1: Schematic diagram of the synthesis of PU-GO polymer hybrid (PU-GO-C).....	159

List of the Figures

Figure 1.1 Solar radiation spectrum on the Earth's surface.....	4
Figure 1.2 Air mass calculated from the zenith point.....	6
Figure 1.3 World's photovoltaic market growth.....	7
Figure 1.4 Growth per region of the world's photovoltaic market 2016-2022.....	8
Figure 1.5 Variation of the Shockley-Queisser Limit with band gap of various semiconductor materials.....	9
Figure 1.6 Band energy diagram of p-n junction solar cell under irradiation of light.....	12
Figure 1.7 Cross-section of monocrystalline silicon solar cell.....	13
Figure 1.8 Energy band diagram of p-i-n junction under the irradiation of light.....	15
Figure 1.9 Schematic diagram of a thin film solar cell.....	16
Figure 1.10 Differences between a bi layer junction (a) and a bulk heterojunction (b).....	18
Figure 1.11 Structure and energy level for a standard BHJ solar cell. The active blend is composed by the intermixed phase of the donor and acceptor materials.....	20
Figure 1.12 Perovskite structure of ABX_3 where $A = CH_3NH_3$, $B = Pb$, and $X = Cl, Br$ or I	21
Figure 1.13 Two different types of perovskite solar cells diagram	22
Figure 1.14 Structure diagram of dye sensitized solar cells.....	24
Figure 1.15 Typical device structure of QDSSCs.....	27
Figure 3.1: (a) 1H NMR spectra of pure and various functionalized PUs (b) degree of sulfonation as a function of the sulfonating agents.....	72

Figure 3.2: (a) FTIR measurements of pure and various degree of functionalized PUs (b) UV-vis spectroscopy measurements of pure and functionalized PUs.....73

Figure 3.3: (a) TGA thermograms of pure and functionalized PUs (b) DTA of pure and functionalized PUs (c) DSC measurements of pure and functionalized PUs.....75

Figure 3.4: (a) Potentiodynamic polarization (I-V) measurements of mild steel with and without the inhibitor in 0.5 M H₂SO₄; (b) variation of percentage inhibition efficiency with inhibitor concentration.....77

Figure 3.5: (a) CV measurements of indicated PU and functionalized PUs; (b) optical band gap of various functionalized PUs.....78

Figure 3.6: (a) CV measurements of CdS QDs; (b) CV measurements of CdSe QDs (c) optical band of CdS and CdSe QDs.....79

Figure 3.7: (a) FTIR spectra of synthesized CdS and CdSe (b) UV-visible spectra of CdS and CdSe QDs.....81

Figure 3.5: (a) TEM bright-field image and particle size distribution of CdS in the inset (b) TEM image and particle size distribution of CdSe QDs.....82

Figure 3.9: (a) UV-visible absorbance spectra of FTO/TiO₂, FTO/TiO₂/CdS, and FTO/TiO₂/CdS/CdSe; (b) light harvesting efficiency of photoanode (FTO/TiO₂, FTO/TiO₂/CdS, and FTO/TiO₂/CdS/CdSe).....83

Figure 3.10: (a) comparative band energy diagram of functionalized SPU-1 and CdSe quantum dots; (b) comparative band energy diagram of functionalized SPU-2 and CdSe quantum dots; (c) comparative band energy diagram of functionalized SPU-3 and CdSe quantum dots.....84

Figure 3.11: (a) Energy profile diagram of TiO₂, CdS, and CdSe QDs with SPU-3 gel electrolytes with energy levels as calculated from E_g, E_{HOMO}, and E_{LUMO}. The arrow indicates the flow of

excitons under a suitable energy level; (b) comparison of the energy level of the SPU polymer with CdSe QDs showing difficulty in transport of the holes.....85

Figure 3.12: (a) Array of the photoanode and solar excitation mechanism for the constructed solar cells; (b) layer by layer deposition of TiO₂, CdS, and CdSe to fabricate the photoanode; (c) J-V characteristics measurements to calculate the photocurrent density and open circuit voltage under 1-sun illumination (100 mw/cm²); (d) power voltage curve to calculate the PCE of the indicated QDSSCs.....87

Figure 3.13: (a) represent the photocurrent density-potential curve using the SPU-1 gel electrolyte with TiO₂/CdS/CdSe photoanode; (b) represent the power-voltage (J-V) curve using the SPU-1 gel electrolyte with TiO₂/CdS/CdSe photoanode; (c) represent the photocurrent density-potential curve using the SPU-2 gel electrolyte with TiO₂/CdS/CdSe photoanode; (d) represent the power-voltage (J-V) curve using the SPU-2 gel electrolyte with TiO₂/CdS/CdSe photoanode.....89

Figure 4.1: (a) ¹H NMR spectra of pure PU, PU-GO and functionalized polymer (SPU-GO), inset figure shows the magnified spectrum in the indicated zone; (b) FTIR spectra of PP, PP-GO, PU-GO and SPU-GO showing appearance of new peak and shifting of peak position; (c) UV-vis absorption spectra of PP, PP-GO, PU-GO and functionalized polymer (SPU-GO) showing shifting of peak position.....99

Figure 4.2: (a) DSC thermograms of PP, PP-GO, PU-GO and SPU-GO showing the melting temperatures; and (b) TGA thermograms of PP, PP-GO, PU-GO and SPU-GO showing relative thermal stability; (c) DSC thermograms of PP, PP-GO, PU-GO and SPU-GO showing the melting temperatures100

Figure 4.3: (a) Nyquist plots for the indicated pure and functionalized PUs; (b) Arrhenius plots of the pure and indicated functionalized polymers.....103

Figure 4.4: (a) Potentiodynamic polarization measurement of mild steel with and without the indicated inhibitors in 0.5 M H ₂ SO ₄ solution; and (b) percentage inhibition efficiency as a function of inhibitor (SPU-GO-CC) concentration.....	104
Figure 4.5: (a) UV-vis absorption spectra of CdS and CdSe showing the absorption peak; (b) FTIR spectra of synthesized CdS and CdSe QDs.....	107
Figure 4.6: The UV-Vis absorption spectroscopy of EDTA capped and Uncapped of CdS QDs.	108
Figure 4.7: (a) TEM bright field image and particle distribution of CdS QDs; and (b) TEM bright field image and particle size distribution of CdSe QDs.....	109
Figure 4.8: (a) CV voltammograms of PU-GO, SPU-GO and SPU-GO-CC polymer/composite; (b) optical band gap measurement of SPU-GO and SPU-GO-CC polymer/composite; (c) CV voltammograms of CdS and CdSe QDs; and (d) optical band gap measurements of CdS and CdSe QDs	110
Figure 4.9: The CV measurement of functionalized polymer with varying content of conducting carbon additives.....	112
Figure 4.10 (a): The HOMO and LUMO energy levels of various functionalized polymers are used to draw the energy profile diagrams of functionalized polymers.....	113
Figure 4.10 (b): The comparative band energy diagrams of functionalized polymer with and without passivation layer.....	114
Figure 4.10 (c): The energy levels diagrams of SPU-GO polymers and QDs.....	115
Figure 4.10 (d): The energy levels diagrams of SPU-GO-CC polymers and QDs.....	115
Figure 4.10 (e): The energy levels diagrams of SPU-GO-CC polymer and QDs with passivation layer.....	116

Figure 4.11: (a) Energy profile diagram of TiO₂, CdS and CdSe with SPU-GO-CC gel electrolyte; (b) comparison of energy level of the SPU-GO and SPU-GO-CC with CdSe QDs showing the transports behavior of holes.....116

Figure 4.12: (a) Light harvesting efficiency of layer-by-layer deposition of QDs photoanodes FTO/TiO₂, FTO/TiO₂/CdS, FTO/TiO₂/CdS/CdSe and ZnSe passivation layer; and (b) Solar excitation mechanism and layered structure of fabricated QDSSCs.....118

Figure 4.13: (a) *J-V* characteristics measurement to calculate the photocurrent density and open circuit voltage under 1-Sun illumination (100 mW/cm²); and (b) power-voltage curve to calculate the power conversion efficiency (PCE) of the indicated QDSSCs.....120

Figure 5.1(a): ¹³C NMR spectroscopy measurements for pristine and functionalized MWCNTs, (b) FTIR measurements of pristine and functionalized MWCNTs, (c) UV-vis absorption measurements of pristine and functionalized MWCNTs.....132

Figure 5.2: (a) ¹H NMR spectra of PU, PU-CNT and SPU-CNT polymer, (b) FTIR spectroscopic pattern for PP, PP-CNT, PU-CNT, and SPU-CNT polymer, (c) absorption spectroscopic measurements of PP, PP-CNT, PU-CNT, and SPU-CNT polymer.....133

Figure 5.3: (a) Raman spectroscopic pattern for MWCNTs, f-MWCNTs, PP, PP-CNT, PU-CNT, and SPU-CNT polymer, (b) Thermogravimetric measurements for PP, PP-CNT, PU-CNT, and SPU-CNT polymer, (c) Differential scanning calorimetry measurements for PP, PP-CNT, PU-CNT, and SPU-CNT polymers.....135

Figure 5.4: (a) Nyquist plots for the indicated pure and functionalized PUs, (b) ionic conductivity for PP, PP-CNT, PU-CNT, and SPU-CNT polymers.....136

Figure 5.5: (a) Potentiodynamic polarization measurements of mild steel with and without the indicated inhibitors in 0.5 M H₂SO₄ solution; and (b) percentage inhibitor efficiency as a function of inhibitor (SPU-CNT) concentration.....138

Figure 5.6: (a) TEM bright field image and particle size distribution, (b) FTIR spectra of the synthesized CuInS₂ QDs, (c) UV-vis absorption spectra of CuInS₂ QDs; (d) optical band measurement of CuInS₂ QDs.....141

Figure 5.7: (a) CV measurements of PU-CNT and SPU-CNT polymers, (b) optical band gap measurements of PU-CNT and SPU-CNT polymers, (c) CV measurements of CuInS₂ QDs, (d) relative light harvesting efficiency of FTO/TiO₂ and FTO/TiO₂/CuInS₂ QDs.....143

Figure 5.8: (a) Energy profile diagram of TiO₂, CuInS₂ with SPU-CNTs gel electrolyte using the platinum as counter electrode.....145

Figure 5.8: (b) Energy profile diagram of TiO₂, CuInS₂ with SPU-CNTs gel electrolyte using the nickel as counter electrode.....146

Figure 5.8: (c) Energy profile diagram of TiO₂, CuInS₂ with SPU-CNTs gel electrolyte using the Au (gold) as counter electrode.....147

Figure 5.9: (a) Energy profile diagram of TiO₂, CuInS₂ with SPU-CNTs gel electrolyte using the gold as counter electrode; (b) comparative energy levels of the SPU-CNTs with various counter electrode (Pt, Ni, and Au) showing the transportation of holes, (c) schematic layer structure of fabricated QDSSCs, (d) schematic representation of solar excitation mechanism and hole transportation behavior inside the fabricated QDSSCs.....148

Figure 5.10: (a) *J-V* characteristics measurements to calculate the photocurrent density and open-circuit voltage under 1 Sun illumination (100 mW cm^{-2}); and power-voltage curve to calculate the power conversion efficiency (PCE) of the indicated QDSSCs.....150

Figure 6.1: (a) Schematic diagram of physical mixing of GO in PU (PU-GO-P); (b) Schematic diagram of the chemical tagging of GO in PU chain (PU-GO-C); (c) Photographic images of pure PU, PU-GO-P and PU-GO-C gel at 25°C160

Figure 6.2: (a) Gelation kinetics of pure PU, PU-GO-P and tagged polymer nanocomposites (PU-GO-C); (b) Thermogravimetric curves of indicated gels showing relative rate of solvent evaporation; and (c) DSC thermograms of PU, PU-GO-P, and PU-GO-C gels showing the relative gel melting through vertical lines.....161

Figure 6.3: (a) UV-vis absorption spectra of PU, PU-GO-P and PU-GO-C nanocomposites dried gel; (b) FTIR spectra of chemically tagged and physical mixture of indicated nanocomposite dried gels; (c) XRD patterns of PU, PU-GO-P and PU-GO-C dried gels.....162

Figure 6.4: (d) SEM images of pure PU and chemically tagged nanocomposite dried gel (PU-GO-C).....163

Figure 6.5: (a) Frequency sweep measurement of polymer nanocomposites gels in terms of storage modulus, loss modulus and complex viscosity as a function of angular frequency measured at (25°C).....165

Figure 6.6: (a) viscosity flow curve behavior of PU, PU-GO-P and PU-GO-C nanocomposite gels as a function of shear rate; and (b) Constant shear measurement ($\dot{\gamma} = 1 \text{ s}^{-1}$) of nanocomposite gels as function of time.....166

Figure 6.7: Stress relaxation behavior of pure PU, PU-GO-P, and PU-GO-C gels at 25°C168

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1.1: The distance between the various planet and Sun and the solar irradiance on the respected surfaces.....	5
Table 1.2: Comparison between QDSSCs and DSSCs.....	25
Table 3.1: Corrosion Current Density, Potential, and Percentage Inhibition Efficiency of Functionalized PUs (SPUs) at Different Concentrations.....	78
Table 3.2: Short-circuit Current Density (J_{sc}), Open-circuit Voltage (V_{oc}), FF, and PCE (η) of Various Cells Using the Indicated Photoanode and SPU-3 Polymer Gel Electrolytes.....	88
Table 4.1: The resistance and conductivities of various pure and functionalized polymer / composite.....	105
Table 4.2: The corrosion current density, potential, corrosion rate density and percentage inhibition efficiency of functionalized polymer at different concentration.....	106
Table 4.3: Open-circuit voltage (V_{oc}), short-circuit current density (J_{sc}), fill factor and power conversion efficiency, PCE (η) of various Cells using the cosensitized photoanode and polymer gel electrolytes with and without ZnSe passivation layer.....	121
Table 5.1: The resistance and conductivities of pure, CNT-tagged and functionalized polymer..	137
Table 5.2: Corrosion current density, potential, corrosion rate density and percentage inhibition efficiency of functionalized polymer (SPU-CNT) at different concentration.....	140
Table 5.3: Photocurrent density, open circuit voltage, fill factor, and power conversion efficiency of various cells using the SPU-CNT polymer gel electrolytes, $TiO_2/CuInS_2$ photoanode and prepared various counter electrode.....	152
Table 6.1: Various parameters as obtained from the fitting of the curve as per the Chasset and Thrion equation.....	168