

Contents

CERTIFICATE	i
DECLARATION BY THE CANDIDATE	iii
COPYRIGHT TRANSFER CERTIFICATE	v
Acknowledgments	vii
Contents	xi
LIST OF FIGURES	xv
LIST OF TABLES	xxv
LIST OF SYMBOLS AND ABBREVIATIONS	xxvii
PREFACE	xxix
CHAPTER 1: Introduction and Literature Review	1
1.1 Overview.....	1
1.2 Fuel Cells Basics	3
1.2.1 History of Fuel Cell:.....	4
1.2.2 Working principle of the f Fuel cell	5
1.2.3 Types of Fuel cells.....	8
1.3 Solid Oxide Fuel Cell (SOFC)	9
1.3.1 The basic operation of SOFC	10
1.3.2 Components of SOFC.....	12
1.4 Reaction and Kinetic mechanism for the air electrode.....	16
1.4.1 Mechanism of Oxygen Reduction Reaction (ORR)	17
1.4.2 Mechanism for Oxygen Evolution Reaction (OER)	21
1.5 Electrodes for fuel Cells: An Overview	24
1.5.1 Magnetite based cathodes	24
1.5.2 Ferrite based cathodes.....	25
1.5.3 Cobaltite based cathode.....	26
1.5.4 Ferro-cobaltite based cathode	27
1.5.5 Nickelate based cathodes.....	28
1.6 State of the Art: Nickelate based cathode	28

1.6.1	Perovskite structure.....	29
1.6.2	Ruddlesden-popper type oxide:.....	30
1.7	Layered $\text{Ln}_2\text{NiO}_{4+\delta}$ nickelates:	31
1.7.1	Overview of $\text{Sm}_{2-x}\text{Sr}_x\text{NiO}_{4-\delta}$	35
1.8	The objective of the Present Research Work	36
CHAPTER 2: Materials and Methods		41
2.1	Overview	41
2.2	Specification of the Materials used	41
2.3	Synthesis of Materials.....	42
2.3.1	Solid-state reaction route (SSR)	42
2.3.2	Sol Gel Method	44
2.3.3	Spin Coating Technique:	45
2.3.4	Pulse Laser Deposition Technique (PLD).....	46
2.4	Characterization Techniques	48
2.4.1	Thermogravimetric Analysis (TGA)	48
2.4.2	Differential Scanning Calorimetry (DSC)	49
2.4.3	Bench-Top X-Ray Diffraction (BT-XRD).....	51
2.4.4	Fourier-Transform Infrared Spectroscopy (FTIR).....	53
2.4.5	Scanning Electron Microscopy (SEM)	55
2.4.6	Atomic Force Microscopy (AFM).....	57
2.4.7	X-ray Photoelectron Spectroscopy (XPS)	59
2.4.8	Cyclic Voltammetry (CV)	61
2.4.9	Density Measurement.....	63
2.5	Methods and Analysis.....	64
2.5.1	Rietveld Refinement Technique.....	64
2.5.2	Software for Analyzing the Obtained Data	67
CHAPTER 3: Oxygen reduction reaction in a Ruddlesden-Popper perovskite $\text{SmSrNiO}_{4-\delta}$.....		71
3.1	Introduction	71
3.2	Methodology.....	73
3.2.1	Sample preparation	73
3.2.2	Characterization techniques	73
3.3	Result and discussion.....	74

3.3.1	Structural details of the calcined powder	74
3.3.2	Structural Variation after CV	89
3.4	Conclusion	96
CHAPTER 4: Electrocatalytic behaviour for $\text{Sm}_{2-x}\text{Sr}_x\text{NiO}_{4-6}$ ($x = 0.4$ to 1.0) Ruddlesden Popper based systems		99
4.1	Introduction.....	99
4.2	Experimental Procedure.....	102
4.2.1	Synthesis Technique	102
4.2.2	Characterization techniques.....	103
4.3	Results and Discussion	104
4.3.1	Structural and electrical Studies.....	104
4.3.2	Thermogravimetric studies	111
4.3.3	Microstructural Studies	112
4.3.4	Catalysis Studies	113
4.4	Conclusion	133
CHAPTER 5: Electrochemical performance of A-site substituted SmSrNiO_{4-6} for energy storage applications.....		137
5.1	Introduction.....	137
5.2	Methods and Materials	139
5.2.1	Synthesis Technique	139
5.2.2	Characterization Techniques	140
5.3	Results and Discussion	140
5.3.1	Thermogravimetry analysis	140
5.3.2	Structural and microstructural studies.....	142
5.3.3	Electrochemical properties	147
5.3.4	Electronic Studies	155
5.3.5	Conclusion	160
CHAPTER 6: Electrocatalytic activity of nickel oxide thin film:		163
6.1	Introduction.....	163
6.2	Synthesis and characterization of electrocatalyst.....	165
6.3	Results and Discussion	166
6.3.1	Structural Studies	166

6.3.2	AFM and SEM studies	167
6.3.3	FTIR analysis.....	169
6.3.4	Electrocatalytic Studies	169
6.4	Conclusion.....	179
	CHAPTER 7: Conclusions and Future Scopes	183
7.1	Conclusion of the Present Investigation	183
7.2	Scope for Future Work.....	186
	References	187
	List of Publications	209