Characterization Techniques for Nanomaterials in Energy Storage Across South African Settings

Likhane Ngubeni[1]**, Nthabi Sikhosana**[2]**, Sifiso Makhubelekwe**[1,3]

[1] Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT)

[2] Department of Research, University of Johannesburg

[3] University of Johannesburg

Correspondence: lngubeni@hotmail.com

Author notes

Likhane Ngubeni is affiliated with Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT) and focuses on Physics research in Africa.
Nthabi Sikhosana is affiliated with Department of Research, University of Johannesburg and focuses on Physics research in Africa.
Sifiso Makhubelekwe is affiliated with University of Johannesburg and focuses on Physics research in Africa.

Abstract

Nanomaterials are increasingly used in energy storage applications due to their unique properties such as high surface area and enhanced conductivity. In South Africa, various settings offer diverse opportunities for research into nanomaterials, including their characterization techniques. A comparative study design was employed using a mixed-method approach combining laboratory experimentation with literature review. Techniques such as X-ray diffraction (XRD) for phase identification, scanning electron microscopy (SEM) for morphology analysis, and Raman spectroscopy for structural characterization were compared in terms of their precision and cost-effectiveness. The findings indicate that SEM provided the most consistent results across different samples, with a high proportion of materials showing uniform morphological features. XRD was found to be more reliable in identifying specific nanomaterial phases, while Raman spectroscopy offered insights into structural variations within certain materials. This study highlights the importance of selecting appropriate characterization techniques based on material properties and environmental conditions. The contribution of this research is the identification of optimal methods for characterizing nanomaterials in energy storage applications across diverse South African settings. Further studies should include a broader range of materials and environments to validate these findings, with an emphasis on developing cost-effective characterization protocols suitable for resource-limited contexts. The empirical specification follows $Y = \beta_{0+\beta}^{\rightarrow} p\, X + varepsilon$, and inference is reported with uncertainty-aware statistical criteria.

Keywords: *Geochemistry, Nanoparticles, Scanning Electron Microscopy, X-ray Diffraction, DFT Modelling, Catalysis, Carbon Materials*

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