

PREPARATION AND CHARACTERIZATION  
OF SUPPORTED NANO-ZERO VALENT IRON  
FOR TREATMENT OF ORGANIC  
POLLUTANTS IN WATER

ATYAF KHALID HAMMED AL-DAHAN

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA PAHANG



## **SUPERVISOR'S DECLARATION**

We hereby declare that we have checked this thesis and in our opinion, this thesis is adequate in terms of scope and quality for the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Chemistry.

---

(Supervisor's Signature)

Full Name : DR. MOHD HASBI BIN AB. RAHIM

Position : ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR

Date : 2017



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I hereby declare that the work in this thesis is based on my original work except for quotations and citations which have been duly acknowledged. I also declare that it has not been previously or concurrently submitted for any other degree at Universiti Malaysia Pahang or any other institutions.

---

(Student's Signature)

Full Name : ATYAF KHALID HAMMED AL-DAHAN

ID Number : PSK13006

Date : May 2017

PREPARATION AND CHARACTERIZATION OF SUPPORTED NANO-ZERO  
VALENT IRON FOR TREATMENT OF ORGANIC POLLUTANTS IN WATER

ATYAF KHALID HAMMED AL-DAHAN

Thesis submitted in fulfillment of the requirements  
for the award of the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy

Faculty of Industrial Sciences & Technology  
UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA PAHANG

MAY 2017

## **DEDICATION**

To

My Father and my younger sister Spirits in heaven and my beloved Mother

In Recognition of Their Worth, Love, and Respect

My brothers

My sisters

My friends

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Atyaf Khalid Hammed Al-Dahan

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## LIST OF SYMBOLS

$q_e$	Uptake of adsorbate at equilibrium time
$C_e$	The final concentration (mg/L)
$C_i$	The initial concentration (mg/L),
$S$	The dosage concentration
$m$	The mass of adsorbent
$V$	The initial volume of adsorbate solution
$b_v$	The breakthrough volume of the adsorbate (L).
$\Delta G$	The standard free energy change
$\Delta H$	The standard enthalpy change
$\Delta S$	The standard entropy change
$\frac{dq}{dt}$	The rate of the uptake(mg/g)
$k_1$	The rate constant of pseudo first model (1/min).
$q_t$	Uptake the adsorbate with the change of time(mg/g),
$k_2$	The rate constant of the pseudo second order model, (g mg <sup>-1</sup> min <sup>-1</sup> )
$R$	The gas constant (8.13 J/mol K)
$T(K)$	The absolute temperature
$B$	The constant gives the mean free energy
$E$	Free energy per molecule of the adsorbate
$q_e$	The adsorbate on the adsorbent (mg/g),
$q_m$	The maximum adsorption capacity of monolayer coverage (mg/g)
$b$	The constant related to the binding site (L/mg),
$C_e$	The concentration of molecule in the solution at equilibrium (mg /L).
$K$	The constant value
$1/n$	The constant for the intensity of the adsorption
$K_d$	The distribution coefficient (L/g).
$D$	The mean diameter the Scherer's' constant
$\theta$	The Bragg angle
$\beta$	The width of peak at half height
$\lambda$	The X-Ray wavelength
$K$	The shape factor with value of about 0.9.

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CTS/MMT	Chitosan/Montmorillonite
DBPs	Disinfection By-products
DDT	Dichlorodiphenyltrichloroethane
FTIR	Fourier Transform Infrared
FESEM	Field Emission Scanning Electron Microscopy
BET,(S <sub>BET</sub> )	Specific surface area by Brunauer-Emmett- Teller
IUPAC	International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry
MB	Methylene Blue
MSN	Mesoporous Silica
NZVI	Nano Zero Valent Iron
NZVI/AL	Nano Zero Valent Iron supported on Alumina
NZVI/MSN	Nano Zero Valent Iron supported on Mesoporous silica
NZVI/SuAL	Nano Zero Valent Iron supported on carbon-coating alumina
NZVI/SuMSN	Nano Zero Valent Iron supported on carbon-coating Mesoporous silica
NZVI/SuZSM	Nano Zero Valent Iron supported on carbon-coating zeolite
NZVI/ZSM	Nano Zero Valent Iron supported on zeolite
HCB	Hex-chloric benzene
PCB	Poly chlorinated bi phenyl
PCDD/Fs	Polychlorinated di-benzoyl-dioxins and Di-benzoyl furans
POPs	Persistent Organic Pollutants
OCPs	Organic chlorine pesticides
TEM	Transmission Electron Microscopy
TCP	2,4,6-Trichlorophenol
CHCl <sub>3</sub>	Trichloromethane/Chloroform
TGA	Thermal Gravimetric Analysis
US EPA	United States Environmental Protection Agency.
VOCs	Volatile organic compounds
ZSM-5	Zeolite Socony Mobil-5

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## ABSTRAK

Kehadiran bahan pencemar organik berbahaya dalam aliran air mengakibatkan masalah alam sekitar dan kesihatan. Oleh itu, kaedah penyingkiran yang berkesan adalah amat diperlukan. Salah satu kaedah penyingkiran yang berkesan serta ringkas dan murah adalah melalui proses penjerapan menggunakan bahan penjerap bersaiz nano seperti besi nano sifar valen (NZVI). Walau bagaimanapun, NZVI mempunyai beberapa kelemahan utama seperti kecenderungan untuk mengumpal serta kurang lasak yang menjejaskan kecekapan penjerapan. Oleh itu, NZVI tersokong telah diperkenalkan dan ditambahbaik melalui proses penyalutan lapisan karbon menggunakan D-glukosa sebagai sumber karbon yang baru. Ciri-ciri penjerap telah dikenalpasti menggunakan beberapa kaedah dan instrumentasi pencirian seperti XRD, FTIR, penjerapan gas  $N_2$ , TGA, FESEM-EDX dan TEM. Suhu dan keadaan dimana proses penyalutan karbon telah dikenalpasti memainkan peranan penting dalam menghasilkan lapisan karbon yang sekata serta mempunyai komposisi permukaan yang diperlukan bagi proses penjerapan yang cekap. Dalam kes ini, suhu pada  $500^\circ\text{C}$  adalah paling sesuai dan telah dibuktikan melalui nilai kecekapan penjerap serta hasil pencirian. Seterusnya, kajian lanjut kecekapan penjerap telah dibuat dengan menggunakan metilena biru (MB), 2, 4, 6-triklorofenol (TCP) dan kloroform ( $\text{CHCl}_3$ ) dalam larutan akuueus. Secara umum, penjerap bersalut karbon menghasilkan kapasiti penjerapan yang lebih tinggi. Parameter penjerapan telah dinilai (masa keseimbangan, 0-180 min; dos penjerap, 0.05-0.1g; kepekatan awal bahan jerapan, 10-40mg/L; suhu,  $30\text{-}50^\circ\text{C}$  dan pH larutan, 2-9) untuk semua penjerap. Mekanisma proses jerapan telah ditentukan berdasarkan model isoterma Freundlich dan Langmuir dan didapati bahawa model Freundlich adalah sesuai untuk penjerapan MB. Nilai jerapan yang dibandingkan melalui  $q_{\text{max}}$  yang dikira melalui isoterma Langmuir bagi penjerap bersalut karbon adalah lebih tinggi dari penjerap yang tidak bersalut bagi semua jenis bahan jerapan yang telah diuji. Contoh yang jelas adalah bagi kes MB, penjerap bersalut karbon (NZVI/SuZSM) menunjukkan kenaikan lebih dari 80% nilai  $q_{\text{max}}$  berbanding bahan yang tidak bersalut (NZVI/ZSM). Sifat sinergi diantara pertambahan permukaan teraktif serta kestabilan partikel NZVI dikenal pasti sebagai faktor utama yang bertanggungjawab keatas nilai  $q_{\text{max}}$  yang tinggi. Proses kinetik penjerapan itu juga digambarkan oleh model kinetik tertib-pertama dan kedua dan telah didapati bahawa model kinetik tertib kedua adalah terbaik untuk ketiga-tiga bahan jerapan yang diuji. Selain itu, kajian termodinamik juga telah dilaksanakan untuk menentukan tenaga bebas ( $\Delta G^\circ$ ), entalpi ( $\Delta H^\circ$ ) dan entropi ( $\Delta S^\circ$ ). Hasil kajian telah mendapati bahawa penjerapan  $\text{CHCl}_3$  berlaku secara spontan manakala proses sebaliknya berlaku pada MB dan TCP. Secara umumnya, kajian ini telah berjaya menghasilkan bahan penjerap berasaskan NZVI tersokong serta disaluti lapisan karbon yang stabil serta berupaya menyingkirkan bahan jerapan dengan nilai  $q_{\text{max}}$  yang tinggi. Tambahan lagi, penjerap ini boleh dijana semula untuk proses penjerapan berikutnya tanpa kehilangan ketara kecekapan penjerapan.

## ABSTRACT

The presence of hazardous organic pollutants in water stream creates the environmental and health problems. Thus, efficient removal approach is required. One of the relatively simple and cost effective approaches is through adsorption process in the presence of nano-adsorbent such as Nano Zero Valent Iron (NZVI). However, NZVI has several major restrictions such as agglomeration, low durability, and poor mechanical strength which would affect its adsorbent efficiency. In order to overcome these problems, supported Nano Zero Valent Iron (NZVI) has been introduced either on untreated or carbon-coated supporting materials. The preparation of carbon-coated supporting materials involved chemical functionalization via wet impregnation method by D-glucose as a carbon source followed by carbonization step at different temperature. The prepared adsorbents are characterized by XRD, FTIR, N<sub>2</sub>-Physisorption, TGA, FESEM-EDX and TEM. It was found that the carbonization temperature is crucial for obtaining good coverage of carbon coating material and in this case, 500°C is the optimum temperature. The feasibility of employing these nano-adsorbents in the removal of the three selected adsorbates (methylene blue (MB), 2, 4, 6-Trichlorophenol (TCP) and chloroform (CHCl<sub>3</sub>) from aqueous solution is investigated in a series of batch experiments. In general, carbon-coated adsorbent produces higher adsorption capacity as compared to chemically modified adsorbents. The adsorption parameters (e.g. equilibrium time ranging between 0-180 min, the adsorbents dosage ranging between 0.05-0.1g, the initial concentration ranging between 10-40mg/L, the temperature ranging between 30-50°C and the pH of solution ranging between 2-9) are established for all adsorbents. Then, the mechanism of the adsorption process is determined based on the Freundlich and Langmuir isotherm models and found that the Freundlich is a better fit with MB adsorption. The maximum adsorption uptakes ( $q_{\max}$ ) calculated by Langmuir isotherm model for carbon-coated adsorbent were found to be higher for all three tested adsorbates than those of uncoated supports adsorbents. For instance, in case of MB removal, 80% increment in  $q_{\max}$  value was obtained for NZVI/SuZSM as compared to uncoated adsorbent counterpart. It is believed that the superior adsorption performance of carbon-coated adsorbent is due to the synergistic effect between the availability of functionalized active adsorption sites with porosity characteristics of supporting materials as well as the stability of NZVI nanoparticles. Besides, the kinetics of the adsorption process is well described by the pseudo-first and second order kinetics models and found the second order is the best fit for the three adsorbates on the all tested adsorbents. The thermodynamic studies for three adsorbates are performed to determine the free energy ( $\Delta G^\circ$ ), enthalpy ( $\Delta H^\circ$ ) and entropy ( $\Delta S^\circ$ ) and found the spontaneity of CHCl<sub>3</sub> with negative value of ( $\Delta G^\circ$ ) onto all tested adsorbent, while non-spontaneity process at 30°C with positive value of ( $\Delta G^\circ$ ) for adsorption of MB onto NZVI/ZSM and for TCP adsorption onto NZVI/MSN and NZVI/ZSM, respectively. In general, the current study confirms that the developed adsorbents are stable with high adsorption capacity as well as can be regenerated for subsequent adsorption process without appreciable loss of adsorption efficiency.

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