

Synthesis and Optical Characteristics of PMMA Polymeric Films Doped with Methylene Blue Dye for Laser Applications

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ABSTRACT

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Poly(methyl methacrylate) (PMMA) polymeric films doped with methylene blue dye were sensitized using two concentrations of dye: 0.01 and 0.1 mM. The linear and optical power limiting (OPL) characteristics were investigated. The films were made by dissolving the dye and polymer in dimethylformamide (DMF) a quick and easy casting method. The wavelength range of 400–750 nm was used to calculate the linear absorption coefficients (α_{00}), linear refractive index (n_0), coefficients (k), and optical energy gap (E_g). The optical constants change with dye concentrations rise, according to the results. It has been discovered that the films, both direct and indirect optical transitions are possible due to the optical gap. The direct allowed optical band gap energy decreased from 1.831 eV to 1.815 eV when doped with MB. A continuous wave (CW) solid-state laser (SSL) operating at 665 nm was used to investigate the optical limiting features of the composite. The results show a clear optical limiting effect, to the results. Wide-ranging applications are possible for the developed MB composites.

INTRODUCTION

Poly(methyl methacrylate) (PMMA) is widely accepted as superior optical polymer. It offers higher visible-light transmittance of 92%, compared to glass [1]. PMMA is also characterized by its resistance to harsh outdoor conditions and immune to ultraviolet (UV) radiation [2]. PMMA is widely used in several applications as a popular host polymer because of its non-toxicity [3], good mechanical stability [4], easy casting, brilliant flexibility [5], low cost [6], and excellent forming ability [7]. These essential characteristics have made dye-grafted polymers attractive options for cutting-edge optics and optoelectronic applications. The integration of organic or inorganic functional constituents into a host matrix provides a practical route for tailoring the structural, optical, electronic properties of thin-film materials [8, 9]. In traditional thin-film systems, material composition, processing conditions, surface uniformity, and defect formation jointly influence the resulting optical performance and suitability for device integration [10]. The continuing development of organic, optoelectronic, and electronic devices therefore requires materials with controllable linear and nonlinear optical properties. These are used in optical networks, optical communications, data storage devices, and optical computing signal processing. The term "nonlinear optical materials" refers to any class of materials that exhibit effective and

efficient nonlinear phenomena. This is necessary to achieve applications dependent on light intensity, such as optical amplification, refractive index changes, optical wavelength conversion, etc. [11]. In particular, methylene blue (MB), an organic cationic thiazine dye [12] with strong absorption in the visible region—at approximately 665 nm—offers promising opportunities for tailoring light-matter interactions when embedded in a polymer matrix [13]. Sukumaran and Ramalingam [14] focused on studying the spectral properties and linear and non-linear optical characteristics of MB with PMMA polymer and *n*-butyl acetate. Hassan et al. [15] studied diffraction patterns and Z-scan methods and the optical power limiting (OPL) of iodine film, where it was observed that it has OPL. Parvin and Ahmed [16] applied a technique to the dye, which showed a high value for the nonlinear refractive index (n_2) as well as negative n_0 (self-defocusing) under experimental conditions. Despite considerable investigations on dye-doped polymers, managing and refining their optical response, especially for non-linear optical applications such as optical limiting, remains a substantial issue. The linear absorption coefficients (α_{00}), optical energy gap (E_g), and linear refractive index (n) are particularly sensitive to dye concentration, molecular interactions, and dispersion within the polymer host. Sensitive optical equipment protection has received a lot of attention lately. Most eye protection devices use materials that strongly absorb light at specific

wavelengths, which is crucial for protecting the eyes from harmful, direct laser beams [17]. However, a comprehensive understanding of how variable concentrations of MB influence optical performance of PMMA films, particularly in the context of optical limiting behavior, is still limited. In this paper, we focus not only on the preparation of MB/PMMA films doped with varying concentrations of MB, but also on their application as OPL materials, with a systematic comparison of the effects of different doping concentrations. Additionally, the influence of low and high concentrations on

(20 mL for each MB mass), and C_M represents the concentration of the MB. The liquid polymer was prepared, according to the source [19], by dissolving 1 g of PMMA in 20 mL of DMF and left on a hot stirrer for 6 h at 50 °C. Table 1 shows the weights and sizes used to prepare all solutions. Subsequently, the solutions were utilized to prepare polymeric films in a 1:1 ratio. The film thickness was measured using a digital micrometer. The ultraviolet-visible (UV-Vis) spectrometer was used to record the absorption spectra of two films with MB concentrations of 0.01 and 0.1 mM and