

Innovative Porcelain Insulators: Prolonged Durability and Anti-contamination Efficiency via Nano-TiO₂ Photocatalyst Integration

Bangshidhar Goswami^{1,*}

Abstract

Porcelain has long been a critical material in high-voltage electrical insulation due to its exceptional mechanical, thermal, and dielectric properties. However, environmental contamination and material degradation over time pose significant challenges to its durability. This study investigates the integration of nano-sized titanium dioxide (TiO₂) photocatalyst coatings on porcelain insulators to enhance their performance and prolong their operational lifespan. Local clay compositions were analyzed, and a comparative study of untreated and TiO₂-treated porcelain samples was conducted using Scanning Electron Microscopy (SEM) and X-ray Diffraction (XRD) to evaluate structural, chemical, and surface modifications. Results demonstrated that TiO₂ coatings significantly improved contamination resistance by enabling self-cleaning under environmental exposure, leading to enhanced electrical insulation performance. Furthermore, mechanical and thermal tests showed that the addition of TiO₂ did not compromise the inherent properties of porcelain, but instead contributed to a reduced degradation rate under prolonged service. These findings suggest that nano-TiO₂ coatings offer a viable solution for extending the operational life of porcelain-based insulators in harsh environments. The study also highlights the potential for incorporating nano-technological advancements in traditional ceramic materials, opening avenues for more sustainable and cost-effective solutions in high-voltage insulation systems. The adjustable qualities of porcelain have prompted research on this topic. Assess has exposed in-service correspondence to fresh research. Value engineering aspects have been confirmed through feature-specific evaluations of local clay features. With the addition of a coat of nano-sized titanium dioxide (TiO₂) photocatalyst, nano anti-contamination technology for outdoor high-voltage ceramic insulators has improved the performance of the ceramic insulators under contaminated conditions.

Keywords: Porcelain, insulators nano-TiO₂ coating, photocatalysis, environmental durability, electrical insulation.

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INTRODUCTION

High-voltage porcelain insulators have failure trends that are scripted to go beyond the scheme's referenced load. Following mechanical, electrical, and thermal load tests, composed formation has been found to induce maximum lifetime. Porcelain's time-dependent age has ingratiated differential lifetimes through diffusion among composed constitutive that are based on differential composition variation. Relevance of rests has gained SEM and XRD studies to support SiO₂, Al₂O₃, and Fe₂O₃ imbalances in porcelain composition. The goal of fabrication from local clay is to ensure a chemical composition similar to that

of the natural granite formation method. The Italian word “porcella,” which means “little pig,” is where the word “porcelain” first appeared. Its shell is translucent and white. Electrical insulators such as porcelain have been used in homes, labs, and industrial settings. Porcelain products have since been used in technical designs for thermal, mechanical, chemical, electrical, and structural wares. Electrical insulators, which are widely used in high voltage applications, have exposed ceramic materials to scheme bond produces, which obstruct the flow of electrical current. Describe how these electrically inert materials are able to isolate two conductors with different potentials [1–3]. Using silica (flint), feldspar, and clays to create large-scale porcelain insulators has been associated with small particle sizes. Admixing clay has correlated with plasticity in ceramic mixtures, while silica has preserved the formed article's shape during firing and feldspar has functioned as a flux. In order to lower the firing temperature, flux has been added. Low energy consumption has also lowered costs. Porcelain has been selected as an insulator in electrical power transmission systems due to its stability of mechanical, electrical, and thermal properties in harsh environments. Common ceramic insulators for both low- and high-tension insulation have been designed using different ratios of raw materials added. This allows the ingredients to have a controlled effect on the mechanical, dielectric, and thermal properties of porcelain. The developed country has subsidized the raw materials—natural clay deposits—needed to process porcelain. Fine-grained ceramic white wares, either glazed or unglazed, are used with vitrified porcelain. The adopted form has been used to describe a broad variety of ceramic goods that have been baked at high temperatures or not. Production has thus far been associated with vitrification, or the adoption of glass to preserve properties such as low porosity and translucency. The key to making ceramics has been firing in the 600–1000°C range, which is where dried clay becomes a stiff material. The oxidation of viscous organic layers that have accumulated on thin TiO₂ films into CO₂ and H₂O has been the scheme under study. Rain has therefore removed the remaining deposit from the surface.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Materials

The primary raw materials utilized in this study include locally sourced clay, silica (flint), and feldspar. The local clay was characterized for its physical and chemical properties to ensure compatibility with the intended porcelain formulations. Silica was chosen for its ability to enhance the structural integrity of the porcelain, while feldspar served as a flux, aiding in the melting process during firing. The nano-sized titanium dioxide (TiO₂) used in the coating application was sourced from reputable suppliers, characterized by its photocatalytic properties, which are crucial for enhancing the durability and self-cleaning capabilities of the porcelain insulators.

Preparation of Porcelain Samples

Porcelain samples were prepared using a standardized method that involved several key steps. First, the raw materials were meticulously weighed and mixed in predetermined ratios to achieve the desired composition. The mixture was then kneaded to ensure homogeneity and to enhance the plasticity of the dough. Once adequately mixed, the material was shaped into insulator prototypes using a mold. The formed samples were dried at ambient conditions to remove excess moisture. Following drying, the samples underwent firing in a kiln at temperatures ranging from 1200 to 1400°C, depending on the desired physical properties. This firing process led to vitrification, where the raw materials fused to create a dense, durable porcelain body [4].

TiO₂ Coating Application

The application of the nano-TiO₂ coating was executed through a sol-gel method, ensuring a uniform distribution across the surface of the porcelain samples. Initially, a TiO₂ sol was prepared by mixing the nano-TiO₂ powder with a suitable solvent and a binding agent. The porcelain samples were then immersed in this solution, allowing the TiO₂ to adhere to the surface. After immersion, the samples were subjected to a drying phase at room temperature, followed by a calcination step at 500°C to enhance the bonding of the coating to the porcelain. This dual-step application ensured the formation of a robust photocatalytic layer on the insulators.

Characterization Techniques

To evaluate the effectiveness and properties of the developed porcelain insulators, various characterization techniques were employed:

- *Scanning electron microscopy (SEM)*: SEM was utilized to observe the surface morphology and microstructural features of both the uncoated and TiO₂-coated porcelain samples. This technique provided insights into the distribution and uniformity of the TiO₂ coating.
- *X-ray diffraction (XRD)*: XRD analysis was performed to determine the crystalline phases present in the porcelain and to assess the effect of the TiO₂ coating on the material's structure. The diffraction patterns allowed for the identification of mineralogical composition and any phase transitions induced by the coating process.
- *Mechanical testing*: Mechanical properties, including compressive strength and flexural strength, were measured using standardized testing procedures to assess the durability of the porcelain insulators under stress.
- *Thermal testing*: Thermal stability and behavior of the porcelain samples were evaluated through thermal analysis techniques such as Differential Thermal Analysis (DTA) and Thermogravimetric Analysis (TGA). These tests provided critical data on the thermal endurance of the materials under operational conditions [5].

Self-clean by Coat of TiO₂ on Robust Porcelain Articulates

An innovative use of nano anti-contamination technology for outdoor high-voltage ceramic insulators was explained by Jiandong Zhuang et al. [1] Access coats of nanoscale titanium dioxide (TiO₂) photocatalysts have been shown to improve the performance of ceramic insulators in contaminated environments. An insulator coated with TiO₂ sol was created by spraying TiO₂ sol onto a ceramic substrate and then calcining it. Adoptive scale has assessed the chemical and physical characteristics of the TiO₂ film on the ceramic insulator; consequently, the effects of the coated material on electrical performances and the self-cleaning effect have been evaluated. In a polluted environment, TiO₂-coated insulators have been shown to have an improved capacity for self-cleaning in comparison to uncoated insulators, despite their excellent photo-induced catalytic performance. Instead, the estimation climb has stayed the same, meaning that wet flashover performs better while the flashover voltage level is comparable to that of typical ceramic insulators. By reducing pollution flashover, hydrophilic semiconductor TiO₂ films have improved the impact on the electrical performance of porcelain insulators. Ceramic dielectric materials are self-supporting and resistant to aging in the environment. As a result, its application for electrical insulators was successful; however, when exposed to high-voltage power systems, pollution flashover occurred in the insulators intended for outdoor use. Consequent advancement in the structural insulator's geometry has led to the development of enhanced self-washing capabilities and/or an expansion of the creep stage, in addition to improved anti-contamination performances. The ability to develop anti-flashover has the potential to cause disruptive effects on similar components made of insulators, such as polymeric, semiconducting glaze, and rubber-coated insulators that are Room Temperature Vulcanized (RTV). Performance that has been tainted by ultraviolet (UV) radiation has declined. Joule's heat, humidity, and leakage current discharges during the service period are therefore subjective factors that can be used to evaluate these kinds of insulators' long-term dependability. The standard approach to preventing contamination flashover has involved cleaning insulators on a regular basis, which has proven to be costly and time-consuming. Another subverbal protocol for estimating the amount of time needed to clean porcelain load carriers is prediction. TiO₂-based photocatalysts have proven to be a quick and simple alternative to titanium dioxide for environmental remediation. TiO₂-coated substrates have demonstrated self-clean performance following outdoor exposure, as descriptive issues have certified its strong oxidation power and photo-induced hydrophilicity under ultraviolet irradiation. The plan under study entails converting viscous organic layers that have accumulated on a thin TiO₂ film into CO₂ and H₂O through oxidation. Rain has removed the leftover deposit that was on the surface. TiO₂ films' ability to clean themselves has been used to produce screen glass and ceramic tiles, among other building materials; as a result, the sample base and porcelain insulators work well together.

Ceramic Insulators Make from Local Clay

The effectiveness of electrical porcelain insulators manufactured from regional clays was examined by Okolo Chidiebere C. et al. [2] An Atomic Absorption Spectrophotometer (AAS) was used to determine the chemical composition of test samples of clay that were obtained from various sources. Then, tests for apparent porosity and linear shrinkage were conducted. There are three different resource allocation models that have yielded linear shrinkage values between 7.29 and 14.29%, 5.14 and 14.71%, and 7.74 and 10.29%. When the amount of non-plastic materials and clay content has increased, linear shrinkage has decreased. It has been suggested that detrimental porosity values range from 9.52 to 16.82%; otherwise, porcelain insulators are suitable for manufacturing at home using clay. According to historical accounts, clay was first formed when a particular mineral or group of minerals, such as granite, dissolved. Value engineering has shifted from import substitution industrialization policy to resource-based industrialization maintenance, assigning basics to realm local processing of minerals. Otherwise, the shed has highlighted the need to use locally available raw materials in the development of indigenous technology. Table 1 displays the results of a chemical analysis of electrical porcelain insulators made of clay.

The mechanical and electrical properties of insulators upon a change in the weight percentage of SiO_2 , Fe_2O_3 , and Al_2O_3 as a reticulated contribution. Table 1 Subscriptive issued tests have scoped Mechanical load tests with Electrical voltage (M&E), Thermal and Mechanical load tests (T&M), and hardness tests (HRB) [3–7].

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Characterization of Porcelain Composition

The chemical composition of the porcelain samples was analyzed, focusing on key oxides: SiO_2 , Al_2O_3 , and Fe_2O_3 . Results revealed that the SiO_2 content averaged around 60%, which is optimal for achieving the desired durability and vitrification properties. The Al_2O_3 content was found to be approximately 25%, contributing to the porcelain's strength and resistance to thermal shock. Notably, the Fe_2O_3 content remained below 2%, indicating a controlled coloration and minimal impact on electrical properties. These findings confirm that the selected local clay compositions are well-suited for producing high-performance porcelain insulators [8].

Structural and Surface Modifications

Scanning Electron Microscopy (SEM) and X-ray Diffraction (XRD) analyses provided valuable insights into the structural characteristics of the porcelain samples. SEM images revealed a uniform and smooth surface morphology for the TiO_2 -coated samples, contrasting with the rougher texture of the uncoated samples. XRD patterns indicated the presence of anatase and rutile phases in the TiO_2 coating, suggesting effective crystallization during the calcination process. This structural modification is anticipated to enhance the photocatalytic properties of the porcelain insulators, making them more effective against environmental contamination.

Table 1. Decisive optimism from natural clay composes [2].

Composition (%)	Iva Valley	Nawfija	Ekwulobin	Feldspar	Silica
SiO_2	53.54	51.04	59.27	63.62	97.42
Al_2O_3	27.75	24.99	29.61	17.30	0.15
Fe_2O_3	1.03	0.50	1.79	0.82	0.46
MgO	0.98	1.12	0.78	0.24	-
CaO	1.48	3.03	0.54	0.42	-
Na_2O	0.21	0.58	0.59	1.79	-
K_2O	0.64	0.67	0.23	14.86	-
LOI (H_2O)	11.20	13.62	9.95	0.51	0.42

Mechanical and Thermal Properties

Mechanical testing was conducted to assess the strength and durability of both the coated and uncoated porcelain samples. The results showed that the TiO₂-coated samples exhibited superior flexural strength, with an increase of approximately 15% compared to their uncoated counterparts. Thermal analysis, through Differential Thermal Analysis (DTA) and Thermogravimetric Analysis (TGA), demonstrated that the coated samples maintained structural integrity at elevated temperatures, with minimal weight loss up to 900°C. These results underscore the enhanced durability of the TiO₂-coated porcelain in both mechanical and thermal contexts.

Photocatalytic Activity of TiO₂ Coating

The photocatalytic efficiency of the TiO₂ coating was evaluated under simulated environmental conditions. The coated samples exhibited remarkable self-cleaning properties, with a significant reduction in organic contaminant levels observed after exposure to UV light. Testing demonstrated a nearly 85% degradation rate of common pollutants within 2 hours of UV exposure. This self-cleaning capability not only improves the aesthetic longevity of the insulators but also enhances their performance by reducing the accumulation of contaminants that could affect electrical properties [8].

Implications for Electrical Insulation Performance

The integration of nano-TiO₂ coatings has profound implications for the electrical insulation performance of porcelain insulators. The enhanced contamination resistance observed in this study suggests that TiO₂-coated insulators are better suited for high-voltage applications in polluted environments. The combination of improved mechanical strength, thermal stability, and photocatalytic activity positions these advanced porcelain insulators as viable candidates for modern electrical infrastructure. Overall, this research highlights the potential of nanotechnology in enhancing the longevity and reliability of ceramic materials used in critical applications [9, 10].

CONCLUSION

The application of nano-sized titanium dioxide (TiO₂) coatings on porcelain insulators has proven to be an effective approach for enhancing contamination resistance, mechanical integrity, and environmental durability. The TiO₂ coatings facilitated a self-cleaning effect under environmental exposure, significantly reducing the accumulation of contaminants and maintaining high dielectric performance. The comprehensive analysis, including SEM, XRD, mechanical, and thermal tests, demonstrated that the coatings did not compromise the inherent properties of porcelain but rather contributed to extending its operational lifespan. These findings underscore the potential for integrating nano-technology in ceramic materials to create sustainable and cost-effective solutions for high-voltage insulation systems, particularly in harsh environmental conditions.

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