

SYNTHESIS AND CHARACTERIZATION OF FLUORESCENT CARBON QUANTUM DOTS AND THEIR MULTIFUNCTIONAL APPLICATIONS



Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment for
the award of the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

By

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Dedicated to My Beloved
PARENTS

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Contents

Title	Page No.
TITLE OF THESIS	i
CERTIFICATE	ii
DECLARATION BY THE CANDIDATE & CERTIFICATE BY THE SUPERVISOR	iii
COPYRIGHT TRANSFER CERTIFICATE	iv
Dedication	v
Acknowledgement	vi-vii
Contents	viii-xv
List of Figures	xvi-xx
List of Schemes	xxi
List of Tables	xxii
List of Symbols/Abbreviations	xxiii-xxv
Preface	xxvi-xxix
Chapter1: Introduction and literature survey	1-32
1.1 Introduction	1
1.2 Carbon quantum dots (CQDs)	5
1.2.1 Methods for the Synthesis of CQDs	6
1.2.1.1 Top-down approach	7
A. Laser ablation	7
B. Electrochemical oxidation	7
C. Arch Discharge	8
1.2.1.2 Bottom-up approach	8
A. Combustion method	8

Contents

B.	Pyrolysis method	9
C.	Template method	9
D.	Microwave synthesis	10
E.	Hydrothermal method	10
1.2.2	Optical properties of carbon quantum dots	11
1.2.2.1	Absorption	11
1.2.2.2	Fluorescence	11
1.2.2.3	Phosphorescence	12
1.2.3	Consequence of doping on the fluorescence intensity of CQDs	13
1.2.3.1	Single-heteroatom doping	13
A.	Nitrogen (N) doped CQDs	13
B.	Sulfur (S) doped CQDs	14
C.	Phosphorus (P) doped CQDs	14
D.	Boron (B) doped CQDs	14
1.2.3.2	Multiple heteroatom doping	15
A.	N and P co-doped CQDs	15
B.	N and S co-doped CQDs	15
C.	N and B co-doped CQDs	15
1.3	Fluorescence quenching	16
1.3.1	Inner filter effect (IFE)	16
1.3.2	Static quenching	16

1.3.3	Dynamic quenching	17
1.4	Fluorescence quantum yield (QY)	17
1.5	Applications of CQDs	18
1.5.1	Peroxidase-mimetic enzyme activity	18
1.5.2	Sensing of tyrosine (Tyr)	19
1.5.3	Cell imaging	20
1.5.4	Sensing of fungicides and pesticides	21
1.5.5	Drug delivery	21
1.5.6	Schottky barrier diodes (SBD)	22
1.5.7	Light emitting diodes (LED's)	23
1.5.8	Solar cells	24
1.5.9	Sensing of heavy metal ions	24
1.5.9.1	Sensing of Fe (III)	25
1.5.9.2	Hg (II) sensing	26
1.5.9.3	Sensing of Cr (VI)	27
1.5.9.4	Sensing of Co (II)	28
1.5.10	Photocatalysis	28
1.5.11	Biosensor	29
1.5.12	Temperature sensor	30
1.5.13	Fluorescent ink	30
1.6	Motivation of the study	31
1.7	Research Objectives	31

Chapter 2: Materials and Methods	33-53
2.1 Introduction	33
2.2 Materials	33
2.3 Methods	36
2.3.1 Synthesis of CQDs	36
2.4 Preparation of standard solution	36
2.4.1 Preparation of standard solution of 3,3',5,5'- Tetramethylbenzidine (TMB)	36
2.4.2 Preparation of standard solution of ascorbic acid (AA)	36
2.4.3 Preparation of standard solution of other reducing agent	37
2.4.4 Preparation of standard solution of Fe ³⁺	37
2.5 <i>In vitro</i> cell imaging study	37
2.5.1 Cell line	37
2.5.2 Cytotoxicity assay	37
2.6 Calculations	37
2.6.1 Determination of Quantum yield (QY)	37
2.6.2 Determination of limit of detection (LOD)	38
2.6.3 Determination of Stern-Volmer constant	38
2.7 Characterization technique	39

Contents

2.7.1	Transmission Electron Microscopy (TEM)	39
2.7.2	Fourier Transform Infrared (FTIR) Spectroscopy	42
2.7.3	UV-visible (UV-vis) Spectroscopy	43
2.7.4	Fluorescence Spectroscopy	45
2.7.5	Time resolved fluorescence spectroscopy	47
2.7.6	Fluorescence decay	47
2.7.7	X-ray Diffraction (XRD)	48
2.7.8	X-ray Photoelectron Spectroscopy (XPS)	50
2.7.9	Zeta Potential	52

Chapter 3:	53-85
Green synthesis of fluorescent carbon quantum dots from <i>Azadirachta indica</i> leaves and their peroxidase-mimetic activity for the detection of H₂O₂ and ascorbic acid in common fresh fruits	

3.1	Introduction	53
3.2	Experimental section	56
3.2.1	Chemicals and materials	56
3.2.2	Hydrothermal Synthesis of Neem-Carbon quantum dots (N- CQDs)	56
3.2.3	Apparatus and Characterization	57
3.2.4	Quantum yield determination	57
3.2.5	Peroxidase-mimetic activity of N-CQDs	58

Contents

3.2.6	Detection of hydrogen peroxide	59
3.2.7	Detection of ascorbic acid	59
3.2.8	Detection of ascorbic acid in the real sample	59
3.2.9	Investigation of hydroxyl radical	60
3.3	Results and discussion	60
3.3.1	Characterization	60
3.3.2	Optical Studies	64
3.3.3	Peroxidase-mimetic activity of the synthesized N-CQDs	67
3.3.4	Optimization of different experimental conditions	69
3.4	Kinetic studies	72
3.5	Mechanism of catalytic activity	75
3.6	Detection of H ₂ O ₂	77
3.7	Detection of Ascorbic acid	79
3.8	Sensing of AA in fresh fruit juice	82
3.9	Conclusions	84
Chapter 4:		86-113
A Facile Synthesis of Green-Blue Carbon Dots from <i>Artocarpous lakoocha</i> Seeds and Their Application for the Detection of Iron (III) in Biological Fluids and Cellular Imaging		
4.1	Introduction	86
4.2	Experimental Section	89

Contents

4.2.1	Materials	89
4.2.2	Hydrothermal Synthesis of green-blue carbon dots	89
4.2.3	Apparatus and characterization	90
4.2.4	Quantum yield measurements	90
4.2.5	Detection of Fe ³⁺ ion in real samples	90
4.2.6	Cytotoxicity assay	91
4.2.7	In vitro imaging study	92
4.3	Results and discussion	92
4.3.1	Characterizations	92
4.3.2	Optical properties	96
4.4	Selectivity studies	100
4.5	Investigation of Fe ³⁺ in real samples	107
4.6	Detection of Fe ³⁺ in the living cell	109
4.7	Conclusions	112

Chapter 5: **114-136**
Synthesis of green fluorescent carbon quantum dots via latex of
***Ficus benghalensis* for the detection of tyrosine and fabrication of**
Schottky barrier diodes

5.1	Introduction	114
-----	--------------	-----

Contents

5.2	Experimental section	117
5.2.1	Chemical and materials	117
5.2.2	Synthesis of Green Carbon Quantum dots (G-CQDs)	117
5.2.3	Determination of quantum yield (QY)	118
5.2.4	Apparatus and Characterization	118
5.2.5	Device fabrication	118
5.3	Results and discussion	119
5.4	Optical properties	122
5.5	Selectivity studies	126
5.6	Strategy of device fabrication	133
5.7	Conclusion	136
	Summary	137-140
	Future recommendations	141-142
	References	143-183
	List of publications	184-186

List of Figures

Figure No.	Title	Page No.
Figure 2.1	Schematic diagrams with working principle of TEM and two different operation mode of TEM.	41
Figure 2.2	Typical image of Transmission Electron Microscopy (TEM).	41
Figure 2.3	Demonstration of working principle of FT-IR and its Photograph.	43
Figure 2.4	Illustration of working principle of UV-visible spectroscopy and their photograph.	45
Figure 2.5	Schematic representation of working principle and photograph of fluorescence spectrophotometer.	46
Figure 2.6	Diagrammatic representation of Bragg's Law.	48
Figure 2.7	Illustration of working principle of XRD with its photograph.	50
Figure 2.8	Working principles of XPS spectrum.	51
Figure 2.9	Typical photograph of XPS instrument.	52
Figure 2.10	Working principles of Zeta sizer and its photograph.	53
Figure 3.1	(a) High resolution TEM micro-image of the synthesized N-CQDs at 20 nm magnification, (b) size distribution graph, (c) P-XRD spectrum ranges between 5-80°, and (d) represents the FTIR spectrum of the N-CQDs.	61
Figure 3.2	Energy dispersive X-ray analysis (EDAX) images of N-CQDs.	62
Figure 3.3	Zeta potential of as-synthesis N-CQDs.	62
Figure 3.4	XPS survey (a) full scan (b) C 1s, (c) N 1s, and (d) O 1s spectrum of the as-synthesized N-CQDs.	64
Figure 3.5	UV-visible absorbance spectrums of the N-CQDs.	64
Figure 3.6	Represents the fluorescence emission spectra of the N-CQDs at the different excitation wavelength ranged from 290 nm to 370 nm with the difference of 10 nm.	65

Figure 3.7	Study of pH change on the fluorescent intensity of N-CQDs with corresponding photograph under UV – light ($\lambda_{ex} = 365$ nm) from pH range 2 to 12.	66
Figure 3.8	Effect of ionic strength on emission spectra of N-CQDs with photograph under UV- light ($\lambda_{ex} = 365$ nm).	67
Figure 3.9	Represents the UV-visible absorption spectra of varies reaction system: TMB + N-CQDs, TMB + H ₂ O ₂ and TMB + H ₂ O ₂ + N-CQDs whereas inset photograph shows the corresponding color change.	68
Figure 3.10	Long term stability experiment for the peroxidase-mimetic catalytic activity of N-CQDs.	69
Figure 3.11	Represents the UV-visible absorption spectra towards peroxidase-mimetic activity of N-CQDs on varying (a) pH of the solution from 2 to 6, (b) temperature from 10 to 50°, (c) H ₂ O ₂ concentration (1-10 mmol/L), (d) TMB concentration (1-10 mmol/L) and, (e) Time respectively where inset shows the corresponding color change at different reaction conditions.	71
Figure 3.12	Dependence of relative activity of peroxidase-like catalytic reactions by N-CQDs on the (a) pH (b) temperature (c) H ₂ O ₂ concentration, (d) TMB concentration and (e) Time.	72
Figure 3.13	Represents the steady-state reaction rate and catalytic mechanism of the N-CQDs. (a and d) represent the michaelis-Menten curve at fixed TMB varying H ₂ O ₂ concentration (a) and at fixed H ₂ O ₂ varying TMB concentration (d), (b and e) corresponding Lineweaver–Burk plots by varying H ₂ O ₂ , fixed TMB (b) and varying TMB, fixed H ₂ O ₂ (e), (c and f) Double-reciprocal plots of N-CQDs at fixed TMB varying H ₂ O ₂ concentration (c) at fixed H ₂ O ₂ , varying TMB concentration (f).	74
Figure 3.14	Absorbance spectra of ox-TMB in the absence and presence of different hydroxyl radical scavengers (IPA and MA) in the reaction system of TMB+H ₂ O ₂ +N-CQDs.	76
Figure 3.15	Shows the absorbance spectra of ox-TMB on varying the concentration of H ₂ O ₂ from 0.02 to 2 mmol/L with color change of (inset), (b) absorbance at 652 nm and its linear calibration plot in a range 0.1-0.5 mmol/L for the H ₂ O ₂ detection based on peroxidase-like oxidation of TMB.	79

Figure 3.16	Absorbance spectra of ox-TMB on varying the AA concentrations from 0 to 120 μM with change of color (inset photograph), (b) Absorbance at 652 nm and linear calibration plot ranges between 5-40 μM for the AA detection.	80
Figure 3.17	Fluorescence spectrum of N-CQDs in different system with inset photograph taken under UV-light.	81
Figure 3.18	The interference of different reducing agents in the AA detection and upper photograph showed selective sensing of AA.	82
Figure 3.19	Showed the AA detection in different fruit samples whereas photograph of vial showing the corresponding color change.	83
Figure 3.20	The interference of different amino acids for the AA detection in fresh fruits.	84
Figure 4.1	HRTEM images of as-prepared GB-CDs, (B) Size distribution histogram, (C) XRD pattern of the GB-CDs and (D) FT-IR spectra of GB-CDs.	93
Figure 4.2	Zeta potential of as-synthesized GB-CDs.	94
Figure 4.3	(A) XPS survey scan, (B) XPS spectrum of C 1s, (C) XPS spectrum of N 1s and (D) XPS spectrum of O 1s of as-synthesized GB-CDs.	95
Figure 4.4	EDS spectrum of as-synthesized GB-CDs.	96
Figure 4.5	UV-vis absorption spectra of GB-CDs (B) Fluorescence emission spectra of GB-CDs at different excitation wavelength (320-410 nm).	97
Figure 4.6	Study of pH change on the fluorescent intensity of N-CQDs with corresponding photograph under UV – light ($\lambda_{\text{ex}} = 365 \text{ nm}$) from pH range 2 to 12.	98
Figure 4.7	Effect of ionic strength on the fluorescent intensity of GB-CDs.	99
Figure 4.8	Photo stability of as-synthesized GB-CDs under visible-light.	100

Figure 4.9	Photograph showing the selective sensing of Fe ³⁺ ion and bar diagram symbolizes the relative fluorescent intensity of GB-CDs by adding 40 μL of Fe ³⁺ solution (10 ⁻³ M) and 40 μL of other metal ions (10 ⁻² M), showing the insignificant interference of other metal ions.	101
Figure 4.10	(A) Fluorescence titration experiment revealing the quenching upon consecutive addition of Fe ³⁺ ion into GB-CDs solution (B) shows fluorescent detection of Fe ³⁺ ion being fitted into Stern-Volmer plot.	102
Figure 4.11	(A) UV- vis absorption spectra of Fe ³⁺ (black line), excitation spectra of GB-CDs at λ _{em} = 475 nm (green-line), emission spectra of GB-CDs at λ _{ex} = 350 nm (red line), (B) Fluorescence lifetime decay curve of GB-CDs in the presence and absence of Fe ³⁺ ion.	103
Figure 4.12	Showing the correlation amid fluorescence intensity ratio (F/F ₀) of GB-CDs and different volume of human serum added.	109
Figure 4.13	Cell viability assays of GB-CDs on SH-SY5Y neuroblastoma cells after incubation of 24h (A) and 48h (B).	110
Figure 4.14	(A) Inverted light microscopy image of SH-SY5Y neuroblastoma cells without GB-CDs, (B) Fluorescent microscopic image of GB-CDs at 485nm excitation, (C) Fluorescent microscopic image of GB-CDs at 560 nm excitation, (D) Fluorescence quenching of GB-CDs after addition 100 μL of Fe ³⁺ .	111
Figure 4.15	Showing the correlation amid fluorescence intensity ratio (F/F ₀) of GB-CDs and different volume of human serum added.	112
Figure 5.1	TEM figure of synthesized G-CQDs, (b) Size distribution histogram, (c) XRD spectra of the G-CQDs and (d) FT-IR spectra of G-CQDs.	120
Figure 5.2	XPS survey spectrum (a), Corrected C1s spectra (b), N1s (c), and O1s (d), of the as-prepared G-CQDs.	121
Figure 5.3	Zeta potential of as-synthesized G-CQDs.	122

Figure 5.4	(a) UV-visible absorption spectrum of G-CQDs. (b) FL emission of G-CQDs at different excitation wavelength (310-440 nm). (c) Image of CIE coordinates showing the green colour of G-CQDs. (d) Photograph illustrating selective sensing of Tyr and bar diagram represents relative fluorescence intensity of G-CQDs after addition 50 μL of Tyr ($1 \times 10^{-3}\text{M}$) and other amino acids ($1 \times 10^{-2}\text{M}$) designated negligible interference of other amino acids.	123
Figure 5.5	Study of pH change on the fluorescent intensity of G-CQDs with corresponding photograph under UV – light ($\lambda_{\text{ex}} = 365\text{ nm}$) from pH range 2 to 12.	125
Figure 5.6	Effect of ionic strength on the fluorescent intensity of G-CQDs.	126
Figure 5.7	Influence of metal ions on the fluorescence of G-CQDs.	127
Figure 5.8	(a)FL titration experiment enlightening the quenching upon successive addition of 50 μL Tyr (C, top to bottom: 0, 15, 30, 45, 60, 75, 90, 100 μM) into G-CQDs solution (30 mg mL^{-1}). (b) Fluorescent detection of Tyr being fitted into Stern-Volmer plot.	128
Figure 5.9	(a) Absorption spectra of Tyr (black line), excitation (blue line) and emission (green line) spectra of G-CQDs. (b) FL lifetime decay curves of G-CQDs in the absence and presence of Tyr.	129
Figure 5.10	I–V characteristics graph for ITO/G-CQDs/Ag-based Schottky Barrier diode.	135

List of Schemes

Scheme No.	Title	Page No.
Scheme 1.1	Diagrammatic illustrations for synthesis of CQDs.	6
Scheme 3.1	The Synthetic methodology adopted for one pot hydrothermal synthesis of N-CQDs.	55
Scheme 3.2	Schematic representation of oxidation of TMB and colorimetric detection of AA in the real sample.	77
Scheme 4.1	Schematic diagram for the synthesis of GB-CDs and their application in Fe ³⁺ detection.	88
Scheme 5.1	The Synthetic methodology was adopted for one-pot hydrothermal treatment of G-CQDs.	116
Scheme 5.2	Schematic presentation of fabrication of Schottky barrier diode based on G-CQDs.	134

List of Tables

Table No.	Title	Page No.
Table 2.1	List of chemicals	33
Table 3.1	Calculation of fluorescence quantum yield with integrated intensity and absorbance of quinine sulphate and N-CQDs at excitation wavelength 340 nm.	58
Table 3.2	The Michalies-Menten constant (K_m) and maximum velocity (V_{max}) obtained from the Lineweaver-Burk plots of N-CQDs and comparable with HRP and others enzyme mimetic nanomaterials.	75
Table 3.3	The comparison of earlier reported literatures with the proposed method for the AA detection.	80
Table 4.1	Calculation of fluorescence quantum yield with integrated intensity and absorbance of quinine sulfate and GB-CDs at excitation wavelength 360 nm.	97
Table 4.2	Details of fluorescence lifetime measurement of GB-CDs in the presence and absence of Fe^{3+} ion.	104
Table 4.3	Comparison of Sensing performance of as-prepared GB-CDs with other carbon-based nanoprobcs.	106
Table 4.4	Comparison of the analytical performance of as-prepared GB-CDs with other carbon-based nanoprobcs, derived from natural resources.	107
Table 4.5	Fe^{3+} ion detection in spiked water sample by using GB-CDs.	108
Table 5.1	Calculation of fluorescence quantum yield with integrated intensity and absorbance of quinine sulfate and G-CQDs at excitation wavelength 360 nm.	124
Table 5.2	Fluorescence lifetime measurement of G-CQDs in the presence and absence of Tyrosine.	130
Table 5.3	Comparison of Sensing performance with other nanoprobcs.	132
Table 5.4	Detection of Tyr in milk sample by using G-CQDs.	133

List of Symbols/Abbreviations

AA	Ascorbic acid
AgNPs	Silver nanoparticles
<i>A. lakoocha</i>	<i>Artocarpus lakoocha</i>
<i>A. indica</i>	<i>Azadirachta indica</i>
<i>F. benghalensis</i>	<i>Ficus benghalensis</i>
AuNPs	Gold nanoparticles
c	Concentration absorbing molecule in mol.m ⁻³
Carbon dots-oxaliplatin	(CD-Oxa)
CIE	Commission Internationale de l'Éclairage
CeONPs	Cerium oxide nanoparticles
CNTs	Carbon nanotubes
CDs	Carbon dots
CQDs	Carbon quantum dots
N-CQDs	Neem-Carbon Quantum dots
G-CQDs	Green-Carbon Quantum Dots
B-CQDs	Boron doped-CQDs
P-CQDs	Phosphorous doped-CQDs
S-CQDs	Sulfur doped Carbon Quantum Dots
N,S-CQDs	Nitrogen sulfur co-doped CQDs
N,P-CQDs	Nitrogen and Phosphorous co-doped CQDs
d	Interplanar spacing
DSSCs	Dye-sensitized solar cells
DMSO	Dimethyl sulphoxide
EDAX	Energy-dispersive X-ray spectroscopy
et al.	Co-authors
FT-IR	Fourier transform infrared spectroscopy
FL	Fluorescence
GB-CDs	Green-Blue Carbon Dots
GSH	Glutathione
H₂O₂	Hydrogen peroxide

HRP	Horseradish peroxidase
I_t	Emission intensity decay
I_0	Intensity of the incident radiation
IV	Instrumental variables
ITO	Indium doped Tin oxide
ISC	Intersystem crossing
IFE	Inner filter effect
IONPs	Iron oxide nanoparticles
I_t	Intensity of the transmitted radiation
K_{sv}	Stern-volmer constant
K_m	Michaelis–Menten constant
LED's	Light emitting diodes
LOD	Limit of detection
MA	Methyl alcohol
MONPs	Metal oxide nanoparticles
MRI	Magnetic resonance imaging
MTT	3-(4, 5-dimethylthiazol-2-yl)-2, 5-diphenyl-tetrazolium bromide
NaAc	Sodium acetate buffer
NMNPs	Noble metal nanoparticles
oxTMB	Oxidized TMB
PBS	Phosphate buffer saline
PdNPs	Palladium nanoparticles
PdNPs	Palladium nanoparticles
PGMs	Platinum group metals
PBS	Phosphate buffer saline
PVD	Physical vapor deposition
PVA	Polyvinyl alcohol
PEI	Polyethyleneimine
ppb	Parts per billion
QY	Quantum yield

List of Symbols/Abbreviations

QS	Quinine sulfate
R²	Correlation coefficient
RBCs	Red blood cells
RSD	Relative standard deviation
SAED	Selected area diffraction pattern
SBD	Schottky Barrier Diodes
SH-SY5Y	Neuroblastoma cells
t	Time (min)
Tyr	Tyrosine
TPA	Terephthalic acid
TTDDA	Trioxa-tridecanediamine
TEM	Transmission electron microscopy
TiO₂	Titaniumoxide
TiONPs	Titanium dioxide nanoparticles
TMB	Tetramethylbenzidine
UV-vis	Ultra-violet visible
XPS	X-ray photoelectron spectroscopy
XRD	X-ray diffraction spectroscopy
μL	Microlitre
mL	Millilitre
ε	Molar absorption coefficient
θ	Angle (degree)
λ	Wavelength

The current thesis work signifies the synthesis of fluorescent carbon quantum dots from various economical viable precursors for the sensing of metal ions and biosensor. Carbon quantum dots (CQDs) have excellent properties such as good water solubility, easy surface functionalization, low-cytotoxicity and strong fluorescence emission. CQDs are regarded as zero-dimensional (0D) materials and their size ranges from 1 and 10 nm. CQDs are also named as carbon dots (CDs) and carbon nanoparticles (CNPs). Because of their high surface energy and large surface area, CQDs could be utilized for catalysis, schottky barrier diode, optronic devices, drug delivery, bioimaging and in sensing applications. To improve the functionality and optical properties of CQDs, a large number of efforts have been made in the preparation using various techniques like chemical oxidation, arc discharge, laser ablation, electrochemical oxidation, microwave irradiation, and hydrothermal method. The electrochemical oxidation and chemical oxidation method require very strong acids while arc discharge and laser ablation require sophisticated and expensive instruments, The Microwave irradiation method provides an easy path for the synthesis of CQDs within a few minutes; though one of the major limitations of this method is its uncontrollable reaction conditions. Therefore, the hydrothermal method is highly demanded because of its rapidity, simplicity, controlled reaction conditions, cost-effectiveness and one-step process. Various organic precursors like citric acid, tartaric acid, ascorbic acid, glucose, sucrose, glycerol, and glycol have been utilized for the synthesis of CQDs. For surface passivation, different organic polymeric moieties, like polyethylene glycol, polyethyleneimine, 4,7,10-trioxa-1,13-tridecanediamine etc have been commonly utilized. Addition to this, various natural organic precursors such as orange juice, green grass, soybean, milk, pomelo peel, plant leaves, potato, cocoon silk soy milk, etc have been

utilized for the synthesis of CQDs. Although, the synthesis of CQDs with high QY is still a challenge.

Chapter 1 Describes the complete literature survey related to economical and green routes for synthesizing fluorescent CQDs. Present chapter illustrates the various types of nanomaterials and their synthesis approaches in brief. The history and an overview of CQDs have also been examined in the current chapter. This chapter also gives in details about the properties and applications of CQDs, objective and scope of the present thesis work.

Chapter 2 Provides detail regarding the experimental procedure, materials and methods used in the preparation, characterization and applications of CQDs. A variety of applications of CQDs like sensing of metal ions, ascorbic acid, cell cytotoxicity, bioimaging, and schottky barrier diodes have also been included in this article.

Chapter 3 In this chapter, an eco-friendly and zero-cost technique has been established for the preparation of CQDs by one-pot hydrothermal treatment of leaf extracts of Neem (*Azadirachta indica*). The QY of as-prepared Neem-carbon quantum dots (N-CQDs) was obtained to be 27.2 %. N-CQDs exhibited peroxidase-mimetic enzyme activity towards the oxidation of peroxidase substrate 3,3',5,5' tetramethylbenzidine (TMB) in the presence of hydrogen peroxide (H₂O₂). In addition, the kinetic of peroxidase-like catalytic activity follows the Michaelis-Menten and ping-pong pathway. Further, the H₂O₂ concentration-dependent oxidation of TMB motivated for the colorimetric detection of H₂O₂ in a linear range from 0.1 to 0.5 mmol/L with a limit of detection (LOD) of 0.035 mmol/L. Besides this, the oxidized blue color TMB (ox-TMB) were reduced in native TMB with ascorbic acid (AA) selectively without causing any interference of other reducing agents. The

linearity for the detection of AA was lying between 5-40 μM with LOD up to 1.773 μM . Finally, we have used the practical feasibility for the detection of AA in real samples such as common fresh fruits.

Chapter 4 Herein, a facile, green and eco-friendly approach has been applied for the synthesis of fluorescent green-blue carbon dots (GB-CDs) through the one-pot hydrothermal treatment of *Artocarpus lakoocha* seeds for the first time and entirely characterized via a variety of instrumental techniques such as fluorescent spectroscopy, Transmission Electron Microscope (TEM), X-Ray photoelectron spectroscopy (XPS), X-ray diffraction (XRD), and Fourier Transform Infra-Red spectroscopy (FT-IR) analysis. The as-prepared GB-CDs exhibited high fluorescent quantum yields (QY) up to 38.5 % and high photostability based on which GB-CDs were successfully applied as a sensitive nanoprobe for the detection of Fe^{3+} ion which showed linearity from 2 to 6 μM with a limit of detection (LOD) of 0.6 μM . The sensing of Fe^{3+} was further investigated in the bona fide sample like river water and human blood serum. In addition, to explore the potential application, MTT assay was carried out on SH-SY5Y neuroblastoma cells. The results showed negligible cytotoxicity and high cell viability, revealing that as-prepared GB-CDs could be utilized as fluorescent probe in living cells.

Chapter 5 In this chapter, a facile and straightforward approach has been designed to prepare fluorescent green carbon quantum dots (G-CQDs) from the latex of *Ficus benghalensis* as a carbon source and polyethyleneimine as a nitrogen source. Various instrumental techniques such as TEM, XRD, FT-IR and XPS were employed to

characterize G-CQDs. Interestingly; as-prepared CQDs exhibited green fluorescence with 41.2 % quantum yield and showed excitation-dependent emission. The G-CQDs were applied as a fluorescent probe for the selective and sensitive Tyrosine (Tyr) detection with a detection limit of 0.13 μM . Further, to explain the quenching mechanism, a fluorescence lifetime experiment was performed. In addition to this, the detection of Tyr was performed in the milk sample. Based on semiconducting properties, the synthesized G-CQDs were effectively applied to fabricate a Schottky barrier diode on Indium doped tin oxide (ITO) substrate. On the whole, the work is a novel illustration of the demanding optoelectronic device application of G-CQDs.