

Contents

	Page No.
Title page	i
Certificates	ii-iv
Acknowledgements	v
List of Figures	xiii
List of Tables	xviii
List of Abbreviations	xix
Preface	xxiv
Chapter 1	
Introduction	3
1.1 Electronic waste (e-waste)	3
1.1.1 Global e-waste generation statistics	4
1.1.2 Classification of e-waste and its composition	7
1.2 Printed circuit boards	7
1.3 Recycling and recovering copper from e-waste	9
1.4 E-waste recycling techniques	11
1.4.1 Pretreatment of e-waste	11
1.4.2 Physical recycling	12
1.4.3 Chemical recycling	13
1.4.3.1 Incineration, Pyrolysis, and Gasification	13
1.4.3.2 Super critical fluids systems	14
1.4.3.3 Pyrometallurgy	14
1.4.3.4 Hydrometallurgy	14
1.4.3.5 Bio-hydrometallurgy	16
1.4.3.6 Other greener treatments	16
1.5 Non-metallic fraction recycling	16
1.6 High added-value products recovery from e-waste	17
1.6.1 Precious metals nanoparticles	21
1.6.2 Base metal and base metal oxide nanoparticles	25

1.6.2.1	Copper nanoparticles	25
1.6.2.2	Copper-based nanostructured alloys	27
1.6.2.3	Copper oxide NPs	29
1.6.2.4	Nanocomposites	30
1.7	Research gaps	31
1.8	Research objectives	32
1.9	Organisation of the thesis	34
Chapter 2		
Experimental details		39
2.1	Procurement of raw materials and chemicals	39
2.2	Pre-processing of WPCBs	39
2.2.1	Estimation of composition in WPCBs	41
2.2.2	Analysis of composition of liberated metallic fraction	43
2.3	Synthesis of copper oxide nanoparticles from copper-rich leach liquor of WPCBs of computer motherboards	45
2.4	Application of CuO nanoparticles: Photocatalytic property measurements by evaluating the degradation of textile dyes Congo red and Methylene blue	49
2.4.1	Degradation of Congo red	49
2.4.2	Degradation of Methylene blue	50
2.5	Synthesis of Cu(OH) ₂ /CuO hybrid nanostructures and CuO nanoparticles from strip solution of mobile phone PCBs	50
2.5.1	Preparation of copper-rich strip solution from obsolete mobile phone PCBs	50
2.5.2	Synthesis of Cu(OH) ₂ /CuO hybrid nanostructures and CuO nanoparticles from strip solution of mobile phone PCBs	52
2.6	Assessment of photocatalytic property of Cu(OH) ₂ /CuO hybrid nanostructures and CuO nanoparticles: Degradation of Rhodamine blue	53
2.7	Material Characterization techniques	54
2.7.1	Atomic Absorption Spectroscopy (AAS)	54
2.7.2	Powder X-Ray Diffraction (P-XRD)	55
2.7.3	Fourier Transform Infrared Radiation (FTIR)	56
2.7.4	Scanning Electron Microscope (SEM)	56
2.7.5	Transmission Electron Microscope (TEM)	57
2.7.6	X-ray Photoelectron Spectroscopy (XPS)	57
2.7.7	UV-visible Diffuse Reflectance Spectroscopy (UV-DRS)	57
2.7.8	UV-visible spectroscopy	58

2.7.9	Brunauer-Emmett-Teller (BET)	58
Chapter 3		
Recovery of copper from metallic fraction of WPCBs of end-of-life computer motherboards		65
3.1	Characterization of WPCBs of obsolete computer motherboards	65
3.2	Recovery of copper from metallic fraction of computer motherboard PCBs	70
3.2.1	Nitric acid leaching	70
3.2.2	Analysis of residue obtained after nitric acid leaching	78
3.2.3	Kinetics of dissolution of copper and zinc	78
3.3	Conclusions	82
Chapter 4		
Recovery of CuO nanoparticles from WPCBs of obsolete computer motherboards		87
4.1	Introduction	87
4.2	Synthesis of CuO NPs from Cu-rich leach liquor	89
4.3	Characterization of the recovered products	92
4.3.1	Structural properties analysis (XRD, FTIR, SEM-EDS)	92
4.3.2	Optical bandgap energy analysis	97
4.3.3	TEM micrograph analysis	100
4.3.4	XPS analysis	105
4.3.5	Surface area measurements	108
4.4	Conclusions	110
Chapter 5		
Photocatalytic property assessment of recovered high added-value materials		115
5.1	Introduction to wastewater generation and treatment	115
5.2	Photocatalysis	118
5.3	Degradation of Congo Red	120
5.3.1	Photocatalytic activity assessment	120
5.3.2	Results and discussions of CR degradation	121
5.4	Degradation of Methylene Blue	127
5.4.1	Photocatalytic activity assessment	127
5.4.2	Results and discussions of MB degradation	128
5.5	Plausible photocatalytic mechanism	135

5.6	Understanding the photocatalytic behaviour of recovered nanoproducts	136
5.7	Conclusions	137
Chapter 6		
Recovery of hybrid Cu(OH)₂/CuO and CuO nanostructures from strip solution of spent PCBs of mobile phones and evaluation of their photocatalytic activity		141
6.1	Introduction	141
6.2	Synthesis of hybrid Cu(OH) ₂ /CuO and CuO nanostructures from strip solution of mobile phone PCBs	142
6.2.1	Analysis of composition of purified strip solution acquired from solvent extraction of leached solution of delaminated WPCBs	143
6.3	Characterization of as-synthesized nanoproduct	146
6.3.1	Structural properties analysis	146
6.3.2	Optical bandgap energy analysis	149
6.3.3	XPS analysis	151
6.3.4	TEM micrograph Analysis	154
6.4	Photocatalytic activity measurement	156
6.4.1	RhB degradation	158
6.4.2	Plausible photocatalytic mechanism	163
6.4.3	Understanding the photocatalytic behaviour of P1 and P2	164
6.5	Conclusions	167
Chapter 7		
Conclusions and scope for the future work		171
7.1	Major conclusions of the present work	171
7.2	Scope for the future work	173
References		175
List of Publications		203