



Preparation of a composite NF rGO-TiO₂-pPD membrane deposited on low-cost ceramic support: Application for dye removal

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Abstract

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Given its exceptional qualities, graphene oxide (GO) has attracted a lot of interest in membrane technology, especially in water treatment. Nevertheless, its poor stability, swelling, and performance loss during filtration are still some major issues that still need to be resolved. This work aims to prepare a stable and more efficient GO-based nanofiltration (NF) layer disposed of on low-cost kaolinite support. The hydrothermal technique was used to produce titania oxide (TiO₂) nanoparticles, reduced graphene oxide (rGO) and rGO-TiO₂ intercalated sheets with different intercalation ratios which will provide the membrane with increased hydrophilicity enhancing water flux, selectivity and resistance to fouling. Following that, the rGO-TiO₂ was cross-linked with para-phenylenediamine (pPD) to achieve a tailored 3D membrane layer with increased stability and selectivity, preventing water molecules adsorbed in the interlayer spacing of GO from widening the distance and decreasing rejection. The prepared composite was coated on geomaterial support using grafting and evaporation-assisted assembly techniques while comparing two activations approaches. The prepared membrane showed enhanced stability while FTIR and XRD proved the successful preparation of TiO₂ and its intercalation between the rGO sheets. The filtration results showed that the combined interaction and cross-linking led to an improvement in the membrane performances as the permeability enhanced from 3.58 to 20.80 L h⁻¹ m⁻² bar⁻¹ while the rejection of 50 ppm congo red solution passed from 78.7 to 99.3%.