

A STUDY OF THERMAL STABILITY OF
DIFFERENT ZNO/P-SI DIODE STRUCTURE
TOWARD APPLICATION OF RADIATION DETECTORS

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Dedication to my beloved father, my wife, and kids

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I am gratefull to God Almighty with His grace giving me the opportunity to pursue my study. I would also like to express my gratitude to Dr. Suhana Mohammed Sultan for her time and guidance. My wife Azriyani Md. Yusoff for her support and commitment. My understanding son, daughter and family members. Lastly Public Service Department and Malaysia Nuclear Agency for their sponsorship and permission to further study.

ABSTRACT

Radiation hard detectors are difficult and costly to design. Moreover silicon based detectors are not superior in-term of high temperature environment compared to wide band semiconductor materials such as zinc oxide (ZnO). ZnO semiconductor are actively studied for the past decade due to its versatile properties such as high transparency, ability to be deposited at low temperatures, and high resistance towards radiation. Radiation hard materials must be able to withstand high temperature operation. A nuclear power plant demands high temperature up to 673 K operation especially near reactor pressure vessel. Not many work are done on the effect of temperature on radiation hard semiconductor material. The aims of this research is to remodel and simulating two different ZnO/p-Si heterojunction diode structure material and to study the temperature effect of diode parameters such as barrier height, apparent barrier height, ideality factor (η), series resistance, shunt resistance, simulation of Spice ZnO/p-Si heterojunction diode model and subsequently to optimize thermal stability for high temperature application such as radiation detector and electrical power plant. Modeling and simulation was analyzed and executed in Matlab and LTSpice. During characterization, the temperature were ramped-up from room temperature to 673 K. Furthermore, this analyzed result were compared to experimental result that have been published on high ranking journal. For each temperature, the parameters extracted were tabulated. Subsequently, all electrical characteristic obtained have been plotted on graph. On top of that, the effect of barrier inhomogeneity have been carried out and there were three prime prove of barrier inhomogeneity which is small barrier height value obtain from gradient of $\ln(\frac{I_0}{T^2})$ versus V^{-1} , low Richardson constant value, and linearly lines on plotted barrier height against ideality factor. Result shows the structure 1 ideality factor of 2.07 were achieved at 673 K temperature with semi-empirical structure 2 hole concentration and calculated structure 1 electron concentration of $7.05 \times 10^6 \text{ cm}^{-3}$ and $2.59 \times 10^{13} \text{ cm}^{-3}$ respectively. Beside that, the activation energy was found at 0.35 eV. In conclusion, structure 1 ZnO/p-Si heterojunction diode shows good thermal stability compared to structure 2 but structure 2 show ability to fabricate high current and low turn on voltage of 0.8 V at room temperature. It has been observed that structure 1 ZnO/p-Si can withstand up to 673 K temperature thus proven that ZnO/p-Si as an substitute or alternative to high temperature environment operation.

ABSTRAK

Pengesan radiasi adalah sukar dan mahal untuk direka cipta. Tambahan pula pengesan radiasi berasaskan silikon memiliki ketahanan yang kurang baik untuk digunakan pada suhu yang tinggi berbanding semikonduktor yang bahannya daripada Zink Oksida (ZnO). Banyak kajian telah dijalankan terhadap semikonduktor ZnO kerana sifatnya yang tinggi kadar lut sinar, kebolehpayaan untuk didepositkan ketika suhu rendah, dan kerintangan yang tinggi terhadap radiasi. Bahan yang tahan radiasi adalah tinggi daya tahan dan beroperasi pada suhu yang tinggi. Loji jana kuasa nuklear memerlukan bahan yang berupaya untuk manampung suhu yang tinggi dan beroperasi pada suhu 673 K terutamanya berhampiran dengan kerangka jana tekan. Namun begitu tidak banyak kajian yang dijalankan terhadap bahan semikonduktor yang tinggi kadar ketahanan radiasinya kepada perubahan suhu yang tinggi. Matlamat kajian ini adalah untuk merangka model dan menjalankan simulasi dua jenis struktur bahan ZnO/p-Si persimpangan hetero diod bagi mengkaji kesan suhu terhadap parameternya iaitu penghadang, penghadang yang benar, faktor ideal, rintangan sesiri, rintangan selari, simulasi di dalam Spice, dan untuk mengenalpasti struktur yang optimal dan stabil terhadap suhu yang tinggi iaitu sesuai untuk digunapakai sebagai pengesan radiasi dan di dalam aplikasi jana kuasa elektrik. Semua model dan simulasi ini dianalisa dan dilaksanakan di dalam perisian Matlab dan LTSpice. Semasa pencirian parameter dijalankan, suhunya diubah dari suhu bilik ke 673 K. Analisa kajian ini dibandingkan dengan hasil kajian yang diterbitkan di dalam jurnal yang terkenal. Bagi setiap suhu, semua parameter yang diperolehi direkodkan. Semua pencirian elektrik juga di lukiskan grafnya. Tambahan pula, kesan penghadang yang diluar jangkaan juga telah dikaji. Berdasarkan kajian, terdapat tiga bukti yang menunjukkan kesan penghadang diluar jangkaan iaitu melalui hasil penemuan nilai penghadang yang dijumpai melalui kaedah kecerunan graf $\ln(\frac{I_0}{T^2})$ berlawanan V^{-1} adalah kecil, nilai Richardson yang sekata adalah kecil, dan wujudnya graf garis lurus di antaran penghadang berlawan faktor ideal. Hasil penemuan struktur 1 menunjukkan faktor idealnya ialah 2.07 ketika suhu mencecah 673 K dan kepadatan lohong struktur 2 ialah $7.05 \times 10^6 \text{ cm}^{-3}$ manakala kepadatan elektron struktur 1 ialah $2.59 \times 10^{13} \text{ cm}^{-3}$. Selain daripada itu, pengaktifan tenaga yang diperolehi ialah 0.35 eV. Secara kesimpulannya struktur 1 menunjukkan ketahanan terhadap suhu yang tinggi berbanding struktur 2. Walau bagaimanapun struktur 2 berupaya untuk menghasilkan arus elektrik yang tinggi pada nilai permulaan

voltan yang rendah iaitu 0.8 V sewaktu suhu bilik. Oleh yang demikian, didapati struktur 1 memiliki kebolehpayaan untuk bertahan sehingga suhu mencecah 673 K dan sekali gus membuktikan bahawa ZnO/p-Si boleh digantikan atau menjadi alternatif kepada aplikasi yang memerlukan suhu pengoperasian yang tinggi.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Si	-	Silicon
AZO	-	Aluminum Doped Zinc Oxide
ZnO	-	Zinc Oxide
Ti	-	Titanium
ZnO/p-Si	-	Zinc Oxide and p-type Silicon
SrCu ₂ O ₂	-	Strontium Copper Preoxide
NiO	-	Nickel Oxide
ZnRh ₂ O ₄	-	Zinc Rhodium Tetraoxygen
UV	-	Ultra Violet
PMT	-	Photomultiplier Tube
HV-DC	-	High Voltage Direct Current
KeV	-	Kilo Electron Volt
MeV	-	Mega Electron Volt

LIST OF SYMBOLS

$e\phi$	-	Workfunction
χ	-	Electron Affinity
E_F	-	Fermi Level Energy
E_{Fi}	-	Intrinsic Fermi Level Energy
E_C	-	Conduction Band Energy
E_V	-	Valance Band Energy
ΔE_C	-	Conduction Band Offset
ΔE_V	-	Valance Band Offset
E_g	-	Energy Band Gap
m_e	-	Electron Effective Mass Density of State
m_{oe}	-	Electron Mass
n_c	-	Conduction Band Density of State
n_a	-	Acceptor Concentration
n_d	-	Donor Concentration
V_{bi}	-	Build in Potential
T	-	Temperature
n_i	-	Intrinsic Concentration
V_{do}	-	Diffusion Voltage
K	-	Boltzmann Constant
I_O	-	Reverse Saturation Current
A	-	Contact Area
A^*	-	Richardson Constant
V_T	-	Thermal Voltage
R	-	Universal Gas Constant
e_{vc}	-	Electron Volt Constant
η	-	Ideality Factor
I	-	Current

V_{bias}	-	Bias Voltage
R_j	-	Junction Resistance
r_d	-	Piecewise Linear Model Resistance

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Zinc Oxide (ZnO) is one of the propitious material for semiconductor device applications. ZnO also have large free exciton binding energy [1], wide band gap, high electron mobility, good transparency, high thermal conductivity [2], large saturation velocity, excitonic emission process above room temperature, and strong radiation hardness [3]. It is also available in large bulk single crystal. Besides, it exhibit good design and fabrication process, it performs well in wet chemical etching with low growth cost. ZnO are almost n-type, that has been the reason an extensive debate and research.

ZnO proffer numerous synthesis technique such as metal organic chemical vapor deposition, chemical bath deposition, pulsed laser deposition, spray pyrolysis, thermal evaporation, vapor phase transport, arc discharge, template directed wet and dry, sol gel, microwave synthesis, carbothermal, sputtering, and so forth. Furthermore, ZnO electrical properties can be controlled by doping level, thus it can change from insulator through ZnO semiconductor to metal. Indeed, there are few ZnO heterojunction devices such as SrCu₂O₂/ZnO [4], NiO/ZnO [4], ZnO/SiC [5], ZnRh₂O₄/ZnO [4] and ZnO/Si. Consequently, ZnO/Si is the most established heterostructure in term of cost effectiveness and maturity of Si based material. ZnO has been actively researched for various electronic applications such as UV astronomy, sensors, light emitting diodes, piezoelectric, solar cell, actuator, space to space communication [3] and environmental monitoring [6].

However there are lack of study on ZnO as semiconductor radiation detector. It is known that a good commercial radiation detector in the current market is on scintillation detector (inorganic scintillator) but this detector require additional cooler to operate at high temperature and bulky in size. Apart of that, ZnO as a wide band gap semiconductor has good radiation absorption efficiency toward gamma and photon.

However, no research have been carried out to find thermally stable structure that can be operated at temperature up to 673 K.

1.1 Project Problem Statement

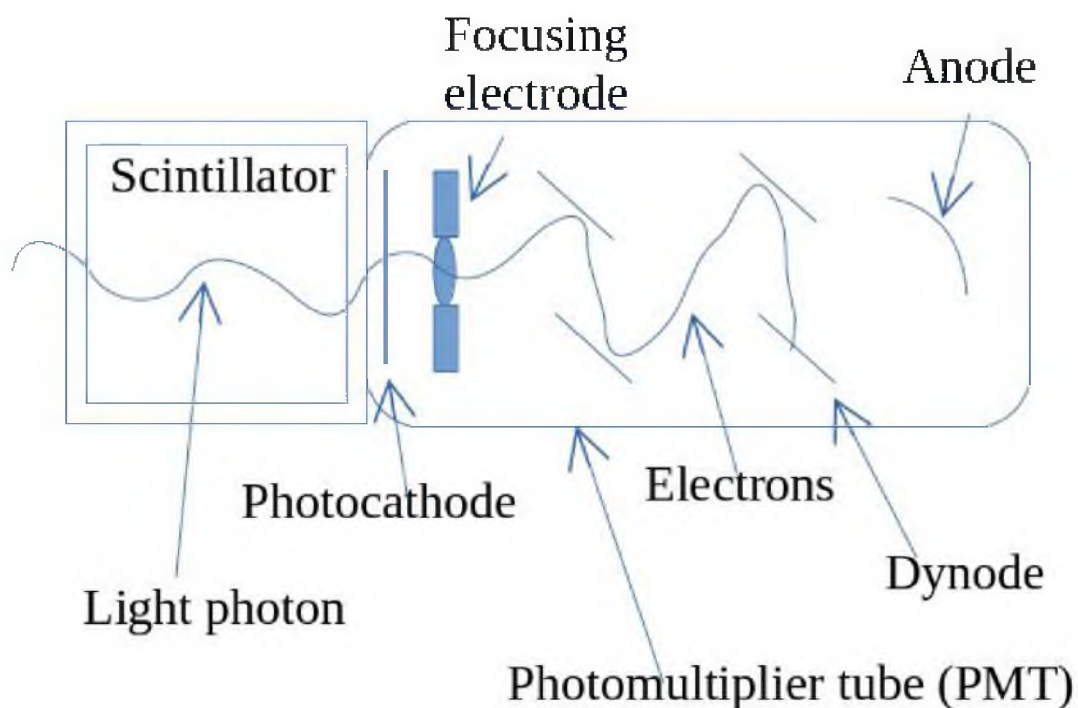


Figure 1.1: Basic Scintillation Detector.

The definition of scintillation is a luminescence of light with characteristic spectrum produces by passing a particle and absorb radiation energy. Beside that, scintillation also transpire from inorganic material such as liquid, gases, and salt. Based of Fig.1.1 above, a scintillation detector has been made up of scintillator and light detector also known as photomultiplier tube(PMT). Scintillator will absorb energy when it gets excited when struck by incoming ionizing radiation particle such as electron, alpha, ion, or even high photon energy and produce light energy. Photoelectric effect occur in PMT that convert an absorbed light energy to electron form. Conventionally, ionizing radiation energy ranges from a few kilo electron volts to mega electron volts (KeV to MeV) in form of alpha, beta particle, x-ray and y-ray. However, in terms of implementation, scintillation detector commonly connected to direct current high voltage (HV-DC) power source from 450 V to 1000 V. Meanwhile, output signal will be preamplified before amplified and analyzed using either single channel analyzer or multichannel analyzer as show on Fig.1.2.

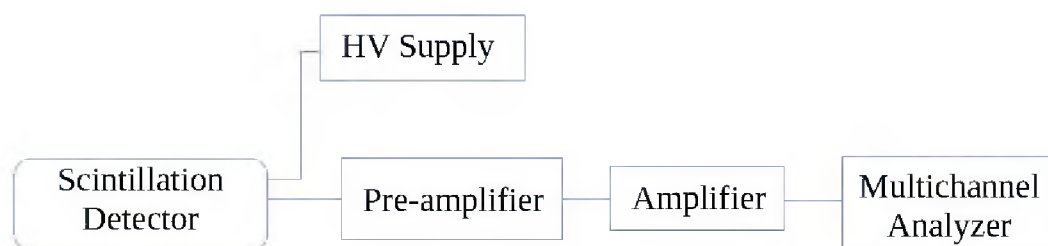


Figure 1.2: Basic Scintillation Detector Block Diagram.

The predicament when using scintillation detector require additional cooling when operating at high temperature(up to 673 K) and bulky in size. The prospect of using ZnO/p-Si device as a radiation detector is high due to its thermal stability [7] [1]. Thus ZnO/p-Si device is a suitable complimentary or cost effective to scintillation detector.

1.2 Project Objectives

There are three main objectives that need to achieve. These three main aims are listed as below :

- To remodel and simulate two different heterojunction diode structures based on ZnO/p-Si material in Matlab and LTSpice.
- To study the temperature effect of diode parameters such as ideality factor, barrier height, apparent barrier height, series resistance, shunt resistance, and simulation of Spice ZnO/p-Si Heterojunction Diode Model.
- To determine suitable structure for thermally stable high temperature application such as radiation detector.

1.3 Project Scope of Work

Basically ZnO/p-Si heterojunction diode research is governed either by

- Modeling
- Simulation

- Fabrication
- Electrical Characterization

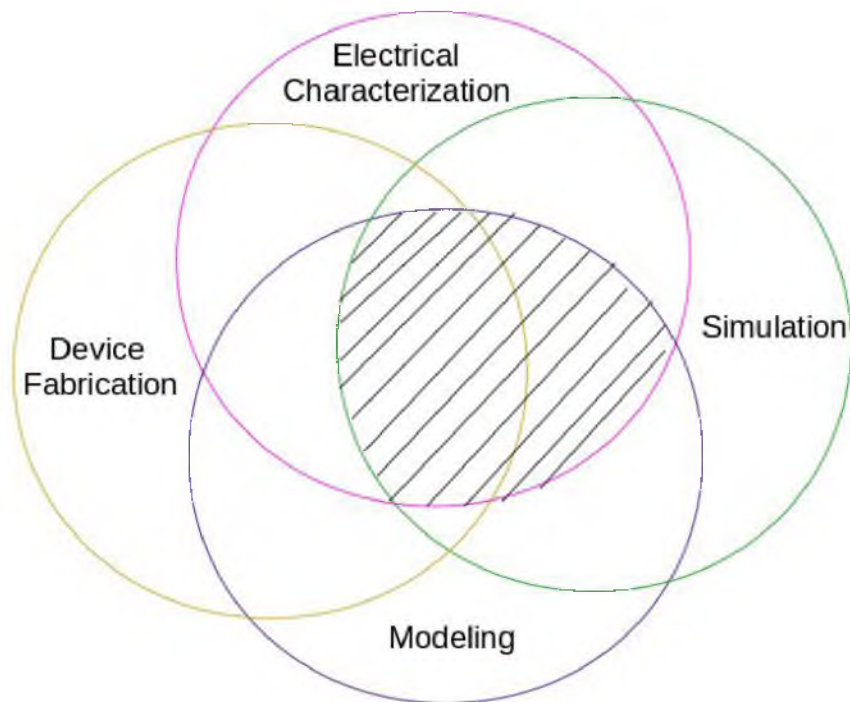


Figure 1.3: Basic ZnO/p-Si Heterojunction Diode Research Scope of Work.

However this project is limited to basic modeling, simulation, and electrical characterization using Matlab and LTSpice as show on Fig.1.3, the shaded area. Beside that, this project also limited to certain constraints as follow :

- Limited to ZnO/p-Si material as heterojunction diode.
- Lattice matching, effect of series and shunt resistance in circuit modeling and analysis is not covered in this study.
- Basic modeling and simulation is run in Matlab and LTSpice.
- All chareacterization result are plotted and tabled.
- The maximum temperature is being studied at 673 K.
- Spice ZnO/p-Si Heterojunction Diode Model is limited on positive forward bias voltage and DC voltage source only.
- Minimum ideality factor is assume to be 1.
- Some experimental data are taken from golden reference and some of experimental data are calculated based on given data from golden reference.

1.4 Summary of Contribution

In this project I strive to remodeled and simulated two ZnO/p-Si heterojunction diode structures taken from literature using Matlab and LTSpice. The effect of ideality factor, barrier height, apparent barrier height, series resistance, and shunt resistance towards temperature variation are studied and finding apparent ideality factor, activation energy, Richardson constant without barrier inhomogeneity, Richardson constant with barrier inhomogeneity, junction resistance, turn on voltage, and current-voltage. Hence the main accomplishment are as follow:

- a. H. Hasim, S.M. Sultan,'Temperature Analysis of. ZnO/p-Si Heterojunction Using Thermionic Emission Model',AIP Conference Proceeding.(Submitted)
- b. Successfully remodel and simulate ideality factor towards temperature variation in Matlab.
- c. Successfully remodel and simulate barrier height towards temperature variation in Matlab.
- d. Successful remodel and simulate apparent barrier height towards temperature variation in Matlab.
- e. Successful remodel and simulate series resistance towards temperature variation in Matlab.
- f. Successful remodel and simulate shunt resistance towards temperature variation in Matlab.
- g. Successful remodel and simulate activation energy in Matlab.
- h. Successful remodel and simulate Richardson Constant with and without barrier inhomogeneity in Matlab.
- i. Successful remodel and simulate apparent ideality factor in Matlab.
- j. Successful remodel and simulate junction resistance in Matlab.
- k. Successful remodel and simulate turn on voltage in Matlab and LTSpice.
- l. Successful remodel and simulate current-voltage in Matlab and LTSpice.

1.5 Thesis Organization

This thesis is divided into five further chapters. Chapter two covers literature review of ZnO/p-Si heterojunction diode at various temperature. This literature review with structure within have been published on recognized journals and conference from 2007 to 2017. Following on chapter 3, the theoretical background cover theory behind heterojunction diode such as ohmic contact, heterojunction contact, structure 1 and structure 2 overview. On chapter 4, this thesis will cover basic modeling and Spice simulation technique. It will start from basic modeling flow chart to electrical characterization and end at Spice simulation. In addition to that, Chapter 5 will be finding semi-empirical electrical characterization of ZnO/p-Si heterojunction diode on first structure and semi-empirical electrical characterization of ZnO/p-Si heterojunction diode on second structure. In this chapter, it also narrate the comparison of semi-empirical structure 1 and semi-empirical structure 2 for thermally stable structure to operated at 673 K. Lastly chapter 6 will be the conclusion, suggestion, and possible future work on ZnO/p-Si heterojunction diode.

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