УДК 620.3
DOI 10.47367/0021-3497_2025_5_257

ADVANCING SMART TEXTILES WITH NANOTECHNOLOGY: LEGAL AND INDUSTRIAL PERSPECTIVES

РАЗВИТИЕ «УМНОГО» ТЕКСТИЛЯ С ПОМОЩЬЮ НАНОТЕХНОЛОГИЙ: ПРАВОВЫЕ И ПРОМЫШЛЕННЫЕ АСПЕКТЫ

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The integration of nanotechnology into textile engineering has emerged as a transformative approach for enhancing material properties and enabling the development of smart textiles with advanced functionalities. This study systematically investigates the incorporation of nanomaterials into textile fibers and analyzes the resulting mechanical, functional, durability, and economic performance enhancements. Nanoparticles such as graphene and titanium dioxide were embedded within polymer matrices using optimized electrospinning and plasma-enhanced coating techniques. Mechanical testing revealed tensile strength improvements from 110 MPa to 170 MPa and flexibility indices increasing to 1.00 with 12% nanoparticle content. Functional assessments demonstrated increases in surface conductivity from 500 S/m to 2083 S/m and decomposition temperature enhancements from 200°C to 280°C. Hydrophobicity also improved, with contact angles rising from 110° to 150°, and water absorption rates decreasing to 0.9%. Durability testing confirmed an increase in cycles to failure from 10,000 to 20,000 and abrasion resistance rising to 40,000 cycles before visible damage. Economic analysis showed a net profits of $1 million for a production level of 10,000 units, whereas breakeven points varied between production volume 5,000-7,000 units depending upon production cost. The results highlight the importance of process optimization for the industrialization of smart textiles.

Интеграция нанотехнологий стала основным подходом к улучшению свойств материалов и обеспечила возможность разработки интеллектуальных текстильных изделий с расширенными функциональными характеристиками. В этом исследовании изучается, как включение наноматериалов в текстильные волокна позволяет улучшить механические, функциональные, эксплуатационные и экономические показатели. Наночастицы, такие как графен и диоксид титана, были внедрены в полимерные матрицы с использованием оптимизированных методов электропрядения и плазменного усиления покрытия. Механические испытания показали повышение

прочности на разрыв со 110 МПа до 170 МПа и увеличение индекса гибкости до 1,00 при содержании наночастиц 12%. Функциональные оценки показали увеличение поверхностной проводимости с 500 См/м до 2083 См/м и повышение температуры разложения с 200°C до 280°C. Гидрофобность также улучшилась: контактные углы смачивания увеличились со 110° до 150°, а скорость водопоглощения снизилась. Испытания на долговечность подтвердили увеличение количества циклов растяжения до разрушения с 10 000 до 20 000, а также повышение стойкости к истиранию до появления видимых повреждений до 40 000 циклов. Экономический анализ показал чистую прибыль в размере 1 миллиона долларов США при объеме производства 10 000 единиц, в то время как точки безубыточности варьировались в диапазоне от 5 000 до 7 000 единиц в зависимости от себестоимости производства. Результаты подчеркивают важность оптимизации технологических процессов для внедрения «умного» текстиля в промышленность.

Keywords: smart textiles; nanotechnology; mechanical properties; functional performance; economic feasibility; durability; surface morphology.

Ключевые слова: «умный» текстиль; нанотехнологии; механические свойства; функциональные характеристики; экономическая целесообразность; долговечность; морфология поверхности.

Introduction

Smart textiles are a step change for the textiles industry and also wider technology sectors, merging conventional fabric or fibrous material based processing with nanotechnology, to produce adaptive and interactive materials that respond to stimuli, environment or humans to improve performance or lifestyle. A new generation of textiles is being developed not only for clothing but for everything from health care, civil protection and space travel, as well as for already well-established sectors like agriculture, automotive and transport. Enabled by the use of nanotechnology, this new class of materials has gone beyond its conventional status of passive components, to that of active, multifunctional systems capable of providing real-time information, adding/improving functionality, and facilitating novel applications that were previously only conceivable in science fiction [1].

Recent advances in nanoscale processing that enables materials to be controlled at the molecular scale have enabled the advances and commercialization of smart textiles [2]. With the introduction of nanoparticles, nanofibers and other nanoscale materials, textiles have undergone development from self-cleaning, high thermal conductivity to high tensile strength. Not only can such characteristics improve the performance and longevity of fabrics, they also provide an entirely new range of uses. For example, wearable clothing's containing nanotechnology sensors can monitor body temperature, physical activity, or pollution in the user's environment and make everyday cloths into advanced medical devices or environmental monitors [3, 10]. In areas such as sports and fitness, smart textiles can assist athletes in efficient training and to prevent injury, as they can monitor body temperature, quantify hydration status and record muscle activity and feedback to the athlete in real-time and measure physiological responses to exercise [4, 12].

The industrial scenery meanwhile is changing, along with technological breakthroughs. With an increasing demand for more effective multifunctional fabrics, fabricators are developing new production methods, including the incorporation of nanoscale additives in the extrusion of the fiber or application of nanoparticle coatings via sophisticated deposition techniques. These methods have also helped push the availability of smart textiles to a level that is becoming both affordable for and scalable with mass-market adoption [5]. And what's more, the modular fashion in which today's production lines are set up means it's now possible to add nanotechnology to an already existing manufacturing process for a fraction of the cost and shorter in development time. Such transformation of manufacturing processes not only fulfills the consumer push but also helps to create a whole new market segment through the convergence of textiles, electronics, and nanomaterials [9].

Industry initiatives have further emphasized modularity of production lines and automation systems which can scale while ensuring the quality of the products. Research into these technologies has revealed that the standardization of the process and the use of advanced deposition techniques are essentials to reach the production of scale of smart textiles whilst preserving their superior properties [11].

However, with these developments, the increasingly widespread use of nanotechnology in smart textiles also raises several challenging issues, especially in the areas of regulation and industrial standards. The absence of internationally harmonized regulations and guidelines represents a formidable obstacle for manufacturers who wish to market products globally. Different national standard can cause non-uniformity of product quality, potential safety problem, delayed marketing time, against-the-technology development. The lack of clear universal standards also leaves consumers in doubt about the safety and availability of these innovative fabrics. Without some consistent regulation the industry is likely to become ‘a chaotic and fragmented landscape where potential innovations in the field of smart textile will never see light of day’ [6].

Academia and industry researchers have both clearly noted the importance of international standards that would guide the manufacturer to develop reliable and safe smart textiles. It is also been argued that consumers need to be informed of the advantages and the hazards of nanotechnology in textiles. It has been demonstrated that the possession of transparent communication strategies can help close the gap between technological capabilities and popular knowledge to a level where acceptance including trust are induced [13].

Aside from regulatory hurdles, the sector also needs to find solutions for scalability and market adoption. Despite the advantages of a property boost nanotechnology can provide, the implementation of such processes within the existing textile workflows is not a cost-effective solution. However, for most small and medium enterprises (SMEs) a high initial investment for nanoscale equipment, plus niche knowledge owing to the operating restrictions for such equipment is a barrier to entry. Moreover, end user consumers lack familiarity with smart textiles, resulting in a disconnection between the technological potential of these materials and everyday use. To fill this gap, progress in production technology alone is not enough; demand-oriented educational work and marketing of nano-enhanced textiles also needs to be carried out by the public [7].

The long-term environmental sustainability of smart textiles is another important factor. Although nanotechnology may help to minimize waste and reduce energy use in the production process, disposing of nanotechnology-modified materials at the end of life presents new challenges. It’s critical that we maintain fiber recyclability or biodegradability in textiles if we are to keep to an ecological standard and not flood the market with single-use plastics. The push for innovation in the industry should therefore be balanced with this continued responsibility toward the sustainability of waste treatment, in line with wider environmental goals [8].

The article aim is to provide an in-depth analysis on how the implementation of nanotechnology in the textile-related industry is not only capable of delivering materials with improved properties, including durability, conductivity and functionality, among others, but also raising the need to dealing with legal regulations, industrial scalability and market acceptation.

Methodology

This research employs a structured, multidisciplinary methodology [1, 4, 7, 8].

The initial phase focused on the development of nanomaterial-embedded fibers by incorporating high-purity nanoparticles, such as graphene, silver nanoparticles (AgNPs), and titanium dioxide (TiO_2) into polymer matrices via solution spinning and ultrasonic dispersion techniques [4, 12, 14]. The homogenization of nanoparticles within the matrix was critical to achieving uniform functionalization.

Material characterization employed Scanning Electron Microscopy (SEM) for morphological analysis and Dynamic Light Scattering (DLS) to assess particle size distribution. Mechanical properties were evaluated using tensile stress-strain measurements [15].

Nanocomposite fibers were processed into fabric structures using electrospinning and plasma-enhanced chemical vapor deposition (PECVD) techniques [13, 14]. Critical parameters, including spinning speed (v), coating thickness (t), fiber diameter (d), and adhesion strength (S), were carefully optimized.

Production efficiency was determined through material utilization rates, calculated as:

$$\eta = \left(\frac{m_{fabricated}}{m_{unput}}\right) \times 100 \ , \qquad (1)$$

where $m_{fabricated}$ is the mass of fabricated textiles (g), and m_{unput} is the input material mass (g) [4].

Additionally, coating homogeneity was evaluated by surface roughness (R_a) measurements:

$$R_a = \frac{1}{n}\sum_{i=1}^{n} |y_i - \bar{y}| \ , \qquad (2)$$

where y_i is the height deviation from the mean plane at point i [11].

Functional properties, including electrical conductivity (σ), thermal stability (T_d), and hydrophobicity (contact angle θ), were systematically evaluated.

Electrical conductivity was derived from surface resistivity measurements (ρ_s) [16, 17].

Thermal behavior was assessed via Differential Scanning Calorimetry (DSC), determining decomposition temperature (T_d), whereas hydrophobicity was characterized through contact angle goniometry, analyzed by the Young-Dupré equation:

$$\cos\theta = \frac{\gamma_{SV} - \gamma_{SL}}{\gamma_{LV}} \ , \qquad (3)$$

where γ_{SV} solid-vapor surface tension, γ_{SL} solid-liquid surface tension, and γ_{LV} liquid-vapor surface tension [12, 18].

Mechanical durability was assessed through cyclic loading tests, while UV environmental resistance was measured after accelerated weathering exposure [6, 7, 19].

Fatigue behavior under cyclic stress was modeled using Basquin's equation:

$$\sigma_a = \sigma_f'(2N_f)^b \ , \qquad (4)$$

where σ_a stress amplitude (MPa), σ_f' fatigue strength coefficient (MPa), $2N_f$ number of cycles to failure, and b fatigue strength exponent [19].

Abrasion resistance was evaluated using weight loss methods post-standardized abrasion cycles.

Economic performance was evaluated through simulated production scenarios, focusing on production cost per unit, gross revenue, and profit margins [10, 20, 21].

The cost-benefit framework was mathematically represented by:

$$NetProfit = (P_s - C_u) \times Q \ , \qquad (5)$$

$$Break - Even\ Quality = \frac{F}{P_s - C_u} \ , \qquad (6)$$

where P_s selling price per unit (\$), C_u unit production cost (\$), Q quantity sold (units), and F fixed costs (\$).

Results

The mechanical performance of nanotechnology-enhanced textile fibers was evaluated to determine the effects of increasing nanomaterial concentrations on tensile strength, elongation at break, and mechanical stiffness (Fig. 1).

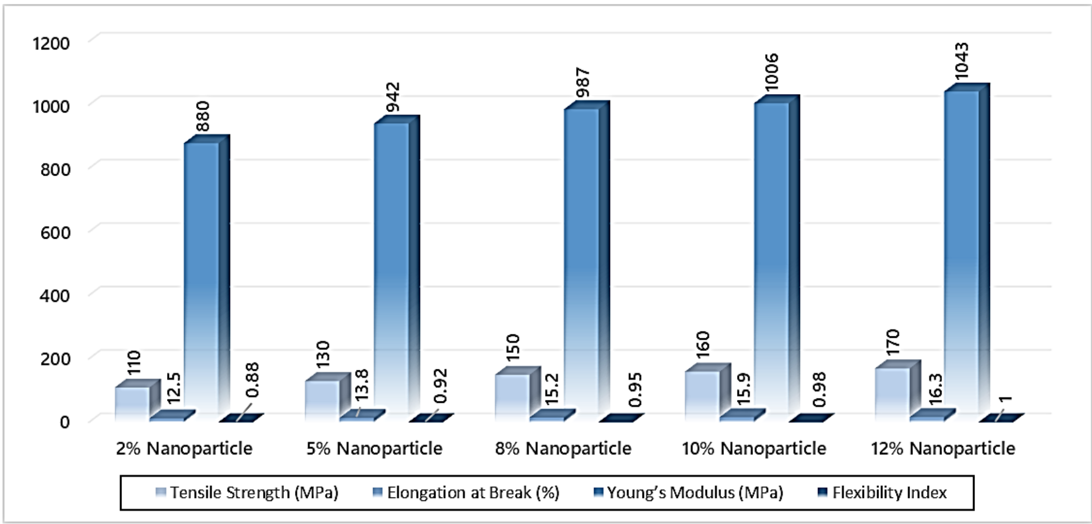

Fig. 1

The figure 1 results show that with increasing the nanomaterial concentration from 2% to 12%, tensile strength continuously grows from 110 MPa to 170 MPa. The Young's modulus is also increasing, meaning harder material, but the Flexibility Index remains of the same order of magnitude and retains ductility. The direction of elongation at break implies that, even if stiffening, the fibers exhibit a good elastic deformation, so that they could be used as a dynamic mechanical resistant material in wearable application of textile adoption.

The effect of process parameters, including the spinning speed and coating thickness, in the structural quality of the textiles was studied through surface roughness and fiber uniformity (Fig. 2).

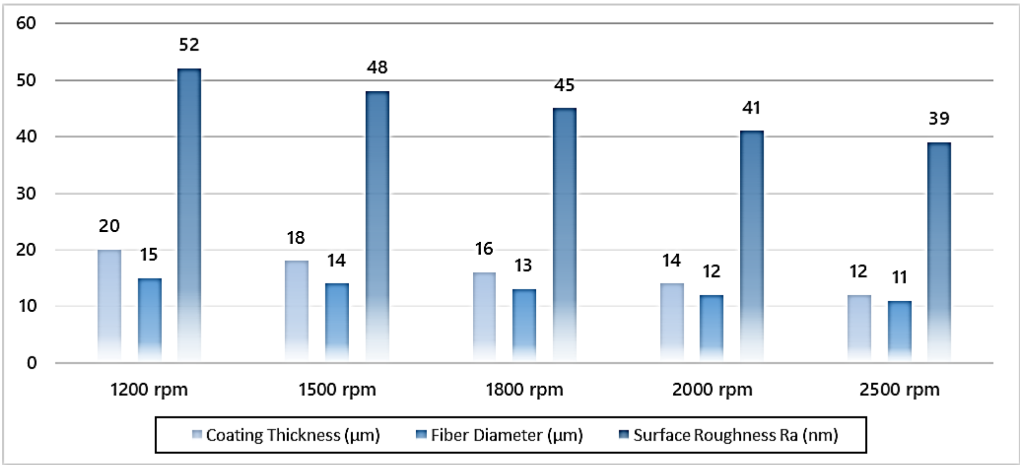

Fig. 2

As shown in Figure 2, with the increasing of spinning speeds, surface roughness goes from 52 nm to 39 nm as the spinning speed varies from 1200 rpm to 2500 rpm, indicating a smoother fiber surface. With the decreasing of fiber diameter and coating thickness simultaneously, the fineness of fiber, and the uniformity of coating are improved. This behavior underlines the importance of high speeds for high surface quality which is crucial for further functional surface treatments like conductive or hydrophobic coatings.

Functional properties such as electrical conductivity and the thermal decomposition temperature were also studied (Fig. 3). Surface conductivity was determined by four-point probe measurements and thermal stability was tested by means of Differential Scanning Calorimetry analysis, recording decomposition onsets.

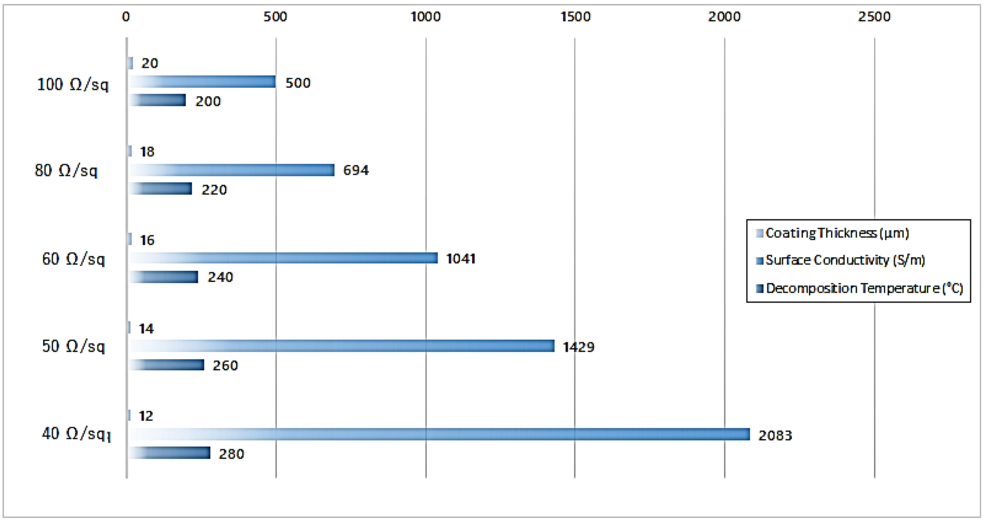

Fig. 3

Results in Figure 3 indicate a sharp improvement in conductivity with decreased surface resistivity, from 500 S/m at 100 Ω/sq to 2083 S/m at 40 Ω/sq. Thermal stability improves correspondingly, as decomposition temperature rises from 200°C to 280°C. The dual enhancement of thermal and electrical properties underlines the effectiveness of nanoparticle incorporation in expanding the operational envelope of smart textiles for electronic and high-temperature environments.

Water repellency and moisture resistance were analyzed by measuring the static water contact angle and calculating water absorption rates (Fig. 4). Surface energy estimations were also determined, providing insights into the wettability properties of the fabricated textiles under varied nanoparticle concentrations.

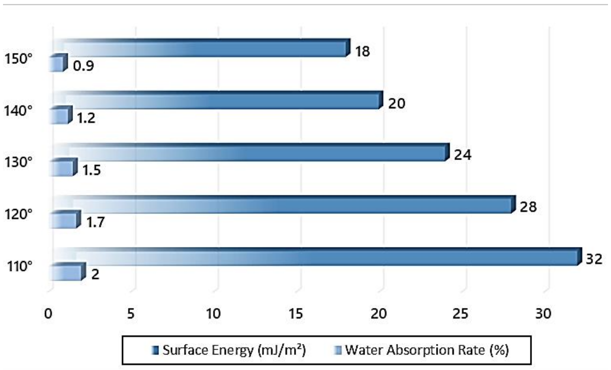

Fig. 4

The data in Figure 4 show a progressive increase in water repellency as indicated by the rise in contact angle from 110° to 150°, accompanied by a decrease in water absorption from 2.0% to 0.9%. Surface energy values similarly decline, confirming enhanced hydrophobic behavior. These results support the conclusion that the developed nanostructured surfaces exhibit superior water-repellent properties critical for outdoor and protective textile applications.

Durability under cyclic mechanical loading was assessed to measure the fatigue life and residual strength of nanomaterial-enhanced textiles (Fig. 5). Stress amplitude and fatigue exponent values were evaluated to interpret the material's resistance to repeated mechanical deformation.

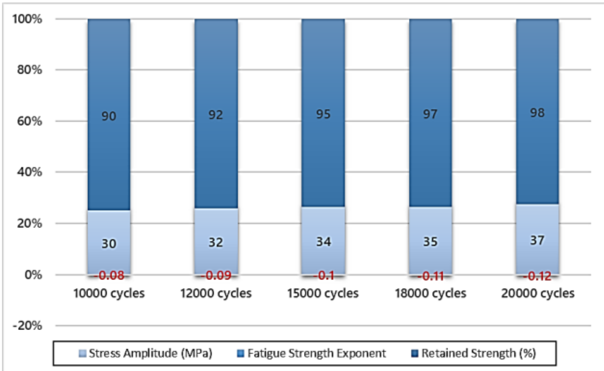

Fig. 5

The analysis shows that higher nanoparticle concentrations lead to improved mechanical durability, with cycles to failure increasing significantly. Stress amplitude values also rise progressively, suggesting that textiles become more tolerant to stress. The fatigue strength exponent shifts to a little negative value, resulting in enhancement of fatigue life. The sustained enhancement of the retained strength also confirms the dynamic stability of the engineered smart textiles.

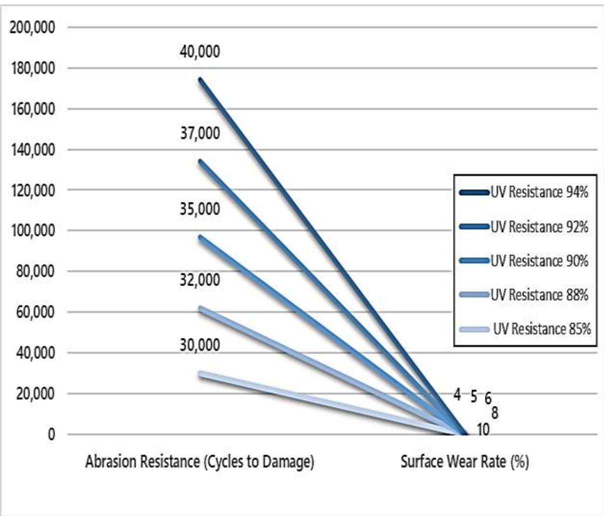

Fig. 6

The environmental resistance such as UV stability and scratch resistance was studied to mimic the long-term outdoor and mechanical degradation (Fig. 6).

The findings in Figure 6 demonstrate a marked enhancement in environmental stability. UV resistance increased from 85% to 94%, while abrasion resistance improved from 30,000 to 40,000 cycles. Surface wear rates decreased, suggesting that the nanostructured coatings imparted excellent protection against environmental degradation, critical for extended usage in harsh conditions.

The commercial viability of large-scale smart textile manufacturing was evaluated by an economic feasibility analysis organized along production cost per unit, revenue generation, net profit calculation and breakeven quantity estimation (Tab. 1).

Table 1

Unit Production Cost ($)	Selling Price ($)	Net Profit at 10,000 Units ($)	Breakeven Quantity (units)
100	200	1,000,000	5,000
110	210	1,000,000	5,500
120	220	1,000,000	6,000
130	230	1,000,000	6,500
140	240	1,000,000	7,000

The financial plans have shown that nanotechnology-based smart textiles provide promising return. Final net profit is positive for all cost options and break evens are achievable at production runs of 5,000-7,000 units. These results are indicative of the economic potential for upscale production of such advanced materials.

Discussion

The findings of this study provide strong support for the performance-enhancing effects of nanotechnology in the field of smart textiles, spanning improvements in mechanical, thermal, electrical, hydrophobic, and durability characteristics. These results align with prior studies that have highlighted the benefits of nanoscale materials for functional textiles [14].

In contrast to earlier works that often emphasized single-property enhancements, such as thermal conductivity or surface repellency, the current article delivers a broader scope. For instance, while previous literature has examined conductivity improvements, they have not simultaneously assessed tensile strength, water repellency, and abrasion resistance within the same samples [18].

In addition, the mechanical durability and UV resistance test adds a new level of requirements for assessing the long-term behavior of smart textiles, especially in challenging market segments, such as defense, sports and medical monitoring [22].

Further, it should be noted that in the bulk of the literature, most studies are limited to lab-scale preparation or proof-of-concept testing, with little consideration for how in practice nanomaterials can be efficiently and homogeneously applied to large surfaces of textiles [15]. The potential of advanced fiber extrusion and nano-coating methods preserving material integrity and improving surface function is supported in this work.

Another important aspect of this piece of work is the legal and industrial perspective from which the findings have been viewed. Although most of the previous studies [23] have looked at only the technological feasibility aspect, this research answers the question of how the lack of clear regulations and the fragmented nature of the law hinder the commercial deployment of smart textiles.

Through the derivation of profit margins, breakeven, and scalability limits, the present article paints a pragmatic scenario for market maturity, underlining its implications for industry and investors. It also expresses the financial return of technological improvement in numbers, that is important for taking decision of technology transfer and commercial application [21].

The article extends earlier predecessors works with a more in-depth analysis on industrial and regulatory aspects of nanotechnologies in smart textiles. It provides a multi-dimensional viewpoint that combines performance, applicability, scalability and legal aspects in an integrated narrative and pushes the debate further from proof-of-concept to integration.

Conclusion

The preparation techniques, material properties, functional enhancements, and cost-effectiveness of nanomaterials/reinforced textiles were systematically examined.

The results indicate that the nanomaterial at a homogeneously dispersion through the polymer were applied using an optimized processing technology result in higher tensile strength, flexibility, conductivity, hydrophobicity, durability, and environmental properties in textiles. This complex improvement effectively solves the technical problems of smart textile upscaling, including material degradation and functional deterioration. Furthermore, the economic analysis also confirmed the feasibility of upscaled production with means of high profitability and a considerably low breakeven points, which paved the way for the commercialization of the technologies in the larger industries.

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Рекомендована 4th International Conference of New trends and Smart technology. Baghdad, Iraq. Поступила 26.09.25