

Tuning Magnetic Behavior of $\text{La}_{1-x}\text{Sr}_x\text{FeO}_3$ ($x = 0.1\text{--}0.5$) via Sr Doping: From Antiferromagnetism to Ferromagnetism

Ramlan^{1*}, Marzuki Naibaho², Masno Ginting^{3*}

¹Department of Physics, Faculty of Mathematic and Natural Sciences, Universitas Sriwijaya, Inderalaya, Ogan Ilir, South Sumatera, 30662, Indonesia

²Department of Physics, Universitas Indonesia, Depok, South Tangerang, 16424, Indonesia

³Research Center for Energy Materials (PRME) - National Research and Innovation Agency (BRIN), Complex Puspiptek Building 440-441, South Tangerang, 15314, Indonesia

*Corresponding author: ramlan@unsri.ac.id, masn001@brin.go.id

Abstract

Strontium-substituted LaFeO_3 compounds with the chemical formula $\text{La}_{1-x}\text{Sr}_x\text{FeO}_3$ ($x = 0.1\text{--}0.5$) were successfully prepared via the solid-state reaction technique by partially replacing La at the A-site. Structural analysis was performed using X-ray diffraction (XRD), while the surface morphology and elemental composition were investigated through scanning electron microscopy coupled with energy-dispersive X-ray spectroscopy (SEM-EDS). The magnetic behavior of the samples was evaluated using a vibrating sample magnetometer (VSM). XRD patterns verified that all synthesized compositions crystallized in a single-phase LaFeO_3 structure without detectable impurity phases. The dominant diffraction peak corresponded to the (121) crystallographic plane, confirming an orthorhombic structure with the Pnma space group (No. 62). SEM observations showed irregular particle shapes accompanied by a broad particle size distribution. EDS analysis confirmed the successful incorporation of Sr into the LaFeO_3 lattice, as evidenced by the presence of La, Fe, O, and Sr elements across all doped compositions ($x = 0.1\text{--}0.5$). Magnetic measurements revealed that the $\text{La}_{0.9}\text{Sr}_{0.1}\text{FeO}_3$ sample exhibited superior magnetic performance, with a saturation magnetization (M_s) of 0.393 T and a coercive field (H_c) of 2661 Oe. The introduction of Sr resulted in a transition of magnetic behavior from antiferromagnetic to ferromagnetic ordering. Overall, these results demonstrate that $\text{La}_{1-x}\text{Sr}_x\text{FeO}_3$ materials are promising candidates for electromagnetic wave absorption applications.

Keywords

LaFeO_3 , Solid State Reaction, Structure, Morphology, Magnetic Properties

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1. INTRODUCTION

Magnetic materials are essential components in various modern technological applications, ranging from permanent magnets, electronic devices, and energy systems to telecommunications (Edianta et al., 2021; Ramlan et al., 2024). Magnetic characteristics, including magnetic saturation (M_s), remanence (M_r), coercive field (H_c), and magnetic susceptibility (X), are highly dependent on the material's crystal lattice, microstructural features, and elemental composition (Melinia et al., 2024; Nasution et al., 2025; Novita et al., 2023, 2024). Through compositional engineering and synthesis methods, magnetic characteristics can be enhanced to produce materials with optimal performance tailored to specific applications. Among various magnetic materials, perovskite oxides (ABO_3) have emerged as attractive candidates due to their flexible crystal structure, excellent chemical stability, and tunable electrical and magnetic properties through ion substitution at the A or B

sites (Pidburtnyi et al., 2021).

Perovskite oxides possess an ABO_3 crystal structure, where A is a cation with a large ionic radius and coordination number 12, while B is a cation with a coordination number of 6 (Pidburtnyi et al., 2021). Perovskite materials have attracted significant research interest due to their magnetic (Acharya et al., 2010, 2011), electrical (El-Mallah, 2012; Li and Zhu, 2021; Thirumalairajan et al., 2015), optical, and ferroelectric properties (Janbutrach et al., 2014). Their advantages lie in the wide compositional flexibility while retaining the fundamental perovskite structure, enabling their use in magnets, electronic devices, solar cells, and photocatalysts (Pidburtnyi et al., 2021). Perovskite materials have been widely studied in previous works, including LaMnO_3 (Zhang et al., 2013), CaMnO_3 (Su et al., 2023), YFeO_3 (Wang et al., 2021), CoTiO_3 (Yunasfi et al., 2025), LaFeO_3 (Huang et al., 2022), and many others. One particularly interesting perovskite oxide is LaFeO_3 .

LaFeO₃ has attracted considerable research interest as an electrode material, catalyst, and sensor owing to its distinctive physical characteristics and broad application potential (Huang et al., 2020; Liu et al., 2017; Meng et al., 2024; Pidburtnyi et al., 2021). Extensive investigations have been conducted on its synthesis routes, structural features, and physicochemical properties. This material is classified as an antiferromagnetic insulator with a high Néel temperature ($T_n = 740$ K) and is a member of the orthoferrite family. One of the most remarkable aspects of LaFeO₃ is the simultaneous presence of antiferromagnetic ordering and ferroelectric behavior at room temperature, which continues to draw significant attention from the physics and materials science communities. Structurally, LaFeO₃ crystallizes in an orthorhombic lattice with the Pbnm space group. The stability of perovskite structures is commonly assessed using the Goldschmidt tolerance factor (t), which is less than unity for LaFeO₃. This deviation induces a transformation from an ideal cubic structure to a distorted orthorhombic phase, characterized by Fe–O–Fe bond angles that differ from 180°, leading to distortions of the FeO₆ octahedra, as previously reported (Huang et al. (2020, 2022)). Owing to its chemical stability, environmental friendliness, and relatively narrow band gap, LaFeO₃ has been widely explored for advanced technological applications, including solar energy conversion devices (Ju et al., 2019), solid oxide fuel cell (SOFC) electrodes (Ju et al., 2019), gas sensing platforms (Hao et al., 2020), supercapacitor systems (Ata et al., 2025), photocatalytic processes (Ata et al., 2025), and microwave absorption materials (Yan et al., 2024).

In magnetism, perovskite oxide LaFeO₃ has been intensively investigated due to its remarkable physical properties such as superconductivity (Varignon, 2023), colossal magnetoresistance (Vitayaya et al., 2024), multiferroicity, magnetocaloric effect (Zhemas et al., 2025), thermoelectricity (Wu and Gao, 2018), spintronics (Bouhenna et al., 2025), absorbers (Naibaho et al., 2025; Sihotang et al., 2025), and many other applications for future technologies (Assirey, 2019). Alongside these advances, LaFeO₃ has been synthesized using various methods, including coprecipitation (Rianna et al., 2023), electrospinning (Jeong et al., 2018), sol-gel (Huang et al., 2022), hydrothermal (Mesbah et al., 2020), solid-state reaction, and wet mixing (Nehan et al., 2025; Zhang et al., 2013).

Naibaho et al. (2025) successfully synthesized single-phase LaFeO₃ as a microwave-absorbing material by varying the sintering temperature using the solid-state reaction method (Naibaho et al., 2025, 2024). In another study, Huang et al. (2022) synthesized La_{1-x}Ba_xFeO₃ ($x=0.0-0.4$) via the sol-gel method doped with Ba²⁺, which enhanced its magnetic properties by inducing a transition from antiferromagnetic to ferromagnetic behavior and increasing microwave absorption (Huang et al., 2022). Similarly, in YFeO₃ synthesized via the sol-gel method doped with Sr, Man Wang reported that Y_{1-x}Ba_xFeO₃ samples transitioned from weak ferromagnetism to paramagnetism with increasing Sr content (Wang et al., 2021). Investigations on La_{0.75}Sr_{0.25}MnO₃ synthesized using the solid-state reaction method revealed an improvement

in its magnetic properties (Zhang et al., 2013). Furthermore, LaFeO₃ synthesized via the sol-gel method with Sr²⁺ doping demonstrated enhanced magnetic properties of La_{1-x}Ba_xFeO₃ samples as Sr content increased (Huang et al., 2020).

Based on previous studies, Sr doping has demonstrated great potential in enhancing the magnetic properties of LaFeO₃, particularly when synthesized using methods such as mechanical alloying and solution-based techniques like sol-gel. In this study, Sr-doped LaFeO₃ will be synthesized via the solid-state reaction method using an agate mortar. This approach is employed as a comparative synthesis route due to its simplicity, environmental friendliness, and suitability for large-scale production without generating acidic or basic waste. The main focus of this research is to investigate the effect of Sr doping on the crystal structure, morphology, and magnetic properties of LaFeO₃, specifically saturation magnetization (M_s), coercivity (H_c), and remanence (M_r).

2. EXPERIMENTAL SECTION

2.1 Materials

The precursors were provided by LOBA CHEMIE PVT. LTD., Indonesia, and included 99.5% pure lanthanum oxide (La₂O₃), >99% pure iron (III) oxide (Fe₂O₃), and >99% pure strontium carbonate (SrCO₃).

2.2 Methods

A compound of LaFeO₃ by mixing solid powders. We started with La₂O₃, SrCO₃, and Fe₂O₃ powders, measured them out based on the right amounts, and then mashed them together in a mortar for an hour. After that, we put the mix in an oven to dry at 90°C for half a day. Then, we heated it up really hot, to 1200°C, for 5 hours. Once it was all baked, we ground it up again with a mortar and sifted it through a fine 200-mesh sieve. Finally, we checked out the powders we got using a bunch of different tools: X-ray Diffraction (XRD, SmartLab Rigaku), Scanning Electron Microscopy (SEM), Energy Dispersive Spectroscopy (EDS, Phenom Pharos Desktop FEG), Fourier Transform Infrared Spectroscopy (FTIR, Bruker Alpha II), and Vibrating Sample Magnetometry (VSM, Oxford 1.2H).

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 XRD Analysis of La_{1-x}Sr_xFeO₃

The X-ray diffraction (XRD) patterns of La_{1-x}Sr_xFeO₃ samples ($x = 0, 0.1, 0.3, 0.5$) were analyzed using Cu-K α radiation ($\lambda = 0.15406$ nm) at room temperature, within the 2θ range of 10–90°, as shown in Figure 1.

As seen in Figure 1, all samples' X-ray diffraction peaks suggest that the LaFeO₃ phase formed without the presence of secondary phases. The (121) plane, which corresponds to the LaFeO₃ phase, can be identified as the primary peak found. As Sr doping increased, the diffraction peaks gradually shifted toward higher angles and their intensity decreased, as seen in Figure 1b. As shown in Figure 2 and verified by COD

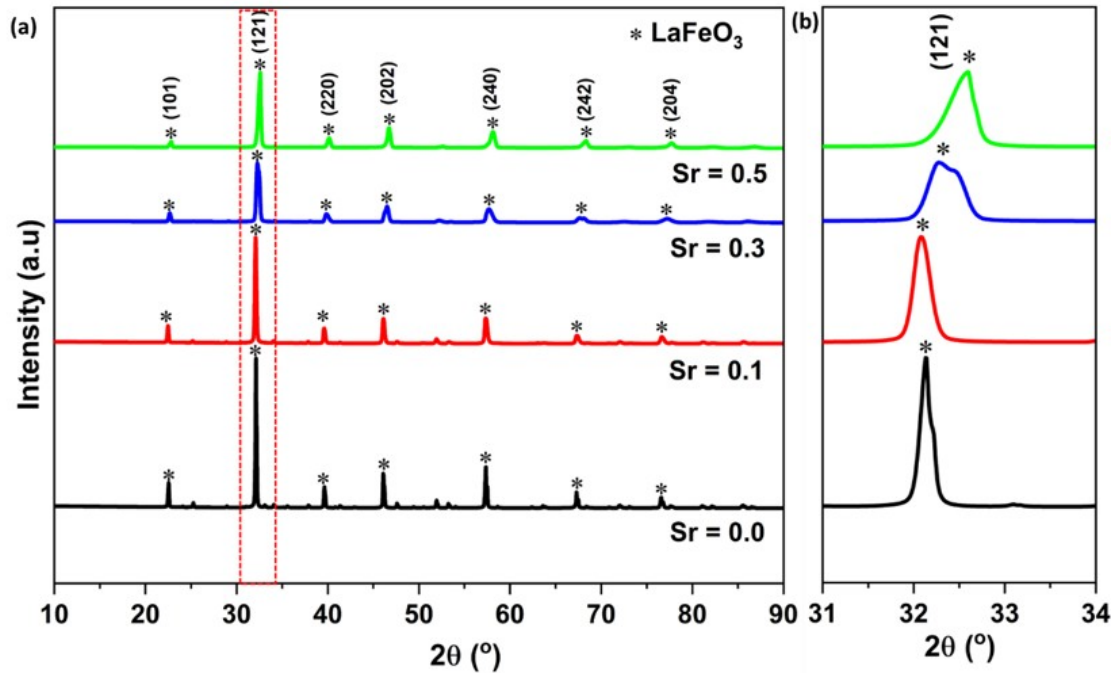


Figure 1. (a) XRD Patterns of $\text{La}_{1-x}\text{Sr}_x\text{FeO}_3$ ($x = 0, 0.1, 0.3, 0.5$), (b) hkl (121) Peak

Table 1. XRD Parameters of $\text{La}_{1-x}\text{Sr}_x\text{FeO}_3$

Sample	Structure	FWHM	2θ	Lattice parameter (Å)			Crystallite size (Å)	Volume (Å)
				a	b	c		
Sr = 0.0	Orthorhombic	0.099	32.115	5.563	7.851	5.552	80.694	242.479
Sr = 0.1	Orthorhombic	0.154	32.154	5.549	7.850	5.533	51.565	241.057
Sr = 0.3	Orthorhombic	0.312	32.345	5.533	7.843	5.495	25.476	238.449
Sr = 0.5	Orthorhombic	0.330	32.484	5.525	7.831	5.492	21.500	237.618

Table 2. EDX Result of $\text{La}_{1-x}\text{Sr}_x\text{FeO}_3$ ($x = 0, 0.1, 0.3, 0.5$)

Element Symbol	Element Name	Sr = 0.0		Sr = 0.1		Sr = 0.3		Sr = 0.5	
		At (%)	Wt (%)	At (%)	Wt (%)	At (%)	Wt (%)	At (%)	Wt (%)
$\text{La}_{(57)}$	Lanthanum	57.33	65.36	23.87	61.42	12.62	39.07	10.20	32.51
$\text{Sr}_{(38)}$	Strontium	–	–	2.41	3.91	10.36	20.24	12.49	25.10
$\text{Fe}_{(26)}$	Iron	25.49	16.93	17.35	17.96	14.90	18.54	15.33	19.64
$\text{O}_{(8)}$	Oxygen	17.18	17.71	56.37	16.71	62.12	22.15	61.98	22.75

PDF#1526450, the diffraction peak seen in the (121) plane may be indexed to the conventional LaFeO_3 phase with an orthorhombic structure (Pnma, space group 62). These findings imply that the solid-state reaction mechanism can be used to insert Sr^{2+} ions into the LaFeO_3 perovskite lattice. Furthermore, the XRD parameters provide a clearer explanation of the relationship between Figure 1 and Table 1.

The revised crystal structure and lattice properties of LaFeO_3 derived from the Rietveld refinement study are shown in Table 1. Equation (1) provides the full width at half maximum (FWHM) of the (121) peak based on the Debye–Scherrer technique, which was used to compute the crystallite size. The

results are reported in Table 1.

$$D = \frac{K\lambda}{\beta \cos \theta} \tag{1}$$

where K , λ , and β stand for the Scherrer constant, the X-ray wavelength, and the observed FWHM of the diffraction peak, respectively, and D is the average crystallite size perpendicular to the crystal plane.

Table 1 illustrates how the crystallite size of $\text{La}_{1-x}\text{Sr}_x\text{FeO}_3$ reduces as Sr doping increases. The substitution of La^{3+} (0.106 nm), which has a smaller ionic radius, for Sr^{2+} (0.113 nm),

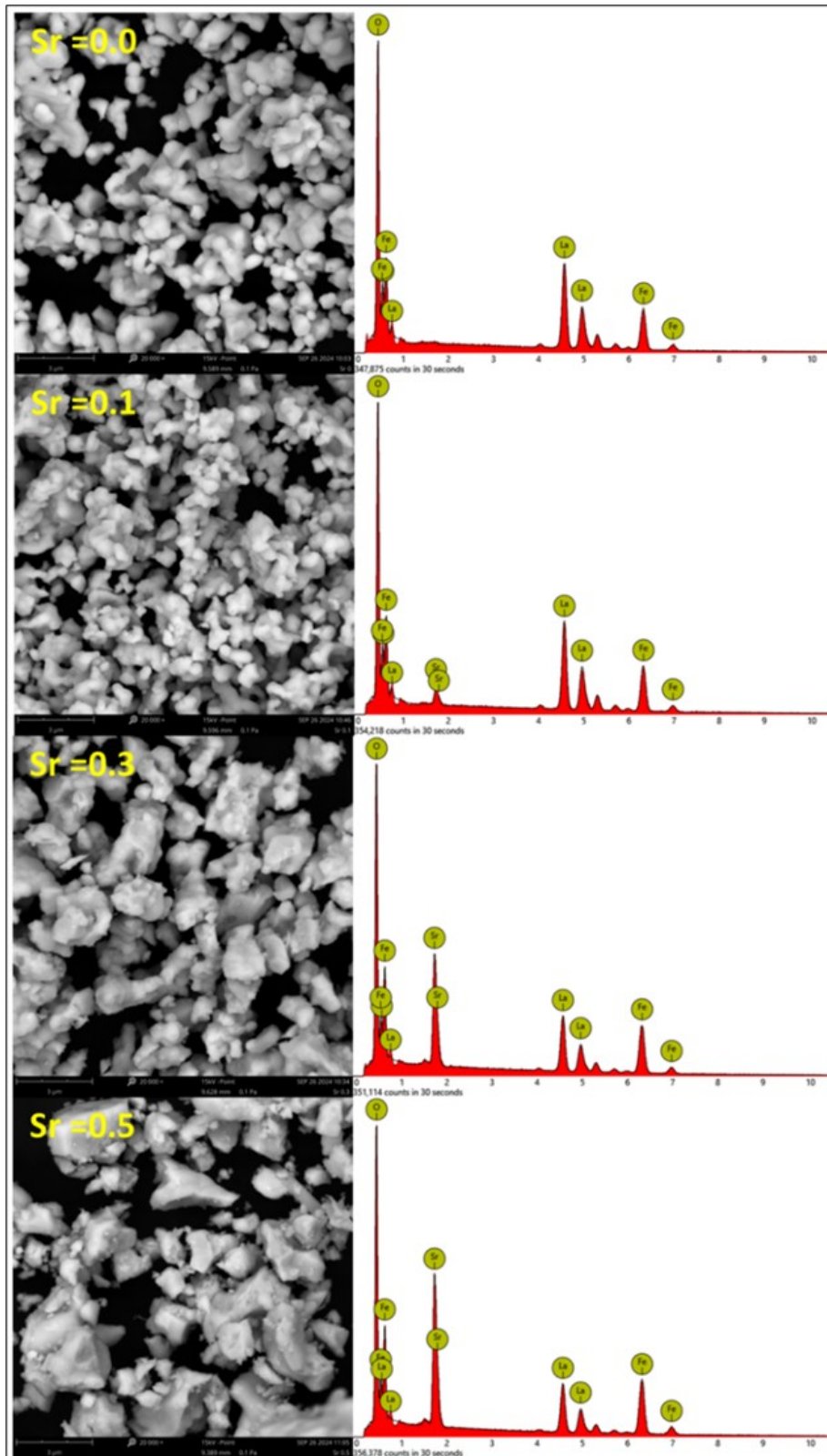


Figure 2. SEM-EDS Micrographs of $\text{La}_{1-x}\text{Sr}_x\text{FeO}_3$ ($x = 0, 0.1, 0.3, 0.5$)

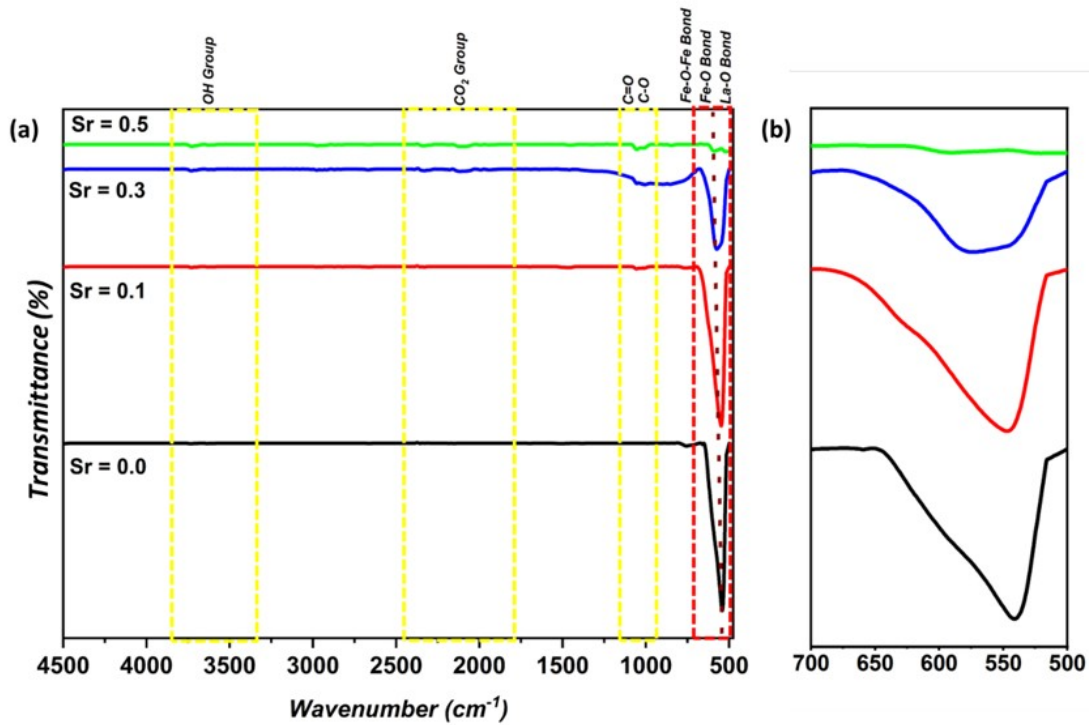


Figure 3. FTIR Spectra of $\text{La}_{1-x}\text{Sr}_x\text{FeO}_3$ ($x = 0, 0.1, 0.3, 0.5$) with the Wavenumber Range (a) 4500-500 cm^{-1} , and (b) 700-500 cm^{-1}

Table 3. Result of the Magnetic Properties of $\text{La}_{1-x}\text{Sr}_x\text{FeO}_3$ ($x = 0.0, 0.1, 0.3, 0.5$)

Sample	M_s (emu/g)	M_r (emu/g)	H_c (T)	Squareness (M_r/M_s)
Sr = 0.0	0.094	0.017	0.036	0.181
Sr = 0.1	2.66	1.66	0.393	0.062
Sr = 0.3	2.16	1.39	0.23	0.643
Sr = 0.5	1.62	0.70	0.12	0.432

which has a greater ionic radius, may be connected to this occurrence. Under the same sintering temperature and time, materials with larger ionic radii for all samples require more crystallization energy than those with smaller ionic radii. As the concentration of Sr^{2+} rises, the crystallite size decreases because $\text{La}_{1-x}\text{Sr}_x\text{FeO}_3$ nanoparticles have insufficient crystallization energy (Huang et al., 2020). Furthermore, when the Sr content increases, the unit cell volume of LaFeO_3 declines and reaches a minimum at $x = 0.5$ Sr doping. It is clear that the unit cell volume and crystallite size.

3.2 SEM-EDS Analysis Of $\text{La}_{1-x}\text{Sr}_x\text{FeO}_3$

The SEM-EDS results of samples sintered for five hours at 1200°C are shown in Figure 2. The pictures demonstrate that when Sr doping increases, particle aggregation becomes more

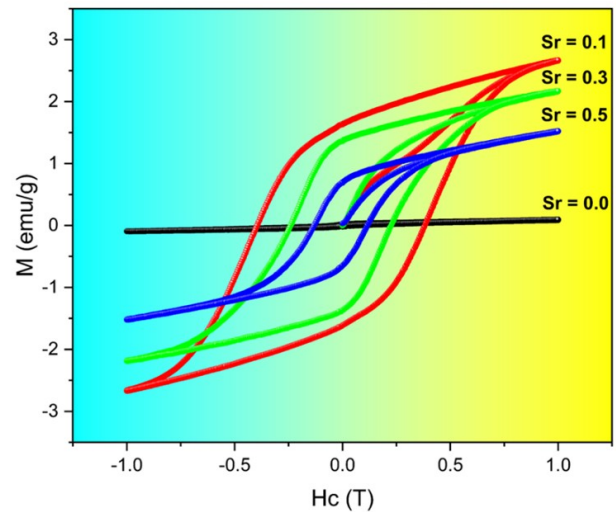


Figure 4. Hysteresis Loops of $\text{La}_{1-x}\text{Sr}_x\text{FeO}_3$ ($x = 0.0, 0.1, 0.3, 0.5$)

noticeable and interparticle spacing reduces. When examined at a $20,000\times$ magnification, the particle size falls between 1 and 3 μm . Table 2 summarizes the relevant EDX results,

Table 4. Comparison of Lanthanum Ferrite-Based Magnetic Properties Research

Materials	Method	Ms (emu/g)	Mr (emu/g)	Hc (Oe)	References
LaFe _{0.50} Co _{0.50} O ₃	Sol-Gel	–	0.07	408	(La et al., 2022a)
La _{0.9} Bi _{0.1} Fe _{0.50} Co _{0.50} O ₃			0.01	593	(La et al., 2022a)
La _{0.8} Bi _{0.2} Fe _{0.50} Co _{0.50} O ₃		–	0.085	3572	(La et al., 2022a)
BaSnO ₃	Citric Acid-Assisted Combustion	0.0023	0.0007	330	(Handal et al., 2020)
BaSn _{0.99} Gd _{0.01} O ₃		0.005	0.0011	240	(Handal et al., 2020)
BaSn _{0.98} Gd _{0.01} Mn _{0.01} O ₃		0.024	0.017	2578	(Handal et al., 2020)
BaSn _{0.95} Gd _{0.01} Mn _{0.04} O ₃		0.106	0.055	1578	(Handal et al., 2020)
BaSn _{0.98} Gd _{0.01} Ni _{0.01} O ₃		0.049	0.031	1117	(Handal et al., 2020)
BaSn _{0.95} Gd _{0.01} Ni _{0.04} O ₃		0.0135	0.004	386	(Handal et al., 2020)
Ba _{0.3} La _{0.7} Ti _{0.3} Fe _{0.7} O ₃		Solid State Reaction	1.23	0.52	179.52
Ba _{0.1} La _{0.9} Ti _{0.1} Fe _{0.9} O ₃	7.61		3.60	20.38	(La et al., 2022b)
YFeO ₃	Sol-Gel	0.3319	0.1362	10472.06	(Wang et al., 2021)
Y _{0.95} Sr _{0.05} FeO ₃		0.3853	0.1495	9602.55	(Wang et al., 2021)
Y _{0.90} Sr _{0.10} FeO ₃		0.4290	0.1586	7524.34	(Wang et al., 2021)
Y _{0.85} Sr _{0.15} FeO ₃		0.9797	0.3218	1463.35	(Wang et al., 2021)
La _{0.75} Gd _{0.25} FeO ₃	Solid-State Reaction	0.72	0.169	2700	(Saikia et al., 2022)
LaFeO ₃	Citrate-Nitrate Auto Combustion	0.300	0.049	257.08	(Ateia et al., 2021)
Ce _{0.7} La _{0.3} FeO ₃		1.351	0.168	192.38	(Ateia et al., 2021)
Pr _{0.7} La _{0.3} FeO ₃		0.353	0.024	220.64	(Ateia et al., 2021)
Nd _{0.7} La _{0.3} FeO ₃		0.284	0.011	387.39	(Ateia et al., 2021)
Sm _{0.7} La _{0.3} FeO ₃		0.447	0.191	4848.8	(Ateia et al., 2021)
Gd _{0.7} La _{0.3} FeO ₃		1.771	0.027	158.71	(Ateia et al., 2021)
La _{0.6} Ba _{0.4} FeO ₃		Sol-Gel	–	0.0125	750
LaFeO ₃	Hydrothermal	0.0036	0.00037	1044.79	(Sasikala et al., 2019)
LaFe _{0.8} Ti _{0.2} O ₃		0.0074	0.00035	448.31	(Sasikala et al., 2019)
LaFe _{0.6} Ti _{0.4} O ₃		0.0099	0.00061	339.39	(Sasikala et al., 2019)
LaFe _{0.4} Ti _{0.6} O ₃		0.0028	0.00016	623.61	(Sasikala et al., 2019)
LaFeO ₃	Sol-Gel	0.1256	0.0032	22.6	(Huang et al., 2020)
La _{0.9} Sr _{0.1} FeO ₃		0.1581	0.0093	566.72	(Huang et al., 2020)
La _{0.8} Sr _{0.2} FeO ₃		0.2906	0.0611	2978.79	(Huang et al., 2020)
La _{0.7} Sr _{0.3} FeO ₃		0.3903	0.1442	3551.50	(Huang et al., 2020)
La _{0.6} Sr _{0.4} FeO ₃		0.8102	0.3129	4145.53	(Huang et al., 2020)
LaFeO ₃	Solid State Reaction	0.094	0.017	360	This Work
La _{0.9} Sr _{0.1} FeO ₃		2.661	1.66	3930	This Work
La _{0.7} Sr _{0.3} FeO ₃		2.160	1.39	2300	This Work
La _{0.5} Sr _{0.5} FeO ₃		1.620	0.70	1200	This Work

which demonstrate that as Sr doping increases, the intensity and weight % of La drop.

In this instance, the FTIR spectra of the La_{1-x}Sr_xFeO₃ samples are influenced by the structure, crystallite size, unit cell volume, and EDX results.

3.3 FTIR Analysis of La_{1-x}Sr_xFeO₃

The FTIR spectra of La_{1-x}Sr_xFeO₃ (x = 0.0–0.5) reveal the characteristic vibrational features of the perovskite lattice and clearly demonstrate the influence of Sr substitution on the local bonding environment. A broad absorption band observed in the range of 3400–3600 cm⁻¹ is attributed to the stretching

vibration of –OH groups, originating from adsorbed moisture or surface-bound water molecules. The weak bands appearing around 2000–2400 cm⁻¹ are associated with adsorbed CO₂ species from the ambient atmosphere, while the absorption features in the 980–1200 cm⁻¹ region correspond to C=O and C–O vibrational modes, which are commonly linked to residual carbonate species formed during the solid-state synthesis process. The most prominent and structurally significant absorption occurs in the low-wavenumber region, particularly between 500 and 600 cm⁻¹, which is assigned to the stretching vibrations of Fe–O and La–O bonds within the FeO₆ octahedra, confirming the formation of the La₁FeO₃ perovskite

framework. Notably, variations in the intensity and slight shifts of the Fe–O-related bands with increasing Sr content indicate lattice distortion and modifications in bond lengths and bond angles induced by the substitution of Sr²⁺ for La³⁺ at the A-site. Such local structural distortions are known to play a crucial role in tailoring the magnetic and electromagnetic responses of perovskite oxides, thereby enhancing their suitability for electromagnetic wave absorption applications. These observations are consistent with previous studies reporting that alkaline-earth doping in LaFeO₃ significantly alters lattice vibrations and local structural characteristics (Huang et al., 2020; Nehan et al., 2025; Pidburnyi et al., 2021). In this instance, the Magnetic properties of the La_{1-x}Sr_xFeO₃ samples are influenced by the FTIR spectra.

3.4 Magnetic Properties of La_{1-x}Sr_xFeO₃

The magnetic hysteresis loops of the samples produced at room temperature under an applied magnetic field of 1.2 T are shown in Figure 4, illustrating the measurement of the magnetic properties of LaFeO₃ crystals using VSM.

First, with saturation magnetization (Ms), remanence (Mr), and coercivity (Hc) values of 0.094 emu/g, 0.017 emu/g, and 0.036 T, respectively, the LaFeO₃ particles without Sr doping show a comparatively low hysteresis curve (Table 3). This suggests that the presence of Fe³⁺ ion interactions and antiparallel interactions causes pure LaFeO₃ to be a weak ferromagnet. At ambient temperature, pure LaFeO₃ is also known to exhibit G-type antiferromagnetic activity. Both Ms and Hc values rise with Sr doping, as Table 4 illustrates, reaching maximum values of 2.661 emu/g, 1.66 emu/g, and 0.393 T, respectively, for La_{0.9}Sr_{0.1}FeO₃. This implies that the material experiences a change in behavior from antiferromagnetic (AFM) to ferromagnetic (FM) (Wang et al., 2021). Lattice expansion and structural distortion brought on by the substitution of (0.113 nm), which has a greater ionic radius, for La³⁺ (0.106 nm), which has a smaller ionic radius, can account for the increase in magnetism. The resulting structural changes lead to a reduction in the Fe–O–Fe bond angle, as reported in previous studies (Huang et al., 2020). AFM superexchange interactions strengthen with increasing Fe–O–Fe bond angle, with the maximum at 180° (Huang et al., 2020; Zhang et al., 2013). Therefore, the reduction of this bond angle weakens AFM superexchange interactions, thereby deviating the structure from its AFM nature. Furthermore, this also promotes the formation of oxygen vacancies and multivalent iron ions, which typically occur during high-temperature sintering of LaFeO₃ under an oxygen atmosphere. The substitution of Sr²⁺ for La³⁺ enhances the Fe ion states, leading to improved magnetic properties.

4. CONCLUSIONS

The perovskite material LaFeO₃ is an oxide with an orthorhombic structure that exhibits intriguing magnetic and functional properties. In this study, Sr doping on LaFeO₃ was carried out using the solid-state reaction method, which revealed changes in structure, morphology, and magnetic properties. XRD anal-

ysis showed that all samples retained the LaFeO₃ structure without secondary phases; however, diffraction peak shifts and a gradual decrease in intensity were observed with increasing Sr doping. The incorporation of Sr led to a reduction in crystallite size from 80.694 to 21.500 Å and a decrease in unit cell volume from 242.479 Å. SEM analysis indicated that particle sizes were in the range of 1–3 μm, and no other elements were detected besides La, Fe, O, and the doped Sr, as confirmed by EDS. Regarding magnetic properties, Sr doping enhanced the saturation magnetization (2.66 emu/g), remanence (1.66 emu/g), and coercivity (0.393 T), with the maximum values observed in La_{0.9}Sr_{0.1}FeO₃. This enhancement is attributed to lattice distortion and modifications in Fe–O–Fe interactions, which promote a transition from antiferromagnetic to ferromagnetic behavior. Therefore, Sr doping is proven to improve the magnetic performance of LaFeO₃, making it promising for various technological applications such as sensors, electrodes, and microwave absorbers.

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