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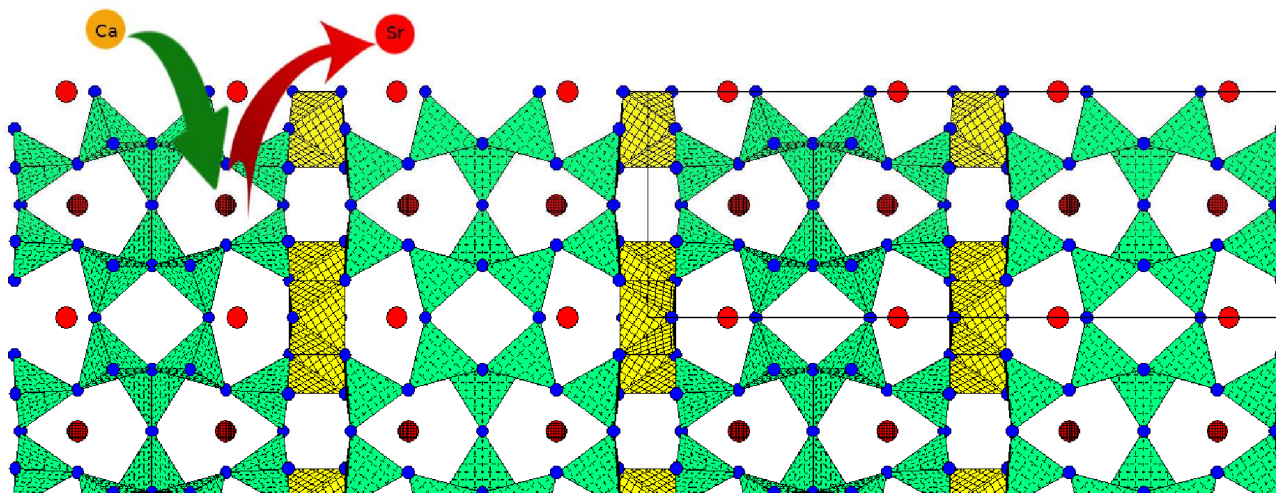
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Effect of partial substitution of Ca for Sr on crystal structure and luminescence of Ce-doped $\text{Sr}_4\text{Al}_{14}\text{O}_{25}$

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Abstract

Monophasic undoped and cerium-doped $\text{Sr}_4\text{Al}_{14}\text{O}_{25}$ samples with partial substitution of calcium for strontium were prepared using conventional solid-state synthesis. Structural studies revealed that substitution of strontium by calcium in $\text{Sr}_{4-x}\text{Ca}_x\text{Al}_{14}\text{O}_{25}$ up to $x=1.4$ is possible without formation of additional phases and that the Sr2 site (of two possible) is more likely to be substituted by the smaller Ca ions. Photoluminescence measurements of $\text{Sr}_4\text{Al}_{14}\text{O}_{25}:\text{Ce}$ showed emission with double peak (360 and 380 nm) under 330 nm excitation wavelength. The effect of partial substitution of strontium by calcium on the luminescence of $\text{Sr}_{4-x}\text{Ca}_x\text{Al}_{14}\text{O}_{25}:\text{Ce}$ (emission, quantum yield, decay) were studied as well.

Keywords: Oxides; crystal structure; optical properties; X-ray diffraction; luminescence.

1. Introduction

The discovery of advanced optical materials with multiple superior qualities for display applications remains a difficult problem. The specific luminescence properties of multinary oxides are highly sensitive to the changes in dopant composition, host stoichiometry, and processing conditions [1-4]. Inorganic luminescent materials in most cases consist of rear-earth ions embedded in a crystal matrix. Part of the widely studied matrices for luminescent materials is the group of strontium aluminates. In SrO-Al₂O₃ system, there are several well-known phases, namely Sr₃Al₂O₆, SrAl₂O₄, SrAl₄O₇, SrAl₁₂O₁₉, Sr₄Al₂O₇, Sr₄Al₁₄O₂₅, Sr₁₂Al₁₄O₃₃ and Sr₁₀Al₆O₁₉, as described in the literature [5]. Eu²⁺-doped SrAl₂O₄ is one of the most studied systems in the family of strontium aluminates and it shows strong green emission at ~530 nm [6, 7].

However, during recent years, a great deal of attention has been paid to Sr₄Al₁₄O₂₅ phase [8-33]. The crystal structure of Sr₄Al₁₄O₂₅ has been determined to be orthorhombic with space group Pmma and $a = 24.7451(2)\text{\AA}$, $b = 8.4735(6)\text{\AA}$, $c = 4.8808(1)\text{\AA}$, $V = 1023.41(3)\text{\AA}^3$, $Z = 2$, and $D = 3.66\text{ g/cm}^3$ [34]. Capron et al. showed that this phase forms at 1134 °C and is stable up to 1500 °C [35]. Sr₄Al₁₄O₂₅:Eu has been focused for white LEDs, because it has a greenish-blue emission band at 495 nm by nUV excitation and a quantum efficiency of 90% [36]. If co-doped with dysprosium, Sr₄Al₁₄O₂₅:Eu,Dy has been reported to show persistent luminescence with an afterglow of more than 20 h [8-11]. Other dopants have also been incorporated in this phase. Red luminescence has been observed in Sr₄Al₁₄O₂₅:Cr,Eu,Dy [12] and Sr₄Al₁₄O₂₅:Mn [13, 37]. Samarium doped compounds exhibited orange red emission [14, 15]. Blue green Sr₄Al₁₄O₂₅:Eu,Tm,La phosphor has also been reported [16]. Cerium-doped Sr₄Al₁₄O₂₅ phosphors have been studied previously, but the reported emission wavelengths are at 400 nm ($\lambda_{\text{ex}} = 350\text{ nm}$) [17], at 472 and 511 nm ($\lambda_{\text{ex}} = 275\text{ nm}$) [18] or at 314 nm ($\lambda_{\text{ex}} = 262\text{ nm}$) [19]. Such different results might be due to different synthesis methods used in researches, but still it shows that more investigation is required.

The effects of nonstoichiometry and cationic substitution on photoluminescence and afterglow characteristics of strontium aluminate phosphor ($\text{Sr}_4\text{Al}_{14}\text{O}_{25}:\text{Eu}^{2+}, \text{Dy}^{3+}$) has been investigated by Suriyamurthy and Panigrahi [30]. The authors reported that calcium-substituted samples show decreased photoluminescence intensities and in case of higher degree of substitution – blue shifts of emission spectra are visible. The photoluminescence emission intensity from barium-substituted samples was significantly enhanced compared with that of the unsubstituted one. A similar study has been carried out by Dacyl et al. [25], in which it is also reported that substitution by calcium resulted in a blue shift of the emission spectrum. On the other hand, both studies deal with samples that mostly consist of several phases. In the current study cerium was chosen as an activator since it is one of most promising activators in non- Eu^{2+} -based persistent luminescent materials [38]. In order to investigate the effects of strontium substitution by calcium on crystal structure of $\text{Sr}_4\text{Al}_{14}\text{O}_{25}$ and luminescent properties of related cerium-doped samples, single-phase materials were synthesized and subjected to detailed investigations in the present study.

2. Experimental

All $\text{Sr}_4\text{Al}_{14}\text{O}_{25}$, $\text{Sr}_{(4-x)}\text{Al}_{14}\text{O}_{25}\text{Ce}_x$ and $\text{Sr}_{(3.95-x)}\text{Al}_{14}\text{O}_{25}\text{Ce}_{0.05}\text{Ca}_x$ samples were synthesized using conventional solid-state synthesis method. Stoichiometric amounts of strontium carbonate (SrCO_3 , 97.5%, AlfaAesar), calcium carbonate (CaCO_3 , 99%, CarlRoth) alumina (Al_2O_3 , 99.5% NanoDurTM, AlfaAesar) and cerium nitrate ($\text{Ce}(\text{NO}_3)_3 \cdot 6 \text{H}_2\text{O}$, 99%, Merck) were mixed in an agate mortar. Also 2.5% by weight of H_3BO_3 (99.8 %, CarlRoth) was added as a fluxing agent. The starting mixtures were heated to 1300 °C using a heating rate of 5 °/min and held it for 10 h. In the case of cerium containing samples, the same heating approach was used, however, activated carbon powder was used to create a reducing atmosphere. In order to achieve this, smaller open crucible with the starting mixture was placed inside a larger crucible containing excess of activated carbon powder, which was closed with a lid.

Powder X-ray diffraction (XRD) measurements for initial phase analysis were performed using Rigaku MiniFlex II diffractometer working in Bragg-Brentano ($\Theta/2\Theta$) geometry. The data were collected at a step of 0.01° and at speed of $10^\circ/\text{min}$ using Cu $K\alpha$ radiation. In order to obtain data for structural refinement, Rigaku SmartLab diffractometer was used working in a parallel beam (Θ/Θ) geometry, using 5.0° Soller slits and Cu $K\alpha_1$ ($\lambda = 1.54059 \text{ \AA}$) radiation. Samples were spun at 30 rpm, measurements were taken at a step of 0.01° and at speed of $4^\circ/\text{min}$. Rietveld refinement in this work was performed using *FullProf* software[39].

Quantum yield, excitation and emission spectra were recorded using Edinburgh Instruments FLS980 spectrometer equipped with double excitation and emission monochromators, 450 W Xe arc lamp, a cooled (-20°C) single-photon counting photomultiplier (Hamamatsu R928) and mirror optics for powder samples. The excitation spectra were corrected by a reference detector. In both cases step width was 0.5 nm and integration time was 0.4 s. Quantum yields (QY) were calculated by measuring emission spectrum of the sample in Teflon coated integration sphere. The values were obtained by employing the following equation:

$$QY = \frac{\int I_{em,sample} - \int I_{em,Teflon}}{\int I_{ref,Teflon} - \int I_{ref,sample}} \times 100\%$$

where $\int I_{em,sample}$ and $\int I_{em,Teflon}$ are integrated emission intensities of the sample and Teflon, respectively; $\int I_{ref,sample}$ and $\int I_{ref,Teflon}$ are the integrated reflectance of the sample and Teflon, respectively [40]. The photoluminescence decay kinetics studies were performed on the same FLS980 spectrometer. Decay curves were fitted using monoexponential decay function: $I(t) = I_0 e^{-t/\tau}$, where τ is decay constant, $I(t)$ – intensity at a given time, I_0 – initial intensity and t – time.

3. Results and discussion

3.1. Synthesis of monophasic $Sr_4Al_{14}O_{25}$

The $\text{Sr}_4\text{Al}_{14}\text{O}_{25}$ samples prepared using boric acid as a fluxing agent (2.5 wt.%) were single phase compounds. Results of Rietveld refinement are shown in Figure 1. The original crystallographic data of Wang et al. [34] were used as a starting model for Rietveld refinement of X-ray diffraction data collected at room temperature. The refinement smoothly converged to the structure close to the starting model based on X-ray powder diffraction data. Therefore, it was determined that $\text{Sr}_4\text{Al}_{14}\text{O}_{25}$ phase can be synthesized by heating at 1300 °C for 8 h using the solid state reaction method.

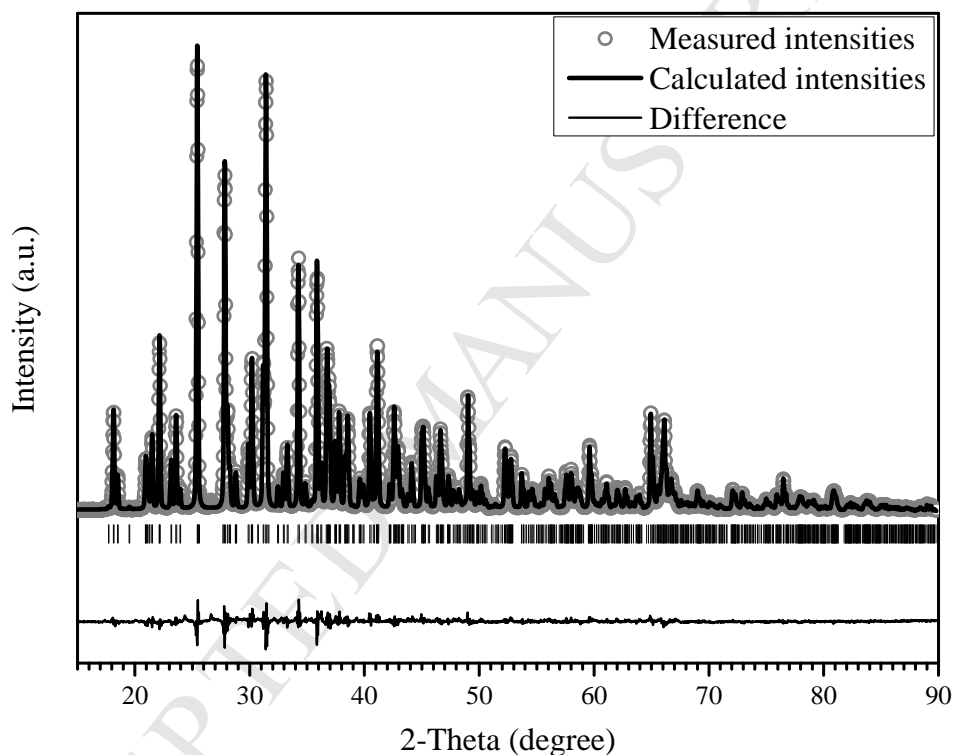


Figure 1. X-ray diffraction pattern of $\text{Sr}_4\text{Al}_{14}\text{O}_{25}$ refined employing Rietveld method. Sample prepared using H_3BO_3 (2.5% wt.) as a fluxing agent. Vertical bars located just below the background level indicate calculated positions of Bragg peaks for $\lambda = 1.54059 \text{ \AA}$ (Cu $K\alpha_1$). (Figures of merit: $R_p = 5.75\%$, $R_{wp} = 7.46\%$, $R_{exp} = 3.96\%$, $\chi^2 = 3.55$)

3.2. Partial substitution of Sr^{2+} by Ca^{2+}

To investigate the influence of partial substitution of strontium by calcium on the lattice parameters of $\text{Sr}_4\text{Al}_{14}\text{O}_{25}$, a series of samples $\text{Sr}_{(4-x)}\text{Ca}_x\text{Al}_{14}\text{O}_{25}$ $x = 0, 0.05, 0.1, 0.2, 0.3, 0.5, 0.7, 1.0, 1.2, 1.4$,

1.6, 1.8, 2.0 and 2.2 were prepared. From XRD data (representative patterns are given in Figure 2) it is visible that single phase compounds can be obtained with substitution up to $x = 1.4$. With higher substitutional level of Ca the secondary phase of CaAl_4O_7 is forming.

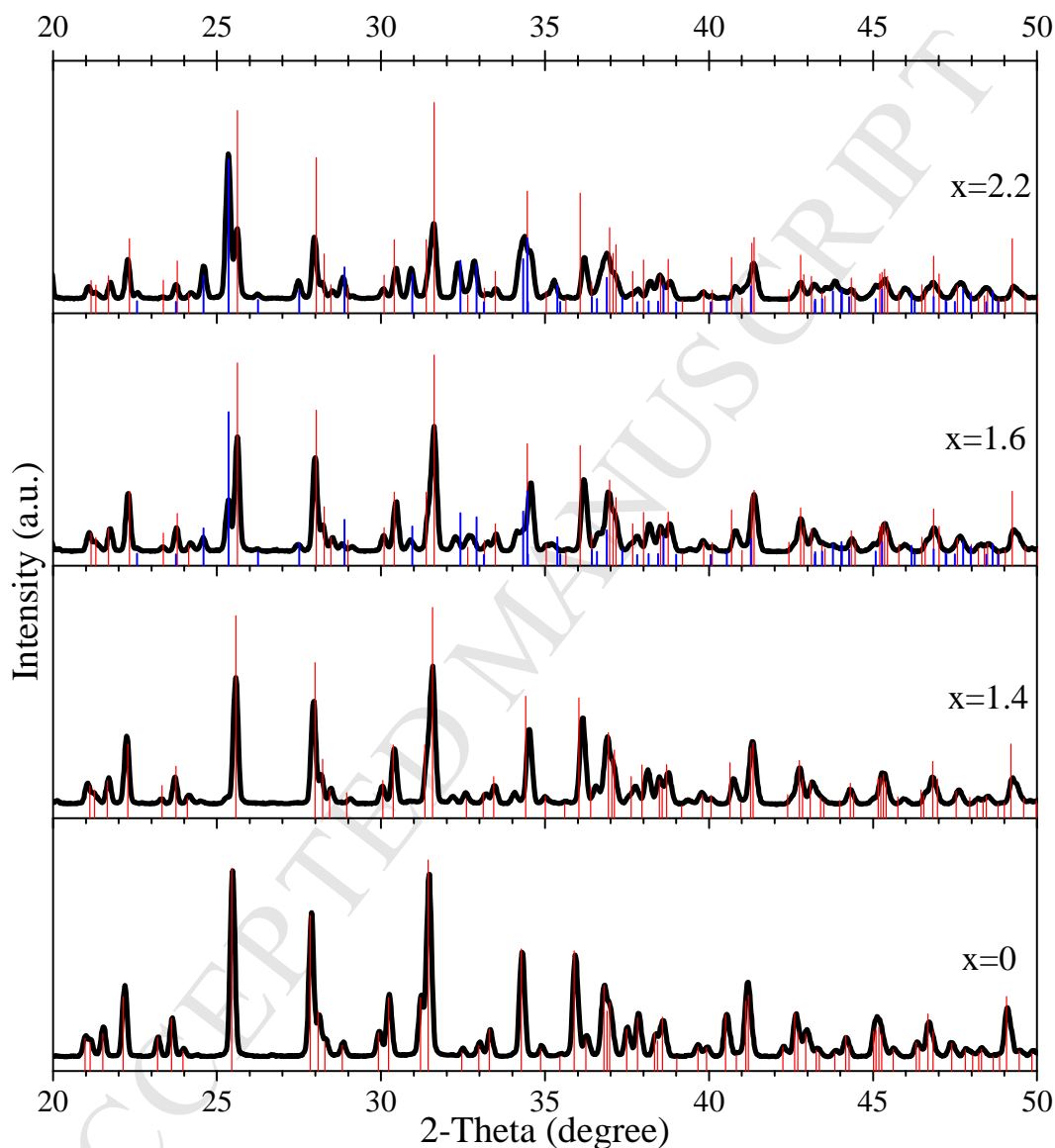


Figure 2. XRD patterns of $\text{Sr}_{(4-x)}\text{Ca}_x\text{Al}_{14}\text{O}_{25}$ samples. Red bars indicate standard pattern of $\text{Sr}_4\text{Al}_{14}\text{O}_{25}$ (PDF#00-074-1810) phase. Additional phase of CaAl_4O_7 (PDF#96-901-4426) is marked by blue bars.

These data are in a good agreement with published by Suriyamurthy et al. [30]. It was reported, that when calcium amount in $\text{Sr}_{(4-x)}\text{Ca}_x\text{Al}_{14}\text{O}_{25}$ samples was $x = 3.2$ the $\text{Sr}_4\text{Al}_{14}\text{O}_{25}$ phase was barely detectable and CaAl_4O_7 phase was dominant in the synthesis product.

Previously refined $\text{Sr}_4\text{Al}_{14}\text{O}_{25}$ data were used as a starting model for Rietveld refinement. The Ca^{2+} ions were assumed to occupy the Sr1 (4*j*) and Sr2 (4*i*) sites in the refinements and the sum of the Sr and Ca occupancies of these two sites were constrained to 0.5. Crystallographic data of CaAl_4O_7 (ICDS#14270) were used for the refinement when second phase was present in the samples ($x > 1.4$). Refined lattice parameters *a*, *b* and *c* are shown in Figure 3. The crystallographic details of one selected representative sample (where $x=1.4$) refined from X-ray powder diffraction data are provided in Table 1.

Table 1. Structural parameters^a for $\text{Sr}_{2.6}\text{Ca}_{1.4}\text{Al}_{14}\text{O}_{25}$ ^b refined from X-ray powder diffraction data collected at room temperature using orthorhombic space group Pmma (No. 51).

Atom	x	y	z	B_{iso}	Occupancy	Site/ Multiplicity
Sr1	0.13790 (7)	1/2	0.03242 (50)	0.397 (65)	0.405 (4)	4 <i>j</i>
Ca1	0.13790 (7)	1/2	0.03242 (50)	0.397 (65)	0.095 (4)	4 <i>j</i>
Sr2	0.11965 (10)	0	0.12039 (64)	0.397 (65)	0.239 (4)	4 <i>i</i>
Ca2	0.11965 (10)	0	0.12039 (64)	0.397 (65)	0.261 (4)	4 <i>i</i>
Al1	0.18554 (16)	0.19266 (50)	0.62811 (100)	0.492 (58)	1	8 <i>l</i>
Al2	0.06647 (16)	0.31970 (58)	0.51039 (106)	0.492 (58)	1	8 <i>l</i>
Al3	1/4	0.29316 (68)	0.12979 (144)	0.492 (58)	1/2	4 <i>k</i>
Al4	0	0.16716 (52)	0	0.492 (58)	1/2	4 <i>g</i>
Al5	0	0	1/2	0.492 (58)	1/4	2 <i>c</i>
Al6	0	1/2	0	0.492 (58)	1/4	2 <i>e</i>
O1	0.04498 (28)	0.16206 (95)	0.31940 (208)	0.078 (82)	1	8 <i>l</i>
O2	0.13781 (30)	0.31851 (84)	0.50152 (173)	0.078 (82)	1	8 <i>l</i>
O3	0.18909 (27)	0.22533 (82)	-0.01895 (151)	0.078 (82)	1	8 <i>l</i>
O4	1/4	0.23081 (122)	0.47781 (204)	0.078 (82)	1/2	4 <i>k</i>
O5	0.04024 (43)	0	0.83537 (264)	0.078 (82)	1/2	4 <i>i</i>
O6	0.05041 (40)	1/2	0.33651 (277)	0.078 (82)	1/2	4 <i>j</i>
O7	0.16456 (39)	0	0.56937 (233)	0.078 (82)	1/2	4 <i>i</i>
O8	0.04274 (26)	0.32899 (93)	0.85792 (219)	0.078 (82)	1	8 <i>l</i>
O9	1/4	1/2	0.10010	0.078 (82)	1/4	2 <i>f</i>

^a: Numbers in parentheses are standard deviations of last significant digits. Values with no standard deviation shown were not refined.

^b: Cell parameters: $a = 24.57249$ (34), $b = 8.45725$ (12), $c = 4.86924$ (7); Figures of merit: $R_p = 9.26\%$, $R_{wp} = 13.3\%$, $R_{exp} = 4.58\%$, $\chi^2 = 8.48$.

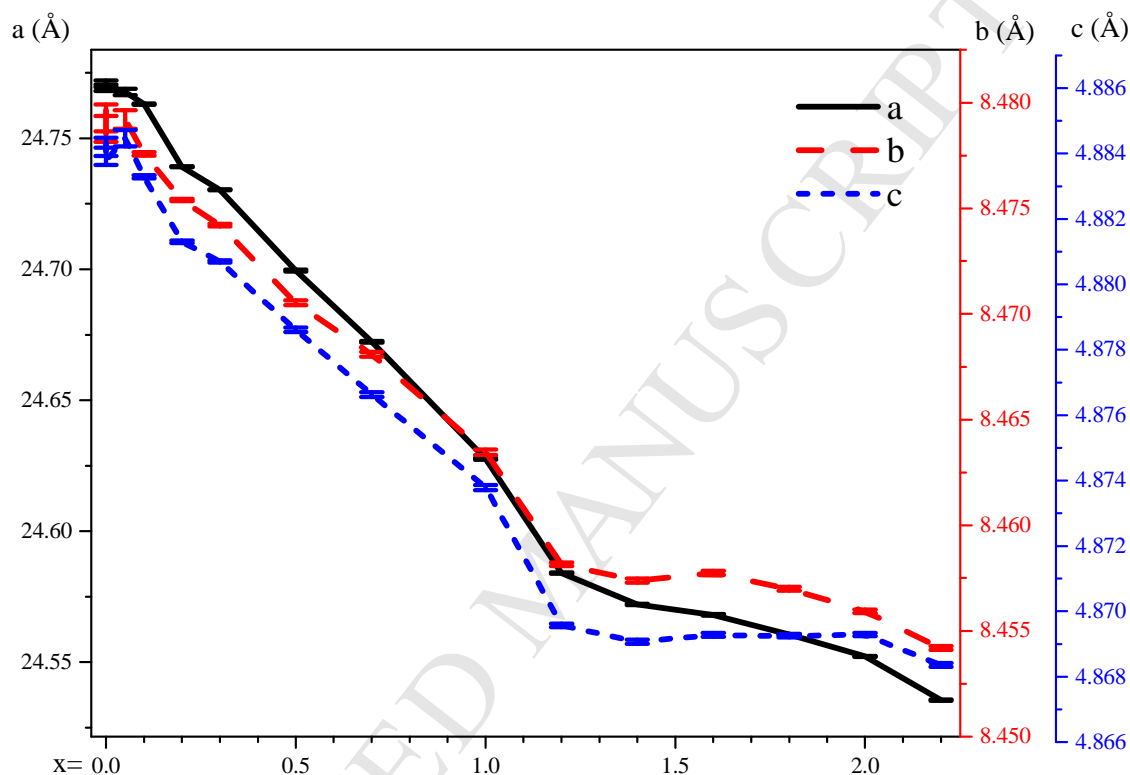


Figure 3. Refined lattice parameters a , b and c for $\text{Sr}_{(4-x)}\text{Ca}_x\text{Al}_{14}\text{O}_{25}$ plotted as a function Ca^{2+} doping level x .

As expected, substituting Sr^{2+} with Ca^{2+} (ionic radii 118 and 100 pm [41], respectively) caused unit cell volume and lattice parameters to shrink. The rate of change of all three lattice parameters a , b and c is seen to abruptly decrease when x reaches a value of approximately 1.3 which is close to the critical Ca^{2+} concentration $x = 1.4$ which is the upper limit for formation of single phase samples. The refined Ca occupancies of the Sr1 and Sr2 sites are plotted in Figure 4.

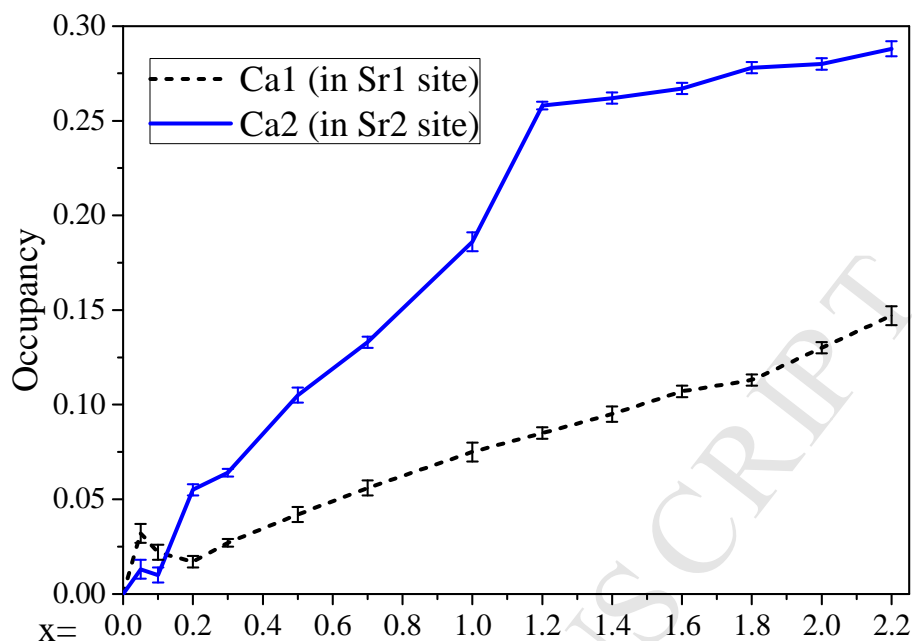


Figure 4. Refined occupancy parameters for two strontium sites in $\text{Sr}_{4-x}\text{Ca}_x\text{Al}_{14}\text{O}_{25}$ samples plotted as a function Ca^{2+} doping level x .

Except for the lowest calcium concentrations, the Sr2 site is more likely to be substituted by calcium. Furthermore, the rate of Ca substitution in the Sr2 site is seen to decrease for $x > 1.2$ which again reflects the onset of second phase formation. Figure 5 Shows the $\text{Sr}_4\text{Al}_{14}\text{O}_{25}$ crystal structure. The Sr1 sites are surrounded by AlO_4 -tetrahedra while the Sr2 sites are surrounded by both AlO_4 -tetrahedra and AlO_6 -octahedra. The Sr2 sites (coordination number 7, average Sr2-O distance 2.636 Å) are more susceptible for Ca substitution as sites are less spacious than Sr1 sites (coordination number 10, average Sr1-O distance 2.811 Å).

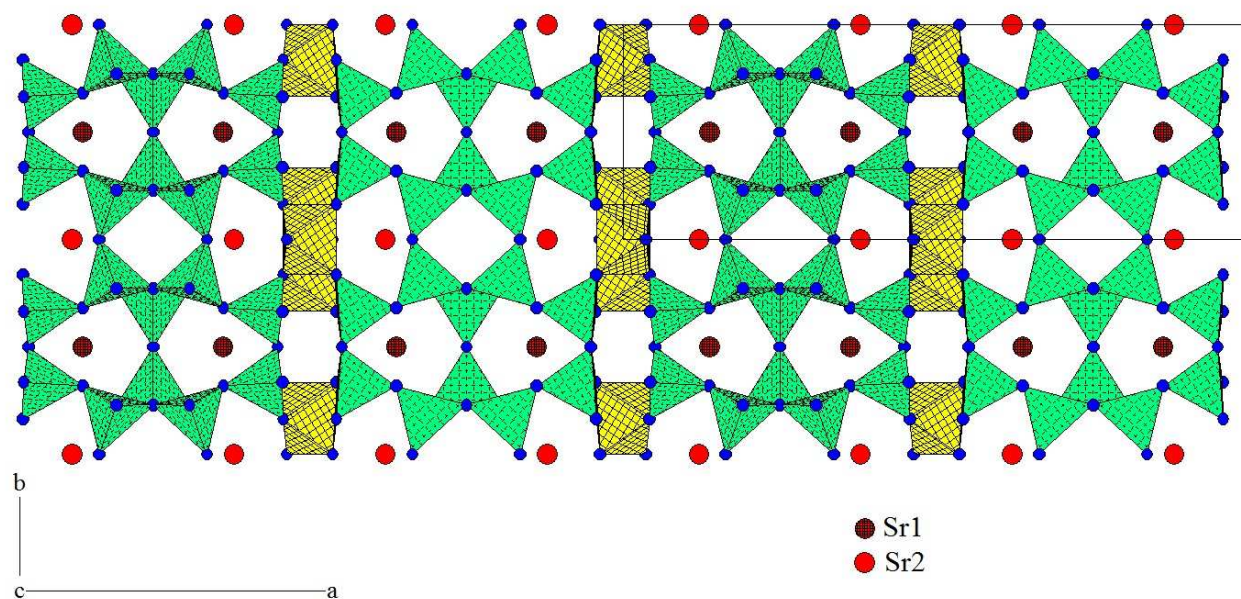


Figure 5. Projection of $\text{Sr}_4\text{Al}_{14}\text{O}_{25}$ crystal structure viewed along c-axis. Sr1 (red circles with squared patterns), Sr2 (red circles), AlO_4 -tetrahedra (green) and AlO_6 -octahedra (yellow).

3.3. Synthesis of Ce-doped $\text{Sr}_4\text{Al}_{14}\text{O}_{25}$

Cerium-doped $\text{Sr}_{4-y}\text{Al}_{14}\text{O}_{25}:\text{Ce}_y$ samples were prepared using the same synthetic approach and phase analysis of synthesis products was also performed. As seen from the XRD patterns presented in Figure 6, two compounds with the largest amount of cerium contain additionally traces of ceria (cerium(IV) oxide).

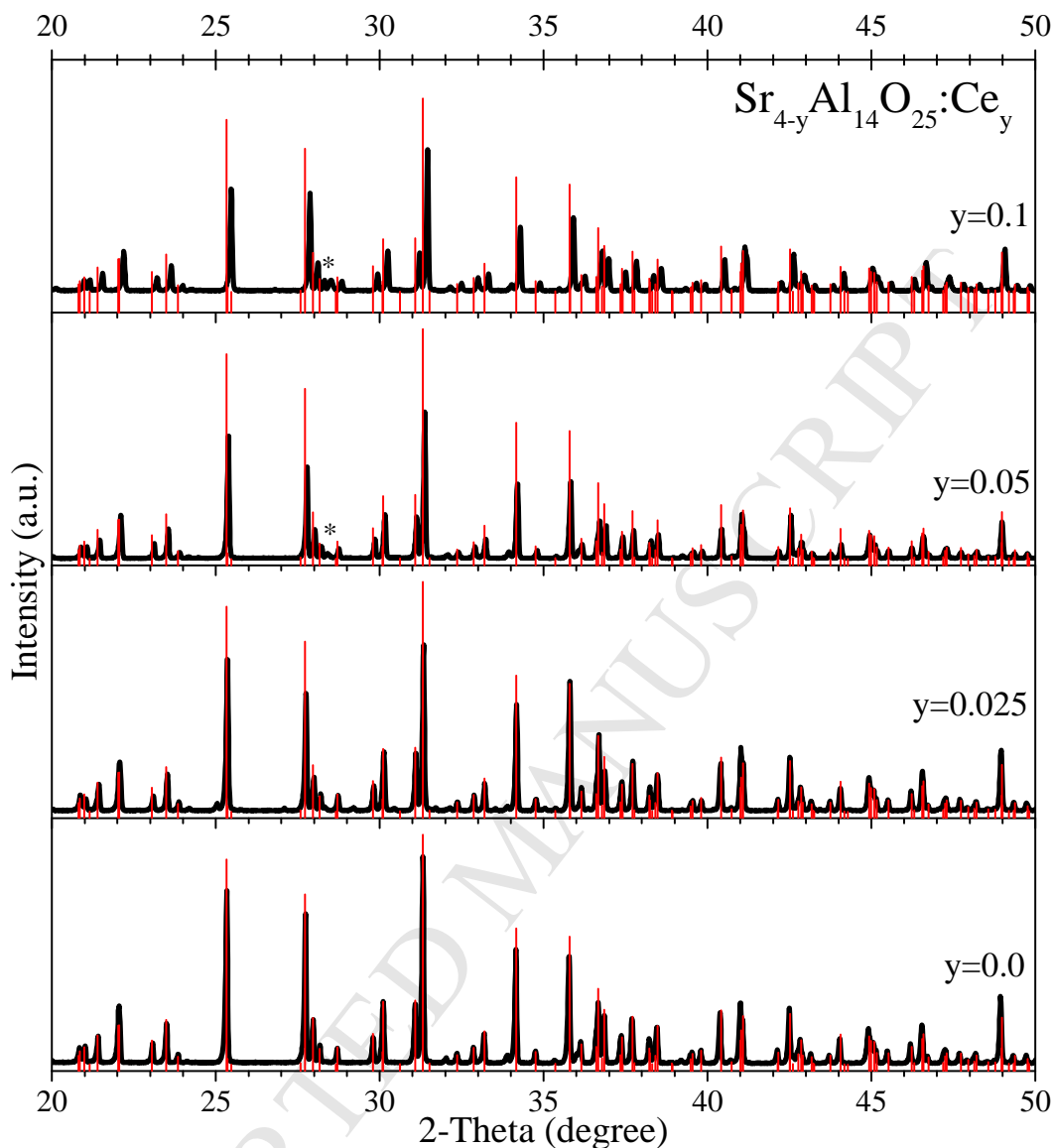


Figure 6. XRD patterns of $\text{Sr}_{4-y}\text{Al}_{14}\text{O}_{25}:\text{Ce}_y$. Red bars indicate standard pattern of $\text{Sr}_4\text{Al}_{14}\text{O}_{25}$ (PDF#00-074-1810) phase. The impurity phase is marked: * – CeO_2 .

The Rietveld refinement for these samples was performed as well. The results obtained from the refinement imply that the amount of CeO_2 (the crystallographic data were obtained from COD – crystallographic open database, #4343161) present in the compounds are 1 % and 0.4 % for $y = 0.1$ and $y = 0.05$ accordingly. These results clearly show that even CeO_2 phase is forming as impurity, the largest part of cerium is still embedded into the structure of $\text{Sr}_{4-y}\text{Al}_{14}\text{O}_{25}:\text{Ce}_y$ (e.g. when $y = 0.05$, the total mol % of cerium is 1.25, so at least 0.75 mol % should be incorporated in the

structure). Attempts to refine the Ce occupancies Sr1 and Sr2 sites following the procedure used for Ca-doping were unsuccessful.

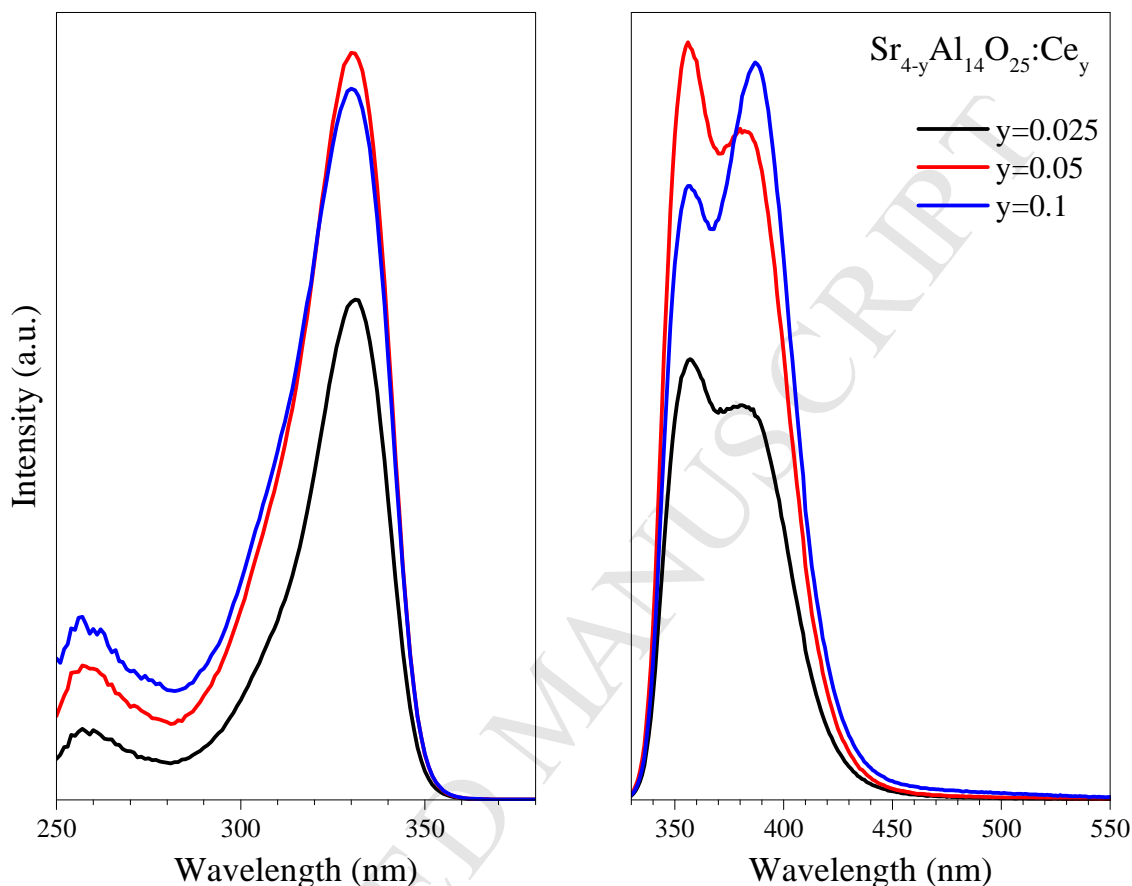


Figure 7. Excitation ($\lambda_{em} = 360$) at left and emission ($\lambda_{ex} = 330$ nm) at right spectra of $Sr_{4-y}Al_{14}O_{25}:Ce_y^{3+}$ samples.

Excitation and emission spectra of the $Sr_{4-y}Al_{14}O_{25}:Ce_y$ samples were also measured and are presented in Figure 7. Two emission maximums can be noticed: the first around 360 nm and the second around 380 nm, the excitation maximum is around 330 nm. The emission peaks are broad, this is due to the transition in Ce^{3+} ions from $[Xe]4d^1$ to $[Xe]5f^1$. As it can be seen from the spectra in Figure 7 the sample with $y = 0.05$ has the highest emission intensity. Higher level of doping results in decrease of intensity due to concentration quenching. Therefore, the doping with $y = 0.05$ was chosen for further investigations.

3.4. Partial substitution of Sr^{2+} by Ca^{2+} in cerium-doped samples

Cerium-doped strontium aluminates where strontium was partially substituted by calcium were synthesized to investigate the effects on the structural changes of the $\text{Sr}_{3.95}\text{Al}_{14}\text{O}_{25}:\text{Ce}_{0.05}$. A series of $\text{Sr}_{3.95-x}\text{Ca}_x\text{Al}_{14}\text{O}_{25}:\text{Ce}_{0.05}$ samples where $x=0.1, 0.4, 0.6, 0.8, 1.0, 1.2$ and 1.4 were prepared using the same synthesis method. XRD data of the representative compounds are shown in Figure 8.

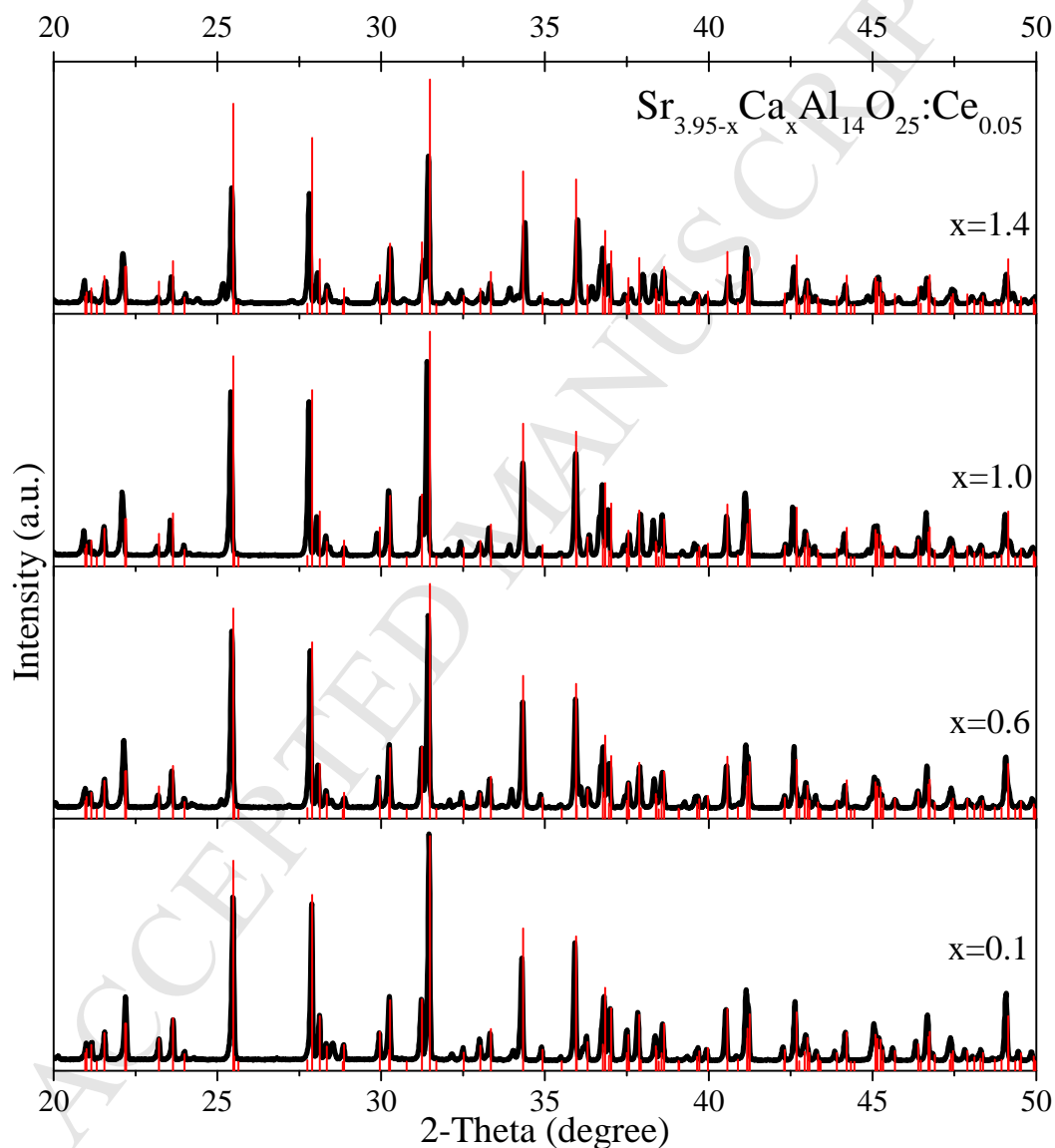


Figure 8. XRD patterns of $\text{Sr}_{3.95-x}\text{Ca}_x\text{Al}_{14}\text{O}_{25}:\text{Ce}_{0.05}$. Red bars indicate standard pattern of $\text{Sr}_4\text{Al}_{14}\text{O}_{25}$ (PDF#00-074-1810) phase.

All compounds from the synthesized series were refined using the Rietveld method. The result of $\text{Sr}_{3.95}\text{Al}_{14}\text{O}_{25}:\text{Ce}_{0.05}$ refinement which was performed earlier was used as basis for this series

refinement. The refinement results for cell parameters and their dependence are depicted in Figure 9. As in undoped samples described previously, all cell parameters are decreasing linearly with increasing the level of Sr^{2+} substitution by Ca^{2+} .

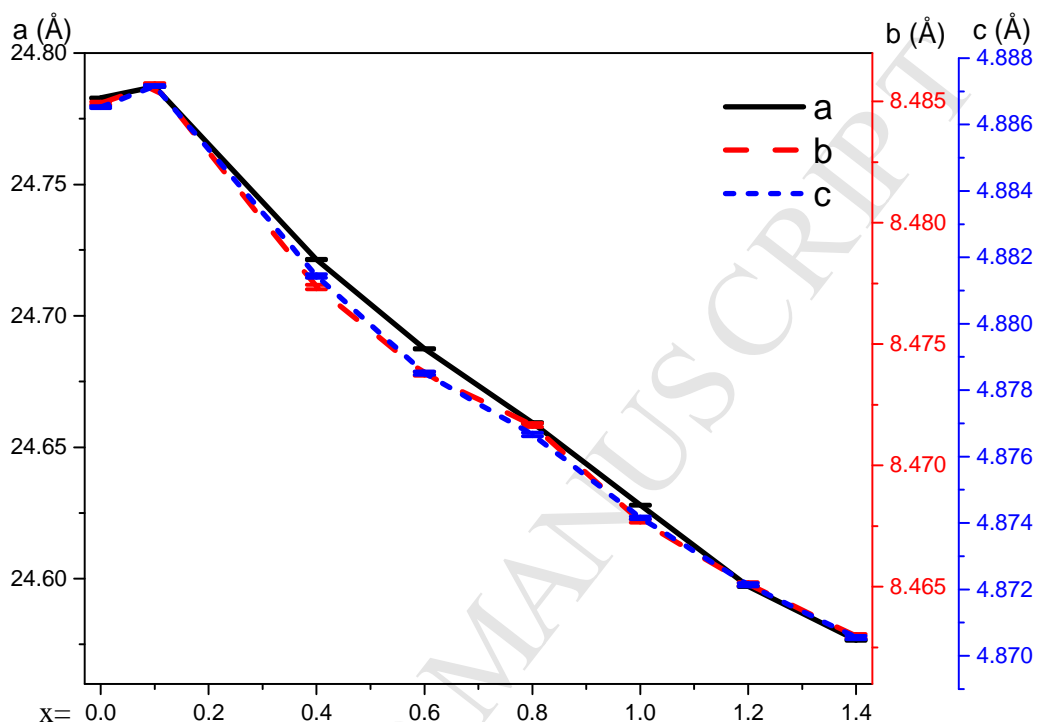


Figure 9. Refined lattice parameters a , b and c for $\text{Sr}_{3.95-x}\text{Ca}_x\text{Al}_{14}\text{O}_{25}:\text{Ce}_{0.05}$ plotted as a function Ca^{2+} doping level x .

Occupation factors were refined by introducing the constraints as explained previously ($\text{Sr1} + \text{Ca1} = 0.5$, $\text{Sr2} + \text{Ca2} = 0.5$). Once again, both Ca1 and Ca2 occupancies are increasing linearly when substitution level is increased. Also it can be seen that Sr2 is a much more preferred site for calcium, and except for the smallest amounts it was at least 3-4 times more substituted by calcium.

Excitation and emission spectra of photoluminescence measurements are presented in Figure 10. The decrease of excitation and emission intensities was observed by substituting even small amount of Sr by Ca, however, at higher levels of substitution the intensities of emission monotonically increase. Unsubstituted sample falls around the middle of our range of substitution and its

integrated intensity is close to that of the $\text{Sr}_{3.35}\text{Ca}_{0.6}\text{Al}_{14}\text{O}_{25}:\text{Ce}_{0.05}$ sample (see inset of Figure 10).

The highest intensity was determined for the most substituted aluminate ($x = 1.4$).

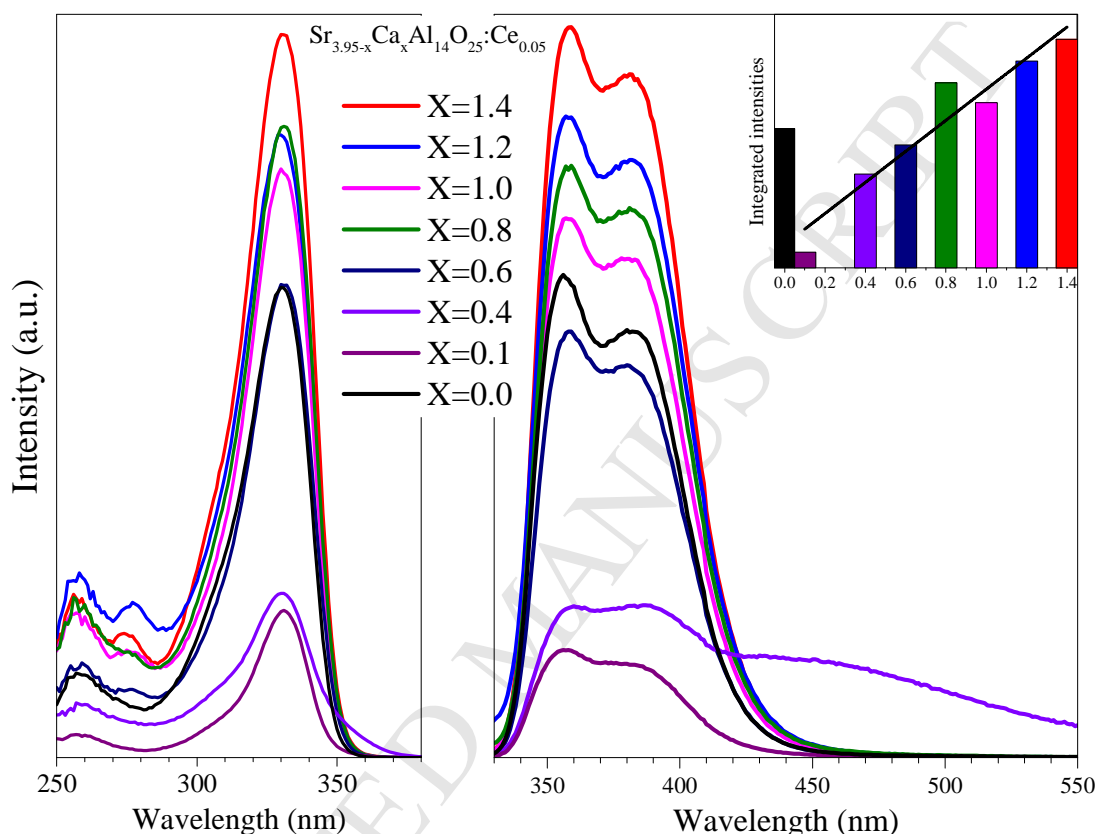


Figure 10. Excitation ($\lambda_{\text{em}} = 360 \text{ nm}$) at left and emission ($\lambda_{\text{ex}} = 330 \text{ nm}$) at right spectra of $\text{Sr}_{3.95-x}\text{Ca}_x\text{Al}_{14}\text{O}_{25}:\text{Ce}_{0.05}$ samples. Figure inset – integrated emission intensities plotted as a function Ca^{2+} doping level x .

Quantum yields and luminescence kinetics for the synthesized samples were also measured. Decay curves are presented in Figure 11. Decay constants of monoexponential fits are presented in Table 2 along with quantum yield calculation results and positions of emission peak maximums. Both, quantum yields and decay times, slightly increase with increasing amount of Ca while unsubstituted sample is in the middle of the range.

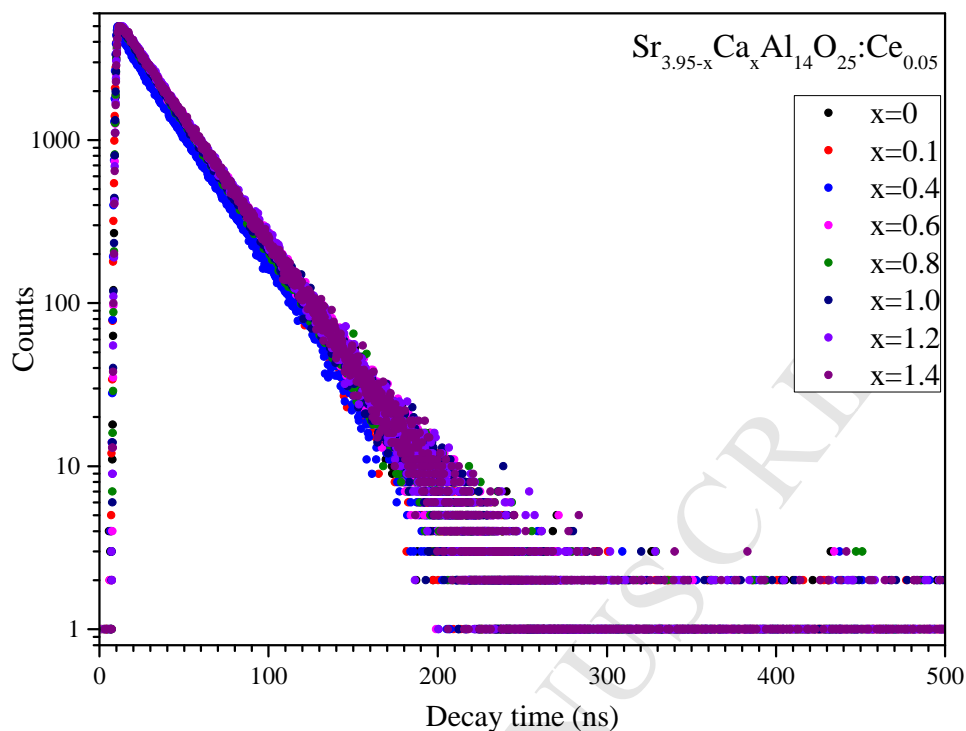


Figure 11. Decay curves for $\text{Sr}_{3.95-x}\text{Ca}_x\text{Al}_{14}\text{O}_{25}:\text{Ce}_{0.05}$ samples. ($\lambda_{\text{ex}} = 330 \text{ nm}$, $\lambda_{\text{em}} = 360 \text{ nm}$)

Table 2. Emission maximums, quantum yields and τ_1 constant determined for $\text{Sr}_{3.95-x}\text{Ca}_x\text{Al}_{14}\text{O}_{25}:\text{Ce}_{0.05}$ samples (numbers in parenthesis note the deviation of last significant digit).

x=	0.0	0.1	0.4	0.6	0.8	1.0	1.2	1.4
Ca amount (%)	0	2.5	10	15	20	25	30	35
λ_{em} maximum (nm)	356	357	360	359	359	359	359	359
Quantum yield (%)	16.93	6.16	10.63	16.86	22.42	22.88	22.26	27.11
τ_1 (1/ns)	27.87 (4)	27.56 (4)	27.54 (5)	28.11 (4)	28.34 (4)	28.17 (4)	28.35 (4)	28.39 (4)

4. Conclusions

It was demonstrated that partial substitution of calcium for strontium in $\text{Sr}_{4-x}\text{Ca}_x\text{Al}_{14}\text{O}_{25}$ is possible up to $x=1.4$ obtaining monophasic samples, while higher concentrations of Ca result in occurrence of additional phases. Refinement of crystal structures showed that such substitution results in

shrinkage of unit cell parameters due to smaller radius of Ca^{2+} ion. Moreover, cerium-doped samples $\text{Sr}_{4-y}\text{Al}_{14}\text{O}_{25}:\text{Ce}_y^{3+}$ and $\text{Sr}_{3.95-x}\text{Ca}_x\text{Al}_{14}\text{O}_{25}:\text{Ce}_{0.05}$ were prepared as well. The luminescent and structural properties of these samples were investigated. Refinement of site occupancy parameters revealed that Sr2 site (of two strontium sites in the crystal structure) is more likely to be substituted by the smaller calcium ion, however, the site preference of cerium could not be reliably determined using X-ray diffraction analysis. Evidently, further investigation on cerium substitutional effects should be performed in future. Examination of luminescence properties showed that the $\text{Sr}_4\text{Al}_{14}\text{O}_{25}:\text{Ce}_y^{3+}$ sample with $y = 0.05$ showed the highest emission intensity. In overall, for the $\text{Sr}_{3.95-x}\text{Ca}_x\text{Al}_{14}\text{O}_{25}:\text{Ce}_{0.05}$ samples all measured properties (excitation and emission intensities, decay times and quantum yields) increased with increasing substitutional level of calcium. However, the values of unsubstituted sample were close to the middle of the range of substituted samples.

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List of figures:

Figure 1. X-ray diffraction pattern of $\text{Sr}_4\text{Al}_{14}\text{O}_{25}$ refined employing Rietveld method. Sample prepared using H_3BO_3 (2.5% wt.) as a fluxing agent. Vertical bars located just below the background level indicate calculated positions of Bragg peaks for $\lambda = 1.54059 \text{ \AA}$ (Cu $K\alpha_1$). (Figures of merit: $R_p = 5.75\%$, $R_{wp} = 7.46\%$, $R_{exp} = 3.96\%$, $\chi^2 = 3.55$)

Figure 2. XRD patterns of $\text{Sr}_{(4-x)}\text{Ca}_x\text{Al}_{14}\text{O}_{25}$ samples. Red bars indicate standard pattern of $\text{Sr}_4\text{Al}_{14}\text{O}_{25}$ (PDF#00-074-1810) phase. Additional phase of CaAl_4O_7 (PDF#96-901-4426) is marked by blue bars.

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Figure 5. Projection of $\text{Sr}_4\text{Al}_{14}\text{O}_{25}$ crystal structure viewed along c -axis. Sr1 (red circles with squared patterns), Sr2 (red circles), AlO_4 -tetrahedra (green) and AlO_6 -octahedra (yellow).

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Highlights:

- Monophasic pure and modified $\text{Sr}_4\text{Al}_{14}\text{O}_{25}$ samples were prepared
- Sr was partially substituted by Ca without change in phase composition
- Ce-doped $\text{Sr}_4\text{Al}_{14}\text{O}_{25}$ samples (unsubstituted and partially substituted) were prepared
- Effect of partial substitution on luminescence was studied