

# Electronic structures of Eu-doped FAPbI<sub>3</sub> perovskite crystals studied by first-principles calculation

Atsushi Suzuki<sup>1</sup> and Takeo Oku<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The University of Shiga Prefecture, 2500 Hassaka, Hikone, Shiga 522-8533, Japan; suzuki@mat.usp.ac.jp, oku@mat.usp.ac.jp

\* Correspondence: suzuki@mat.usp.ac.jp; Tel.: +81-749-28-8369; (A. S.)

† Presented at the title, place, and date.

**Abstract:** Effects of mixed-valence states on electronic structures of europium (Eu)-incorporated CH(NH<sub>2</sub>)<sub>2</sub>PbI<sub>3</sub> (FAPbI<sub>3</sub>) and CH<sub>3</sub>NH<sub>3</sub>PbI<sub>3</sub> (MAPbI<sub>3</sub>) perovskite crystals were investigated by first-principles calculation. Partial replacements of europium ions into the perovskite crystal influenced the electronic structures. In the case of the FAPb(Eu<sup>+3</sup>)I<sub>3</sub> crystal, there was wide distribution of the 5p orbital of iodine near the valence band, and the 3d orbital of the Eu<sup>3+</sup> ion near the conductive band. Incorporation of Eu<sup>2+</sup> ion into the perovskite crystal provided a low energy levels at VB with increase of the band gap, and decrease of  $m_h^*/m_e$ . The behaviour expects improvement of carrier-mobility related to short circuit current and the conversion efficiency, as compared with incorporation of Eu<sup>3+</sup> ion into the perovskite crystal. The partial substitution of europium ion at position of lead ion as B-site in the perovskite crystal caused the electron correlation based on the charge transfer between 5p orbital of iodine and 3d orbital of Eu ion, and narrowed the band dispersion with decrease of effective mass ratio, which expected to improve the carrier mobility related to the short circuit current density and the conversion efficiency.

**Keywords:** perovskite crystal; first-principles calculation; band structure; NMR

## 1. Introduction

The perovskite solar cells have a great advantage to develop the photovoltaic application using perovskite crystal varied with chemical element and crystal structure [1-3]. The perovskite solar cells have high performance of the photovoltaic properties. The wide-band gap perovskite tandem solar cell has been developed for practical use of photovoltaic devices [4, 5]. The photovoltaic properties were influenced by chemical elements and crystalline structure in active layer [6, 7]. The photovoltaic performance was based on optimization with tuning the band structure and the effective mass related with carrier mobility. For example, incorporation of alkali metal [8-10], organic cation [11, 12], transition metal [13-20], tin [21, 22] and halogen ions [23, 24] improved the photovoltaic performance. The decomposition was suppressed by partial substitution of formamidinium (FA) [25], guanidinium (GA), ethylammonium (EA) and alkali metal ions instead of methyl ammonium (MA) at the A-sites, and transition metals (copper [18, 19], cobalt [26] and nickel) incorporated to lead (Pb) ions at the B-sites into the CH<sub>3</sub>NH<sub>3</sub>PbX<sub>3</sub> (MAPbX<sub>3</sub>) perovskite crystal, where X were the halogen ions. The surface modifications promoted the carrier diffusion with suppressing the deterioration.

The photovoltaic performances were associated with the electronic structure [27, 28]. Tolerance factor varied with effective ionic radii was used for predicting the thermodynamic stability of the crystal as cubic crystal system [29]. Transition metal-incorporated perovskite crystal had a high potential to improve the photovoltaic properties [30, 31]. Recently, the photovoltaic properties of lanthanide perovskite compounds were characterized by experimental results using first-principle calculation [32-35]. Rare-earth-based compound have unique type of physical phenomena as heavy-electron behaviour [36, 37]. The photovoltaic performance, the electronic structure and partial density of state were studied by the first-principle calculation using density functional theory (DFT) [38-41]. Partial replacement of

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europium ion with B site in the perovskite crystal prevented the decomposition, improving the stability of the performance.

The purpose of the present study is to focus on improvement of the photovoltaic properties by investigating effects of europium in the FAPbI<sub>3</sub> perovskite crystal. The electronic structure of the Eu-incorporated FAPbI<sub>3</sub> perovskite crystal was predicted by first-principles calculation. The electronic structures, electron density distribution, band structure, partial density of state (pDOS), chemical shifts of <sup>127</sup>I-NMR, electronic field gradient (EFG) and asymmetric parameter ( $\eta$ ) were considered in the Eu-incorporated FAPbI<sub>3</sub> or MAPbI<sub>3</sub> perovskite crystal. The photovoltaic mechanism was discussed by the electronic structure.

## 2. Calculation

The electronic structures of the perovskite crystals were single-point-calculated with crystallographic structural data obtained from X-ray diffraction patterns. The *ab initio* quantum calculations were performed using the Vanderbilt ultrasoft pseudo-potentials, scalar relativistic generalized gradient approximations and Perdew-Burke-Ernzerhof (GGA-PBE) exchange-correlation functional and density functional theory (DFT+U, U = 6.0 eV) (Quantum Espresso software). The basis-functions were used properly according to the cases of itinerant and localized electron system. Plane-wave basis set cut offs for the wave functions and charge density were set at 25 and 225 Rydberg (Ry). The perovskite crystals were constructed with experimental lattice constants ( $a = 6.362 \text{ \AA}$ ) and crystal system (cubic  $Pm\bar{3}m$ ) [41, 42]. Uniform  $k$ -point grid ( $4 \times 4 \times 4$ ) in the Brillouin zone was used to calculate the electronic structure and partial density of state. The Eu-incorporated FAPbI<sub>3</sub> perovskite cubic crystals as models were constructed with the supercells ( $2 \times 2 \times 2$ ) as initial unit cell, and were used for the band calculation. The band structures and effective mass were analysed for the Brillouin zone of the perovskite crystal along the direction of wave vector.

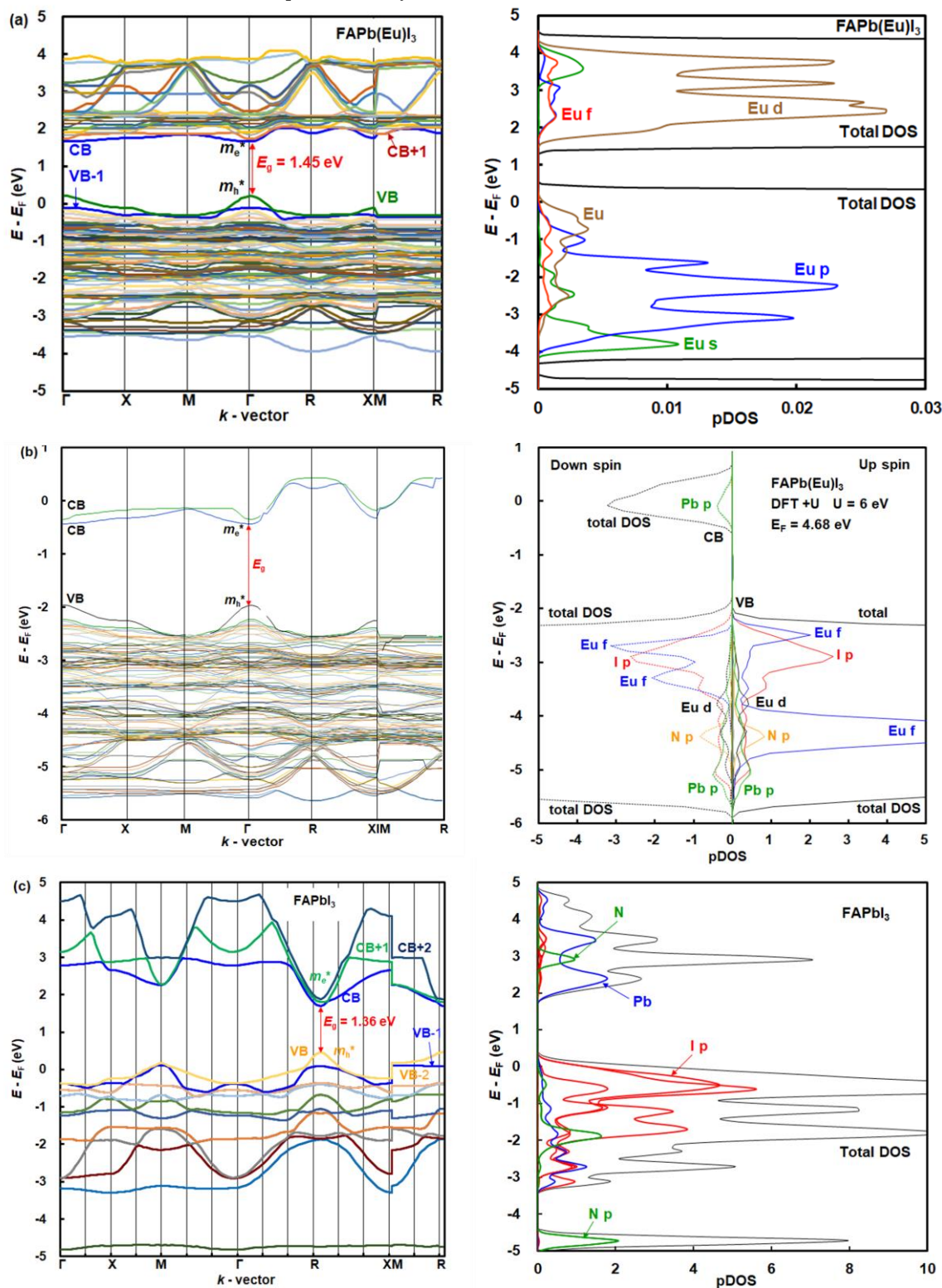
Path for FAPbI<sub>3</sub> perovskite crystal were set as follows,  $\Gamma (0, 0, 0) \rightarrow X (0, \frac{1}{2}, 0) \rightarrow M (1/2, 1/2, 0) \rightarrow \Gamma \rightarrow R (1/2, 1/2, 1/2) \rightarrow X, M \rightarrow R$ . Pb cation was set at the position of  $\Gamma (0, 0, 0)$ . FA cation was set in the centre position of unit cell ( $1 \times 1 \times 1$ ). Path for the FAPb(Eu)I<sub>3</sub> perovskite crystals were set as follows,  $\Gamma (0, 0, 0) \rightarrow X (1/2, 0, 1/2) \rightarrow W (1/2, 1/4, 3/4) \rightarrow K (3/8, 3/8, 3/4) \rightarrow \Gamma \rightarrow L (1/2, 1/2, 1/2) \rightarrow U (5/8, 1/4, 5/8) \rightarrow W (1/2, 1/4, 3/4) \rightarrow L \rightarrow K \mid U \rightarrow X$ . For minor partial replacement, Eu cation was replaced with Pb cation in the centre position of the supercell ( $2 \times 2 \times 2$ ). The density of states (DOS) and partial density of states (pDOS) were calculated to make clear the energy level for each orbital near valence band (VB) and conduction band (CB). The chemical shifts of <sup>127</sup>I-NMR, <sup>157</sup>Eu-NMR, electronic field gradient (EFG) and asymmetry parameter ( $\eta$ ) of the Eu-doped MAPbI<sub>3</sub> crystal were calculated by hybrid DFT using unrestricted B3LYP (UB3LYP) and GIAO with SSDall as the basis set (Gaussian 09).

## 3. Results and discussion

The band structure, partial density of state, electronic density distribution in the FAPb(Eu<sup>+3</sup>)I<sub>3</sub> perovskite crystal were calculated by first-principle calculation. The band structure and partial density of state (pDOS), the electronic density distribution in the FAPb(Eu<sup>3+</sup>)I<sub>3</sub> perovskite crystal are shown in Fig. 1(a). The energy levels at valence band and conduction band, band gap, effective mass ratio of electron and hole in the electron structure were calculated. The direct band gap was obtained to be 1.45 eV. The band dispersion curvature at wave vector near  $\Gamma (0, 0, 0)$  had the effective mass ratio of electron and hole to be 0.04 and 0.07. This result indicates that makes it is easy for carriers to diffuse in the crystal, improving the carrier mobility, short circuit current density and conversion efficiency. The partial density of state and enlarge view of 3p, 3d and 4f of Eu<sup>3+</sup> in the FAPb(Eu<sup>3+</sup>)I<sub>3</sub> perovskite crystal were considered. The 5p orbital of iodine, 3d and p orbitals of Eu<sup>3+</sup> were widely distributed near valence band state. Near the conduction band, 6p orbital of Pb, 3d and 4f orbitals of Eu<sup>3+</sup> were widely distributed. The itinerant behaviour indicates a different tendency from the localized system of the FAEuI<sub>3</sub> perovskite crystal [39].

In the case of the FAPb(Eu<sup>2+</sup>)I<sub>3</sub> perovskite crystal, the band structure, and pDOS was considered as shown in Fig. 1(b). The band structure had the direct band gap of  $E_g$  of 1.53 eV near wave vector at  $\Gamma (0, 0, 0)$ . The band dispersion curvature near at  $\Gamma (0, 0, 0)$  had the effective mass of electron and hole of 0.03 and 0.01, respectively. The itinerant characteristics indicates the light electronic system. The carriers are easy to diffuse with increase of mobility in the FAPb(Eu<sup>2+</sup>)I<sub>3</sub> perovskite crystal, as compared with those of the FAPb(Eu<sup>3+</sup>)I<sub>3</sub> perovskite crystal. The partial density of state and enlarged view of 3p, 3d and 4f orbitals of Eu<sup>2+</sup> in the crystal are demonstrated. The 5p orbital of iodine, and 3d, 4f orbital of Eu<sup>2+</sup> in the crystal were widely distributed. Near the conduction band, 6p orbital of Pb were distributed and increased. Incorporation of Eu<sup>2+</sup> ion into the crystal did not influenced on the pDOS of 5p orbital of Pb and 5p orbital of iodine in the crystal. This behaviour expects a slight influence on the carrier mobility. The electronic behaviour expects the itinerant

characteristics with promotion of the carrier diffusion on the 5p orbital of I in the crystal structure. Incorporation of  $\text{Eu}^{2+}$  ion into the perovskite crystal provided a low energy levels at VB with increase of the band gap, and decrease of  $m_h^*/m_e$ . The behaviour expects improvement of carrier-mobility related to short circuit current and the conversion efficiency, as compared with incorporation of  $\text{Eu}^{3+}$  ion into the perovskite crystal.



**Figure 1.** (a) Band structure, (b) density of state, and enlarged view of 3p, 3d, and 4f orbitals of  $\text{Eu}^{3+}$  in (a)  $\text{FAPb}(\text{Eu}^{3+})\text{I}_3$  (b)  $\text{FAPb}(\text{Eu}^{2+})\text{I}_3$  and the (c)  $\text{FAPbI}_3$  crystals.

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The chemical shifts of  $^{127}\text{I}$ -NMR in the  $\text{MAPb}(\text{Eu}^{3+})\text{I}_3$  rather than  $\text{MAPb}(\text{Eu}^{2+})\text{I}_3$  were remarkably shifted by nuclear quadrupole interaction in proportion to extent of value in  $Q$ , EFG tensor and  $\eta$ . The chemical shifts of  $^{127}\text{I}$ -NMR in the  $\text{MAPb}(\text{Eu})\text{I}_3$  perovskite crystal depend on extent of nuclear quadrupole interaction based on  $Q$ -tensor related with EFG and  $\eta$  of the iodine ligand with extent of spin-orbital interaction based on electron density distribution and hybridization of s, p and d orbital on the Eu ion in the coordination structure. The chemical shifts of  $^{127}\text{I}$ -NMR of the  $\text{MAPb}(\text{Eu}^{3+})\text{I}_3$  perovskite crystal were based on the anisotropic magnetic interaction between nearest neighbour ligand and  $\text{Eu}^{3+}$  ion in the coordination structure. In the case of the  $\text{MAPb}(\text{Eu}^{2+})\text{I}_3$  perovskite crystal, the chemical shifts of  $^{127}\text{I}$ -NMR expected the isotropic behavior with narrow splitting in the magnetic field. The isotropic magnetic interaction was derived from nuclear Zeeman interaction, isotropic hyperfine interaction between electron and nuclear spins, and nuclear quadrupole interaction based on EFG and  $\eta$  of the  $\text{Eu}^{2+}$  ion with slight extent of electron density distribution on the Eu-I band in the coordination structure.

The electronic correlation based on the charge transfer from 3d, 4f hybrid orbital of europium ion to 5p orbital of iodine ion as ligand determined the itinerant system with increase of the carrier mobility related to reciprocal of the effective mass of hole. The anisotropic behaviour were associated with the crystal field perturbation of energy level splitting and the nuclear quadrupole interaction based on EFG and  $\eta$ . The itinerant behaviour would promote to increase the carrier mobility, predicting improvement of the short circuit current density. The valence fluctuation of  $\text{Eu}^{2+}$  and  $\text{Eu}^{3+}$  ions influence the charge transfer between metal and ligand in the perovskite crystal. The mechanisms have itinerant variation based on exchange interaction in the coordination structure. The electronic structures of the doping of lanthanide ions into  $\text{MAPbI}_3$  perovskite crystals were considered. The electronic correlation with the crystal field perturbation expects the photovoltaic mechanism, improving the stability of conversion efficiency.

#### 4. Conclusion

Partial replacement of Eu at the Pb site in the perovskite crystal influenced the electronic structure, the effective mass related to carrier mobility and  $E_g$  with energy level at VB state. In the case of the  $\text{FAPb}(\text{Eu}^{+3})\text{I}_3$  crystal, 3d and 4f orbital of Eu ion appeared near VB, and 3d orbital was widely distributed near CB. The effective mass ratio was slightly increased by incorporation of  $\text{Eu}^{+3}$  ion. In the case of the  $\text{FAPb}(\text{Eu}^{+2})\text{I}_3$  crystal, 4f orbitals of  $\text{Eu}^{+2}$  ion and 5p orbital of iodine ion were strongly appeared near VB, and 3d orbital of  $\text{Eu}^{2+}$  ion and 5p orbital on Pb ion were distributed near CB. Incorporation of  $\text{Eu}^{+2}$  ion into the crystal decreased the effective mass ratio, promoting the carrier diffusion related to the mobility, expecting for improvement of the short circuit current density and conversion efficiency. The chemical shifts of  $^{127}\text{I}$ -NMR of the  $\text{MAPb}(\text{Eu}^{2+})\text{I}_3$  crystal depended on the extent of the nuclear quadrupole interaction based on EFG and  $\eta$  in the coordination structure. The electronic correlation promoted the charge transfer, improving the short circuit current density and conversion efficiency.

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