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### ACCEPTED MANUSCRIPT

# Investigating the effects of calcination temperatures on the structure of modified nanosilica prepared by sol-gel

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#### **Graphical Abstract**



#### Highlights

- The densification by calcination of the dried, modified silica powders prepared by a mixed alkoxide sol-gel method without using an ammonia catalyst or surfactants is the critical process affecting the powder structure characteristics.
- The calcination process between 125°C and 550°C directly contributes the changes in the average particle size and size distribution, particle densification, particle coarsening and the stability of the amino group intensity.
- The changes in the silica particle structure and morphology is explained within two decoupled zones, particle shrinkage by densification up to 300°C, and growth by coarsening behaviours between 300°C and 550°C.

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