

## Key External Causes of Poor Performance of Engineering and Technical Departments within Governmental Construction Projects in Saudi Arabia

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**Abstract :** Poor levels of performance and low productivity were highlighted by many previous studies as a major cause of failure in the Saudi construction industry. This paper provides recommendations to address key external indicators that led to poor levels of performance and low productivity in Engineering and Technical Departments (ETDs) within the Saudi governmental agencies. The ETDs are client's representative on behalf of the Saudi Ministries. This paper represents a part of an investigation which contained external and internal challenges that led to occurrence of the research problem. The paper is focusing on the external challenges which contain 14 indicators. These 14 external indicators had been examined carefully through comprehensive review of the literature then have been tested through quantitative and qualitative methods. 400 questionnaires were distributed to dozens of different bodies. The actual response rate was 47% completed responses. Four semi-structured interviews were conducted with senior practitioners from the Public Construction Sector. The finding showed that the 14 external indicators directly and/or indirectly influence the Public Construction Sector. It was noticed significantly that these indicators have prevented the ETDs from performing properly. It was also found that the 14 external indicators were constant with all kinds of Government Construction Projects in the Saudi context. Addressing the 14 external indicators requires to be planned over the long run which is responsible by relevant Saudi governmental authorities under the umbrella of the Saudi Council of Ministers. The study recommends that Project Management Office (PMO) should be considered in order to improve the performance of the ETDs.

**Keywords :** construction projects' performance, low engineering productivity, public construction sector

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