

## An Investigation into the Current Implementation of Design-Build Contracts in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

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**Abstract :** In the last decade, the use of project delivery system of design build engineering contracts is increasing in North America due to the reasons of reducing the project duration and minimizing costs. The shift from traditional approach of Design-Bid-Build to Design-Build contracts have been attributed to many factors such as evolution of the regulatory and legal frameworks governing the engineering contracts and improvement in integrating design and construction. The aforementioned practice of contracting is more appropriate in North America; yet, it may not be the case in Saudi Arabia where the traditional approach of construction contracting remains dominant. The authors believe there are number of factors related to the gaps in the level of sophistication of the engineering and management of the construction projects in both countries. A step towards improving the Saudi construction practice by adopting the new trend of construction contracting, this paper identifies the reasons why Design/Build form of contracting are not frequently utilized. A field survey, which includes the questionnaire addressing the research problem, is distributed to three main parties of the construction contracts: clients, consultants, and contractors. The analyzed collected data were statistically sufficient to finding the reasons of not adopting the new trend of good practice of design build approach in Saudi Arabia. In addition, the reasons are: (1) lack of regulation and legal framework; (2) absence of clear criteria of the owner for the trade-off between competing contractors, (3) and lack of experience, knowledge and skill.

**Keywords :** design built projects, Saudi Arabia, GCC, mega projects

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