

Fundamental Flip-Flop Design: Comparative Analysis

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ABSTRACT

A latch is used to store single bit information. It is a level triggered device. These are the building blocks for sequential circuits. The basic working of D-Latch is that input data will be transferred to the output node whenever the clock or enable signal is high. In this paper, various efficient designs of d-latch using 18nm FinFET technology are proposed. The designing of latches are very flexible when compared with flip flops. FinFET technology has many advantages over planar CMOS, such as lower leakage current and lower power consumption. The circuits are designed and simulated using FinFET spectre models in cadence virtuoso tool. The proposed latches using FinFET consumes less power and has low power delay product when compared to traditional D-Latch designs.

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INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, all the electronic circuits require low power consumption and an increase in the speed of operation. Many technologies have been used by the researchers to design circuits with less power consumption. A Low-Voltage CML (current mode logic) D-latch and CML based logic gates and Latches are designed in.^[1,2] Process variations have been increasing with technology scaling. These process variations effect the temperature of the device. These effects are studied and discussed in.^[3] The optimizations in the FinFET devices are discussed in^[4] for low power and delay. FinFET circuits are designed at low power, and they are analyzed at multiple threshold voltages and supply voltages in.^[5] The soft error masking latches have been designed to reduce the errors and obtain the efficient outputs in.^[6] MCML D-Latch has been designed in.^[7] A low-cost CMOS latch has been designed in.^[8] A time redundant hardened latch has been designed for efficient outputs.^[9] Transistor stacking technique has been implemented in many combinational circuits to reduce the leakage current.^[10] A fault resistant D-Latch has been designed to reduce the transient faults that occurred from the previous circuits.^[11]

Different D-Latch topologies have been designed in 32nm CMOS technology based on transistor stacking effect in.^[12] A ternary D-Latch has been designed using GNRFET's (Graphene Nano-ribbon Field Effect Transistor) as it gives reduced power consumption and a small area.^[13] The brief explanation about the characteristics, working and types of FinFET are studied and discussed in.^[14]

Commonly used methodologies are CMOS, FinFET, GNRFET, etc. FinFET is used in many electronic devices, and it serves as the basis for fabrication of nano semiconductor devices.^[15, 16] So far, many researchers have preferred planar MOSFET's that are built on bulk silicon wafers. CMOS (Complementary MOSFET's) are mostly preferred to design various VLSI circuits and its applications.^[17, 18]

MOSFET is widely used for amplifying the electronic signals and switching in electronic devices. However, the main drawback in MOSFET is the increase in short channel effects.^[19] The short channel effects mainly arose due to electron shifts and the change in threshold voltage.^[20] The main motive of most of the researchers is to reduce power consumption and enhance the speed of operation. To achieve these improvements we have to decrease the

channel length. Due to this decrease in channel length, drain potential will influence the electrons in the channel. Due to this, the gate loses its control over the channel. This problem leads to an increase in leakage current and short channel effects.^[21] The Multiple-gate Field Effect Transistors (MGFET's) are the best alternative for MOSFET's to reduce the leakage currents and short channel effects.^[22] Because if one gate loses control over the channel, the other gate takes control and reduces the leakage current, thereby reducing the short channel effects. This is the main advantage of MGFET's.^[23] The most commonly used MGFET's are FinFETs and Tri-gate FET's. The fully depleted SOI (silicon-on-insulator) MOSFET's reduces the leakage current to some extent. The MGFET's reduces the leakage current and offer better performance when compared with planar MOSFET's.^[24, 25]

The existing circuits are designed using CMOS technology. To obtain better results of power and delay FinFET technology has been evolved. As FinFET has many advantages than CMOS technology, the proposed circuits are designed using FinFET technology. The proposed D-Latches are designed in 18nm FinFET technology for low power memory applications. Different D-Latches have been designed and simulated using cadence virtuoso tool.^{[26]-[31]}

The characteristics and working of FinFET are discussed in the second section. There are two types of FinFET. Shorted-gate FinFET and Independent-gate FinFET. The brief description of the types of FinFET and its advantages and applications are discussed in the next section. The proposed design and its circuit diagrams, along with its truth tables are discussed in the third section. The simulations are performed using cadence virtuoso tool. These results are shown in the fourth section. The experimental results are also performed. The power delay calculations and comparisons are tabulated in the fifth section. The final results obtained and conclusions are discussed in the last section. Advantages of the designed circuits and their applications are also discussed.

FINFET CHARACTERISTICS AND MODELING

The MGFET's can reduce the leakage current and offer better performance when compared with planar MOSFET's. Among all the MGFET's, FinFETs and Tri-gate FET's are

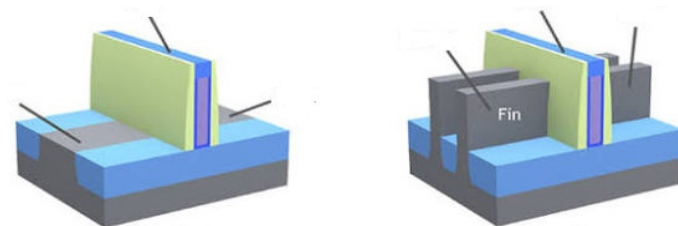


Fig. 1: Structure of (a) planar MOSFET (b) FinFET

mostly preferred because they are simple to fabricate. FinFET having thick oxide on the top of the fin is called as Double gate FinFET. FinFET having thin oxide on the top of the fin and the sides is called as Tri-gate FinFET.^[26] The structures for FinFET and Tri-gate FET's are shown in Figure 2. Tri-gate FET's have an additional gate on top of the fin so that its process becomes complex. However, the fringe capacitances will be reduced by using the Tri-gate FET's. But FinFET is mostly preferred by most of the researchers. The working principle of FinFET is similar to MOSFET. But the main difference is CMOS is a planar transistor and FinFET is a non-planar transistor with two gates.^[27-35]

FinFET was developed by Chenming Hu and by his colleagues at the University of California, Berkeley. FinFET is a non-planar transistor. It is a multi-gate device. It is a MOSFET with channel elevated so that the gate surrounds the channel on three sides. Due to this gate that surrounds the channel, leakage current decreases, and the obtained results will be useful. The technology has been named as FinFET because the structure looks like a set of fins. The basic working of FinFET is same as standard CMOS. FinFET also has source, drain and a gate to control the flow of current. But the only difference is that the channel is built in three dimensional between the source and drain. The gate surrounds the channel so that leakage current reduces. The width of the FinFET is nothing but the height of the channel. FinFETs are built on both bulk and silicon-on-insulator wafers. Most of the researchers prefer FinFET built on SOI wafers. Bulk FinFETs are also used by some of the companies.^[32-39]

PROPOSED D-LATCH MODULE USING FINFET MODELS

In this paper, the proposed circuits are designed using FinFET technology. Latches can be easily designed when compared to flip-flops. These are used in sequential circuits like shift registers, adders, etc. The proposed circuits show better performance by reducing power consumption and power delay product when compared to existing D-Latch.

A latch is used for storing single bit information. Every sequential circuit is built with latches. So these are the

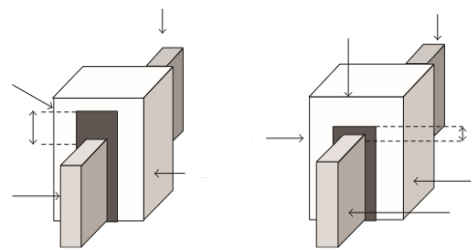


Fig. 2: Structures for (a) FinFET (b) Tri-gate FET

building blocks for sequential circuits. When CLK is high, the output will be the same as D. When CLK is low output will remain in its previous state. The working of D-Latch has validated from the circuit of basic D-Latch shown in Figure 3.

Design 1

From Figure 3, when clk is high the transistors T1 and T2 becomes on and passes the data D. This data gets inverted by transistors T3 and T4 and again inverted by T9 and T10. At this instant, the data inverted by T3 and T4 gets stored and latched by transistors T5, T6, T7 and T8. When CLK becomes low T1 and T2 becomes off and T5, T6 becomes on. So the data D will not be passed through transistors T1 and T2. Therefore, the previous data which was stored by T7 and T8 will be passed through T5 and T6. This data gets inverted two times by the transistors T3, T4, T9 and T10. Finally, the output will remain in the previous state. Assuming that the previous state is logic '1' the truth table for deisgn1 is shown in table 2.

Design 2

From Fig. 4, when CLK is high, the transistors T1 and T2 become on. So the data D passes through T1 and T2. The data D will be directly sent to the output node. At this instant, the output will be stored by the transistors T9, T10, T11 and T12. Now if the CLK is off the transistors, T1 and T2 become off. So the data D will not be sent to the output node. The previous data which was stored by the transistors T9, T10, T11 and T12 will be sent to remaining

transistors. So the output will remain in the previous state. The table 3 shows the truth table for Design2 assuming the previous state as logic '1'.

Design 3

From Fig. 5, when CLK is high, the transistors T2 and T3 become on. If D=1, then transistor T4 becomes on and T1 becomes off. So logic '0' will be sent to the next node. This gets inverted by the inverter, and then logic '1' will be sent to the output. At this instant, this output data will be stored by the transistors T7 and T8. The same process goes on for D=0. Now if CLK becomes low, transistors T2 and T3 become off. So no data will be sent to the next node. Transistors T8 and T9 become on. As the previous output is '1' transistor, T7 becomes off, and T10 becomes on. So logic '0' will be sent to the next node. This gets inverted, and logic '1' will be sent to the output. From this, it is evident that whenever CLK is low output remains in the previous state. The truth table for this design is shown in table 4, assuming the previous state as logic '1'.

Design 4

Figure 6 shows ternary D-Latch design. The existing circuit is designed using GNRFET. The proposed circuit is designed using FinFET. The circuit diagrams for NTI (Negative ternary inverter), STI (Standard Ternary Inverter) and NAND gates are shown in figure 7. NTI and STI work similarly to the basic inverter. These are designed to generate three levels in the output. But the designed circuit is simulated using cadence virtuoso tool. So the output consists of

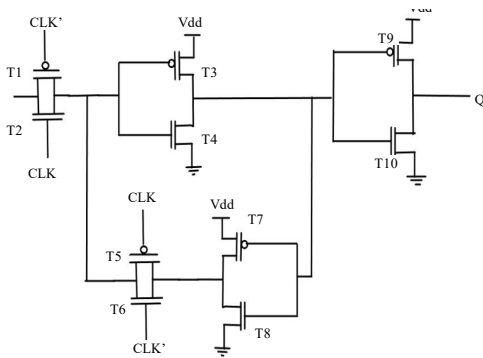


Fig. 3: D-Latch design1

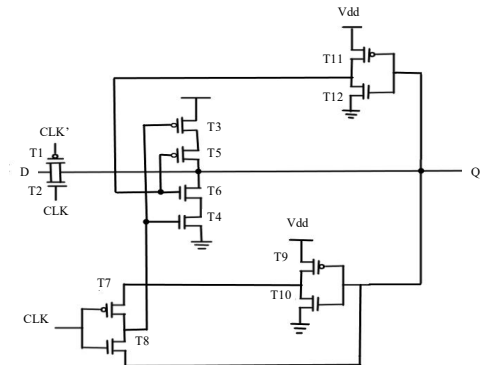


Fig. 4: D-Latch design 2

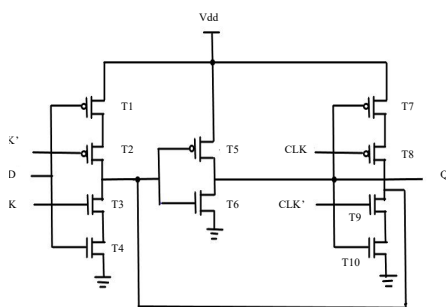


Fig. 5: D-Latch design 3

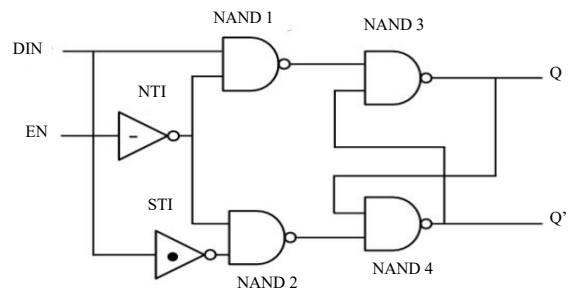


Fig. 6: D-Latch design 4

only two levels. Ternary NAND gate also works similar to a binary NAND gate.

From figure 6, whenever the EN is low, the output Q will be the same as the data D. when the EN is high output will remain in the previous state. This is the operation of the above D-Latch. The truth tables for the inverters, NAND gate and the designed circuits are shown in the following tables.

Figure 9 shows the circuits for STI and NTI. The above circuits are designed using ternary logic. The working of these circuits is similar to that of CMOS inverter and NAND gates. The truth table for these circuits is shown in Table I and Table II.

EXPERIMENTAL FINDINGS OF THE PROPOSED WORK

The schematics are designed and simulated using 18nm FinFET library in cadence virtuoso tool. The circuits are simulated with a power supply of 1V at a frequency of 1GHz. Power and Delay values are also obtained from the resultant waveforms. The power and delay calculations are performed for both LVT and HVT FinFETs. The outputs for all the designed circuits are shown in figure 8, 9, 10 and 11.

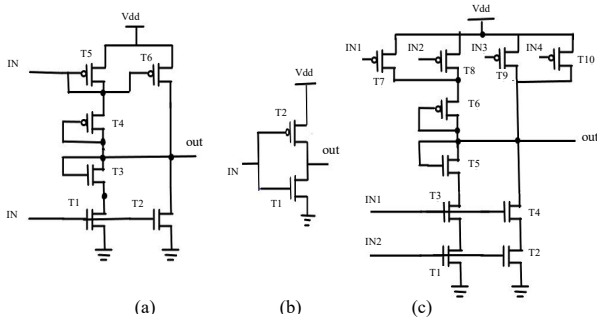


Fig. 7: Schematics for (a) STI (b) NTI (c) NAND

TABLE 1: TRUTH TABLE FOR STI AND NTI

Input	STI o/p	NTI o/p
0	2	2
1	1	0
2	0	0

TABLE 2: TRUTH TABLE FOR STI AND NTI

Input IN1	Input IN2	NAND output
0	0	2
0	1	2
0	2	2
1	0	2
1	1	1
1	2	1
2	0	2
2	1	1
2	2	0

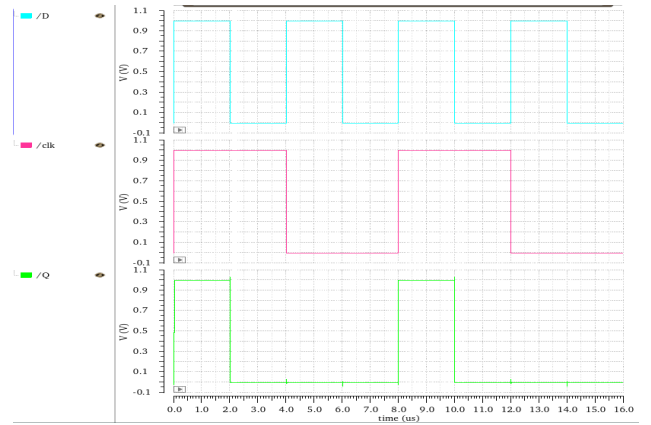


Fig. 8: Output for Design1

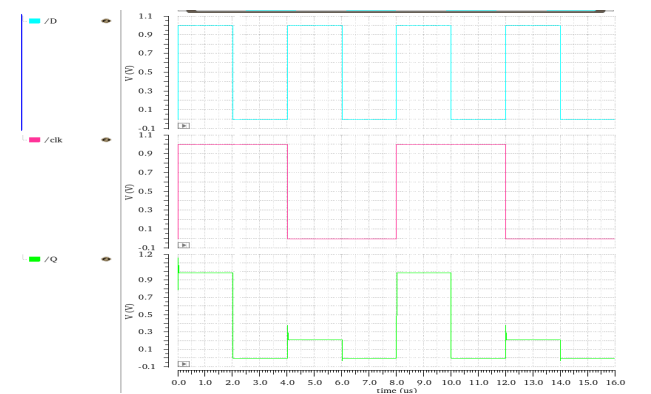


Fig. 9: Output for Design2

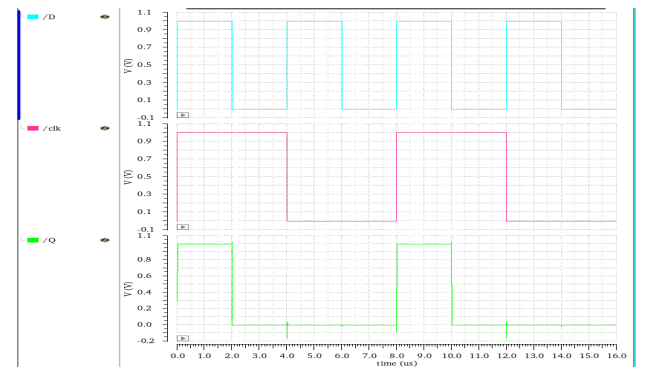


Fig. 10: Output for Design3

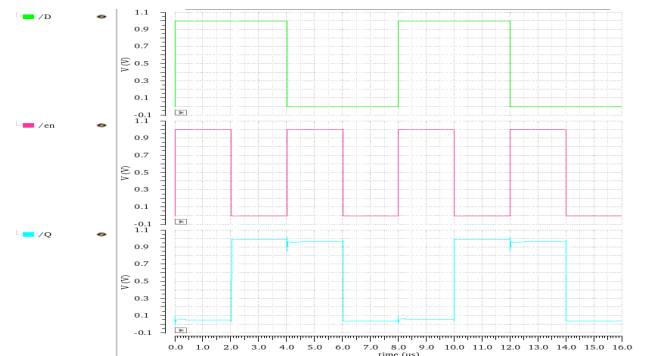


Fig. 11: Output for Design4

TABLE 3: POWER AND DELAY COMPARISONS

Design	LVT		HVT	
	Power	Delay	Power	Delay
Design 2	0.1 mw	8 us	63.5 uw	8 us
Design 4	91.4 uw	2.00 us	83.6 uw	2.00 us
Design 1	46.5 uw	39.6 ps	33.3 uw	55.5 ps
Design 3	27.2 uw	0.336 ps	26.1 nw	44.2 ps

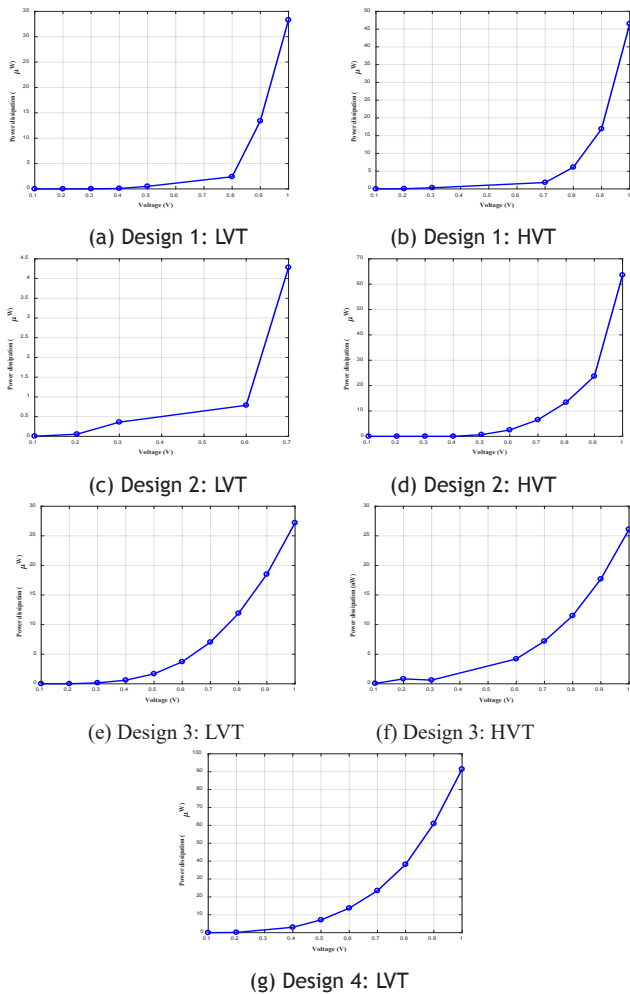


Fig. 12: Power consumption Vs V_{DD}

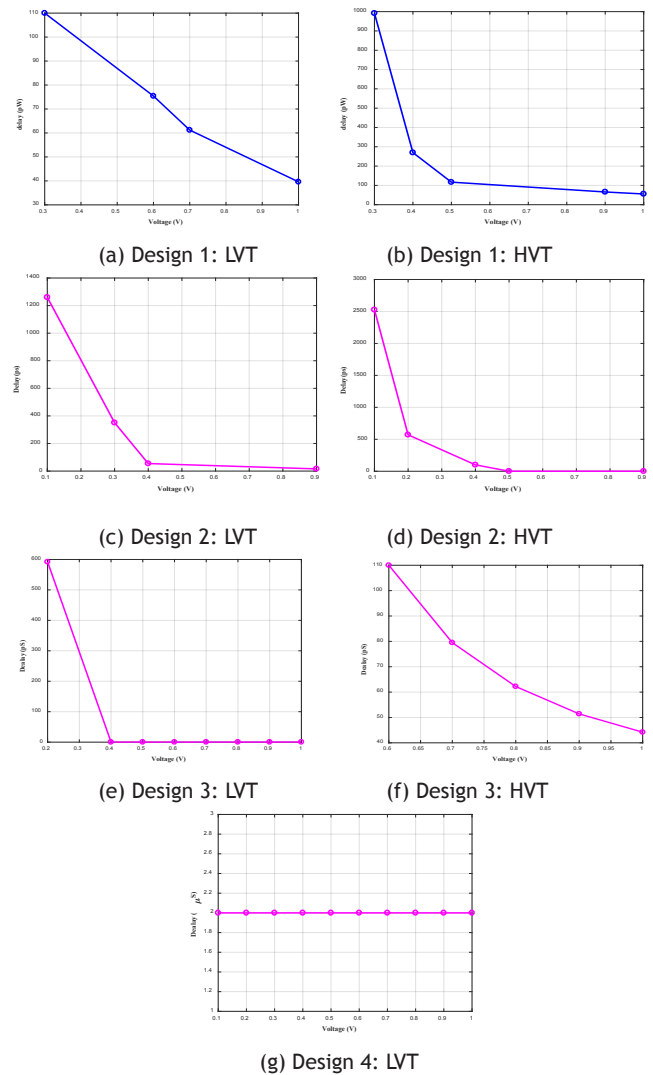


Fig. 13: Delay Vs V_{DD}

CONCLUSION

We have presented the different approaches to designing D-Latch that consumes low power. The designed D-Latches consume less power when compared to existing latches. The circuits are designed using 18nm FinFET technology in cadence virtuoso tool. Many researchers have used CMOS technology. But FinFET has many advantages over CMOS technology. The main disadvantage of CMOS is short channel effects. These can be reduced by using FinFET because it is a multi-gate device. From the obtained results, the power and delay are reduced than the existing circuits. Among all the four designed D-Latches, design3 consumes less power when compared to others. The circuits are simulated at a supply voltage of 1V. Power and Delay values are calculated at different supply voltages. Power and Delay waveforms are plotted using the obtained values. The proposed latches can be used in power gating circuits, adders, shift registers, etc. These circuits are specifically used for low power memory applications.

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