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# Importance of $\Delta V_{\text{DIBLSS}}/(I_{\text{on}}/I_{\text{off}})$ in Evaluating the Performance of n-Channel Bulk FinFET Devices

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**ABSTRACT** This paper aims to investigate the recently proposed figure of merit,  $\Delta V_{\text{DIBLSS}}/(I_{\text{on}}/I_{\text{off}})$ , in detail. Experimental results show that  $\Delta V_{\text{DIBLSS}}/(I_{\text{on}}/I_{\text{off}})$  represents the index of device immunity to short-channel effects in bulk FinFETs. The value of its numerator,  $\Delta V_{\text{DIBLSS}}$ , accounts for the drain-induced barrier lowering and subthreshold swing. The value of its denominator,  $I_{\text{on}}/I_{\text{off}}$ , accounts for the transistor performance in transitioning between on and off states. Small  $\Delta V_{\text{DIBLSS}}$  and large  $I_{\text{on}}/I_{\text{off}}$  are desirable, representing the improved gate control over the channel potential. We found that both  $\Delta V_{\text{DIBL}}$  and  $\Delta V_{\text{SS}}$  values are more correlated with the drain off-state current,  $I_{\text{off}}$ , than they are with the drain on-state current,  $I_{\text{on}}$ . A high-performance FinFET device exhibits  $\Delta V_{\text{DIBLSS}}$  of about 100 mV and  $I_{\text{on}}/I_{\text{off}}$  of about  $1 \times 10^6$ . Thus,  $\Delta V_{\text{DIBLSS}}/(I_{\text{on}}/I_{\text{off}})$  in a high-performance FinFET device is expected to be around  $1 \times 10^{-4}$  mV. Using this figure of merit, along with the verification using conventional parameters such as  $\Delta V_{\text{DIBLSS}}$  and  $I_{\text{on}}/I_{\text{off}}$ , the proposed device shows better electrical characteristics than that in our previous work due to the optimized process conditions implemented.

**INDEX TERMS**  $\Delta V_{\text{DIBLSS}}/(I_{\text{on}}/I_{\text{off}})$ , bulk FinFETs, drain-induced barrier lowering, short-channel effects, subthreshold swing.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Fin field-effect transistors (FinFETs) are regarded as strong candidates for the sub-20 nm regime because of their excellent immunity to short-channel effects (SCEs) [1]–[3]. In the silicon industry, bulk FinFETs are preferred over silicon-on-insulator (SOI) FinFETs for enhanced heat dissipation, similar performance, and less cost [4]–[8]. Also, the number of required masks used for device fabrication heavily discourages the implementation of SOI FinFET technology in low-cost manufacturing of consumer electronics products. Hence, the implementation of bulk FinFET technology is still currently the most practical option even though SOI would provide a much better short-channel performance.

Recently, a new figure of merit (FoM),  $\Delta V_{\text{DIBLSS}}/(I_{\text{d,sat}}/I_{\text{sd,leak}})$ , has been presented for the purpose of monitoring the performance of n-channel bulk FinFET devices [9]. Logic FoMs, such as drain-induced barrier lowering (DIBL), subthreshold swing (SS), saturation

drive current,  $I_{\text{d,sat}}$ , and source/drain (S/D) subthreshold off-state leakage current,  $I_{\text{sd,leak}}$ , are merged into a single parameter to represent the overall device performance. Among them,  $\Delta V_{\text{DIBL}}$  is defined as  $V_{\text{t,lin}} - V_{\text{t,sat}}$ , where  $V_{\text{t,lin}}$  is the linear threshold voltage, and  $V_{\text{t,sat}}$  is the saturation threshold voltage [10].  $\Delta V_{\text{SS}}$  is approximately the value of SS [9].  $\Delta V_{\text{DIBLSS}}$  is defined as  $\Delta V_{\text{DIBL}} + \Delta V_{\text{SS}}$ , representing the gate voltage ( $V_{\text{g}}$ ) domain covered by the combination of DIBL and SS.  $I_{\text{d,sat}}/I_{\text{sd,leak}}$  represents the transistor performance in transitioning between on and off states. As more analysis regarding this new FoM is done, more interesting facts are found.

In our previous work, we utilized this new FoM,  $\Delta V_{\text{DIBLSS}}/(I_{\text{d,sat}}/I_{\text{sd,leak}})$ , to characterize and compare the performance of n-channel bulk FinFET devices with and without the lightly-doped drain (LDD) implantation. The main purpose of this paper is to investigate in more detail the fundamental concepts of  $\Delta V_{\text{DIBLSS}}/(I_{\text{on}}/I_{\text{off}})$ , where

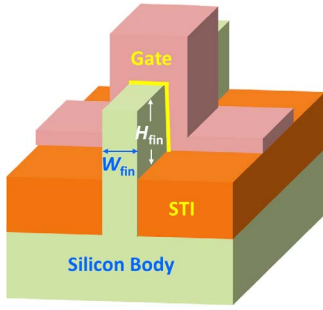


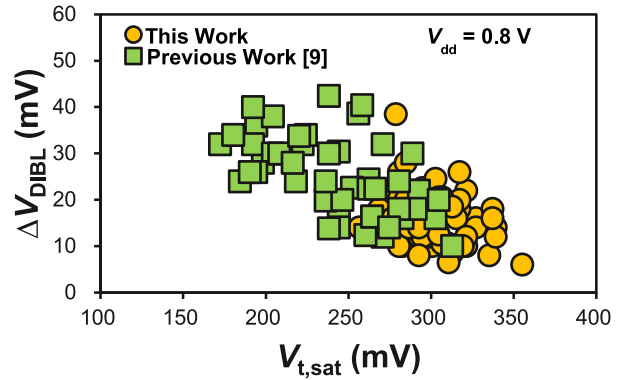
FIGURE 1. Bulk FinFET in this work.

$I_{\text{d,sat}}/I_{\text{sd,leak}}$  is replaced with  $I_{\text{on}}/I_{\text{off}}$  for simplicity. It should be noted that by changing the term  $I_{\text{sd,leak}}$  into  $I_{\text{off}}$ , other components of the leakage current such as gate leakage, band-to-band tunneling, and gate-induced drain leakage (GIDL) are also covered [11]. However, since the  $I_{\text{off}}$  of the proposed device in this work is sufficiently small ( $7 \times 10^{-13}$  A) and is dominated by the subthreshold leakage current, these leakage currents can be ignored in our computation of  $\Delta V_{\text{DIBLSS}}/(I_{\text{on}}/I_{\text{off}})$ . Such low leakage current is attributed to the FinFET structure and the high- $\kappa$  metal-gate process [1], [12]. Our findings show that the  $\Delta V_{\text{DIBLSS}}/(I_{\text{on}}/I_{\text{off}})$  parameter is a key index for reporting the device immunity to SCEs in bulk FinFETs. In general, this new FoM can be used for reporting the device immunity to SCEs in any metal-oxide-semiconductor (MOS) FETs (MOSFETs)-based devices. Detailed discussion and analysis of  $\Delta V_{\text{DIBLSS}}/(I_{\text{on}}/I_{\text{off}})$  are presented.

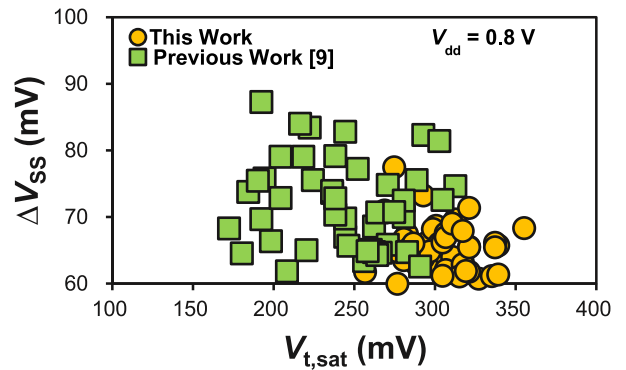
## II. DEVICE FABRICATION

A silicon starting material was used for manufacturing FinFET devices with physical gate lengths between 16 nm and 20 nm. The major processes are described as follows. After p-well implantation (BF:  $2.5 \times 10^{19} \text{ cm}^{-3} - 5 \times 10^{19} \text{ cm}^{-3}$ ), the fin structure was formed. Fin widths were between 8.2 nm and 9.1 nm, and fin heights were between 40.1 nm and 42.3 nm. Definition of gate length and dry etching were then carried out. LDD implantation was absent in this work. Next, the sacrificial nitride layers were deposited on the silicon surface, followed by lithography and etching processes. The selective epitaxial growth of in-situ phosphorus-doped silicon was performed. The total oxide spacer thicknesses were between 4.2 nm and 4.4 nm. Rapid thermal processing was used for activating implanted dopants. Subsequent processes took place using standard high- $\kappa$  complementary MOS (CMOS) technology. The gate dielectric thicknesses were between 1.8 nm and 2 nm. A schematic view of the proposed FinFET is shown in Fig. 1. The main structural parameters are shown.

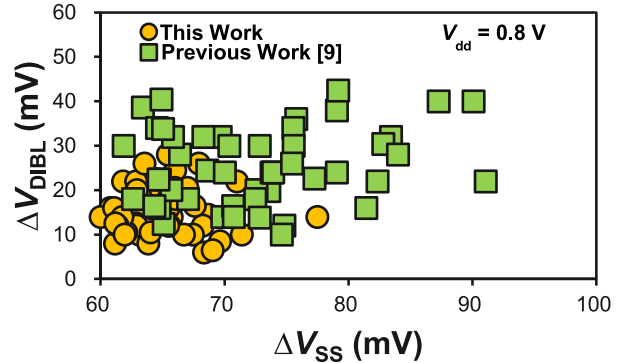
The previous work, presented in [9], is used for comparison with the proposed device in terms of electrical parameters such as  $V_{\text{t,sat}}$ ,  $\Delta V_{\text{DIBL}}$ ,  $\Delta V_{\text{SS}}$ ,  $I_{\text{on}}/I_{\text{off}}$ , and  $\Delta V_{\text{DIBLSS}}/(I_{\text{on}}/I_{\text{off}})$ . Furthermore, the influence of  $V_{\text{t,sat}}$  on



(a)



(b)



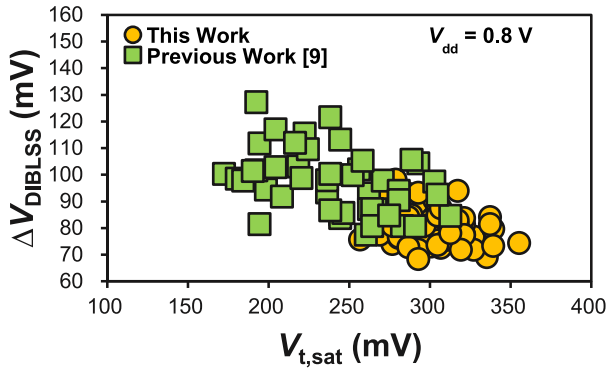
(c)

FIGURE 2. The (a)  $\Delta V_{\text{DIBL}}$  and (b)  $\Delta V_{\text{SS}}$  as a function of  $V_{\text{t,sat}}$  in n-channel bulk FinFETs without lightly-doped regions. (c) The  $\Delta V_{\text{DIBL}}$  as a function of  $\Delta V_{\text{SS}}$  in n-channel bulk FinFETs without lightly-doped regions. Small  $\Delta V_{\text{DIBLSS}} (= \Delta V_{\text{DIBL}} + \Delta V_{\text{SS}})$  is preferred, implying that the suppression of SCEs is observed. In addition, it is noted that the proposed device behaves better than the device from the previous work [9].

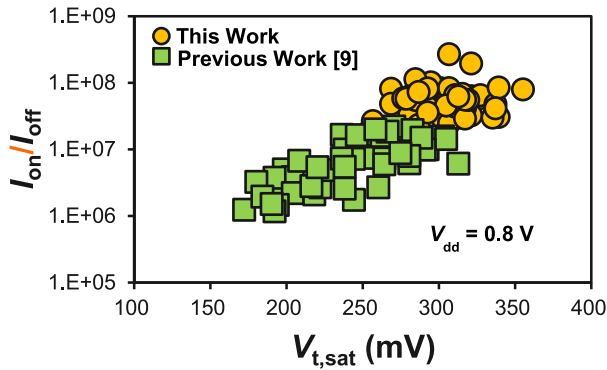
$\Delta V_{\text{DIBLSS}}/(I_{\text{on}}/I_{\text{off}})$  in bulk FinFETs is investigated under a given  $V_{\text{t,sat}}$  range.

## III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

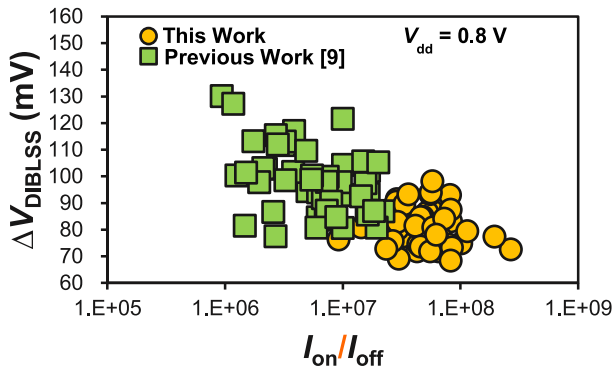
First, we investigate the influence of  $V_{\text{t,sat}}$  on the device's  $\Delta V_{\text{DIBL}}$  and  $\Delta V_{\text{SS}}$  characteristics (Fig. 2(a) and Fig. 2(b)). Parameters are defined as follow:  $\Delta V_{\text{DIBL}} = \text{DIBL} \times (V_{\text{dd}} - V_{\text{d,low}})$  and  $\Delta V_{\text{SS}} \approx \text{SS} \times \Delta I_{\text{d}}$  [9]. Results show that when



(a)



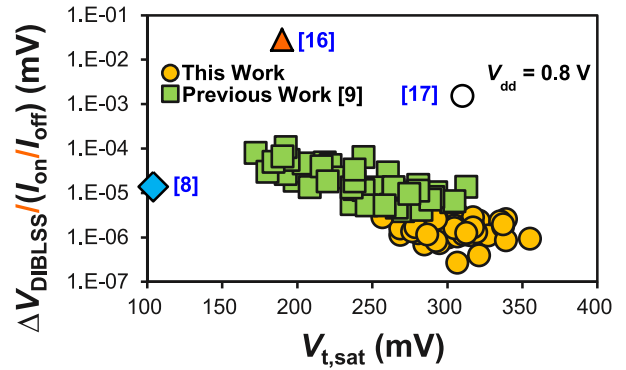
(b)



(c)

**FIGURE 3.** The (a)  $\Delta V_{\text{DIBLSS}}$  and (b)  $I_{\text{on}}/I_{\text{off}}$  as a function of  $V_{t,\text{sat}}$  in n-channel bulk FinFETs without lightly-doped regions. (c) The  $\Delta V_{\text{DIBLSS}}$  as a function of  $I_{\text{on}}/I_{\text{off}}$  in n-channel bulk FinFETs without lightly-doped regions. Smaller value of  $\Delta V_{\text{DIBLSS}}$  results in larger transistor on/off current ratio, which means a low-risk of SCEs in bulk silicon FinFETs.

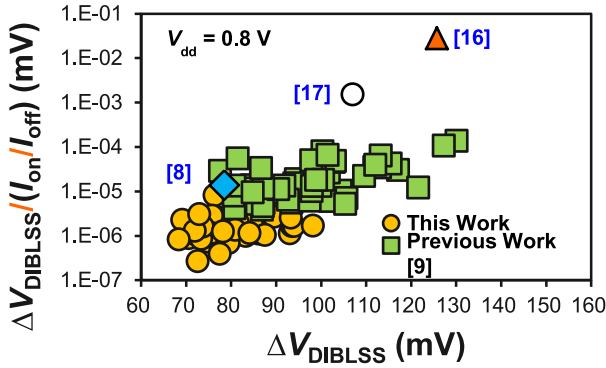
the  $V_{t,\text{sat}}$  is decreased further, both the  $\Delta V_{\text{DIBL}}$  and the  $\Delta V_{\text{SS}}$  become larger. This is attributed to the fact that the SCEs strongly influence the device performance in bulk FinFETs. We also observe that the  $V_{t,\text{sat}}$  has little impact on the  $\Delta V_{\text{SS}}$  characteristics. Under the same  $V_{t,\text{sat}}$  condition, the proposed device has smaller values of  $\Delta V_{\text{DIBL}}$  and  $\Delta V_{\text{SS}}$  in comparison with that in the previous work [9] because optimized process conditions were implemented. Fig. 2(c) shows  $\Delta V_{\text{DIBL}}$  as a function of  $\Delta V_{\text{SS}}$  in n-channel bulk FinFETs



**FIGURE 4.** The  $\Delta V_{\text{DIBLSS}}/(I_{\text{on}}/I_{\text{off}})$  as a function of  $V_{t,\text{sat}}$  in n-channel bulk FinFETs without lightly-doped regions. The  $\Delta V_{\text{DIBLSS}}/(I_{\text{on}}/I_{\text{off}})$  parameter exhibits a strong  $V_{t,\text{sat}}$  dependence.

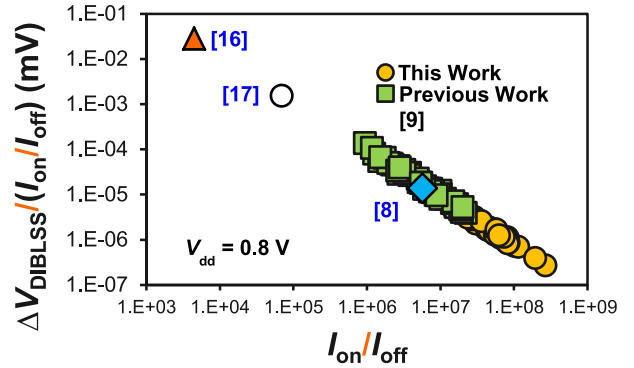
without lightly-doped regions. It is clear that smaller  $\Delta V_{\text{DIBL}}$  corresponds to smaller  $\Delta V_{\text{SS}}$ .  $\Delta V_{\text{DIBL}}$  of 30 mV and  $\Delta V_{\text{SS}}$  of 70 mV are desirable in a nanoscale device. This implies that the on and off states of a nanoscale device are almost completely controlled by the gate. The value of  $\Delta V_{\text{DIBLSS}}$  is the sum of  $\Delta V_{\text{DIBL}}$  and  $\Delta V_{\text{SS}}$ . Smaller value of  $\Delta V_{\text{DIBLSS}}$  in a nanoscale device assures that smaller DIBL and steeper SS values are achieved simultaneously, under which condition,  $I_{\text{off}}$  is not significantly affected by the DIBL effect and SS [13].

$\Delta V_{\text{DIBLSS}}$  is affected by the  $V_{t,\text{sat}}$  due to the contribution of DIBL and SS (Fig. 3(a)).  $\Delta V_{\text{DIBLSS}}$  of 100 mV is used to monitor and compare the characteristics of bulk FinFETs. Hence, the smaller values of  $\Delta V_{\text{DIBL}}$  and  $\Delta V_{\text{SS}}$  are simultaneously obtained. It is also interesting to note that  $I_{\text{on}}/I_{\text{off}}$  increases with increasing  $V_{t,\text{sat}}$  (Fig. 3(b)). An  $I_{\text{on}}/I_{\text{off}}$  of  $1 \times 10^6$  indicates that the  $V_{\text{g}}$  has much more control over the operation of the MOSFET than the drain voltage,  $V_{\text{d}}$ . The relatively flat trend of  $\Delta V_{\text{DIBLSS}}$  (and  $I_{\text{on}}/I_{\text{off}}$ ) vs.  $V_{t,\text{sat}}$  is a result of the reduction of SCEs in this work. According to [4], [9], [10], and [14], when the charge sharing from the S/D to the channel is suppressed, a higher  $V_{t,\text{sat}}$ , which approaches the value of  $V_{t,\text{lin}}$ , can be obtained. Therefore, a negligible trend of  $\Delta V_{\text{DIBLSS}}$  (and  $I_{\text{on}}/I_{\text{off}}$ ) vs.  $V_{t,\text{sat}}$  can be observed. We aim to minimize the value of  $\Delta V_{\text{DIBLSS}}/(I_{\text{on}}/I_{\text{off}})$  and obtain a relatively flat trend of  $\Delta V_{\text{DIBLSS}}/(I_{\text{on}}/I_{\text{off}})$  vs.  $V_{t,\text{sat}}$ . Such case indicates better short-channel performance. To further analyze the role of  $\Delta V_{\text{DIBLSS}}$  in bulk silicon FinFETs, the  $\Delta V_{\text{DIBLSS}}$  as a function of  $I_{\text{on}}/I_{\text{off}}$  is shown in Fig. 3(c). As seen in this figure, small  $\Delta V_{\text{DIBLSS}}$  is almost always linked with large  $I_{\text{on}}/I_{\text{off}}$ . This again proves that the improvement of SCEs in bulk silicon FinFETs reduces the sensitivity of  $I_{\text{off}}$  to the DIBL effect and SS. In other words, a potential barrier between the source and the channel region is not significantly decreased when the  $V_{\text{d}}$  is high (0.8 V) [10], [14]. Small DIBL leads to small off-state leakage current. Steep SS results in good on/off switching performance. Hence, the value of  $\Delta V_{\text{DIBLSS}}$  can be used to evaluate the overall performance of n-channel bulk FinFET devices.



**FIGURE 5.** The  $\Delta V_{DIBLSS}/(I_{on}/I_{off})$  as a function of  $\Delta V_{DIBLSS}$  in n-channel bulk FinFETs without lightly-doped regions. It is observed that when  $\Delta V_{DIBLSS}$  is smaller than 100 mV, the  $\Delta V_{DIBLSS}/(I_{on}/I_{off})$  parameter value becomes significant smaller than  $1 \times 10^{-4}$  mV. Hence, the device performance is quantified by  $\Delta V_{DIBLSS}/(I_{on}/I_{off})$ . Smaller  $\Delta V_{DIBLSS}/(I_{on}/I_{off})$  means stronger immunity to SCEs.

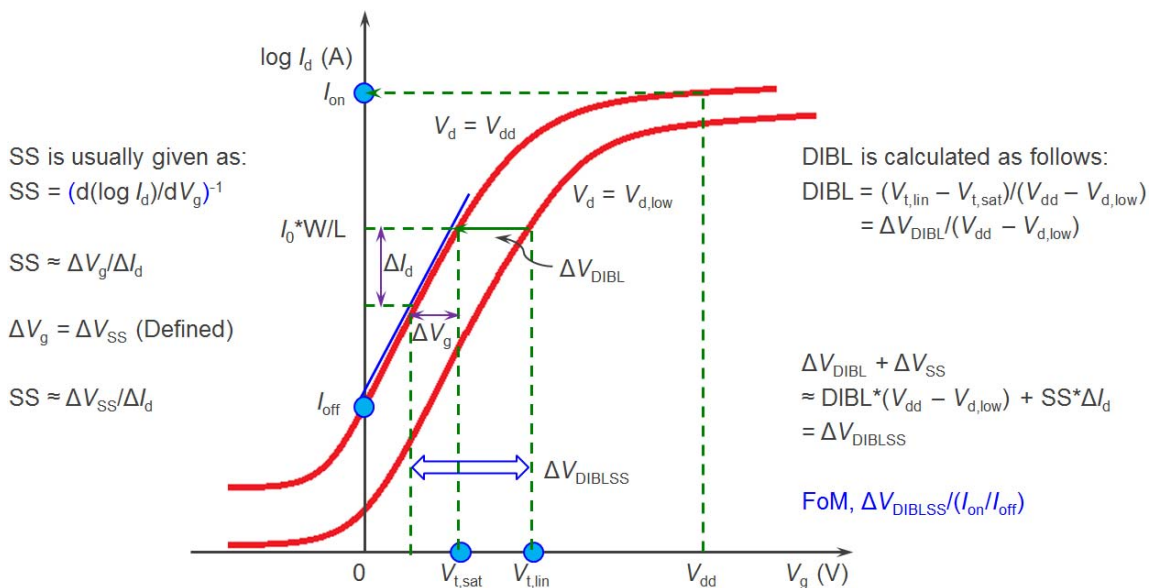
The measured values of  $\Delta V_{DIBLSS}/(I_{on}/I_{off})$  for n-channel bulk FinFETs without lightly-doped regions as a function of  $V_{t,sat}$  are shown in Fig. 4. One important point to note is that  $\Delta V_{DIBLSS}/(I_{on}/I_{off})$  exhibits a strong  $V_{t,sat}$  dependence.  $\Delta V_{DIBLSS}/(I_{on}/I_{off})$  decreases as  $V_{t,sat}$  increases. This is due to the fact that SCEs occur in bulk FinFETs. This proves the usefulness of the  $\Delta V_{DIBLSS}/(I_{on}/I_{off})$  parameter in analyzing SCEs for bulk FinFETs. Another important point is that the proposed device has smaller  $\Delta V_{DIBLSS}/(I_{on}/I_{off})$  than that in our previous work. As explained in Fig. 2, smaller  $\Delta V_{DIBLSS}$  and larger  $I_{on}/I_{off}$  result in better device performance. Next, the  $\Delta V_{DIBLSS}/(I_{on}/I_{off})$  as a function of  $\Delta V_{DIBLSS}$  is investigated. It is demonstrated in Fig. 5 that the  $\Delta V_{DIBLSS}/(I_{on}/I_{off})$  decreases as the  $\Delta V_{DIBLSS}$  decreases. At the same time, the  $\Delta V_{DIBLSS}/(I_{on}/I_{off})$  decreases as the  $I_{on}/I_{off}$  increases, as



**FIGURE 6.** The  $\Delta V_{DIBLSS}/(I_{on}/I_{off})$  as a function of  $I_{on}/I_{off}$  in n-channel bulk FinFETs without lightly-doped regions. An  $I_{on}/I_{off}$  of larger than  $1 \times 10^6$  is achieved, eventually resulting in the  $\Delta V_{DIBLSS}/(I_{on}/I_{off})$  parameter value smaller than  $1 \times 10^{-4}$  mV. Smaller  $\Delta V_{DIBLSS}/(I_{on}/I_{off})$  also means better switching performance.

shown in Fig. 6. When the value of  $\Delta V_{DIBLSS}/(I_{on}/I_{off})$  is around  $1 \times 10^{-4}$  mV, the values of  $\Delta V_{DIBLSS}$  and  $I_{on}/I_{off}$  are 100 mV and  $1 \times 10^6$ , respectively. This behavior is due to the interrelated effects of  $\Delta V_{DIBL}$  and  $\Delta V_{SS}$  in a nanoscale device. Smaller  $\Delta V_{DIBLSS}$ , which means reduced electric field in the drain region of a MOS transistor, indicates better on/off characteristics. Thus,  $\Delta V_{DIBLSS}/(I_{on}/I_{off})$  becomes a key device parameter in evaluating the performance of n-channel bulk FinFET devices.

Some state-of-the-art devices in [8], [16], and [17] are used for comparison with the proposed device. These are shown in Fig. 4–6. Although it is difficult to compare apples to apples due to the differences in fabrication conditions, we observe a consistent trend: devices with reduced DIBL and SS eventually result in smaller  $\Delta V_{DIBLSS}/(I_{on}/I_{off})$ .



**FIGURE 7.** A physical explanation of  $\Delta V_{DIBLSS}/(I_{on}/I_{off})$ . Logic FoMs, such as DIBL, SS,  $I_{on}$ ,  $I_{off}$ , are merged into a single parameter to analyze the overall device performance. Smaller  $\Delta V_{DIBLSS}/(I_{on}/I_{off})$  is desirable implying a superior immunity to SCEs.  $I_0$  is the  $I_d$  used for defining the  $V_t$  [15].

The physical meaning of  $\Delta V_{\text{DIBLSS}}/(I_{\text{on}}/I_{\text{off}})$  is summarized by redrawing the figure in [9] (Fig. 7).  $\Delta V_{\text{DIBLSS}}/(I_{\text{on}}/I_{\text{off}})$  contains information on the important performance parameters: The DIBL effect and SS in the  $x$ -axis of the  $I_d$ - $V_g$  curve and the transistor on/off current ratio in the  $y$ -axis of the  $I_d$ - $V_g$  curve.  $\Delta V_{\text{DIBLSS}}$  refers to the  $V_g$  domain covered by the combination of DIBL and SS as depicted by the graph in Fig. 7.  $I_{\text{on}}/I_{\text{off}}$  refers to the on/off transition performance. Small  $\Delta V_{\text{DIBL}}$  results in small leakage current, increasing the separation between  $I_{\text{off}}$  and  $I_{\text{on}}$ . Steep SS exhibits fast on/off transition performance, which also increases  $I_{\text{on}}/I_{\text{off}}$ . Thus,  $\Delta V_{\text{DIBL}}$  and  $\Delta V_{\text{SS}}$  are interrelated. As a result, small  $\Delta V_{\text{DIBLSS}}/(I_{\text{on}}/I_{\text{off}})$  is a good indication that the SCEs are under control.

In general, the  $\Delta V_{\text{DIBLSS}}/(I_{\text{on}}/I_{\text{off}})$  parameter can also be utilized for special technologies such as of III-V MOSFETs and tunnel FETs (TFETs) [18]–[20]. These topics are beyond the scope of this paper. However, these technologies are nevertheless short-channel devices, so the  $\Delta V_{\text{DIBLSS}}/(I_{\text{on}}/I_{\text{off}})$  parameter can still be useful. Note that in a high-performance device, the  $\Delta V_{\text{DIBLSS}}/(I_{\text{on}}/I_{\text{off}})$  parameter should still always be smaller than  $1 \times 10^{-4}$  mV because it means that small  $\Delta V_{\text{DIBLSS}}$  and large  $I_{\text{on}}/I_{\text{off}}$  are being simultaneously obtained.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

We have demonstrated experimentally that the  $\Delta V_{\text{DIBLSS}}/(I_{\text{on}}/I_{\text{off}})$  parameter can be used to evaluate the performance of n-channel bulk FinFET devices. The numerator corresponds to DIBL and SS, and the denominator indicates how well a nanoscale device performs under switching operation. Small  $\Delta V_{\text{DIBLSS}}$  and large  $I_{\text{on}}/I_{\text{off}}$  are desirable for a high-performance FinFET device. Thus, the smaller the value of  $\Delta V_{\text{DIBLSS}}/(I_{\text{on}}/I_{\text{off}})$ , the better the performance of a nanoscale device. Furthermore, for a given  $V_{t,\text{sat}}$ , the proposed device has better electrical characteristics compared to our previous work, including smaller  $\Delta V_{\text{DIBLSS}}$  ( $<100$  mV) and larger  $I_{\text{on}}/I_{\text{off}}$  ( $>1 \times 10^6$ ).

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