# Social Design Thinking: an Introduction

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Abstract

*In today's digital age, there are many complicated social issues that need to be solved, and design thinking is certainly the most effective approach. This essay aims to elucidate the notion of design thinking, which is influenced by the demands of modern society. The major objective of design thinking is to steer clear of ideal answers and develop the best possible solutions for society. Not necessarily what is beneficial for society will be ideal. Empathy is therefore a necessary component of every social design thought process. The core building blocks of social design thinking are the five stages of information gathering, problem analysis, concept generation, prototype modeling, and critical evaluation. In order to offer the greatest potential answers, empathy must be employed at every stage. Because the main goal of social design thinking is to create sustainable, human-centered solutions.*

**Keywords**: *Social Design Thinking, Society, Empathy*

## INTRODUCTION

The social sciences are undergoing substantial changes right now, with numerous investigations and studies being carried out to address the many social issues that society is currently facing. Design thinking, a thinking process that focuses on original and successful solutions to social problems, is one of the ideas currently being developed in the social sciences.

The relationship between the growth of social science and the design thinking notion is that as social science advances, design thinking as a concept becomes more qualified and successful in resolving social issues. This idea offers a practical and cutting-edge way to address social issues and contribute to the creation of a better society. Design thinking is therefore crucial to the advancement of social science and can provide optimal solutions to pressing problems in society.

In today's digital age, there are many complicated social issues that need to be solved, and design thinking is certainly the most effective approach. By utilizing design thinking, it is possible to view the issues facing modern society from several angles and come up with better solutions. Design thinking also makes ensuring that the solutions are implemented successfully enough to establish the ultimate choice. Design thinking is therefore the most effective approach for dealing

with the issues in today's digital society, while it isn't always in perfect performance.

It is intended that this essay will help to clarify the idea of design thinking, which is informed by the needs of contemporary society.

**LITERATURE REVIEW**

Design thinking has been used in several sectors over the past five years. Applyable renewable energy concepts can be described using a design thinking methodology based on actual experiences and community requirements (Törnroth et al., 2022). The development and formalization of design thinking has been applied in the military as a potential tool for addressing and resolving complex problems and fostering innovation at the operational level of conflict (Wrigley et al., 2021).

In the world of entrepreneurship, design thinking is frequently applied. On the one hand, actual data and theoretical explanations of how design thinking contributes to entrepreneurial innovation and the development of new businesses are provided (Klenner et al., 2022). Yet, despite having little experience, technical competence, or time, design thinking can help entrepreneurs improve their information processing and perspective (Vallis & Redmond, 2021).

Design thinking is crucial to the growth of its stakeholders in the field of education. Education can promote epistemic justice and practice in society using a perspective and strategy of cognitive empathy (mind) that is dominant and balanced with affective (heart) and conative (action) empathy (Jamal et al., 2021). With particular normative interpretations of effective behaviors, the fundamental principles and norms embedded in design thinking can provide well-designed entrepreneurial methods (Klenner et al., 2022). Design thinking has many elements, including empathy, which contribute to its great applicability in education (Dym et al., 2006). Students are demonstrably more engaged, cooperative, and creative when employing innovative teaching techniques than when using conventional ones (Sándorová et al., 2020).

Moreover, social design thinking contributes to the growth of critical thinking. Design thinking can be adjusted to more explicitly include critical thinking, and it has the potential to assist and supplement conventional critical thinking techniques (Ericson, 2022). Such critical thinking can create workgroups that devise creative solutions to the challenges they face and actively collaborate to find them (Latorre-Cosculluela et al., 2020).

## METHOD

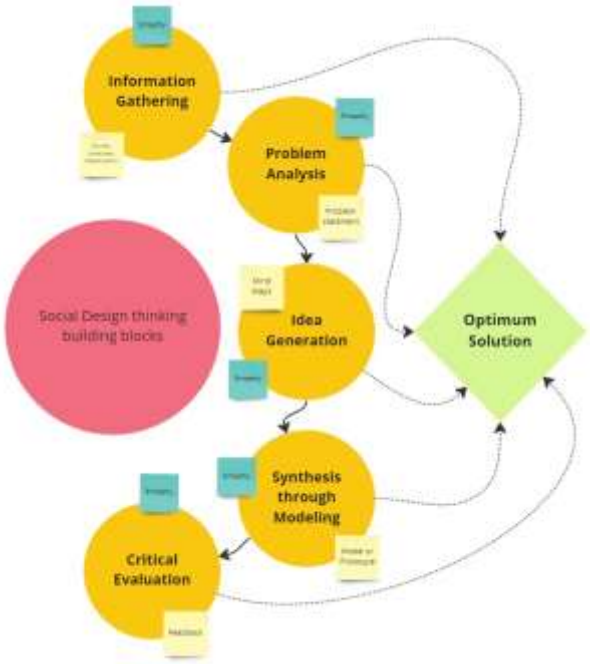
A literature review is used in this article to explain the fundamentals of social design thinking. A literature review is the result of reading about a particular topic and is summarized in a descriptive format. Of course, the authors chose international journals published within the last 5 years when conducting a literature review. This is done to ensure the review's quality and the relevance of topics and issues related to social design thinking in the digital era.

## RESULT AND FINDING

To find the best answers to the problems at hand, social design thinking involves a process of creative and analytical thought. In order for the solutions to be truly appropriate for the needs and the current circumstances, this notion highlights the significance of having a thorough awareness of the problem and the environment in which it originates. Social design thinking is frequently applied in practice across numerous industries, including business, technology, healthcare, and many more. Design thinking can be applied to the social sector to solve problems like poverty, discrimination, conflict, and many more.

The development of social science and the concept of design thinking are linked in the sense that as social science advances, the concept of design thinking becomes more qualified and effective in overcoming social problems. This concept offers an effective and innovative methodology for addressing social issues and shaping a better society. As a result, the concept of social design thinking is critical to the advancement of social science and can provide optimal solutions to existing social problems.

Figure 1: Social Design Thinking Building Blocks




Social design Thinking is a problem-solving methodology that consists of five stages: gathering information, analyzing problems, generating an idea, synthesis-prototype, and evaluation. These five stages are commonly known as the fundamental building blocks of design thinking. The first stage is gathering information, which is critical because the information gathered will be used as a foundation for problem-solving. Design Thinking information collection techniques range from observation to interviews, surveys, and data analysis.

On the one hand, observation is a method of gathering information by directly seeing and observing a situation or condition. Observations can be made by observing individuals' behavior or interactions, the environment, or the products used. Meanwhile, an interview is a technique for gathering information by directly asking individuals associated with the problem to be solved. Surveys, on the other hand, are methods of gathering information by sending out a large number of questions to a select group of people. Finally, data analysis is a technique for gathering information by analyzing existing data such as transaction data, customer data, or other data relevant to the problem at hand. The combination of several information-gathering techniques can aid in the collection of more comprehensive and accurate data as a foundation for problem-solving.

The second crucial step in the social design thinking process, problem analysis, tries to recognize and comprehend the issue that must be resolved. This step is crucial because, without a thorough examination of the problem, the solution will not be appropriate. To acquire data and assess issues at this stage, social design theorists will also employ a variety of methodologies like observation, interviews, and surveys.

The outcomes of the problem analysis will serve as the foundation for formulating a more precise definition of the issue and identifying the objectives to be met during the problem-solving procedure. The context of the problem, its essential components, and the roles of the people or groups involved in it can all be understood with the use of problem analysis. An accurate and thorough study of the problem will help choose the best solution and guarantee that the solution is efficient and in line with the desired outcomes.

Idea generation is critical in the Design Thinking process because it aids in the discovery of innovative and creative solutions. The number of ideas generated during this stage aids in determining the best solution to the problem and ensures that the solution is effective and meets the goals. Idea generation also facilitates discussion and collaboration among design thinkers, reduces bureaucracy and speeds up the decision-making process, and ensures that the solutions found are innovative and creative.

In social design thinking process, the information gathered is processed and synthesized into useful and creative issue solutions through the use of synthesis and prototyping. The information gathered in the previous stage is processed in the synthesis stage in order to look for patterns and combinations of various types of information. Making visuals or representations of the desired solution is the focus of the prototype stage. This illustration can take the form of a rough drawing, a schematic, or a mockup of the desired outcome.

The representation aids in better picturing and comprehending the solution as well as, if necessary, in iterating and enhancing it. In the Design Thinking process, synthesis and modeling are crucial since they aid in identifying the best solution to the issue at hand and guarantee that it is practical and in line with the desired outcomes.

The final stage of the Design Thinking process is evaluation, which aims to assess and evaluate the solutions that have been developed. This stage is critical because it ensures that the solutions found are appropriate for the actual problems and meet the objectives. Design thinkers will use various techniques such as trials and testing at this stage to determine whether the solution works well and meets the desired standards. The evaluation results will help determine whether the solution is ready to move on to the next stage or if it needs to be improved. Evaluation also ensures that the solution fits the actual problem and meets the desired outcomes. The evaluation stage also aids in ensuring that the solution meets quality standards and reduces the risk of implementation errors or failures. Proper evaluation will ensure that the solution discovered is the best and most effective way to solve the problem.

## DISCUSSION

Design Thinking's main goal is to create optimal solutions for society while avoiding ideal solutions. Not always something ideal that will work best for society. As a result, empathy is required in every social design thinking process.

At the beginning stages, the principles of social design thinking and empathy will be developed, leading to observations that are more in line with community requirements. The effectiveness of empathy when conducting interviews and observations will make the findings of the study of the current problem more precise. The researcher must adopt the perspective of the community during the problem analysis phase. The conclusion of design thinking will always be community-focused and sustainable if empathy is always applied at every phase.

## CONCLUSION

The five stages of design thinking—information collecting, problem analysis, idea development, prototype modeling, and critical evaluation—are its foundation. Empathy must be used at every stage to provide the best possible solutions for society. Because creating sustainable, human-centered solutions is social design thinking's primary objective.

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