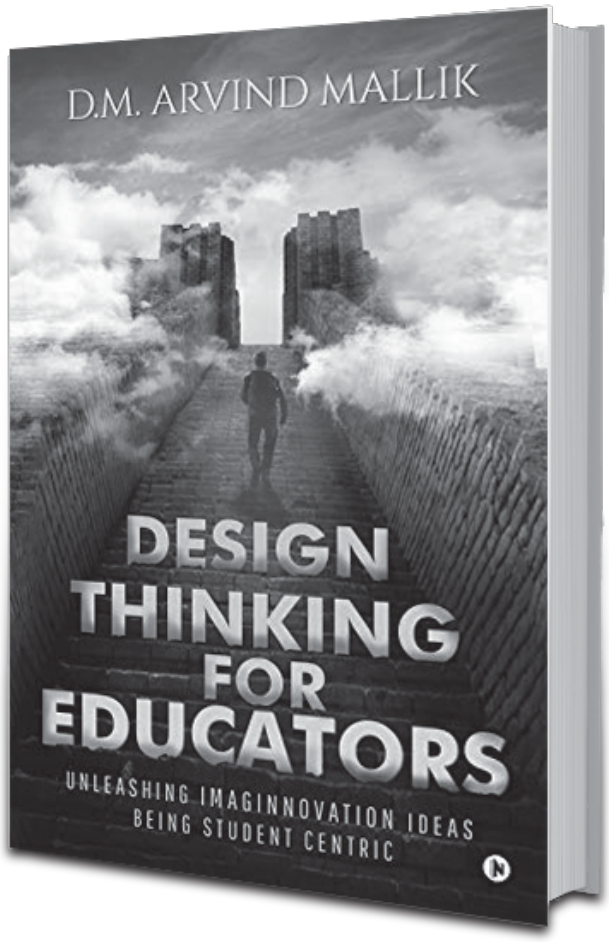
Book Review

Design thinking for educators

by D M Arvind Mallik



Notion Press Media Pvt. Ltd.,
First impression, **Pages:** 137, **Price:** INR 199/-
ISBN-10: 9351109925
ISBN : 978-1-64650-692-7

About the Author

D M Arvind Mallik is the author of this book, he is an Eduventor, with over 10 years' experience in the education sector and a TEDx speaker. He has successfully introduced world-class teaching methods like flipped classroom and holds several records. Recently his experiential learning on introducing virtual reality into academics for the first time entered the Limca Book of Records – 2019. This is the first impression of the book Design thinking for educators, published in 2019.

Appreciation and Critique

The book is kind of a guide for educators (teachers/professors/tutors) at all levels to understand, appreciate and apply the Design Thinking philosophy, to develop innovative solutions, to various kinds of problems/issues that they are facing in the teaching, learning, evaluation, research, mentoring and other functions as an educator.

Design Thinking is a novel approach developed by IDEO, a design and consulting firm of US to develop solutions to all kinds of problems by following a simple process of Empathy – Ideation – Prototyping – Testing and educational problems is not an exception.

Author, in a very convincing manner explained how the Design Thinking philosophy can be applied by educators, by explaining the basics about the philosophy in part A and the application of the same in part B

Part A which is further divided into four chapters clearly articulate on the following;

1. The challenges involved in education, especially in the current context, where-in the generation Z characterized by being extremely tech savvy with a very low attention span and would like to multitask, prefer their own learning methods and decide on;
   - What they want to learn
   - When they want to learn
   - Why they want to learn and
   - From whom they want to learn.
2. The basic theory and concepts involved like;
   - Difference between creativity and innovation
   - Different modes of thinking including; Convergent, Divergent, Lateral, Analytical, Intuitive and Design thinking
   - Different types of innovations including; Incremental, Radical, Open, Closed and Disruptive Innovations

With relevant examples and conceptual frameworks.

3. Design Thinking framework which is basically a problem-solving process of empathy, discovery, ideation and experimentation, employing various design-based techniques to gain insight and yield innovative solutions for any problem/challenge were explained with examples. Essential features of Design Thinking were illustrated with examples like;
   - Dynamic and constructive process that is iterative in nature
   - Action orientation where-in cross disciplinary learning happens by doing
   - Embracing unconventional thinking and changes throughout
   - Promoting empathy
   - Integrating foresight and anticipatory imagination into the design process
4. Keeping in mind the 21st century learner, author explain the student centric Design Thinking Model which has four stages and substages, i.e.
   - SEEK - Define and Empathy
   - IMAGINE - Research and Select
   - PROTOTYPE - Test and Evaluate
   - SHARE - Learn and Collaborate

In Part B author explain the four stages of Design Thinking, i.e. Seek, Imagine, Prototype and Share in next four chapters as articulated below;

1. SEEK: Engaging, observing and listening with the students to empathize with them which helps in defining the problem that an educator is facing which he/she is trying to solve.
2. IMAGINE: Once the problem is defined, educator has to do the research (primary and secondary) and use all different techniques like brainstorming to figure out an idea/approach to solve a given problem. It can be using innovative teaching and learning methodologies like;
   - Flipped classroom
   - Hybrid and Blended Learning
   - Using MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses)
   - Mobile Learning, Simulations and Gamifications
   - Using ICT, Multimedia and Open educational resources
   - Mind Mapping, Project Based Learning and Experiential Learning
   - Peer Tutoring and Work Integrated Learning
   - Case based teaching (Text/Multimedia/Pod cases)
   - Self-Learning and Activity based Learning
   - Roleplay, Drama and Seminar

   In different combinations by an educator.
3. PROTOTYPE: The ways and means to test and evaluate proposed solutions. Author explained the P-K-V cycle (Plan-Know-Verify cycle) and PRATTI (Predicting Revolutionary Authentic Technique for Testing Ideas) model: the tools to test and validate the proposed solution by the educator.
4. SHARE: The emphasis is on the learning from the entire exercise and collaborating with all the stakeholders involved including; Peers, Students, Government, Management and Parents.

In nut shell, the book is a must read for all the educators at all levels, as it unleashes creativity in implementing novel innovative teaching-learning-evaluating-researching-mentoring techniques which are students centric.

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