

Design Thinking for Startups: A Literature Review of Design Thinking Applications for Startup Success

Deepak Kumar^{*} and Abhinava Singh^{}**

*Department of Management, Sardar Vallabhbhai Global University
Ahmedabad, Gujarat, India*

Abstract: Design Thinking (DT) has evolved from a design-centric discipline into a widely adopted innovation and problem-solving approach across industries, including entrepreneurship and startup ecosystems. Startups have, also, transformed from linear, capital-intensive ventures into agile, experimentation-driven entities emphasizing user-centricity, rapid iteration, and scalable innovation. Barring a few exceptions, most of the studies in the Design Thinking and its application in start have been on building user insights, new product development, strategy, ideation, role of incubators and so on. There is a weak tie-up in the research done on role of Design Thinking for Startup success. The contribution of this paper is three-fold. Firstly, it examines the contribution and the limitations of the study done so far. Secondly, it examines the research done across the phases of the startup journey. And thirdly, the study examines the significance of dynamic capability for startup success. Based on this interpretation, we define the avenues for further research that can support the success of startups using the Design thinking approach.

Keywords: Design Thinking, Startups, Entrepreneurial Innovation, Startup Lifecycle, Success, Capability Framework

^{*} Research Scholar. ^{**} Director MBA.