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Abstract

Tackling poverty in Egypt is considered one of the most challenging issues, since this kind of complex problem is highly dynamic and cutting across different disciplines. A considerable body of literature has referred to traditional design thinking - conceived as 1st generation methods - as the first obstacle that failed to let designers to deal with such complex problem. Therefore, this research is an attempt to explore additional skills and methods that designers should learn to participate effectively with other organizations in tackling poverty in Egypt.

To accomplish study purpose, a case study is chosen to explore the problem under real circumstances. Approaching Real-world Problem, such as tackling poverty in Egypt, has led to choose Al-Darb Al-Ahmar Revitalization Project (DAR). It is one of Aga Khan Trust for Culture (AKTC) projects run in Egypt that dealing with complex reality. This project aims at providing a comprehensive strategy that helps poor people to structure their life in a sustainable way. One particular program has been chosen as an intervention point called 'Local Crafts development' and data is collected through different project's annual reports and through conducting expert interviews; using open-end questions to get more insight about project's different activities.

Three key results are presented in this study: Proposing a clear vision (theoretical foundation) that defined design role in development discourse to tackle poverty as one specific Real-world Problem (know-what), developing 'the operational framework' to guide processing the data; using different methods from different backgrounds where system thinking, scenario building and strategic planning and acting are important methodological components synthesized in this framework (know-how); finally, visualizing the proposed design thinking process for solving Real-world problems through the case study that ending up with a prototype for the solution in form of 'social business model' of design.

Answering study questions required applying a Mixed Methods approach. A dynamic mixed methods design is developed with regards to prioritizing the qualitative approach. Constructing 'the operational framework' required three sequential phases: Analysis > Projection > Synthesis. Each phase imposes different questions to be answered in the next

phase. The first phase (Analysis) aims at representing the actual situation with respect to its dynamic character using Vester's sensitivity model. The second phase (Projection) focuses on constructing 'context scenarios' following Schwartz's approach. The third phase (Synthesis) reviews the development of design innovative solution.

Keywords

Tackling poverty; system thinking; scenario building; strategic planning; mixed methods; design thinking process