

# Entrepreneurial Empathetic Management: A Design Thinking Conceptual Framework for Value Co-Creation within SMEs

**Ahmed Romouzy-Ali**

*BSc (Hons), MSc, PhD*

*Assistant Professor of Industrial Design Egypt-Japan University for Science & Technology  
Helwan University, Egypt*

## Abstract

Embedding Design Thinking within a divergent ecosystem that is not a design-based environment needs an overall surplus of awareness of Design and empathy in tandem with the innovative bold management among SMEs. While empathy is a key management skill, Empathetic management is defined as being able to distinguish and understand others' needs, as well as their feelings and thoughts.

This paper advances knowledge by exploring how leaders among SMEs innovate their business models to engage in empathetic management through Embedding Design Thinking. By suggesting a Design Thinking conceptual framework for Value Co-Creation, this paper provides new insights into developing new value (concepts, ideas, goods, and services) in collaboration with consultants and/or stakeholders (such as customers, suppliers, etc.) who bridge the micro and macro levels the business context. Also, it sheds light on the value of Design Thinking reflections on an entrepreneur's pioneering approaches and promotes cultivating successful creative entrepreneurship in a business context.

**Keywords:** Entrepreneurship; Empathetic Management; Design Thinking; Conceptual Framework; Value Co-Creation; SMEs