

Understanding Design
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Module – 07
Start of Section 2
Lecture – 38
Facilitating the reach of a traditional craft

Have you worked on something that you would like to share with us as an example of innovation by design?

Yes sure, let me tell you about a chair.

Chair again that is our favourite example.

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This was a stackable cane chair taken up as a class room project by a student who is our colleague now.

You mean Professor Kumaresan?

Yes.

Welcome, we were just talking about your chair.

This chair I designed in 2003 when I was student here and later this was taken up by Professor Chakravarthy for marketing and manufacturing.

Tell us about cane.

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Cane is a plant that grows a lot in north east.

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And there are many cane craftsmen who work in north east; however, if you make cane furniture in north east and transport to other cities the cost really goes up due to

transportation. This is why furniture shops in the big cities they bring both cane and the crafts men to their places and locally manufacture it.

But this was cause a lot of disruption in the life of the workers.

And ultimately it does not cut costs either.

So, what was your solution?

Our innovation was to make it most stackable like this. So, like this they can put 100 chairs in a container whereas, earlier they could only put 20 chairs.

5 times as many; obviously, this meant the transport cost was slashed and the crafts men could stain the own villages avoiding migration.

What is interesting here, is that the issue of transportation impacted the very design of the chair.

And what an absolution from the perspective of sustainability?

Of course, we did not do the obvious also, we did not straight away copy a standard, stackable, plastic furniture.

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We kept the visual appeal of cane intact here in this.

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We retained the weavings and all the details, cane details in this design.

The crafts persons could work from home; the manufacturer got better value, and the user got a better product which saves space in their homes and workplaces.

Also it was a great experience, I got a chance to travel to remote places and met a lot of interesting people.

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And right now my students are taking this project further and I have a class now, so, shall I take a leave?

Thank you so much for giving us your time.

Thank you.