Design Thinking Lab Activity-1 : Improving the College Canteen Experience

Objective:
To understand students' problems and design a user-centered solution using the **Design Thinking process**.

Activity Steps

Design Thinking Stage	Student Activity	Output
1. Observe a Real-Life Problem	Observe students using the college canteen and identify problems such as waiting time, seating, cleanliness, payment, or food availability.	Problem observations
2. Conduct User Interviews	Interview **3–5 students** about their canteen experience. Ask questions like: *What problems do you face? What would you like to improve?*	Interview notes
3. Prepare an Empathy Map	Organize findings into **Says, Thinks, Does, and Feels**.	Empathy Map
4. Develop a Persona	Create a representative user, e.g., **"Rahul – a 2nd-year student who has only 15 minutes for lunch."**	User Persona
5. Prepare User Journey Map	Map the user's experience from **entering the canteen → ordering → waiting → receiving food → payment → leaving**. Identify pain points.	Journey Map
6. Define the Problem	Write a clear **How Might We (HMW)** statement.	Example: *"How might we reduce students' waiting time in the college canteen?"*

🎯 Final Student Deliverable

Each team should submit **one A3 poster/PPT slide** containing:

Observation → Interview Findings → Empathy Map → Persona → User Journey Map → HMW Problem Statement

Example:

Example: Improving the College Canteen Experience

1. Observation of Real-Life Problem

Students observe the canteen for 15–20 minutes.

Observation	Finding
Long queue	Students wait 10–15 minutes
Limited seating	Seats are often occupied
Payment delay	Cash payment takes more time
Food availability	Popular items become unavailable
Crowding	Heavy crowd during lunch break

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2. User Interview

Interview **5 students**.

Question	Student 1	Student 2	Student 3	Student 4	Student 5
Main problem?	Queue	Seating	Queue	Payment	Queue
Waiting time?	15 min	10 min	20 min	12 min	15 min
Desired improvement?	Faster service	More seats	Online order	Digital payment	Token system

Interview Finding

3 out of 5 students identified long waiting time as their major problem.

Student Canteen Problems

Example interview findings from 5 students.

01234Long queueLimited seatingPayment delay

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3. Empathy Map (Says, Thinks, Does, FEELS)

Draw this on an A3 sheet:

SAYS 💬	THINKS 💭
"The queue is too long."	"I may be late for class."
"I don't have much time."	"There should be a faster way."

DOES 👣	FEELS ❤️
Waits in queue	Frustrated
Checks the time	Worried
Sometimes skips food	Unhappy

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4. Persona

👨‍🎓 Persona: Rahul

Age: 19
Year: II B.Tech
Goal: Have lunch quickly during the break
Problem: Spends 15–20 minutes waiting in the queue
Need: Faster ordering and payment

"I want to get my food within 5 minutes so that I can return to class on time."

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5. User Journey Map

Stage	Enter Canteen	Select Food	Order	Wait	Eat/Leave
Action	Enters	Selects item	Places order	Waits	Collects food
Feeling	🙂	🙂	😐	😞	🙂
Pain Point	Crowd	Limited information	Queue	**Long waiting**	—
Opportunity	—	Digital menu	Online ordering	**Token system**	—

🔴 Biggest Pain Point

Long waiting time during ordering.

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6. Final Problem Statement

Students should now write:

"Students need a faster and more convenient way to order and receive food because long queues during lunch breaks cause delays and frustration."