

Bringing Design into the Indian School Curriculum: Experiences & Insights from a Designers - Teachers Workshop

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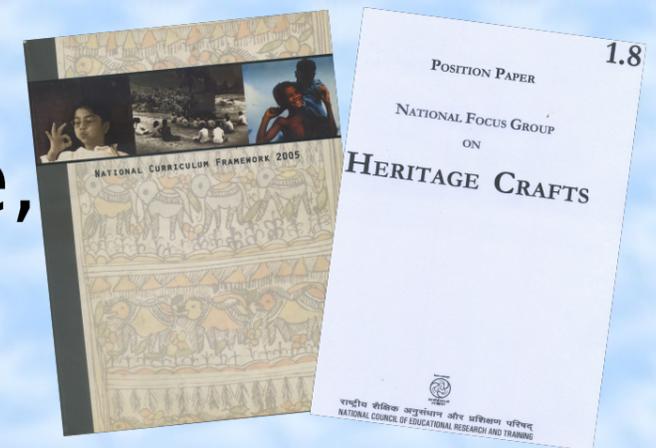
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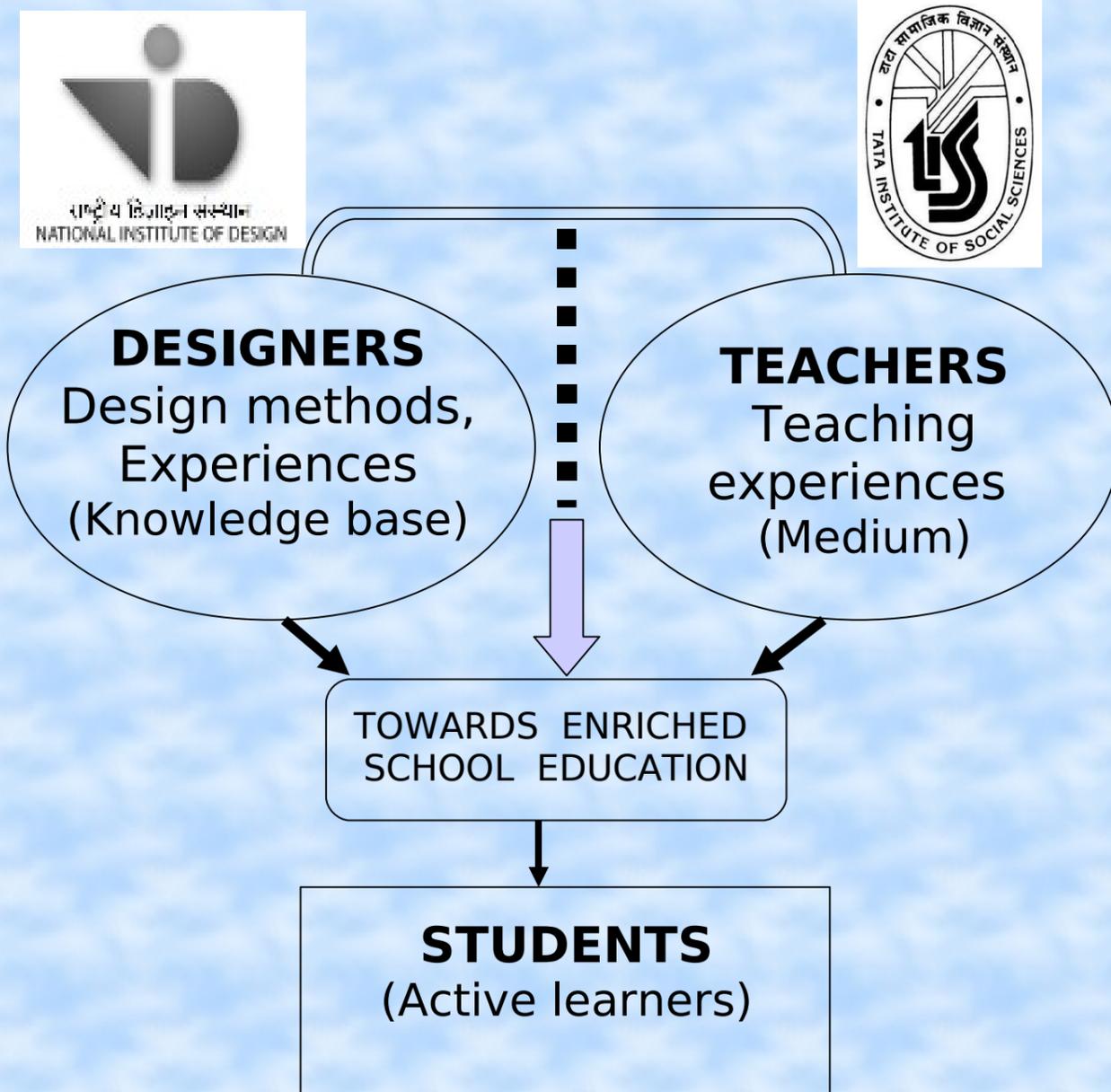
Introduction: Rich craft tradition



- India's rich tradition of craft & design is not reflected in school curricula
- Nai Talim: a bold education experiment that made crafts innovation the basis of school curriculum.
- Yet mainstream school education emphasizes literacy, numeracy, and literacy based academic knowledge.
- Recently, in NCF 2005, there has been an effort to revive the educational value of heritage crafts and 'practical knowledge' that they represent.
- There have been few attempts to explore, understand and operationalise this potential dimension in the Indian schools



Method: NID-TISS Workshop 22-25 November 2008



- **Design in Curriculum:** Creating a shared understanding of design in schools and teacher development curricula
- **A collaborative initiative:** National Institute of Design (NID), Ahmedabad, Researchers in education and 8 school teachers pursuing MA in Elementary Education course at Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS)
- Interaction through activities, discussion and critical reflection

Data: Activities and discussions in focus

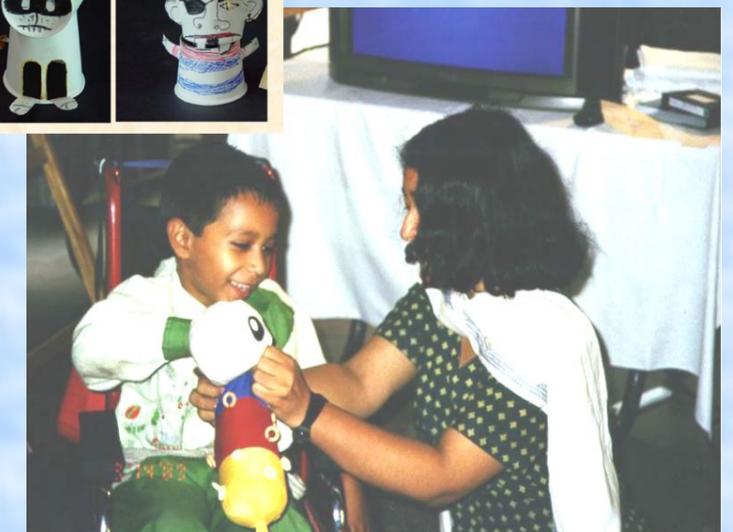
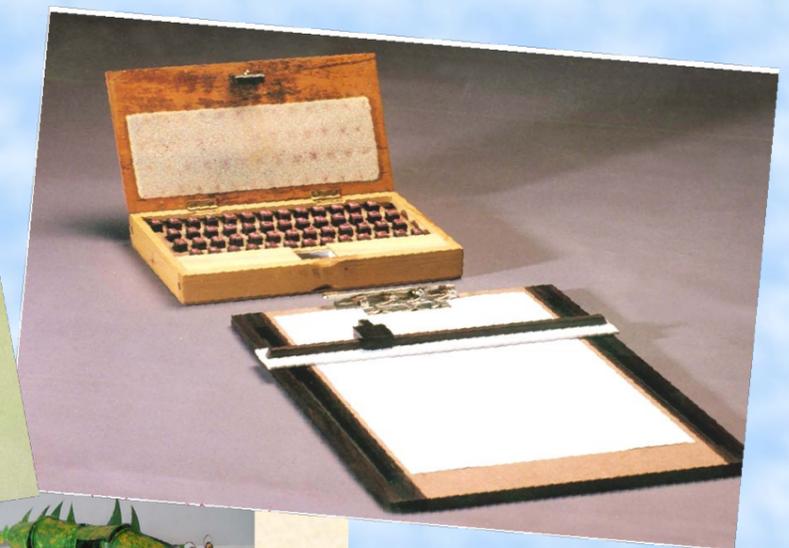
- Documented video-records and as a report and
- Glimpses of activities as video clippings
 - design experiences of teachers,
 - Teachers' assessment of the significance of design in education - pedagogic strategies for curricular transaction, benefits for students
- Inputs for structuring interactions with teachers e.g. Using participants' pre-existing ideas to build local consensus on “what is design”



Design experiences shared...

Facilitators shared their prior experiences of design projects.

(a) NID experience: Toys, challenge games, puzzle activities, and many more



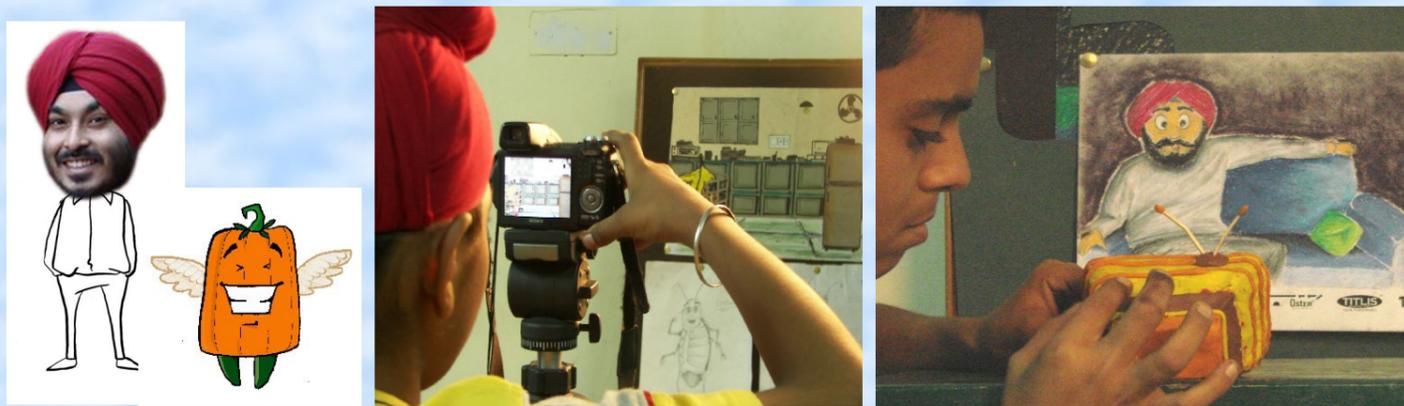
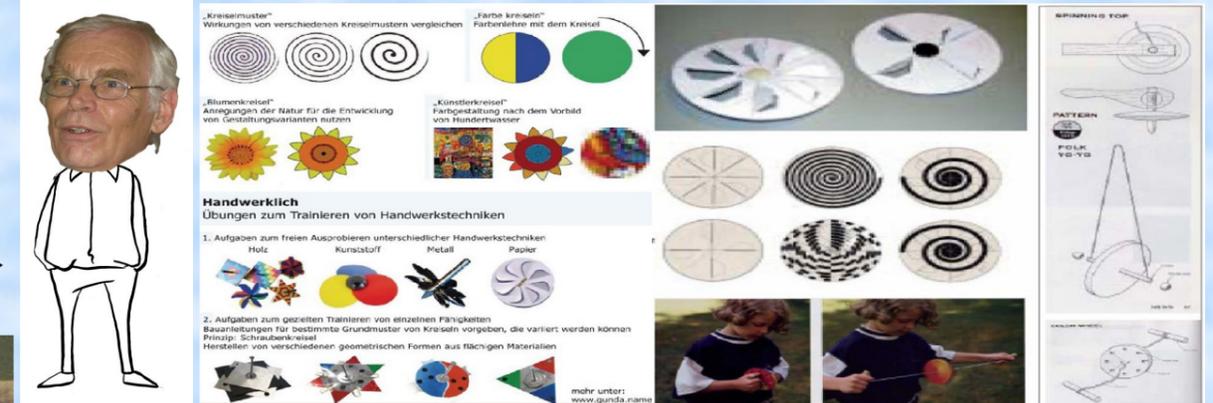
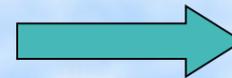
Sharing a few design experiences...



(b) Doll design (heritage crafts) studied by NID students



(c) Spinning wheels as media for design and playful learning - the German context



(d) 'Orange Pumpkin' project - Students' design animations

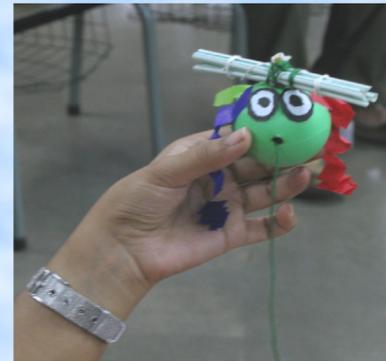


(b) Research study on design units in urban and rural middle Indian schools



Design engagements through some activities...

(1) Folk toys as educational aid – make and use

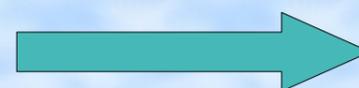


(2) Visualization, Metaphor & abstraction

(3) Socio-cultural aspects

(4) Nature-inspired design

(5) Story-telling, creative narratives



Outcomes of the workshop...

- a participatory effort involving designers—with a formal knowledge of design, and teachers/ students of education—who have the potential to practice and develop this idea.
- served to probe problems and concerns of teachers
- understand the teacher preparation that may be necessary to support the introduction of design in curriculum
- motivate teachers to learn about design and its role in education. Teachers expressed need for an interaction every 6 months
 - to assess progress
 - share experiences of design in local school contexts
- enabled a creative confluence of schools (student/teacher/ parents), toy-craft professionals (community) and designers (design institutions) which possibly may lead to new, innovative structures and systems.