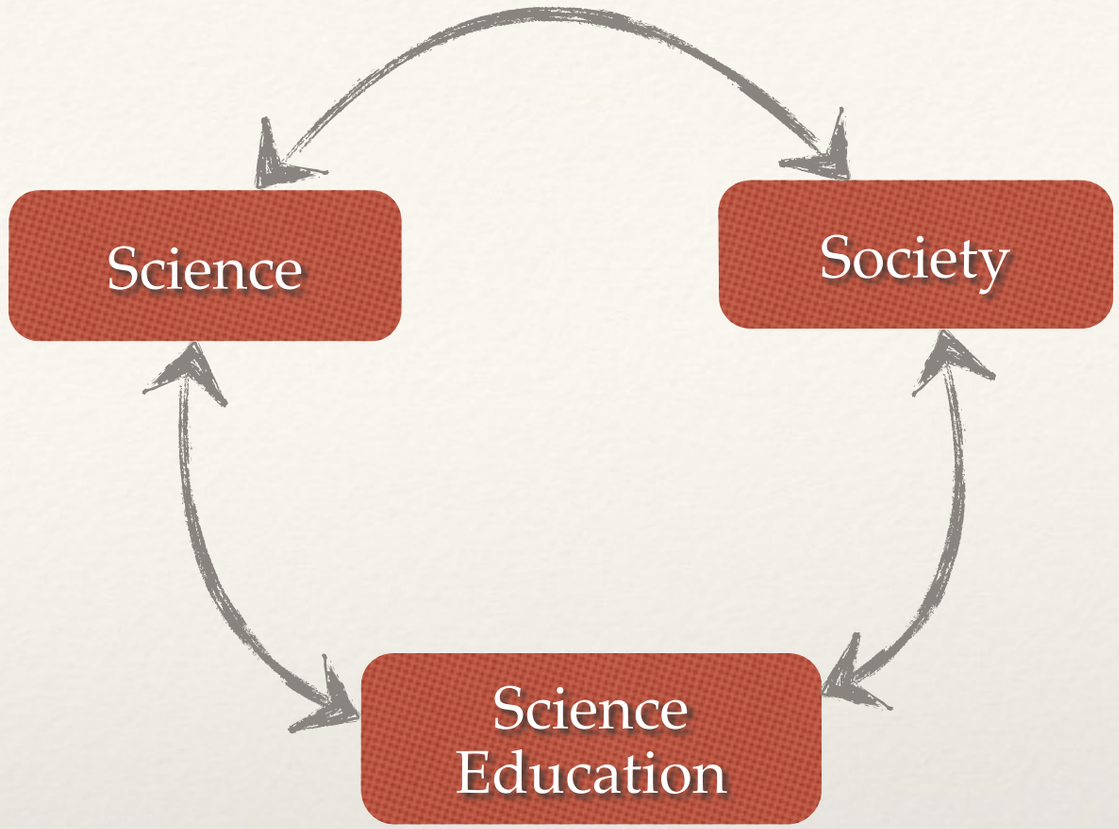


October 2014

Socio-cultural studies in the context of education

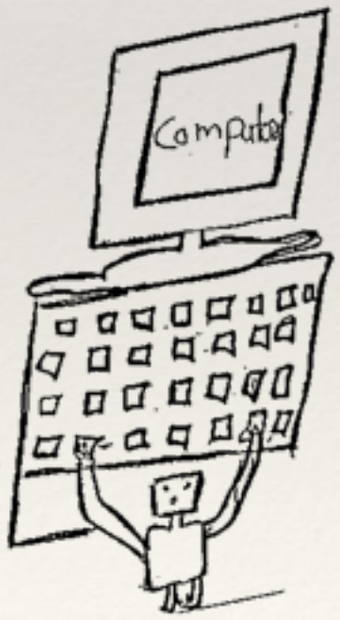
Sugra Chunawala

HBCSE's efforts

- The Centre is recognised for its work on socio-cultural issues, specifically on:
  - Education of socially and economically disadvantaged groups
  - Gender issues in education
- An early study was aimed at uncovering the career aspirations of socio-economically backward students and girls (1985-1992).
- International collaborations have been a way to extend research in this area

Students' ideas about Science and Scientists (1995-98)

- A research study with middle school students in Mumbai was sponsored by the Norwegian Agency for Development (NORAD)
- The students irrespective of their gender had a very positive image about scientists, who were mostly seen to be males



"Scientists are very intelligent and creative people. They are the future of the world"

Multilingualism, Subalternity and the Hegemony of English in India and South Africa' (2001-2004)

- An interdisciplinary collaboration in research, teaching and educational practice.
- Led to a focus on D&T for legitimizing multiple modes of expression in Indian classrooms.

Relevance of Science Education (ROSE 2003-2005)

- An international project, about affective dimensions of young learners' relations (15 years old) to S&T.
- Students found school science more interesting than other subjects and felt it increased their career chances

Science Education for Diversity (SED): 2010-2013

- Funded by European Union's Seventh Framework Programme, involved a collaborative research group from UK, Netherlands, Turkey, Lebanon, Malaysia and India (HBCSE)

Indian teachers did not recognise diversity in the classroom and saw no need to address it in science teaching

The project has led to teacher workshops on science education and diversity

Inclusive education

Aims

- to explore attitudes of parents, teachers and students towards inclusive education
- to develop strategies for teaching visually impaired students

Preliminary work

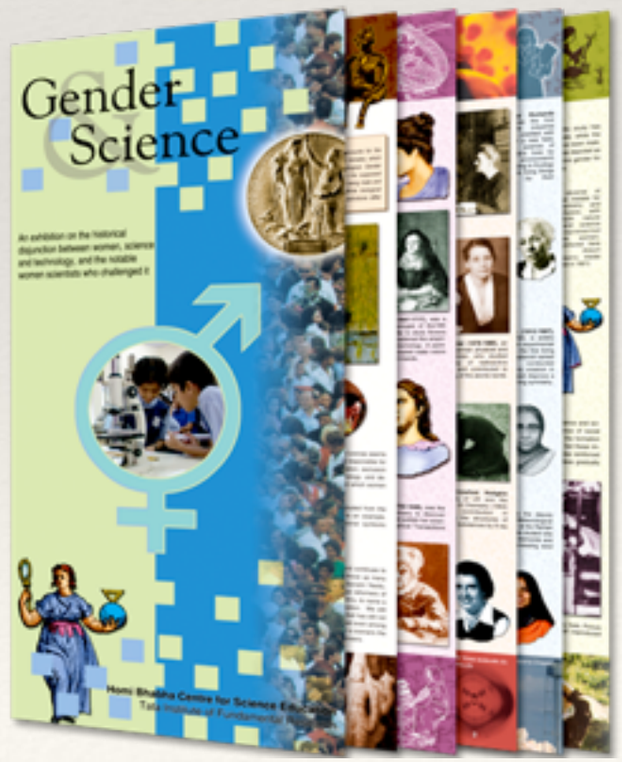
- studied the aspirations of students with disabilities (SWD) and their views on science education and inclusion
- observed science classes in inclusive and special settings
- initiated a study on using diagrams for students in inclusive settings

Socio-scientific issues (SSI)

- Intersection of science, technology and values needs to be acknowledged in the science curriculum.
- A study focused on how adolescent students (16-19 y) negotiate SSI issues: controversial medical technologies; ethical, social and scientific value considerations.
- Biology doctoral students exhibited limited criticality towards media claims about genetic determinism.

Gender and Science

- A permanent exhibition on Gender and Science (2003).
- Member of Focus Group on Gender Issues in Education, in NCF 2005
- A request from DST to analyse the middle school textbooks for gender bias in visual and textual representations. The study highlighted the absence of women's role in knowledge generation



Outcomes

- Insights into issues of equity that arise in Indian classrooms
- Peer reviewed research publications, expository writings, technical reports
- Research motivated to integrate socio-cultural dimensions
- Influenced R&D at the Centre often explicitly, as in the development of curricular materials

Future trends

- National level collaborations to promote different socio-cultural issues in education in other part of the country.
- Socio-cultural issues in STME to be an integral part of every program at the Centre
- Broadening research interests at the Centre and increasing its relevance to other areas

Thank you