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India's education system:



Challenges of Policy into practice

Dr Sally Elton-Chalcraft
University of Cumbria
Limerick Feb 2018



Policy into practice in Christian foundation schools in India

India's education system is one of the largest and most complex in the world with more than 1.4 million schools and more than 230 million enrolments (British Council 2014:6). Recent policies have sought to reform India's education system but some have argued with variable success. This presentation offers some insights into how policies are worked out in practice in a sample of Christian foundation schools in India with a particular emphasis on provision for special educational needs children. *In different countries attitudes vary towards inclusion or segregation of children with special educational needs. Educating special educational needs (SEN) children in special schools is the norm in India but there is a growing trend towards inclusive practice since the introduction of the Right to Education Act 2009. This keynotes draws on findings from a research project undertaken in Banagalore, India. Perspectives were sought from children, their parents and teachers to investigate perceptions of effective provision for SEN children using an interpretative approach to provide 'thick descriptions'. Findings suggest that integration of SEN children in mainstream schools was not the preferred model for both the children and adults in the study, despite this being the aim of the Right to Education Act. Separate schooling was cited by the majority of respondents as the most appropriate model for reasons of unsuitable pedagogy and curriculum, a lack of individualised attention for children and difficulties of social interaction. The study reveals that teacher dedication, passion and care for the SEN children in their classes is juxtaposed with an acknowledgment of their professional training and development needs. These findings provide teachers and policy makers with an in depth insight from this sample case study into the perspectives of children, their parents and teachers on appropriate SEN provision and the challenges of implementing inclusive practice.*

India – education system – school- perspectives of stakeholders

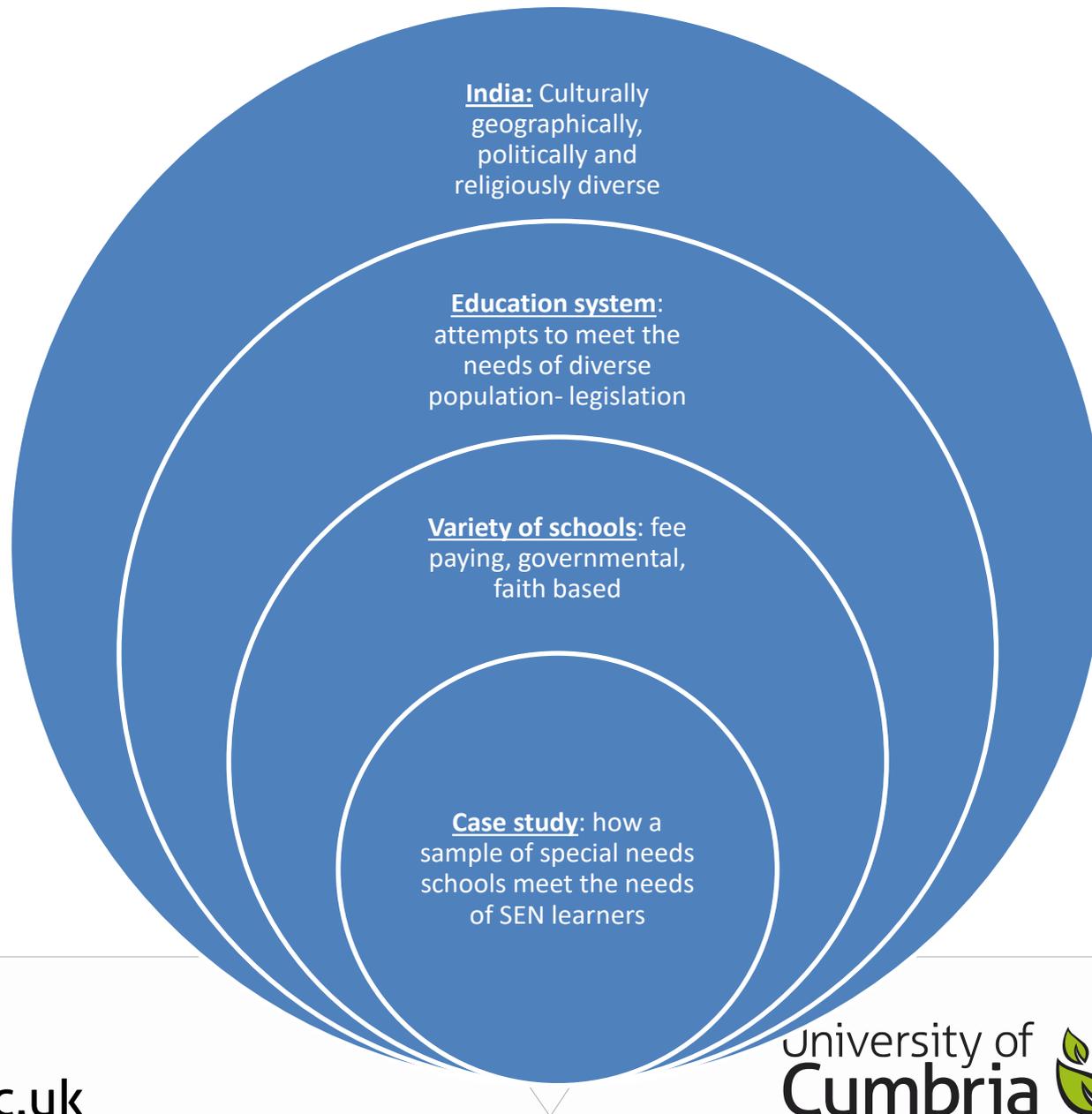


Fig 1 map of states of India http://www.nationsonline.org/oneworld/india_map.html Andhra Pradesh is divided –Telangana +AP



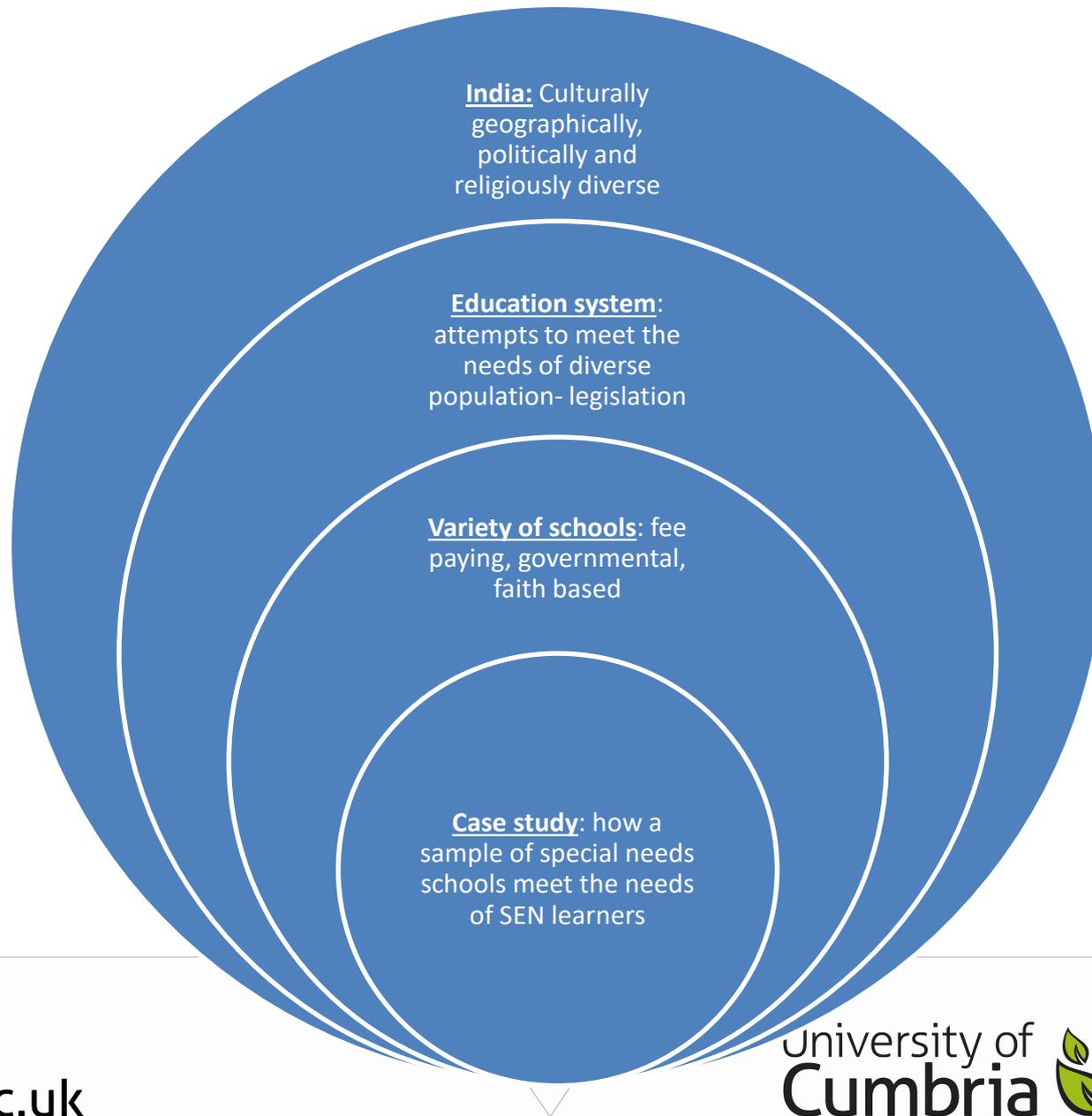
India : Diverse languages

Over 25 states in India each with their own community language (Karnataka state language = Kanada, Tamil Nadu state = Telagu)
English is the *lingua franca*. Indians from different states can only communicate through English. Highly educated and elite Indians speak fluent English. Every Indian knows a few words of English.
In a 'good school' lessons are taught in English
In England there is not the same necessity to learn a second language

India Diverse religions



India – education system – school- perspectives of stakeholders



India's Education system

- National policy on education 1986
- Mid day meal programme 1995
- Girls secondary education 2008
- Enrolment ration (Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksh Abhiyan (RMSA) 2009
- Right to Education Act 2010
- Inclusive Education for disabled 2010



To what extent is India successful in implementing the Right to Education Act 2010?

Special report evaluating the 'Right to education' Act's implementation

Has India's education system lived up to the aims of the Act?

1. **Vision NOT implementation**
2. **Reasons for non attendance**
3. **Infrastructure**
4. **Mid day meals**
5. **Trained teachers**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yiiqrlf2xT0>

Education is sinking
India

Kiran Mazumdar Shaw,
Managing director

Education
can hurt
and hinder

education is a
fantastic resource

Jesuit Headteacher-

Absenteeism in government school



Contextual point: Appointment of teachers in India

Who works in SEN ?

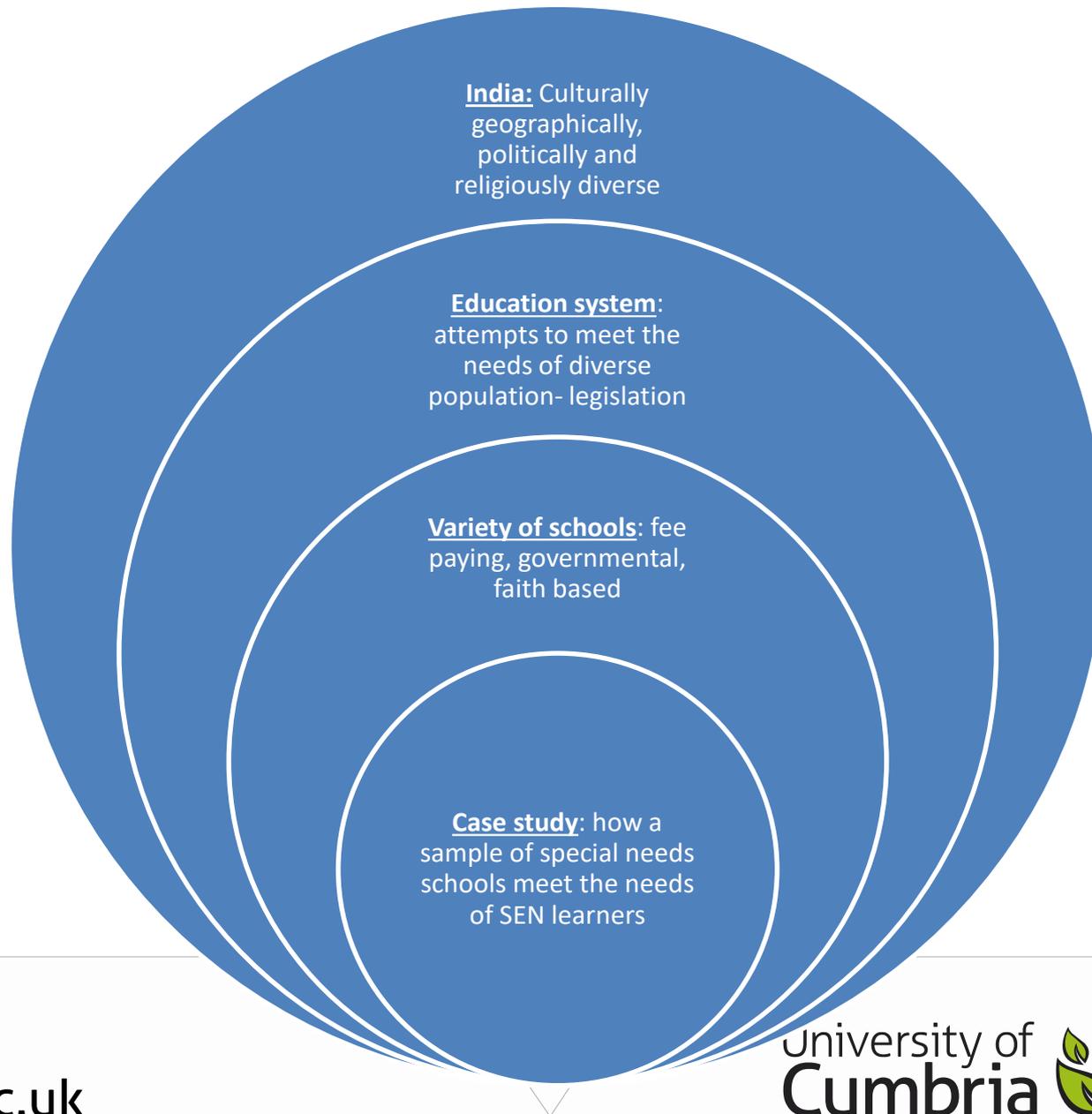
Training for mainstream:
Student teachers with highest grades are allocated teaching posts in the most prestigious schools

Those with the lowest grades are appointed in governmental schools

There is low status of SEN

British system –
advert, interview process

India – education system – school- perspectives of stakeholders





Case study : Context and literature

Fundamental shift in India in the education of children with special educational needs (SEN) away from segregated provision towards a more inclusive approach

Das, Sharma and Singh, 2012

Factors inhibiting effective inclusion:

- structural aspects of education policy- most Indian schools are private
- lack of adequate inclusion policies in many schools
- restrictive practices limiting SEN students to enrol in mainstream schools
- poor physical infrastructure -access difficulties etc
- funding does not meet basic needs
- large class sizes

(Bhatnagar and Das 2014

Sharma et al., 2009).

Focus of research in Bangalore

- Perceptions of effective provision
 - what parents and teachers say
 - Models of inclusion
 - Influence of culture
- Project funded by St Christopher's Trust and University of Cumbria



Data collection

4 schools in Bangalore

2 special needs schools

2 mainstream schools
• (with a resource centre)

Observations

- Lessons
- break times

Discussions

- Principal
- Superintendent

Interviews/questions

- children
- parents
- teachers

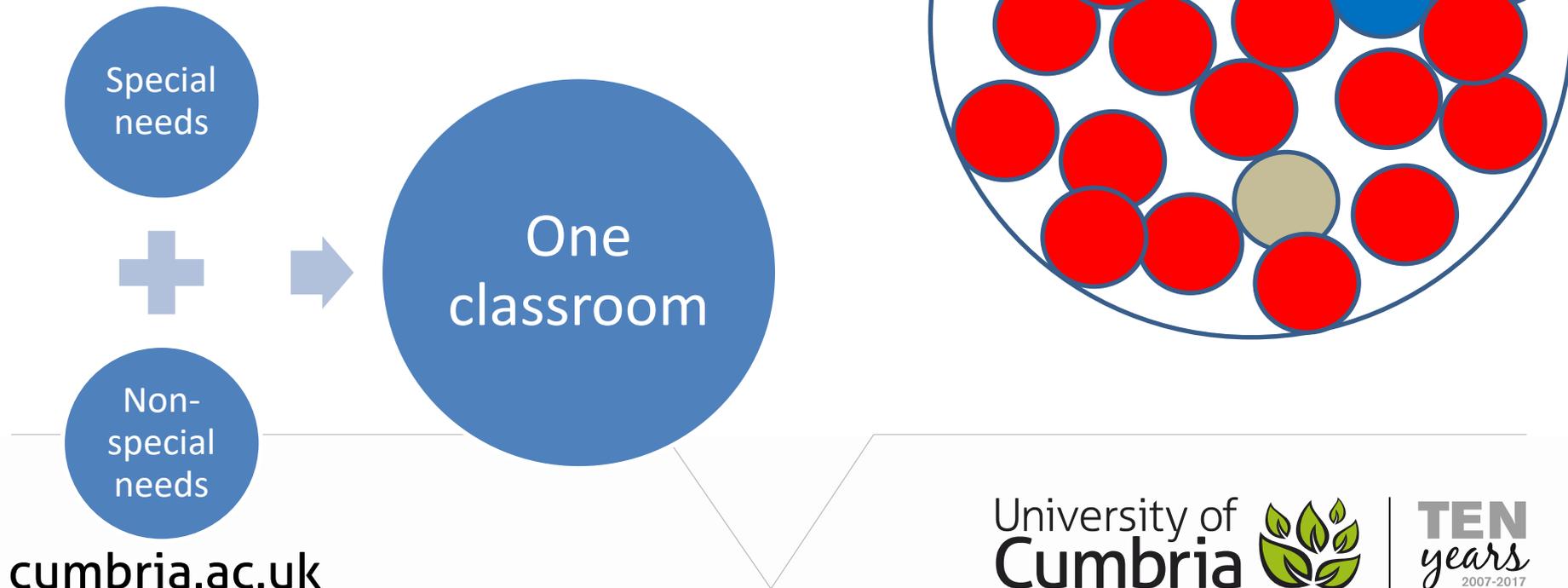
Models of inclusion in India

After observations the researcher discovered that in many Indian schools SEN children (those with an 'intellectual disability') were either

- ❑ withdrawn from their mainstream class to receive extra help (withdrawal)
- ❑ they were removed from the mainstream school and sent to a special school (segregation)
- ❑ This contrasts with England where most SEN children are integrated in the mainstream class (inclusion/ inclusive practice). But in some English mainstream schools SEN children are sometimes withdrawn.

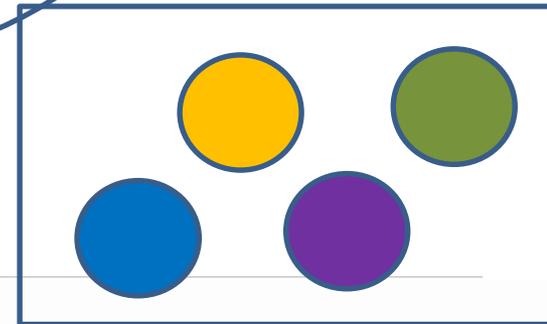
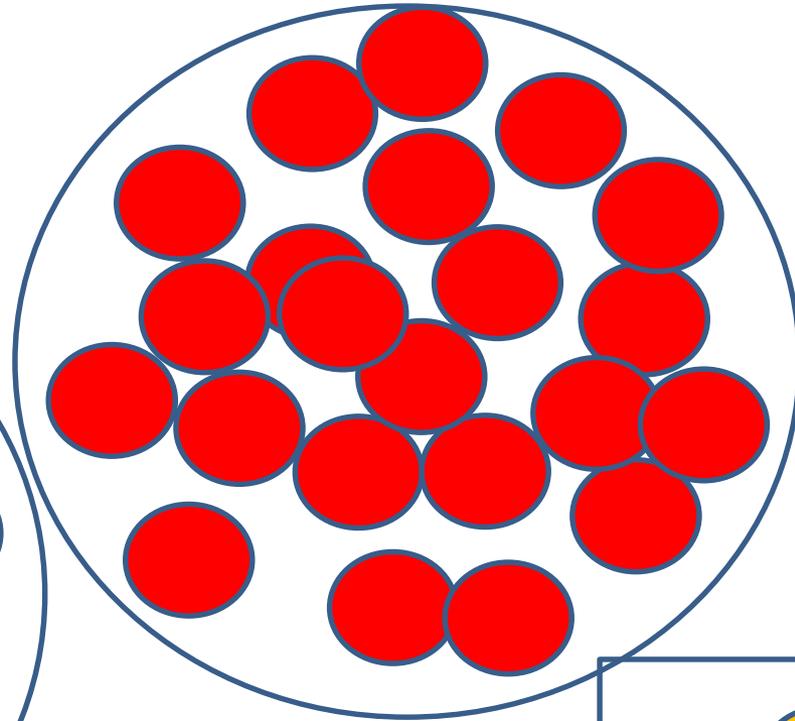
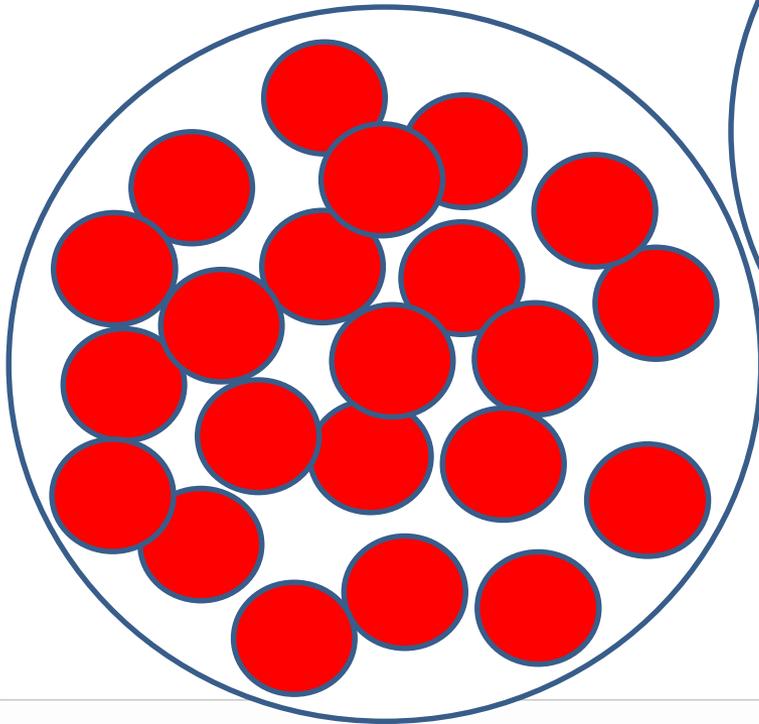
Models of inclusion- 1 INCLUSION

Option 1 INCLUSION Mainstream school: inclusion of all children in one class (typical English classroom)



Models of inclusion- withdrawal

Option 2: SEN from each
Mainstream class



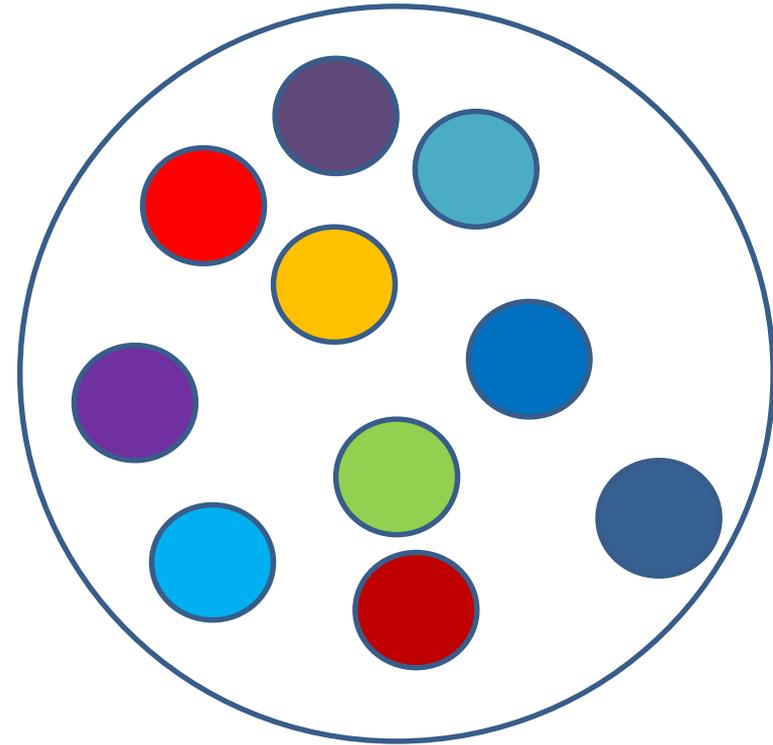
Withdrawn - to a Resource centre - typical of some English and
some mainstream schools

Models of inclusion

Option 3- special needs school

Each class made up of SEN children

Typical of many Indian schools



Findings from Indian case study

- 1. Models of inclusion/ justification for segregation**
- 2. The role of education for SEN children in India**
- 3. Meeting the perceived needs of the SEN child**
- 4. Training and development needs of Indian teachers**

1. Models of Inclusion/ justification for segregation

- Segregated model as opposed to an inclusive model
- From all stakeholders there seemed to be support for a segregated model because:
 - a) Teaching methods in mainstream schools not suited to SEN child**
 - b) Children unlikely to receive adequate, individualised attention because their needs would not be recognised or understood**
 - c) Curriculum inappropriate in mainstream school in India**
 - d) Children with special needs were often bullied in mainstream schools in India**

1. Justification for segregation (a)

a) Mainstream schools use methods which are not suited to the SEN child

- Teachers teach the whole class from the front, no differentiation
 - desks all face the teacher, no group learning
- cumbria.ac.uk



1. Justification for segregation (b)

b) Children unlikely to receive adequate, individualised attention because their needs would not be recognised or understood;

- “I was called into *[my daughter’s mainstream]* school with complaints that this child was just being pure lazy, because she could answer everything when it was done orally, but she couldn’t put anything down onto her piece of paper; and the teachers refused to accept that there was something that could be wrong with her so she went into a severe depression; and she was below standard. She just started moving within; and I decided that enough was enough, and I pulled her out of the school.

(parent in SEN school)

- This parent placed her daughter in the special school where she made huge progress because her needs were met

1. Justification for segregation (c)

C) Curriculum inappropriate in mainstream school

“there was a Principal there[at the mainstream school] who knew something aboutchildren who could learn in a different way, but her hands were not opening up to take a decision, to do something for these kids. So although she would empathise with me – she said the syllabus does not allow me to do anything for these children. So she also washed her hands. So these were very trying times for us because we looked around; we didn’t know where to place her so definitely there is [lack of understanding].
.....I think more and more people are aware and more and more teachers, but in a class of 40 [it is hard].

Parent, special school

1. Justification for segregation (d)

**d) Children with special needs were often bullied
(Teenage girl, A school)**

Sally :How did you know they [the children in the 'normal' school] hated you?

J: They're hitting

Sally :Hitting?

J: Yeah

Sally: They were hitting you in the 'normal' [mainstream school] school?

J:They didn't like me."

2. The role of education for SEN children

The special school provided preparation for a 'productive' life as a 'contributing' citizen in a competitive world

Eg data handling initiative to employ SEN special school leavers with a job

Many SEN children made products to sell

- “.....we need to train them properly to be thorough. They (the computer company employers) don't mind that the children are slow but they should be perfect. The work should be perfect, for accuracy.”

Parent, A school

3. Meeting the perceived needs of the SEN child

- **Qualities of the special needs school teachers: acceptance, care, compassion and empathy - features of Schools A and B that were less available or missing in mainstream schools**
- **Environment: interactive displays**



B school
cumbria.ac.uk

4. Training and development needs of teachers

Many of the teachers from the two special needs schools and also the resource unit in C school were trained as classroom teachers not SEN specialists. India has a problem in educating sufficient numbers of required teachers



Conclusion

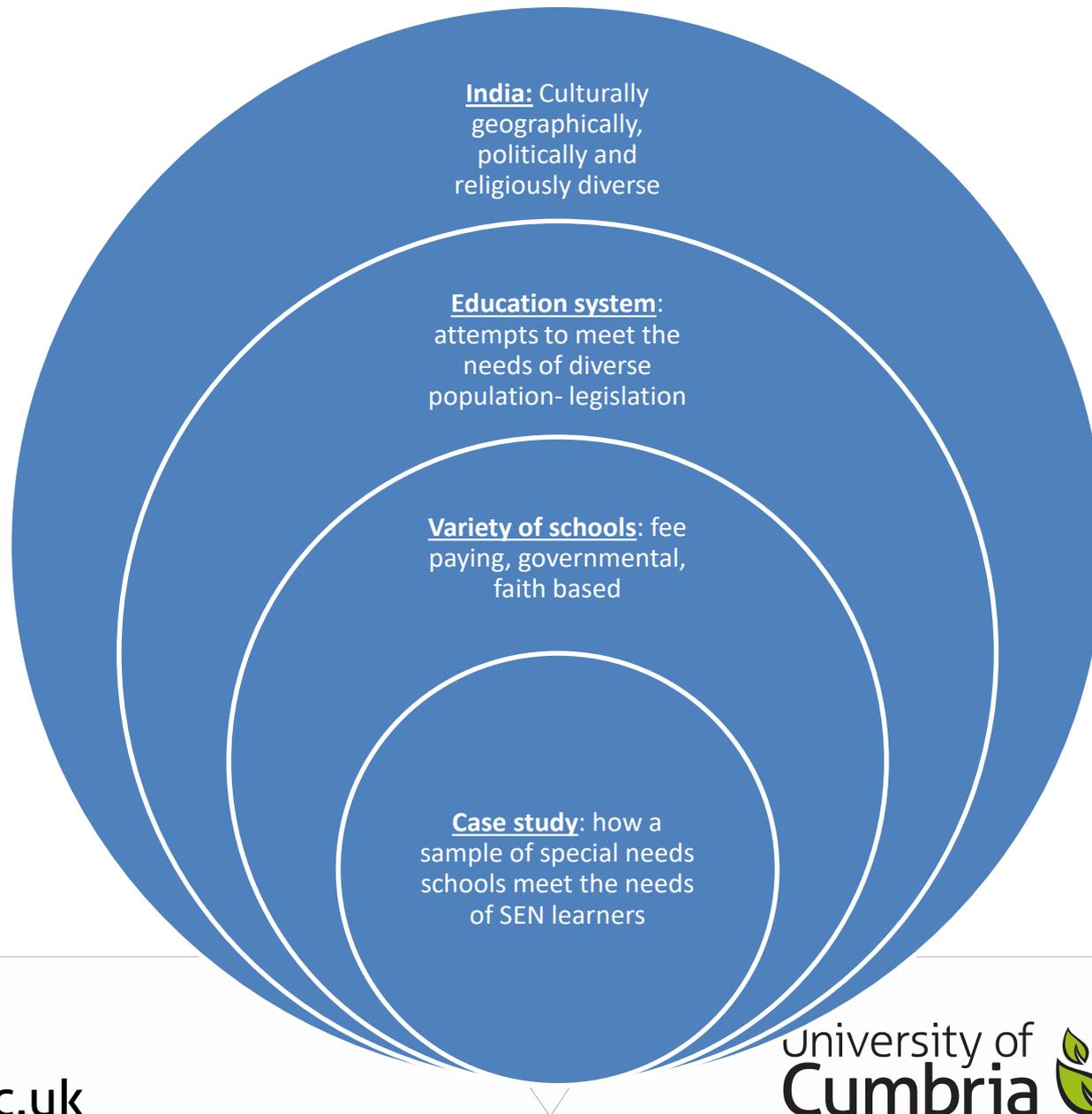
Literature said : Good progress with inclusion but much work needs to be done (Das et al) and our findings support this view

Teachers and parents feel strongly that there is a need for social change

Need for training and development of teachers in India, to address problems of inequality caused by faults in the education system



India – education system – school- perspectives of stakeholders



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Positionality – insider outsider

