

Comparative Analysis of Transformative Approaches to Inclusive Education, Social Change, and Human Development in Contemporary India: The Samanta Saga

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Abstract

Education has long been a catalyst for social transformation and inclusive development in India. This study comparatively examines the educational philosophies and reformist contributions of Rabindranath Tagore, Jyotirao Phule, Swami Vivekananda, B.R. Ambedkar, and Madan Mohan Malaviya alongside the contemporary educational model of Achyuta Samanta. Using a qualitative and interdisciplinary approach, the analysis draws on scholarly literature, historical records, institutional documents, and policy sources to explore five dimensions: philosophical foundations, educational innovation, social reform, institutional impact, and legacy. The findings reveal strong continuities between Samanta's educational praxis and earlier reformist traditions in their commitment to empowerment, social justice, dignity, and holistic human development. However, the KISS model extends these principles through a large-scale institutional framework integrating education, nutrition, healthcare, vocational training, cultural preservation, and community empowerment for marginalized tribal populations. The study argues that the KISS model represents a contemporary and scalable adaptation of India's educational reform heritage, addressing persistent challenges of poverty, exclusion, and inequality. By positioning Dr. Achyuta Samanta within the broader continuum of Indian educational thought, the study contributes to comparative educational scholarship and underscores the continuing relevance of inclusive education for sustainable development, social justice, and nation-building.

Keywords: Inclusive Education; Social Transformation; Human Development; Tribal Education; Educational Philosophy; Social Justice; Achyuta Samanta; KISS; Educational Reform; Sustainable Development.

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1. Introduction

Education has historically been a powerful instrument of social transformation, human empowerment, and nation-building in India. Influential reformers such as Rabindranath Tagore, Jyotirao Phule, Swami Vivekananda, B.R. Ambedkar, and Madan Mohan Malaviya viewed education not merely as a means of literacy but as a pathway to social justice, equality, ethical development, and national progress. Despite their diverse philosophical orientations, all emphasized education as a mechanism for addressing poverty, discrimination, exclusion, and human deprivation.

In contemporary India, Dr. Achyuta Samanta has emerged as a prominent educationist and social reformer whose work extends this reformist tradition. Rising from poverty in rural Odisha, he founded the Kalinga Institute of Industrial Technology (KIIT) and the Kalinga Institute of Social Sciences (KISS), one of the world's largest fully free residential educational institutions for indigenous tribal students. The KISS model integrates education with nutrition, healthcare, vocational training, leadership development, cultural preservation, and community empowerment, addressing the structural barriers that hinder the advancement of marginalized tribal communities. (KISS 2024)

This article comparatively examines the educational philosophies and transformative contributions of Tagore, Phule, Vivekananda, Ambedkar, Malaviya, and Samanta. It argues that the Samanta model represents a contemporary expansion of India's educational reform tradition by translating inclusive educational ideals into large-scale institutional practice for social justice, tribal empowerment, and sustainable nation-building.

2. Review of Literature

Education has long been recognized in India as a powerful instrument for social transformation, human development, and nation-building. Consequently, a substantial body of scholarship has examined the educational philosophies and reformist contributions of major thinkers such as Rabindranath Tagore, Jyotirao Phule, Swami Vivekananda, B.R. Ambedkar, and Madan Mohan Malaviya, while recent studies have increasingly focused on the educational innovations of Dr. Achyuta Samanta through KIIT and KISS. Scholars have extensively analyzed Rabindranath Tagore's educational philosophy, highlighting its emphasis on holistic development, creativity, freedom, experiential learning, and harmony with nature. Research on Santiniketan and Visva-Bharati demonstrates how Tagore integrated culture, arts, environmental consciousness, and internationalism into education, making his ideas relevant to contemporary discussions on humanistic and learner-centered education. (Patnaik 2019; Teachers Institute 2023)

The educational and social reform initiatives of Jyotirao Phule are widely examined within the framework of anti-caste movements, social justice, and educational democratization. Scholars identify Phule as a pioneer of universal education, particularly for women and marginalized communities. His schools for girls and oppressed castes challenged prevailing social hierarchies and established education as a tool for emancipation and social equality. Research on Swami Vivekananda emphasizes his concept of "man-making education," which integrates intellectual growth, moral values, character formation, physical strength, and spiritual development. Studies of institutions inspired by the Ramakrishna Mission highlight the enduring relevance of his ideas on self-reliance, leadership, service, and value-based education. (Phule 2008; Vivekananda 2006)

Academic scholarship consistently recognizes B.R. Ambedkar as one of the foremost advocates of education as a means of social mobility and empowerment. Researchers emphasize his commitment to educational rights, affirmative action, constitutional safeguards, and institutional support for historically marginalized communities. His educational philosophy remains foundational to contemporary debates on equality, inclusion, and democratic citizenship. Studies on Madan Mohan Malaviya focus on his vision of integrating Indian cultural values with modern scientific education. The establishment of Banaras Hindu University is widely regarded as a landmark contribution to higher education, reflecting his commitment to intellectual excellence, ethical conduct, patriotism, and national development. (Ambedkar 1936; Sharma 2020)

Recent scholarship has increasingly examined Dr. Achyuta Samanta's contributions through KIIT and KISS. Researchers highlight the KISS model's integration of free education, nutrition, healthcare, vocational training, sports, leadership development, and cultural preservation within a comprehensive residential framework. Studies report its positive impact on educational participation, gender inclusion, social mobility, and tribal empowerment, while international organizations have recognized KISS as an example of education-led sustainable development. Despite the richness of existing scholarship, a significant research gap remains. Most studies examine these reformers individually, with limited comparative analyses across reform traditions. Scholarly efforts to position Dr. Achyuta Samanta within the broader continuum of Indian educational thought are particularly scarce. Furthermore, few studies have explored whether the KISS model represents continuity, adaptation, or expansion of earlier reformist philosophies in addressing contemporary challenges of poverty, exclusion, and inequality. (KISS 2023)

The present study addresses this gap by comparatively analyzing the educational philosophies, institutional innovations, social reform strategies, and transformative contributions of Tagore, Phule, Vivekananda, Ambedkar, Malaviya, and Samanta. By situating Samanta's educational praxis within India's broader reformist tradition, the study contributes to a deeper understanding of inclusive education as a continuing instrument of social transformation, human development, and nation-building.

3. Conceptual Framework and Methodology

This study adopts a qualitative, comparative, and interdisciplinary research methodology to examine the educational philosophies, social reform initiatives, and transformative contributions of Dr. Achyuta Samanta, Rabindranath Tagore, Jyotirao Phule, Swami Vivekananda, B. R. Ambedkar, and Madan Mohan Malaviya. Situated within the traditions of comparative educational philosophy, social reform theory, humanistic education, and inclusive development, the study explores how educational interventions across different historical periods contributed to social transformation, empowerment, and nation-building in India (Refer Table 1).

Table 1. Comparative Analytical Framework for Examining Educational Reform Models

Dimension	Key Indicators
Philosophical Foundation	Humanism, Equality, Spirituality
Educational Innovation	Institutional Model, Curriculum, Pedagogy
Social Reform Strategy	Target Groups, Inclusion, Empowerment
Institutional Impact	Scale, Reach, Sustainability
Legacy & Relevance	Contemporary Influence, Replicability

The conceptual framework is based on the premise that education functions not merely as a mechanism of instruction but as a powerful instrument of social mobility, ethical development, human capability enhancement, and community transformation. Drawing upon principles of humanistic education, emancipatory pedagogy, social justice, and inclusive development, the study analyzes the educational visions of the selected reformers as responses to social challenges such as caste discrimination, poverty, patriarchy, colonial domination, tribal exclusion, illiteracy, and developmental inequality.

The analysis is guided by five major dimensions: (i) philosophical foundations, (ii) educational contributions and institutional innovations, (iii) social reform strategies and outcomes, (iv) legacy and enduring influence, and (v) points of convergence and divergence.

The study relies primarily on secondary sources, including books, peer-reviewed journal articles, institutional reports, policy documents, speeches, autobiographies, archival materials, government publications, conference proceedings, and authenticated digital resources. Institutional literature relating to KIIT and KISS is also examined to understand the operational and developmental dimensions of Dr. Samanta's educational model. (Ramakrishna Mission 2024; Ambedkar 1948)

A thematic comparative approach is employed to interpret the philosophies and interventions of the reformers within their respective socio-historical contexts. Factors such as colonialism, caste hierarchies, tribal marginalization, rural deprivation, and post-independence developmental challenges are treated as important contextual variables influencing educational thought and practice. Elements of critical discourse analysis are further used to examine recurring themes including educational liberation, dignity, equality, empowerment, spirituality, nationalism, cultural identity, and social inclusion.

The research is descriptive, analytical, and exploratory in nature. Rather than emphasizing statistical measurement or hypothesis testing, it focuses on conceptual interpretation, philosophical synthesis, institutional evolution, and social impact. Information from multiple sources is triangulated to enhance academic rigor, while contextual differences among the reformers are carefully acknowledged to avoid historical oversimplification or ideological bias.

Given its focus on educational philosophies, social visions, institutional practices, and historical transformations, a qualitative comparative framework provides the most appropriate means of analysis. Through this approach, the study ultimately positions Dr. Achyuta Samanta's educational and humanitarian initiatives within the broader continuum of Indian reformist educational traditions, assessing whether his model represents continuity, adaptation, expansion, or transformation of the educational visions advanced by Tagore, Phule, Vivekananda, Ambedkar, and Malaviya in contemporary India.

4. Dr. Achyuta Samanta: Journey and Emergence of a Contemporary Educational Model

Dr. Achyuta Samanta represents one of the most significant contemporary examples of transformative educational leadership in India. Emerging from conditions of extreme poverty in rural Odisha, his life and work demonstrate how education can serve as a powerful instrument of empowerment, social justice, and human development. Through the establishment of the Kalinga Institute of Industrial Technology (KIIT) and the Kalinga Institute of Social Sciences (KISS), he transformed humanistic educational ideals into a scalable institutional model dedicated to marginalized tribal communities. His journey reflects the evolution of a lived educational philosophy grounded in compassion, inclusion, dignity, and service.

Born in 1965 in Kalarabanka village of Odisha, Dr. Samanta faced severe economic hardship following the death of his father when he was only four years old. Despite limited resources and challenging circumstances, he pursued higher education with determination, completed a Master's degree in Chemistry from Utkal University, and later joined the teaching profession. These formative experiences shaped his deep understanding of deprivation and reinforced his belief in education as a pathway to social transformation.

At the age of twenty-five, with only ₹5,000 and a vision for social change through education, Dr. Samanta established a small educational institution in two rented rooms in Bhubaneswar during 1992–93. This initiative subsequently evolved into KIIT, which emerged as one of India's leading multidisciplinary universities. However, his vision expanded beyond professional education when he recognized that millions of tribal children remained excluded from mainstream development because of poverty, illiteracy, and geographical isolation. To address this challenge, he founded KISS in 1993 with only 125 tribal children.

Over the past three decades, KISS has evolved into one of the world's largest fully free residential educational institutions for indigenous students, serving more than 40,000 learners from Kindergarten to postgraduate levels and representing over 62 tribal communities. The institution provides free education, food, accommodation, healthcare, vocational training, sports education, emotional support, and cultural guidance within an integrated residential environment. The scale and continuity of KISS challenge conventional assumptions that holistic and inclusive education cannot be effectively implemented within large institutional frameworks. (Mohanty 2020)

A defining feature of Dr. Samanta's educational philosophy is the integration of modern education with indigenous identity and cultural preservation. Tribal languages, festivals, dance forms, oral traditions, and artistic expressions are actively preserved and celebrated within the educational ecosystem. Rather than promoting cultural assimilation, KISS seeks to balance educational advancement with cultural continuity, enabling tribal students to participate in modern developmental opportunities while retaining their heritage and collective identity.

The KISS model extends beyond conventional classroom instruction. Education is conceived as a multidimensional process encompassing intellectual growth, emotional security, cultural dignity, physical well-being, ethical development, and economic empowerment. Students are exposed not only to formal academics but also to vocational training, leadership development, life skills, sports, and community-oriented learning. This holistic approach reflects the broader Indian educational ideal of nurturing the body, mind, and spirit.

The social impact of KISS has been substantial. The institution has contributed to reducing school dropout rates, child labour, trafficking vulnerability, illiteracy, and social exclusion among tribal youth. Its graduates have progressed into higher education, civil services, professional careers, international sporting events, and globally reputed universities. Beyond education, Dr. Samanta's initiatives in healthcare, rural development, community welfare, and the globally recognized Art of Giving movement reflect his conviction that education must be integrated with compassion, volunteerism, and social responsibility.

Philosophically, Dr. Samanta's educational praxis reflects important continuities with India's reformist educational tradition. His emphasis on harmony and holistic learning resonates with Rabindranath Tagore's humanism; his commitment to social inclusion parallels the emancipatory visions of Jyotirao Phule and B.R. Ambedkar; and his focus on service, dignity, and character formation reflects the ideals of Swami Vivekananda and Madan Mohan Malaviya. Yet, his distinctive contribution lies in translating these principles into a large-scale institutional framework capable of addressing contemporary challenges of tribal exclusion, poverty, and inequality. (Rout & Mishra 2023)

Thus, Dr. Achyuta Samanta emerges not merely as an educationist or institution builder, but as a contemporary social reformer whose work embodies the transformative possibilities of inclusive, value-based, and culturally responsive education. His journey demonstrates how visionary leadership can transform personal adversity into collective empowerment and contribute meaningfully to nation-building and human development in twenty-first-century India.

5. Comparative Analysis: The Enduring Legacy of Reformers

Having examined the emergence and operational features of Samanta's educational model, it becomes necessary to situate this framework within the broader historical tradition of Indian educational reform. The following comparative analysis evaluates points of convergence and divergence between Samanta and five major educational reformers. The six reformers (refer Table 2) examined in this study—Rabindranath Tagore, Jyotirao Phule, Swami Vivekananda, B.R. Ambedkar, Madan Mohan Malaviya, and Dr. Achyuta Samanta—represent diverse educational philosophies shaped by distinct social, cultural, and historical contexts. Despite their differences, all viewed education as a transformative force capable of advancing social justice, human development, and nation-building. Their contributions collectively illustrate the evolution of India's reformist educational tradition from the nineteenth century to the present day.

Table 2. Comparative Overview of Educational Reformers and Their Contributions

Reformer	Target Group	Educational Philosophy	Institution	Social Impact
Tagore	General society	Humanistic	Visva-Bharati	Cultural transformation
Phule	Dalits, Women	Social justice	Schools	Anti-caste movement
Vivekananda	Youth, Poor	Character building	Ramakrishna Mission	Spiritual-social reform
Ambedkar	Dalits	Equality and rights	Colleges/Hostels	Constitutional empowerment
Malaviya	National society	Cultural-modern synthesis	BHU	Nation-building
Samanta	Tribals	Holistic empowerment	KIIT-KISS	Tribal transformation

5.1 Philosophical Foundations and Ideological Diversity

The philosophical foundations of these reformers reveal both diversity and convergence. Tagore championed a humanistic and cosmopolitan vision of education that emphasized creativity, freedom, and harmony with nature. Phule approached education through the lens of social justice, challenging caste oppression and gender inequality while advocating equal access for marginalized communities. Vivekananda promoted “man-making education,” integrating intellectual growth with moral strength, spiritual awareness, and service to humanity.

Ambedkar viewed education as the most powerful instrument for equality, dignity, and democratic participation. His philosophy was rooted in social democracy and the eradication of caste-based discrimination. Malaviya sought to harmonize India’s cultural heritage with modern scientific knowledge, emphasizing ethical citizenship and national regeneration. In contrast, Samanta’s philosophy may be described as pragmatic idealism, combining compassion, inclusivity, and holistic development to empower marginalized tribal communities through institutional intervention.

Although their ideological orientations differed, all six reformers shared the belief that education must promote human dignity, social mobility, and collective progress.

5.2 Educational Contributions and Institutional Innovations

A defining characteristic of these reformers is their ability to translate educational ideals into institutional practice. Tagore established Visva-Bharati as an innovative educational experiment that promoted experiential learning, artistic expression, and global understanding. Phule pioneered schools for women and oppressed castes, challenging social exclusion and establishing education as a fundamental right.

Vivekananda inspired the Ramakrishna Mission’s network of educational institutions, emphasizing character formation, self-reliance, and service. Ambedkar promoted educational access through hostels, scholarships, and advocacy for disadvantaged communities, recognizing education as a pathway to empowerment. Malaviya’s establishment of Banaras Hindu University represented a landmark effort to integrate traditional Indian learning with modern higher education.

Dr. Achyuta Samanta’s contributions through KIIT and KISS represent a contemporary extension of these reformist traditions. KISS, which began in 1993 with only 125 tribal children, has evolved into one of the world’s largest fully free residential educational institutions, serving more than 40,000 indigenous students. By integrating education, healthcare, nutrition, accommodation, vocational training, sports, and cultural preservation, Samanta has transformed educational philosophy into a scalable and sustainable model of empowerment. (Mishra 2015; Singh 2026)

5.3 Social Reform Strategies and Transformative Impact

The reformers adopted different strategies to address the social challenges of their times. Tagore pursued cultural transformation through literature, education, and artistic engagement. Phule directly confronted caste hierarchy

and gender discrimination through activism, institution-building, and the Satyashodhak Samaj movement. Vivekananda advocated social upliftment through spiritual awakening and service to the poor.

Ambedkar employed constitutional, legal, and political mechanisms to secure equality and justice for marginalized communities. Malaviya worked within the broader nationalist framework, promoting educational reform, social harmony, and national development. In contrast, Samanta's strategy centers on institution-based social transformation. Through KISS and related initiatives, he addresses poverty, educational exclusion, and social marginalization by providing comprehensive support systems that enable long-term empowerment.

Despite differing methods, each reformer challenged prevailing structures of inequality and expanded opportunities for disadvantaged populations. (Senapati 2015; Ambedkar 1945)

5.4 Legacy, Relevance, and Samanta within the Reformist Continuum

The enduring relevance of these reformers remains visible in contemporary educational and social discourse. Tagore continues to influence humanistic and learner-centered education; Phule remains a foundational figure in social justice movements; Vivekananda's emphasis on character and service inspires value-based education; Ambedkar's vision continues to shape debates on equality, constitutional rights, and social inclusion; and Malaviya's educational legacy endures through BHU and broader discussions on nation-building.

Within this continuum, Samanta represents a contemporary adaptation of India's reformist educational heritage. His model incorporates Tagore's holistic outlook, Phule's commitment to marginalized communities, Vivekananda's emphasis on service and character formation, Ambedkar's concern for social inclusion, and Malaviya's institution-building vision. However, he extends these traditions through a large-scale, integrated framework specifically designed for tribal empowerment.

The comparative analysis reveals both convergence and divergence. While the reformers differed in philosophy, target groups, and methods, they were united by a commitment to social transformation through education. Samanta's contribution lies in demonstrating how these enduring principles can be operationalized in twenty-first-century India through sustainable institutional innovation. Together, the six reformers represent a continuing tradition of educational thought that remains highly relevant for advancing inclusive development, social justice, and nation-building in contemporary society. (Ghadai 2016; Verma & Srivastava 2025)

6. Samanta's Model: A Comparative Understanding

The present research summarizes and highlights the social work of Dr. Achyuta Samanta (Founder of KIIT, KISS, and KIMS) with all five other social reformers considered under the present study individually, as mentioned below:

6.1 A Rational Insight into Tagore and Samanta's Educational Philosophies (Tripathy 2024; Patnaik 2020; Agastya Foundation 2023; British Association for International and Comparative Education 2022)

Presented below are the principal parallels between Dr. Achyuta Samanta (renowned Indian educationist and founder of KIIT, KISS, and KIMS) and Rabindranath Tagore:

- **Focus on Education as Empowerment:** Both Dr. Samanta and Tagore believed that education is the key to social transformation and empowerment, and they emphasized that holistic education nurtures both intellect and character.
- **Innovative Educational Models:** Tagore founded Visva-Bharati University at Santiniketan, pioneering open-air classes, learning in harmony with nature, and integrating art, culture, and academics. His approach was idealistic, focusing on spiritual and aesthetic development. Samanta established Kalinga Institute of Social Sciences (KISS), a large-scale, fully residential institution providing free education, food, and healthcare to tribal students, with a strong focus on scalability and replication. He focused on practical empowerment through free residential education, vocational training, and life skills, aiming to promote socio-economic development and alleviate poverty.
- **Social Upliftment:** Both dedicated their lives to uplifting marginalized communities. Tagore worked for rural reconstruction and the upliftment of the poor in Bengal, whereas Samanta focuses on empowering indigenous and tribal communities through education and social support.
- **Humanistic Philosophy:** They share a humanistic worldview, advocating for dignity, equality, and

compassion for all, regardless of caste, creed, or background.

- **Integration of Arts and Culture in Education:** Both emphasized the importance of arts, music, and culture as integral parts of education, fostering creativity and holistic growth.
- **Visionary Leadership:** Both are visionary leaders who translated their ideals into large-scale institutions that continue to impact society.

There are some key differences between the educational models of Dr. Samanta and Rabindranath Tagore, which are elaborated below:

- **Historical Context:** Tagore developed his model in the early 20th century (founded Santiniketan in 1901) during the colonial period, whereas Samanta developed his model in the late 20th and early 21st centuries in post-independence, modern India.
- **Target Beneficiaries:** Tagore aimed to create a universal, liberal, and holistic educational environment for students from diverse backgrounds. Samanta specifically targeted tribal and underprivileged children, focusing on their upliftment and integration into mainstream society.
- **Philosophy and Approach:** Tagore emphasized learning in harmony with nature, freedom of expression, and the integration of arts, culture, and academics. His approach was idealistic, focusing on spiritual and aesthetic development. Dr. Samanta focused on practical empowerment through free residential education, vocational training, and life skills, aiming to promote socio-economic development and alleviate poverty.
- **Integration with Society:** Tagore sought to create a cultural hub where students and teachers lived and learned together, promoting internationalism and global citizenship, whereas Samanta's model prioritizes grassroots social transformation, empowering marginalized communities through education with a clear focus on measurable social outcomes.
- **Scope of Impact:** Tagore's model influenced educational philosophy across India and inspired many alternative schools, but had limited direct reach due to its boutique and philosophical nature, whereas Samanta's model impacts over 40,000 tribal children annually at KISS and offers a scalable model for mass upliftment.
- **Use of Resources:** Tagore relied on patronage, donations, and his own earnings as a writer; he often struggled to secure resources, whereas Samanta uses modern fundraising, partnerships, and integration with other institutions (such as KIIT University) to sustain resource mobilization.

Summary: Both Samanta's and Tagore's models champion holistic, inclusive education for the underprivileged, inspiring ongoing educational reform in India. While Tagore focused on individual development in harmony with nature, Samanta emphasizes large-scale, practical empowerment of marginalized children. Their differences reflect distinctive responses to the needs of their respective eras.

6.2 Advancing Social Justice: A Comparison of Educational Contributions of Phule and Samanta (Samanta 2021; Dash & Sethi 2022; Phule 1991; Omvedt 2008; Keer 1990)

The following summarizes the key similarities between Samanta's model and Jyotirao Phule's approach:

- **Focus on Marginalized Communities:** Both models are centered around uplifting the most disadvantaged groups - Phule focused on Dalits and women, while Samanta targets tribal and impoverished children.
- **Education as the Primary Tool:** Each leader views education as the most effective means to break the cycles of oppression and poverty, making it the cornerstone of their reform efforts.
- **Institution Building:** Both established institutions to further their missions - Phule founded schools for girls and marginalized communities; Samanta created KISS and KIIT to provide comprehensive education and support.
- **Holistic Empowerment:** Their models go beyond academics, aiming to empower individuals socially, economically, and psychologically.
- **Challenging Social Hierarchies:** Both have directly confronted deeply rooted social inequalities - Phule against caste and gender discrimination, Samanta against poverty and neglect of tribal communities.

- **Personal Sacrifice and Leadership:** Each committed personal resources, faced significant resistance, and demonstrated visionary leadership in sustaining their initiatives.
- **Creating Lasting Change:** Both focused on creating sustainable models for long-term transformation, inspiring others to continue their work.
- **Promotion of Dignity and Inclusion:** Their approaches promote dignity, self-respect, and social inclusion for the marginalized, aiming to build a just and equitable society.

Dr. Achyuta Samanta's model for social empowerment and education differs from Jyotirao Phule's approach in several important ways, reflecting both their historical contexts and personal strategies. Some highlights are as follows:

- **Historical and Social Context:** Phule operated in 19th-century colonial India, where social reform meant confronting deeply entrenched caste and gender hierarchies under British rule. Samanta works in modern, independent India, leveraging constitutional rights and contemporary policies to support marginalized communities, especially tribal children.
- **Target Groups:** Phule primarily focused on lower-caste (Dalit) communities and women, who were denied access to education and basic rights. Samanta has concentrated on tribal and extremely poor children, many of whom face intersectional disadvantages, including poverty, displacement, and lack of infrastructure.
- **Institutional Approach:** Phule started small-scale institutions such as schools for girls and Dalits, and the Satyashodhak Samaj, focusing on awareness and grassroots mobilization. Samanta has built large-scale, self-sustaining institutions like Kalinga Institute of Social Sciences (KISS) and KIIT, which provide not only education but also food, healthcare, and vocational training to tens of thousands of children.
- **Scale and Sustainability:** Phule's efforts, while pioneering, were limited by resources and social opposition, with a primary focus on laying the groundwork for future reform. Samanta has scaled his vision to impact a much larger population, using modern fundraising, partnerships, and organizational management to ensure sustainability and growth.
- **Role of State and Policy:** Phule largely worked outside the state apparatus, often in opposition to both colonial and orthodox structures. Samanta collaborates with government programs, international organizations, and the private sector to magnify his impact.
- **Nature of Reform:** Phule emphasized social consciousness, self-respect, and activism to challenge the status quo. Samanta focuses on holistic development—combining education with nutrition, healthcare, and life skills to foster overall well-being and empowerment.

Summary: Both Samanta and Phule devoted themselves to social justice and empowerment through education. While Phule pioneered grassroots, consciousness-raising efforts, Samanta's model is large-scale and modernized, but both share the mission of transforming society by uplifting the oppressed through educational action.

6.3 Education and Service: Comparative Legacies of Vivekananda and Samanta (Vivekananda 2009; Nikhilananda 1953; Rolland 2008; Chadarava 2019; Samal 2020)

The following presents the key similarities between Samanta's educational model and Swami Vivekananda's ideals:

- **Education as a Tool for Social Transformation:** Swami Vivekananda believed education is the primary means to uplift society, eradicate poverty, and build character. Dr. Samanta used education as the primary instrument to empower marginalized and tribal communities, aiming for holistic social change.
- **Emphasis on Character Building and Values:** Swami ji advocated for man-making education, focusing on moral, spiritual, and character development alongside academics, whereas Samanta integrated value-based education, teaching ethics, discipline, and social responsibility at KISS.
- **Focus on the Marginalized and Underprivileged:** Vivekananda championed the cause of the poor, downtrodden, and those excluded from mainstream society, whereas Samanta devoted his efforts specifically to tribal, underprivileged, and marginalized children, providing them with opportunities for growth.

- **Holistic Approach to Education:** Swami Vivekananda supported an education system that develops the body, mind, and spirit - integrating physical fitness, intellectual growth, and spiritual well-being. Samanta's KISS model offers a holistic curriculum encompassing academics, sports, cultural activities, and life skills, fostering all-around development.
- **Practical Application of Knowledge:** Swami ji emphasized practical, life-oriented education that prepares students for real-world challenges, not just book learning. Samanta's model blends academic learning with vocational training and life skills, equipping students for employment and self-reliance.
- **Vision of National Development:** Swami Vivekananda saw education as the foundation for building a strong, self-reliant nation, whereas Samanta aims to contribute to national development by transforming marginalized communities into empowered, productive citizens.

The following presents the key distinctions between the educational models of Achyuta Samanta and Swami Vivekananda:

- **Historical Context and Approach:** Swami Vivekananda proposed his educational philosophy in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, focusing on broad spiritual, moral, and national revival in colonial India. Dr. Samanta built his model in 21st-century India, addressing contemporary challenges of poverty, tribal exclusion, and access to modern education.
- **Institutional Implementation:** Swami Vivekananda did not establish a large-scale educational institution himself, but inspired the Ramakrishna Mission schools and colleges, which combine academics with spiritual and moral education. Dr. Samanta personally founded and manages KISS, a massive residential institution that offers free education, food, and healthcare to thousands of tribal children each year.
- **Target Audience:** Swami ji advocated for the upliftment of all Indians, with a strong emphasis on the poor and the masses, whereas Samanta's work is specifically targeted toward tribal and extremely marginalized children, focusing on the most excluded sections of society.
- **Nature of Education:** Swami ji stressed "man-making" and "character-building" education, with a strong spiritual and philosophical core, integrating Indian traditions, yoga, and Vedanta. Samanta's model is more focused on practical, outcome-oriented education - academic learning combined with vocational training, life skills, and career guidance, with less emphasis on spiritual or philosophical content.
- **Educational Content and Methods:** Swami ji favored blending ancient Indian wisdom with modern science and technology, but with a strong undercurrent of spiritual awakening. Dr. Samanta prioritizes modern, secular education relevant to contemporary job markets, along with health, nutrition, and sports, to ensure holistic but pragmatic development.
- **Scale and Modernity:** Swami Ji's ideas were implemented in several institutions, but not at the scale or with the residential, fully supported model of KISS. Thus, in contrast, Dr. Samanta pioneered a scalable, replicable, and sustainable model that addresses all aspects of a marginalized child's life - from basic needs to career.
- **Resource Mobilization:** Swami ji relied on the dedication of monks and volunteers, with funding from donations and philanthropy, whereas Dr. Samanta uses modern fundraising, institutional partnerships, and integration with other educational ventures (such as KIIT) to achieve sustained, large-scale impact.

Summary: Both Samanta and Vivekananda advocate for education as a means of personal and social transformation rooted in values and service to the underprivileged. Vivekananda focused on spiritual and moral development for all, while Samanta's model targets large-scale, practical upliftment of the most marginalized. Their shared aim is social betterment, with distinct approaches shaped by their times.

6.4 Upholding Constitutional Values: A Comparison between Samanta and Ambedkar's Educational Mission (Ambedkar 2014; Zelliott 2004; Mohanty 2021; Das 2023)

Outlined below are the principal similarities between Dr. Samanta's model and Dr. B.R. Ambedkar's educational and social philosophy:

- **Education as a Tool for Social Justice and Empowerment:** Ambedkar believed education is the most effective means for the upliftment and liberation of oppressed and marginalized communities, famously

- stating, “Education is the milk of a lioness. Drink it and roar.” Dr. Samanta founded KISS on the conviction that education is the primary tool for empowering tribal and underprivileged children, breaking the cycle of poverty and social exclusion.
- **Focus on Marginalized Groups:** Ambedkar dedicated his life to the upliftment of Dalits and other disadvantaged groups, ensuring their access to education and rights. Samanta’s model targets tribal and extremely marginalized children, providing them with free, high-quality education, food, and healthcare.
 - **Advocacy for Equality and Social Inclusion:** Ambedkar championed equality, social justice, and the annihilation of caste discrimination, whereas Samanta promotes social inclusion, dignity, and equal opportunities for tribal children, aiming to integrate them into mainstream society.
 - **Institution Building for Social Change:** Ambedkar established educational institutions, hostels, and organizations to provide safe and supportive environments for marginalized students. Dr. Samanta founded a world-class, fully residential institution - KISS - that serves as a model for inclusive and transformative education.
 - **Holistic Approach:** Ambedkar advocated for the all-around development of individuals, emphasizing not just academic success but also social, economic, and moral advancement. Similarly, Samanta ensures holistic development through academics, vocational training, sports, healthcare, and value-based education.
 - **Vision of Social Transformation:** Ambedkar envisioned a just and equitable society in which education leads to the emancipation and empowerment of the oppressed. On the other hand, Samanta shares this transformative vision, using education as a vehicle to elevate entire communities and promote social justice.

The following outlines the principal differences between Samanta’s model and Dr. B.R. Ambedkar’s approach to education and social transformation:

- **Historical Context and Scope:** Ambedkar worked in early to mid-20th-century India, focusing on eradicating caste discrimination and uplifting Dalits and other oppressed classes, whereas Dr. Samanta operates in 21st-century India, focusing on the educational and social uplift of tribal and indigenous populations.
- **Primary Target Group:** Ambedkar focused on Dalits (“untouchables”) and lower-caste groups suffering under caste inequality, whereas Dr. Samanta primarily serves tribal and indigenous children, a group often distinct from the Dalit community, though both face marginalization.
- **Nature and Scale of Institution:** Ambedkar established several hostels, schools, and educational societies, but his institutions were smaller in scale, built under severe resource constraints and social opposition. Samanta founded KISS, the world’s largest fully residential school for tribal children, serving tens of thousands of children annually through integrated education, nutrition, and healthcare.
- **Philosophical Approach:** Ambedkar emphasized legal rights, political participation, and constitutional safeguards alongside education; his vision was deeply intertwined with social reform and legal empowerment. Dr. Samanta focuses primarily on practical, large-scale educational delivery and holistic welfare, with less direct emphasis on legal or political activism.
- **Curriculum and Methods:** Ambedkar advocated for access to mainstream education and higher learning, encouraging his community to excel in traditional academic fields and participate in national life. Dr. Samanta offers a blend of academic education, vocational training, life skills, sports, and cultural activities, tailored to the needs of tribal children and modern job markets.
- **Integration with Wider Society:** Ambedkar sought to empower marginalized groups by ensuring their participation in national political, social, and economic life through radical reform. Dr. Samanta focuses on integrating tribal children into mainstream society via education and economic empowerment, but with less emphasis on political mobilization.
- **Resource Mobilization:** Ambedkar relied heavily on personal sacrifice, community support, and philanthropy in an era of severe discrimination, whereas Samanta utilized modern fundraising, partnerships, and integration with other educational ventures (such as KIIT) to achieve scale and sustainability.

Summary: Both Samanta and Ambedkar believed in education as a tool for breaking social inequality and empowering the marginalized. While Ambedkar combined education with legal and political reform for Dalit

upliftment, Samanta's model focuses on large-scale, practical support for tribal communities today. Both are transformative, but their approaches and contexts differ.

6.5 Transforming Education: The Visionaries Malaviya and Samanta (Rout 2022; Pattnaik et. al. 2024; Singh 2021; Kumar 2022; Mishra & Tripathi 2023)

The following highlights the main similarities between Dr. Samanta's educational model and Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya's educational philosophy:

- **Education as a Catalyst for Social Transformation:** Malaviya believed education was crucial for national development and social upliftment, founding Banaras Hindu University (BHU) to empower Indians through learning, whereas Dr. Samanta uses education as a primary tool for empowering marginalized and tribal communities, aiming for holistic societal change.
- **Institution Building for Wider Access:** Malaviya established a major, inclusive university (BHU) with the vision of providing quality education to a broad spectrum of society. Dr. Samanta founded KISS, the world's largest residential school for tribal children, offering free education, food, and healthcare to thousands annually.
- **Commitment to Inclusivity:** Malaviya sought to make education accessible to all, regardless of caste, religion, or background, promoting unity and equality. Dr. Samanta's model focuses on the most excluded - tribal children - ensuring they receive equal opportunities and integration into mainstream society.
- **Holistic Approach to Education:** Malaviya advocated a blend of academic, moral, and spiritual education to foster all-around development, whereas Dr. Samanta provides a holistic curriculum at KISS that combines academics, vocational training, sports, healthcare, and value-based education.
- **Visionary Leadership and Legacy:** Malaviya's vision and leadership transformed India's educational landscape, inspiring future generations, whereas Dr. Samanta's model exemplifies visionary leadership by creating a sustainable, impactful framework for uplifting marginalized communities.
- **National Development and Social Responsibility:** Malaviya saw education as vital to India's progress, fostering responsible, ethical citizens, whereas Dr. Samanta aims to transform marginalized children into productive citizens who contribute to national development.

The following outlines the primary distinctions between Dr. Samanta's educational model and Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya's educational philosophy:

- **Historical Context and Social Focus:** Malaviya founded Banaras Hindu University (BHU) in the early 20th century, aiming to promote higher education and nation-building during the Indian freedom movement. In comparison, Dr. Samanta established KISS in the late 20th and 21st centuries, focusing on the social upliftment of tribal and extremely marginalized children in contemporary India.
- **Target Beneficiaries:** Malaviya's BHU is open to all, with a mission to provide quality university education to Indians across castes and religions, but it does not specifically target the most marginalized. Dr. Samanta's KISS is designed exclusively for tribal and underprivileged children, directly addressing the needs of India's most excluded communities.
- **Type and Level of Institution:** Malaviya built a comprehensive university offering undergraduate, postgraduate, and doctoral programs across multiple disciplines, with a focus on both traditional Indian knowledge and modern sciences. In comparison, Dr. Samanta runs a large, fully-residential K-12 school with integrated support (education, food, healthcare), later offering pathways to higher education through affiliated universities.
- **Curriculum and Educational Approach:** Malaviya advocated a blend of modern scientific education and traditional Indian values, including religious, moral, and spiritual instruction, whereas Dr. Samanta emphasizes holistic, practical education - academics, vocational training, sports, and life skills - with a secular and pragmatic outlook, tailored for employability and social integration.
- **Support Systems:** Malaviya's BHU provides academic infrastructure but not comprehensive residential care, nutrition, or free services for all; scholarships and hostels are available, but not on the same scale as KISS. Dr. Samanta's KISS provides complete support - free education, food, healthcare, accommodation, and mentoring - removing all barriers for marginalized children.

- **Scale and Focus of Social Impact:** Malaviya influenced Indian higher education and produced national leaders, but with a broader, less targeted approach, whereas Dr. Samanta's model achieves concentrated, measurable social impact by transforming the lives of tens of thousands of tribal children and entire communities.
- **Resource Mobilization and Sustainability:** Malaviya relied on donations, public support, and the nationalist movement to build and sustain BHU, whereas Dr. Samanta's model Leverages partnerships, modern fundraising, and integration with other educational institutions (like KIIT) for long-term sustainability and growth.

Summary: Both Samanta and Malaviya championed education for social change and inclusivity. Malaviya focused on broad-based higher education for a diverse student body, while Samanta's contemporary model targets holistic upliftment of tribal children. Their approaches reflect the needs of their times and audiences.

The comparative analysis reveals that Dr. Samanta's model shares philosophical continuities with earlier Indian reformers in its emphasis on dignity, empowerment, holistic development, and social justice. However, its distinctiveness lies in the large-scale institutional operationalization of these principles through an integrated residential model for tribal education.

7. Assessing Contemporary Relevance and Institutional Impact

The educational philosophies and reform initiatives of Rabindranath Tagore, Jyotirao Phule, Swami Vivekananda, B.R. Ambedkar, Madan Mohan Malaviya, and Dr. Achyuta Samanta collectively represent a rich continuum of Indian educational thought. Although shaped by different historical contexts and social realities, all six reformers viewed education as a transformative force capable of promoting social justice, human dignity, empowerment, and national development. Their contributions continue to influence contemporary debates on inclusion, equality, citizenship, and human development.

The enduring relevance of these reformers lies in their ability to address structural inequalities through educational intervention. Tagore emphasized creativity, cultural development, and holistic learning; Phule championed education as a means of social liberation for marginalized communities and women; Vivekananda advocated character-building and service-oriented education; Ambedkar viewed education as the foundation of equality and democratic participation; and Malaviya sought to integrate cultural values with modern scientific knowledge for national regeneration. Together, these approaches established the intellectual foundations of modern educational reform in India. (Tiwari 2023)

Within this broader tradition, Dr. Achyuta Samanta represents a contemporary adaptation of reformist educational thought to the realities of twenty-first-century India. His work through KIIT and KISS demonstrates how educational philosophy can be translated into large-scale institutional practice. Beginning with only 125 tribal children in 1993, KISS has evolved into one of the world's largest fully free residential educational institutions, serving more than 40,000 indigenous students annually. The model integrates education, nutrition, healthcare, accommodation, vocational training, sports, cultural preservation, and emotional support within a single ecosystem of development. (O'Hanlon 1985; Burke 1985)

A distinguishing feature of the KISS model is its comprehensiveness. While earlier reformers primarily focused on expanding educational access, Samanta's approach addresses the multiple barriers that prevent marginalized communities from benefiting from education. By integrating academic learning with healthcare, nutrition, life skills, and employability-oriented training, the model seeks to create conditions for sustained social mobility rather than educational participation alone. This multidimensional framework reflects contemporary understandings of human development and inclusive growth.

The model also demonstrates significant adaptability to present-day socio-economic realities. Unlike many traditional educational interventions, KISS combines formal education with vocational skills, leadership development, digital literacy, and cultural preservation. Such integration enables tribal students to participate effectively in modern economic and social systems while maintaining their indigenous identities. In this regard, the model extends the inclusive aspirations of Phule and Ambedkar, the humanistic ideals of Tagore, the service-oriented philosophy of Vivekananda, and the institution-building vision of Malaviya.

Another important dimension of Samanta's contribution is scalability. Educational initiatives developed by earlier reformers were often constrained by the political, economic, and institutional conditions of their respective eras. The KISS model demonstrates how strategic partnerships, sustainable financing mechanisms, and institutional innovation can expand educational opportunities for large populations without compromising

holistic support systems. Its success has attracted national and international recognition, positioning it as a noteworthy example of education-led social transformation. (Debnath 2026)

The measurable outcomes associated with the KISS model further enhance its contemporary relevance. The institution has contributed to improved educational participation, reduced dropout rates, enhanced social mobility, and greater access to higher education and professional opportunities among tribal communities. Graduates have entered universities, civil services, professional careers, and international sporting platforms, reflecting the long-term developmental impact of the model. (Jaffrelot 2005; Singh 2024)

The comparative analysis suggests that Dr. Achyuta Samanta’s work should not be viewed as a departure from India’s reformist educational tradition but rather as its contemporary extension. His model synthesizes many of the core principles advanced by Tagore, Phule, Vivekananda, Ambedkar, and Malaviya while adapting them to contemporary challenges of poverty, exclusion, and inequality. In doing so, it demonstrates how educational institutions can function not merely as centres of learning but as instruments of social transformation, community empowerment, and sustainable human development. Consequently, the KISS model offers valuable insights for policymakers, educators, and development practitioners seeking inclusive and scalable solutions to persistent educational and social disparities in the twenty-first century. These comparisons are summarized from Table 3 to 7: (UNESCO 2022; UNDP 2021)

Table 3: Comparison of Samanta’s Model with Tagore’s Work

Indicators	Reformers’ Work	
	Dr. Achyuta Samanta	Rabindranath Tagore
Mass Outreach and Scalability	The KISS model (educates and supports over 40,000 tribal children annually, providing free education, food, and healthcare) is scalable and replicable, addressing the needs of large populations.	Santiniketan and Visva-Bharati, while influential, remained relatively small and boutique, limiting direct impact.
Targeted Social Transformation	Focuses specifically on uplifting marginalized tribal communities, addressing poverty, illiteracy, and exclusion at the grassroots level.	Aimed at holistic individual development, but his approach was not targeted at the poorest or most marginalized.
Practical and Outcome-Oriented Approach	Combines academic learning with vocational training, life skills, and social values, preparing students for real-world success and economic independence.	Emphasized aesthetic, spiritual, and intellectual development, which sometimes lacked immediate practical outcomes for students.
Integrated Support System	Offers a comprehensive residential model, students receive education, nutrition, healthcare, and career guidance all under one roof.	Provided a nurturing environment but did not offer the same level of integrated support for basic living needs.
Measurable Impact and Replication	Success is easily quantified -thousands of graduates, improved tribal literacy rates, and social mobility. The model is recognized nationally and internationally, and can be replicated elsewhere.	The model is more philosophical and less focused on measurable outcomes or mass replication.
Adaptation to Modern Challenges	Addresses contemporary issues like poverty, social exclusion, and access to education for the most vulnerable, adapting to India’s current socio-economic realities.	While visionary, his model was shaped by early 20th-century ideals and may not fully address today’s challenges.

Table 4: Comparison of Samanta’s Model with Phule’s Work

Indicators	Reformers’ Work	
	Dr. Achyuta Samanta	Jyotirao Phule
Scale and Institutional Reach	The KISS model (educates and supports over 40,000 tribal children annually, providing free education, food, and healthcare) is scalable and replicable, addressing the needs of large populations.	Founded schools for girls and lower-caste children in 19th-century Pune, which were revolutionary but limited in scale due to the era’s constraints.
Comprehensive Support System	Provides a holistic, residential model, students’ educational, nutritional, medical, and emotional needs are all addressed within the campus.	Focused on opening access to education and fighting caste discrimination, but could not offer the same breadth of support due to limited resources and social barriers.
Integration of Vocational and Life Skills	Curriculum includes vocational training, sports, life skills, and career guidance, preparing students for employment and self-reliance.	Emphasized basic education and social equality, but vocational and modern employability skills were not a focus, reflecting the period’s priorities.
Targeted Modern Social Upliftment	Directly addresses contemporary issues such as poverty, exclusion of tribal populations, and modern educational challenges. The model is recognized for its effectiveness in social transformation.	Pioneer in battling caste and gender discrimination, but his model was shaped by the urgent needs of 19th-century India.
Replication and Recognition	The KISS model is scalable and has inspired similar initiatives nationally and internationally, with strong partnerships and recognition.	His efforts laid the foundation for later reforms but did not immediately yield scalable institutional models.
Resource Mobilization and Sustainability	Uses modern fundraising, partnerships, and integration with other educational institutions (such as KIIT) to achieve sustained impact.	Relied on personal resources and support from reform-minded individuals, facing significant societal opposition and limited funding.

Table 5: Comparison of Samanta’s Model with Swami’s Work

Indicators	Reformers’ Work	
	Dr. Achyuta Samanta	Swami Vivekananda
Large-Scale Institutional Implementation	The KISS model (educates and supports over 40,000 tribal children annually, providing free education, food, and healthcare) is scalable and replicable, addressing the needs of large populations.	Inspired the Ramakrishna Mission and educational reform, but did not create a single, large-scale institution with comparable reach or infrastructure.
Targeted Support for Most Marginalized	Specifically focuses on tribal and extremely marginalized children, addressing their educational, nutritional, and healthcare needs comprehensively.	Advocated for the upliftment of all, especially the poor, but his vision was broader and less focused on a specific segment.

Indicators	Reformers' Work	
	Dr. Achyuta Samanta	Swami Vivekananda
Comprehensive and Practical Support	Provides a holistic support system: free residential schooling, meals, healthcare, vocational training, sports, and life skills, all under one roof.	Emphasized holistic development, but practical support systems for students' everyday needs were not a core part of his model.
Measurable and Replicable Impact	The success of KISS is quantifiable, with tangible improvements in literacy, social mobility, and empowerment for thousands, with a model that can be replicated elsewhere.	His legacy is more philosophical and inspirational, with less focus on measurable, immediate outcomes or mass replication.
Modern Adaptability	Addresses current socio-economic challenges such as poverty, exclusion, and employability, integrating modern curriculum and skill development.	His educational ideals, though timeless in spirit, were shaped by early 20th-century priorities and may lack direct solutions for today's practical challenges.
Resource Mobilization and Sustainability	Employs contemporary fundraising, institutional partnerships, and integration with other educational institutions (like KIIT) for sustained, large-scale impact.	Relied on philanthropic support and the dedication of followers, with fewer options for large-scale, sustainable resource generation.

Table 6: Comparison of Samanta's Model with Ambedkar's Work

Indicators	Reformers' Work	
	Dr. Achyuta Samanta	Dr. B.R. Ambedkar
Scale and Institutional Reach	Founded KISS, the world's largest fully residential school for indigenous children, directly serving over 40,000 students annually and providing them with free education, food, and healthcare.	Established important educational institutions and hostels for Dalit students, but these were smaller in scope due to the social, political, and financial constraints of his era.
Comprehensive, Holistic Support	Offers a one-stop, all-encompassing model, students receive not only education, but also nutrition, healthcare, sports, vocational training, and life skills, ensuring all-around development.	Focused on educational access and social rights, but his institutions could not provide the same level of comprehensive services due to the limitations of time.
Modern Adaptability and Replication	The KISS model is adapted to 21st-century challenges-integrating technology, vocational skills, and employability into the curriculum-and has inspired replication on national and international scales.	Pioneered the educational movement for Dalits, but replication at large scale was difficult due to societal barriers and available resources.
Measurable, Immediate Social Impact	The outcomes of KISS are tangible and trackable: thousands of tribal children lifted out of poverty, improved literacy rates, and clear pathways to employment and higher education.	His impact was foundational and transformative for Indian society, but direct, large-scale, measurable educational outcomes were limited by historical constraints.
Resource Mobilization and Sustainability	Leverages modern fundraising, partnerships, and integration with KIIT University to sustain and expand KISS's impact.	Relied on personal sacrifice and limited community support, facing significant resistance and fewer institutional resources.

Table 7: Comparison of Samanta’s Model with Malaviya’s Work

Indicators	Reformers’ Work	
	Dr. Achyuta Samanta	Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya
Focused Upliftment of the Most Marginalized	KISS is specifically designed for tribal and extremely underprivileged those at the very bottom of social and economic spectrum.	BHU, while inclusive and visionary, broadly serves all sections of society and does not exclusively target the most marginalized.
Comprehensive, Holistic Support	Offers a fully residential, free education, food, healthcare, accommodation, sports, and vocational training, removing every barrier to L&D..	BHU provides academic excellence and some support services, but not the same level of comprehensive, day-to-day care and life support.
Practical, Outcome-Oriented Approach	Integrates academics with vocational, life, and employability skills, ensuring students are prepared for real-world success and social mobility.	Emphasized academic and moral education, but with less focus on vocational or livelihood skills tailored to the most disadvantaged.
Direct, Measurable Social Impact	The impact of KISS is quantifiable: tens of thousands of marginalized children lifted out of poverty, with improved literacy, health, and career prospects.	BHU’s impact is broad and national, but its direct effect on the poorest and most excluded is less concentrated.
Modern Scalability and Replication	The KISS model is scalable, replicable, and has inspired similar institutions adapting to contemporary challenges.	BHU set a benchmark for higher education, but its model is less easily replicated for the specific upliftment of the most excluded populations.
Removal of Barriers	By providing everything at no cost, KISS eliminates material barriers to education for the most marginalized, addressing not just access but also retention and completion.	While BHU is accessible, students often need to arrange for their own support, which can be a barrier for the poorest.

8. Conclusion

This study examined the transformative approaches to inclusive education, social change, and human development advanced by Rabindranath Tagore, Jyotirao Phule, Swami Vivekananda, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, and Dr. Achyuta Samanta. Although these reformers emerged from different historical periods and responded to distinct social challenges, they shared a common conviction that education is the most powerful instrument for human empowerment, social justice, and national development. Their philosophies collectively demonstrate that meaningful social transformation requires not only access to education but also the cultivation of dignity, equality, cultural identity, ethical values, and community participation.

The comparative analysis reveals that Dr. Achyuta Samanta’s educational model represents a contemporary institutional extension of many of the ideals articulated by earlier reformers. Similar to Tagore’s holistic humanism, Phule’s commitment to the oppressed, Vivekananda’s emphasis on character-building and service, Ambedkar’s vision of education as liberation, and Malaviya’s belief in nation-building through education, Samanta’s work places marginalized communities at the centre of educational transformation. However, his contribution is distinguished by the large-scale institutional operationalization of these principles through the Kalinga Institute of Social Sciences (KISS), where education is integrated with nutrition, healthcare, vocational training, cultural preservation, emotional support, and community development. While the study identifies significant contemporary strengths in the KISS model, it does not seek to establish a hierarchy among reformers; rather, it recognizes each contribution as a historically significant response to the educational and social challenges of its time. From an academic perspective, this study contributes to the growing discourse on transformative and inclusive education by positioning Samanta within the broader intellectual tradition of Indian

educational thought. Rather than viewing his work as an isolated contemporary initiative, the study demonstrates how his educational praxis reflects philosophical continuities with major Indian reformist traditions while simultaneously responding to twenty-first-century developmental challenges. The analysis therefore extends existing scholarship by providing a comparative framework through which historical educational philosophies can be examined alongside modern institutional models of social transformation. The study further contributes to comparative educational scholarship by proposing a framework through which historical educational philosophies may be examined alongside contemporary models of inclusive institutional development.

The findings also carry important policy implications. The experiences of the reformers examined in this study suggest that educational interventions are most effective when they address the multidimensional realities of exclusion, including poverty, social discrimination, cultural marginalization, and lack of access to health and welfare services. The KISS model illustrates how integrated educational ecosystems can contribute to educational attainment, social mobility, gender inclusion, indigenous empowerment, and community development. Policymakers may draw valuable lessons from such approaches while designing inclusive educational strategies aligned with national priorities and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). At the same time, critical questions relating to sustainability, scalability, institutional decentralization, and long-term replicability remain important areas for future research. The continued success of transformative educational models depends not only on visionary leadership but also on robust governance structures, community participation, and institutional continuity. Further empirical studies may therefore explore the long-term social outcomes of such models across diverse regional and cultural contexts.

Ultimately, the study reaffirms that education remains the most enduring pathway toward human development and social transformation. The collective legacy of the reformers examined here demonstrates that educational institutions can become powerful instruments of justice, empowerment, and nation-building when guided by ethical commitment, inclusive vision, and social responsibility. In this broader context, Dr. Achyuta Samanta's journey from extreme poverty to global educational leadership represents not merely a personal success story but a contemporary example of how education, compassion, and institutional innovation can transform lives, communities, and societies.

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