

## THE ANISA MODEL: AN OVERVIEW

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Anisa comes from a root word that refers to "the tree of life" and symbolizes beauty, fragrance, shelter, shade, and perpetual cycles of fruition. The Anisa Model represents a scientific effort over many years to lay the conceptual foundations for a system of education that embodies the qualities reflected in that ancient symbol.

The Model rests on a clear philosophical base which specifies the nature of man, and on a coherent body of theory concerning development and learning, curriculum, pedagogy, administration, and evaluation derived from the philosophy. The logical derivation of the Anisa theories from the philosophical base has insured both the coherence and comprehensiveness of its overall conception. To whatever extent possible, every proposition in the body of theory has been checked against the findings of empirical studies thereby providing inductive support for the theory. It is obviously beyond the scope of this article to present a detailed explanation of the Model, but a discussion of its basic principles and theoretical propositions will be sufficient to convey its significance as a potential break-through in educational thought and the promise it holds for the future of education. Only the philosophical base of the Model and its theories of development, administration, and evaluation will be presented in this overview. References to the theories of curriculum and pedagogy will be brief since they are discussed more fully in subsequent articles.

### The Philosophical Base and the Theory of Development

To establish the philosophical base of the Model, we reviewed both Western and Eastern streams of philosophical thought beginning with philosophers before Plato and progressing up to those of the present day. Because his work is a synthesis of historically important contributions to philosophy which could provide the broadest possible context within which to understand man's nature and his relation to the universe, we have drawn heavily on the cosmology of the organismic philosopher, mathematician, and logician, Alfred North Whitehead. His work has nurtured our assurance that the Anisa educational system rests on principles of such generality that it has the potential for addressing any educational issue at any point in time.

Whitehead claimed that the most pervasive and fundamental characteristic of the universe is change, that change means process, and

that process presupposes potentiality. In essence, process is the translation of potentiality into actuality—a translation which we regard as synonymous with creativity, the "universal of universals" as Whitehead terms it. Process is reality; to understand reality is to understand process. Viewing man in terms of this reality, the Anisa philosophy sets forth the basic proposition that there is no limit to man's potentiality and therefore to his creativity. These propositions reveal the general purpose of education: the promotion of the actualization of potentiality at an optimum rate.

The Anisa theory of development explains the nature of potentiality and how it is translated into actuality. It establishes two basic categories of potentiality—biological and psychological, fixes nutrition as the key factor in the actualization of biological potentialities, and designates learning as the key factor in the actualization of psychological potentialities. The Anisa theory is an epigenetic theory of development; it affirms that the translation of potentiality into actuality is sustained by the organism's interaction with the environment and explains why certain kinds of environments and particular kinds of interactions are required to actualize given potentialities. The genetic endowment of the organism does not solely determine what it will become nor does its environment, but the qualities of both and the interactions between them.

Since interaction with the environment is held to be the means by which the actualization of potentiality is sustained, teaching is defined as arranging environments and guiding the child's interaction with them for the purpose of actualizing a given potentiality. This clear definition of teaching enables us to break down the teaching act within the framework of the theory of development so that a competency-based teacher preparation program becomes possible.

The Anisa theory of development establishes five categories of psychological potentiality: psycho-motor, perceptual, cognitive, affective, and volitional. It defines learning as the ability to *differentiate* experience by breaking it down into contrastible elements, to *integrate* these elements into a new pattern, and then to *generalize* the pattern to new situations. This definition of learning applies to the actualization of all psychological potentialities. If a child is having a learning problem, it is theoretically traceable to some kind of biological impairment or to a failure to differentiate, integrate, or generalize, or some combination of these in one or more of the categories of potentialities. Given this theoretical base, a teacher can diagnose the developmental levels of the child and create prescriptions to fit his needs.

The philosophy underlying the Model asserts that man is both immanent and transcendent, and therefore conscious. Immanence refers to the capacity of man to record his interactions with various environments, so that his total past may be drawn upon as he negotiates the present. His remarkable memory is the vehicle of immanence. As man organizes present affairs so that what exists only *in potentia* ultimately does become actualized, his transcendence is expressed. Transcendence always concerns the operation of volition in response to aspirations for the future. The future dwells actively in the present when current activities are organized around an ideal that speaks to future possibilities. This is particularly true in the case of a person's self-ideal. Young people who grow up without forming a self-ideal will have no sense of future or purpose and therefore no framework for organizing present actions except avoidance of pain and pursuit of pleasure. In other words, an ideal operates very much at the heart of consciousness as an intrinsic source of motivation as well as an organizing principle that controls the use of energy. It expresses the operation of purpose as final cause.

The promulgation of the idea of purpose or ideals as final cause is one of the chief features that distinguishes a philosophy of organism from a philosophy of mechanism. Modern physicists themselves no longer adhere to the mechanistic interpretation of the universe based on Newtonian physics. Whitehead claims that the introduction of this "subjectivist principle" is in essence the admission of subjective aim or purpose as final cause. The operation of purpose accounts for a great deal of human behavior and coupled with the notion of efficient cause (which looks at external forces creating changes in the organism) provides a more comprehensive view of development and education.

An example that makes a distinction between efficient and final causes may be useful. Consider a gardener who has dug a hole to plant a tree. The efficient cause that made the hole come into being was the shovel, forced into the earth by the gardener, and the removal of soil from one spot to another. But what made the gardener make the *shovel* do this? To find the answer we must ask the gardener *why* he did what he did and he will say, "Because my *purpose* was to plant a tree and to plant a tree a hole must be dug." This purpose was the final cause. Without it the shovel would not have been pushed into the earth. There would have been no efficient causation without the prior existence of the final cause.

Theories of learning and development that are only concerned with stimulus and response are mechanistic in conception since they deal

only with extrinsic forces or efficient causes. Such a mechanistic conception of the nature of man is an inadequate conceptual basis for an educational system just as it has been found inadequate in the physical sciences.

When potentialities are actualized, they are manifested as expressions of power or energy. But the energy is not randomly expressed; it is structured. These structured or patterned expressions of energy use are the values of the organism. Thus, the Anisa Model incorporates a new value theory which defines values as the relatively enduring structurings of potentialities as they are actualized into patterns of energy use (acting, perceiving, thinking, feeling, and intending or willing). The integration of these values—patterns of energy use—represents the functional and structural reality of personal identity. In other words, we differ from each other in personality because each personality is comprised of unique patterns of energy use. Thus to know and understand a person is to know how he uses his energy and to see why the energy is used the way it is by virtue of the person's past experience (immanence), present needs, and aspirations for the future (transcendence). Self-knowledge depends on the same things.

If the patterns of energy use which define the personality result in interaction with the environment which threatens survival or decreases the quality of life, education as we define it has failed. If energy use removes one from contact with reality or threatens the life of oneself or others, it is pathological and will be manifested as neurosis or psychosis on the one hand and delinquency or crime on the other. It is a central purpose of the Anisa Model to assist in the formation of personal character or identity, so that the patterns of energy use which define it place the person in charge of his own destiny in a way that enables him to continue actualizing his own potentialities and those of others, so that their mutual survival is not only guaranteed, but their quality perpetually improved. Thus, the Model is clearly preventive in its approach to crime and mental illness. However, because it is unrealistic to expect that all pathology can be prevented, the Model includes a comprehensive system of therapy and rehabilitation.

### Theory of Administration

Any educational system must have the proper administrative machinery to keep it functioning. But if the principles by which the administration functions violate the purposes of the educational sys-

tem, means will not be consistent with ends and incoherence will be introduced into the system, mitigating against the efficient achievement of objectives. Therefore, it was essential that the Model incorporate a theory of administration that is deductively related to the philosophical base of the Model and consistent with its theory of development.

The theory of administration defines administration in terms of service, the meaning of which is determined by the specific purposes and goals of the Model. So that they can be both helpful and credible such a service explicitly calls for administrators to have extensive knowledge about the goals and how they are to achieve them. The theory identifies two basic functions of administration which must remain in dynamic equilibrium: leadership and management. *Leadership* is a function that arises from dealing with the present in terms of future possibilities and is therefore an expression of transcendence. *Management* is a function which deals with the present by organizing and coordinating the resources represented by past achievements, accumulated knowledge and expertise. It therefore is an expression of immanence. The theory explicates the necessity for leadership and management to collaborate in the establishment of priorities, assessing needs, identifying resources, determining feasibility and allocating resources to achieve objectives as efficiently as possible.

The theory of administration holds that institutions are collectivities that have potentialities just as individuals do. The theory explains how differentiation and integration of the staff around purpose is the primary means of releasing the potentialities of the institution. It presents the rationale for defining all of the tasks to be achieved and the qualities required to achieve them so that personnel can be recruited on a rational basis and the staff can be differentiated by matching the talents, interests, abilities and skills of individuals with institutional needs. The theory recognizes the unifying advantages of hierarchical administrative structures. Guarding against the tendency of hierarchically organized institutions to become rigid and unresponsive, it establishes consultation as a function indispensable to the problem-solving process and removes arbitrariness from decision-making power by distributing that power to different positions throughout the system in such a way that expertise, knowledge, and experience of persons occupying the positions legitimize the power that flows from the authority assigned to the positions.

The theory of administration places a great deal of importance on the dissemination of information both horizontally and vertically

and relates the rate and quality of information flow to both efficiency and morale. It affirms the necessity for direct feedback on performance of staff members and endorses a circumscribed counseling function as an important element in performance evaluation. In other words, feedback should be given in the most helpful way possible and must include encouragement and appreciation, both of which are important to the maintenance of morale.

Morale is defined by the theory as a pervasive willingness to comply with reasonable policy, to work cooperatively, and to make sacrifices when the system is under stress. It arises out of a widespread conviction that everyone's energy in the organization is constructively utilized in the achievement of the shared purposes and ideals of the system—purposes and ideals which themselves relate to the perpetual release of the potentialities of the group as a social organism and which generate a climate of hope and opportunity for growth. Morale also depends upon satisfaction with the compensation received for efforts made and a sense of security that derives from trust that confidences will not be broken or injustices committed. Finally, morale depends upon a sense of unity and belonging that comes from the acknowledgement and appreciation of contributions made.

Within the wider context of the community, the theory of administration reflects an understanding of the need for the active participation of community and home in the educational process so that children are rescued from the fragmenting discontinuities and conflicting loyalties that can impair the release of their potentialities.

### Theory of Evaluation

Because the theory of administration emphasizes the need to have a rational basis for making decisions that will lead to institutional self-renewal, research and evaluation are mandatory. But it would not make any sense to have an evaluation that focuses on the irrelevant or trivial aspects of the Model and its implementation. It was therefore desirable to construct a theory of evaluation coherent with the body of theory of which it is a part. Within the Model, evaluation takes its definition from the purposes of the activity or program element being evaluated and seeks to relate means to ends, distinguishing efficient from final cause. In keeping with the Anisa value theory, evaluation centers around an analysis of the system's energy use (means) to see how well purposes (ends) are achieved. Since energy use in a system is an on-going process, evaluation is neces-

sarily an on-going process—one which examines every part of the program operation and which provides immediate feedback for timely modifications of the evaluation schemes themselves. Evaluation methods and activities must be evaluated so that instruments and procedures used to collect data yield information that is as truthful as possible.

The theory of evaluation affirms the view that data rarely speak for themselves, but require interpretation which takes into account 1) the probable accuracy and weight or significance of the data as determined by the type of data, their source, and the time and means of collection, and 2) the purpose for which the data and their interpretation are to be used (i.e., a question of relevance). The theory reflects a commitment to the value of longitudinal studies and cautions against the ready acceptance of short-term effects as proof of significant impact. It establishes the comparative analysis of children's interactions with particular environments and their developmental consequences as the focal points of inquiry.

The acceptance of subjective aim (purpose and ideals) as final cause introduces the need for a new kind of perspective on evaluation. Thus, the theory affirms the indispensability of recognizing internal states of the organism as causal influences on behavior. Of course, internal states of the organism are extraordinarily complex and cannot be sampled directly. The theory of evaluation therefore admits the ineffability of many vital aspects of human experience, thereby avoiding possible inadvertent biases proceeding from an unrecognized assumption that whatever is not measurable is not important. The theory also accommodates the notion of efficient causes reflected in much of the current stimulus-and-response research paradigm.

Within a broader context, the theory allies the purpose of evaluation with the general heuristic, explanatory, and predictive functions of the scientific method.

## Conclusion

Because the Model itself is based on a recognition of the actualization of potentiality as the process which ultimately defines reality, it regards the results of evaluation as the rational basis for reexamining and refining the philosophy underlying the Model and the body of theory on which its operationalization depends. It therefore is an essential element in institutionalizing self-renewal, assuring sur-

vival, and improving the quality of life. The Anisa educational system is, therefore, not to be viewed as a passive transmitter of the status quo but as a benevolent transformer of the culture that it both serves and helps perpetually to recreate.

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