



Published online: 2 May, TAPS 2018, 3(2), 54
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.29060/TAPS.2018-3-2/LE2032>

Rashomon approach as educational method

Junichi Tanaka

Department of Education and support for Regional Medicine, Tohoku University Hospital, Japan

It was interesting to read the letter from Rajesh and Sengodan (2017) published in *The Asia Pacific Scholar* (TAPS) Volume 2 Number 3 regarding the Kurusowa approach to teaching and learning (Rajesh & Sengodan, 2017). The authors discuss the Rashomon effect in the letter and hence, I would like to elaborate further on the “Rashomon approach.”

J. M. Atkin (1975) proposed the Rashomon approach derived from Akira Kurosawa’s movie *Rashomon*. Atkin explains the Rashomon approach in contrast to the technological approach from the 1974 Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development meeting held in Japan.

The technological approach establishes general goals and then reassigns them to measurable goals. Educational materials are created and learning activities are conducted to achieve the set goals.

In the Rashomon approach, the general goals are set first. After that, however, the teacher fully understands the general goals, utilizes the experience and technological expertise of individual teachers, and engages in creative learning activities to realize the goals. In such learning environments, the learner’s behavior is evaluated based on various aspects to see whether the set goals were achieved. The point of emphasis is an “improvisational activity” performed by the teacher. However, to improvise in a particular way, the teacher must have the ability to understand the content and facilitate effectively to benefit the student. Therefore, the importance of teacher training is emphasized.

As background to this approach, not only the intended result but the unintended hidden curriculum, that go unnoticed as secondary results in curriculum evaluation, can sometimes have significant educational impact.

In that respect, the Rashomon approach is distinctive as learning activities are conducted based not only on goals

provided externally but also on learners’ internal interests.

The common point between the Rashomon effect and the Rashomon approach is that multiple people assign different meanings to certain events, thereby producing various perceptions. The Rashomon effect is widely recognized and studied under cultural anthropology. However, we still do not have enough knowledge to regard this approach as a pedagogical method.

For handling clinical cases, a biopsychosocial model has been proposed to capture disease or illness as a system of biological, psychological, and social factors. This model and the Rashomon approach are very similar in handling multifaceted problems and issues. Therefore, in complicated clinical cases, I believe that education through the Rashomon approach will be very appropriate and effective.

Declaration of Interest

The author declare no competing interests.

References

Rajesh, P. K., & Bharathi, S. (2017). The Kurusowa approach to teaching learning. *The Asia Pacific Scholar*, 2(3), 28. <https://doi.org/10.29060/TAPS.2017-2-3/LE1045>

Atkin, J. M. (1975). A New Evaluator Perspective for Professors of Education. A. Bagley (Ed), *The Professor of Education: An Assessment of Conditions* (pp. 81-84). Minneapolis: Society of Professors of Education, College of Education, University of Minnesota. Retrieved from https://societyofprofessorsofeducation.files.wordpress.com/2013/07/profed_atkins.pdf.

*Junichi Tanaka
Department of Education and support for Regional Medicine
Tohoku University Hospital
Address 1-1 Seiryomachi, Aoba-ku, Sendai
+81-22-717-7587
bdtp392@hosp.tohoku.ac.jp