

## The Effect of Person-Organization Fit on Organizational Agility: The Mediating Role of Organizational Happiness

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### Abstract

In today's world, where person-organization fit, organizational agility, and organizational happiness are becoming increasingly important, we conducted a study to investigate the mediating role of organizational happiness in the relationship between person-organization fit and organizational agility. For this purpose, the research was carried out according to the relational survey and mediation models. Data were collected from 338 teachers using three scales: the Person-Organization Fit Scale, the Organizational Agility Scale, and the Organizational Happiness Scale. The correlation analysis revealed that person-organization fit is strongly and positively correlated with organizational agility. Additionally, there is a moderate positive correlation between person-organization fit and organizational happiness, as well as between organizational happiness and organizational agility. Finally, the mediation test found that organizational happiness partially mediates the effect of person-organization fit on organizational agility.

**Key Words:** Person-Organization Fit, Organizational Agility, Organizational Happiness, School Happiness, Organizational Agility

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## INTRODUCTION

In today's rapidly changing world, it is increasingly difficult for organizations to keep up with the pace of change and innovation. As a result, competition between organizations is intensifying. In order to stay ahead of the competition, organizations need to be able to adapt quickly to change. This is where the concept of "organizational agility" comes in. Organizational agility is the ability of an organization to rapidly adapt to change. This includes the ability to:

- Respond quickly to unexpected changes
- Be flexible in the face of reorganizations
- Be open to new ideas and development
- Adapt to new situations

Organizations that are able to be agile are better positioned to succeed in today's rapidly changing world. (Brosseau et al., 2019; Doğan and Baloğlu, 2018; Yıldırım, 2022). Individuals need to be in harmony with the organization's external environment as well as within itself to provide integrity within the same goals, values, and expectations and to gain the success and continuity of the organization with this integrity. The concept of "person-organization harmony," which emphasizes the similarity of the characteristics of the individual and the organization, basically includes the harmony between the individual and the organization's values and, within this harmony, being compatible and harmonious with mutual goals, personality, attitudes, abilities, and skills (Aksoy-Kuru, 2020; Pattnaik et al., 2020). An individual who spends most of their life at work also contributes to the effectiveness and development of the organization. 'Happiness,' which we can call the state of feeling good and pleasant in the essence of the individual, is also handled as "organizational happiness" within the organization with inter-individual interaction. It can be said that organizational happiness is positively effective in increasing the motivation and performance of individuals, revealing their potential, and increasing the efficiency of institutions (Çetin and Polat, 2021; Polatçı and Ünüvar, 2021). The concepts of person-organization harmony and happiness in the organization have recently come to the fore as mutually essential issues for employers and employees (Demirer, 2019). In this sense, it is thought that the relationship between person-organization fit, organizational agility, and organizational happiness should be examined for organizations to protect and maintain their efficiency and effectiveness in the face of rapid change. In this study, we aimed to examine the mediating role of organizational happiness in the effect of teachers' person-organization fit on organizational agility based on the bilateral relations of the concepts of "*person-organization fit*," "*organizational agility*," and "*organizational happiness*."

### Person-Organization Fit

The 21st century is a period in which individuals are concerned and searching for the organizations they will work for, as well as choosing the most suitable jobs for them. At the same time, in recruitment, organizations look for the harmony between the personality, beliefs, and values of the individual and their own culture, norms, and values; It is observed that individuals are also interested in organizations with a similar structure (Cable and Judge, 1996; Schneider, 2001). The previous search is conceptualized as person-organization fit (P-O Fit) and is briefly defined as "the fit of person and organization values" (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005). It is stated that this harmony is not independent and should be supported by the relationship between the two parties. For this reason, the harmony of values alone is insufficient to explain the person-organization fit. Person-organization fit includes the employee's ability, knowledge, needs, personality, and the job requirements of the organization, the harmony of the organizational structure, and the perceived image of the organization (Morley, 2007; Westerman and Vanka, 2005). In line with these explanations, the concept of person-organization fit, which has increased interest in scientific and managerial fields (Kristof, 1996), is considered as the harmony/overlap of the needs, structure, and values adopted by the individual and

the organization (Can and Kerse, 2020; Chatman, 1989; Dos Santos and De Domenico, 2015; Jehanzeb and Mohanty, 2018; Kerse et al., 2016). Many research results provide empirical evidence that person-organization fit is effective on organizational outcomes and employees. For example, it has been reported that there is a significant relationship between person-organization fit and employees' performance (Demirer, 2019; Hamstra et al., 2019; Sorlie et al., 2022), motivation (Saether, 2019), employee retention (Miller et al., 2020; Naz et al., 2020), job satisfaction (Jehanzeb and Mohanty, 2018), organizational commitment and citizenship levels (Polatçı and Cindiloğlu, 2013), organizational culture (Güleryüz and Aydın, 2020), leadership styles (Aksoy-Kuru, 2020; Halbusi et al., 2020; Sökmen and Benk, 2020; Sudibjo and Prameswari, 2021). The concept of person-organization fit, which is considered as the "holistic harmony" of the person in the organization, expresses the harmony with the general rather than the position (Sorlie et al., 2022). This is one of the most important criteria sought in an organization because agile organizations need speed and harmony in the context of this speed.

### **Organizational Agility**

In a healthy competitive environment, organizations are in a dynamic structure in line with the impact of environmental changes, rapid changes, and demands. In this context, organizations must adapt to and respond to change appropriately. These dynamic business environments have revealed the concept of "agility." First, agility was defined as "*the ability to react quickly to rapid change*" (Brown and Agnew, 1982). Organizational agility can be defined as "*the ability of the organization to adapt to rapid changes and developments*" (Meinhardt et al., 2018; Vinodh et al., 2012). In other words, organizations need to be 'agile' to survive and compete today (De Smet et al., 2018) and to innovate in fast-growing areas (Rigby et al., 2019). Thus, organizations can succeed with their human and material resources and the ability to respond quickly to unexpected and unplanned situations (Meyer, 2011). It is seen that agile organizations increase productivity, employee satisfaction, organizational performance, experience with cooperation, trust, and morale development positively (Ahlbäck et al., 2017; Biçer, 2021). In addition, organizational agility increases the organizational commitment of employees while decreasing their organizational cynicism (Gözcü, 2020) and turnover intentions (Tarakçı, 2021).

Agile organizations are seen as 'living systems' and aim to keep up with the pace of change. Agile organizations, which are stable simultaneously with their dynamic structure, are in continuous development and change with their open, inclusive, dynamic human structure, quick decision-making and learning cycle, and using the developing technology (De Smet et al., 2018). Organizations operating in various sectors have begun to believe that their employees should adopt agile methods (Ahlbäck et al., 2017). It has been determined that organizations with organizational agility have four main characteristics. These are responsiveness, flexibility, speed, and competence. The organization's ability to "respond" is responding quickly and proactively to the customer's change-oriented requests in all sectors. In this way, they can take part in the competition. The organization's "flexibility" concept is to evaluate alternatives for leaders, use different methods to adapt to conditions and be able to do things. "Speed," on the other hand, can be defined as developing innovation in the process of rapidly responding to rapid change. At this stage, the sooner the organization decides its answer, the faster it must be implemented. Finally, "competence" includes three dimensions: how and in what dynamics the three dimensions are used (Akkaya and Tabak, 2018; Zhang and Sharifi, 1999; Tarakçı, 2021).

While the concept of organizational agility has been taken seriously in for-profit organizations for a long time, it appears as a much newer concept in education. Educational organizations and school leaders can't ignore the change while addressing education in the rapidly changing world. When "change and speed" come together, "agility" comes to the fore. The ability of agile organizations to detect changes quickly and respond accurately and more rapidly than their competitors will always ensure that they are ahead (Conboy, 2009; Sull, 2010; Tallon and Pinsonneault, 2011). For example, Altalhi (2018) stated that, according to a study conducted in higher education, institutions accept the importance of organizational agility in order to adapt to innovations in education quickly and to

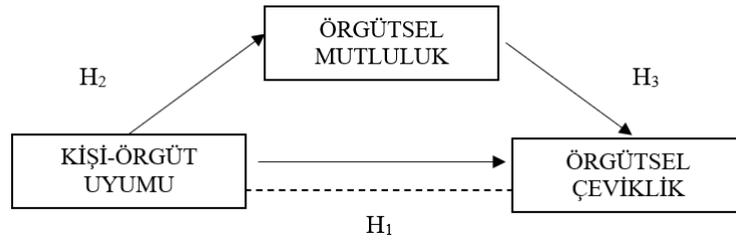
continue to exist in a competitive environment to attract the attention of students, parents, and investors in line with developing technology. Ghasemi (2015) revealed that organizational agility positively relates to organizational effectiveness. Mukerjee (2014), on the other hand, concluded in her study that organizational agility is important in the fight against uncertainties in higher education. Hazzan and Dubinsky (2014) emphasized that agility is a response to change and adaptation in educational organizations, as in every organization. They stated that the Finnish Education System adopts the agile approach in education and is thriving.

### **Organizational Happiness**

Although happiness is perceived as an individual feature, it can be said that the happiness of individuals owned by an organization directs "organizational happiness" and depends on individuals (Fisher, 2010; Harris, 2018; Seligman, 2002). Pryce-Jones (2010) emphasizes that organizational happiness is the most effective way for employees to increase their performance and reveal their potential. Christakis and Fowler (2008) stated that happiness could be a collective phenomenon and that the good feelings that spread from person to person are spread among colleagues, as well as siblings, spouses, and people living in the same place. It is claimed that happiness, which has a contagious quality, positively affects teamwork and organizational communication. The fact that negative emotions cause employees to display cynical attitudes towards the organization and the emergence of toxic actions and situations makes it necessary for organizations to develop different employee happiness strategies (Korkut, 2019). In organizations where positive emotions are dominant, employees develop problem-solving skills, are open to new information, and perform operations easily (Fredrickson, 2003). In other words, in organizations with high organizational happiness, employees play an important role in achieving organizational goals quickly by contributing more to organizational performance. Harter et al. (2003) argue that the performance and motivation of employees with high organizational happiness perceptions will be high, and these employees will contribute more to the effectiveness and efficiency of the organization. The studies have determined that organizational happiness increases employee productivity and the related organizational profitability and cooperation (Arslan and Polat, 2017; Juul, 2018).

"Agility" in organizations brings with it being innovative, strategic, and proactive (Alzoubi et al., 2011). Agility, the inevitable priority of organizations that want to manage change, needs cooperation, flexibility, transparency, harmony, creativity, accountability, empowerment, and trust. In organizations with these characteristics, the employees' performance, motivation, and organizational harmony are high (Harraf et al., 2015; Karlstedt and Hellenborg, 2020). At the same time, organizational happiness is essential in employee performance, motivation, cooperation, organizational commitment, and job satisfaction (Fatima et al., 2017; Uzun and Kesecioğlu, 2019). In this context, it is predicted that organizational happiness will have a high relationship with organizational agility.

Since organizational happiness is of great importance in increasing efficiency and productivity in organizations, it is emphasized that the features required by organizational agility will reach a high level (Wesarat et al., 2015). Assuming that organizational agility requires employees to keep up with innovations by performing fast in the face of uncertainties and changes, person-organization harmony comes into play at this point and can affect this situation; In this study it is aimed to reveal its reflections in educational organizations to examine whether organizational happiness has a mediating role in this interaction. The theoretical model proposed in this direction is given in Figure 1.



**Figure 1. Theoretical model**

Figure 1 (H<sub>1</sub>) shows that person-organization fit positively affects organizational agility. (H<sub>2</sub>) Person-organization fit positively affects organizational happiness. (H<sub>3</sub>) Organizational happiness positively affects organizational agility. (H<sub>4</sub>) Organizational happiness has a mediating role in the relationship between person-organization fit and organizational agility.

## METHOD

### Model of the Research

This research aims to determine the mediating role of organizational happiness in the effect of person-organization fit on organizational agility. The study was carried out according to the quantitative research method and the relational survey model, and the proposed theoretical model was tested with the mediation model. The Relational survey model determines the strength and direction of the relationship between variables (Martella et al., 2013).

### Study Group

The study group of the research consisted of 338 teachers working in the Anatolian side of Istanbul. 67.5% of the participants are female, and 32.5% are male. The average age of the teachers participating in the research is  $\pm 40.38$ .

### Data Collection Tools

In this study, the "Information Form," "Person-Organization Fit Scale," "Organizational Agility Scale," and "Organizational Happiness Scale" were used as data collection tools.

*Person-Organization Fit Scale:* The Person-Organization Fit Scale, developed by Netemeyer et al. (1997) and adapted into Turkish by Turunç and Çelik (2012), consists of 4 items. The sample item of the 5-point Likert scale (1. Strongly disagree, 5. Strongly agree): "I feel that my values are quite compatible with the values of my school." Turunç and Çelik (2012) determined the reliability coefficient of the scale as .81. In this study, the reliability coefficient of the scale was determined as .92.

*Organizational Agility Scale:* The Organizational Agility Scale, developed by Sharifi and Zhang (1999) and adapted into Turkish by Akkaya and Tabak (2018), consists of 17 items and 4 sub-dimensions. The sample item of the 5-point Likert scale (1. Never, 5. Always) is: "Our school has a strategic vision to achieve its long-term goals." Akkaya and Tabak (2018) determined the reliability coefficient of the scale as .92. In this study, the reliability coefficient of the scale was found to be .96.

*Organizational Happiness Scale:* The Organizational Happiness Scale, developed by Demo and Paschoal (2013) and adapted into Turkish by Arslan and Polat (2017), consists of 29 items and 3 sub-dimensions. Sample items of the 5-Likert scale (1. Never, 5. Totally /1. Totally Disagree, 5. Totally Agree): "I have been feeling happy at my job for the last six months. / I use my potential in my work". Arslan and Polat (2017) found the reliability coefficient of the scale to be .96. In this study, the reliability coefficient of the scale was calculated as .73.

### Data Analysis

As a result of the analysis, it was first checked whether the data were normally distributed, the reliability values were calculated, and the results are given in Table 1.

**Table 1: The Kurtosis and Skewness Values of the Scales and their Confidence Coefficients**

Variables	Skewness	Kurtosis	Cronbach Alpha	Number of Items
Person-Organization Fit	-.965	1.016	.921	4
Organizational Agility	-.724	.530	.961	17
Organizational Happiness	-.625	.308	.731	29

According to Table 1, it is seen that the kurtosis and skewness values of the scales are between  $\pm 1$ . According to George and Mallery (2019), the data show a "perfect distribution" when the kurtosis and skewness values of the data are within the range of  $\pm 1$ . In addition, since the reliability values of the scales are .70 and above, it is understood that the scales are reliable.

SPSS and AMOS programs were used in the analysis of the data. First, Pearson correlation analysis was performed to determine the relationship between the variables. Then the theoretical model was tested with the mediation analysis suggested by Baron and Kenny (1986). There are three variables in the model: dependent (organizational agility), independent (person-organization fit), and mediator (organizational happiness). Three criteria are suggested for this analysis: (i) The independent variable should affect the dependent and mediating variable, (ii) the mediating variable should affect the dependent variable, (iii) the effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable should disappear or decrease noticeably when a mediating variable is added to the model. If the effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable disappears, "full mediation" or if there is a noticeable decrease/decrease in the effect, "partial mediation" can be mentioned (Baron & Kenny, 1986).

## RESULTS

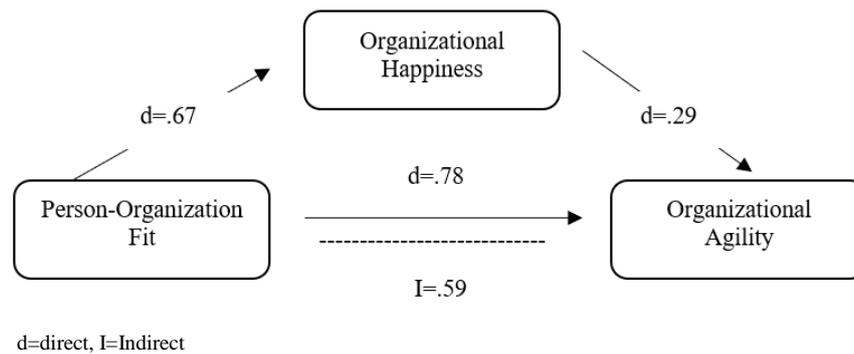
The correlation analysis findings between person-organization fit and organizational agility and organizational happiness variables are given in Table 2.

**Table 2. Correlation Values Between Variables**

		Mean	sd	1	2	3
1-Person-Organization Fit	R	3.998	.869	1		
2- Organizational Agility	R	3.861	.742	.731**	1	
3-Organizational Happiness	R	3.843	.756	.583**	.588**	1

N=338; \*\*p<0.01

When the correlation analysis results were examined, there was a high and positive correlation between person-organization fit and organizational agility ( $r=.731$ ;  $p<.01$ ); between person-organization fit and organizational happiness in a moderate and positive direction ( $r=.583$ ;  $p<.01$ ); it is seen that there is a moderate and positive ( $r=.588$ ;  $p<.01$ ) a significant correlation between organizational agility and organizational happiness. These findings support the mediation test's H1, H2, and H3 hypotheses (Baron and Kenny, 1986) and research. The relationship between the variables was determined, and mediation analysis was performed in the second stage. First, the effect of person-organization fit on organizational happiness was calculated. The analysis was done by adding organizational happiness to the model, and the findings are presented in Figure 2.



**Figure 2. Research Model**

As seen in Figure 2, the direct effect of person-organization fit on organizational agility ( $\beta=.78$ ,  $p<.01$ ) and the direct effect of person-organization fit on organizational happiness decreased with the addition of organizational happiness to the model ( $\beta=.59$ ,  $p<.01$ ). The regression path coefficients in the model were found to be significant, and the direct and indirect effect values between the variables given in Table 3 were examined.

**Table 3: Standardized Direct And Indirect Effect Coefficients Between Variables**

Standardized Direct Effects	P-O Fit	Org. Hap.	Org. Ag.
Organizational Happiness	,674	,000	,000
Organizational Agility	,585	,294	,000
Standardized Indirect Effects	P-O Fit	Org. Hap.	Org. Ag.
Organizational Happiness	,000	,000	,000
Organizational Agility	,198	,000	,000

d= direct/direct effect; I=Direct/indirect effect

As seen in Table 3, person-organization fit directly affects organizational happiness ( $\beta=.674$ ) and organizational agility ( $\beta=.585$ ). In addition, organizational happiness directly affects organizational agility ( $\beta=.294$ ). Person-organization fit indirectly affects organizational agility through organizational happiness ( $\beta=.198$ ). In other words, organizational happiness is partially mediated in the relationship between person-organization fit and organizational agility. The fit indices presented in Table 4 were examined for model validity.

**Table 4. Fit Indexes**

Indexes	Model values	Excellent Values	Acceptable Values	Evaluation
$\chi^2/df$	2.522	$0 \leq \chi^2/df < 3$	$3 < \chi^2/df \leq 5$	Excellent
RMR	.025	$0 \leq RMR \leq .05$	$.05 < RMR \leq .08$	Excellent
SRMR	.031	$0 \leq SRMR \leq .05$	$.05 < SRMR \leq .08$	Excellent
GFI	.948	$.95 \leq GFI \leq 1.0$	$.90 \leq GFI < .95$	Acceptable
AGFI	.914	$.90 \leq AGFI \leq 1.0$	$.85 \leq AGFI < .90$	Excellent
TLI	.974	$.90 \leq TLI \leq 1.0$	$.90 \leq TLI < .95$	Excellent
CFI	.981	$.95 \leq CFI \leq 1.0$	$.90 \leq CFI < .95$	Excellent
RMSEA	.067	$0 \leq RMSEA \leq .05$	$.05 < RMSEA \leq .08$	Acceptable

$\chi^2=100.868$ ;  $df=40$ ;  $p=.000$

According to the fit indices given in Table 4, the theoretical model presented is compatible with the collected data, and the proposed theoretical model has the reference intervals specified in the mediation analysis of the fit indices (Barret, 2007; Bentler & Bonett, 1980; Byrne, 2008, 2010, 2012; Kline, 2011; Maydeu-Olivares & Garcia-Forero, 2010; Schumacker & Lomax, 2010). Along with all these, it is understood that organizational happiness "partially mediates" the effect of person-organization fit on organizational agility.

## DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION, AND SUGGESTIONS

Person-organization fit is expressed as the common norm, belief, value, and goal harmony between employees and the organization (Chatman, 1989; Kristof-Brown et al., 2005). The fact that an organization is in harmony with its employees is an essential factor that will facilitate the achievement of its goals. Agility is seen as a separate and superior quality for organizations to gain an advantage in change and competition, and agility requires flexibility, adaptability, and proactiveness (Obeidat et al., 2021). In addition, organizations that want to achieve excellence in their fields of activity prioritize their employees' happiness (Obeidat et al., 2021). Myers and Diener (1995) stated that a person's relationships, work experiences, and culture stem from the person's well-being. In this context, workplace happiness stems from workplace relationships (Cited by Özen, 2018). On the other hand, organizational happiness expresses the individual's happiness in the workplace where they spend the most time. Paschoal and Tamayo (2008) explain organizational happiness as high positive emotions (moods and emotions) of employees in the organization and progress in improving themselves and reaching their goals (self-actualization). For this reason, employees' happiness during their work in the organization can be considered an important factor that increases organizational commitment (Singh et al., 2017), productivity, motivation, and performance (Al-Ali et al., 2019; Demirer, 2019; Wright, 2004). Likewise, employees with a harmonious working environment will have a happier work atmosphere. It has been revealed that the highly positive relationship between harmony and happiness (Töre and Uysal, 2022) brings efficiency and productivity (Jeong and Park, 2020). It has been demonstrated that adaptability is a factor that positively affects agility (Junker et al., 2021). Seligman (2020) pointed out that all actors in the field of education feed on "happiness" (Cited by Puiu, 2021). In this sense, we aimed to test the mediating role of organizational happiness in the effect of teachers' person-organization fit on organizational agility.

Although the bilateral relations between teachers' person-organization fit and organizational happiness and organizational agility were significant, it was revealed that organizational happiness partially mediated the relationship between person-organization fit and organizational agility. In other words, the agility of schools increases when the goals, abilities, values, structure, and needs of teachers are compatible with the school's goals, abilities, values, design, and needs. In addition, this harmony leads to an increase in school happiness. Finally, teacher-school harmony increases school/organization agility more together with school happiness. Person-organization fit (Demirer, 2019; Sousa & Porto, 2015; Yıldız & Uzunbacak, 2021) shows that strong relationships between employees and managers (Turan, 2019) positively affect employees' perceptions of organizational happiness and that employees' happiness is in the relationship between person-organization fit and performance. Empirical evidence reporting a partial mediating role (Demirer, 2019) strengthens our current research findings. In addition, the positive effect of organizational happiness on employees' willingness, dynamism, development, and openness to innovation (Erer, 2021), productivity, creativity, and efficiency (Jeong and Park, 2020) indicates the importance and necessity of organizational happiness in terms of organizational effectiveness and efficiency. In this context, the fact that teachers are in harmony with the values, assumptions, and goals of the school they work in contributes to their happiness and the school's adaptability by acting agile in times of crisis or change. In addition, teacher-school harmony and school happiness increase school agility's effect on school and teacher outcomes. It can be said that teachers who feel happy at school will make more efforts for the school's goals and student outcomes and will show higher performance. Remarkably, the fact that school happiness partially mediates the relationship between school-teacher harmony and school agility can be delivered as evidence of a primary factor affecting school agility. The more compatible the cultural objectives of the schools and the teachers are, the more the schools' organizational happiness and ability to act agile increase. In summary, high school-teacher harmony and happiness can strengthen schools' agility structures.

It is emphasized that organizations should have agile organizational characteristics in order to protect their existence in today's competitive environment (İnanır, 2020). According to Menon and Suresh (2020), the organization's structure is one of the primary factors affecting organizational agility. In this respect, the current research provides empirical evidence that person-organization fit

and organizational happiness contribute positively to organizational agility. However, it has been determined that organizational happiness partially mediates the relationship between person-organization fit and organizational agility. That is, it does not have a full mediator role. Determining the partial mediation effect of organizational happiness suggests that there may be other variables between person-organization fit and organizational agility or that the relationship between person-organization fit and organizational agility is extreme. However, when the literature is examined, it is seen that there is not enough theoretical knowledge in the field of organizational happiness and organizational agility, especially in the field of education, and there is an empirical gap. In this study, data were collected from teachers. In this sense, the fact that the study group consisted of only teachers limits the generalization of the relationship between the variables discussed in the research. Taking the opinions of other groups that make up the school community can enable comparison. It can be said that the high level of harmony and happiness of the teachers in the school will play an important role in the agile action of the school against uncertainties and challenging situations in uncertain conditions such as Covid-19, sudden developments, and changes. In a world experiencing rapid change and transformation, as in every organization, agile action in schools with a sustainable, innovative, and qualified education approach can provide school effectiveness.

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