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Why Should Errors Be Tolerated?

Perceived Organizational Support, Organization-Based Self-Esteem and

Psychological Well-Being

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Purpose – On the basis of conservation of resources theory (COR), the current study proposes a framework linking an organizational factor, organizational error tolerance, with employees' psychological well-being through gains of psychological resources: perceived organizational support (POS) and organization-based self-esteem (OBSE).

Design/methodology/approach – Across three-wave data collected from 220 hotel frontline employees, this study tests the proposed model using structural equation modeling through AMOS.

Findings – Employees’ perceived organizational error tolerance positively influenced their psychological well-being through significant sequential mediation effects of POS and OBSE.

Practical implications – This study contributes to the existing literature of psychological resources, positive psychology and error management by providing insights into how organizational practice in error situations can be positively related to employees’ psychological well-being.

Originality/value – This paper identifies error-related organizational practices as precursor of individual psychological well-being and explores the non-work-related outcome variable of error management for the first time. The examination of the linkage between organizational error tolerance and employees’ psychological well-being via the underlying mechanism of psychological resources provides the insight into how resources dynamics play important roles in influencing employees’ psychological well-being.

Keywords Error management, Organizational support, Well-being, Self-esteem, Psychological resource, Conservation of resources theory

Paper type Research paper

Introduction

Proclaimed by the UN General Assembly, the first-ever International Day of Happiness was celebrated worldwide in 2012, with the purpose of promoting happiness and well-being as a fundamental goal of human development around the world. As an indispensable component of people’s lives, the workplace plays decisive roles in affecting individuals’ psychological well-being because it is where most people spend most of their time and seek fulfillment of their

physiological as well as social needs (e.g., Hsu *et al.*, 2019; Keeman *et al.*, 2017). However, instead of contributing to the development of psychological well-being, organizations seem to stand at the opposite side and produce factors that continuously impair employees' psychological well-being, such as a poor physical work environment, over-control, unnecessary rules and regulations, heavy workload, unrealistically high performance expectations, lack of support, abusive supervision, bullying or harassment, and few promotion opportunities (e.g., Haver *et al.*, 2019; Huyghebaert *et al.*, 2018). The customer-oriented hospitality work setting is characterized by long work hours, a heavy workload, a high likelihood of interpersonal tensions, and high emotional labor (e.g., O'Neill and Davis, 2011), rendering the job highly stressful and demanding. The annual Jobs Exodus survey from Investors in People (IIP) found that 65% of hospitality employees are unhappy in their current jobs (2015). A study conducted by Kansas State University indicated that every 100 unhappy employees can cost \$390 000 per year in lost productivity.

Hospitality employees' psychological well-being matters a great deal from both individual and organizational perspectives. Due to the demanding emotional regulation and expression required in the hospitality field, employees who are not genuinely happy must force themselves to demonstrate positive emotions and attitudes with customers, which is referred to as emotional labor. Emotional labor has been found to be an important cause of emotional exhaustion and job burnout (Brotheridge and Grandey, 2002). In other words, unhappy hospitality employees tend to become even unhappier due to more emotional labor being required for the expected service delivery, which constitutes a vicious circle. Eventually, the lack of psychological well-being results in decreased job performance or quality of service delivery, reduced organizational commitment and job satisfaction, higher turnover, and reduced customer

satisfaction and loyalty (e.g., Brunetto *et al.*, 2012; Wright and Cropanzano, 2000). In addition, low wages, unsociable working hours, and high employment mobility make it difficult for hospitality employees to attend special well-being promotion programs, such as health promotion programs and meditation awareness training (Sardiwalla, 2003). Taken together, although the pursuit of well-being has been consistently considered as a predominant and common goal of mankind (Russell, 2012), hospitality organizations have a long way to go in terms of how to improve employees' psychological well-being within an organization that is cost-effective and easy to operate.

In light of the above, the current study proposes one approach that helps promote employees' psychological well-being: creating an error-tolerant work environment. The framework of psychological resources, in particular, the theory of conservation of resources (COR) serves as the theoretical foundation to understand how organizational error tolerance positively impacts employees' psychological well-being via the underlying mechanisms of perceived organizational support (POS) and organization-based self-esteem (OBSE) (Hobfoll, 2011; Hobfoll and Freedy, 2017). First, individual well-being is closely related to and contingent on resources one possesses, and the likelihood to obtain and maintain resources (Hobfoll *et al.*, 2018). The people-dependent and people-oriented nature, the simultaneous production and consumption, and the customers' involvement in the service production process have made the hospitality work setting error-prone, (e.g., Wang *et al.*, 2018). Error occurrence leads to important consequences for both customers and employees, such as flawed service, customer dissatisfaction, and negative word-of-mouth (Guchait *et al.*, 2016). Given that, employees tend to consider error occurrence a sign of incompetence or even lack of intelligence (Mangels *et al.*, 2006). From the COR perspective, error occurrence poses conditions of threat of resources loss

in different kinds, such as reputation of work competence, promotion opportunity, bonus, relationships with colleagues, evaluation of leaders, even one's sense of self-confidence and self-worth at work. As a result, both organizations and employees tend to hold negative, even aversive attitudes toward errors; in short, they do not tolerate them (Frese and Keith, 2015). However, increasing evidence has revealed that error occurrence is not just a result of carelessness but can be traced back to uncontrollable reasons. Therefore, a purely intolerance- and punishment-oriented approach is not the optimal solution to error handling. By adopting an error management approach characterized by more open and tolerant attitudes toward errors, error communication, and helping each other in error situations, employees and organizations can benefit from errors by achieving better learning behavior (Sosna *et al.*, 2010), and organizational goal achievement (van Dyck *et al.*, 2005; Weinzimmer and Esken, 2017). However, whether error tolerance can benefit employees in terms of individual psychological states is largely unknown. Traditionally, errors are always related to employees' job stress, shame, anger, emotional exhaustion, fatigue, and low perception of self-efficacy (e.g., Frese and Keith, 2015). As the COR theory suggests that threat of resource loss can be offset via resource gain, we propose that tolerating error at work is an important organizational factor that employees can extract from to prompt their psychological well-being via psychological resources gain: organizational support and OBSE.

The literature of employee well-being has identified two main approaches to promote psychological well-being: 1) specially designed healthy or psychological interventions and 2) general organizational factors that may improve employee well-being (Chughtai *et al.*, 2015; Nielsen *et al.*, 2017; Gordon *et al.*, 2019). In spite of the growing literature of employee well-being (e.g., O'Neill and Davis, 2011), how organizational factors can influence employees'

psychological well-being still remains to be explored. Previous studies have identified factors such as organizational justice (Lawson *et al.*, 2009), flexible working conditions (Joyce *et al.*, 2010), leadership style (Milner *et al.*, 2013), job demand (Elovainio *et al.*, 2014), and workplace bullying (Devonish, 2013) that were related to employees' psychological well-being. Based upon principles of the COR that 1) resources loss is primary compared to resources gain; 2) anticipatory loss of resources can result in psychological outcomes as important as the actual loss does; and 3) resources are layered and dynamic, this study used a three-wave design to examine how employees' perception of error tolerance in the organization is associated with employees' psychological well-being. Moreover, employees' POS and OBSE are respectively identified as secondary and central-valued psychological resources to sequentially mediate the relationship between error tolerance and psychological well-being (see Figure 1).

INSERT FIGURE 1 ABOUT HERE

The present research makes several contributions to understanding hospitality employees' well-being by exploring its organizational and individual causes from the perspective of psychological resources. First, this paper introduces error tolerance, as an organizational factor, to promote employee psychological well-being. No research to our knowledge has linked a common and negatively perceived organizational situation, error occurrence, with an ultimate positive psychological outcome: psychological well-being. We thus expand the nomological network of psychological well-being. Second, by linking error tolerance with individual psychological well-being, the current research enriches the error management literature by showing that error management can impact individuals' overall psychological states, in addition to its positive

impacts on job-related behavior and organizational performance found in previous studies. Third, we identified POS and OBSE as two mediators of the relationship between error tolerance and psychological well-being, which helps understand how an organizational factor related to error handling has an impact on employees' non-work-related psychological outcomes via resources gain. These results also emphasize the dynamics between secondary and centrally-valued resources, extending the understanding of the resources dynamics outlined in the COR theory (Hobfoll *et al.*, 2018).

Literature Review and Hypothesis Development

Error Tolerance

Error has been defined as individuals' decisions and behaviors that “(1) *result in an undesirable gap between an expected and real state and (2) may lead to actual or potential negative consequences for organizational functioning that could have been avoided*” (Zhao and Olivera, 2006, p. 1013). Organizations adopt different strategies toward error handling and these are mainly categorized as either an error prevention or error management approach (Reason, 2000). Error management posits that errors should be allowed and accepted because 1) errors cannot be completely eliminated despite all attempts to prevent them and 2) errors are likely to contribute to employees' creativity and learning behaviors (Bligh *et al.*, 2018). The core belief of error management is tolerating errors that distinguishes error management from other error handling approaches. Weinzimmer and Esken (2017) defined error tolerance¹ as “*the conditions that exist within an organization that allow organizational members to take risks, pursue*

¹ In the paper of Weinzimmer and A. Esken (2017), the term *mistake tolerance* is used. Based on the definition provided in this article, the term *mistake* is equivalent to the term *error*. Therefore, we use *error tolerance* in the current paper to incorporate this concept in broader error management literature.

innovative solutions, and develop superior knowledge without fear of repercussions for making mistakes” (p. 326).

The lack of error tolerance is prevalent in the workplace. First, employees tend to blame errors and failures of others, whereby they feel that they are more competent than their coworkers (Shaver, 2012). Second, as errors have long been associated with negative outcomes through the socialization processes (e.g., Martin and Marsh, 2003), people tend to be more intolerant of errors because of social norms. Namely, blaming others' errors can sometimes be justified in the context of moral judgment and is a reflection of one's high moral standards: factors leading to errors (e.g., carelessness, lack of professionalism) are not tolerated (Smith, 2013). Third, a widely accepted belief holds that it would be better not to tolerate errors in order for people to better learn from them (Demetriou, 2011). Previous literature suggested that intolerance of errors 1) enables people to focus on internal attribution, and cognitive efforts on thorough error analysis; and 2) produces negative emotions which enable one's learning motivation (Zhao, 2011). Over time, a negative organizational environment characterized by the intolerance of errors is likely to be formed and maintained.

Meanwhile, a managerial approach, error management, is introduced to renew the way organizations perceive and handle errors using a series of behaviors related to error handling (Reason, 2000; van Dyck *et al.*, 2005). These behaviors include discussing and sharing error information with coworkers, improving competence in analyzing and resolving errors, and asking for help when making errors. The premise behind these behaviors is an error-tolerance attitude (Hagen, 2013). The integrated behavior model highlights the role that attitude plays in determining one's behavioral intention and eventually the actual behavior (e.g., Montano, D.E. and Kasprzyk, 2015). Few studies have explored attitudinal and behavioral outcomes of

organizational error tolerance. For example, Weinzimmer and Esken (2017) revealed positive relationships between error tolerance and organizational learning as well as organizational performance.

Perceived Organizational Support (POS)

Organizational support theory posits that employees develop a holistic assessment of how much the organization values and cares about employees from various aspects, such as its recognition of employees' efforts, or its willingness to meet their socioemotional needs, referred to as POS (Kurtessis et al., 2017). This assessment further helps employees determine the corresponding job attitudes and behaviors according to the principle of reciprocity highlighted in the social exchange theory (Molm, 2010). Different from economic exchange, social exchange is built on trust and reflects the socioemotional side of the interpersonal relationship (Blau, 2017). Organizational support is one aspect of resource caravan that employees cherish and strive for (Hobfoll, 2011).

Meanwhile, integrating the perspectives of social exchange and COR theory, it is fair to argue that the essence of reciprocal exchange remains the exchange of various types of resources (e.g., tangible or intangible, socioemotional or physical resources). Therefore, POS can be considered as organizations' initiatives to provide various resources that valued by employees with the expectation of employees' favorable return in the long run. The POS often exerts salutary impacts on employees for 1) organization meets individuals' socioemotional needs; 2) organization provides resources that are needed for employees to achieve good job performance; and 3) organization takes the initiative to establish a positive relationship with employees (Molm et al., 2007; Cropanzano et al., 2017).

Employees' perception of organizational support is impacted by a variety of elements that shape the way employees interpret the underlying motives of how they are treated in the organization (Eisenberger *et al.*, 2014). In general, positive discretionary activities can be considered contributing factors that shape employees' POS (Kurtessis *et al.*, 2017; Krishnan and Mary, 2012). Error situation is a specific and recurrent situation wherein employees tend to feel vulnerable, nervous and guilty, and experience a sense of failure (Zhao, 2011). When error occurs, employees feel vulnerable and perceive the threat of resource loss, thus they are particularly in need of support and help compared to usual situations due to the predominance of resource loss compared to resource gain (e.g., Guchait *et al.*, 2015). According to the law of habituation, employees are sensitive to the environment and the treatment they receive, either positive or negative under exceptional circumstances (e.g., error occurrence). When employees feel that favorable treatment is an organization's intentional action stemming from free choice, they are likely to develop a strong perception of organizational support.

The current study argues that error tolerance is a strong antecedent of POS for the following reasons. First, as error occurrence is not considered normal and regular situation, one tends to be particularly sensitive to the treatment they receive, overcoming the law of habituation. In addition, errors pose condition of resources loss, which further urge employees to regain resources (Halbesleben *et al.*, 2014). Second, employees understand that the organization or its agents have the freedom to choose how to handle error situations. Simply put, if organizations or their agents exhibit a tolerant attitude toward error occurrences, it is their choice to do so out of kindness. Taken together, one would appreciate that the organization demonstrates a tolerant, forgiving and understanding attitude toward errors, and would interpret error tolerance as a clear message that employees are respected, valued and supported. Tolerating

errors mitigates the threat of losing resources, and also leads to resources gain especially in socio-emotional aspects (Hobfoll and Freedy, 2017). Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed.

Hypothesis 1: Error tolerance is positively related to POS.

Organization-based Self-esteem (OBSE)

Regarded as one of an individual's centrally-valued resources, self-esteem plays a central role in influencing one's attitudes and behaviors, and serves as the frame of reference in reacting to life experiences (Bowling *et al.*, 2010; Hobfoll and Freedy, 2017). Considering the multifaceted nature, self-esteem can be shaped from the role, task, situation-specific, organizational and global facets, and these multifaceted appraisals will hierarchically form individuals' general evaluation of self-worth (Gardner and Pierce, 2013; Horberg and Chen, 2010). OBSE describes one's self-belief about his/her competence, importance and values in the workplace (Pierce and Gardner, 2004). According to the COR theory, self-esteem is such a crucial resource that one tends to think and behave in a way to maintain or improve (Gardner *et al.*, 2015). According to the theory of symbolic interactionism (Carter and Fuller, 2015), individuals establish an understanding of themselves through various social interactions. In other words, individuals view themselves through how they are viewed by others (Waskul and Vannini, 2016). Organizations are considered as significant others, thus serving as an important reference for employees in building their self-assessment (Carter and Fuller, 2015).

Previous research on POS has primarily focused on how employees' perception of organizational support impacts their job attitudes and behaviors. This study argues that in addition to the positive influence of POS on job-oriented outcomes, POS also affects self-oriented outcomes, such as how employees perceive themselves in the workplace, namely,

OBSE. COR highlights the dynamics and interactions of resources at different levels: secondary resources tend to further contribute to the gain of centrally valued resources, thereby generating gain spirals (Hobfoll *et al.*, 2016). Thus, this study proposes that organizational support is a robust secondary resource that constitutes conduits to one's organization-based self-esteem, a centrally valued resource. If one feels that one is a valuable member of the organization, one's OBSE is likely to increase. Conversely, a lack of POS can create a feeling of exclusion and call into question one's self-confidence and identity, which impairs the self-esteem (Aquino and Douglas, 2003). Taken together, we posit that POS will be positively related to OBSE.

Hypothesis 2: POS is positively related to OBSE.

Psychological Well-being

Psychological well-being can be defined as a global and “context-free” assessment and reflection of individual feelings of pleasantness (Nica *et al.*, 2016; Pierce *et al.*, 2016). Employees' psychological well-being has gained more attention in organizational research for at least two reasons. First, a lack of effective psychological functioning can have extensive human and financial consequences, such as depression, reduced motivation, slowed thought processes, psychological withdrawal, and turnover (Nica *et al.*, 2016). Second, employees with high level of psychological well-being expand this positive psychological state by exhibiting positive attitudinal and behavioral tendencies, such as better productivity and performance (Kersemakers *et al.*, 2018), organizational citizenship behavior (Davila and Finkelstein, 2013), and life satisfaction (Kern *et al.*, 2014). With the emergence of positive psychology in the workplace, understanding the spillover effect of organizational factors on individuals' non-work-oriented or general psychological states through job attitudes becomes increasingly prevalent (Pierce *et al.*, 2016). The spillover theory proposes that attitudes and emotions generated in the

workplace will affect other aspects of life and vice versa (Balmforth and Gardner, 2006). The concept “affective generalization” also suggests that employees carry over the positive or negative affects produced in the workplace into subsequent non-work situations (Nijp *et al.*, 2012). As a natural part of human life, work is so important that one devotes a great amount of time, energy and effort to it. Thus, employees’ attitudinal, emotional, and behavioral experiences in the workplace are likely to flow into their general psychological and behavioral outcomes (Neto *et al.*, 2017).

Self-esteem is of fundamental importance for an individual’s mental health (Bajaj *et al.*, 2016). A feeling of self-worth is closely related to one’s overall life satisfaction (Erdogan *et al.*, 2012). People with high self-esteem consider themselves valuable and meaningful, tend to hold a positive self-image and accept different facades of the self. More specifically, employees with high OBSE have fulfilled their need for acceptance and belonging stemming from their work role (Pierce *et al.*, 2016). On the other hand, employees with low OBSE experience a feeling of devaluation, lack of recognition and negative self-worth, thus further impairing their overall psychological well-being (Anthony *et al.*, 2007). In addition, the access to obtaining and maintaining resources is critical for both mental and physical health. Although less-studied, self-esteem has been always considered as a crucial resource as it maintains one’s self-worth even in times of difficulties, which will contribute to individuals’ positive psychological states (e.g., Kim and Beehr, 2018). In line with this reasoning, the following hypothesis is proposed:

Hypothesis 3: OBSE is positively related to employees’ psychological well-being.

Mediation effects of POS and OBSE between error tolerance and psychological well-being

In addition to direct relationships, this study attempts to build a sequential relationship linking error tolerance with psychological well-being via the mediators of POS and OBSE based

on the COR framework. First, errors are commonly perceived as threats of resources loss for those who make them, which renders people be more eager to gain resources to cope with the threat of loss. When one's expected resource loss does not occur and is mitigated by organizational error tolerance, one tends to perceive an important resource gain, which contributes to a critical aspect of sources derived from the organization: the organizational support (Hobfoll and Freedy, 2017). Second, given the hierarchical and syntrophic nature of resources dynamics highlighted in the COR, secondary resources often contribute to the gain in resources that are centrally valued (Hobfoll *et al.*, 2018). Accordingly, the current study identifies organizational support as an external resource that would further enrich individuals' centrally-valued internal resource: OBSE. Third, literature of health psychology has adopted psychological resources to study psychological well-being and maintains its close association with resources gain and possession (Murray *et al.*, 2017). Therefore, based on the COR that 1) takes a holistic view of both organizational situational and individual factors; and 2) highlights the dynamics among different types of resources, the study justifies the sequential mediating effect of POS and OBSE.

Hypothesis 4: Error tolerance is indirectly and positively related to employees' psychological well-being, sequentially mediated first through POS and then through OBSE.

Method

Sample and Procedure

Participants were recruited from hotel frontline employees in Turkey. Data were collected at three time points with an interval of one month. After having obtained the permission of hotel managers, one coauthor personally distributed the surveys and collected the results. Employees'

participation was totally voluntary, and the survey was completed during work hours. In total, 249 employees participated at Time 1, 249 at Time 2, and 220 at time 3, resulting in a response rate of eighty-eight percent. Thirty-one percent of the participants were female, and nearly fifty-nine percent of participants were from 18 to 30 years old. Forty-seven percent had completed their higher education. Table 1 presents the summary of participant characteristics. In particular, error tolerance was measured at Time 1, POS and OBSE at Time 2, and psychological well-being at Time 3.

INSERT TABLE 1 ABOUT HERE

Measures

Error tolerance was measured with a five-item scale developed by Weinzimmer and Esken (2017). One sample item is “Managers are generally accepting of errors”. The reliability for this measure was 0.83. *Perceived organizational support* was measured with eight items developed by Eisenberger et al. (1986). One sample item is “My organization is willing to extend itself in order to help me perform my job at the best of my ability”. The reliability for this measure was 0.93. *Organization-based self-esteem* was measured with ten items developed by Pierce et al. (1989). One sample item is “I am a valuable part of this place”. The reliability for this measure was 0.95. All items mentioned above were measured in adopting the 7-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree). Participants reported their *Psychological well-being* using an eight-item scale developed by Wright and Cropanzano (2000). The participants used a 7-point Likert-type scale from 1=never to 7= every time to answer the question “How

often you feel...”. One sample item is “...particularly excited or interested in something”. The reliability for this measure was 0.81.

Results

Psychometric analyses

Confirmatory factor analyses were conducted to examine the measurement model and validity of four constructs assessing employees’ error tolerance, POS, OBSE, and psychological well-being (Table 2 and 3). The hypothesized four-factor model provided good fit ($\chi^2(339) = 653.89, p < 0.05; \chi^2/df = 1.93; CFI = .929; TLI = .921; RMSEA = .065$). Factor loadings for three items of psychological well-being were less than 0.4, resulting in the deletion of these items. All other factor loadings were significant ($p < 0.01$) and greater than 0.4, which convergent validity. Convergent validity was established as all values of the average variance extracted (AVE) were above 0.50, ranging from 0.50 to 0.64, (Hair *et al.*, 2010). Construct reliability was measured by composite construct reliability, with values ranging from 0.83 to 0.95, indicating construct reliability (Fornell and Larcker, 1981). Moreover, the discriminant validity was established as the square root of all AVE values were higher than the correlations between corresponding two constructs.

INSERT TABLE 2 ABOUT HERE

INSERT TABLE 3 ABOUT HERE

Test of hypotheses

Following the validation of the measurement model, AMOS 25 was used to examine the structural model and test the research hypotheses. On the whole, the structural model had a satisfactory model fit ($\chi^2 = 655.28$, $df = 342$, $p < 0.05$; CFI = 0.93; IFI = 0.93; RMSEA = 0.065; $\chi^2/df = 1.92$) (Figure 2). Hypothesis 1 proposed that error tolerance positively relates to POS. As shown in the Figure 2, Hypothesis 1 received support ($\beta = 0.53$, $p < 0.05$). Hypothesis 2 proposed that employees' POS positively relates to OBSE. Results indicated that POS was positively associated with OBSE ($\beta = 0.68$, $p < 0.05$), supporting Hypothesis 2. Hypothesis 3 proposed that OBSE is positively associated with employees' psychological well-being. the result found a positive and significant relationship between OBSE and psychological well-being ($\beta = 0.25$, $p < 0.05$), supporting Hypothesis 3.

In addition, Hypothesis 4 proposed that error tolerance is indirectly and positively related to employees' psychological well-being, sequentially mediated first through POS and then through OBSE. We tested this mediation effect in two ways. First, bootstrapping was used to reveal the significant positive indirect effect of POS and OBSE on the relationship between error tolerance to psychological well-being (Indirect effect = 0.09, 95% bias corrected (BC) boot-strap confidence interval of 0.02-0.17; $p < 0.05$) (Preacher and Hayes, 2008). (see Table 4). Second, we conducted a sequential mediation test (Error tolerance \rightarrow POS \rightarrow OBSE \rightarrow Psychological well-being) using Hayes's (2013) PROCESS (Model 6) in SPSS. We found that OBSE was positively related to psychological well-being ($b=0.25$, $SE=0.07$, $p < .001$), and POS and OBSE, in sequence, fully mediated the effect of error tolerance on psychological well-being (index of sequential mediation=.13, bootstrap $SE=0.04$, bootstrap CI 95% [.05, .22]). Both findings showed that a perception of error tolerance positively result in higher perception of

organizational support as well as OBSE, which in turn leads to a higher level of psychological well-being, supporting H4.

INSERT FIGURE 2 ABOUT HERE

INSERT TABLE 4 ABOUT HERE

Discussion and Conclusions

Conclusions

The current research centers around the psychological well-being of hospitality employees, not only because of the close association between employee well-being and job performance but also because of the context of hospitality work setting, which is characterized by a heavy workload, high demand of emotional labor and long work hours (e.g., Kim *et al.*, 2007; Lee and Ok, 2012). Many hospitality employees are unhappy due to the unsatisfying work conditions in the hospitality industry (Mansour and Tremblay, 2016). Moreover, due to limitations in time, money and other resources, implementing special well-being programs may not always be possible in all hospitality organizations. Therefore, this research aimed to explore organizational factors as distal contributors to one's psychological well-being as well as the underlying psychological mechanism drawn from psychological resources theories. Specifically, this study examined psychological well-being as a function of employees' perceived error tolerance in the workplace. Our results illustrate why tolerance of errors in the workplace matters: error tolerance contributes to employees' two important resources gains: organizational

support and OBSE, and possession of these resources is critical for one's psychological well-being. Those who perceive that the organization accepts error occurrence tend to think that the organization values and supports them, which in turn boosts their organization-based self-esteem and eventually positively influences their general psychological well-being. Our findings not only provide an accessible tool to promote employees' psychological well-being in stressful and demanding hospitality work settings but also offer a rationale for adopting an error management approach in error situations (e.g., Kim, 2008).

Our results are consistent with and extend several previous studies. Widmer *et al.* (2012) indicated that OBSE was positively related to an overall positive attitude toward life. Pierce *et al.* (2016) found a significant positive relationship between one's trait OBSE and subjective as well as eudaimonic well-being. The current study extends the findings of previous research by 1) exploring organizational factors as distal antecedent of employees' psychological well-being and 2) identifying psychological resources (POS and OBSE) as mediators to better understand the psychological mechanism that allows one to link an organizational factor with his/her global psychological well-being. Lastly, the current findings are consistent with several theories and propose that positive discretionary activities, such as error tolerance, can contribute to psychological resources gain, which further determine non-work and overall psychological outcomes. Thus, despite the challenging job characteristics of hospitality organizations, those organizational practices categorized as healthy workplace practices (work-life balance, employee growth and development, health and safety, recognition, and employee involvement) can improve employees' well-being in a contingent way (Grawitch *et al.*, 2006).

Theoretical Implications

There is a need in the current literature to explore organizational factors and practices that help contribute to hospitality employees' well-being. Previous research has related different factors with employees' well-being, such as CSR (Kim *et al.*, 2018), leadership styles (Chughtai *et al.*, 2015), work climate (Schultz *et al.*, 2015), and human resource practice (Guest, 2017). These findings clearly indicate that organizations are able to contribute to one's well-being, as opposed to being the source of individual ill-being (Gillet *et al.*, 2012). Within the COR framework and drawing from organizational support theory, the theory of symbolic interactionism, and spillover theory, the current study fills the research gap by suggesting that tolerating errors increases employees' psychological well-being by increasing employees' two critical psychological resources: POS and OBSE. The theoretical framework indicates that one's work plays a critical role in contributing to one's overall psychological well-being through resources gain (Demerouti *et al.*, 2017). First, literature of health psychology has linked psychological resources theories with individual well-being (Avey *et al.*, 2010). The COR puts special attention on the loss of resources and posits that resources loss exerts more important impacts on individuals compared to resources gain, namely the primacy of resources loss. As errors imply anticipatory resources loss in different kinds, resources gain related to the error occurrence may be more appreciated and valued by individuals. The results confirmed this by revealing the salutary effect of organizational error tolerance on employees' psychological well-being.

Second, this study responded to resources' hierarchical and interactive nature highlighted in COR theory and identified organizational support and OBSE as resources at different levels that mediated the relationship between error tolerance and psychological well-being. Hobfoll (2002; p. 307) indicated that resources can be 1) "*those entities that either are centrally valued in their*

own right (e.g., self-esteem, close attachments, health, and inner peace)” or 2) “act as a means to obtain centrally valued ends (e.g., money, social support, and credit)”. This implies that resources are layered and work in tandem to impact other resources. Specifically, the gain of centrally-valued resources often derives from impetus of secondary resources (Hobfoll *et al.*, 2018). The current results indicated a significant promoting effect of POS on OBSE, demonstrating the resources dynamics (Halbesleben *et al.*, 2014). Although the relationship between POS, organizational commitment and well-being has been examined, a specific organizational factor serving as the antecedent of POS (error tolerance) has not been linked with psychological well-being through the underlying mechanism of OBSE, especially in the error-prone hospitality industry (Panaccio and Vandenberghe, 2009). Third, the current research contributes to error management research by expanding its outcomes to individual non-work-related and global psychological variables. Error management, as one managerial approach to error handling that is characterized by more positive attitudes toward error occurrence, has been linked with work-related outcomes at both the individual and organizational levels, such as organizational performance, employees’ organizational commitment, service recovery performance, job satisfaction, and customer delight (van Dyck *et al.*, 2005; Jung and Yoon, 2017; Wang *et al.*, 2018). However, to date, the salutary effects of error handling on employees’ well-being have not been tested, leaving alone the underlying mechanisms in terms of resources accretion and delivery. This study identifies the spiral of resources gain (organizational support and OBSE) as the sequential mediators of the relationship between error tolerance and employees’ psychological well-being, in the hospitality work context where error occurrence is frequent (Guchait *et al.*, 2016). The current findings extend the error management literature by linking error tolerance with employees’ psychological well-being within the COR framework for

the first time, suggesting that error management practices in the workplace can have positive impact on global psychological outcomes.

Lastly, this research responds to important switch in research focus in organizational management from negative implications (e.g., stress, burnout, violence, job insecurity) to positive outcomes (e.g., well-being, health, positive affects). Cropanzano and Wright (2001, p. 194) argue that *“In fact, too often in applied research, the emphasis appears to have been on what one might call the disease model. That is, a focus primarily concerned with fixing what is wrong with someone, as opposed to developing what is right.”* Contributing to positive psychology, the current study revealed that organizations are capable of contributing to employees’ positive functioning, even in commonly negatively perceived error situations, and can be used as a reference to better understand how other organizational factors can improve employees’ psychological well-being.

Practical Implications

Marriott International’s founder, J.W. Marriott, once said, “Take care of associates and they’ll take care of your customers.” Three main reasons may explain why hospitality employees’ well-being matters and should draw hospitality organizations’ attention. First, psychological well-being is found to be a stronger predictor of job performance, compared to job satisfaction. Second, as a high turnover rate has long troubled the hospitality organization’s effectiveness, more hospitality organizations are attempting to attract more committed employees by highlighting their engagement in employee career development and well-being. Third, as hospitality employees are important internal stakeholders, caring for employees’ well-being becomes one aspect of CSR practices, an increasingly prominent aspect of hospitality organizations’ strategic plans. In addition, in view of the hospitality job nature of face-to-face

service encounters, the emotions employees display, either real or faked, would affect customers' emotions, which is referred to as emotion contagion (Ustrov *et al.*, 2016). Some may argue that as long as employees can hide their negative emotions and display positive moods, there is no need to care about employees' psychological well-being. However, this may not hold true because displaying emotions that are dissonant with one's genuine feeling would involve emotional labor, which is found to result in emotional exhaustion (Tepeci and Pala, 2016). And emotional exhaustion is a negative psychological state that can cause important resources loss and costly consequences including turnover (e.g., Marchand and Vandenberghe, 2016). Taken together, cultivating hospitality employees' genuine positive feelings and psychological well-being seems to be organizations' ultimate and optimal goal. Organizations have invested various resources to promote employee well-being, such as healthy workplace practices (e.g., yoga classes, fitness programs) (Grawitch *et al.*, 2006) and psychological intervention programs (e.g., mindfulness-based stress reduction programs, work-life balance programs, gratitude and social connectedness interventions) (Kaplan *et al.*, 2014). While effective, these approaches involve investment of both time and money, which are not often available in hospitality work settings. The current findings propose a practical and malleable organizational tool to promote employees' psychological well-being: tolerance of error occurrence. Organizational error tolerance has several advantages to be adopted in hospitality organizations. First, the error-prone nature of hospitality industry determines that error occurrence is a recurring situation (Wang *et al.*, 2018). This allows hospitality organizations to not just count on a specific time quantum for well-being intervention or training programs. Instead, when employees make errors, it is an occasion to show organizational support, promote employee self-esteem, and eventually positively influence psychological well-being. Second, error tolerance is much more cost-

effective than other intervention programs. As people tend to put more emphasis on resources loss (e.g., self-image, self-worth, self-esteem, promotion opportunities) compared to resources gain, it is of special importance for hospitality managers to help employees prevent resource loss in error situations through the acceptance of errors. Otherwise, lack of error tolerance can shape employees' perception of resources being threatened, which can further lead to psychological vulnerability and initiate resources loss cycles. The simplest error tolerance practice can be as simple as "It's ok to make errors; don't worry," or "Let me help you out." Managers can also organize regular group discussions and invite employees to share errors they encountered at work and how errors can be better handled. Moreover, managers should make it clear to employees that tolerating errors is by no means encouraging error occurrence. Instead, employees do not have to worry about making errors in the process of learning and innovative attempts. As a result, error tolerance becomes a daily-based, cost-effective, and cumulative organizational intervention to improve hospitality employees' psychological well-being.

The current findings also provide implications for hospitality managers to reconsider the way errors should be perceived and treated. Often associated with service failure, customer complaints and dissatisfaction, errors remain a subject hospitality managers tend to avoid by demonstrating aversive attitudes and taking disciplinary action. Nevertheless, this study revealed that error tolerance is salutary in three specific areas: 1) POS, 2) OBSE and 3) psychological well-being (Pierce *et al.*, 2016; Kurtessis *et al.*, 2017; Wright and Cropanzano, 2000). Therefore, hospitality organizations should adopt an error management strategy offering a more positive view of errors and including such behaviors as error analysis, error reporting, and learning behavior. However, all these norms and practices should originate in and build upon error tolerance, which is the premise and the core of error management strategy. In particular, the

findings bring the benefice of error occurrence to light by indicating that error situations which often imply the threat of resource loss can be offset via resource gain when errors are accepted and tolerated. Namely, tolerating errors helps employees gain resources (organizational support and OBSE), which in turn, result in psychological well-being. As a result, hospitality managers should make good use of error situations to help employees gain resources, as resources gain in face of resources loss may exert stronger positive impacts on individuals, compared to resource gain in itself.

Limitations and Future Research Directions

Methodologically, this paper utilized the multi-wave approach to measure the antecedent, mediators, and outcome variables at three times, which decreased the common method bias compared to many previous studies where all variables were measured at one time (Podsakoff *et al.*, 2003). Nonetheless, a structural equation modeling of the mediation model with longitudinal data following the instructions of Cole and Maxwell (2003) would make more rigorous references to establish causal relationships. In addition, the data were collected in Turkey, which might raise the question of whether or not the results could be generalized to other cultural contexts. Based on the national culture model (Hofstede, 2011), national culture can vary in the dimension of uncertainty avoidance, which describes a country's general acceptance level of uncertainty. It is possible that countries with higher levels of uncertainty avoidance tend to have lower error tolerance in general, which in turn serves as a point of reference when employees assess the level of error tolerance in the organization. Therefore, future studies could collect data from other countries to determine whether the impacts of organizational error tolerance on employee psychological well-being differ. Lastly, future studies can identify other domains of

individual psychological well-being as outcomes of different organizational practices, such as purpose of life, environmental mastery, and perception of autonomy.

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Table 1. The characteristics of the sample employees

	Number	Percentage
Gender		
Male	152	69%
Female	68	31%
Age		
younger than 20	12	5.5%
21-25	60	27.3%
26-30	57	25.9%

31-35	42	19.1%
36-40	32	14.5%
41-50	17	7.7%
Tenure in this hotel		
less than 6 months	47	21.4%
6 months -1 year	37	16.8%
1-2 years	37	16.8%
2-4 years	32	14.5%
4-8 years	22	10.0%
over 8 years	45	20.5%
Tenure in hotel industry		
less than 6 months	21	9.6%
6 months -1year	25	14.5%
1-2 years	24	16.8%
2-4 years	37	20.0%
4-8 years	23	23.2%
over 8 years	90	15.9%
Education		
Primary school	6	2.7%
Middle school	16	7.3%
High school	76	34.5%
Vocational school	19	8.6%
Bachelor	87	39.5%
Master	13	5.9%
Ph.D.	3	1.4%

Table 2. Means, standard deviations, correlations and CFA results.

	M	SD	1	2	3	4
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1. POS	4.80	1.38	--	.27 ^b	.38	.10
2. Error tolerance	4.16	1.36	.52* ^a	--	.13	.06
3. OBSE	5.49	1.27	.62*	.36*	--	.14
4. Psychological well-being	5.01	1.07	.31*	.25*	.37*	--

Goodness-of-fit statistics

$\chi^2(339) = 653.89, p < 0.05$

$\chi^2/df = 1.93$

CFI = 0.93, IFI = 0.93

RMSEA = 0.065

Notes. POS = Perceived organizational support; OBSE = Organization-based self-esteem; * $p < .05$.; CFI = comparative fit index; IFI = incremental fit index; and RMSEA = root mean square error of approximation; ^a Correlations are below the diagonal; and ^b Squared multiple correlations are above the diagonal

Table 3. Convergent and discriminant validity test results.

Construct	Indicator	Loadings	CCR	AVE
Error tolerance			.83	.50
	1	.61		
	2	.75		
	3	.70		
	4	.75		
	5	.72		
Perceived organizational support			.93	.64

	1	.72		
	2	.80		
Cronbach's Alpha = .93	3	.87		
	4	.87		
	5	.86		
	6	.83		
	7	.70		
	8	.72		
Organization-based self-esteem			.95	.64
	1	.77		
	2	.88		
Cronbach's Alpha = .95	3	.87		
	4	.86		
	5	.79		
	6	.83		
	7	.82		
	8	.68		
	9	.81		
	10	.64		
Psychological well-being			.84	.54
	1	.88		
	2	.95		
Cronbach's Alpha = .81	3	.74		
	4	.49		
	5	.45		

Notes. CCR = composite construct reliability; AVE = average variance extract

Table 4. Indirect effects and 95% confidence intervals (CI) for the paths.

Model pathways	Estimated effect	95% CI	
		Lower CI	Upper CI
ET → POS → OBSE → WB	0.09*	0.02	0.17

Notes. ET = Error tolerance; POS: Perceived organizational support; OBSE= Organization-based self-esteem; WB=Psychological well-being

* $p < .05$.

Figure 1. Conceptual model

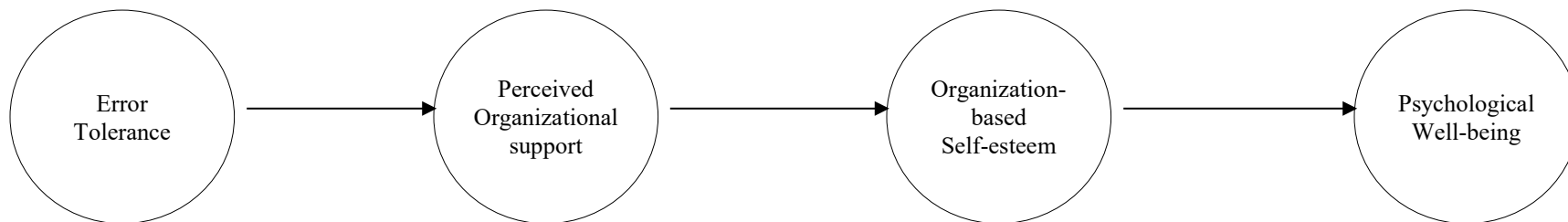
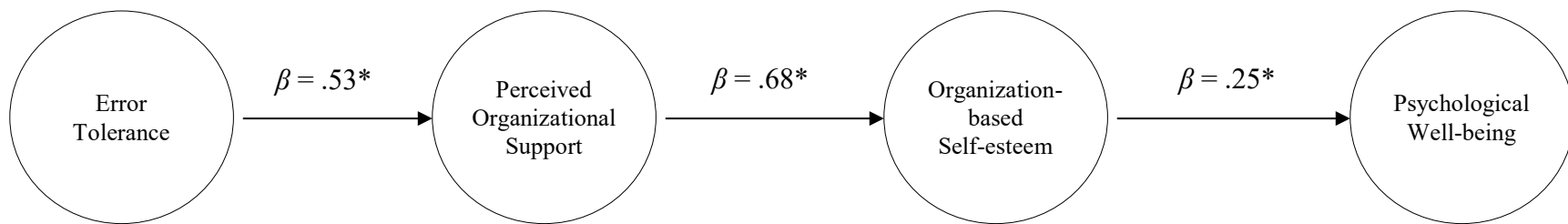


Figure 2. Results of the Research Model.



Notes. * $p < .05$. $\chi^2 = 655.28$, $df = 342$, $p < 0.05$; CFI = 0.93, IFI = 0.93, RMSEA = 0.065, $\chi^2/df = 1.92$.

