Demotivating Factors Affecting Undergraduate Learners of Non-English Majors Studying General English: A Case of Iranian EFL Context

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Abstract

The literature on language teaching and learning has mostly accentuated motivation as one of the crucial factors influencing learners, but demotivating factors can be of crucial importance as well. In this vein, considering a grounded theory approach, this study has tried to investigate the demotivating factors influencing Iranian university students of non-English majors utilizing an interview and a questionnaire. For this purpose, thirty undergraduate students were interviewed from three different universities: State University, Islamic Azad University, and Payame Noor University. Based on the elicited responses from the interviews, a 35-item questionnaire was developed. Applying principal factor analysis, this research has brought forth the shared perception of demotivating factors in language learning among Iranian university students and documented them as a five-factor model in which the factors of "setbacks in system of education" and "lack of extrinsic motivation" were the most and the least influential ones, respectively. The other factors also included "methods and personality of teachers", "lack of self-esteem and intrinsic motivation", and "lack of given importance in society".

1. Introduction

Motivation has always been one of the major factors in language teaching and learning. Most teachers dream of motivated students who strive hard to

achieve success. According to Koiso (2003, p. 96), motivation is considered to be one of the main determining factors of success in developing a second or foreign language.

The relationship between motivation and language learning has also been a subject of inquiry for many years and it has been shown that motivation is crucial for L2 learning (Dörnyei, 1994; Oxford & Shearin, 1994) due to its direct influences on students' effort, their use of learning strategies, their interaction with native speakers, the input the they receive, their performance in the curriculum-related achievement tests, the amount of their general proficiency level, and their preservation and maintenance of L2 skills after the end of the language study (Ely, 1986a, 1986b; Scarcella & Oxford, 1992; Spolsky, 1989).

As English has grown toward an international language, there has been more emphasis to learn English throughout the world. Iran as an EFL context is not an exception and these changes can be seen through the sudden increase in the number of language institutes and the parents' exerted pressure on their children to learn the language. Yet, despite the fact that students are being required to learn English through compulsory programs at schools and universities and have to pass the English course in order to graduate, a large number of students do not seem to have developed any interest in learning English, and if they have, this interest has been lost for some reasons, that is, they have become demotivated. It seems that not only motivating factors but also demotivating factors can have crucial roles in the process of learning the language.

Although, as mentioned above, there has been a large amount of research regarding the issue of motivating language learners and the fact that most of the researches in relation to motivation have focused on motivational factors, demotivating factors have not received this much attention. As the literature on demotivation is relatively scarce, there seems to be a need for a more critical look at its underlying causes especially among the language learners in an EFL context like Iran. Hence, perceiving a grounded theory approach, this study has tried to present a framework for the demotivating factors influencing the university students of Sirjan, Kerman, Iran in their learning English. It is hoped that this framework can be beneficial in presenting effective solutions for the students' de-motivational problems.

2. Objectives and Research Questions

While most of the literature on teaching and learning languages focuses on students' motivation to learn a language, the high extrinsic motivational context and the failure of students to adequately learn foreign languages

(especially English) under those conditions, suggest that motivation alone may not be a sufficient explanation for understanding and treating the current FL learning problems found in such contexts and the demotivating factors as an important cause should also be investigated. This study has tried to find the answer to the following questions:

1. What are the demotivating factors among the university students of Sirjan studying in an EFL context?
2. Which factors are the most and the least influential demotivating factors among these university students?
3. Are there any differences among the students of different universities in terms of demotivating factors?
4. Are there any differences among males and females' demotivating factors?
5. Is there any relationship between age and demotivating factors?
6. Through the use of grounded theory, what is the proposed model for university students' demotivating factors in Iran?

3. Literature Review

The term motivation is used constantly in the everyday and professional context but defining motivation precisely is a demanding task due to its complex and multifaceted nature. Despite the complexity of defining motivation in L2 learning, it has been found to be one of the most influential factors of the individual differences in language learning. Having a clear understanding of motivation is of vital importance for language teachers, because it is one of the key driving forces in language learning success (Dörnyei, 2001). Thus, the considerable amount of studies in this regard comes as no surprise.

The most extensive studies in the area of L2 attitude and motivation have been conducted by Robert Gardner and his associates (Dörnyei, 1994, p. 273). The socio-educational model of second language acquisition by Gardner (1985) outlines how motivation is related to other individual differences in language learning and language achievement. Three primary variables constitute the socio-educational model. The first one is integrative-ness, and the second one is attitudes toward the learning situation both of which influence the third variable, motivation to learn the L2.

Another theory was self-determination theory presented by Deci and Ryan (1985). In self-determination theory, motivation is seen to consist of two types of motivation, intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, which lie on a continuum of self-determination (Noels *et al.*, 2003, p. 38).

As research on motivation and motivational factors continued, one new area of research was found which was highly connected to the immediate

learning environment. This new area which is sometimes called the darker side of motivation is demotivation. Dörnyei (2001) has contributed a lot to increasing the awareness towards demotivation. He defines demotivation as "specific external forces that reduce or diminish the motivational basis of a behavioral intention or an ongoing action" (p. 143). According to Dörnyei, a demotivated learner is someone who has previously been motivated but for some reasons has lost his/her interest and commitment to learn. De-motives which are the negative counterparts of motives are the reasons for losing interest in learning. Whereas motives increase the action tendency, de-motives de-energize it (Dörnyei, 2001, p.142). Dörnyei (1998, as cited in Dörnyei, 2001) conducted a research on fifty secondary school students in Budapest, Hungary who were studying English or German as a foreign language and identified nine demotivating factors as follow:

1) Teachers' personalities, commitments, competence, and teaching methods
2) Inadequate school facilities (very large classes, not the right level, or frequent change of teachers)
3) Reduced self-confidence due to their experience of failure or success
4) Negative attitude towards the foreign language studied
5) Compulsory nature of the foreign language study
6) Interference of another foreign language that pupils are studying
7) Negative attitude towards the community of the foreign language spoken
8) Attitudes of group members
9) Coursebooks used in the class (p. 151)

Dörnyei (2001) also mentions some other similar studies on demotivation like Chambers (1993), Oxford (1998) and Ushioda (1998). In these studies, different methods of collecting data such as questionnaires, content analysis, and interviews were utilized and the teacher-related factors were detected as the main factor demotivating students.

Among some recent investigations, Trang and Baldauf (2007) studied 100 EFL students in Vietnam using stimulated recall essays to examine the demotivating factors influencing students' English learning and categorized their findings as follows:

Internal Demotivating Factors
1. Attitudes towards English
2. Experiences of failure or lack of success
3. Self-esteem

Teacher-related Demotivating Factors

1. Teacher behavior
2. Teacher competence
3. Teaching method
4. Grading and assessment

But none of these factors were considered more influential than the others. In another study, Kikuchi and Sakai (2007) developed a 35-item questionnaire to gather the data in terms of the demotivating factors among Japanese high-school students. One hundred and twelve students attending three private universities in Eastern Japan completed the questionnaire and the following five demotivating factors were extracted:

1. Coursebooks
2. Inadequate School Facilities
3. Test Scores
4. Non-Communicative Methods
5. Teachers' Competence and Teaching Styles

More recently, in a study by Falout *et al.* (2009), nine hundred EFL university students in Tokyo were studied and the results indicated that contrary to some mentioned researches the role of teacher in students' motivation was quite inspiring while the dominant pedagogy (grammar-translation) posed the largest treat to the students' motivation.

Although there have been some studies regarding demotivation and demotivating factors inside the classroom and among the students, these factors have not received enough attention in Iran as an EFL context. There were a few studies in this regard. One was done by Sharififar and Akbarzadeh (2011) in which they had used Kikuchi and Sakai's (2007) scale and questionnaire for investigating the demotivating factors among 53 university students in Iran and their results included three major factors: teacher-related, student-related, and classroom-related demotivating factors from which the last was concluded as the most influential one among the students. Alavinia and Sehat (2012) investigated the demotivating factors of 165 high school students. The students were given a 50-item questionnaire which emphasized the negative experiences of learners in their learning English. In another study Jomairi (2011) studied the main causes of demotivation among the 189 B.A. English majors in Azad, Payame Noor, and State universities in Tehran, Iran. She used a 25-item questionnaire and four demotivating factors, i.e. (1) teacher; (2) learners' lack of motivation and self-confidence; (3) test-scores; and (4) inadequate university facilities were detected.

Although these studies show different ranges of demotivating factors and increase our understanding of demotivation, the results are somewhat dissimilar and have used the models and materials invented in other context than Iran. Since demotivating factors are context-related and closely influenced by different social and cultural contexts, presentation of an exclusive framework can be of great importance in finding the most suitable remedy for the de-motivational problems of Iranian students.

4. Method

4.1 Participants

The participants in this study were 317 (171 males, 146 females) undergraduate students from different majors studying in three major universities of Sirjan including Islamic Azad University, Industrial University (State University), and Payame Noor University who were all having the General English Course. Considering the possibility of the difference in demotivating factors influencing English and non-English majors and also for the better accuracy of the results, only non-English majors were selected as the research participants. In the first part of the study, 30 (18 male, 22 female) students from the three mentioned universities were selected and interviewed utilizing a purposeful sampling strategy (Patton, 1990). In the second part, using cluster sampling, 6 General English classes in the three universities were selected. The average of 50 students, who attended each class, answered a self-made questionnaire.

4.2 Instruments
4.2.1 Interview

The instrument used for this study included a semi-structured interview which contained 4 questions (see appendix A) based on the previous literature as a guideline for conducting the interviews. With the purpose of better communication, the interview was conducted in Persian. The general structure of the interview was based on Lynch's (1996) interview guide:

- *Casual, put-the-interviewee-at-ease questions/comments:* i.e. the researcher tells them a bit about herself and explains the purpose of the interview.
- *General questions:* The researcher asks the participants about their general opinions about what they think about demotivation and demotivating factors in foreign language learning.
- *Specific questions:* The researcher goes over the questions in the interview schedule.

- *Closing questions:* The researcher asks the participants about how the before mentioned factors could be minimized.
- *Casual, wind-down questions/comments:* The researcher expresses appreciation of their participation (p.132).

The selection of interview participants was based on the criteria that they must be of non-English undergraduate majors studying in one of the mentioned universities as well as having the course of General English. Furthermore, they should be willing to do the interview and have their voices recorded.

In order to check the credibility of the obtained data for the qualitative phase, member-checking and peer-debriefing were used. For member-checking, the participants were asked to review the drafts and the themes emerging from the research to assess and garner the feedback about the accuracy of the interpretations. Peer-debriefing involved an external check of the research by a graduate colleague who was provided with the raw data and the researcher's interpretations and explanations in order to review and ask questions about the research to ensure that the study made sense and the interpretations from the data were plausible and accurate.

4.2.2 Questionnaire

Another instrument used in this research was a self-constructed questionnaire based on the information gathered through the interviews which planned to investigate the most and the least influential demotivating factors in students' language learning. The questionnaire was translated into Persian to increase students' level of understanding. Three EFL students read the translated items and provided feedback on their comprehensibility. The first part of the questionnaire elicited the respondents' demographic information, i.e. the name of their university, age, and gender. The second part included the Likert-scale questions and the participants were required to choose one of the alternatives: 1: strongly disagree; 2: disagree; 3: neutral; 4: agree; and 5: strongly agree.

The developed questionnaire was subjected to review for content validity by two external experts and faculty colleagues at the research site. In addition, students participated in the qualitative phase of the research reviewed the questionnaire prior to its distribution, confirming an accurate representation of the themes discussed in that phase. Then, the questionnaire was distributed among a group of 50 students similar to the target participants and the reliability and internal consistency of the instrument were confirmed by factor analysis and the calculation of the coefficient alpha for all the questions. Through this process, several items were eliminated because they exhibited low factor loadings (less than 0.3) or

loaded highly on more than one factor. Finally, a 35-item questionnaire was ready to be administered (see appendix B). The Cronbach-alpha coefficient for the reliability of this questionnaire was estimated as 0.856.

4.3 Procedures
4.3.1 Data collection
The current study has employed a mixed method design which includes both qualitative and quantitative research methods. Such a method integrates both approaches to provide a much more detailed and comprehensive picture of the issue under investigation. The data in this study were collected in three phases. In the first phase, in order to yield an in-depth, rich understanding of the students' experiences and feelings concerning the demotivating factors in language learning, semi-structured interviews were conducted. In the second phase, the recorded interviews were transcribed and decoded. Using the assays of grounded theory approach, i.e. "open coding", "axil coding," and "selective coding" (Ary *et al.*, 2010), different categories were generated. Then, the categories were brought together in the form of a model of the demotivating factors influencing students. In the last phase, in order to reach a deeper and broader perspective of the previous phases and the presented model of demotivating factors, a questionnaire was created and distributed among 317 university students.

4.3.2 Data analysis
4.3.2.1 Qualitative analysis
After transcribing, organizing, and getting familiarized with the obtained data, the raw data was codified through a process which is referred to as open or preliminary coding. Here, the researcher detected a wide range of concepts and categories regarding the demotivating factors which were reduced later. Then, the researcher tried to develop the core categories applying the axial coding. In the last step, called selective coding, some categories were integrated to create a model for demotivating factors influencing Iranian learners (Ary *et al.*, 2010). The obtained model was comprised of seven major categories which will be thoroughly presented later.

4.3.2.2 Quantitative analysis
A questionnaire was developed based on the qualitative data gathered through the interviews and distributed among the participants. After collecting the distributed questionnaires, an exploratory factor analysis was performed to explore the factor structure of the items. In addition, descriptive statistics, the independent samples t-test (to determine the gender differences with regard to the demotivating factors), one-way ANOVA (to investigate the difference between the demotivation of different

universities), and Pearson correlation coefficient (to study the relationship between age and demotivation) were applied as well.

5. Results
5.1 Analysis of the interview results

After the transcribed interviews were categorized through the open coding, some primitive concepts were identified. For instance, many students believed that the reason for their demotivation lied in their insufficient learning at school. They said that, in the very beginning years of their learning English, they had not acquired the basic knowledge they needed, so that this lack of knowledge was the source of their present demotivation. Some others believed that teachers should be blamed for such demotivation towards learning English. They said teachers' attitudes, methods of teaching, lack of interest, lack of proficiency, and absence during the semester were among the important problems they had with their teachers. Family problems like lack of their parents' financial and emotional support and working along with studying were also among the reasons raised by the students for their demotivation. Another group of the students held themselves responsible, saying their lack of intrinsic interest and aptitude was the problem. They also mentioned the difficulty and inapplicability of learning English as a foreign language as another demotivating factor.

In addition to what was cited above, there were still other reasons mentioned, like the negative effect of friends or the unsuitability of the educational environment. The students stated that some of their classmates discouraged them or by messing the class did not let them pay attention to the teacher. A group of students felt the society and the system of education were responsible for their lack of motivation. They said that learning English as a foreign language does not receive enough attention in the society or in the media. On the other hand, the system of education does not present a well-developed program for developing students' proficiency in the foreign language. The first grade of the guidance school is too late to start learning another language from. Furthermore, what is emphasized only includes the grades, and students' proficiency in different skills like speaking, listening, reading, and writing does not receive much importance. In conclusion, a rudimentary model of students' demotivation containing seven major categories or themes were induced as follow:

1. Family (family problems, lack of attention and supports from the parents)
2. Teachers (method of teaching, attitude, management, proficiency, and personality)

3. Lack of self-esteem and intrinsic and personal motivation
4. Negative influence of friends and classmates
5. Unsuitable educational environment and lack of enough facilities
6. Lack of given importance to the foreign languages in society
7. Setbacks of the system of education

5.2 Analysis of the questionnaire results

Table 1 shows the descriptive statistics of the questionnaire's items. According to Oxford (1990, p. 300), the mean scores that fall between 1.0 and 2.4 are identified as "low" influence, 2.5 and 3.4 as "medium" influence, and 3.5 and 5.0 as "high" influence. These categories of ratings were theoretically and arithmetically chosen.

	Low	Medium	High
1.0	2.4-2.5	3.4-3.5	5.0

As it is detected from the table, most items except for the items 1,3,15,16,20,21 and 32 had a mean of higher than 2.5. Therefore, the mentioned items had low influences on the demotivating language learners, but all the other items had medium and high influences.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics for questionnaire responses (asterisks show the deleted items)

No	M	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis	1	2	3	4	5
1*	2.18	1.31	0.78	-0.62	43.2	21.8	15.5	12.0	7.6
2	2.75	1.40	0.23	-1.27	24.6	25.2	15.5	19.9	14.8
3	2.26	1.26	0.75	-0.60	35.3	31.5	11.7	14.5	6.9
4	3.12	1.43	-0.13	-1.39	17.7	22.7	11.0	26.8	21.8
5*	3.00	1.24	0.02	-0.99	12.9	24.3	26.2	23.0	13.6
6*	3.78	1.33	-0.80	-0.64	8.5	13.2	11.0	25.2	42.0
7*	2.84	1.00	0.02	-0.27	10.4	23.3	43.2	17.7	5.4
8*	3.18	1.21	-0.04	-1.09	7.3	27.8	20.8	27.8	16.4
9	2.81	1.37	0.15	-1.31	20.8	28.7	11.7	25.6	13.2
10	3.32	1.20	-0.11	-1.05	5.7	23.7	24.3	25.6	20.8
11	3.86	1.15	-0.95	0.10	5.7	8.8	14.2	36.0	35.3
12*	2.68	1.30	0.36	-0.94	21.1	29.0	22.7	14.5	12.6
13	3.55	1.30	-0.45	-1.08	6.9	20.8	13.2	27.8	31.2
14	2.96	1.49	0.09	-1.48	21.1	27.1	8.8	20.2	22.7
15	1.63	1.06	1.92	3.11	63.4	22.4	6.6	2.5	5.0
16	2.07	1.25	1.01	-0.06	44.2	27.1	12.6	8.8	7.3
17*	4.05	1.06	-1.19	0.80	3.5	7.9	9.8	37.5	41.3
18*	2.53	1.27	0.45	-0.83	25.6	28.7	22.1	14.2	9.5

19	3.45	1.27	-0.34	-1.10	6.6	22.7	14.8	30.3	25.6
20	2.41	1.29	0.65	-0.73	28.4	35.0	12.6	14.2	9.8
21	2.20	1.28	0.87	-0.40	37.9	31.9	10.1	12.0	8.2
22*	3.04	1.27	-0.08	-1.12	13.6	24.3	19.6	29.0	13.6
23	4.04	1.09	-1.21	0.91	4.7	5.7	12.3	35.3	42.0
24	3.47	1.17	-0.46	-0.66	6.6	15.8	21.8	35.6	20.2
25	3.48	1.23	-0.37	-0.97	6.0	19.9	18.6	30.3	25.2
26	3.64	1.20	-0.57	-0.74	5.0	16.7	15.8	33.1	29.3
27	2.73	1.35	0.30	-1.21	20.8	32.8	11.7	21.8	12.9
28	2.80	1.15	0.20	-0.72	13.6	28.4	30.9	18.0	9.1
29	3.51	1.18	-0.39	-0.79	5.7	16.1	24.0	29.3	24.9
30	3.52	1.18	-0.41	-0.78	5.7	16.1	23.0	30.3	24.9
31*	3.88	1.05	-0.74	-0.12	2.5	8.8	20.2	34.7	33.8
32	1.72	1.01	1.58	2.05	54.6	29.7	7.6	5.0	3.2
33	2.59	1.24	0.44	-0.84	20.2	35.0	18.6	17.0	9.1
34*	3.41	1.12	-0.44	-0.47	6.9	13.2	28.1	34.7	17.0
35	3.57	1.30	-0.59	-0.79	9.5	13.6	17.0	29.7	30.3

Through principal factor analysis, the dimensionality of the 35 items was analyzed. Through Varimax method, ten factors were loaded. For the interpretation of the factor loadings, the criterion of .40 or above was used (Field, 2005). Factors seven, eight, and nine were eliminated because they contained only one item. In addition, factor ten which included items below 0.40 was also deleted. The deleted items are shown by the asterisks in Table 1. Table 2 shows the rotated solutions.

Table 2. Factor analysis of demotivation

Item Numbers	F1	F2	F3	F4	F5	F6
Factor 1: lack of self-esteem and intrinsic motivation (α=0.838)						
Q14	0.748					
Q27	0.680					
Q4	0.677					
Q20	0.646					
Q3	0.642					
Q9	0.626					
Q15	0.430					
Factor 2: teachers' methods and personality (α=0.754)						
Q25		0.782				
Q26		0.723				
Q19		0.583				

Q13	0.554				
Q2	0.412				
Factor3: lack of extrinsic motivation (α=0.612)					
Q32		0.595			
Q33		0.543			
Q16		0.511			
Q21		0.417			
Factor 4: setbacks in system of education (α=0.514)					
Q30			0.606		
Q29			0.498		
Q23			0.432		
Factor 5: lack of given importance in society (α=0.596)					
Q35				0.591	
Q24				0.518	
Q11				0.498	
Factor 6: unsuitable class environment (α=0.478)					
Q28					0.678
Q10					0.425

After a detailed examination of the items under each factor, the following six factors were identified: (1) lack of self-esteem and intrinsic motivation (items 14, 27, 4, 20, 3, 19); (2) teachers' methods and personality (items 25, 26, 19, 13, 2); (3) lack of extrinsic motivation (items 32, 33, 16, 21); (4) setbacks in the system of education (items 30, 29, 23); (5) lack of given importance in society (items 35, 24, 11) and (6) unsuitable class environment (items 28, 10). The loading of each item and the reliability coefficient measured by Cronbach's alpha are also given. The Cronbach's alpha for the whole questionnaire after the omission of the items was 0.87. Table 3 shows the descriptive statistics for each factor.

Table 3. Descriptive statistics for demotivating factors

Factor Number	K	M	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
1	7	2.33	0.87	0.22	-0.85
2	5	3.37	0.91	-0.36	-0.43
3	4	1.60	0.66	1.03	0.89
4	3	3.69	0.82	-0.37	-0.09
5	3	3.63	0.90	-0.50	-0.17
6	2	3.06	0.95	0.05	-0.38

Factors four and five are the most influential having the mean-scores of 3.69 and 3.63, respectively. While factors two and six with the mean-scores of 3.37 and 3.06 have an average influence, factors one and three with the mean-scores of 2.33 and 1.60 show a low influence. Therefore, the setbacks of the system of education were detected as the most demotivating factors and the lack of extrinsic motivation as the least demotivating factor in this context.

5.3 Differences among the three universities regarding the demotivating factors

To investigate the difference among the type of university (State, Azad, and Payame Noor Universities) with regard to each demotivating factor, the analysis of variance (ANOVA) was utilized as seen in Table 4.

Table 4. One-way ANOVA results: Influence of type of University on each factor

Factor 1	Mean	Std. Deviation	F	DF	Sig
State	14.34	5.59			
Azad	15.90	5.58	18.06	316	0.000
Payame Noor	19.11	6.34			
Factor 2	Mean	Std. Deviation	F	DF	Sig
State	17.1	4.09			
Azad	17.7	3.93	5.46	316	0.005
Payame Noor	15.6	5.44			
Factor 3	Mean	Std. Deviation	F	DF	Sig
State	6.25	2.47			
Azad	5.66	2.16	11.43	316	0.003
Payame Noor	7.37	3.01			
Factor 4	Mean	Std. Deviation	F	DF	Sig
State	11.13	2.41			
Azad	10.48	2.37	6.01	316	0.003
Payame Noor	11.67	2.53			
Factor 5	Mean	Std. Deviation	F	DF	Sig
State	10.88	2.27			
Azad	11.13	2.71	0.65	316	0.522
Payame Noor	10.70	2.68			
Factor 6	Mean	Std. Deviation	F	DF	Sig
State	6.18	1.96			
Azad	6.08	1.79	0.07	316	0.931
Payame Noor	6.11	1.99			

The above results indicate that Factors 1, 2, 3, and 4, with the significance levels of 0.000, 0.005, 0.000, and 0.003, respectively, are statistically

significant with regard to the three universities. The mean scores of Payame Noor university students show that factors 1, 3, and 4 greatly influence such students. Azad university students are more influenced by factor 2 than the students of the other two universities. The other two factors (5 and 6) showed no difference regarding which university the participants are studying.

5.4 Impact of gender on demotivating factors

Table 5 shows the influence of gender on each demotivating factor by the use of independent sample T-tests. The significance levels indicate that, with the level of significance 0.007, Factor 1 which was coded as lack of self-esteem and intrinsic motivation is the only factor that statistically significant regarding gender. The mean-scores show that this factor is more demotivating for the female students than the male ones. Although the mean-scores show a greater influence of Factors 2, 5, and 6 for the males and Factors 3 and 4 for the Females, the amounts of T and the levels of significance show that this difference is not meaningful.

Table 5. Independent sample T-test results: Impact of gender on each demotivating factor

Factor 1	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	T	Sig
Male	171	15.46	5.63	-2.69	0.007
Female	146	17.32	6.55		
Factor 2	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	T	Sig
Male	171	17.21	4.19	1.32	0.187
Female	146	16.52	4.95		
Factor 3	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	T	Sig
Male	171	6.31	2.47	-0.633	0.527
Female	146	6.50	2.84		
Factor 4	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	T	Sig
Male	171	11.00	2.59	-0.617	0.538
Female	146	11.17	2.33		
Factor 5	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	T	Sig
Male	171	11.08	2.70	1.21	0.226

Female	146	10.71	2.70		
Factor 6	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	T	Sig
Male	171	6.30	1.86	1.76	0.079
Female	146	5.92	1.96		

5.5 Relationship between demotivating factors and age

To find out if there is a relationship between the students' age and each of the demotivating factors, the researcher applied Pearson Correlation Coefficient. Table 6 shows the results. Factors 1 and 5 showed a weak correlation with age (r= 0.111 and r= 0.139). The positive amount of coefficient is the sign of a direct relationship between the two. It means that with an increase in age, the first, i.e. lack of self-esteem and intrinsic motivation) and the fifth, i.e. lack of given importance in society, factors will have a more demotivating effect on students. For the other factors, no significant relationship was detected with an increase in age. However, this weak correlation may be due to the low variance of the age factor among the university students. There is a possibility that studying the demotivating factors in other contexts like language institutes with a broader age range may show a stronger correlation.

Table 6. Correlation results: The relationship between each demotivating factor and age

Factor 1	N	Pearson Correlation	Sig.
Age	317	0.111	0.048
Factor 2	N	Pearson Correlation	Sig.
Age	317	-0.053	0.344
Factor 3	N	Pearson Correlation	Sig.
Age	317	-0.055	0.333
Factor 4	N	Pearson Correlation	Sig.
Age	317	0.061	0.279
Factor 5	N	Pearson Correlation	Sig.
Age	317	0.139	0.014
Factor 6	N	Pearson Correlation	Sig.
Age	317	-0.082	0.144

5.6 The presented model for the Iranian students' demotivation

As mentioned in the previous sections, the primitive model induced from the qualitative data included seven factors which were reduced to six factors using the results of factor analysis in the quantitative phase of the research.

As a final step and after a close examination of the results acquired through the interviews and questionnaires, the last category, which included only two items, was combined with the fourth factor because its specificity could not stand as a major category. The finalized model developed for the demotivating factors in this study includes five themes and twenty-two categories as follow:

Figure 1. The proposed model for demotivating factors
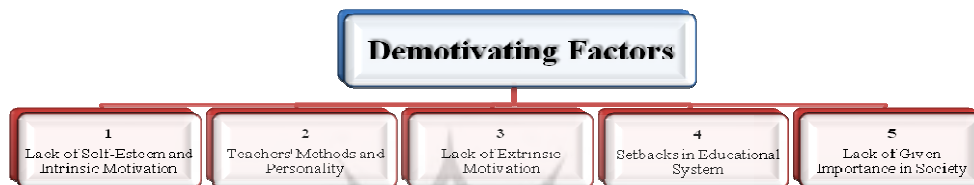
1. *Lack of self-esteem and intrinsic motivation:*
    *   Belief in the lack of ability to learn English in the adulthood
    *   Having fear and stress in learning English
    *   Belief in the difficulty of learning English
    *   Having a weak background in English
    *   Not being interested in learning English
    *   Having no need to learn English

2. *Teachers' Methods and Personality:*
    *   They were rigid and used punishment
    *   They were more interested in grades rather than learning
    *   They did not speak English and did not care about speaking and pronunciation
    *   Their method of teaching was not comprehensive
    *   Their teaching style did not motivate students

3. *Lack of Extrinsic Motivation:*
    *   There is no use for learning English
    *   Other courses are more important and applicable than English
    *   There is no relationship between one's field of study and English
    *   Friends and classmates believe that there is no use to learn English

4. *Setbacks in Educational System:*
    *   The time allocated to the English classes at schools and universities is very limited

- The English textbooks are not suitable
- The classes are crowded
- Students are from different levels of proficiency

5. Lack of Given Importance in Society
- The media do not give much importance to English
- There is no application defined in the society for English
- Learning English is not encouraged in the society

6. Discussion

The current study intended to investigate the demotivating factors influencing the Iranian non-English majors studying General English course through the use of six research questions. The first question was concerned with the demotivating factors of the university students of Sirjan, Kerman, Iran in an EFL environment. As the analysis of the questionnaires through factor analysis showed, six categories as demotivating factors were extracted as follow: (1) lack of self-esteem and intrinsic motivation; (2) teachers' methods and personality; (3) lack of extrinsic motivation; (4) setbacks in educational system; (5) lack of given importance in society and (6) unsuitable class environment. For the second question, among these factors, the least influential factor was Factor 3 and the most influential one was Factor 4, which was later combined with Factor 6 as mentioned above in the presented model of demotivation. Setbacks in educational system included the categories like "limited time allocated to English," "unsuitable textbooks," "crowded classes," and "heterogeneous classes with regard to students' proficiency." These categories overlap with some of the demotivating factors mentioned in Dörnyei's (2001) and Kikuchi and Sakai's (2007) lists such as "inadequate school facilities" and "coursebooks used in class." Lack of extrinsic motivation as the least primary demotivating factor shows that although the system of education and society do not provide the necessary sources for the students' language development, they feel the need to learn English. Lack of given importance in society was the second source of demotivation. This indicates that a need to know and learn English in the EFL environment and the society that students are living in is not emphasized or given importance. The obtained results are not consistent with some of the previous researches in which the teacher-related factors were found to be the main demotivating factors (Chambers, 1993; Dörnyei, 1998, as cited in Dörnyei, 2001; Oxford, 1998; Ushida, 1998). In the present study, teachers' methods and personality comprised the third influential demotivating factor. Finally, the lack of self-esteem and intrinsic motivation was the fourth source of demotivation which

was slightly different in content from other studies. In some researches like Dörnyei (1998, as cited in Dörnyei, 2001) and Trang and Baldauf (2007), the internal demotivating factors included the categories like 'experiences of failure' or 'negative attitudes toward English or the community of the foreign language spoken.' However, in the present study, the participants did not mention any of these categories as the reason for their demotivation. They mostly did not have enough confidence in their own learning and felt fearful and anxious when learning English.

The outcome for the third research question regarding the impact of the type of university (State, Azad and Payame Noor) on each demotivating factor shows a statistically significant difference for factors 1, 3, and 4 (lack of self-esteem and intrinsic motivation, lack of extrinsic motivation and setbacks in system of education) especially for Payame Noor University students who suffer more from such demotivating factors. Payame Noor University is a state distance university, whose students do not have any obligation to attend the classes. In addition, instructors are supposed to work as advisors and they are not obliged to teach the entire coursebooks. Most of the coursebooks are also exclusively published by the university. Therefore, the special context of Payame Noor University might have caused more demotivation for the students regarding factors 1, 3, and 4. Factor 2 (methods and personality of teachers) was more demotivating for the students of Islamic Azad University. To find the reason for this difference as well as the factors influencing Payame Noor University students, further investigation would be needed to be conducted which is out of this paper's tolerance.

In order to investigate the relationship between the demotivating factors and students' age and the impact of gender on the demotivating factors (the main point of the questions four and five), Pearson Correlation and independent sample t-tests were utilized, respectively. Considering the results, it was concluded that Factor one was more demotivating for the females than for the males, but no significant difference was detected in the other factors. Moreover, the examination of the demotivating factors in relation to the students' age demonstrated a weak correlation between Factors 1, 5, and the increase in age. The high influence of the first factor on the demotivating females might be due to the conditions present at the learning environment as mentioned by Dörnyei (2005) that language learning experience "concerns situation-specific motives related to the immediate learning environment and experience" (p. 106). Regarding the relationship between age and motivation, the results of this study are somehow in line with a series of studies on the influence of age on motivation like Singleton (1995), Shaaban and Ghaith (2000), and Singlton

and Ryan (2004) in which the older students were less motivated than the younger ones. Nevertheless, these explanations are mostly skeptical and further investigation is needed. As the final and the main purpose of the study, a model for the demotivating factors influencing Iranian students in language learning was presented and displayed in the previous section.

7. Conclusions

This study has tried to present a model of demotivating factors among Iranian university students. Considering new views presented in post-method theories in language teaching and learning, conducting regional studies can be of great importance not only to get familiar with the socio-cultural context of each region but also to try to develop new views and theories as well (Kumaravadivelu, 2006). Although the study was conducted in only one of the cities of Iran, it can be seen that the results are obviously different from other countries like Japan, Hungary, and Vietnam as mentioned in the literature.

Demotivation can have a negative effect on students' gaining their expected outcomes in learning a foreign language. The results of the study show that system of education, society and teachers have an undeniable role in demotivating learners. Therefore, the ministry of education can play a great role in reducing students' demotivation by making some fundamental changes in its presented curriculum and coursebooks, and by providing a better learning environment and the necessary facilities for the students. In addition to the ministry of the education which is directly related to students learning, some other authorities like those in charge of the national media can have a major role in enhancing the learners' motivation and the status of English as a foreign language in the society. Teachers play a significant part in this regard as well. Teachers, who use suitable methods of teaching, are successful in capturing students' interest and have an effective personality and behavior; besides, providing adequate opportunities for their students' language development would have a greater chance of decreasing their students' demotivation.

This study has tried to shed more light on the demotivating factors influencing language learning of Iranian students, but because the study was conducted in one city and the questionnaire items were limited to 35 items, the results might not be generalizable to all Iranian university students so that further study on demotivation in language learning would be needed to be conducted so as to confirm the outcomes. It was hoped that the findings could have the potential to have a great impact on diminishing the demotivating factors that students confront.

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