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An Investigation into Sources of Demotivation in Second Language Learning

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Abstract

This study investigated the main sources of Iranian students' demotivation in L2 learning and examined demotivation in relation to students' gender and level of education. To find the major demotivating factors, a questionnaire consisting of 32 items was developed and completed by 327 students. An exploratory factor analysis was conducted to explore the factorial structure of the questionnaire. Based on the results, five categories of demotivating factors were identified: Learning Contents, Materials, and Facilities, Attitude towards English Speaking Community, The Teacher, Experience of Failure, and Attitude towards Second Language Learning. To examine demotivating factors in relation to students' gender and educational level, two one-way analyses of variance were run. The results indicated significant differences between male and female students in terms of three demotivating factors. Significant differences were observed between students at different levels of education with regard to the three demotivating factors. Finally, a multivariate analysis of variance was performed to examine demotivating factors in relation to students' gender and educational level.

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Significant differences were found between male and female students across educational levels in terms of all demotivating factors except one.

Keywords: Demotivation; Motivation; Demotivating factors; Second language learning

Introduction

Because of its vital role, the construct of motivation has been widely studied in the past decades (e.g. Dörnyei, 1994, 1996, 1998,2001, 2002, 2003, 2009, 2010; Dörnyei & Ottó, 1998; Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011; Gardner, 1985; Masgoret & Gardner, 2003; Noels et al.,1999; Oxford & Shearin, 1994). Despite the bulk of research, an important aspect of motivation, namely demotivation has not received due attention from the researchers (Dörnyei, 2003). Dörnyei (2005) believes that "although there are both positive and negative forces exerting their influence on ongoing student behaviors, past motivation research has typically overlooked the negative motives and conceptualized motivation as a kind of inducement"(p.89).

Researchers regard demotivation as "another side of motivation" (e.g. Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011; Falout, Elwood, & Hood, 2009; Falout & Maruyama, 2004; Kikuchi, 2009; Sakai & Kikuchi, 2009). They note that students' motivation is subject to many negative influences during the process of second language learning. Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011) argue that these negative influences may relate to "particular learning-related events or experiences, such as performance anxiety, public humiliation, heavy work demands or poor test results" and "factors in the social learning environment, such as the personality and the attitude of the teacher or classroom counter-cultures and peer pressures"(p.148). Demotivation has negative effects on language learning processes and outcomes. As Falout et al (2009) note "demotivation can negatively influence the learner's attitudes and behaviors, degrade classroom group dynamics and teacher's motivation, and result in long-term and widespread negative learning outcomes"(p. 403). In fact, when students are demotivated, second language learning is more difficult and less pleasant; subsequently, the achievement of expected learning outcomes becomes difficult. Furthermore, students' demotivation might lead to amotivation or complete lack of motivation (Falout et al.). It seems that successful language learning requires a serious attention to and plans for dispelling demotivating factors. Any failure to learn a second language may be largely due to the existence of demotivating factors on the part of learners.

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Despite the importance of demotivation in language learning, few researchers have investigated and explored its complex nature. Dörnyei (2001) notes that "very little is usually said about motivational influences that have a detrimental rather than a positive effect on motivation, that is, which instead of energizing action, 'de-energize' it" (p. 50). The motivational influences that have a detrimental effect on student motivation are called demotivating influences. There is no widely accepted definition of demotivation. Nevertheless, demotivation may be defined as the negative effects of various factors that negatively impact motivation. It refers to "specific external forces that reduce or diminish the motivational basis of a behavioural intention or an ongoing action" (Dornyei, 2005, p. 90).

Demotivation does not imply total loss of learners' motivation. In fact, the positive influences that make up motivational basis can still be there and positive motives may still be active in a learner's learning process. On the other hand, demotivation may develop into amotivation or complete lack of motivation, i.e., some demotivating factors can result in a total loss of interest or motivation in the course of time. For example, a series of demotivating experiences or teachers' continuous bad behavior can reduce students' interest or motivation. Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011) have argued that:

> Some demotives can lead to general amotivation regarding the particular activity (e.g. a series of horrendous classroom experiences can reduce the learner's self-efficacy), but with some other demotives, as soon as the detrimental external influence ceases to exist, other positive, and thus far oppressed, motives may again get the upper hand (e.g. if it turns out that someone who dissuaded the individual from doing something was not telling the truth). (p.151)

To date, most research on students' demotivation in language learning has been exploratory in nature. Dornyei (1998, as cited in Dornyei & Ushioda, 2011) interviewed 50 secondary school students who had been identified as demotivated learners by their teachers or peers and identified the following demotivating factors: 1) The teacher, 2) Inadequate school facilities, 3) Reduced self-confidence, 4) Negative attitude towards the L2, 5) Compulsory nature of L2 study, 6) Interference of another foreign language being studied, 7) Negative attitude towards L2 community, 8) Attitude of group members, and 9) Course book. They

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reported that demotivating factors of the teacher and reduced self-confidence account for more than half of all demotivating factors.

Falout and Maruyama (2004) examined the relationship between demotivation and students' level of language proficiency. The 49-item questionnaire developed based on Dornyei's nine demotivating factors was administrated to 164 freshmen university students from two science departments. Six categories of demotivating factors were identified: 1) Teachers, 2) Courses, 3) Attitude towards English speaking community, 4) Attitude toward English itself, 5) Self-confidence, and 6) Attitude of group members. It was found that for the low-proficiency learners, self-confidence, attitudes toward the L2, courses, teachers, and attitudes of group members were the most demotivating factors. For the high- proficiency learners, self-confidence was the most important demotivating factor. In fact, low proficient students tented to correlate demotivetion to their affective states, while the high proficient students were more apt to attribute their demotivetion to external factors and indicate more control over their affective states and learning situation.

To identify the demotivating factors for Japanese high school students, Kikuchi (2009) asked 5 university students from public and private universities to share their experiences in high school English classrooms. Forty-two university students from public universities completed an open-response questionnaire. Through the qualitative analysis, the following demotivating factors were identified: 1) The teacher behavior, 2) The grammar–translation method, 3) Tests and entrance examinations, 4) Vocabulary memorization, and 5) Textbooks and reference books. It was concluded that many demotivating factors were related to "the old-style teacher-fronted approach (p. 466)" in Japanese high school, i.e., traditional teaching methodology and teachers' behavior were the salient demotivating factors in Japanese context.

After reviewing previous studies of demotivation, Sakai and Kikuchi (2009) concluded that teachers, characteristics of classes, experiences of failure, class environment, class materials, and lack of interest were identified as the major demotivating factors in previous studies of students' demotivation. They administrated a 35-item questionnaire to 656 Japanese high school students and identified the following sources of demotivation: 1) Learning contents and materials, 2) Teachers' competence and teaching styles, 3) Inadequate school facilities, 4) Lack of intrinsic motivation, and 5) Test scores. Findings indicated

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that learning contents and materials and test scores were the salient demotivating factors for many students. Contrary to the previous studies, teacher-related factors were not the most demotivating factor. Furthermore, significant differences were found between less motivated and more motivated students; learning contents and materials, lack of intrinsic motivation, and test scores were more demotivating for the less motivated students than for the more motivated students.

Muhonen (2004) examined the main demotivating factors in relation to students' gender and level of achievement. Through the analysis of 91 ninth-grade students' writings, the following demotivating factors were identified: 1) The teacher, 2) Learning material, 3) Learner characteristics, 4) School environment, and 5) Student's attitude towards English. The findings revealed that the most demotivating factor was the teacher and the least demotivating factor was attitude towards second language. The quantitative analysis of the data showed that there were not significant differences between male and female students in terms of demotives. However, the comparison of the frequencies of demotives indicated that male students more frequently attributed demotivation to the teacher whereas learning material was considered more demotivating by female students. The teacher was regarded the main demotivating factor in all grades.

To the best of the researchers' knowledge no study has examined demotivation in Iranian context. Therefore, this study attempts to shed more light on the issue by addressing the following research questions:

1. What are the main demotivating factors affecting L2 learning by Iranian students?

2. Is there any significant difference between male and female students in terms of demotivating factors?

3. Is there any significant difference between students at the different levels of education in terms of demotivating factors?

4. Is there any significant difference between male and female students at the same levels of education in terms of demotivating factors?

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Method

Participants

The participants were 327 students from junior high school, high school, and university. They were all native speakers of Persian studying English as a second language. The distribution of participants by gender and level of education is presented in Table 1.

Table 1
Distribution of participants by gender and level of education

Level of Education	Male	Female	Total
Junior high school	48	45	93
High school	50	48	98
University	77	59	136
Total	175	152	327

Instrumentation

A 32-item questionnaire was used in the present study to identify the main demaotivating factors for Iranian language learners. The following steps were followed in the development of the questionnaire.

First, 40 students (13 junior high school, 10 high school, and 17 university students) were asked to write about the factors that they perceived to be demotivating in L2 learning. They were asked to write in Persian so that they could express themselves better. Their writings were analyzed, coded, and categorized in order to find the most frequent categories of demotivating factors. The second step was to conduct a semi-structured interview with 10 language teachers (4 female and 6 male). In fact, the purpose of the semi-structured interview was to identify the major sources of demotivation among students from the teachers' perspective. Data was recorded, analyzed, and coded in order to find the possible demotivating factors. Next, several of the items of demotivation questionnaires used in previous studies (Falout & Maruyama, 2004; Sakai & Kikuchi, 2009) were translated into Persian. Three EFL students read the translated items and provided feedback on their comprehensibility.

An initial pool of items was created based on the analysis of the students' and teachers' perceived demotivating factors and the questionnaires used in the

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previous studies. The initial list of items was closely examined for redundancy, content validity, and clarity. The revision of items resulted in the deletion of redundant items, the collapsing of some items into one, and the addition of new items. Then, based on the revision of the list of items, a near-final version of the questionnaire was developed and the number of items was reduced to 66.

Finally, the questionnaire was administrated to a group of 100 students who were similar to the target population. Incomplete questionnaires (N=16) were excluded from analysis. Responses to items on the questionnaire were recorded on a 5-point Likert-type scale with values of 5="true" to 1="not true". An exploratory factor analysis was conducted using a principal components analysis followed by a Varimax rotation. After analyzing the pattern of the factor loadings, several items were eliminated because they exhibited low factor loadings (less than 0.3) or loaded highly on more than one factor. Then, the factor analysis was repeated after the elimination of these items. Based on results of the new factor loadings, the list of items was subject to judgment for redundancy, content validity, and clarity. This revision resulted in the elimination of redundant items, the rewording of some items, and the addition of new items. The final version included the following categories of demotives: 1) The Teacher, 2) Learning Contents, Materials, and Facilities, 3) Experience of Failure, 4) Attitude towards Second Language Learning, and 5) Attitude towards English Speaking Community. The items were written in Persian to ensure maximum understanding on the part of the participants. The Cronbach-alpha coefficient for the reliability of the questionnaire in the pilot study was 0.87.

Data Collection Procedures

The final questionnaire was administered to a group of 327 students in 20 minutes (See appendix A). The participants were fully informed of the objectives of the study before the administration of the questionnaire. Instructions for completing the questionnaire were also given in the questionnaire and orally by one of the researchers. They were required to choose one of the alternatives: 1) True; 2) To some extent true; 3) Not either true or untrue; 4) To some extent not true; and 5) Not True.

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Results

Demotivating Factors in Second Language Learning

A Principle Components Analysis followed by a varimax rotation was performed to examine the factorial structure of the questionnaire. Based on the results, five factors were extracted. All of the items met the criterion of loading at least 0.3 on their respective factor. Results of the factor analysis are displayed in Table 2.

Table 2
Factor analysis of demotivation questionnaire (32 items)

Component	1	2	3	4	5
i_30	.800				
i_32	.762				
i_1	.725				
i_17	.569		.314		
i_26	.541				
i_21	.520				
i_22	.468				
i_28	.421				
i_31		.728			
i_11		.677			
i_15		.654			
i_25		.575			
i_2		.559			
i_24		.535			
i_5		.403			
i_19		.401			
i_20		.378			
i_14			.737		
i_16			.735	.326	
i_4			.652		
i_29			.611		
i_7	.333		.472		
i_10			.439		
i_27			.362		
i_3		.371		.596	
i_9				.574	
i_8				.568	
i_6				.423	
i_13	.326			.333	
i_23					.765
i_12					.751
i_18					.747

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Factor 1 received high loadings from 8 items (30, 32, 1, 17, 26, 21, 22, 28). These items concern the ways teachers organized their teaching, taught and presented the learning contents to students, and behaved in the class. Factor 1 was, therefore, called "The Teacher". Factor 2 received appreciable loadings from nine items (31, 11, 15, 25, 2, 24, 5, 19, 20). The items related to students' attitudes toward the compulsory nature of language learning and the lack of purpose or goal for language learning. Thus, Factor 2 was named "Attitude towards Second Language Learning". Factor 3 obtained high loadings from seven items (14, 16, 4, 29, 7, 10, 27). These items concerned the grammar based instruction, the topics of the learning materials, and learning facilities. Factor 3 was, therefore, labeled "Learning Contents, Materials, and Facilities". Factor 4 had loadings on the five items (3, 9, 8, 6, 13). The first three items were concerned with the learners' experience of failure such as the low or disappointing score in examinations and inability to memorize vocabulary and expressions. Items 6 and 13 were related to the course books and the teaching methodology. This factor was called "Experience of Failure". Factor 5 received high loadings from three items that referred to the learners' attitude towards English speaking people, country, and culture (23, 12, 18). This factor was labeled "Attitude towards English Speaking Community". Table 3 presents the reliability coefficients for the demotivation questionnaire.

Table 3
Reliability of demotivation questionnaire

Component name	Cronbach's Alpha
The Teacher	.80
Learning Contents, Materials, and Facilities	.68
Attitudes towards Second Language Learning	.69
Experience of Failure	.71
Attitude towards English Speaking Community	.72
Total Reliability	.83

The participants' mean scores on each factor were calculated. Table 4 presents the descriptive statistics for each demotivating factor. Overall, the mean scores of factors 'Learning Contents, Materials, and Facilities' and 'Attitude towards English Speaking Community' are higher than (3.78 and 3.04, respectively), the factors of 'The Teacher' , 'Experience of Failure', and 'Attitude towards Second Language Learning' (2.73, 2.59, 2.23).

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Table 4
Descriptive statistics for demotivating factors

	Mean	SD
Learning Contents, Materials, and Facilities	3.78	.78
Attitude towards English Speaking Community	3.04	1.22
The Teacher	2.73	.87
Experience of Failure	2.59	.95
Attitude towards Second Language Learning	2.23	.94

Demotivating Factors and Students' Gender

Table 5 displays descriptive statistics for male and female students. As seen, females' mean scores were greater than those of males for all demotivating factors except for 'Attitude towards English Speaking Community'.

Table 5
Descriptive statistics for male and female students on demotivating factors

		Mean	SD
The Teacher	Female	2.90	.85
	Male	2.58	.86
Experience of Failure	Female	2.73	1.02
	Male	2.47	.86
Attitude towards English Speaking Community	Female	2.84	1.24
	Male	3.20	1.18
Learning Contents, Materials, and Facilities	Female	3.85	.76
	Male	3.71	.79
Attitude towards Second Language Learning	Female	2.26	1.03
	Male	2.21	.85

The one-way ANOVA results in Table 6 point to statistically significant differences between males and females with regard to the factors of The Teacher ($p<.001$), Experience of Failure ($p<.012$), and Attitude towards English Speaking Community ($p<.008$). The findings imply that female students were more demotivated than male students with respect to the factor of the Teacher and Experience of Failure while male students were more demotivated in Attitude towards English Speaking Community than females. No significant differences

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were found between the two groups in terms of 'Learning Contents, Materials, and Facilities' and 'Attitude towards Second Language Learning'.

Table 6
ANOVA results for gender

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
The Teacher	8.50	1	8.50	11.48	**.001**
Experience of Failure	5.66	1	5.66	6.31	**.012**
Attitude towards English Speaking Community	10.59	1	10.59	7.18	**.008**
Learning Contents, Materials, and Facilities	1.58	1	1.58	2.60	.108
Attitude towards Second Language Learning	.20	1	.20	.22	.636

Demotivating Factors and Students' Level of Education

Table 7 presents descriptive statistics for demotivating factors for participants at the different levels of education.

Table 7
Descriptive statistics of the demotives across different levels of education

		Mean	SD
The Teacher	Junior high school	2.77	1.01
	High school	2.64	.85
	University	2.77	.77
Experience of Failure	Junior high school	2.58	1.07
	High school	2.47	.92
	University	2.69	.88
Attitude towards English Speaking Community	Junior high school	2.60	1.32
	High school	2.84	1.22
	University	3.48	1.00
Learning Contents, Materials, and Facilities	Junior high school	3.41	.83
	High school	3.89	.69
	University	3.95	.72
Attitude towards Second Language Learning	Junior high school	2.49	1.25
	High school	1.92	.77
	University	2.27	.720

One-way ANOVA results in Table 8 point to statistically significant differences in 'Attitude towards English Speaking Community', 'Learning Contents, Materials,

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and Facilities', and 'Attitude towards Second Language Learning' across the three levels of education.

Table 8
ANOVA results for level of education

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
The Teacher	1.212	2	.606	.792	.454
Experience of Failure	2.748	2	1.374	1.514	.222
Attitude towards English Speaking Community	47.835	2	23.917	17.526	**.000**
Learning Contents, Materials, and Facilities	18.036	2	9.018	16.101	**.000**
Attitude towards Second Language Learning	16.207	2	8.104	9.612	**.000**

In order to find where the differences lie, a post hoc Scheffe test was performed for level of education. The results are presented in Table 9.

Table 9
Scheffe test for educational level

Dependent Variable	(I) LEVEL	(J) LEVEL	Mean Difference	Std. Error	Sig.
The Teacher	junior high school	high school	.1302	.12364	.57
		university	-.0044	.11492	.99
	high school	university	-.1346	.11316	.49
Experience of Failure	junior high school	high school	.1133	.13701	.71
		university	-.1058	.12735	.70
	high school	university	-.2191	.12540	.21
Attitude towards English Speaking Community	junior high school	high school	-.2308	.16199	.36
		university	-.8735*	.15057	.00
	high school	university	-.6427*	.14827	.00
Learning Contents, Materials, and Facilities	junior high school	high school	-.4863*	.10705	.00
		university	-.5411*	.09950	.00
	high school	university	-.0548	.09798	.85
Attitude towards Second Language Learning	junior high school	high school	.5747*	.13176	.00
		university	.2200	.12247	.20
	high school	university	-.3547*	.12060	.01

Findings of the Scheffe test pointed to significant differences between junior high school and university levels and between high school and university levels

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with regard to the factor of 'Attitude towards English Speaking Community'. With respect to the factor of 'Learning Contents, Materials, and Facilities', significant differences were found between junior high school and high school levels as well as between junior high school and university levels. In the case of 'Attitude towards Second Language Learning', findings showed significant differences between junior high school and high school levels as well as between high school and university levels.

Demotivating Factors and Students' Gender and Level of Education

The results of multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) for examining the possible differences between male and female students at the same level of education are presented in Table 10.

Table 10
MANOVA results for gender and level of education

Source	Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
GENDER	The Teacher	7.39	1	7.39	10.13	.002
	Experience of Failure	5.57	1	5.57	6.21	.013
	Attitude towards English Speaking Community	12.71	1	12.71	10.15	.002
	Learning Contents, Materials, and Facilities	1.5	1	1.50	2.75	.098
	Attitude towards Second Language Learning	.81	1	.81	.98	.321
LEVEL	The Teacher	1.73	2	.87	1.19	.305
	Experience of Failure	3.21	2	1.60	1.79	.168
	Attitude towards English Speaking Community	50.79	2	25.39	20.28	.000
	Learning Contents, Materials, and Facilities	18.52	2	9.26	16.93	.000
	Attitude towards second language learning	16.26	2	8.13	9.81	.000
GENDER	The Teacher	5.02	2	2.51	3.44	**.033**
* LEVEL	Experience of Failure	.53	2	.26	.29	.743
	Attitude towards English Speaking Community	31.73	2	15.86	12.67	**.000**
	Learning Contents, Materials, and Facilities	4.01	2	2.0	3.67	**.026**
	Attitude towards Second Language Learning	7.0	2	3.5	4.22	**.015**

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A close examination of the findings indicated that the interaction effects were significant for all the demotivating factors except 'Experience of Failure'. On the basis of the findings it can be argued that while the 'The Teacher' was more demotivating for female junior high school (M=2.99) and university students (M=3.07) than male junior high school (M=2.56) and university students (M=2.54), it was more demotivating for male high school students (M=2.66) than female high school students (M=2.661). Further, this factor was more demotivating for female university students (M=3.07) than female junior high school students (M=2.99); it was more demotivating for male junior high school students (M=2.56) than male university students (M=2.54).

The results also indicated that while 'Attitude towards English Speaking Community' was less demotivating for female junior high (M=2.43) and high school students (M=2.23) than for male junior high (M=2.77) and high school students (M=3.42), it was more demotivating for female university students (M=3.66) than male university students (M=3.34). In addition, this factor was more demotivating for female junior high school (M=2.43) and university students (M=3.66) than female high school students (M=2.23).

The results showed that although 'Learning Contents, Materials, and Facilities' was more demotivating for female university students (M=4.12) than male university students (M=3.82), it was less demotivating for female high school students (M=3.80) than male high school students (M=3.98). In addition, while 'Attitude towards Second Language Learning' was more demotivating for female junior high school students (M=2.71) than for male junior high school students (M=2.29), it was less demotivating for female university students (M=2.12) than male university students (M=2.39).

Discussion

Five demotivating factors were identified in this study: 1) Learning Contents, Materials, and Facilities, 2) Attitude towards English Speaking Community, 3) The Teacher, 4) Experience of Failure, and 5) Attitude towards Second Language Learning. The 'Learning Contents, Materials, and Facilities' was the most prominent demotive in L2 learning. This indicates that the uninteresting topics of the learning materials and the learning contents including the grammar-based contents were demotivating in L2 learning. Furthermore, the results indicated that

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lack of facilities such as videos, tapes, DVDs, CDs, and computers were demotiving. These findings are in line with findings of the previous studies which have related students' demotivation to the learning material and contents (e.g. Dornyei, 1998, as cited in Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011; Falout & Maruyama, 2004; Muhonen, 2004; Sakai & Kikuchi, 2009). The results of the study by Sakai and Kikuchi indicated that learning contents and materials, which focused on grammar and teaching materials such as textbooks, were the salient sources of students' demotivation. In addition, our results are consistent with the findings of the previous studies on language learning demotivation that reported inadequate school facilities as one of the major demotivating factors (e.g. Dornyei, as cited in Dörnyei & Ushioda; Sakai & Kikuchi).

'Attitude towards English Speaking Community' was the second source of students' demotivation. This is consistent with findings of the previous studies such as Dornyei (1998, as cited in Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011) and Falout & Maruyama (2004) that have showed that negative attitude towards l2 community affected the motivation to learn the target language. As findings of the present study demonstrated, this demotive related to learners' attitude towards the country, people, and culture of the target language. Since this demotivating factor has negative effects on language learning processes and outcomes, the selection of teaching materials is of prime importance; by providing learners with a realistic picture of the people who speak the language, teachers can foster positive attitudes among students towards target language speaking community and make them more willing to know about the target community by learning their language.

The findings of the previous studies (e.g. Dornyei, 1998, as cited in Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011; Kikuchi, 2009) showed that the teacher often had been the prominent source of demotivation in the learning experiences. In contrast to the previous studies, in this study it was found that 'The teacher' (their teaching methods and techniques and presenting the course contents, evaluating students' performance as well as their behavior in the class) was the third source of demotivation in the students' English learning experiences. This implies that compared to the results of studies (e.g. Dornyei, as cited in Dörnyei & Ushioda; Kikuchi; Muhonen, 2004) which have demonstrated that the teacher's lack of competence, teaching styles, personality, and behaviors were the most important causes of students' demotivation in second language learning, for Iranian language learners, teaching materials are more important.

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In addition, 'Experience of Failure' was the fourth source of students' demotivation. This demotive included items related to the students' low or disappointing score in examinations and their inability to memorize expressions and vocabulary. It was found that students' experience of failure in the language learning negatively affected their motivation. In fact, students' experience of failure in the language learning led to the loss of interest toward second language learning. This implies that the intrinsic value of learning a language is not appreciated by language learners, and teachers need to invest more time on highlighting the importance of learning a language for reasons such as communication and reading rather than obtaining high scores. It also implies that decontextualised exercises for teaching vocabulary and grammar will have a negative impact on learning; hence, teachers should use more contextulaised activities for teaching both grammar and vocabulary.

Finally, 'Attitude towards Second Language Learning' was the last source of demotivation. In fact, students' negative attitude towards second language learning was not such an influential demotive in the present study. This factor included students' attitudes toward the compulsory nature of language learning and the purpose of language learning. The compulsory nature of language learning decreased the students' motivation because they had to learn the language to achieve some instrumental ends such as passing examination or entering university rather than learning about or interacting with the second language community.

The present study also examined the differences between male and female students with respect to demotivating factors. Previous studies on students' demotivation have ignored the role of the gender. Despite Muhonen's (2004) findings, we found that female students were more demotivated than male students in the two 'The Teacher' and 'Experience of Failure' demotives. The 'Attitude towards English Speaking Community' was more demotivating for male than female students.

The examination of demotives in relation to students' level of education which demonstrated that 'Attitude towards English Speaking Community' was more demotivating for university students than junior high school and high school students. This might be due to the importance of political, religious, and cultural considerations for university students in our country. It might also point to university students' lack of familiarity with English speaking communities.

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The results also showed that the 'Learning Contents, Materials, and Facilities' was more demotivating for high school and university students than for junior high school students. Different needs of high school and university students, such as needs for communication in English, might have resulted in such differences. The findings also indicated that 'Attitude towards Second Language Learning' was more demotivating for junior high school and university students than high school students. In fact, high school students considered this factor less demotivating in learning English because they had more positive attitudes towards second language learning. It is speculated that this might be due to the importance of the university entrance examination for them which is the main driving force for the majority of high school students to learn English.

Conclusion

This study set out to shed more light on the nature and number of demotivating factors in L2 learning and examine these factors in relation to the students' gender and educational level. The results indicated that learning contents, materials, and facilities are the primary sources of students' demotivation. Thus, the Ministry of Education should make some changes in educational planning by reducing the influence of this external demotivationg factor and providing more motivating learning contents and materials. In addition, language teachers should be more careful in selecting appropriate teaching materials. Further, to reduce demotivation, teachers are suggested to pay more attention to the choice of teaching methods and their behavior that can increase students' motivation and interest in second language learning. In addition, teachers should bear in mind that students have to be taught all language skills, instead of vocabulary and grammatical rules at the expense of the oral skills. To make students motivated, teachers should be sensitive to the learning environments and individual experiences of students.

Moreover, the instructional material developers are advised to modify learning contents and materials to meet Iranian students' motivation. Students' negative beliefs about the second language might be changed by improving the content of the course books. English course books fail to capture the students' interest and reduce their motivation by emphasizing grammar and vocabulary. Instead, the course books should create ample opportunities for class interaction and help teachers develop students' language skills, especially speaking and listening. Furthermore, the materials developers should develop interesting activities and

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topics for the texts in the course books to enhance the students' motivation. Considering the learners' attitude towards English speaking community as the second demotivating factor in learning English, students' motivation can be easily enhanced by including information on L2 community and L2 culture in English course books. For example, cultural activities and objectives can be carefully incorporated into the language lessons to enrich the teaching context content and enhance students' motivation.

Because the present study was exploratory in its nature, more studies on L2 demotivation are needed to confirm our findings. Replication of this study with male and female students at the same level of education in different contexts is necessary to understand how well the findings can be generalized to other students in Iran. Future investigation could also examine differences and similarities between teachers' and students' perceptions of demotivating factors.

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Appendix

Questionnaire items of the main study

باسمه تعالی

پرسشنامه

دانش آموز/دانشجو گرامی لطفاً جملات زیر را به دقت خوانده و با صداقت پاسخ دهید. لطفا با توجه به پنج گزینهٔ: **درست ، تا حدودی درست، ، نه درست نه نادرست، تا حدودی نادرست ، نادرست** در مربع مربوطه علامت ضربدر بگذارید. این پرسشنامه صرفاً برای تحقیق در امر آموزش زبان و یافتن عوامل کاهنده انگیزه یادگیری زبان انگلیسی تهیه شده و هیچ تاثیری در نمرات شما نخواهد داشت.

جنسیت: **مقطع تحصیلی:**

		درست	تا حدودی درست	نه درست نه نادرست	تا حدودی نادرست	نادرست
1	**معلمان زبان انگلیسی از روش‌های تدریس مناسب استفاده نمی کنند.**					
2	**زبان انگلیسی درزندگی روزمره من کاربردی ندارد.**					
3	**من معمولا در امتحانات درس انگلیسی نتیجه خوبی نمی‌گیرم.**					
4	**در کلاس درس زبان انگلیسی به ندرت از تجهیزات کمک آموزشی استفاده می شود.**					
5	**من وقت کافی برای مطالعه و یادگیری درس زبان انگلیسی ندارم.**					

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6	تعداد کتب درسی و کمک درسی کلاس زبان انگلیسی زیاد هستند.					
7	معلمها کلمات انگلیسی را صحیح تلفظ نمی کنند.					
8	من در حفظ کردن کلمات و عبارات درس انگلیسی مشکل دارم.					
9	من در امتحانات(میان ترم و پایان ترم) درس زبان انگلیسی نمرات پائینی می گیرم.					
10	موضوع متنهای انگلیسی درسها جالب نیست.					
11	نیازی به یادگیری زبان انگلیسی ندارم.					
12	مردم کشورهای انگلیسی زبان را دوست دارم.					
13	معلمان زبان انگلیسی بیشتر بر حفظ مطالب درسی تاکید می‌کنند.					
14	بیشتر درسها بر یادگیری دستور زبان انگلیسی تمرکز دارند.					
15	نمی دانم که چرا باید زبان انگلیسی را یاد بگیرم.					
16	در درس زبان انگلیسی مهارت گفت و شنود تقویت نمی شود.					
17	توضیحات درسی معلمهای زبان انگلیسی گویا وقابل فهم نیستند.					
18	فرهنگ کشورهای انگلیسی زبان را دوست دارم.					
19	حتی اگر انگلیسی درس اجباری نباشد، مایلم آن را برای یادگیری انتخاب کنم.					
20	آنچه را که باید در زبان انگلیسی یاد بگیرم، مرا نگران می کند.					
21	معلمهای درس انگلیسیم نسبت به همه دانش اموزان با انصاف نیستند.					

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22	معلمهای درس زبان انگلیسیم را دوست ندارم.					
23	هرچه درموردکشورهای انگلیسی زبان شناخت بیشتری پیدا می کنم، علاقه ام به یادگیری زبان انگلیسی بیشتر می شود.					
24	علاقه ام را به زبان انگلیسی از دست داده‌ام.					
25	من از صحبت کردن به زبان انگلیسی در کلاس خجالت می کشم.					
26	معلمها به اشتباهات دانش آموزان در درس انگلیسی می خندند.					
27	سطح کلاسهای زبان انگلیسی رضایت بخش نیست.					
28	در اکثر موارد معلمها از یک روش تکراری برای توضیح مطالب درس انگلیسی استفاده می کنند.					
29	در درس زبان انگلیسی به ندرت از اینترنت استفاده می شود.					
30	نحوه ی برخورد معلمها ی زبان انگلیسی با اشتباهات دانش آموزان در درس صحیح نیست.					
31	یادگیری زبان انگلیسی جالب نیست.					
32	معلمهای زبان انگلیسی در کلاس رفتار مناسبی ندارند.					

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