

Investigating Factors Underlying Iranian High School English Teachers' (De)motivation

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Abstract

Teacher motivation is of paramount importance to the growth of any education system. Despite its significance, the topic has been largely overlooked at the expense of learner motivation research. To further investigate the issue, a questionnaire was developed to find the status of teacher (de)motivation and its underlying components within the Iranian context. The survey also examined the difference between male versus female, and English language versus non-English subject teachers in terms of their (de)motivation. The participants consisted of 509 secondary school teachers from 18 Iranian cities. The questionnaire content was grounded on a focus-group interview as well as a number of extant need-based motivational theories. Upon data collection, a Principal Components Analysis was conducted to identify the minimally optimum items of the so-called 'need-based teacher motivation inventory' (NTMI). The findings underscored English teachers' low motivation, suggesting that secondary school English teachers were less dissatisfied with their school administration and colleagues, the work environment, and the job itself. However, they felt demotivated by meagre earnings, inequity in payment, lack of autonomy and recognition, poor contribution to decision-makings, inadequacy of in-service training programs, unfair opportunities for promotion, non-standard teacher evaluation criteria, and unappealing instructional materials. The results also showed no difference between female teachers and their male counterparts. Nevertheless, English-subject teachers were found to be less motivated. Iranian Ministry of Education seems to be in desperate need of restoring the dignity of its staff through investing in improved services, reasonable payment, and imparting the recognition that teachers deserve.

Keywords: Demotivation, Ministry of Education (MoE), Need-based Teacher Motivation Inventory (NTMI), Teacher motivation

Received 24 March 2019

Accepted 02 June 2019

Available online 25 June 2019

DOI: 10.30479/jmrels.2019.10317.1283

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1. Introduction

Until very recently, teacher motivation has been an under-studied area and the research literature on the topic was surprisingly infrequent. The first series of studies related to teacher motivation were conducted by Pennington on English as a second language (ESL) teachers in 1990. Since then the issue of language teacher motivation has received growing recognition as teachers are the keystone of any thriving education system. As Bruner (1996) put it, “you cannot teacher-proof a curriculum any more than you can parent-proof a family” (p. 64). Barth (1994) compared demotivated teachers to airline passengers in an emergency who try to give oxygen masks to the children without taking oxygen themselves (as cited in Dörnyei & Kubanyiova, 2014). Thus, if a teacher is motivated to teach, there is a good chance for his or her students to be motivated to learn. To a greater or lesser extent, teachers worldwide happen to struggle with a variety of inconvenient circumstances at work including high stress levels, imposed methods or curricula that restrict their autonomy, fragile self-efficacy due to insufficiency of training, unsupportive principals and colleagues, lack of promotion or advancement, and bad economic conditions that may not be comparable to those of other service professions with equal qualifications (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011). For all practical purposes, Iranian high school teachers are no exception. A humble socioeconomic status has caused many teachers especially males to work second jobs alongside teaching to scrape a living, which would often pose as a great impediment for their professional development. There is no denying that teacher demotivation is a formidable obstacle to the promotion of any education system. Therefore, such concerns about teachers’ incentives should not be downplayed as they are a major determinant in the accomplishment of instructional objectives.

Michaelowa defines teacher motivation as the “willingness, drive or desire to engage in good teaching” (2002, p. 5), something that a motivated teacher can do as best. Teacher motivation research is significant as it is closely related to other significant sets of factors such as learner motivation, teaching practices, teachers’ psychological fulfillment and well-being, and educational reform. Hence, administrators are required to learn how to attract potential teachers and how to retain them in the profession (Han & Yin, 2016). The present study, thus, sets out to investigate the set of factors that underlie the motivational roots of Iranian high school teachers and an assessment of the current state of affairs.

2. Literature Review

In order to envision the issue of demotivation in a more concrete fashion, we should familiarize ourselves with the extant 'need' theories which shape the foundation of motivation models. These theories dating back to the

50s and 60s, are elaborated in Ball (2012) and can offer a great deal of insight for modern practitioners:

- Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Pyramid
- Alderfer's ERG Model
- McClelland's Achievement Motivation Theory
- Equity Theory
- Vroom's Expectancy Theory
- Hackman & Oldham's Job Characteristics Mode

Teacher motivation research began with a series of studies by Pennington in 1990. In this year she conducted the British Council survey in which the British English as a Second Language (ESL) teachers were found to have a desperately low level of job satisfaction compared to ESL teachers worldwide. This survey brought to light widespread poor working conditions, low pay, a high number of inexperienced and untrained teachers, high turnover and few career positions (cited in Pennington, 1995). She focused her work on motivation and work satisfaction of ESL teachers, and provided a general review of research in the field of teacher job satisfaction and motivation. She distributed a standardized questionnaire among 100 randomly selected teachers of English to speakers of other languages (TESOL). The teachers' work satisfaction was measured with a 20-facet questionnaire (five items each). The results revealed that *moral values* and *social services* were the highest rated facets. These findings were in accordance with the theoretical argumentations about the intrinsic or ideological facets of teacher motivation. These two facets were followed by *creativity*, *achievement*, and *ability utilization* which were also relevant to intrinsic job satisfaction. *Advancement* and *compensation* were the lowest rated facets which were also consistent with earlier arguments. These were followed by two facets of *supervision* scales and *company policies and procedures* which indicated that the respondents did not find their institutions supportive (Pennington, 1995).

Doyle and Kim's (1999) work differed from that of Pennington. In addition to the questionnaire, the researchers complemented their studies with extensive qualitative interviews with teachers. Their aim was to achieve a critical analysis of the social, cultural and political reasons that erode teacher motivation and cause dissatisfaction and low morale, through analyzing data from Korean and American teachers of English. They discussed their findings by focusing on three main themes: a) intrinsic motivation; indicating a broad consensus among teachers that interest in teaching is the main motivating factor for them; b) factors that lead to dissatisfaction; the data

revealed that the adverse external factors associated with the job have a negative effect on teachers; and C) mandated curricula; tests and government-mandated directives interfere with teachers' motivation.

Another noteworthy study was conducted by Shoaib (2004) who sketched a model of teacher motivation based on a large-scale interview study in Saudi Arabia. She argued that teacher motivation is a complex phenomenon that does not work on one level alone; As such, she distinguished three main levels where motivational change can be made: 'the teacher level', 'the managerial level' and 'the ministerial or institutional level'. Shoaib also compiled an elaborate list of concrete recommendations concerning teacher motivation enhancement. Guilloteaux and Dornyei (2008) investigated the effect of teacher motivational strategies on students' motivation in South Korea. This study examined the relationship between the teachers' motivational teaching practice (strategies applied by the teacher to elicit and stimulate student motivation) and their students' language learning motivation using a self-report questionnaire, a classroom observation instrument, and a post-lesson teacher evaluation scale. The results of their study revealed that there was a direct relationship between language teachers' motivational practice and the learners' motivated learning behaviors in classroom. In the same vein, Alexander (2008) implicates insufficient training inherent in all academic or professional fields as responsible for teacher demotivation. Novice teachers, in his viewpoint, are presented with the same demands and expectations as those with multiple years of experience and documented abilities. This is while the initial and once-for-all training provided to these candidates is often deemed to be sufficient. Hence, these beginner teachers will lack the necessary skills for doing well in the classroom as a result of their 'lop-sided' (p, 172) training. The ensuing shortage of self-efficacy can readily lead to demotivation.

In his seminal article on teacher motivation, Schaefer (2010) reviewed major studies on teacher and learner motivation. Demonstrating the prominence of teacher motivation in SLA and its direct influence on learner motivation, he emphasized the paucity of research on teacher motivation and the need for further research into this domain, including the development of survey and assessment instruments, such as those that have been developed to measure learner motivation. Kassabgy, Boraie, and Schmidt (2011) examined teachers' motivation in relation to their work aspects including: values, rewards, and job satisfaction. The participants of their study were 107 experienced ESL/EFL teachers in Egypt and Hawaii who were inquired about their motivational factors, rewards, and job satisfaction using closed and open-ended questionnaires. The researchers found out that teachers put more value on intrinsic aspects of their job, and that there was a positive relation between intrinsic and extrinsic rewards, and job satisfaction. Chireshe and

Shumba (2011) investigated the reasons behind Zimbabwean teachers' demotivation in teaching as a profession and how the existing challenges could be addressed. Their sample consisted of 62 male and female primary school in-service teachers. Applying a self-administered questionnaire to gather data, they concluded that demotivating factors including poor salaries, poor working conditions, poor accommodation, lack of respect, political harassment/victimization, overworking, the HIV/AIDS pandemic, absence of refresher courses, teachers' unpreparedness to cater for special-needs children, and incompetency in terms of technological advancement across both male and female teachers have resulted in teachers' low morale, poor delivery and brain drain in the education sector. In another study, Gameda and Tynjälä (2015) explored teachers' motivation for teaching and professional development across secondary schools in Ethiopia. They collected their data through focus-group discussions and interviews from 32 teachers. The analysis of the data revealed low salary and lack of connection between performance and reward as major motivational challenges for teachers. On balance, there seems to be an inseparable reciprocal relationship between teachers and students as far as motivation is concerned. Research indicates that students who have motivated teachers are more enthusiastic about the subject-matter than those who have demotivated teachers (Csikszentmihalyi, 1997; Patrick, Hisley, Kempler, 2000; Roth, Assor, Kanat-Maymon, & Kaplan, 2007). Hence, teacher demotivation would undermine the standards of education as well as students' performance. Dörnyei and Ushioda, (2011), in their seminal work, offer a comprehensive overview of the most significant developments in the realm of teacher motivation which is highly recommended for further reading on the topic.

As noted earlier, teacher motivation is an under-researched area. Despite the significance of the topic, to date a plethora of research revolves around learning and learner motivation whereas issues associated with the teacher have been chiefly neglected. Correspondingly, there has been a paucity of research on the major causes of teacher motivation in the Iranian context as well. Therefore, this study sought to investigate the effect of potential factors contributing to (de)motivation among Iranian English language teachers employed at the Ministry of Education (MoE). In addition, the impact of gender on motivation as well as the comparison between English-subject and non-English subject teachers will figure among the objectives of this endeavor. In light of what has been floated on teacher motivation thus far, this study sought to address the following questions:

1. Is the researchers' newly developed questionnaire on teacher motivation reliable and valid?
2. How (de)motivated are high school English teachers of MoE in Iran?

3. What are the underlying factors of (de)motivation among MoE English teachers?
4. Is there a significant difference between male and female MoE English teachers in terms of (de)motivation?
5. Is there a significant difference between English and non-English MoE teachers in terms of (de)motivation?

3. Method

To investigate the motivation status of secondary school teachers in Iran, the researchers attempted to develop a new scale aimed at gauging teacher motivation. The thematic foundation of the scale rests on data collected from a teacher focus-group interview and the need-based content of existing theories of motivation. To this end, the items of the survey were somewhat modeled on the themes of need theories of motivation (see Ball, 2012). This need-based teacher motivation inventory (hereafter NTMI) has been developed within a number of stages (to be explained later), and distributed amongst English as well as non-English teachers across a number of cities in Iran.

3.1. Participants

The teacher contributors of the study consisted of an initial sample of 550 MoE male and female secondary school teachers. Out of this lot, 41 incomplete questionnaires were excluded. The remaining 509 questionnaires were eventually approved for analysis. The participants (see Table 1) were selected from among those who teach English ($N = 145$) and non-English subjects ($N = 364$) to high school students with varying years of teaching experience from a number of public high schools across 18 cities.

Table 1

Participants of the study

Teaching subject	Gender	N
English	Males	41
	Females	104
Non-English	Males	159
	Females	205
Total		509

3.2. Data Collection Procedures

3.2.1. Instrument Development and Validation

Step 1. A semi-structured focus-group interview was arranged by one of the authors of this manuscript (the second researcher), who conversed with 40 MoE teachers directly on several occasions. A number of teachers were

also subjected to individual interviews. As a consequence, a draft version of the NTMI was developed following the elicitation of first-hand accounts and grievances of the teachers and the purported root causes of (de)motivation. The focus-group interview included a group format in which the interviewer recorded the responses and perspectives of groups of 6-12 high school teachers. As outlined by Dörnyei (2007), in focus-group interviews, members think together, inspire, and challenge each other, react to the issues and cause the data to emerge. The data are of high quality because they are based on collective group experiences of the participants who freely pose their deeply-held comments on the topic. To Winslow, Honein, and Elzubeir (2002), a distinct feature of focus-group interview is the possibility for evoking candid spontaneous information from the participants which is not readily feasible by other conventional interviewing techniques. The following are some core statements derived from focus-group interviews pertaining to teacher motivation:

- * Priority is given to relations over rules in their organization;
- * Discrimination against teachers causes them to be demotivated;
- * Professional development opportunities are given to favorites in private schools;
- * The payment and fringe benefits are neither adequate nor punctually offered;
- * Teachers play no role in curriculum decision-making;
- * Teachers consider themselves as one of the least advantaged groups of the society.
- * Teachers have inadequate health insurance coverage;
- * Demotivated students make their teachers as such;
- * Principals distribute the classes unfairly and tender the best ones to their favorites at the beginning of the year;
- * Fossilized teachers who have taken advantage of teaching in private schools do not give the opportunity to their colleagues to take over.
- * The MoE has little de facto respect for the teaching profession;
- * MoE looks into teachers as a consumer society, and fails to invest in those who do not generate money.
- * There is little professional advancement opportunity for teachers as there are in other occupations such as the military, etc. Paradoxically, in the educational system of Iran, people can move from zero to one

hundred without acquiring much experience or professional development.

* Pursuing higher education does not have much impact on teachers' salary increment. Hence, instead of continuing their education, they resort to second or even third jobs to make ends meet, and this would reduce their organizational belonging.

* The shoestring budget on education is not adequate for the welfare of this vast community.

* Little attention is paid to retired teachers which is demotivating for present teachers as they see their own future in them.

Step 2. In addition to group interviews, teachers were also subjected to individual interviews. Individual interview is a verbal exchange of information between two persons with the purpose of gathering information from the interviewee who speaks their mind and joins investigations of deep personal experiences and feelings (Denscombe, 2000; Pole & Lampard, 2002). The interview format nearly resembled the procedure applied earlier. An interview guide was developed whereby the researcher was able to prompt participants to provide essential and relevant information about the issues under consideration. Each individual interview lasted about half an hour.

Step 3. Further demographic questions were also included alongside the main NTMI items including their education level, gender, age, marital status, area of specialization, teaching subject, length of service, employment status, and their monthly salary. The draft NTMI entailed 34 questions (including a number of reverse items) on a six-point Likert-scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (6), which examines different factors contributing to teacher (de)motivation. Upon data collection, the scale was translated into Farsi and piloted to a sample of 50 participants including English subject and non-English subject Iranian teachers. Before the questionnaire was administered, the teachers were provided with an explanation of the purpose of the study and were assured that the given responses would be treated as confidential. Upon calculating the reliability of the scale ($\alpha = .65$) and discarding four unfit items, it was distributed among 550 MoE teachers and consequently subjected to principal components factor analysis which will be delineated in the next section.

3.3. Data Analysis Procedures

The main thrust of this study was to examine the rate of teacher (de)motivation and the potential effects of a number of contributing factors among Iranian English-subject teachers. The study also compared males and females in addition to English subject and non-English subject teachers in

terms of their (de)motivation. In order to analyze the data gleaned from the 509 sample respondents, the scale was subjected to Principal Components Analysis using SPSS software (version 24). The PCA comprised five steps. First, the researcher elaborated the justification of the variables chosen and the adequacy of the sample size for factor analysis. Second, a preliminary analysis was conducted to test the factorability of the sample. Third, the components were extracted and presented. Fourth, they were rotated to see which variables needed to be retained or excluded for the intended construct. Lastly, the components were interpreted and labelled. Later on, two independent-samples t-tests were also run to examine differences in the teachers' motivation level in terms of gender and the subject of instruction. A thorough elaboration of the analyses will follow in the forthcoming section.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Results

4.1.1. *Selecting the Items and Sample Size*

In the first step, the scale items which were premised on perceptions of the respondents in the focus-group interviews as well as the derivations from the need-based theories of motivation were opted to be included in the factor analysis. Although there is little consensus among authors regarding the sample size, what is recommended is: the larger, the better (Pallant, 2013). The scale consisted of 30 variables, which meant that the analysis involved an adequate $509/30 = 17$ respondents per variable.

4.1.2. *Preliminary Analysis*

First, the adequacy of the data set for the PCA was determined. For this reason, the researcher inspected the correlation matrix amongst the variables. For a desirable factor analysis, variables should be correlated to some extent, but not perfectly correlated (Field, 2005). The correlation matrix showed the presence of plenty of correlations above .3. Second, it was time to look at the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy. The KMO measure tests if the correlations among variables are desirable (Field, 2005). In this case, the KMO was .825 which exceeded the recommended value of .6. Therefore, it was good enough for further analysis. Finally, the researcher looked at the Bartlett's test of sphericity to confirm the patterned relationships. As the index reached statistical significance ($p < .001$), the preliminary analysis justified the factorability of the sample.

The internal consistency of the NTMI was computed once again through applying Cronbach's Alpha statistic formula. The analysis results of the 30 item-scale from the 509 subjects showed that the reliability coefficient amounted to .848, suggesting a high internal consistency value for the scale. Moreover, the analysis of the 151 English subject teachers also showed an

acceptable internal consistency measure for the scale with this sample ($\alpha = .851$). The descriptive statistics for the English-subject teachers ($N = 151$) can be viewed in Table 2 below:

Table 2
Descriptive Statistics and Assumptions

			Statistic	Std. Error
Total teacher motivation	Mean of 151		80.55	1.43
	95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	77.73	
		Upper Bound	83.38	
	5% Trimmed Mean		80.49	
	Median		80.00	
	Variance		296.12	
	Std. Deviation		17.21	
	Range		88	
	Interquartile Range		19	
	Skewness		.120	.201
	Kurtosis		.155	.400

As shown in Table 2, the skewness (.12) and kurtosis (.15) values, as well as the histogram (Figure 1) suggest an approximately normal distribution of scores.

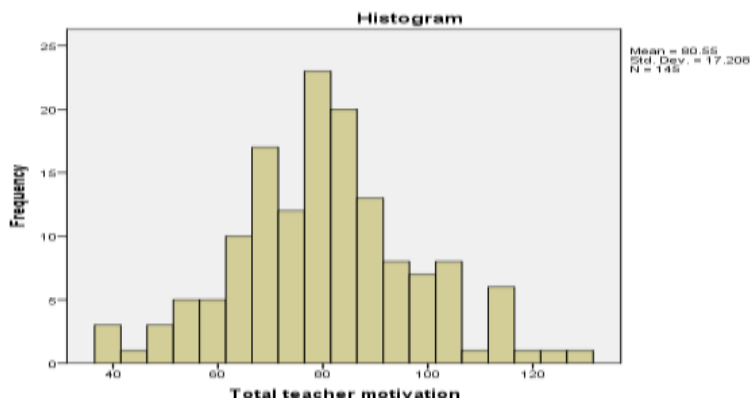


Figure 1. Histogram of NTMI Score Distribution

Further analysis of the Shapiro-Wilk test of normality ($p = .380$) demonstrated that the data distribution has been one of normal. In order to inferentially measure the rate of teacher (de)motivation of high school English teachers in Iran, a one-sample t-test was carried out to test the statistical difference between the sample mean and the hypothesized value of the mean in the population. The one-sample t-test showed $t(144) = 56.37$, $p < .05$. Therefore, in the 30-item scale with a minimum possible score of 30 and maximum score of 180, the total teacher motivation mean (80.55) turned out

to be less than the cut-off point of 105, reflecting the low motivational tendency of high school English teachers of MoE.

4.1.3. Principal Components Analysis (PCA)

In order to categorize the underlying factors of (de)motivation among Iranian MoE English teachers, a principal components analysis was run.

Table 3
Total Variance Explained (Kaiser's Criterion)

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings
	% of Variance		Cumulative %	% of Variance		Cumulative %	Total
	Total			Total			
1	6.479	21.596	21.596	6.479	21.596	21.596	5.387
2	2.840	9.465	31.061	2.840	9.465	31.061	2.622
3	1.742	5.806	36.867	1.742	5.806	36.867	4.461
4	1.580	5.268	42.135				
5	1.514	5.048	47.183				
6	1.332	4.440	51.622				
7	1.286	4.288	55.910				
8	1.179	3.929	59.839				

The PCA of all the 30 variables (see Table 3) based on Kaiser's criterion revealed the presence of three components explaining 36.87% of the total variance respectively.

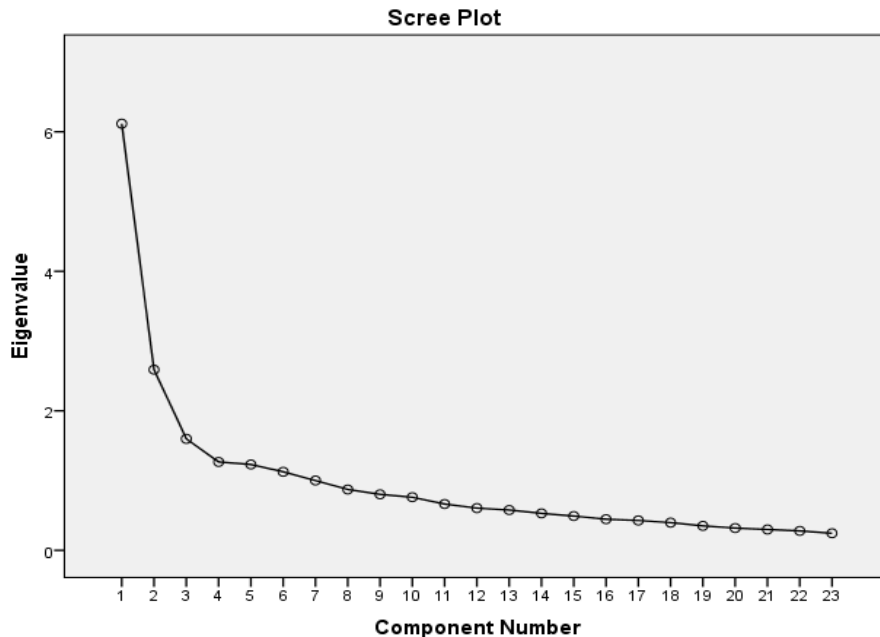


Figure 2. NTMI Scree plot

The inspection of the scree plot (Figure 2), with four components above the bend or elbow implied the use of a four-factor solution. In order to confirm the outcome of the PCA on component extraction, a parallel analysis was performed to ascertain the number of factors to be retained. The eigenvalues obtained from the Kaiser's Criterion were compared with the corresponding values generated from the random parallel analysis eigenvalues. As a rule, the values larger than the criterion value from parallel analysis were retained. The results showed three components with eigenvalues exceeding the corresponding criterion values for a randomly generated data matrix of the same size (23 variables \times 144 respondents).

Table 4
Parallel Analysis (Monte Carlo PCA)

No.	Random Eigenvalue	Standard Deviation
1	1.81	.089
2	1.66	.054
3	1.55	.045
4	1.46	.043
5	1.38	.041
6	1.31	.035
7	1.24	.028
8	1.17	.033
9	1.11	.031
10	1.05	.030

Table 5
Communalities

Item	Extraction	Item	Extraction
Item 1	.468	Item 16	.385
Item 2	.458	Item 17	.602
Item 3	.438	Item 18	.543
Item 4	.256	Item 19	.389
Item 5	.452	Item 20	.307
Item 6	.430	Item 21	.189
Item 7	.409	Item 22	.421
Item 8	.434	Item 23	.160
Item 9	.499	Item 24	.551
Item 10	.254	Item 25	.489
Item 11	.482	Item 26	.310
Item 12	.330	Item 27	.374
Item 13	.306	Item 28	.080
Item 14	.438	Item 29	.067
Item 15	.378	Item 30	.162

As can be seen, the parallel analysis (Table 4) justified the use of a three-factor solution. In order to increase the total variance explained, seven items with low communality that did not fit well with the other items (items lower than .3) were removed from the analysis (Table 5) and the factor analysis was performed again. The PCA of the 23 remaining items based on the output from Kaiser's criterion revealed the presence of three components explaining a cumulative 44.80% of the total variance this time around. The re-calculation of the scale's reliability at this stage amounted to an acceptable $\alpha = .74$.

Table 6
Total Variance Explained

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings
			Cumulative %			Cumulative %	Total
	Total	% of Variance		Total	% of Variance		
1	6.116	26.590	26.590	6.116	26.590	26.590	5.142
2	2.589	11.259	37.849	2.589	11.259	37.849	2.472
3	1.598	6.948	44.797	1.598	6.948	44.797	4.291
4	1.267	5.510	50.306				
5	1.231	5.352	55.658				
6	1.126	4.894	60.553				

Thus, only three components were retained for further investigation. The three-factor solution explained a total of 44.80% of the variance, with Component 1 contributing 26.60%, Component 2 contributing 11.26%, and Component 3 contributing 6.95% (Table 6). Once the number of components was arrived at, the researchers began to semantically interpret what they represent. To assist in this process, the factors were rotated. Rotation does not change the underlying solution, but rather presents the

pattern of loadings in the way that is easier to interpret (Pallant, 2013). In order to aid in the easier interpretation of these three components, Oblimin rotation was performed, resulting in a number of tables of loadings. The most significant table, that is, the *pattern matrix* shows the factor loadings of each of the variables.

Table 7

Pattern Matrix

	Component		
	1	2	3
Item 17	.816		
Item 18	.781		
Item 3	.684		
Item 19	.648		
Item 25	.630		
Item 16	.621		
Item 26	.496		
Item 7	.483		
Item 5	.480		
Item 11	.452		-.363
Item 24		.816	
Item 22		.614	
Item 12		.575	
Item 13		.548	
Item 20		.499	
Item 9			-.736
Item 2			-.691
Item 8			-.630
Item 14			-.626
Item 6			-.495
Item 1	.356		-.494
Item 15		.382	-.442
Item 27	.325		-.441

By looking at loadings of the pattern matrix (Table 7), we can observe three components. The researchers looked for the highest-loading items on each component to identify and interpret the components. In this example, the mainly loaded variables on component 1 were items 17, 18, 3, 19, 25, 16, 26, 7, 5, and 11.

Referring back to the actual items, Table 8 illustrates that they were related to the teachers' interpersonal relationship with their administrators and colleagues. The items with the highest loading on component I generally suggest the teachers were satisfied with the school-related factors including principals, colleagues, work environment, and the job itself.

Table 8

Pattern Matrix-Component I

	Component		
	1	2	3
Item 17. My administrators support my decisions and actions.	.816		
Item 18. My principal is very supportive when new teaching methods are being implemented by us.	.781		
Item 3. Teachers exchange information and learn new things from each other.	.684		
Item 19. My administrators make me aware of the results of my work.	.648		
Item 25. My organization provides me comfortable working environment.	.630		
Item 16. My administrators treat everyone fairly and impartially and set the tone for a safe environment for us.	.621		
Item 26. The audio and video facilities I need for teaching are fully available in my school.	.496		
Item 7. My job can fully utilize my talent and skills.	.483		
Item 5. Teaching profession provides adequate chances for my promotion.	.480		
Item 11. My job gives me the freedom to teach the way I like.	.452		

Table 9

Pattern Matrix-Component II

	Component		
	1	2	3
Item 24. Teachers resort to secondary employment activities because they are poorly paid.		.816	
Item 22. The payment for extra work is not adequate and is not paid monthly with my salary.		.614	
Item 12. Teachers have low autonomy in planning and teaching in general.		.575	
Item 13. People do not think highly of teachers in my society.		.548	
Item 20. Teachers' salary is not comparable to other employees with the same level of education.		.499	

The main items loading on component II were: 24, 22, 12, 13, and 20, (Table 9). The highest loading items on component 2 were chiefly related to teachers' rewards and earnings, suggesting that teachers were disaffected with their income and rewards, low autonomy, lack of recognition, and inequity in payments.

According to Table 10, the highest loading items on component 3 consist of negatively loaded items, implying that the items were required to be interpreted in the opposite direction (items 9, 2, 8, 14, 6, 1, 15, and 27). Therefore, the results of this component were indicative of teachers' future prospects and expectations that have been overlooked, including teachers' role in decision makings, inadequacy of in-service training programs, unfair opportunity for promotion, inadequate job developmental programs, non-standard teacher evaluation criteria, and unappealing instructional materials.

In sum, the scale was ultimately identified as having 23 items loaded on three components.

Table 10
Pattern Matrix-Component III

	Component		
	1	2	3
Item 9. Teachers play an important role at school and ministry level decision-making.			-.736
Item 2. The in-service training programs meet the teachers' immediate needs.			-.691
Item 8. Teachers gain promotion based on how well they teach in my organization.			-.630
Item 14. There is a fair system of offering rewards for teachers' increased efforts.			-.626
Item 6. In my job, the opportunities for promotion are fair for all employees.			-.495
Item 1. There is a variety of staff development program in my organization that enables me to enhance my skills as a teacher.	.356		-.494
Item 15. We need further in-service training as it can enhance our expertise and enthusiasm	.382	-.442	
Item 27. The textbooks are not up-to-date.	.325	-.441	

4.1.4. Gender and Demotivation

The next step of this study included the analysis of the role that gender played in the level of MoE English teachers' motivation. In order to compare male and female teachers' rate of demotivation, an independent-samples t-test was conducted. The descriptive statistics represented the level of motivation among 41 male teachers as $M = 80.17$, ($SD = 16.882$). For 104 female teachers, the mean was 80.70, ($SD = 17.414$).

As the p -value of .87 in Table 11 indicates, it may be concluded that there was no statistical difference in the mean (de)motivation scores between male and female participants. Meanwhile, another independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare the motivation level of two groups of English and non-English subject teachers. The descriptive output revealed the total teacher motivation for the variable 'teaching subject' of 145 English teachers as $M = 80.55$, $SD = 17.21$. For the 364 non-English subject teachers, $M = 86.45$, $SD = 17.01$.

Table 11
T-test for Gender Difference

							95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
	F	Sig.	t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower Upper
Total teacher motivation	.289	.592	-.167	143	.868	-.531	3.184	-6.825 5.763

Table 12
T-test for Teaching Subject

	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
								Lower	Upper
Total teacher motivation	.254	.615	-3.518	507	.000	-5.896	1.676	-9.189	-2.603

As shown in Table 12, $t(507) = -3.52$, $p < .001$, there was a significant difference between English and non-English subject teachers regarding their motivation. In other words, English subject teachers were statistically less motivated than non-English subject teachers. However, the effect size value of .02 suggested a weak magnitude, implying that only 2 percent of the variance in motivation was explained by the teaching subject.

In order to find the underlying factors of (de)motivation among Iranian MoE teachers, the pattern matrix table (see Table 7) was examined. As discussed before, only three factors were retained for this analysis. In PCA, the most important component is the first as it explains the greatest amount of variance and bears the highest eigenvalue. As Table 7 shows, ten items had their highest loading on component 1 which were listed from highest (item 17) to the lowest (item 11). The highest loading items in component 1 were item 17 (My administrator supports my decisions and actions.), item 18 (My principal is very supportive when new teaching methods are being implemented by us.), item 3 (Teachers exchange information and learn new things from each other.), item 19 (My administrator makes me aware of the results of my work.), item 25 (My organization provides me hygiene comfortable working environment.), item 16 (My administrator treats everyone fairly and impartially and sets the tone for a safe environment for us.), item 26 (The audio and video facilities I need for teaching are fully available in my school.), item 7 (My job can fully utilize my talent and skills.), item 5 (Teaching profession provides adequate chances for my promotion.), and item 11 (My job gives me the freedom to teach the way I like.) The content of component 1 which could be construed as '*interpersonal relationships and professional aspects*' imply a set of teacher motivating factors. It seems that profession-related sources of job satisfaction have a greater impact on teachers' incentive including satisfaction with administrators and colleagues' behavior, physical working environment, and the job itself. Five items had their highest loadings on component 2 that were listed from highest (item 24) to the lowest (item 20). Component 2 represents '*autonomy and economic aspects*'. As the results of the analysis imply, in component 2, the highest loading variables were item 24 (Teachers resort to secondary employment activities because they are poorly paid.), item 22 (The

payment for overtime work is not adequate and is not paid monthly with my salary.), item 12 (Teachers have low autonomy in planning and teaching in general.), item 13 (People do not think highly of teachers in my society.), and item 20 (Teachers' salary is not comparable to other employees with the same level of education.). In other words, teachers' physiological needs such as salary and fringe benefits, their low autonomy in planning and teaching in general, and their social needs (recognition and rewards) were the most significant demotivation constituents. Eight items had their highest loading on component 3 listed from highest loading (item 9) to the lowest (item 27). The highest loading items of component 3 were: item 9 (Teachers play an important role at school and ministry level decision-making.), item 2 (The in-service training programs meet the teachers' immediate needs.), item 8 (Teachers gain promotion based on how well they teach in my organization.), item 14 (There is a fair system of offering rewards for teachers' increased efforts.), item 6 (In my job, the opportunities for promotion are fair for all employees.), item 1 (There is a variety of staff development program in my organization that enables me to enhance my skills as a teacher.), item 15 (The criteria used for teacher evaluation is wrong in our organization.), and item 27 (I find the current instructional materials quite appealing to use for teaching.). The negative loading of the items in component 3 indicates that the items need to be interpreted in the opposite direction from the way they had been written for other items. Therefore, these items may represent the '*unfair and demotivating aspects*' such as teachers' weak role in decision makings, teachers' dissatisfaction with inadequacy of in-service training programs and their dissatisfaction with unfair opportunities for promotion, lack of job developmental programs, dissatisfaction with teacher evaluation criteria, and unappealing instructional materials.

4.2. Discussion

The outcome of the current study could be compared with Fives and Alexander's (2004) meta-analysis that explored relationships between contextual variables and teacher motivation within a range of educational settings. In their analysis of 28 empirical studies, they identified teacher efficacy and teacher commitment as central motivational constructs as far as the impact of context was concerned. Parameters such as school climate, participation in school decision making, relationship with administrators, student characteristics and school demographic were subsumed under organizational commitment, whereas perceived teacher autonomy, student ability, school organization and resources, teacher collaboration and institutional culture were associated with teacher efficacy. It must be noted that the decline in teacher motivation is not confined to the Iranian context. Such alarming reports can be heard from far and wide. Europe is amongst those contexts where there is a growing trend towards disaffection. Watt and

Richardson (2008) warn that 40 per cent of teachers in the UK were likely to leave their profession within five years. Similarly, Dinham and Scott's (2000) survey revealed that over half of the teachers they inquired in Australia, England, and New Zealand have gone through a slump in their satisfaction rate ever since they began their teaching careers. Surveys conducted in the US also paint a gloomy picture (e.g., Zhang & Sapp, 2008). Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011) account for this "motivational crisis" (p, 168) by arguing that the teaching profession is propelled by intrinsic motives which could readily be susceptible to erosion. Apart from economic issues including low salaries, they enumerate five demotivating categories responsible for this so-called erosion process: a) the stressful nature of teaching profession, b) the inhibition of teacher autonomy, c) insufficient self-efficacy, d) content repetitiveness and limited potential for intellectual development, and e) inadequate career structures. We also largely concur with their conclusion that there is hardly any qualified profession in the universe where the foundation of motivation would be as fragile as in teaching.

5. Conclusion and Implications

As the findings of the study suggest, there seems to be a dire need for the MoE to legislate and apply educational policies so as to restore the dignity of the teachers through recognition, improved services, reasonable payment and fringe benefits commensurate with the work they do. When teachers' needs are met, that will promote their psychological well-being and enable optimal functioning and performance (Reis, Sheldon, Gable, Roscoe, & Ryan, 2000; Ryan, 1995). On the contrary, when teachers' basic needs are not satisfied, they fail to thrive on their teaching responsibility. Iranian teachers' dissatisfaction with pay and fringe benefits, rewards, discrimination, teacher evaluation criteria, unfair system of payment and promotion in the job are associated with their professional practices. They feel that they are underpaid, made to work in insecure conditions and little attention is paid to their dignity and self-esteem. Teachers are human beings with a vast array of needs, and as Adams (1963) denoted long ago, failure to meet these needs would lead to frustration, rebellion, and nonchalant attitude towards work.

Taken together, the researchers' newly developed scale on teacher motivation (or NTMI) was left with 23 items after being subjected to multiple phases. On probing how motivated Iranian high school teachers are, the results of the one-sample t-test revealed the total mean to be less than the cut-point of 105, ($M = 80.55$), indicating MoE high school English teachers' low rate of motivation in Iran. As for the underlying factors of demotivation among MoE teachers, the analyses revealed that teachers largely find their administrators and colleagues supportive. They were also less dissatisfied with their physical working environment, teaching equipment, and

opportunities for professional promotion. The most demotivating factors included underpayment, inadequate and unpunctual payment for overtime work, inequity in payment in comparison to other referents, low autonomy in planning and teaching in general, and lack of proper recognition. In other words, teachers' physiological needs (salary and fringe benefits), and social needs (recognition and rewards) are the most significant causes of concern. Other demotivating factors were related to MoE administrative policies in general, including teachers' weak role in decision makings, their dissatisfaction with inadequacy of in-service training programs, unfair opportunities for promotion, lack of various job developmental programs, dissatisfaction with teacher evaluation criteria, and unappealing instructional materials. A catastrophic implication of this slump in motivation, as acknowledged by Pelletier, Séguin-Lévesque, & Legault, (2002), will be the likelihood that teachers engage in controlling rather than autonomy-supportive practices with learners that could increasingly aggravate the teacher and student motivation cycle. Moreover, by adopting a more proactive role, teachers can shy away from classroom procedures that are conducive to routinization. Consequently, teachers can boost their self-efficacy and combat burnout which is the root cause of demotivation. We, hereby, encourage further research on motivation drawing on experimental designs. As most investigations to date have been of a correlational *ex post facto* nature, more empirical studies involving intervention in the construct of motivation under various instructional conditions seem warranted. Formerly, teacher motivation has been seen as an antecedent rather than an outcome of student motivation. However, such simplistic notions must be investigated via more reciprocal and recursive patterns and analyzed through complex dynamic frameworks.

The results of the analysis on the impact of gender on motivation showed that there was no significant difference between female teachers and their male counterparts regarding motivation. Ultimately, a significant difference was found between English subject teachers and non-English subject teachers regarding their motivation. In other words, English subject teachers were less motivated than non-English subject teachers, though the effect size was not large. The findings did not depart significantly from previous works although the teachers' priorities and their degree of motivation and needs satisfaction perception might be different. On the whole, school related sources of job satisfaction, especially English subject teachers' interpersonal relationship with their principals and colleagues seemed to have a remarkable share of their approval. The other less demotivating factors were the physical working environment, teaching equipment, and the job itself.

As recommended in Mackey and Gass (2012), the development of the NTMI by the current authors was informed by the actual MoE teachers' opinions in addition to a careful scrutiny on different aspects of teacher motivation and the themes of various need-based motivational theories. It was tested in a systematic way on a large sample size and approximately reached appropriate, valid, and reliable results. Therefore, the researchers recommend the utilization of the NTMI in similar teacher motivation surveys as it could help shed further light on the appropriateness and validation of the scale. Contrary to some scales with stereotyped questions irrelevant to the teachers' concrete needs, the NTMI has sought to reflect the genuine concerns and expectations of teachers. Because of teachers' paramount role both in individual students' lives and in society, their motivation should be placed amongst the top priorities of the MoE. As motivation acts as the willingness, drive or desire to engage in good teaching (Michaelowa, 2002), it is recommended that Iranian teachers of MoE try and employ novel strategies in order to boost their motivation. Some of these strategies derived from the literature which deserve to be taken into account by particularly by authorities would be: First, as the commentaries on extrinsic versus intrinsic sources of motivation suggest, there is a broad consensus among experts and researchers that extrinsic factors such as pay, reward, security, and recognition are just as important as intrinsic factors. Moreover, if teachers are properly rewarded, they will be encouraged to function more actively in their workplace environment and attempt to maintain their impetus at an elevated level. Second, it is necessary that MoE improve the teachers' socioeconomic status through measured legislation so that entry into teaching profession would become more competitive. This policy can encourage talented, academically capable people to step in this career. However, financial investment will not guarantee the restoration of motivation. Research (e.g., Bevan, 2000) also highlights the incorporation of non-monetary motives such as increased opportunities for professional development, enhanced resources and physical conditions of the school, and symbolic rewards.

Further research can involve the study of (de)motivation for different age groups or experience categories of teachers and school management systems. Teacher motivation is fluid by nature and motivational factors can change throughout various stages of a teacher's professional career. Moreover, these factors are not identical across the board and may vary from one context to another. Thus it is suggested that teacher motivation research be replicated from time to time in dissimilar settings. This survey only reflects the perceptions of Iranian English secondary school teachers, and is naturally, not generalizable to all teachers in all settings. It goes without saying that the NTMI is far from flawless. As explained, there were more items worthy of inclusion that had to be eliminated during the reliability and

factor analytical computations. There might also be items that are ambiguous, confusing, or even misleading. Hence, the questionnaire needs to be used and validated further to be able to gain a foothold and stand the test of time within the SLA community.

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