

Farhangian University
Quarterly Journal of Education Studies
Volume. 6, Issue. 24, Winter 2021

**Motivation and Attitude and their Relationship with Reading
Comprehension Ability among Iranian Undergraduate Students**

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Submit Date: 2019-11-14

Accept Date: 2020-04-24

Abstract:

Studies in reading strategies bring together the assumption that individual characteristics may influence reading performance; different readers may process the same text in different ways, depending on their purposes, motivation, attitudes, interests and background knowledge. The research aims to study the possible relationship between Iranian undergraduate learners' motivation and attitude towards reading comprehension. Therefore, a total number of 285 participants from six different fields of study, social sciences, math, primary education, chemistry, biology and Persian literature took part in this study. The researchers gave the instruments over a 2-day period; the Language Proficiency Test was given on day one, the Motivation for Reading Questionnaire (MRQ), Reading Attitudes Questionnaire (RAQ) and the Reading Comprehension Test on day two with one-week interval. Participants' responses to the reading motivation and attitude statements, reading comprehension questions, and English language proficiency questions were analyzed through a multiple regression, One-way ANOVA, T-test and correlation. The findings indicated reading motivations and attitudes contribute to better reading comprehension among the subjects. It was also demonstrated that the participants' discipline was a significant contributing factor to the relationship between reading motivation, attitude and reading comprehension ability.

Keywords: Discipline, Reading Attitude, Reading Comprehension, Reading Motivation.

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Introduction

Over several years of study, plethora of research has been carried out to investigate the key factors that affect learning English as a second or foreign language. Among those factors which would be effective in the learning process, the two important ones were learners' level of motivation and attitudes. Motivation and attitude are the two key factors that affect EFL learning (Dornyei, 2005, p. 65). According to Gardner (1985), motivation is "the extent to which an individual works or strives to learn the language because of a desire to do so and the satisfaction experienced in this activity" (p. 10). A motivated learner is the learner who wants to achieve a goal and who is willing to invest time and effort in reaching that goal. On the other hand, attitudes defined as the set of beliefs that learners maintain towards members of the target language group as well as their own culture (Brown, 2007). Attitudes are shaped by the social factors which, in turn, influence learner outcome. Several researchers (Wenden, 1991) consider attitudes as components of motivation in language learning but the question is how they could be measured.

Reading attitudes are learnt characteristics that influence whether students engage in or avoid reading activities and they can be influenced by societal, familial, and school-based factors (Miller, 2003). Baker (2003) believed that attitudes are not subject to inheritance because they are internalized predispositions. According to Nourie, and Lenski (1998) "the attitude of classroom teachers toward content area literacy can be one of the most important factors in reading achievement and reading practice of secondary students" (p. 372). Karahan (2007) avers that "positive language attitudes let learner to have positive orientation towards learning English" (p. 84). Those students with more negative attitudes engage less often with texts and generally achieve at levels lower than their age peers (McKenna et al., 1995). As a matter of fact, all the other factors engaged in EFL learning achievement to some extent presuppose motivation and without adequate motivation, even people with the most outstanding abilities cannot achieve long-term goals. High motivation also can make up for significant deficiencies in both individuals language ability and learning conditions (Dörnyei, 1998).

One of the fundamental problems with Iranian university students which actuated the present researchers to begin the current study is that many Iranian university students do not enjoy reading English texts. That is, not knowing reading strategies is a problem among most students, but reading avoiding is an even bigger problem. Therefore, they are reluctant to read. Some researchers such as Jafari & Shokrpour (2012) and Shahnazari & Dabaghi (2014) believed two out of some causes of students' reluctance to reading are: teachers' instruction and lack of motivation to reading. The former is due to the fact that teachers' reading instruction is not challengeable enough and accordingly students do not develop sufficient cognitive and metacognitive reading abilities. As Cramer and Castle (1994) asserted, although reading aliteracy, defined as a lack of the reading habit, is a more serious concern than illiteracy.

To examine whether Iranian students' English reading motivation and attitude on the different dimensions vary with their disciplines and their reading

comprehension is the main aim of this study. Such relationships may help in educational settings when trying to improve the students' motivation and attitude towards reading. Therefore, the present study was set out to answer the following questions:

- 1- What is the contribution of university disciplines, reading attitudes and reading motivations to the learners' reading comprehension ability?
- 2- Do the reading motivations of Iranian university students of basic sciences differ from those of students of humanities students?
- 3- Do the university disciplines affect the contribution of Iranian university students' reading attitudes to their reading comprehension ability?

Review of Literature

Research indicates that there is a relationship between learners' motivation level, attitude and their usage of reading strategies, which would affect each other (Khodadady & Khajavy, 2013). Motivation provides the primary impetus to EFL learning and then it would make the long lasting and often boring learning process go on. Attaining long-term goals requires both abilities and an adequate amount of motivation (Dörnyei, 2006). However, "sometimes high motivation and positive attitude can make up for inadequate language aptitude as well as insufficient learning conditions" (Dörnyei, 2006, p. 65). Researchers all agree on the effect of motivation and attitude on language learning (Masgoret & Gardner, 2003). Therefore, it is important for the teachers to be familiar with the aspects of attitude as well as motivation, the way that they can be handled and where and when they could develop those aspects (Colak, 2008). Positive and negative attitude would affect the success and growth of the students as EFL learners. Language teachers often say their students are unsuccessful since they are not motivated and this can be the result of having negative attitude regarding the target language and that would result in discouraging the learners (Colak, 2008).

Dhanapala (2008) and Tercanlioglu (2001) proved that extrinsic motivation was positively correlated with reading amount; however, it was not as strong as the correlation observed with regard to intrinsic motivation. Lin, Wong, & McBride-Chang (2012) found that bilingual students' L2 reading comprehension in Hong Kong was correlated by an extrinsically oriented dimension (instrumentalism) only. However, provided that students are to develop into effective readers in L2, they need to possess not only the skill but also the motivation to read. As stated by Guthrie and Wigfield (2000), "motivation is what activates behavior" (p. 406). Consequently, even the most able or skillful learners might not engage in reading unless they are motivated.

A closer look at the body of research being done so far shows that intrinsic reading motivation seems to be positively linked to reading achievement (McGeown, Norgate & Warhurst, 2012; Wang & Guthrie, 2004); nevertheless, the link between achievement in reading comprehension and extrinsic reading motivation is not clear. Learners' reading motivation is thought to be constantly connected with engagement in an assortment of reading activities (Baker &

Wigfield, 1999; Guthrie and Klauda, 2014; Wang & Guthrie, 2004; Wigfield & Guthrie, 1997). Accordingly, intrinsic motivation in comparison with extrinsic motivation is found to be more closely related to reading engagement; however, there is it is likely that some dimensions of extrinsic reading motivation is correlated with certain types of reading activities, for example, reading books. Should students be motivated extrinsically to achieve high grades, they may spend longer hours reading books. Since motivation to read is considered as the incentive for students' commitment to do reading activities, there is a need to explore if the learners are differently motivated by distinctive dimensions of reading motivation. This could have possible pedagogical implications for teaching reading. Should learners are more extrinsically motivated, teachers can focus on external factors in order to motivate them, while focusing on improving their intrinsic motivation, too (Nuttall, 2016).

Anderson (2015) studied the effect of several disciplines as biology, business, computer science, engineering, and psychology on the volume of reading expected. On average, reading volumes per class were the greatest for business majors at nearly 85 pages per week, followed by Psychology majors at 61 pages per week. Fewer pages were expected from biology majors at 45 pages per week, engineering majors at 42 pages per week, and computer science majors at 38 pages per week. It was concluded that reading amount, reading ability and the learners' disciplines are interwoven.

Method

Participants

In total, 285 Iranian under graduate students were randomly invited to this study (144 males, 140 females, 1 unknown). Their average age was 24, ranging from 21 to 29. Approximately, 16% of the participants were students of Social Sciences (46 participants), 17% of the participants were students of Persian Literature (49 participants), 19% of the participants were students of Primary Education (54 participants), 15% of the participants were students of Chemistry (42 participants), 15% of the participants were students of Biology (44 participants), 18% of the participants were students of Math (50 participants). The criteria for selection included commitment to spend a minimum of 2 hours to complete the needed questionnaire and tests of this study, willingness to participate in the study and their academic field of study. The participants were in their freshman and sophomore years in the university attending Payam-Noor University (PNU), Arak University, Farhangian Teacher Education University and Azad University in Arak.

Instruments

Attitude Reading Questionnaire (ARQ)

A slightly modified version of the 26-item questionnaire developed by Yamashita (2007) was used to estimate Iranian EFL learners' attitudes toward reading in English. This instrument was selected because it is firmly grounded in theory. This questionnaire was developed to assess the 6 different aspects of reading attitude as:

Discomfort, Anxiety, Comfort, Practical value, Intellectual value and Linguistic value. The items included in the ARQ were coded as a 1-4 point Likert scale with the response options being: “completely disagree”, “disagree”, “completely agree”, and “completely agree”. Students were asked to tick the relevant box for each statement. The reliability index, assessed by Cronbach’s alpha formula, was found to be .81.

Motivation for Reading Questionnaire (MRQ)

This 54-item questionnaire was developed by Wigfield and Guthrie (1997) to assess the 11 different aspects of reading motivation. Among various existing motivational scales, the Motivation for Reading Questionnaire (MRQ) is probably the most comprehensive and well-established of the reading motivational scales available. It was originally developed for use in English as the first language and later was established as applicable to English as a foreign language. The MRQ highlights multi-faceted aspects of motivation for reading by outlining three broad categories of motivational beliefs such as the competence and efficacy belief constructs, the purpose of reading and social purposes of reading.

The 54 items included in the MRQ were coded as a 1-4 point Likert scale with the response options being: “Very different from me”, “A little different from me”, “A little like me”, and “A lot like me”. Students were asked to tick the relevant box for each statement. The questionnaire administrators were available to answer the possible questions the participants had about wording of the items. It took the participants approximately 20 to 25 minutes to complete the MRQ. In case of necessity, bonus time was given to the participants to complete the task.

In order to eradicate any possible misunderstanding or confusion, the researchers pilot-tested the MRQ on thirty students who had similar characteristics to the participants of the main sample. They were asked to read the items carefully and identify the items with unclear meaning. The results led to some wording changes and modifications made to make the items appropriate for the target population of the study. Prior to the administration of the pilot test, the MRQ was judged by four TEFL professors. As a result, some ambiguous items underwent changes and they confirmed the content validity of the mentioned-questionnaire for the purpose of this study. Then, in the next phase of the pilot study, the questionnaire was administered for estimating its reliability. The reliability index, assessed by Cronbach’s alpha formula, was found to be .84.

Reading Comprehension Test

Participants were requested to answer the questions of three parts excluded from TOEIC (Test of English for International Communication) to measure their reading skill. The entire Reading Comprehension Test lasted 60 minutes. This test included 50 multiple-choice items, assessing the participants’ literal comprehension of information stated in the passage as well as higher order comprehension that required making inference and conclusions.

Prior to the administration of this instrument, it was pilot tested for the purposes of clarity, simplicity, time allotment, and estimating its reliability. The reliability index, assessed by Cronbach’s alpha formula, was found to be .81. It is worth

mentioning that to predict the efficacy of this instrument and to make sure that it covers the content that was supposed to measure, four TEFL professors were requested to judge this instrument. As a result, they acknowledged this test for this purpose.

The Language Proficiency Test

To ascertain the homogeneity of the participants in terms of language proficiency, the Quick Placement Test (second version) was utilized. It is a standardized 50-item multiple-choice test which consists of grammar, vocabulary, and reading subsections. The entire Quick Placement Test lasted 40 minutes. The reliability (Cronbach's alpha) of the test was 0.86.

Procedures

A total number of 285 participants from different fields of study, humanities (social sciences, Persian literature and primary education) and basic sciences (chemistry, biology and math) took part in this study. Having approached the university authorities in order to get their consent for conducting the study, the researchers gave the instruments over a 2-day period; the Language Proficiency Test was given on day one, the MRQ, ARQ and the Reading Comprehension Test on day two with a one-week interval.

The whole study was completed in two phases as shown below:

Phase 1: First, through administering the Quick Placement Test (second version) to 285 university students, homogenized participant were identified. That is, those whose scores in English language proficiency test were 1 SD above and below the mean score. Making 205 participants in total as follows:

Social sciences (n= 34), math (n=40), primary education (n=39), chemistry (n=24), biology (n=29), and Persian literature (n=39).

Phase 2: Then the Reading Comprehension Test and the Motivation for Reading Questionnaire (MRQ) and Attitude Reading Questionnaire (ARQ) were administered to the students to be completed in 90 minutes as determined at the pilot study. Participants were reminded that there was no right or wrong answer for RQ and MRQ, their forthright and honest responses were important, and confidentiality was respected.

The conditions for testing were strictly followed as far as possible. The researchers firstly read instructions printed on the top of the questionnaires and tests clearly and then before the start of each one, they cleared the mentioned doubts. The way of answering the questions was made clear to the participants and in case of any difficulty, they were encouraged to ask question and were provided with help. The participants were also informed that their performance will be kept confidential and will not have any effect on their final exam scores.

Data Analyses

Students' responses to the reading motivation and attitude statements, reading comprehension questions and general English proficiency questions were analyzed

through main statistical tests as a multiple regression, correlation, T-test, ANOVA, and Chi-Square.

Results

Research Question one: What is the contribution of university disciplines, reading attitudes and reading motivations to the learners' reading comprehension ability?

In order to answer this research question, a multiple regression analysis was conducted after meeting the assumptions of regression analysis. The results are as follow:

Table 1: Model summary of the multiple regression

	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
Model	.546 ^a	.298	.284	3.42777

a. Predictors: (Constant), RANOM, Proficiency Level, Field, RMNOM

b. Dependent Variable: reading

As shown in Table 1, the independent variable included in the model, namely, proficiency level, discipline, reading attitude and reading motivation, provide a rather moderate prediction of the dependent variable (reading comprehension ability) ($R = .54$). In addition, 29 percent of the proportion of variance in the dependent variable (reading comprehension ability) was explained by the independent variables included in the model. This table shows that when all these four variables considered together, they can predict 29 percent of the variations of the reading comprehension test scores in this study.

Table 2: One-way ANOVA for the model good fit

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	998.501	4	249.625	21.245	.000 ^a
Residual	2349.919	200	11.750		
Total	3348.420	204			

a. Predictors: (Constant), RANOM, Proficiency Level, Field, RMNOM

b. Dependent Variable: reading

As shown in Table 2, the observed results ($F = 21.24$, $p = .00$) show that the developed model is a good fit for the collected data. In other words, the independent variables included in the model statistically significantly predict the dependent variable (reading comprehension ability). However; further analysis was needed to understand what the contribution of each variable was.

Table 3:Independent variables coefficients

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		t	Sig.	Correlations			Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta				Zero-order	Partial	Part	Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	6.666	2.478		2.690	.008						
ProficiencyLevel	1.012	.360	.201	2.806	.006	.385	.195	.166	.681	1.468	
Field	-.488	.956	-.060	-.510	.610	-.463	-.036	-.030	.253	3.950	
RMNOM	1.665	.890	.378	1.870	.063	.506	.131	.111	.086	11.648	
RANOM	.015	1.039	.003	.014	.989	.498	.001	.001	.064	15.637	
a. Dependent Variable: reading											

Considering the coefficients reported in Table 3, the only independent variable that could significantly predict the dependent variable of the study (reading comprehension) was the participants' proficiency level ($t= 2.80$, $p= .00$). However, the other independent variables, discipline ($t= .51$, $p= .61$), reading attitude ($t=.01$, $p= .98$), and reading motivation ($t= 1.87$, $p= .06$), were sterile in terms of predicting the reading comprehension ability of the participants. This fact implied that only proficiency level had a significant contribution to the prediction of the participants reading comprehension ability. There is a need to emphasize that although there were significant differences between low and high degrees of reading motivation and reading attitude in terms of the reading comprehension performance, and there was a significant difference between the learners from different disciplines in terms of their reading comprehension ability, these differences were not big enough to make a contribution to reading comprehension ability of the learners in terms of determining or predicting its variation and fluctuation as shown here in the table above.

Following the aforementioned interpretation of the results, the researchers conducted further analysis controlling the proficiency variable as the only significant moderate determiner of the reading comprehension ability of the participants to see how attitude and motivation of the participants contribute to their reading comprehension ability separately. To this end highly proficient participants ($n= 63$) were selected as the homogeneous sample to be studied. The results of descriptive analyses are shown below.

Table 4:Descriptive for reading scores, attitude and motivation of highly proficient participants

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
reading	63	14.00	19.00	13.2857	3.62975
motivation	63	84.00	197.00	151.562	33.02139
attitude	63	15.00	96.00	72.7937	20.22068

The mean score of the selected sample showed that although their scores were high on proficiency test, their performance on reading comprehension test was varying and

not very high ($M= 13.28$) and the standard deviation was rather high ($SD= 3.62$). However, considering the mean scores for motivation ($M= 197.00$) and attitude ($M=72.79$), it was concluded that the levels were moderate and the sample was rather heterogeneous in terms of motivation ($SD= 33.02$) and attitude ($SD= 20.22$).

Table 5: Normality of the motivation, attitude and reading comprehension

	Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.
reading	.944	63	.006
motivation	.869	63	.000
attitude	.852	63	.000

With regard to the results in Table 5, it was concluded that the normality of motivation ($p= .00$), attitude ($p=.00$), and reading comprehension ability ($p= .00$) of the learners were not normal since the observed p levels were below $.05$. Accordingly Spearman correlation test was used for further analysis of the data.

Table 6: Spearman correlation between motivation, attitude and reading comprehension (pairwise)

	reading	attitude	motivation
reading	1.000	.650**	.650**
attitude		1.000	.956**
motivation			1.000

According to the results in Table 6, there is a significant direct correlation between reading comprehension and attitude ($r= .65$, $p= .00$) and reading comprehension and motivation ($r= .65$, $p=.00$). Interestingly, both motivation and attitude are comparably strong enough to predict the changes in reading comprehension ability of the proficient learners. However, they are not very strong enough since they are very little higher than $.60$.

Table 7: Correlation between reading comprehension and extrinsic and intrinsic motivation (pairwise)

	reading	MotivationIntrinsic	MotivationExtrinsic
reading	1.000	.629**	.648**
MotivationIntrinsic	.629**	1.000	.886**
MotivationExtrinsic	.648**	.886**	1.000

According to the results in Table 7, there is a significant direct correlation between reading comprehension and intrinsic motivation ($r= .62$, $p= .00$) and reading comprehension and extrinsic motivation ($r= .64$, $p=.00$). Interestingly, extrinsic motivation is slightly stronger predictor of reading comprehension but

none of them are strong enough to predict the changes in reading comprehension ability of the proficient learners since they are very little higher than .60.

Table 8: Correlation between reading comprehension and motivation components (pairwise)

	reading	Efficacy	Challenge	Curiosity	Involvement	Importance	Avoidance	Competition	Recognition	Grades	Social	Compliance
reading	1.000	.657**	.632**	.627**	.552**	.436**	.505**	.632**	.554**	.689**	.627**	.584**
Efficacy		1.000	.710**	.779**	.585**	.601**	.565**	.698**	.610**	.742**	.780**	.694**
Challenge			1.000	.842**	.812**	.692**	.795**	.762**	.850**	.807**	.798**	.779**
Curiosity				1.000	.733**	.738**	.753**	.770**	.780**	.830**	.842**	.807**
Involvement					1.000	.667**	.897**	.826**	.943**	.709**	.782**	.719**
Importance						1.000	.638**	.752**	.672**	.678**	.768**	.709**
Avoidance							1.000	.673**	.888**	.664**	.716**	.718**
Competition								1.000	.810**	.783**	.841**	.736**
Recognition									1.000	.727**	.739**	.755**
Grades										1.000	.843**	.761**
Social											1.000	.822**
Compliance												1.000

According to Table 8, there were significant correlations between reading comprehension and each of the components of reading motivation, namely, efficacy ($r = .65, p = .00$), challenge ($r = .63, p = .00$), curiosity ($r = .62, p = .00$), involvement ($r = .55, p = .00$), importance ($r = .43, p = .00$), avoidance ($r = .50, p = .00$), competition ($r = .63, p = .00$), recognition ($r = .55, p = .00$), grades ($r = .68, p = .00$), social ($r = .62, p = .00$) and compliance ($r = .58, p = .00$). Accordingly, it was argued that each component of the reading motivation of the participants as measured in this study are either moderate or weak predictors of reading comprehension per se. In addition, it was concluded that the components can be ranked as follows in terms of their strengths of predicting the participants' reading proficiency.

Table 9: Ranking motivation components contribution to reading comprehension ability

Ranking	Motivation Components	r	Description
1	Grades	.689**	Extrinsic
2	Efficacy	.657**	
3	Challenge	.632**	Intrinsic
3	Competition	.632**	Extrinsic
4	Social	.627**	Extrinsic
4	Curiosity	.627**	Intrinsic
5	Compliance	.584**	Extrinsic
6	Recognition	.554**	Extrinsic
7	Involvement	.552**	Intrinsic
8	Avoidance	.505**	
9	Importance	.436**	

According to Table 9, grades which are both extrinsic in nature and efficacy have the highest contributions to reading ability which is moderate whereas avoidance and importance have the weakest contributions to the participants' reading ability. All in all, considering the positive values of r (correlation coefficients), it was argued that the components of reading motivation have positive and direct contribution to reading ability and with regard to the sizes of the observed r, it was concluded that reading motivation components per se were not strong contributors to reading ability.

Table 10: Correlation between reading comprehension and attitude components (pairwise)

	reading	attitude	Discomfort	Anxiety	Comfort	Practical	Intellectual	Linguistic
reading	1.000	.650**	.661**	.667**	.639**	.466**	.568**	.501**
attitude		1.000	.764**	.893**	.861**	.872**	.833**	.913**
Discomfort			1.000	.692**	.750**	.645**	.515**	.601**
Anxiety				1.000	.793**	.765**	.766**	.800**
Comfort					1.000	.776**	.666**	.782**
Practical						1.000	.674**	.893**
Intellectual							1.000	.800**
Linguistic								1.000

According to Table 10, there were significant correlations between reading ability and each of the components of reading attitude, namely, discomfort ($r = .66$, $p = .00$), anxiety ($r = .66$, $p = .00$), comfort ($r = .63$, $p = .00$), practical ($r = .46$, $p = .00$), intellectual ($r = .56$, $p = .00$), linguistic ($r = .50$, $p = .00$), and attitude ($r = .65$, $p = .00$)

as well. Accordingly, it was argued that each component of the reading attitude of the participants as measured in this study are either moderate or weak predictors of reading ability of highly proficient participants per se. In addition, it was concluded that the attitude components can be ranked as follows in terms of their strengths of predicting the participants' reading ability.

Table 11: Ranking of attitude components in terms of contributing to the participants reading ability

Ranking	Motivation Components	r
1	Anxiety	667**
2	Discomfort	661**
3	Comfort	639**
4	Intellectual	568**
5	Linguistic	501**
6	Practical	466**

According to Table 11, anxiety and discomfort have the highest contributions to reading ability which is moderate whereas practical has the weakest contributions to the participants' reading ability. All in all, considering the positive values of r (correlation coefficients), it was argued that the components of reading attitude have positive and direct contribution to reading ability and with regard to the sizes of the observed r, it was concluded that reading motivation per se was not a strong contributor to reading ability since they are little higher than .60.

Research questions two: Do the reading motivations of Iranian university students of basic sciences differ from those of students of humanities students?

To answer this research question, the data collected via the reading motivation questionnaire from the students of chemistry, biology and physical training were grouped together under a label of basic sciences. In the same way, the data collected from the students of social sciences, primary education and literature were grouped together under a label of humanities. The following table shows the descriptive statistics for each group.

Table 12: Descriptive statistics for reading motivation of the students of different disciplines

	discipline	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Reading Motivation	Social sciences	34	179.76	6.30	1.08
	Literature	39	161.95	16.04	2.56
	Primary education	39	131.26	28.90	4.62
	Chemistry	24	97.16	5.99	1.22
	Biology	29	89.31	5.19	.96
	Physical training	40	93.27	7.28	1.15

As demonstrated in Table 12, the students of social sciences enjoyed the highest mean ($M= 179.76$) while the students of biology were found to have the minimum reading motivation ($M= 89.31$). According to the statistics in Table 20, it is evident that the students of literature ($M= 161.95$) and primary education ($M= 131.26$) also had stronger reading motivation than students of basic sciences, biology ($M= 89.31$), physical training (93.27) and chemistry (97.16). In terms of dispersion, while the standard deviation indices of social sciences, biology, chemistry and physical training were rather moderate, those of literature and primary education were high.

Table 13: Descriptive statistics for reading motivation of the students of humanities and basic sciences

	Field	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Reading Motivation	Humanities	112	156.67	28.03	2.64
	Basic sciences	93	93.04	6.96	.72

According to Table 13, the observed mean for the students of humanities ($M= 156.67$, $SD= 28.03$) is considerably higher than the students of basic sciences ($M= 93.04$, $SD= 6.96$); in addition, the same is true regarding the observed dispersions of the data. This implies a higher but more heterogeneous state of reading motivation among the students of humanities. In order to test the significance of the difference between the observed mean scores, there was a need to check the normality assumption. The results are shown below.

Table 14: Normality of reading motivation data for the students of different disciplines

	Discipline	Shapiro-Wilk		
		Statistic	df	Sig.
Reading Motivation	Social sciences	.975	34	.605
	Literature	.902	39	.003
	Primary education	.780	39	.000
	Chemistry	.950	24	.265
	Biology	.960	29	.325
	Physical training	.970	40	.347

According to the statistics in Table 14, the distribution of the data for the students of social sciences ($p = .60$), biology ($p = .32$), chemistry ($p = .26$) and physical training ($p = .34$) were normal considering the fact that the observed p levels were both higher than $.05$. However, the one for the students of literature ($p = .00$) and primary education ($p = .00$) were not normal. Thus, the researcher used parametric test, one-way ANOVA, to compare the groups in terms of their reading motivation levels.

Table 15: Normality of reading motivation data for the students of humanities and basic sciences

	Field	Shapiro-Wilk		
		Statistic	df	Sig.
Reading	Humanities	.846	112	.000
Motivation	Basic sciences	.976	93	.091

According to the statistics in Table 15, the distribution of the data for the students of humanities ($p = .00$) was not normal considering the fact that the observed p levels were both below $.05$. However, the one for the students of basic sciences ($p = .09$) was normal. Thus, the researcher used independent samples t-test to compare the two groups reading motivation levels.

Table 16: One-way ANOVA for comparing the reading motivation of the students of humanities and different disciplines

RM	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	250919.229	5	50183.846	214.742	.000
Within Groups	46504.966	199	233.693		
Total	297424.195	204			

The results in Table 16 demonstrated that the difference between the six groups as it was observed in Table 20 was significant ($F = 214.00$, $p = .00$). In addition, in order to have a detailed comparison of the groups, they were compared pairwise using a scheffe test. The results are shown below.

Table 17: Pairwise comparison of the disciplines in terms of their reading motivation

(I) discipline	(J) discipline	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
social sciences	literature	17.81599*	3.58685	.000
	primary education	48.50830*	3.58685	.000
	chemistry	82.59804*	4.07560	.000
	biology	90.45436*	3.86416	.000
	physical training	86.48971*	3.56590	.000
literature	social sciences	-17.81599*	3.58685	.000
	primary education	30.69231*	3.46183	.000
	chemistry	64.78205*	3.96603	.000
	biology	72.63837*	3.74840	.000
	physical training	68.67372*	3.44013	.000
primary education	social sciences	-48.50830*	3.58685	.000
	literature	-30.69231*	3.46183	.000
	chemistry	34.08974*	3.96603	.000
	biology	41.94607*	3.74840	.000
	physical training	37.98141*	3.44013	.000
chemistry	social sciences	-82.59804*	4.07560	.000
	litreture	-64.78205*	3.96603	.000
	primary education	-34.08974*	3.96603	.000
	biology	7.85632	4.21848	.629
	physical training	3.89167	3.94709	.964
biology	social sciences	-90.45436*	3.86416	.000
	litreture	-72.63837*	3.74840	.000
	primary education	-41.94607*	3.74840	.000
	chemistry	-7.85632	4.21848	.629
	physical training	-3.96466	3.72837	.951
physical training	social sciences	-86.48971*	3.56590	.000
	litreture	-68.67372*	3.44013	.000
	primary education	-37.98141*	3.44013	.000
	chemistry	-3.89167	3.94709	.964
	biology	3.96466	3.72837	.951

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

As shown in Table 17, the observed differences between all pairs of disciplines, except chemistry and biology ($p = .62$), chemistry and physical training ($p = .96$), and biology and physical training ($p = .95$), were significant considering the fact the observed p levels were below $.05$.

Table 18: Independent samples t-test for comparing the reading motivation of the students of humanities and basic sciences

	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference
Reading Motivation	23.170	127.280	.000	63.62663	2.74613

As shown in Table 18, the results ($t= 23.17$, $p= .00$) indicated that there was a significant difference between the students of humanities and basic sciences in terms of their reading motivation. Accordingly, the null hypothesis which stated that "the reading motivations of Iranian university students of basic sciences does not differ from those of students of humanities students" was significantly rejected. Thus, it can be concluded that students humanities ($M=156.67$) had a significantly higher level of reading motivation than those of basic sciences ($M= 93.04$).

Research question three: Do the university disciplines affect the contribution of Iranian university students' reading attitudes to their reading comprehension ability?

In order to have a clear description of the students reading comprehension ability, the scores obtained from the reading comprehension test were tabulated according to the students' disciplines (Table 28 and Table 29). In addition, as shown in Table 30 and Table 31, the distributions of the scores were checked for normality and the results confirmed the use of parametric tests for hypothesis testing. As shown in Table 32, there was a significant difference between the disciplines in terms of their reading comprehension abilities. Further pairwise comparisons were made in Table 33 and the results were discussed. The descriptive of the participants' reading comprehension according to their attitudes are shown below.

Table 19: Descriptive of reading comprehension test according to the participants' attitude

	Attitude	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
reading	Low	103	9.0388	3.58899	.35363
	Mid	30	11.2333	3.15882	.57672
	High	72	13.4583	3.58768	.42281

According to Table 19, considering the mean scores for low-attitude ($M= 9.03$), mid-attitude ($M= 11.23$) and high- attitude ($M= 13.45$) groups, it was concluded that the higher the attitude level of the learners, the higher their reading comprehension ability. In addition with regard to the observed standard deviation it was concluded that the heterogeneity of the three groups were similar considering the fact that the indices ranged from 3.15 to 3.58.

Table 20: Normality of the reading comprehension scores according to the participants' attitudes

	Attitude	Shapiro-Wilk		
		Statistic	df	Sig.
Reading	Low	.970	103	.018
	Mid	.903	30	.010
	High	.964	72	.039

As shown in Table 20, the distribution of the reading scores for all three groups of attitude levels was not normal due to the fact the observed p levels were below .05. Accordingly, a non-parametric test, Kruskal Wallis test, was used to compare the groups.

Table 21: Kruskal Wallis Test for comparing reading comprehension scores of the participants with different levels of attitudes

	X ²	df	Sig.
Chi-Square	49.103	2	.000

The results shown in Table 21 implies that there was a significant difference between the reading comprehension scores of three groups ($X^2 = 49.10$, $p = .00$). In order to further analyze the groups, pairwise comparison was made using Scheffe test.

Table 22: Scheffe test for pairwise comparison of the reading comprehension of scores according to their level of attitudes

(I) RANOM	(J) RANOM	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
Low	Mid	-2.19450*	.73235	.012
	High	-4.41950*	.54226	.000
Mid	Low	2.19450*	.73235	.012
	High	-2.22500*	.76709	.016
High	Low	4.41950*	.54226	.000
	Mid	2.22500*	.76709	.016

With regard to the results demonstrated in Table 22, it was concluded that there was a significant difference between participants with low-attitude and those with mid-attitude ($p = .01$), the participants with low-attitude and those with high attitude ($p = .00$) and the participants with mid-attitude and those with high-attitude ($p = .01$). Considering the statistics reported in Table 53 and those in Table 54, it was concluded that reading attitude was a determinant factor in reading comprehension performance and the higher the learners' attitudes, the higher their reading comprehension scores. To consider the mixed effects of discipline and attitude, two-way ANOVA was conducted.

Table 23: Two-way ANOVA for estimating the mixed effect of discipline and reading attitude on reading comprehension

Source	Type III Squares	Sum of df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	1483.033 ^a	10	148.303	15.424	.000
Intercept	4780.421	1	4780.421	497.163	.000
discipline	602.818	5	120.564	12.539	.000
RANOM	40.251	2	20.125	2.093	.126
discipline * RANOM	43.693	3	14.564	1.515	.212
Error	1865.386	194	9.615		
Total	27759.000	205			
Corrected Total	3348.420	204			

With regard to the results in Table 23, it was concluded that the discipline had a significant effect on reading comprehension scores ($F= 12.53$, $p= .00$) but reading attitude was not a significant factor ($F= 2.09$, $p= .12$). In addition, the mixed effect of discipline and reading attitude was also negligible ($F= 1.51$, $p= .21$). Accordingly, it was argued that while reading attitude was not a significant determinant of reading comprehension scores, the discipline of the students was a significant determinant variable affecting their reading comprehension ability.

Table 24: Descriptive of reading comprehension according to reading attitude and discipline

discipline	Attitude	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
social sciences	High	15.8529	2.07631	34
	Mid	13.0833	1.88092	12
litreture	High	12.1111	3.28556	27
	Low	9.7500	3.74469	12
	Mid	10.6250	2.87228	16
primary education	High	9.3636	2.50091	11
	Low	7.8333	3.73778	24
	Mid	10.3571	3.32459	28
chemistry	Low	6.0000	.	1
	Mid	8.6154	3.41526	39
biology	Low	4.0000	.	1
	Mid	4.0000	.	1
physical training	Low	8.6154	3.41526	39
	Mid	4.0000	.	1

The reason behind the lack of consistency between the results is that the distribution of reading scores among the disciplines with regard to the participants' attitude levels were very heterogeneous so that, for example, the students in social sciences all had high-attitude whereas the students of chemistry all had low-attitude only. In the same way the students of literature had either mid or high attitude while the students of biology and physical training had either low or mid-attitude. This

heterogeneity statistically affects the effectiveness of reading attitude as a determinant variable.

In order to trace the contribution of the reading attitude components, the same procedure was repeated for each component, as follows:

Table 25: Descriptives of reading comprehension test according to the participants' attitude component

		N	Mean (Reading)	Std. Deviation	Std. Error
Discomfort	Low	57	8.6842	3.54138	.46907
	Mid	84	10.1310	3.63311	.39641
	High	64	13.9219	3.17882	.39735
Anxiety	Low	99	9.1818	3.57247	.35905
	Mid	66	11.0455	3.56665	.43902
	High	40	14.9750	2.83284	.44791
Comfort	Low	101	9.0198	3.40288	.33860
	Mid	45	11.2667	3.78634	.56443
	High	59	13.8814	3.40428	.44320
Practical	Low	89	9.0449	3.63665	.38548
	Mid	59	11.6610	3.95932	.51546
	High	57	13.0526	3.46112	.45844
Intellectual	Low	98	9.5102	3.53260	.35685
	Mid	62	11.5000	4.30688	.54697
	High	45	13.1556	3.58631	.53462
Linguistic	Low	111	9.1622	3.56636	.33850
	Mid	40	12.8000	3.63177	.57423
	High	54	13.1111	3.61165	.49148

According to Table 25, considering the mean scores for low-discomfort (M= 8.68), mid-discomfort (M= 10.13) and high- discomfort (M= 13.92), low-anxiety (M= 9.18), mid-discomfort (M= 11.04) and high- discomfort (M= 14.97), low-comfort (M= 9.01), mid-comfort (M= 11.26) and high-comfort (M= 13.88), low-practical (M= 9.04), mid-practical (M= 11.66) and high- practical (M= 13.05), low-intellectual (M= 9.51), mid-intellectual (M= 11.50) and high- intellectual (M= 13.15), low-linguistic (M= 9.16), mid-linguistic (M= 12.80) and high-linguistic (M= 13.11) it was concluded that the higher the attitude level of the learners, the higher their reading comprehension ability. In addition with regard to the observed standard deviation it was concluded that the heterogeneity of the three groups were similar considering the fact that the indices ranged from 3.17 to 4.30.

Table 26: Normality of the reading comprehension scores according to the participants' attitude componenets

		Shapiro-Wilk		
		Statistic	df	Sig.
Discomfort	Low	.956	57	.035
	Mid	.985	84	.448
	High	.965	64	.070
Anxiety	Low	.967	99	.014
	Mid	.974	66	.175
	High	.945	40	.051
Comfort	Low	.970	101	.020
	Mid	.941	45	.023
	High	.965	59	.090
Practical	Low	.963	89	.013
	Mid	.974	59	.228
	High	.968	57	.142
Intellectual	Low	.976	98	.068
	Mid	.943	62	.006
	High	.965	45	.184
Linguistic	Low	.970	111	.014
	Mid	.951	40	.085
	High	.975	54	.319

As shown in Table 26, the distribution of the reading scores for all three groups of attitude component levels, except for low-discomfort ($p = .03$), low-anxiety ($p = .01$), low- ($p = .02$) and mid-comfort ($p = .02$), low-practical ($p = .01$), mid-intellectual ($p = .00$) and mid linguistic ($p = .01$), were not normal due to the fact the observed p levels were below $.05$. Accordingly, a parametric test, one-way ANOVA, was used to compare the groups.

Table 27: One-way ANOVA for comparing reading comprehension scores of the participants with different levels of attitude components

	F	df	Sig.
Discomfort	37.91	2	.000
Anxiety	40.46	2	.000
Comfort	36.42	2	.000
Practical	22.25	2	.000
Intellectual	15.30	2	.000
Linguistic	28.83	2	.000

The results shown in Table 27 implies that there was a significant difference between the reading comprehension scores of three groups in terms of discomfort ($F= 37.91$, $p= .00$), anxiety ($F= 40.46$, $p= .00$), comfort ($F= 36.42$, $p= .00$), practical ($F= 22.25$, $p= .00$), intellectual ($F= 15.30$, $p= .00$), linguistic ($F= 28.83$, $p= .00$). In order to further analyze the groups, pairwise comparison was made using Scheffe test.

Table 28: Scheffe test for pairwise comparison of the reading comprehension of scores according to their level of attitude components

			Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
Discomfort	Low	Mid	-1.44674	.59574	.055
		High	-5.23766*	.63226	.000
	Mid	Low	1.44674	.59574	.055
		High	-3.79092*	.57601	.000
	High	Low	5.23766*	.63226	.000
		Mid	3.79092*	.57601	.000
Anxiety	Low	Mid	-1.86364*	.54667	.004
		High	-5.79318*	.64452	.000
	Mid	Low	1.86364*	.54667	.004
		High	-3.92955*	.68933	.000
	High	Low	5.79318*	.64452	.000
		Mid	3.92955*	.68933	.000
Comfort	Low	Mid	-2.24686*	.62558	.002
		High	-4.86155*	.57194	.000
	Mid	Low	2.24686*	.62558	.002
		High	-2.61469*	.69081	.001
	High	Low	4.86155*	.57194	.000
		Mid	2.61469*	.69081	.001
Practical	Low	Mid	-2.61607*	.61875	.000
		High	-4.00769*	.62525	.000
	Mid	Low	2.61607*	.61875	.000
		High	-1.39161	.68450	.129
	High	Low	4.00769*	.62525	.000
		Mid	1.39161	.68450	.129
Intellectual	Low	Mid	-1.98980*	.61569	.006
		High	-3.64535*	.68322	.000
	Mid	Low	1.98980*	.61569	.006
		High	-1.65556	.74303	.086
	High	Low	3.64535*	.68322	.000
		Mid	1.65556	.74303	.086
Linguistic	Low	Mid	-3.63784*	.66223	.000
		High	-3.94895*	.59579	.000
	Mid	Low	3.63784*	.66223	.000
		High	-.31111	.74912	.917
	High	Low	3.94895*	.59579	.000
		Mid	.31111	.74912	.917

With regard to the results demonstrated in Table 28, it was concluded that there was a significant difference between the participants in all pairs ($p = .00$) except low-discomfort and those with mid-discomfort ($p = .05$), mid-practical and high-practical ($p = .12$), mid-intellectual and high-intellectual ($p = .08$) and mid-linguistic and high-linguistic ($p = .95$). Considering the statistics reported in Table 59 and those in Table 57, it was concluded that reading attitude components were determinant factors in reading comprehension performance and the higher the learners' attitude component, the higher their reading comprehension scores. To consider the mixed effects of discipline and attitude, two-way ANOVA was conducted.

Table 29: Two-way ANOVA for estimating the mixed effect of discipline and reading attitude components on reading comprehension

	F	df	Sig.
Discomfort	2.02	6	.06
Anxiety	.69	6	.65
Comfort	1.24	6	.29
Practical	1.22	6	.30
Intellectual	1.64	6	.32
Linguistic	.08	6	.98

As it was concluded, the mixed effect of discipline and reading attitude components were negligible ($p > .05$). Accordingly, it was argued that while reading attitude components were not significant determinants of reading comprehension scores, the discipline of the students was a significant determinant variable affecting their reading comprehension ability. Considering the results reported before, it may sound confusing at the first glance. However, statistically speaking, they are both rational with regard to the fact that the statistics reflected the differences observed between different groups of a single trait, say discomfort, in terms of their reading comprehension performance. The differences among the three groups which varied in terms of their levels of attitude (discomfort) were significant. And this showed that any single aspect of attitude can affect reading comprehension score significantly. However, as it was considered, a mixed effects of discomfort with regard to its three levels combined with those of discipline together which provided a more complex contribution of attitude components and disciplines which may develop into a reaction and counter-reaction of the variables so that they balance each other in a way that the overall contribution turns into a sterile and neutral impact on reading comprehension.

Further correlational analyses were done to further explore the relationships between reading attitude and reading comprehension of the participants.

Table 30: Cross-tabulation of the participants' attitude levels and their reading ability

		Reading				
		Low	Mid	High	Total	
Reading attitude	Low	Count	46	49	8	103
		% within Reading attitude	44.7%	47.6%	7.8%	100.0%
		% within Reading	79.3%	46.7%	19.0%	50.2%
		% of Total	22.4%	23.9%	3.9%	50.2%
	Mid	Count	4	22	4	30
		% within Reading attitude	13.3%	73.3%	13.3%	100.0%
		% within Reading	6.9%	21.0%	9.5%	14.6%
		% of Total	2.0%	10.7%	2.0%	14.6%
	High	Count	8	34	30	72
		% within Reading attitude	11.1%	47.2%	41.7%	100.0%
		% within Reading	13.8%	32.4%	71.4%	35.1%
		% of Total	3.9%	16.6%	14.6%	35.1%
Total	Count	58	105	42	205	
	% within Reading attitude	28.3%	51.2%	20.5%	100.0%	
	% within Reading	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	
	% of Total	28.3%	51.2%	20.5%	100.0%	

According to this Table, 20, 51 and 28 percent of the participants had high, mid and low reading ability, respectively. In addition, 35, 14 and 50 percent of the participants had high, mid and low reading motivation, respectively. A closer look at the table shows that 22 percent of the total participants with low motivation have low reading ability, 35 percent of the participants with high motivation have high reading ability and 10 percent of the participants with mid motivation have mid reading ability. Accordingly, there seems to be a positive relation between the two variables, that is, higher motivation contributes to higher reading ability.

Table 31: Chi-square test for the relationship between reading ability and attitude

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	47.642 ^a	4	.000
Likelihood Ratio	47.687	4	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	40.215	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	205		

In order to test the possible relationship between the participants' different levels of language reading ability and their levels of attitude, chi-square test was run. The results in Table 31 ($X^2 = 47.64$, $p = .00$) indicated that there was a significant relationship between reading ability and attitude levels and the higher the leavers' attitude, the higher their reading ability.

In order to further investigate the relationship between reading and attitude as well as its components, further correlational analyses were done. The results are shown below.

Table 32: Correlations among reading ability and attitude components

	reading	attitude	Discomfort	Anxiety	Comfort	Practical	Intellectual	Linguistic
reading	1	.488**	-.546**	-.512**	.488**	.458**	.366**	.443**
attitude		1	.760**	.841**	.856**	.840**	.772**	.865**
Discomfort			1	.692**	.701**	.710**	.521**	.637**
Anxiety				1	.846**	.775**	.794**	.840**
Comfort					1	.865**	.757**	.894**
Practical						1	.753**	.922**
Intellectual							1	.855**
Linguistic								1

According to the results in Table 32, there was a significant correlation between reading ability and attitude ($r = .48$, $p = .00$). The positive correlation coefficient showed that the relationship was positive, that is, the higher level of reading attitude contributed to higher levels of reading ability.

According to Table XI, there were significant correlations between reading ability and each of the components of reading attitude, namely, discomfort ($r = -.54$, $p = .00$), anxiety ($r = -.51$, $p = .00$), comfort ($r = .48$, $p = .00$), practical ($r = .45$, $p = .00$), intellectual ($r = .36$, $p = .00$), and linguistic ($r = .44$, $p = .00$). Accordingly, it was argued that each component of the reading attitude of the participants as measured in this study are rather weak predictors of reading ability per se. In addition, it was concluded that the components can be ranked as follows in terms of their strengths of predicting the participants' reading ability.

Table 33: Ranking attitude components in terms of their contribution to reading comprehension

Ranking	Motivation Components	r
1	Discomfort	-.546**
2	Anxiety	-.512**
3	Comfort	.488**
4	Practical	.458**
5	Linguistic	.445**
6	Intellectual	.366**

According to Table 33, discomfort and anxiety had the highest contributions to reading ability which was moderate whereas intellectual had the weakest contributions to the participants' reading ability. All in all, considering the negative

values of r (correlation coefficients) for discomfort and anxiety, it was argued that the components of reading attitude have positive and indirect contribution to reading; that is, the higher the discomfort and anxiety the lower the reading comprehension of the participants. With regard to the sizes of the observed r , it was concluded that reading attitude per se was not a strong contributor to reading ability considering the fact that all observed coefficients were below .60.

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to determine if there are significant relationships between the level of attitude and motivation of the Iranian EFL learners and their overall reading comprehension ability regarding their disciplines. To discuss the results of data analysis presented, the interpretation of the analysis of the collected data in this study will be elaborated on with respect to the theories and frameworks which focused on the relation between the reading performance and EFL learners' motivation and attitude.

The results showed that there is a relatively high positive correlation between level of motivation and attitude, and students' reading comprehension ability. High motivated learners showed significantly higher reading performance. This suggests that EFL learners' level of motivation and attitude does affect their reading comprehension skill. The findings of the present study are in line with the previous ones showing that readers with a positive attitude and higher motivation toward reading will have higher success in reading comprehension (Fields, 2011; Kayiran & Karabay, 2012; Taboada, Tonks, Wigfield, & Guthrie, 2009).

The interpretation of findings of the present study denotes important information about the Iranian university students' reading motivation and attitude along with their dimensions considering their general English proficiency level and how they relate to their reading comprehension ability regarding their disciplines. The results support the claims as often reported in the literature (Dornyei, 2006; Grabe, 2009; Hairul, Ahmadi & Pourhossein, 2012; Schutte and Malouff, 2007; Morgan & Fuchs, 2007; Cox & Guthrie, 2001 and Ahmadi, HairulNizam & KamarulKabilan, 2013) that generally believed, there is an impact of reading motivation and attitude on the learners' reading comprehension ability. That is, students' motivation and attitude positively affect their readings; it means that students with stronger reading motivation and attitude can be expected to read more in a wider range. The comparison of scores in this study reinforced the idea that motivated students can comprehend the English texts better than non-motivated students. The same scenario was revealed about the students who had higher attitude towards reading. It is evident that these students are more likely encouraged to make educated guesses (Nuttal, 2016), better achievement, solve problems or difficulties while reading the text and also reduce comprehending anxiety. Thus, as Ahmadi, HairulNizam and KamarulKabilan (2013) believed, it can be concluded that considering such reading motivation in teaching curriculum as to be instructed on the regular and disciplined basis could be profitable for the students. In this case, teachers are also encouraged

to consider reading motivation in their regular English classes so that their students might become motivated in a reading comprehension situation.

Although it was revealed that reading attitude components were not significant determinants of reading comprehension scores, all dimensions of reading motivation were statistically significantly correlated with the participants' reported reading comprehension ability, intrinsic goal-related dimensions as Challenge, Curiosity and Involvement, could be considered stronger contributors to the participants' reading comprehension ability in compare with extrinsic goal-related dimensions as Competitive, Grade, Recognition, Social and Compliance. Thus, this finding is in line with what Stanovich, West, Cunningham, Cipelewski, & Siddiqui, 1996; Wang & Guthrie, 2004; Baker & Wigfield, 1999; Coddington & Guthrie, 2009 and Wigfield et al., 2016 found out. They indicated that students who were intrinsically motivated to read have proved that they outperformed their extrinsically motivated peers in reading comprehension.

As expected, work avoidance as another dimension of reading motivation had the weakest contributions to the students' reading comprehension ability. The student who avoids reading-related work is not likely to seek outside reading opportunities. As Paris, Wasik & Turner (1991) suggested, work avoidance may have related consistently to performance because it is the clearest indication of student disengagement; students who score high on this item care little for reading, and so it is not surprising that they perform less well than other students.

This study also found that reading motivation, reading attitude and reading comprehension of the students vary by academic fields. Students of humanities (primary education, social sciences and Persian literature) outperformed those of basic sciences (chemistry, math and biology) in terms of their reading motivation, attitude and also reading comprehension ability. This finding echoes Wang's (2019) argument that students' reading comprehension ability is associated with the nature of the academic fields, such as humanities, emphasizing critical thinking skills. It makes sense that students of humanities had higher level of reading motivation. This finding is also in line with Saraceno's (2019); Anderson, (2015) and Wambach's (1999) results which generally claim that the students' disciplines or disciplinary literacy can significantly affect their reading attitude. Therefore, it was concluded that students of humanities because of their nature of fields of study are usually highly motivated and have more positive attitude to read the texts. Anderson (2015) also found out that the faculty members of humanities usually would more like to promote the reading motivation of students and make students clearly understand the reading expectations which can be very helpful to reading comprehension ability.

Conclusion

The results of the present study suggest that the level of motivation and attitude could strongly contribute to the Iranian EFL learners' overall reading comprehension. Findings of this study support the claim that positive motivation and attitude facilitate students' reading comprehension. Reading comprehension,

seen as the interaction among reader, text, and environment, is such an essential skill that has to be improved and nurtured among learners both in school and in university as well as at home due to its contributing role in academic life and being a prerequisite of a successful learning. Dagget & Hasselbring (2007) considered reading to be an alive and active skill in the new millennium for students or professionals and as the key factor for achieving academic proficiency. Therefore, developing influential reading leads to learning success across the curriculum, higher motivation to read and more constructive attitudes toward learning.

The main goal of this study was to examine whether Iranian students' English reading comprehension motivation and attitude on the different dimensions vary with their disciplines and their reading comprehension. To this aim, a total number of 285 participants from different fields of study, social sciences, Persian literature, primary education, chemistry, biology, and math took part in this study. The Language Proficiency Test, the MRQ, ARQ and the Reading Comprehension Test as the main instruments were administered over a 2-day period.

Data analysis indicated that reading motivation and attitude could have a positive impact on students' reading comprehension. It was also indicated that the students' disciplines play an important role in motivating the students to read and improving their reading comprehension ability consequently. This implied that the students of humanities outperformed those of basic sciences in terms of their reading comprehension ability. Connections between types of motivation (intrinsic vs. extrinsic) and actual reading comprehension had been examined in this research. It was proved that there is a positive correlation between intrinsic motivation and reading comprehension ability. Extrinsic motivation also positively correlated with reading comprehension ability, but generally to a lower average.

Improved reading comprehension is an aspect of learning that cannot be ignored and may lead to even more relationships between learning and motivation. Since reading is a basic and vital part of the learning process at almost every level of education, improved comprehension of what students read must be a major goal of all educators. As Ercetin (2015) mentioned, the high correlation between reading comprehension and reading motivation is an indication of students' motivation towards learning which has an important impact on academic success in general. Educators who are able to tap the wealth of reading motivation in their students, will therefore help those students to reap the rewards of improved comprehension and all that it entails.

In line with previous studies, it can be concluded that motivation directly impacts the development of reading comprehension. As mentioned, there are several components for reading motivation as efficacy, challenge, grade, competition and some more expressed earlier in this research. Therefore, the teachers are expected to know that the learners are motivated in different ways. They need to provide enjoyable classrooms to motivate their learners and raise their confidence, autonomy, and self-stimulation as well. Ahmadi and Mohseni (2017) believed teachers had better notice learners' interests and requirements; for example, provided that learners are extremely interested in material including humor, fun,

enjoyment, and pleasure, they prefer reading for entertainment purposes. This implies that fun has to be integrated to reading instruction. In addition, motivation, as an essential contributor to reading comprehension development, needs to be taken care of through providing appropriate environment which helps them increase their motivation to reading and gain higher language proficiency which is seen as the manifestation of learners knowledge about some areas of language related to teaching and learning such as vocabulary, pronunciation, listening, reading, speaking, writing, and grammar. As mentioned previously, it can be argued that learners' awareness in terms of the important role of motivation in learning and academic performance in general and reading comprehension in particular needs to be raised.

It seems worth mentioning that students' self-efficacy appeared to be particularly important across English language proficiency levels in this study. The reason behind it may refer to this reality that high self-efficacy can increase students' confidence in language learning. As Hamamura, Heine & Paulhus (2008) found, people with lower self-efficacy tend to use a strategy of avoiding failure in achievement situations. In contrast, those with higher self-efficacy are more likely to make efforts to approach success. Self-efficacy is a key factor for reading comprehension across languages.

The findings of this study are fruitful for both teachers and students. Becoming aware of the students' reading motivation will help teachers utilize reading intervention to involve as many students as possible in assigned tasks and alter the course syllabus (if needed) in order to accommodate students' learning. Students can also understand their reading motivation mirrored in this study; therefore, they may better understand how they can become motivated readers.

From the results of this study, it can also be implicated that rather than thinking of students as either high or low motivated learners, it is important to realize that many of them have a mixture of motivational characteristics, some of which may facilitate their engagement in reading and others that could lead them to disengage. Best of all, the findings of this study indicated that motivation is a multifaceted characteristic. That is, students should not be characterized as either motivated or not motivated learners. Instead, they are motivated for different reasons or purposes.

The present study suffers from a number of limitations as, lack of cause-effect relation between variables. That is, the collected data in this study were seen correlationally. Therefore, it is recommended to provide the participants with enough treatment on reading motivation and then find out its impact on their reading comprehension ability. Another limitation with this study is ignoring the role of gender in reading motivation, reading comprehension and English language proficiency. It is also recommended to take the role of gender into account in this regard. Probably female learners and male ones perform differently in reading motivation, reading comprehension and also English language proficiency.

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