



Note. By [StockSnap](#) from [pixabay](#).

# CRITICAL READING

BY ZACH WALKER

FOR EDCI 568  
DISCOURSE ON SOCIAL MEDIA

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

01 Overview of Yang et al. (2024)

02 Three types of help seeker

03 Implications for future practice

04 Personal connection

05 Professional connection

06 Connection to M.Ed Project

07 Additional resources and references

08 Questions

# A QUESTION FOR YOU



menti.com 4702 1469

Where do you go when  
you need help?

Sources of help can include but are not limited to online discussion forums, close friends, instructors, course websites, etc.



Note. By [stanislava](#) from [Getty Images](#)



## An Exploration of How Students Prioritize Help-Seeking Sources in Online Learning Environments

Fan Yang<sup>1</sup> · Xigui Yang<sup>1</sup> · Meimei Xu<sup>1</sup> · Jill Stefaniak<sup>1</sup>

Accepted: 4 March 2024 / Published online: 9 March 2024  
© Association for Educational Communications & Technology 2024

### Abstract

The aim of this study is to analyze how undergraduate learners seek academic help online at a public university in the United States with Q methodology. Upon completion of the study, we identified three groups of help-seekers. The first group, informal and personal help-seekers, sought help from close friends or classmates to solve problems. The second group, formal and impersonal help-seekers, relied on instructors as their primary source of help, followed by instructional materials such as course websites, syllabi, and rubrics. The participants in the third group expressed a significant reluctance to seek help from instructors and preferred alternative options like tutoring centers, search engines, and discussion boards. Contradicting opinions about help-seeking sources existed, with reasons explored. Implications and recommendations for future studies were also discussed.

**Keywords** Online help-seeking · Online learning environment · Q methodology

Note. From An exploration of how students prioritize help-seeking sources in online learning environments by Yang et al., 2024, *TechTrends*, 68(3), 456

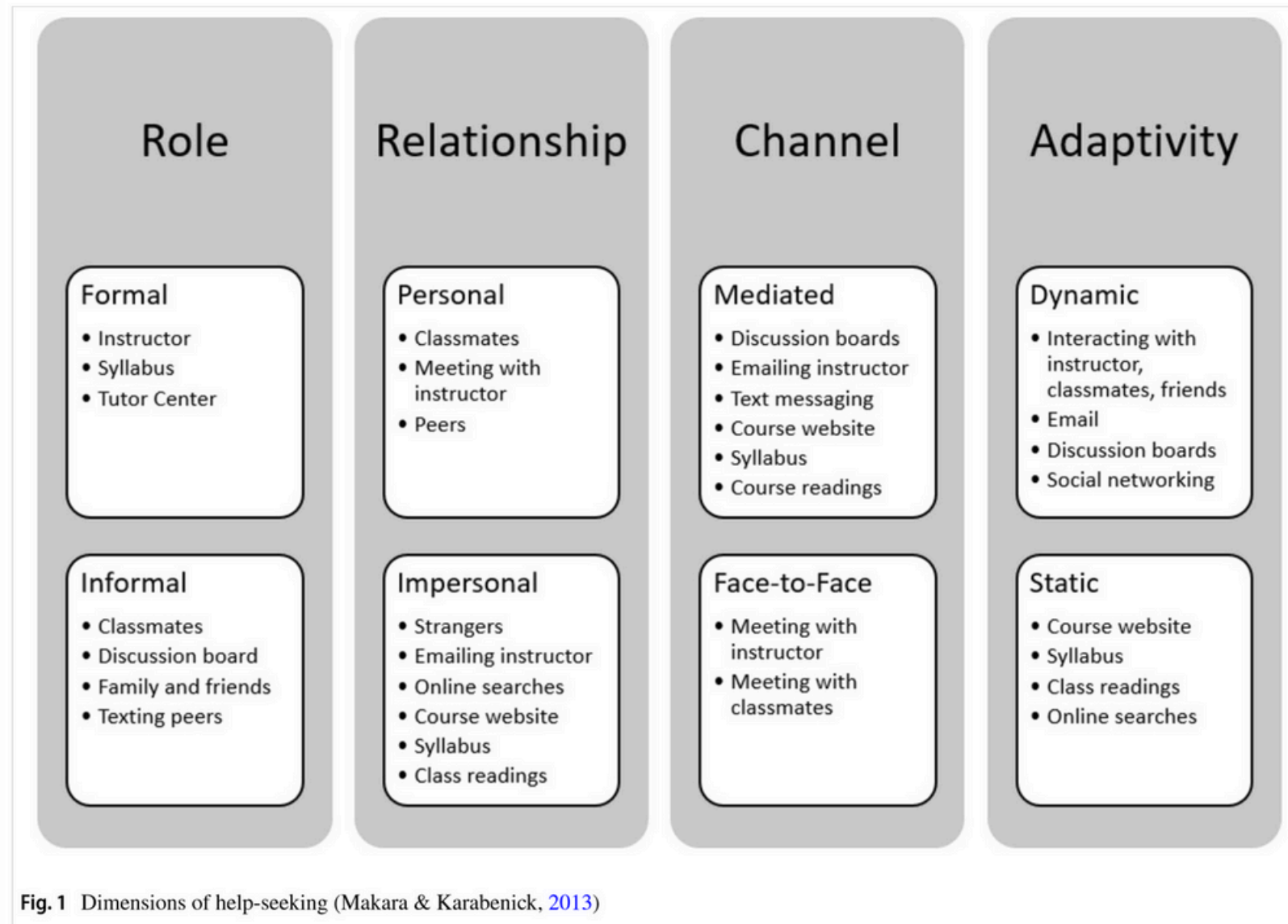
## AN EXPLORATION OF HOW STUDENTS PRIORITIZE HELP-SEEKING SOURCES IN ONLINE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS BY YANG ET AL. (2024)

**Literature:** Students seek help in many ways. Online modality is under-studied as a source for academic help-seeking.

A potential drawback for online learning is a lack of SRL skills in lower achieving students.

A benefit to seeking help online is that it is timely, varied, and accessible.

# DIMENSIONS OF HELP SEEKING



Help-seeking behaviours include:

**Role** - How close is the source to instructional design of the course?

**Relationship** - How do you know the source?

**Channel** - How are you reaching your source?

**Adaptivity** - How does your source change over time?

Note. From Characterizing sources of academic help in the age of expanding education technology: A new conceptual framework by K.A. Makara and S.A. Karabenick, 2013, Advances in help-seeking research and applications: The role of emerging technologies. Information Age Publishing.

# FINDINGS

After conducting a survey of 20 graduate students and applying the Q methodology, Yang et al. (2024) found that students could be grouped into three categories according to their help-seeking behaviours.



Note. By [Mathias Reding](#) from [Pexels](#)

## **Group 1**

Preference for friends

Students in this group prefer to seek help from friends informally

## **Group 2**

Preference for teachers

Learners in this group prefer seeking help from instructors and formal course documents like syllabi

## **Group 3**

Preference for technology

Students in this group prefer to seek help from the internet

# IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE PRACTICE



**01** Educators should provide students with many different avenues to seek help

**02** Students should be given choice when seeking help



# PERSONAL CONNECTION

When I was a student at UVic,  
I relied on two sources

First, on technology

Then, on others.



Note. By [Nima Ahmadzadeh](#) on [Unsplash](#)



# PROFESSIONAL CONNECTION

As a new teacher, I started by helping my students before they needed it

After a few years, I found that not helping my students was more helpful for them



Note. By [Jametlene Reskp](#) on [Unsplash](#)

# CONNECTION TO MY M.ED PROJECT



**Problem:** Low achieving students find it difficult to study asynchronously

**Purpose:** To find strategies to improve self study and implement them in an online learning environment

## Questions

1. What strategies improve self study?
2. Which strategies can be employed online?
3. What elements are important for help seeking to occur in online learning environments?

Note. A Sociogram showing help seeking connections between students from A description of classroom help networks, individual network positions, and their associations with academic achievement by L. Van Rijsewijk et al., 2018, PLOS ONE, 13(12).

# ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Social network interaction and self-regulated learning skills: Community development in online discussions (Yen et al., 2022)

Use of live chat in higher education to support self-regulated help-seeking behaviours: A comparison of online and blended learner perspectives (Broadbent & Lodge, 2021)

Prior achievement in math impacts adolescents' help-seeking behaviour in interactive learning environments (Cohen & Zusho, 2023)

Ethical issues in educational technology (Aydin, 2024)

Building thinking classrooms in mathematics, grades K-12: 14 teaching practices for enhancing learning (Liljedahl, 2021)

# REFERENCES

- Aydin, İ. (2024). Ethical issues in educational technology. *Kastamonu Eğitim Dergisi*, 861–881. <https://doi.org/10.24106/kefdergi.1426735>
- Broadbent, J., & Lodge, J. (2021). Use of live chat in higher education to support self-regulated help seeking behaviours: A comparison of online and blended learner perspectives. *International Journal of Educational Technology in Higher Education*, 18(1), 17. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s41239-021-00253-2>
- Cohen, R. L., & Zusho, A. (2023). Prior achievement in math impacts adolescents' help-seeking behavior in interactive learning environments.
- Liljedahl, P. (2021). *Building thinking classrooms in mathematics, grades K-12: 14 teaching practices for enhancing learning*. Corwin Mathematics.
- Makara, K. A., & Karabenick, S. A. (2013). Characterizing sources of academic help in the age of expanding education technology: A new conceptual framework. In *Advances in help-seeking research and applications: The role of emerging technologies*. Information Age Publishing.
- Yang, F., Yang, X., Xu, M., & Stefaniak, J. (2024). An exploration of how students prioritize help-seeking sources in online learning environments. *TechTrends*, 68(3), 456–468. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11528-024-00944-3>
- Yen, C.-J., Tu, C.-H., Ozkeskin, E. E., Harati, H., & Sujo-Montes, L. (2022). Social network interaction and self-regulated learning skills: Community development in online discussions. *American Journal of Distance Education*, 36(2), 103–120. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08923647.2022.2041330>



Note. By [Hadija](#) on [Unsplash](#)

QUESTIONS?

MENTI