RESEARCH ARTICLE

ASSOCIATION BETWEEN ACADEMIC SELF-EFFICACY, ACADEMIC HELP-SEEKING BEHAVIOUR AND ACHIEVEMENT AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
	This study explored the association between Academic Self-efficacy, Academic Help-seeking Behaviour and student Achievement on a sample of 600 secondary school students. Academic Self-efficacy is a person's belief in his/her ability to succeed in an academic situation. Academic help-seeking behaviour is 'seeking others help' at the time when one faces difficulties or uncertainty in the course of his/her education in classroom. Achievement is the accomplishment or acquired proficiency in the performance of an individual with respect to a given knowledge or skill. In the present study, the variables demonstrated the positive and significant relationship between academic self-efficacy, academic help-seeking behaviour and student achievement. The practical implications and future directions of the study are discussed.

INTRODUCTION

The genesis of the concept of self-regulated learning seems to be as perennial as the evolution of civilization, when human beings, the thinking homo sapiens began to probe into what constitutes the universe; what is the role and purpose of man in life and how can human force contribute to the sustainability and achievement of the destined or proposed goals? Self-regulated learning is "processes in which individuals take the inventiveness, with or without the help of others, in recognizing their learning needs, formulating goals, identifying human and material resources, selecting and executing appropriate learning strategies and evaluating learning outcomes" (Knowls 1975). Self-regulated learning is "an active, constructive process whereby learners set their goals for their learning and then attempt to monitor, regulate and control their cognition, motivation and behaviour, guided and constrained by their goals and the contextual features in the environment" (Pintrich, 2000, p. 453). Zimmerman (1986) asserts that students' self-regulation can be described to the degree that they are active in their own learning process in terms of metacognition, motivation and behaviour. It emerges mostly through students' self generated thoughts, feelings, behaviours and strategies that are oriented towards attaining

goals (Schunk and Zimmerman, 1998) and includes cognitive processes such as attention to instruction, processing and integration of knowledge, information, rehearsal and self-efficacy (Schunk, 1988). "Self-regulatory behaviours include goal setting, environment structuring, time management, help-seeking, self-evaluation, self-efficacy and metacognition. They are all equally important behaviours on the achievement and performance of learners". Academic self-efficacy is gaining augmented credence as a determinant of self-regulated learning. During the past two decades, self-efficacy has come out as a highly effective interpreter of students' motivation and learning. As a performance-based measure of perceived capability, self-efficacy differs theoretically and psychometrically from related motivational constructs, such as outcome expectations, self-concept, or locus of control. Self-efficacy beliefs have been found to be sensitive to slight changes in students' performance context, to interact with self-regulated learning processes, and to mediate students' academic achievement. Academic self-efficacy is found to be significantly associated with students' learning, cognitive engagement, analytical thinking, academic commitment, strategy use, persistence, susceptibility to negative emotions and achievement (Linenbrink and Pintrich, 2003). A relatively new branch of social psychology and motivation has been investigating 'help-seeking'. Knowing when and how to seek help during learning is a key self-regulatory skill (Pintrich,

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2000). Over the last two decades, adaptive help-seeking has been found to be an active strategy that serves as an aid to achieving academic success in the face of difficult or challenging tasks. Help-seeking behaviours are often linked to goal-orientation. Volet and Karabenick (2006) maintained that help-seeking is not an indicative of dependency but rather the opposite; that is, adaptive help-seekers "become less rather than more reliant on others when future difficulties arise". On this account, help-seeking is recognized as a component of self-efficacy, which consists not only of self-regulated learning but also of one's belief that he or she can perform well on a designated task (Pintrich, 2000; Schunk & Ertmer, 2000). The present study seeks to examine the unique contribution of each motivational constructs (mastery and performance goal, academic self-efficacy, academic help-seeking behaviour and achievement) in predicting the educational outcomes in terms of an individual (i.e., a long term educational outcome for an individual's lifelong well-being) and achievement (which is often the major concern for educators and researchers).

Academic Self-Efficacy

It is for the general, global nature that academic self-efficacy was chosen as valuable outcome for education, which is clearly different from specific self-efficacy and often used as a predictor in educational and psychological research. It is a long-term educational outcome that is important for the lifelong wellbeing of an individual. Academic self-efficacy may provide one piece of the enigma to explain the existing breach in academic achievement and degree attainment. The four sources of self-efficacy can have a strong impact on academic self-efficacy beliefs. Lack of mastery experiences, insufficient vicarious learning opportunities, and the absence of verbal persuasion and support from others in society such as teachers, parents, mentors or counselors can influence academic self-efficacy in a negative way. Addition to this, psychological arousal is conjectured to impact academic self-efficacy in both encouraging and unenthusiastic way. On the whole, if an individual had received successful and positive experiences in his past where academic self-efficacy has been elevated and fortified, most probably he or she is going to develop a higher level of expectations, increased level of self-confidence, and improved performance towards academic domain. Based on Bandura's social cognitive theory, a vast number of studies have shown that students' academic self-efficacy is extrapolative to study the behaviour as well as academic outcomes. Academic self-efficacy is stranded in self-efficacy theory (Bandura, 1977).

According to self-efficacy theory, it is an "individual's confidence in their ability to organize and execute a given course of action to solve a problem or accomplish a task". Self-efficacy theory proposes that academic self-efficacy may differ in strength as a function of task difficulty. Some individuals may consider they are most efficacious on difficult tasks, at the same time others only on easier tasks. Moreover, self-efficacy is supposed to be situational in nature rather than being viewed as a stable trait (Linnenbrink & Pintrich, 2002a). Self-efficacy should not be puzzled with self-esteem or self-concept. Self-efficacy is a task-specific evaluation while self-esteem and self-concept replicate more general affective evaluations of self (Linnenbrink & Pintrich, 2002a). Addition of the word *academic* to self-efficacy, researchers unlocked a door to different aspects of learning and teaching process. A similar definition Schunk (1991), Midgley

et al. (2000) uttered "academic self-efficacy as students' perceptions of their competence to do their class work". Altunsoy *et al*. (2010) state that "the notion of academic self-efficacy contains the beliefs about the capabilities to achieve the tasks in certain academic fields". The role of self-efficacy in an information rich world becomes even more important where individuals need to become more empowered for lifelong learning.

Academic Help-Seeking

Education is an intricate activity which covers the involvement of harmonizing factors of the learner's cognitive and affective states. Models and theories are needed to integrate the various cognitive and affective components. Research in cognitive science has provided the means to understand the learning process better; and shown that meta-cognition is a decisive aspect of learning. One of the meta-cognitive strategies that seem to have a great impact in learning is help-seeking. Over the recent decades, the conception of Self regulated learning has flickered considerable interest among researchers involved in education to examine the characteristics of a self-regulated learner. Help-seeking is that adaptive strategy which helps the self-regulated learners to enhance their learning. Help-seeking is that behavioural strategy that can be very helpful for good students and good self-regulators to know when, why and from whom to seek help. Self-regulated learners not only seek help from others, but they do so with the goal of making themselves more independent. By providing an on-going feedback to the students, teachers can promote positive help-seeking behaviours in them so that they can easily understand and use opportunities to resubmit assignments after making suitable changes. When learners face difficulty in solving problems, understanding text material or completing assignments, in that case they can go with the options which include seeking assistance from friends, family members, classmates and teachers as well as for perseverance or abandoning tasks.

Help-seeking is primarily needed in the academic domain, when students experience academic difficulty while doing a task. Students have a choice either to seek out help from helper or keep on working independently. It is frequently in the case of the students that though facing difficulty but will not seek for help and continuously keep on working without achieving success. From this standpoint, seeking help is understood to be an adaptive learning strategy which can be utilized by students who come across to difficulty. Help-seeking is thought to be an important component of SRL (Zimmerman, 2001). The process of help-seeking facilitates the learner in recognizing a difficulty or an error and providing most appropriate strategy to prevail over the problem detected, indicating that the act of help-seeking is a multifaceted phenomenon, extremely dependent upon the: (a) classroom focus; (b) students' perceptions and beliefs; and (c) a teacher's instructional approach and openness and flexibility. When help-seeking behaviours are studied in the classroom, it is called academic help-seeking. Students usually seek help in the classrooms when they have difficulty in learning new-fangled material or completing assignments. They pose questions from the teachers during entire group activity, from peers when doing task in small groups, and from family associates when finishing their home assignments. In instructional contexts, the help-seeking process involves cognitive and emotional challenges that are most often communal and arise from the need for the students constantly to learn more difficult

curricular material. Therefore, it is significant to recognize the process and the factors that manipulate whether students ask for help or not, as well as responses to such requests, which can settle on the students to carry on their struggle or get ultimately success.

Help-seeking and self-efficacy

There is one motivational construct which is linked with academic help-seeking that deals with students' beliefs about their own academic abilities, or self-efficacy beliefs. A mixed results or findings have come into existence on the relationship between students' self-efficacy beliefs and their help-seeking and revealed that students having low self-efficacy are unlikely to seek help because fear of failure makes it difficult for them to uphold an impression of competence. Some findings have revealed that students with low self-efficacy takes less initiative and ask less questions and seek less help all through their schooling compared to students having high self-efficacy. Also reported that students with low self-efficacy feel more endangered when seeking help; they have poor approach about seeking help, not able to judge the benefits of help-seeking, avoid help-seeking, and ask more pointless questions than do students with high self-efficacy. Confident students are more expected to seek help when they need it. In academic motivational research, self-concept is considered to be an evaluative judgment for giving a right value of one's self-worth on the other, self-efficacy provides the judgments of confidence that one has in his academic abilities.

Achievement

Achievement has always been a vital point and heart of the educational research, regardless of having different statements about the aims of education. Academic development of the learner is the first and foremost concern and also the most important goal of education. It does not mean that other aspects of educational objectives are to be overlooked but the fact is that academic achievement is the sole responsibility of all educational institutions to promote a nutritious scholastic development of the learners. According to Good (1976) The term 'achievement' is defined as "accomplishment or proficiency of performance in a given skill or body of knowledge attained or developed in school subjects usually developed in students by the teachers for a specified level of proficiency in a scholastic or academic work". Thus, achievement is the task-oriented behaviour that gives consent to an individual's performance to be evaluated according to some internally and externally imposed phenomenon. Academic achievement is considered as a key criterion to judge one's total potentialities and capacities. Hence, it occupies a very important place in education as well as in the learning process. Achievement implies an attainment, a proficiency gained or an ability required. In the field of education an achievement is the amount of knowledge or skills that a child has learnt in a particular field or subject (Kumar, 2013). In short, achievement refers to the level of proficiency achieved in an academic work so as to get formally acquainted with the knowledge in school subjects which is determined by the grades, or marks students are getting in their examination.

Objectives of the Study

- To study the relationship between academic self-efficacy and academic help-seeking behaviour of secondary school students.

- To study the relationship between academic self-efficacy and achievement of secondary school students.
- To study the relationship between academic help-seeking behaviour and achievement of secondary school students.

Hypotheses of the Study

- There exists no significant relationship between academic self-efficacy and academic help-seeking behaviour of secondary school students.
- There exists no significant relationship between academic self-efficacy and achievement of secondary school students.
- There exists no significant relationship between academic help-seeking behaviour and achievement of secondary school students.

Research Design and Methodology

- **Variables-** Academic self-efficacy, academic help-seeking behaviour and achievement
- **Method-** Descriptive Survey Method was used.
- **Sample-** In the present study, a sample of 600 secondary school students of class X from government and private schools of Faridabad district was taken.
- **Research Instruments-** In the present study, Academic self-efficacy questionnaire by Muris (2001) and Academic Help-seeking Scale adapted by Winograd (2014) and achievement scores of previous class were used for data collection.

Procedure for Data collection

The research instruments were administered on the subjects personally by the researcher herself. The respondents were informed that the information given by them would be kept confidential and would be used for research purpose only. They were asked to follow the instructions given on each questionnaire. They took about 30 minutes to fill the questionnaires. The sheets were collected back on the spot. Pearson correlation coefficient was used to interpret and analyze the data.

RESULTS

Given the current data, the correlation of academic self-efficacy, academic help-seeking behaviour and achievement was found positively correlated. The analysis of each correlation is presented below.

Correlation between Academic Self-Efficacy and Academic Help-seeking of secondary school students

Sr. No.	Variable	N	Mean	Coefficient of correlation
1	Academic Self-Efficacy	600	20.77	
2	Academic Help-seeking	600	14.29	.135**

*** Significant at 0.01 level*

The table shows that academic self-efficacy and academic help-seeking behaviour of secondary school students are positively and significantly correlated to each other. It shows that students with efficacious beliefs tend to manifest help-seeking behaviour. Self-efficacy is positively related to help-

seeking behaviour. It reveals that students with low self-efficacy are more likely to use help-seeking strategies.

Correlation between Academic Self-Efficacy and Achievement of secondary school students

Sr. No.	Variable	N	Mean	Coefficient of correlation
1	Academic Self-Efficacy	600	20.77	0.22**
2	Achievement	600	71.30	

** Significant at 0.01 level

The table shows that academic self-efficacy and achievement of secondary school students are positively and significantly correlated to each other. Self-efficacy is a reliable predictor of student's academic performance. Self efficacy predicts intellectual performance better than skills alone and it directly influences achievement through cognition.

Correlation between Academic Help-seeking behaviour and Achievement of secondary school students

S. No.	Variable	N	Mean	Coefficient of correlation
1	Academic Help-seeking Behaviour	600	14.29	0.27**
2	Achievement	600	71.30	

** Significant at 0.01 level

The table shows that academic help-seeking behaviour and achievement of secondary school students are positively and significantly correlated to each other. Help seeking is an active strategy that serves as an aid to achieving academic success in the face of difficult or challenging tasks.

Educational Implications of the Study

In the light of the above, the findings of the present investigation were examined and following implications are traced out:

- The findings of the study have implications for the educators. To understand the academic behaviour of the students, educators must begin by understanding what motivates students to engage in such behaviors. Teachers do well to take seriously their share of responsibility in nurturing the self-efficacy beliefs of their pupils, for it is clear that these beliefs can have beneficial or destructive influences. When students faced with feelings of failure, teachers need to engage them in active help seeking aimed at building their efficacy beliefs through mastery experiences or observing peers.

- The students can also be benefitted from the study. Self-efficacy plays an important role in the way students engage in the material to be learned and their achievement in school. Students who have positive and relatively high self-efficacy beliefs will be more likely to be engaged in the classroom in terms of their behavior, cognition, and motivation. The findings have a number of implications for providing help and effective advising to students, especially for those students who are in the initial years of their academic studies, who may be experiencing academic difficulties, or who may be taking a limited, outcome-oriented approach to their educational decisions.

- Guidance workers can encourage teachers to initiate and develop activities that are sensitive to the diversity of students which can help in fostering healthy traits among the students. They can also play a role in enhancing the self confidence of students, and allow them to refocus on an ability to try again finding alternative means to accomplish the goals.

- The present study also has implications for parent community. Children develop confidence in many ways, and those who are confident about their skills are more likely to engage in a variety of activities. The parents can encourage them to compete with themselves. They should provide confidence-building feedback. The way parents compliment children also has an impact on how successfully they perceive themselves. They can guide them in a proper and goal oriented direction with a belief of having all capabilities and confidence by promoting positive help-seeking behaviour with on-going progress feedback.

Conclusion

From this study, it can be concluded that self-efficacy helps the students to understand their goals by providing appropriate motivation and encouragement to lead further by having beliefs in themselves. Academic help-seeking behaviour also plays an effective role in taking decision about the importance of help-seeking. When an individual moves towards a goal, he definitely needs a helping hand to guide him in a proper way that is the role help-seeking plays. In the last, all the variables studied here is becoming that aspect for oneself which cannot be neglected and take an individual in a right way with a proper track.

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