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Expectancy, Value, and the Rise of GenAI: Understanding Academic Help-Seeking in a Changing Education Landscape

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ABSTRACT

BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

Academic help-seeking is essential for STEM student success, with source selection playing a key role. Traditional formal and informal sources are well-researched, however, the rapid adoption of generative AI (GenAI) tools among students is reshaping this landscape. GenAI's use is increasingly studied, still, its integration into students' broader help-seeking strategies and its potential to complement or replace traditional sources remain underexplored.

PURPOSE OR GOAL

This study investigates how STEM students select and use help sources in daily learning, with a focus on GenAI. It aims to understand students' source preferences and multi-source strategies with GenAI, and provide insights into evolving trends in this landscape.

APPROACH OR METHODOLOGY

A mixed-methods approach with a convergent design was adopted, combining survey responses (N = 52) and semi-structured interviews (N = 7) with postgraduate students in computing and information systems. Quantitative data identified source preferences, while qualitative data revealed students' motivation, using the Expectancy-Value Source Selection Model as an interpretive lens.

OUTCOMES

Online class materials were students' most preferred source, followed by GenAI tools. Two main multi-source strategies identified: 1) informal-to-formal verification; and (2) formal-to-informal expansion. The rising role of GenAI was evident. Major concerns include surface-level learning and a decline in social learning.

CONCLUSIONS

This study shows GenAI tools as a powerful transformative force, likely to become a dominant academic help resource, even integrated into formal education. Practically, it calls for educators to promote AI literacy to ensure deep learning.

KEYWORDS

Academic help-seeking, source selection, multi-source strategies, GenAI tools.

Introduction

In higher education, particularly within Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) disciplines, students frequently encounter complex academic challenges that require not only strong discipline knowledge and advanced problem-solving skills but also high adaptability to evolving tools and learning environments. One critical strategy for managing these demands is academic help-seeking, a self-regulated learning process where students identify knowledge gaps and actively seek support to improve their understanding and performance (Li et al., 2023). By engaging in this strategic process, students not only improve their immediate academic outcomes but also gradually develop independent learning skills, which are essential for long-term academic and professional success.

Recently, Generative AI (GenAI) tools such as ChatGPT have emerged as a new and increasingly accessible form of personalised academic support. Multiple research studies suggest that these tools can help students with a wide range of learning tasks, such as brainstorming, writing assistance, code generation, and concept explanation (Chan & Hu, 2023; Skripchuk et al., 2024). Their increasing popularity raises important questions about how students are integrating them into their academic help-seeking behaviours, especially in STEM fields, where understanding intricate concepts and applying them effectively is crucial.

While academic help-seeking is a well-established area of research, much of the existing literature predates the GenAI era and does not account for these new dynamics (Li et al., 2023). Moreover, most recent GenAI-related studies tend to treat these tools as standalone learning aids (Batista et al., 2024). Although a few studies have begun to explore how STEM students use GenAI to supplement existing help sources, whether replacing them entirely or integrating these tools into the overall help-seeking strategies, the findings remain limited and often inconclusive (Hou et al., 2024; Zhang & Yang, 2025). As GenAI rapidly evolves, students' help-seeking behaviour is adapting to take advantage of the new features it offers. In response to these shifts, this study seeks to answer the following research questions:

1. How do students in STEM disciplines prioritise help sources in today's evolving academic help-seeking landscape, particularly with the integration of GenAI tools?

2. In what ways do STEM students use GenAI alongside or in place of other academic help sources, and what are the crucial underlying reasons?

This study aims to present a holistic perspective on STEM students' academic help-seeking in the latest AI landscape, potentially extending existing models of source selection and providing timely insights about the evolving trend to inform future educational practices.

Literature Review

Academic help-seeking is a crucial self-regulated learning strategy in which students actively seek assistance from other individuals or sources to overcome academic challenges (Li et al., 2023). Since encountering academic difficulties is a natural and recurring part of the learning process, help-seeking plays an essential role in students' academic development (Wirtz et al., 2018). Conceptually, academic help-seeking can be understood as a multi-stage process involving the recognition of a knowledge gap, evaluation of the need for assistance, identification of the goal for seeking help, selection of appropriate sources, and application of the support received (Giblin et al., 2021). While each stage contributes to a meaningful help-seeking experience, source selection plays a particularly essential role. This step requires students to evaluate the distinct trade-offs of different sources and to formulate effective help requests (Hou et al., 2024).

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A common lens for understanding students' help-seeking is the distinction between formal and informal sources (Li et al., 2023). Formal sources, such as instructors and institutional support, provide reliable, course-aligned help, but often require more time or social effort (Yang et al., 2024). Informal sources, such as search engines and peers, are more accessible and anonymous. However, their lack of institutional quality control can negatively impact learning outcomes, particularly when they provide ready-made solutions that allow students to bypass cognitive engagement, leading to surface-level learning focused solely on task completion (Chen et al., 2025). Although students value both quality and accessibility, they tend to favour low-effort, easily available options, especially online tools (Ko & Stephens-Martinez, 2025). This efficiency-quality trade-off contributes to a tiered help-seeking pattern, where students start with low-effort, low-utility sources and turn to higher-quality, less accessible ones only if needed (Doebling & Kazerouni, 2021). Likewise, Wirtz et al. (2018), also showed that students tend to exhaust informal or digital sources before turning to instructors as a last resort. Beyond quality and accessibility, factors such as perceived reciprocity, the channel through which help is delivered (mediated or face-to-face), and the adaptability of the source (dynamic or static) also influence source selection (Giblin et al., 2021; Makara & Karabenick, 2013).

The recent and rapid proliferation of GenAI tools, has introduced a new, powerful form of informal academic support, offering immediate, adaptive assistance that aligns with students' preference for quick, accessible support (Hou et al., 2024; Ko & Stephens-Martinez, 2025; Uddin et al., 2024). More importantly, many students perceive them positively due to their ability to generate coherent, context-aware responses in a conversational format, giving the impression of useful and intelligent feedback (Chen et al., 2025). This perceived alignment between students' preferences and GenAI's affordances makes it a naturally appealing option. However, as an emerging and still understudied source of academic support, researchers have cautioned that its ease of use may encourage shallow engagement with learning tasks, uncritical acceptance of potentially inaccurate information, and overreliance (Zhai et al., 2024).

While recent studies have begun to examine students' use of GenAI tools for academic purposes, these investigations have largely treated GenAI as an isolated support tool, without sufficiently considering its role alongside, or in competition with, other traditional sources (Adams et al., 2024; Holland & Ciachir, 2025; Uddin et al., 2024; Youssef et al., 2024). To date, only a few studies have directly compared GenAI tools such as ChatGPT with other help sources, particularly web search, and their findings present a mixed picture, requiring further investigation. For example, Hou et al. (2024) and Skripchuk et al. (2024) suggest a strong preference for search engines over GenAI, attributing this to the perceived quality and justifiability of information, given that search engine outputs can be traced to credible sources and substantiated as evidence-based. In contrast, Zhang and Yang (2025) found that students marginally prefer ChatGPT (51.7%) over search engines (48.3%) for academic help, primarily due to its perceived efficiency. These differing observations might be attributable to the rapid improvement of GenAI tools and the evolving student familiarity with GenAI tools over time. Overall, they indicate that students are actively exploring GenAI and shifting their help-seeking preferences. Consequently, a critical gap still exists in capturing this evolving trend and comprehensively understanding how and why STEM students are integrating GenAI into their broader help-seeking ecosystems.

To explain students' academic source selection process, Makara and Karabenick (2013) proposed the Expectancy-Value Model of Help Source Selection. This model posits that source selection decisions are multiplicatively determined by two key factors: students' expectations that meaningful help will be provided and the perceived usefulness for meeting academic goals weighed against the perceived costs (e.g., time, effort, potential social or academic risk). Furthermore, it acknowledges that students' prior experiences with a help source influence their assessment of a source.

Methodology

This study employed a mixed-methods approach with a convergent design, guided by a pragmatic paradigm. Pragmatism was deemed suitable as the focus was on gaining practical insights into the real-world phenomenon of student source selection (Clarke & Visser, 2019). This mixed-methods design was chosen to capture the multifaceted nature of help-seeking, which includes both observable behavioural patterns and the underlying personal motivations that drive them (Mitchell, 2018). Specifically, the quantitative strand (survey) aimed to identify broader trends in source prioritisation (RQ1), while the qualitative strand (interviews) offered rich, in-depth insights into how and why students use various sources, including GenAI (RQ2). A convergent design was employed, with the quantitative and qualitative data collected concurrently within the same timeframe (September to October 2024). This approach ensured a synchronised snapshot of student experiences, which was important given the rapidly evolving context of GenAI. The data from both strands were analysed separately and subsequently merged, where the survey data provided context for qualitative themes, to develop an in-depth understanding of the students' choices and preferences. The target population was postgraduate computing and information systems (CIS) students at a leading Australian university. Ethical approval was obtained (Approval ID: 20833).

Quantitative Strand (Survey): Participants were recruited through a form of convenience sampling. Invitations to complete the online survey were distributed by approaching coordinators of CIS subjects and requesting them to post the invitation link within their respective subject communication channels. Additionally, invitations were shared through direct contact with some students known to the researchers. Out of approximately 600 students potentially reached through these subjects, 52 responses were received. All 52 responses were deemed complete and valid for analysis.

Qualitative Strand (Interviews): Participants for the semi-structured interviews were recruited using purposive sampling in stages. Initially, five postgraduate students pursuing Master's degrees in CIS were recruited from volunteers. Subsequently, to explore the potential variation of themes across different academic disciplines, two postgraduate students pursuing master's degrees in business management were purposefully recruited. Although the study primarily focused on the CIS context, these additional interviews were conducted to provide a limited comparative perspective. This helped assess whether themes identified among CIS participants were discipline-specific or indicative of broader trends across the university student population. Our analysis of the interview data from these two business students revealed a notable convergence in their help-seeking strategies described and the primary themes that emerged from their experiences. This resulted in a total of seven interview participants. All seven participants had prior experience using AI tools for academic purposes, such as coding and study assistance. Age and gender information were not disclosed by participants. Each interview lasted approximately 45 minutes. Recruitment was concluded at seven participants as thematic saturation was found to have been reached.

Instruments: Data collection was guided by a common list of eight academic help sources, as summarised in Table 1. It was developed based on the multidimensional framework of helping sources proposed by Makara and Karabenick (2013) and further shaped by the expanded set of technology-based sources identified by Hou et al. (2024). This list served as a shared baseline to facilitate focused discussion and ensure participants considered a consistent range of key resource types in both the survey and interviews.

Table 1: Eight common academic help sources

Source Name	Type	Medium	Description
Online class materials	Formal	Digital	Class materials in the Learning Management System (e.g., textbook, readings, lecture slides, and tutorial worksheets)
Instructors	Formal	Interpersonal	Sending emails or posting a question online to the instructors

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University online library	Formal	Digital	Online library (e.g., online databases of the university)
Peers	Informal	Interpersonal	Contacting peers/friends/classmates
Search engines	Informal	Digital	Searching through online search engines (e.g., Google, Wikipedia)
Online educational content	Informal	Digital	Searching for educational content on online platforms (e.g., YouTube, Coursera, Khan Academy)
GenAI tools	Informal	Digital	Using Generative AI Tools (e.g., ChatGPT)
Non-university online forums	Informal	Digital	Discussion in the online non-university communities (e.g., Reddit, Quora)

The relevance and clarity of the source list and associated survey and interview questions were piloted through an expert review conducted by two CIS educational specialists.

Online survey: Administered using Qualtrics, the survey was designed to collect data related to students' help-seeking preferences and experiences. Questions were informed by Giblin et al.'s (2021) academic source selection framework and tailored to the specific context of GenAI integration. It asked participants to rank their preference for eight pre-defined help source options. Further questions investigated the frequency and combination of formal or informal source usage. Survey data were analysed using descriptive statistics, including cumulative counts for top rankings and percentages for categorical responses.

Semi-structured Interviews: An interview guide was used to explore students' help-seeking processes, source choices for various academic tasks, and reasons for preferring or avoiding specific sources, incorporating the list of eight source options as discussion prompts. Key guiding questions were "Can you explain the reasoning behind your preference ranking?" and "What factors discourage you from selecting a particular resource for help?" All interviews were audio-recorded and then transcribed for analysis. Interview transcripts were analysed using Reflexive Thematic Analysis (RTA) inductively (Braun & Clarke, 2012). The analysis focused on identifying semantic themes directly related to participants' expressed experiences and perceptions of source selection. The recommended six-step process was followed. Subsequently, to deepen the interpretation of these inductively derived themes, Makara and Karabenick's (2013) Expectancy-Value Source Selection Model was employed as a theoretical framework to analyse students' help-seeking choices. In practice, this analysis was iterative, with intervening time gaps, facilitated critical researcher reflection on analytical assumptions and decisions.

Finding

This section presents survey and interview findings, offering an integrated view of students' source preferences and GenAI use in academic help-seeking.

Theme 1: Dominance of Digital Resources Over Interpersonal Support

Theme 1.1 Online Class Materials: The Leading Formal Digital Source

Overall, online class materials were the most consistently preferred source among the survey respondents. This trend is illustrated in Figure 1, where stacked bar charts display the number of respondents who assigned each rank (from Rank 1 = most preferred, to Rank 8 = least preferred) to the various help sources. For instance, 26 out of 52 respondents (50%) chose online class materials as their most preferred source, and a significant 47 out of 52 respondents (90%) placed this option within their top three preferences.

Qualitative interview findings reveal why students often prioritise online class materials as a help source. Participants described them as "direct," "credible," and "authoritative," reflecting their formal status and alignment with assessment expectations. Many preferred to consult

these materials first, viewing them as “key messages” from instructors and essential for doing well in assignments.

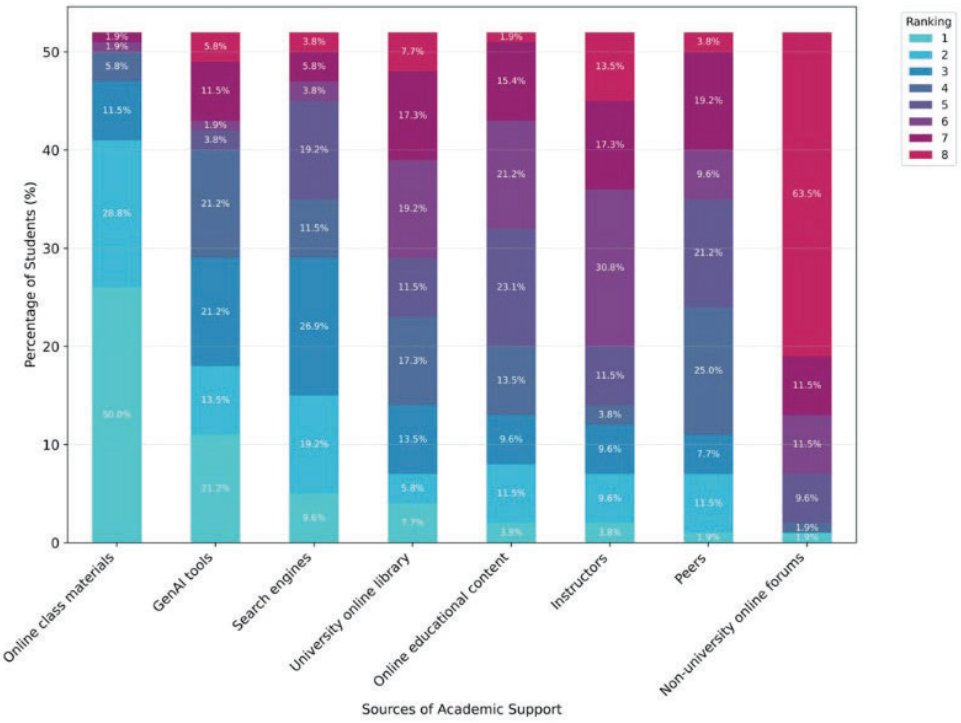


Figure 1: Stacked bar charts of students’ ranking of preferred help-seeking sources

However, students who did not prioritise online class materials cited concerns about clarity and efficiency. Some found the content too brief or lacking elaboration, while others noted that revisiting extensive readings was too time-consuming. As one participant put it:

> *[Class materials] provided by the university include a huge amount of content. It takes a lot of time to go through... But when you’re seeking help, that’s usually when you’re already feeling frustrated. If it takes too long or wastes a large chunk of your time, it just makes the situation worse. [P3, Major in Human Computer Interaction]*

These findings highlight a trade-off: while online class materials are valued for their authority and relevance, their actual usefulness depends on factors such as content clarity, elaboration, and time demands. Thus, their effectiveness in providing academic help varies depending on student learning needs and task requirements.

Theme 1.2 Rise of GenAI: Balancing Efficiency with Reliability Concerns in Informal Support

Following online class materials, GenAI tools and search engines were commonly ranked among students’ top help sources. As shown in Figure 1, GenAI tools were preferred at the top 1 level, but in the top 3, both sources were equally ranked, and in the top 6, search engines slightly overtook GenAI. Interview findings clarify this pattern. Students praised GenAI tools (e.g., ChatGPT) for their efficiency and directness, noting that they provide immediate answers without requiring users to sift through multiple websites. One participant explained: “It will directly give you the exact answer… but if you search it on a browser, you need extra steps.” [P5, Major in Human Computer Interaction] Others valued GenAI’s comprehensiveness and convenience, especially for unfamiliar tasks: “AI is the most helpful one… AI saves you a large amount of time.” [P3, Major in Human Computer Interaction]

However, concerns about accuracy were mentioned by all participants. Participants noted that GenAI tools can be unreliable or fabricate information: “It has some illusions… you always need to double-check the content.” [P7, Major in AI] These concerns likely explain the shift

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toward search engines at broader preference levels, as students seek more verifiable sources when accuracy becomes crucial.

Theme 1.3 Perceived Social Cost: Barriers to Instructor and Peer Assistance

The two interpersonal help sources, instructors and peers, were rarely selected as a top-ranked source, with only 23% of respondents ranking instructors and 21% ranking peers within their top three preferences (Figure 1). Interview findings illustrate the nature of this low engagement. Students expressed reluctance to contact instructors due to delays and formality, noting that replies take time and emails require a careful tone: “You have to wait until they reply... you have to format your language very politely and formally.” [P4, Major in Computing] Instructors were also viewed as a limited, shared resource, used only after exhausting other options: “I want to make sure that I did all I could before I request a public resource.” [P3, Major in Human Computer Interaction] Peer support was avoided primarily due to academic integrity concerns: “Maybe we will have some overlap in our ideas that may cause plagiarism.” [P4, Major in Computing] These insights suggest that the low preference for human help sources stems from social and academic misconduct concerns, including perceived inaccessibility, formality, and fear of misconduct.

Theme 2: Layered Multi-Source Approaches to Academic Challenges

Theme 2.1: Strategic Sourcing: Starting Informally, Verifying Formally

Survey data showed that 71% of respondents reported either always or frequently using both formal and informal sources to solve a single academic issue, as shown in Figure 2. Interview data further illustrates this complementary use of sources. As shown in Theme 1, each highly preferred source offered unique strengths but also came with notable limitations. A shared desire to maximise help-seeking outcomes was observed among participants, reflected in the statement: “Explore multiple sources is a good way to validate answers.” [P2, Major in AI] One key strategic approach involved initially consulting informal sources and subsequently verifying information with formal ones. Participants described turning first to informal sources, especially GenAI tools, when tackling practical challenges or feeling overwhelmed, as one articulated:

> *Because I am exploring from [nothing to something that is workable], it is very confusing, but AI saves me a lot of time. [The AI-generated solution] is sometimes not accurate, but it at least tells you how to do it. [P3, Major in Human Computer Interaction]*

Crucially, this reliance on GenAI tools was often accompanied by an awareness of their potential credibility issues, leading them to actively employ additional, typically formal, sources for verification. As another participant detailed the process:

> *ChatGPT is good at generating initial ideas, but it's not that reliable ... I sometimes have very vague and broad ideas, so I ask ChatGPT to suggest narrower topics I could focus on... Once I have a clear hypothesis, I consult formal resources to validate it. [P5, Major in Human Computer Interaction]*

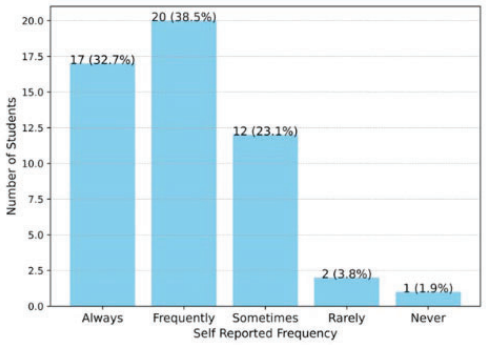


Figure 2: Bar chart of student-reported frequency of combined use of formal and informal sources during a single help-seeking attempt

Theme 2.2: Strategic Sourcing: Starting Formally, Expanding Informally

In a contrasting strategic approach, participants often begin with formal help sources, typically online class materials, when clear, credible direction, particularly related to assessments, is important. As one participant explained this initial preference for formal guidance:

> *I will first look at the rubric and the requirements of this assignment. And if I need to study more, I will go through the lecture slides myself. [P4, Major in Computing]*

Another participant noted that class materials provide "a big structure, a big outline of what is expected," [P5, Major in Human Computer Interaction] reinforcing their value as an authoritative source of subject requirements. However, participants also noted that these resources primarily offer a general outline. When deeper understanding and more insights were required, they found that "class materials cannot support us with help like that," [P7, Major in AI] and thus would often turn to other sources, typically informal ones, for further elaboration.

Discussion

This study examined how STEM students navigate academic help-seeking in the GenAI era, using the Expectancy-Value Source Selection Model (EVSSM) (Makara & Karabenick, 2013). According to EVSSM, students select help sources based on ease of access and understanding (expectancy), perceived usefulness, and associated costs such as effort or social discomfort.

Digital Resources Dominate, but Trade-offs Persist: Our findings reveal a clear hierarchy in students' help source preferences shaped by EVSSM. Most students identified online class materials as their first point of reference when encountering difficulties, aligning with Wirtz et al. (2018), due to their direct relevance to assessments and authoritative nature, making them seem like the most direct path to academic success. However, they are criticised for being time-consuming, lacking elaboration, and requiring significant effort to interpret. A significant observation is the continued rise of GenAI tools, now rivalling or surpassing search engines. Our findings on this align with Zhang and Yang (2025), who also found a marginal preference for ChatGPT (51.7%) over Google (48.3%). This marks a shift from earlier studies that showed a strong preference for search engines (Hou et al., 2024; Skripchuk et al., 2024). Our participants praised GenAI for its low access effort, clarity, and usefulness in brainstorming, quick explanations, and simplifying unfamiliar tasks. However, concerns about inaccuracy and "hallucinations" undermined trust and required extra effort to verify answers. This mirrors the dual-edged nature of GenAI within the education context, which is largely debated in the literature (Kasneci et al., 2023). Conversely, interpersonal sources like instructors and peers were less frequently prioritised. While the perceived usefulness of instructors as a source of help is high (expert, tailored help potentially leading to deep understanding), their perceived accessibility is low, and the costs are also significant, due to social stress and effort. This raises serious concerns that students are increasingly moving away from social learning, including collaboration and communication with instructors and peers, which are essential for developing critical thinking, emotional intelligence, and important people skills.

Layered Multi-Source Strategies: Our findings, analysed through the EVSSM lens, demonstrate that students perceive distinct strengths and weaknesses for each help source. Hence, they employ two key layered, multi-source strategies to navigate these trade-offs and obtain the perceived optimal help from them: (1) informal-to-formal verification and (2) formal-to-informal expansion. This expands on prior research showing that students typically begin with low-effort, lower-utility resources and escalate to more effortful, higher-utility options as needed (Doebling & Kazerouni, 2021; Wirtz et al., 2018). Notably, GenAI tools were frequently mentioned in both approaches. When students begin with informal sources, GenAI is often used as an effective early-stage brainstorming tool. Conversely, when students start with an accessible formal source, GenAI serves as a supplementary aid to refine or elaborate their developing understanding. This reliance on multi-source strategies suggests that current

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resources, in isolation, may not consistently provide the optimal balance of high-quality, personalised, and easily accessible support that students seek.

GenAI as a Potentially Disruptive Force: As GenAI tools evolve, improving in search integration, information refinement through interaction, and alignment with specific academic subjects, their potential to transform academic help-seeking grows. Current limitations, like inaccuracy and weak web search, may diminish, while core strengths, including accessibility, direct responses, and personalised support, remain hard to replicate by other help sources. Students already use GenAI in ways that bridge formal and informal support, and institutions are starting to adopt AI chatbots trained on class materials to deliver more reliable and personalized assistance. As GenAI improves, it may surpass search engines and dominate informal help-seeking practices, signalling a case of disruptive innovation. However, GenAI is unlikely to replace human support in the near term, as summarised in Table 2. Teachers make key decisions about instruction and assessment and offer official guidance. While GenAI may supplement or disrupt existing digital sources, instructors' help should remain essential.

Table 2: Expectancy-value assessment of key help sources and GenAI replacement potential

Help Source	Expectancy (Access + Effort)	Perceived Usefulness (Fit with academic goals) against Cost	GenAI Replacement Potential (As it continues to improve)
Online class material	**Low** access effort, but **moderate to high** effort to interpret	**High** alignment with course objectives; may **lack** elaboration or adaptability	**Moderate**: GenAI (e.g., chatbots) trained on class materials begins to be adopted by institutions
Instructors	**High** access effort (requires scheduling, potential social stress)	**High** (professional, tailored help)	**Low**: GenAI is unlikely to replicate instructors' professional role and subject expertise
Search engines	**Low** effort to access, **moderate to high** effort to find relevant information	**Varies** (require effort to confirm relevancy and accuracy)	**Moderate to High:** GenAI is rapidly improving its web search capability and accuracy

Conclusion

Our study offers an in-depth examination of how STEM students select and use different academic sources through the lens of the Expectancy-Value Source Selection Model (EVSSM), and sheds light on the evolving role of GenAI in students' help-seeking trajectories. This study contributes by contextualising the mixed preferences students show toward GenAI. This ambivalence appears to be a key indicator of a transitional phase. The phase is characterised by the rapid adoption of the technology, its ongoing improvement, and students' continued exploration of its potential.

Another key contribution is the identification of two distinct layered multi-source help-seeking strategies: (1) informal-to-formal verification and (2) formal-to-informal expansion, with GenAI notably embedded in both strategies. These findings extend prior work by offering a more nuanced understanding of how students adaptively integrate multiple sources to optimise help-seeking outcomes. Crucially, this research demonstrates the application of EVSSM, showing how students' help source choices are intricately shaped by the unique affordances and perceived costs of GenAI alongside more traditional resources.

Our findings crystallise GenAI's role as a transformative and potentially disruptive force, both powerful and risky, in academic help-seeking. The current findings illustrate the continued rise of GenAI as a preferred help source. Given its rapid advancements in capability, accessibility, and integration, GenAI is expected to further solidify its position and potentially become the dominant informal help source for many students. Educators must proactively respond to this dynamic shift by fostering responsible GenAI use and equipping students with essential AI literacy skills such as prompt engineering, critical evaluation, and source triangulation. These

competencies are vital to prevent the so-called “shortcut-through-a-maze” effect, where students seek quick answers but bypass the cognitive effort necessary for deep understanding and robust problem-solving skills.

While this study offers valuable insights, several limitations should be acknowledged. Firstly, since our study focused on students’ daily learning activities, it did not seek insights into the characteristics of specific academic tasks. Secondly, the survey was conducted using a convenience sample of postgraduate CIS students from a single Australian university, which limits the generalisability of the findings to broader student populations across different disciplines, academic levels, or geographic regions. The scope of transferability of the qualitative themes should also be considered with caution. Future research should aim to validate these findings using larger, more diverse samples and incorporate additional methods, such as behavioural data or longitudinal designs, to capture the evolving role of GenAI and deepen our understanding in different academic contexts.

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