



# Objective and Subjective Help Seeking Behaviors in Children

Alisha J. Silkey, Michelle Shields, Diana Selmeczy

Department of Psychology  
*University of Colorado Colorado Springs*



## Background

- Help-seeking is a multi-faceted process in which an individual must make decisions about whether to ask for help, what type of help to ask for, and who to seek help from (Karabenick & Newman, 2006).
- Previous research has used objective measures of help-seeking during a cognitive task (Huet et al., 2011) while other research has used subjective self-reports of help-seeking through questionnaires (Karabenick & Knapp, 1991).
- The purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between objective measures of help-seeking measured during a memory task and self-reported help-seeking measured through a questionnaire.
- We predicted that there would be a small to moderate relationship between children’s self-report of their help-seeking behaviors and the objective measure of help-seeking during the task.

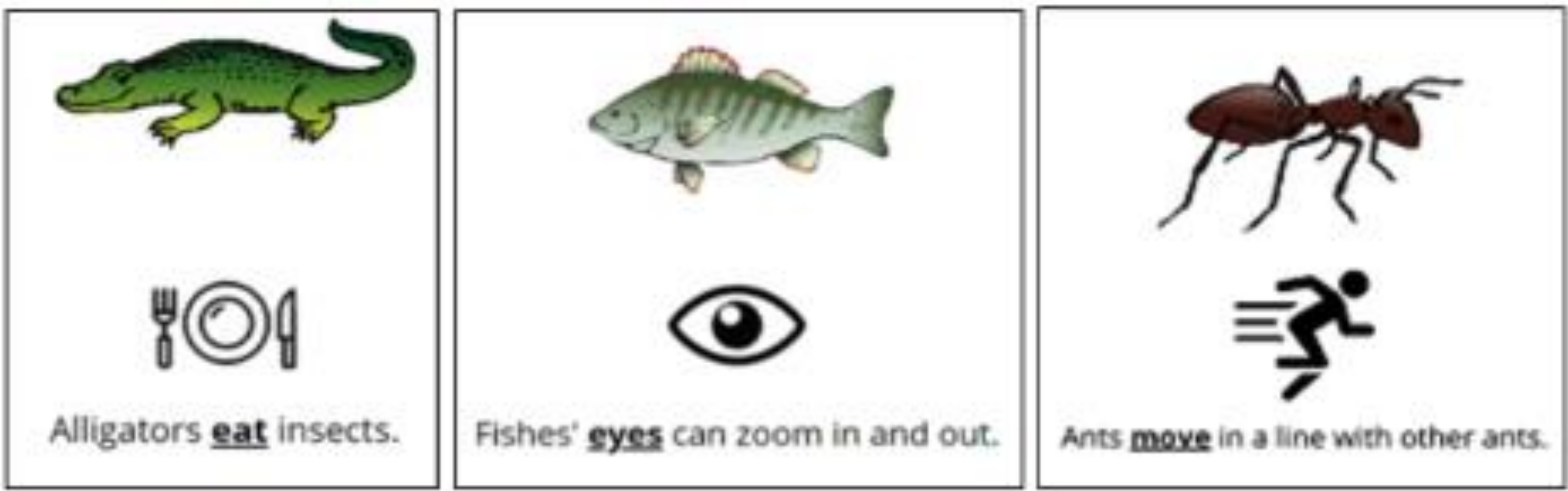
## Method

- 42 children ages 8 to 13-years-old (26 females, 15 males, 1 non-binary, mean age = 10.7).
- This is a virtual study conducted via Zoom. Participants completed two one-hour sessions approximately 24 hours apart.
- Session 1: Objective help-seeking was measured through a memory task.
- Session 2: Subjective help-seeking was measured using a help-seeking questionnaire adapted from Karabenick (2003) and Ryan & Shim (2012).
- The methods presented are apart of a larger on-going study (see <https://osf.io/mb8ug>).

## Method Continued

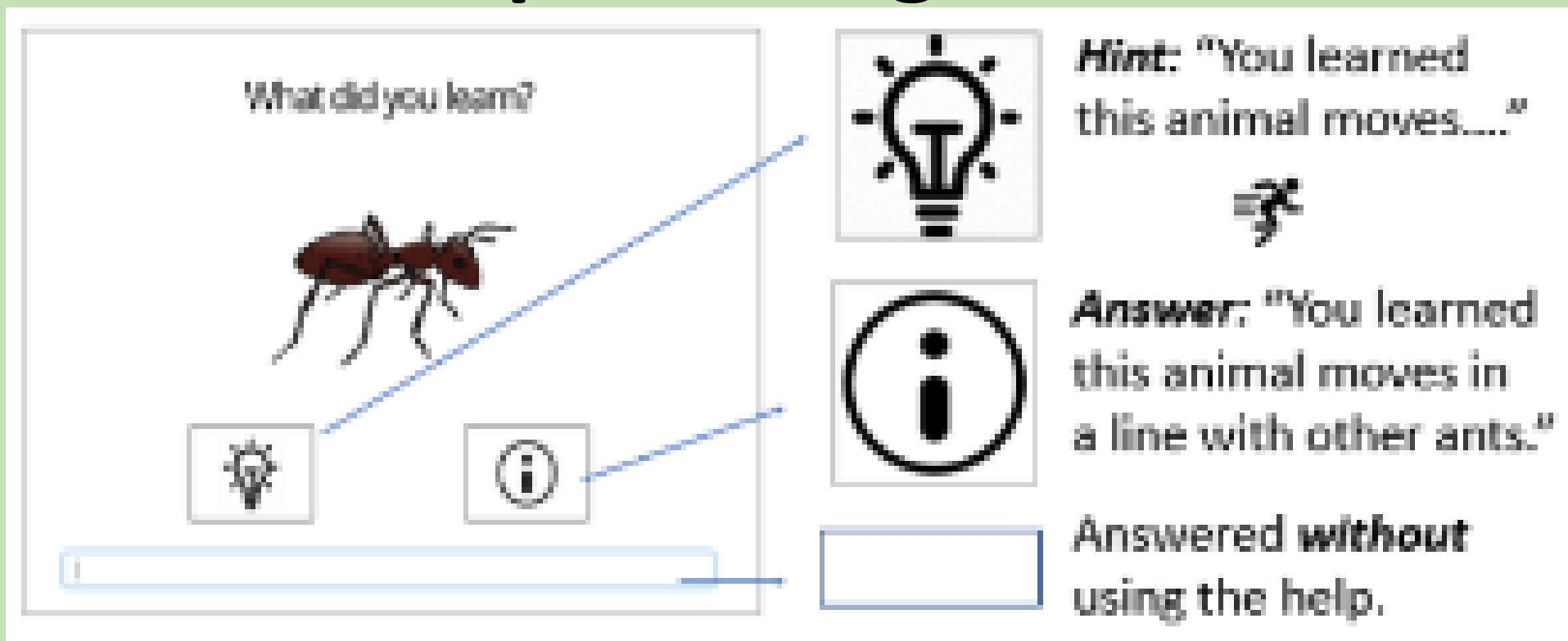
### Objective Help-Seeking

#### Encoding Phase



- Children learned 36 facts about how animals eat, see, and move.

#### Help-Seeking Phase



- Children took a practice test on animal facts with the option to seek help.
- Help-seeking was measured as the number of times participants asked for help and how frequently they asked for help in the form of a hint versus answer.

### Subjective Self-Report Questionnaire

- Questions were answered via a 5-point Likert scale and divided into categories of adaptive and avoidant help-seeking.

#### Adaptive Examples

- If I needed help, I would ask for an explanation, not just the answer.
- If I needed help, I would ask for hints or clues rather than the answer.

#### Avoidant Examples

- I would rather do worse on a task than ask for help when learning.
- If I didn’t understand something, I would guess rather than ask for help.

## Results

### Correlation Matrix

		Self-Report Avoidant	Self-Report Adaptive	Objective Help Sought	Objective Hints
Self-Report Avoidant	Pearson's r	—			
	p-value	—			
Self-Report Adaptive	Pearson's r	−0.497 ***	—		
	p-value	<.001	—		
Objective Help Sought	Pearson's r	−0.151	0.232	—	
	p-value	0.340	0.138	—	
Objective Hints vs. Answers Sought	Pearson's r	0.205	−0.034	−0.268 *	—
	p-value	0.199	0.831	0.044	—

Note. \* p < .05, \*\* p < .01, \*\*\* p < .001

- A numeric positive association between self-reported help-seeking and objective help-seeking was found such that children who asked for help more frequently in the memory task were also the ones who self-reported more adaptive help-seeking.
- Children who self-reported engaging in less adaptive help-seeking also self-reported avoiding seeking help.
- Children who sought more help during the memory task also sought more answers compared to hints.

## Conclusion

- Overall, these results suggest that children can self-reflect about their general help-seeking intentions.
- The relation between objective and self-reported measures were small, suggesting these measures may capture different aspects of help-seeking.

## References

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