WHO DOES WHAT? CREATING AN INFORMATION SEEKING PROFILE FOR NURSING STUDENTS

Rationale
- Do nursing students search for information differently?
- Do particular factors impact on this?
- Are there implications for teaching searching skills?

Aim
This research aims to produce an information seeking behaviour profile for nursing students. Investigating three aspects: personality, self-efficacy, and learning style and mapping these to the information seeking behaviour of the student.

Objectives
- Examine how nursing students perceive their ISB and needs.
- Investigate the processes and methods nursing students utilize to find information (using Foster's (2004) model as a basis for the questionnaire).
- Determine the role of personality, self-efficacy and learning style (using validated measurement instruments) in the context of ISB and how these act and interact on ISB.

Research Design
A concurrent embedded quantitative dominant mixed-methods approach was used on a sample of nursing students enrolled on courses at a Higher Education Institution.

Research Questions
Quantitative
- What is the relationship between personality, self-efficacy, learning styles, and information seeking behaviour?
- What is the impact of differing personalities, self-efficacy levels, and/or learning styles on information seeking behaviour?
Qualitative
- Why do users search the way they do?
- What are the preferred methods of information seeking?
Mixed
- How do the qualitative data inform the development of the information seeking behaviour profile?

Research instruments used to create questionnaire

Foster's ISB model—Information Seeking Inventory
This inventory has been set up using Foster's non-linear model of ISB. Each of the core processes from Foster's model have been transferred into a set of two opposing questions. For example:

Breadth Exploration
A. I tend to start my search broad and then narrow down later.
B. I prefer to try and find exactly what I want straight away, then broaden my search out if necessary.
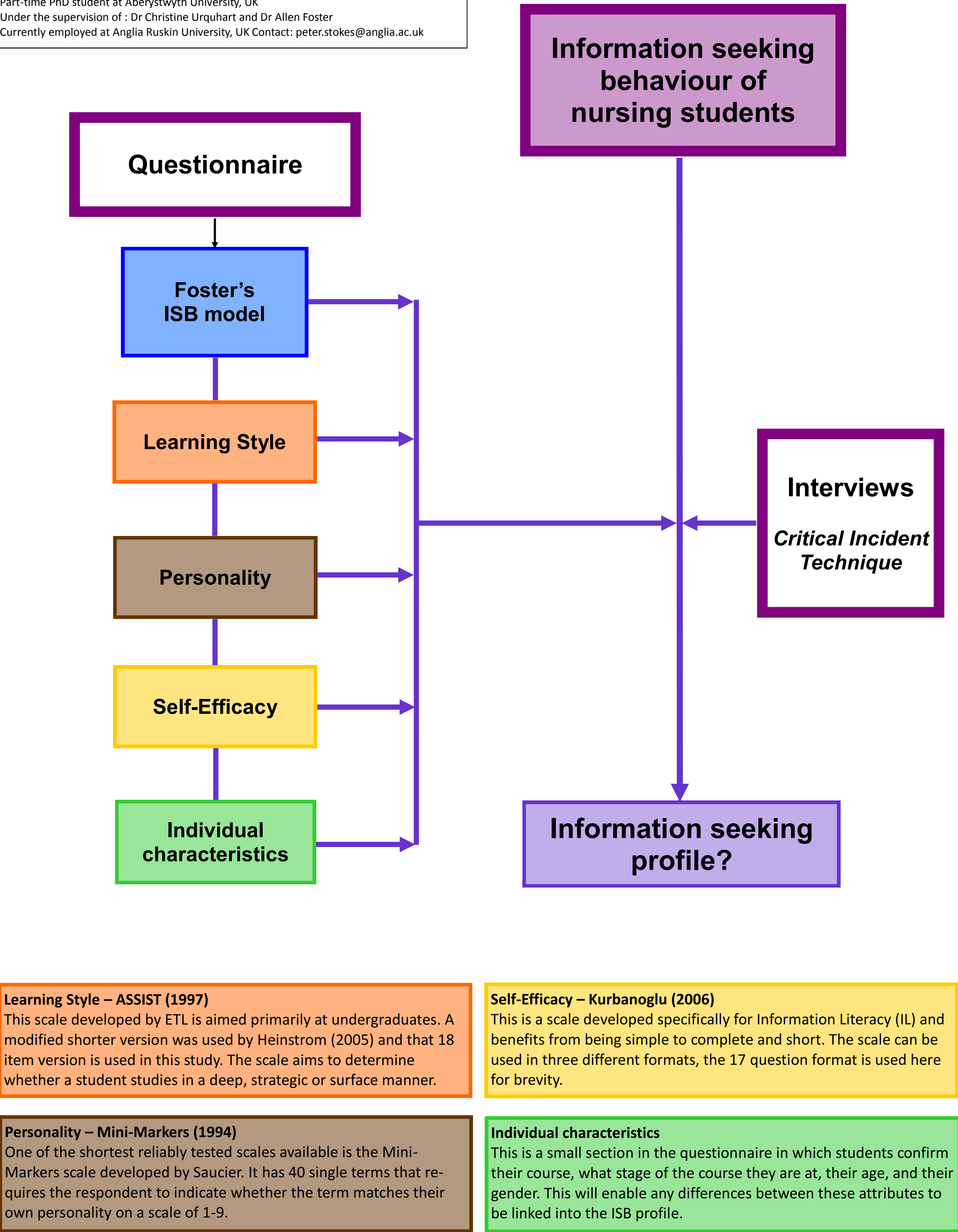
Problem Definition
A. I think defining my focus and boundaries are important.
B. I don't consider defining a focus as being a major consideration in information searching.

Knowing Enough
A. I am usually able to decide when I have enough information for an assignment.
B. I usually find it difficult to assess when I have enough information for an assignment.

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Questionnaire

Foster's ISB model

Learning Style

Personality

Self-Efficacy

Individual characteristics

Information seeking behaviour of nursing students

Interviews
Critical Incident Technique

Information seeking profile?

Learning Style – ASSIST (1997)
This scale developed by ETL is aimed primarily at undergraduates. A modified shorter version was used by Heinstrom (2005) and that 18 item version is used in this study. The scale aims to determine whether a student studies in a deep, strategic or surface manner.

Personality – Mini-Markers (1994)
One of the shortest reliably tested scales available is the Mini-Markers scale developed by Saucier. It has 40 single terms that requires the respondent to indicate whether the term matches their own personality on a scale of 1-9.

Self-Efficacy – Kurbanoglu (2006)
This is a scale developed specifically for Information Literacy (IL) and benefits from being simple to complete and short. The scale can be used in three different formats, the 17 question format is used here for brevity.

Individual characteristics
This is a small section in the questionnaire in which students confirm their course, what stage of the course they are at, their age, and their gender. This will enable any differences between these attributes to be linked into the ISB profile.

Quantitative Results *(Qualitative results yet to be analyzed)*
- Most students considered themselves 'Advanced' with IL tasks
- Confidence in IL does <u>not</u> increase as students progress
- Younger students are <u>more</u> confident in IL
- <u>Highest</u> percentage of students are Strategic learners
- As students get older they become <u>more</u> Deep and <u>less</u> Strategic
- Younger students are <u>more</u> Extravert and Neurotic, older students are <u>more</u> Conscientious and Open
- First year students are <u>least</u> Extravert, second years <u>most</u> Extravert, Open, and Agreeable

- Students with <u>higher</u> levels of confidence with IL tasks are <u>more</u> Extravert, Agreeable, Conscientious, Emotionally Stable, and Open
- **Deep** learners are <u>most</u> Open but also <u>least</u> Emotionally Stable
- **Strategic** learners are <u>most</u> Conscientious and <u>most</u> Emotionally Stable
- **Surface** learners are <u>most</u> Extravert but also <u>least</u> Conscientious
- **Mixed** style scored highest for Agreeableness

Significant relationship ($p=0.034$) between Learning Styles and Self-efficacy with IL: Deep – Advanced; Strategic/Surface – Intermediate

Odds ratios
- The **Advanced** self-efficacy with IL group are more likely to think about their search, work out strategies, and build and adapt their searches
- **Deep** learners take a broad, exploratory approach to searching
- **Strategic** learners think about their search and adapt as they progress
- **Surface** learners do less planning

Regression analysis
Positive significant relationships:
- Conscientiousness – Sifting, Verifying
- Agreeableness - Reviewing
- Openness - Browsing
Negative significant relationships:
- Agreeableness – Picture Building, Identifying the Shape of Existing Research

Early conclusions
- Confidence with IL does not necessarily improve as students progress through a course
- Students with different Learning Styles display different searching strategies
- Personality impacts on the way students search

Implications for practice
- One size information skills teaching does not fit all
- Some students may not benefit from traditional skills searching
- It cannot be assumed that students further into their course will be better at searching for information

References
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