

## THE MEDIATOR EFFECT OF CAREER DEVELOPMENT BETWEEN PERSONALITY TRAITS AND ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT: THE EXAMPLE OF SPORT COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY TALENTS

**Hung-Jen Lo, Ph.D.**

*Taichung Municipal Kuang Rong Junior High School, Taiwan*

**Chun-Hung Lin, Doctoral Student**

*Graduate School of Technological and Vocational Education, National Yunlin University of Science and Technology, Taiwan*

**Prof. Dr. Lin Tung-Hsing**

*National Taichung University of Science and Technology, Taiwan, Tel : 886-4-22196733*

*dawson@nutc.edu.tw*

**Peng-Fei Tu Corresponding author**

*National Chung Hsing University, Taiwan, Tel : 886-4-22840230#307*

*pengfeitu007@yahoo.com.tw*

### ABSTRACT

This paper explored the relationships among career development, personality trait, and organizational commitment and examines whether career development mediates the relationship between personality trait and organizational commitment. The sample was 275 sport communication technology talents in Taiwan. The instrument included the Personality Trait Scale, Career Development Scale, and Organizational Commitment Scale. The relationship between personality trait and organizational commitment was mediated by career development. According to the findings, some suggestions and recommendations for administration agency, and further researchers were made.

**KEYWORDS:** Career development theory; Personality trait; Organizational commitment

### INTRODUCTION

The management philosophy of school is especially related to this issue because school is most important place of learning. Every student in school has his or her uniqueness and strength. Suitable education is aimed at inspiring the multiple abilities of talents and talents are able to develop their own personality traits and the ability of active learning through this process. However, the cultivation of personality traits and morals has been less emphasized. According to David & Stanle (1989), personality trait is a set of consistent characteristics and tendencies that can express the similarities and difference among individuals. It is a crucial and stable factor that lasts for a lifetime (Costa & McCrae, 1992). To a substantial extent, personality trait can explain the cause of human behavior because the general characteristics of one person always show in specific contexts and one's personality can affect their behaviors (Daniel & Timothy, 1996). Therefore, understanding of individual personality and career development belief can be helpful in one's future development. It is also valuable in assisting teachers and coaches to predict the performance of athlete.

However, most talents spend less time considering their career plan and how to face the challenges in life. Most talents are relatively unfamiliar with career planning because they have been included in the concentrated training courses since they were young. The training courses have offered them clear goals of their sports performance.

Through career counseling from school education, talents are able to prepare and develop their future step by step. The objectives of career planning include exploring individual interests, understanding job values and social structure, establishing individual goals, strengthening strategic planning and problem solving ability, improving basic and professional skills, promoting individuals to observe meaning of life, developing individual career and hobbies, and enhancing the adaptation of social transition (Chang, 2007). According to the system of career development (Gutteridge, Leibowitz & Shore, 1993), organizations accounted for career management while individual employees accounted for their own career planning. Although career planning is mainly individual-centered, it is highly related to organizations because the focus of career is occupation. Generally, there are two areas in investigating career development - organizational career management and individual career planning. Hall (1986) has proposed that organizational career development was the process of integrating individual career planning and organizational career management. To implement career development, employees were required well self-understanding and clear career goals; organizations were required better communicate

with employees. The well communication between organizations and employees may reduce the turnover rate of outstanding employees and enhance the satisfaction and performance of employees. Hence, organizational career development not only provided resources for individual career planning, but also improved organizational commitment.

Mowday, Porter and Steers (1982) have considered that there was a mutual relationship between the organizations and employees. When employees were offered sufficient assistance and their specific needs were met by their organizations, they would strengthen their organizational commitments. Therefore, if employees knew their career goals clearly, they would actively search for organizations which can satisfy their needs. Then, these employees would dedicate their knowledge and experiences to their organizations and have higher organizational commitments. On the other hand, if organizations provided career counseling service for their employees with the considerations of the needs of both employees and organizations, the morale and the loyalty of employees could be encouraged (Yeh & Yu, 2000). In conclusion, employees' career planning as well as organizational career management influenced career commitment. Based on the above literature, the first research hypothesis was posited:

H1: Career development positively influenced organizational commitment.

Costa and McCrae (1986) suggested that personality trait was a unique feature among interpersonal relationships and previous behaviors can be a predictor of future behaviors. The current study aimed to address the association between personality trait, career planning and the behaviors of talents. Furthermore, the study was also objected to clarify the impact of personality trait on individual career planning. Huang (1998) has indicated that in career planning, individuals chose their occupation and working organization base on their own ability, interest, and potential working opportunity. Hence, everyone engaged the process of individual development, including evaluating individual personality tendencies, abilities and interests, comparing the directions of future career, setting the future goals and then planning the appropriate activities for development. Therefore, everyone had unique life experiences and handled matters with different attitudes. If people valued the character of justice, they would pursue fairness; if they valued the character of success, they would seek for competition. Similarly, we could apply the concept to the attitude towards career. Some people valued the profession position, so they would work hard for promotion, while others valued self-affirmation and challenged themselves continuously. In conclusion, one's personality trait had a close relationship with career development. Accordingly, the second research hypothesis was posited:

H2: Personality trait positively influenced career development.

Another study by Zsheliaskova-Koynova (1991) analyzed the personality traits of talents participating in orienteering. Besides, a study showed a significant correlation between positive emotions and affective commitment (Williams, Gavin, & Williams, 1996). Chang (2003) reported that the personality traits of undergraduates affected their organizational commitment. Therefore, the third and fourth research hypotheses were posited:

H3: Personality trait positively influenced organizational commitment.

H4: Career development mediated the relationship between personality trait and organizational commitment.

Based on the previous literature, the research framework is listed as following.

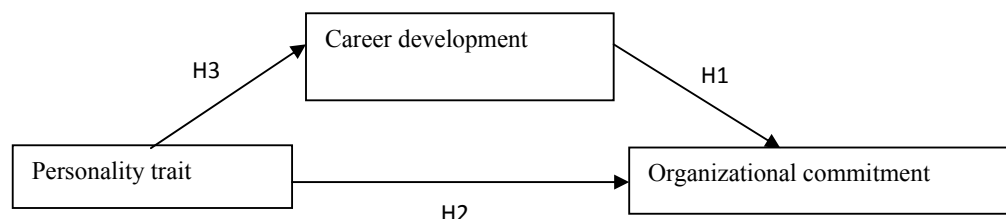


Figure 1. The research framework

## METHODOLOGY

### 1. Participants

This study employed cluster sampling technique (using sports team as the cluster) in order to ensure the representativeness of the sample. The sample comprised of 275 sport information communication talents in Taiwan. The average age of the sample was 21.32 years old.

### 2. Procedure

The data was collected using survey methodology. Questionnaires and informed consents were distributed on site by the researchers without the presence of participants' coaches in order to enhance the validity of the response. On each questionnaire, there were clear descriptions concerning the purpose of this study and assurance of the anonymity and confidentiality of all responses. After the questionnaires were returned, each question was carefully examined in order to fill in incomplete questionnaire. Of the 300 returned questionnaires, 275 valid questionnaires were used for an effective response rate of 91.06%.

### 3. Instruments

The questionnaire used in this study consisted of three scales, including Personality Inventory Scale, Career Development Scale, and Organizational Commitment Scale.

#### (1) Personality Trait Scale

This scale is based on Costa and McCrae's (1992) five personalities, inclusive of extraversion, neuroticism, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness to experience. Then taking the scale of Yang's (2003) related study as reference, we make some revise to our scale. This scale is mainly surveying the talents' special personality trait. There are 23 examination questions, which can examine the five aspects of personality trait. Six questions are used to measure extraversion, five questions are used to measure neuroticism, five other questions are used to measure agreeableness, four questions are used to measure conscientiousness, and last three questions are used to measure openness to experience. The result of Personality Inventory Scale is presented as six-point scale. In exploratory factor analysis, we found out that the explained variances for extraversion is 12.30%, for neuroticism is 5.50%, for agreeableness is 30.79%, for conscientiousness is 3.94%, and for openness to experience is 4.49%. Overall explained variances of this scale are 57.04%. Regards to reliability, the internal consistency of each dimension is .83 for extraversion, .77 for neuroticism, .78 for agreeableness, .73 for conscientiousness, and .60 for openness to experience. The overall value of Cronbach's  $\alpha$  is .81 which shows the internal consistency of the overall scale and each scale of this questionnaire is comparatively good. These all mean that the reliability is acceptable.

#### (2) Career Development Scale

Take Organizational Career Management and Individual Career Planning from Hall's Career Development Theory as main theoretical framework, and refer to the related literatures from Jin, S. R., Lin, C. S., & Tien, H. L. (1989), Lu, H. F. (2008), Chen, F. J., Lo, H. J., & Tsai, J. J. (2012) to revise and finish this Career Development Scale. The results of this scale can divide into two dimensions, organizational career management and individual career planning. There are 11 questions for organizational career management, 12 questions for individual career planning and total 23 questions.

In organizational career management dimension, explained variances of career information are 35.78% and explained variances of career counseling are 28.28%. The overall explained variances are 64.06%. Regards to reliability, the internal consistency of each dimension is .84 in career information and .89 for career counseling. The overall value of Cronbach's  $\alpha$  is .83 which shows the internal consistency of the overall scale and each scale of this questionnaire is good. The reliability is good.

In individual career planning dimension, explained variance of career planning is 37.89%, of career tactics is 23.84%. The overall explained variances are 61.73%. Regards to reliability, the internal consistency of each dimension is .88 in career planning and .86 for career tactics. The overall value of Cronbach  $\alpha$  is .84 which shows the internal consistency of the overall scale and each scale of this questionnaire is good. The reliability is ensured.

#### (3) Organizational Commitment Scale

We refer to Wang, M. J. & Cho, K. H. (2010), and Chang, S. Z. (2007) and modify our Organizational Commitment Scale. The results of this scale can divide into three dimensions, team recognition, willingness to take efforts and decision to stay in the team. There are 5 questions to team recognition, 5 questions to willingness to take efforts, 5 questions to decision to stay in the team and total in 15 questions. The result of Organizational Commitment Scale is presented as six-point scale. In exploratory factor analysis, we found out that the explained variances for team recognition are 9.11%, for willingness to take efforts are 44.97%, and for decision to stay in the team are 6.55%. The overall explained variances are 60.63%. Regards to reliability, the internal consistency of each dimension is .87 in team recognition, .85 for willingness to take efforts, and .61 for decision to stay in the team. The overall value of Cronbach's  $\alpha$  is .80 which shows the internal consistency of the overall scale and each scale of this questionnaire is good. The reliability is good.

### 3. Data analyze

Uses stepwise regression to analyze how personality trait influences and predicts career development and organizational commitment. Test for mediation of career development using Cheung and Lau’s (2008) SEM (Structural Equation Modeling) bootstrap procedure.

## RESULTS

### 1. The impacts of personality traits on individual career planning

We can learn from table 1 that four explanatory variables were significant according to their F-statistics, including Agreeableness, Neuroticism, Conscientiousness, and Extraversion. In addition, these four variables had positive  $\beta$ -coefficient. By the magnitude of the  $\beta$ -coefficient, the variable of Agreeableness is the most important one, followed by Neuroticism, Conscientiousness, and Extraversion orderly. Personality traits can explain 41% of the variation of Organization commitment. In particular, Agreeableness has the largest R-square increment, explaining 30% of the variation of Individual career planning.

### 2. The impacts of Personality trait on Organizational career management

The lower panel of table 1 indicates that three explanatory variables of personality traits have their F-value at the significant level, including Openness to experience, Neuroticism, and Extraversion. These three variables have positive  $\beta$ -coefficient. In particular, Openness to experience has largest  $\beta$ -coefficient and it explain most part of Organizational career management, followed by Neuroticism and Extraversion. In our model, all the explanatory variables can only explain 25% of the Organizational career management. Furthermore, Openness to experience has largest R-square increment, which is 18%.

Table 1. The regression analysis of Personality traits on Individual career planning and Organizational career management.

	Personal career planning					
	(R)	(R-square)	R-square increments	F value	Net F value	( $\beta$ -coefficient)
Agreeableness	.55	.30	.30	109.84*	109.84	.21
Neuroticism	.59	.35	.05	70.35*	21.99	.32
Conscientiousness	.63	.40	.04	56.25*	18.53	.27
Extraversion	.64	.41	.01	44.29*	5.49	.12
Organizational career management						
Openness to experience	.42	.18	.18	56.51*	56.51	.41
Neuroticism	.47	.22	.04	37.37*	15.15	.27
Extraversion	.50	.25	.03	28.39*	8.32	.18

\* $p < .05$

### 3. The impacts of Organizational commitment on Personality trait, Individual career planning, and Organizational career management

From table 2, we can see that there are four variables significant with regard to their F-values, including Career planning, Career counseling, Agreeableness and Career tactics. All four  $\beta$ -coefficients are positive. We can infer from the magnitude of  $\beta$ -coefficient that Career planning has the largest impacts, followed by Career counseling, Agreeableness, and Career tactics. In this model, all the variables can explain 47% of the total variation. Among the variables, Career planning itself is responsible for 37% of the variance of Organizational commitment.

Table 2. The regression analysis of Organizational commitment on Personal traits, Personal career planning, and Organizational career management

	Organizational commitment					
	(R)	(R-square)	R-square increments	F value	Net F value	( $\beta$ -coefficient)
Career planning	.61	.37	.37	155.61*	155.61	.36
Career counselling	.67	.45	.07	103.96*	33.10	.25
Agreeableness	.68	.46	.01	73.15*	6.83	.14
Career tactics	.69	.47	.01	56.66*	4.36	.14

\* $p < .05$

**4. Test for mediation of career development**

Mediation effect is mostly analyzed using Baron and Kenny’s (1986) approach. Recently, scholars indicated that the use of SEM bootstrap method can enhance the stability of the test results (Cheung & Lau, 2008; Cheung, 2009; Lau & Cheung, 2012). When using the bootstrap method, the mediation effect exists if the estimate of indirect effect reached statistical significance and confidence intervals (usually 95% CI, Confidence Interval) does not contain zero. The results (shown in Table 3) revealed that the estimate of indirect effect (0.261,  $0.424 \times 0.616 = 0.261$ ) reached the .05 level of significance and the 95 % CI does not contain 0, indicating that moral disengagement demonstrated partial mediation effect between locus of control and rule transgression.

Table 3. Mediation effect analysis

	Estimate	<i>p</i> value	Confidence Interval
Indirect effect			
PT→CD→OC	0.261	<0.05	0.162-0.283
Direct effect			
PT→ CD	0.424	<0.05	0.411-0.587
CD→ OC	0.616	<0.05	0.416-0.638
PT → OC	0.173	<0.05	0.057-0.280
total effect			
LC → OC	0.434	<0.05	0.286-0.477

Note: Personality Trait= PT, Career Development=CD, Organizational Commitment=OC

**DISCUSSION**

**1. Discussion**

According to our data analysis, our following discussion can be divided into three parts. First of all, we reached the same conclusion on the personality traits of talents as the reviewed literatures (Huang, 1998; Chang, 2003; Lo, 2009; Williams, Gavin, & Williams, 1996). In other words, the better personality traits with the talents, the career development and organizational commitment were shown to be higher. The talents who can well manage and have better planning on their career development resulted in stronger organizational commitment.

Next, the personality traits of talents have significantly explained career development. Among the indicators for personality traits, agreeableness can explain the largest part of the total variance (up to 30%) of individual career planning. The talents who were more easy-going were shown to have better ability in planning individual career in the future. Alternatively, the openness to experience of personality traits has the largest explanatory ability (up to 18%) in organizational career management. The talents who were more curious and imaginative intended to receive the information and counselling service from the university and apply to their career development. This result was consistent with Liu (2002) and Tsai (2004). Apparently, personality traits have significant and positive influence on individual career development (Tokar, 1998).

From our analysis, we can learn that people with different personality traits have different perception and cognition on individual planning and organizational management. Among the five factors of personality traits, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and neuroticism have obvious influences on individual career planning. Similarly, if one person can be more focused and concise on his/her goal and be more conscientious, s/he will have a better understanding of his/her advantage and disadvantages and thus can have clear career tactics. Furthermore, openness to experiences, neuroticism, and extraversion have the largest ability to explain organizational career management. If one person is open-minded, confident, initiative, and not too nervous, s/he would be more active to explore his/her career, collect the useful career tactics and find possible paths to achieve the career goal. In present Taiwan society, individual decision plays an important role. However, the introspection is also a crucial element in individual career planning. One should put it into practice through organizational career management.

As for the analysis of personal traits, individual career planning, and organizational career management of talents on organizational commitment, career planning, career counselling, agreeableness, and career tactics achieve significant level and can explain up to 47% of total variation of organizational commitment. Career planning is the most important factor that can explain 37% of the total variation of organization commitment. We can infer that the students will actively to learn the knowledge and share personal experiences that can satisfy organizational needs when they are clear with the individual career goal. They tend to have high organizational commitment in this case. This inference is similar to the findings in Mowday, Porter, & Steers (1982). Hence, the

talents who are clear with their individual career goal can help increase the satisfaction in their organizational team and establish networks that are helpful for them to obtain more opportunities for their career. The better self-understanding of advantages and disadvantages is also useful to pursue personal career. The organization will development different career counseling and offer relative information to help talents achieve their various life goals. The organization will help its talents to know themselves and cultivate the skills in order to achieve individual goal by the opportunity from the organization.

If the organization can take talents' needs and competence into consideration and help offer talents the career counselling on the team or on campus, then the talents will have sense of belonging and be highly encouraged in the organizational team. In short, once the talents enter any sport organization, they should try to combine individual career and organizational goal together and the organizational team should establish a win-win situation for its talents and the team itself in order to achieve the goal of athlete cultivation and development. Moreover, the sport team on campus should better understand its dilemma and search for proper supports to achieve the goal of whole university. On the other hand, talents should understand their advantages and disadvantages and thus to contribute and grow at the same time within the sports team.

Our research tries to the personal traits' impact on career development with the mediation effect from career development. According to Baron and Kenny (1986), we use regression analysis to test the existence of mediation effect of career development. From our analysis, we know that personal traits have impact on organizational commitment through the mediation effect of career development and the influence is significant. We provide an implication for the teachers and instructors on campus sports team that they can firstly understand the personal traits of talents and offer the service of career planning and career counselling in order to acquire higher organizational commitment from the talents. Conversely, our research also shows that career development will have positive impacts on organizational commitment. The result is similar to Lo ( 2009 ) 、 Wang & Huang (2007). Smooth career development can help to improve the organizational commitment of talents. Our empirical analysis shows that the improvement of organizational commitment can be achieve via personal traits and career development. We will expect our results can raise the awareness of university to provide more career services for the talents and treat their career more seriously. Comparatively, talents will be encouraged and grow sense of belonging in the sports team and hence be willing to make more efforts during their training.

## 2. Conclusions and Suggestions

Our research aims to study the relation among personal trait, career development and organizational commitment. We find there is consistently positive relation among personal traits, career development, and organizational commitment. First, among the personal traits indicator, agreeableness can explain the largest part of individual career planning. Secondly, openness to experiences can explain the largest part of organizational career management. In addition, career planning, career counselling, agreeableness, and career tactics attain significant level in explaining the organizational commitment. Career planning has the largest impact on organizational commitment, and career development plays an important role in personal traits and organizational commitment. Therefore, if the university, as an organization, can focus more on talents' career planning and counselling, the talents would have sense of belonging in the sport team and in the university.

Our research indicates that personal traits and career development are important deterministic factors on talents' organizational commitment. Therefore, the university can firstly understand the talents' personal traits, provide proper career planning and counselling, and help them make a balanced plan between work and life in the future in order to place every athlete into the right position. The talents will grow sense of belonging for the sport team. Therefore, the sport team will be better off because the perfect integration of individual talents and the improvement of communication among the team members. Talents will grow the sense of recognition for the sport team because of the improvement of the individual skills and team consensus.

## REFERENCES

- Baron, R. M., & Kenny, D. A. (1986). The moderator-mediator variable distinction in social psychological research: Conceptual, strategic, and statistical considerations. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 51, 1173-1182.
- Boardley, I. D., & Kavussanu, M. (2007). Development and validation of the moral disengagement in sport scale. *Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology*, 29, 608-628.
- Chang, S. Z. (2007). A Study on Transformational Leadership, Intra-team Interaction, Organizational Commitment and Team Efficacy through the Structure Equation Modeling: An Example of High School Basketball Athletes, *Journal of Oriental Institute of Technology*, 27, 177-186.
- Chang, Y. L. (2003). *A Research of Relationship between E-generation Undergraduate Students personal traits and Organization Commitment*, Unpublished master thesis, Lunghwa University of Science and

- Technology, Taoyuan, Taiwan.
- Cheung, G. W., & Lau, R. S. (2008). Testing mediation and suppression effects of latent variables: Bootstrapping with structural equation models. *Organizational Research Methods*, 11(2), 296-325.
- Cheung, M. W.-L. (2009). Comparison of methods for constructing confidence intervals of standardized indirect effects. *Behavior Research Methods*, 41, 425-438.
- Chen, F. J., Lo, H. J., & Tsai, J. J. (2012). A Research about the Relativity between Career Development and School Life Satisfaction of Military Academy, *Central Taiwan journal of humanities and social sciences*, 23(3), 147-167
- Cheung, G. W., & Lau, R. S. (2008). Testing mediation and suppression effects of latent variables: Bootstrapping with structural equation models. *Organizational Research Methods*, 11(2), 296-325.
- Costa, P.T., Jr., and McCrae, R.R. (1986). Personality stability and its implications for clinical psychology, *Clinical Psychology Review*, 6, 407-423.
- Costa, P.T., Jr., and McCrae, R.R. (1992). *NEO-PIR: Professional Manual*. Odessa, FL.: Psychological Assessment Resources.
- Daniel M. Cable & Timothy A Judge. (1996). Person-organization fit, job choice decisions, and organizational entry. *Organization Behavior and Human Decision Process*, 67(3), pp.294-311.
- David V.D. & Stanley B.S. (1989). *Personality and Job Performance: Evidence of Incremental Validity*. *Personnel Psychology*, 42, 25-36.
- Gutteridge, T. G., Leibowitz, Z. B., & Shore, J. E. (1993). *Organizational career development*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Inc, 2.
- Hall, D.T. (1986). An Overview of Career Development Theory and Practice. *Career Development in Organizations*. Jossey-Bass: San Francisco, CA.
- Huang, I. C. (1998), *Modern Management*. Taipei: Hwatai.
- Jin, S. R., Lin, C. S., & Tien, H. L. (1989). The Career Development of Chinese College Students in Taiwan, *Bulletin of Educational Psychology*, 22, 167-190.
- Liu, C. H. (2002), *The Relationships between work values, personal characters, and career orientations of the Taiwanese expatriates in Mainland China*, Unpublished master thesis, National Sun Yat-sen University, Kaohsiung, Taiwan.
- Lu, H. F. (2008). The Influence Factors of Career Development for the Elite Athlete Students-An Empirical Study of Aletheia University, *TAMSUI OXFORD Journal of Sports Knowledge*, 5, 163-173.
- Lau, R. S., & Cheung, G. W. (2012). Estimating and comparing specific mediation effects in complex latent variable models. *Organizational Research Methods*, 15(1), 3-16.
- Mowday, R. T., Porter, L. W., & Steers, R. M. (1982). *Employee-organization linkage*. New York: Academic Press.
- Tokar, D. V., & Fischer, A. R. (1998). Personality and behavior. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 53, 115-153.
- Tsai, M. H. (2004), *Research on The Influence of Personality Traits, Work Value, Money Ethics and Emphasis of QWL on Career Orientation - Taking Students Just Graduating from The Senior High School and Vocational High School in Tainan County as example*, Unpublished master thesis, Nanhua University, Chiayi, Taiwan.
- Wang, M. J., & Cho, K. H. (2010). The mediator effect of organizational commitment and job satisfaction on the relationship between athlete identity and organizational citizenship behavior: Example of college sport volunteers. *NPUE Journal of Sports Science*, 6, 245-256.
- Wang, C. C., & Huang, J. Y. (2007). The Effect of Employee's Perceived Value to the E-learning on their Career Development and Organizational Commitment. *T & D Fashion*, 64, 1-15.
- Williams, L. J., Gavin, M. B., & Williams, M. L. (1996). Measurement and nonmeasurement processes with negative affectivity and employee attitudes. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 81, 88-101.
- Yang, G. M. (2003). Survey Research of the Outstanding personality of Youth Badminton Players, *Tamkang Sports*, 6, 119-125.
- Zsheliaskova - Koynova, Z. (1991). Some personality characteristics of elite orienteers. *Scientific Journal of Orienteering*. 7(1), 18-33.