

**Critical Review of a Research Article “A Qualitative Study of Career Exploration among Young Adult Men with Psychosis and Co-occurring Substance Use Disorder” Studied by Alison Luciano, M.P.H., PhD and Elizabeth A. Carpenter-Song, PhD**

by

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**Abstract**

This is a Critical Review of a research article “A Qualitative Study of Career Exploration among Young Adult Men with Psychosis and Co-occurring Substance Use Disorder” studied by Alison Luciano, M.P.H., Ph.D. and Elizabeth A. Carpenter-Song, Ph.D. The article was published online on 15 September 2014 in “Journal of Dual Diagnosis: research and practice in substance abuse comorbidity Volume 10, 2014 – Issue 4”. The purpose of the article was to explore the significance of career exploration and career development with regard to coordinated treatment for youthful grown-ups with early psychosis and substance use issues as far as a co-happening issue (Luciano and Carpenter-Song, 2014).

**Keywords:** Critical review, Research article, Career Exploration, Young Adult Men, Psychosis, Co-occurring Substance Use Disorder, Alison Luciano, Elizabeth A. Carpenter-Song, etc.

**Review:**

The article followed and observed standardized formatting in terms of typeface (font and font size), line spacing, margins, line length, alignment, paragraphing, and page numbers. The study objectively explored that career planning along with early treatment of young adults having dual disorder (psychosis and drug abuse) indicated improving functional and clinical results. The study is original and primary work as it was published in the “Journal of Dual Diagnosis” (indexed in ProQuest and PsycINFO) an international publication on a quarterly basis and uses *ScholarOneManuscripts* in order to peer review of the manuscript prior to publishing the article in the Journal (Tylor & Francis Online, n.d.). The article contributed to the body of scientific knowledge. Next is given a review of different sections.

Title of the article, although, clearly indicates the study pertaining to the topic and gives meaningful understanding. However, the title has more than 12 words limit that is beyond the recommended standard (Section 2.01, *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association (6th Ed)*, 2009, p. 23). It may sound better if the study would have titled as *Career Exploration among Young Adult Men having Dual Psychosis and Substance Use Disorder*.

The abstract of the article provides a brief and thorough summary of the contents of the study. It has sufficient and appropriate information regarding purpose, significance, methods, findings, and conclusion of the study. Although, it accurately reflects the study it was divided into four paragraphs. On the other hand, abstract in one paragraph without indentation is more

appropriate as it follows the standard format and would look more scholarly like (Section 2.04, *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association (6th Ed)*, 2009, p. 27). Keywords mentioned at the end of the Abstract were relevant and informative but words like career development, career choices, career exploration, and career planning should also be included in the list in order to help researchers to trace out their works in databases. These words and concepts are repeatedly used in the article so they must be mentioned in the keywords list.

The literature review gives a general idea about the literature related to the issues in the study. Researchers logically linked previous studies to their work by showing the sequences of their work in the literature. The article coherently states that the previous writers focused on psychotic patients and their clinical treatments. But this article linked the clinical treatment and rehabilitation with career planning so the study has novelty as this new integrated work was not researched at length in previous studies. The literature review also included the theoretical framework in a scholarly way and discusses the social cognitive career theory covering its aspects i.e. behaviors, career interests, career choices, barriers, and supports and related it to the study. It illustrates that the study covers the theoretical framework of research and fills the gap in the literature. Notwithstanding the overall literature section focused on the issue, but it was not broad as it did not include the limitations, issues, problems, and backgrounds of young men with dual disorder i.e. psychosis and drug abuse. Moreover, the literature review does not represent opposing views.

The methods section of the article clearly describes the steps that were taken to study and investigate the issue. It states that researchers rationally applied the procedures, steps, and techniques pertaining to collect, generate, and analyze the data. As being a qualitative study, the researchers recruited 12 in the number of young adult men having dual disorders as a sample. The article explains the criteria of study sample i.e. age group 18-35 years old men, under treatment as outpatient or residential at mental health and drug treatment facility, and incapacity to provide informed consent for the study. Moreover, it is clearly mentioned in the article that no woman was recruited for the study as no woman was there in the treatment center and the study was exclusively for men with the dual disorder. This is the strength of the article because it clarifies ambiguity. The participants sampled method and approach in the article were relevant to the study as the researchers used purposeful sampling techniques and obtained detailed information through in-depth interviews.

The article states about measures and operational definitions as qualitative interviews initially focused on functional domains like a relationship, with peers, family, the daily routine of school and works, etc. and later on emphasized on sensitive matters relating to drug abuse habits. Although, data collected through qualitative interviews and record review presented by clinicians after screening assessment comprehensively a comprehensive are good but clear relationship between concepts and measures were not discussed in the article.

The article in a good way defines sample recruitment and data collection procedures. The article mentioned that researchers gave a brief presentation and provided information to clinicians, staff, and clients at the treatment center regarding purpose, procedures, risks, and methods relating to the study. It is also clearly written in the article that the researchers obtained informed consent in writing and also gave a \$20 gift card to every participant after each interview. Moreover, the researchers took permission prior to recording interviews in audio and sought a confidentiality certificate in this regard. These are good practices and strengths of the article.

The data analysis adopted credible procedures that substantiate the study claim. The article expressively mentioned that verbatim data of interviews recorded through audio devices were analyzed through Atlas ti. It is highlighted that the Atlas ti is a software program that qualitatively codes and analyzed the data (Atlas ti 2.0, 2002). The article explains that thematic analysis was also carried out. In addition, it is also written in the article that the researchers masked the identity of the participants as they changed names and related places of the participants. The data analysis section explains the steps and methods involved in the process along with justification that depicts the strength of the article.

The results presented in the article clearly depict relevancy with the purpose and issue for which the study conducted. The results section of the article found that participants were suffering from various mental disorders (schizophrenia-spectrum disorder, bipolar disorder, major depressive disorder, and co-occurring anxiety disorder) and they were also dependents on various drugs (cannabis, alcohol, poly-substances, opioids, and amphetamines). Consequently, the participants had developed different psychological, physiological, social, and economic problems. The interventions of researchers with career exploration, career interests, and career choices integrated treatment of drug abuse and mental disorders. Resultantly, the participants felt psychologically well-being and become hopeful about their futures. However, the article did not mention explicitly the relationship between career development and integrated treatment for adult young psychosis with the dual disorder.

In the discussion section, the results of the study with relation to previous works were discussed and suggested further research for better results. The inferences of research results were interpreted and evaluated in the context of the research issues or problems. The discussion indicated that results supported the findings of previous studies and clearly supported the findings and theoretical framework of this study as well. The good point is that the article also presented study limitations in terms of gender, varying age groups, longitudinally, and socio-economic backgrounds to find better results. The conclusion of the article was presented in a good way as this section summarizes the main points and showed the benefits of the study. But it did not make further recommendations based on this study. The reference list of the article was presented in a scholarly way as all references cited in the text were listed accordingly. Text citations and listed references are aligned in relation to spellings. All references are listed in alphabetical order as per standard format.

Overall, the article is written in a highly scholarly manner as it observed and followed standard format and style. The abstract, literature review, methods, results, discussion, and references all are well written and constructed educationally ways. The topic of the study was different and difficult as limited researches have been published in this regard. Therefore, the study is a useful and original one. The study is credible and trustworthy as it followed and ensured standard procedures relating to research methodology and code of ethics with regard to informed consent and confidentiality of information while conducting the study. However, the article also has some weakness, for example, the aim of the study was not clearly stated as the aim of the study describes what the article attempted to achieve. Although, a separate section labeling introduction is not specifically required, but the article is lacking a meaningful introduction and there is no clarity about the researchable problems, and its background. The introduction gives more clarity regarding the purpose and rationale of the study as it tells about the specific issue and it links with previous works on the topic (Section 2.05, *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association (6th Ed)*, 2009, p. 27). Recommendations based on

the findings are not clearly made for future works as these are supportive and helpful to build further knowledge.

## References

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