**Valentina Iemmi, Ernestina Coast, Tiziana Leone, David McDaid**

## Suicide and poverty: mapping the evidence in low and middle income countries

# Conference Item (paper)

# Suicide and poverty in low and middle income countries (LMICs)

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# What?
# Relationship between suicide and poverty in LMICs

Loss of job
Reduced productivity

SUICIDE

POVERTY

Economic deprivation
Low education
Unemployment
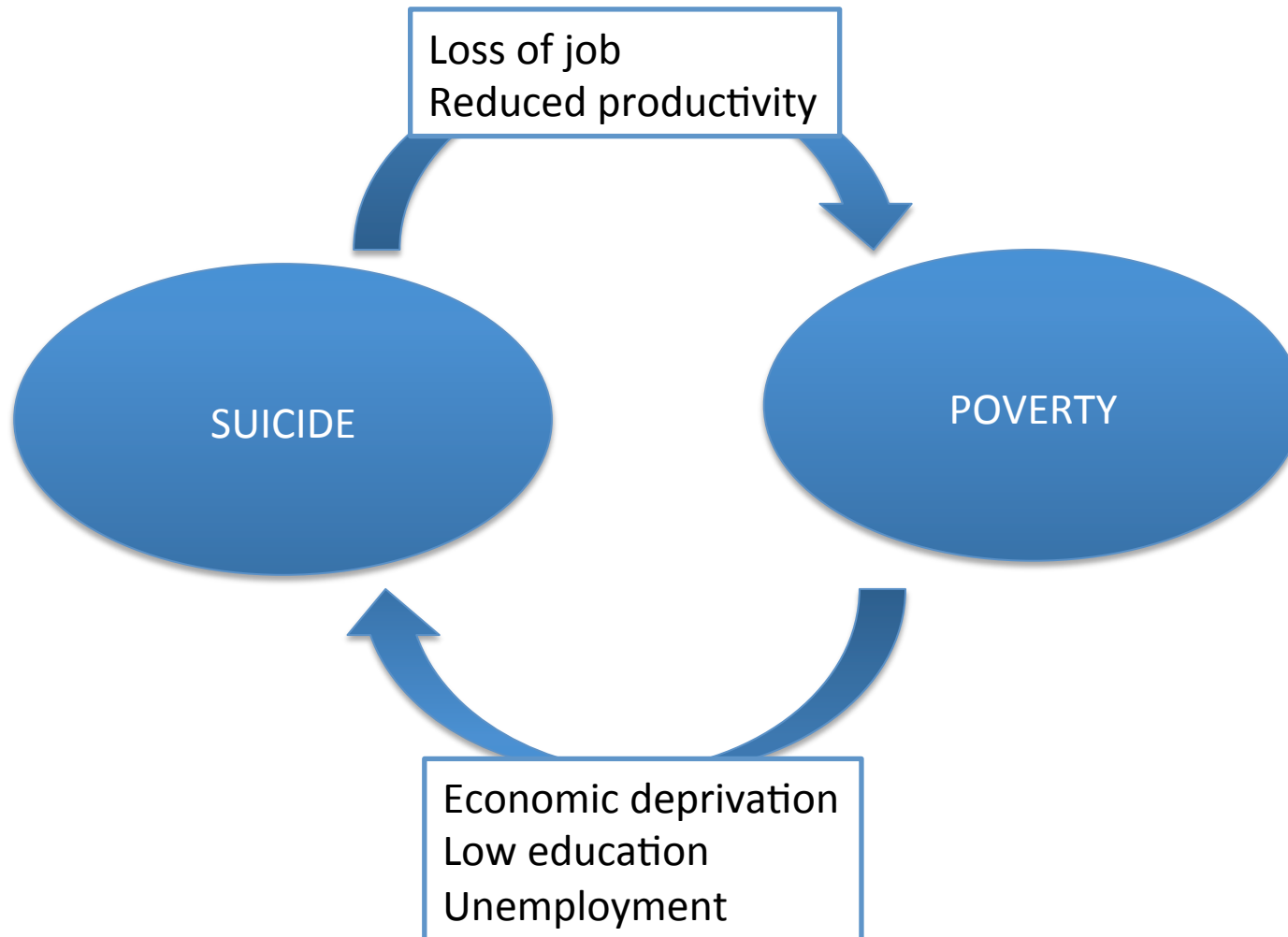
# How?
# Systematic mapping

**KEY WORDS**

**SUICIDE (ideation-attempted-completed)**

**POVERTY (monetary)**

**LMICs**

Databases: PubMed/Medline, Embase, PsycINFO, PsycEXTRA, ISI Web of Science, IBSS, ASSIA, PAIS, CAB Direct, EconLit, GEOBASE, ERIC, Cochrane Review, Campbell Library

Type of study: qualitative, quantitative, mixed methods, economic evaluations and modelling, reviews, and meta-analysis

Languages: English, French, Spanish, Portuguese, Italian

Publication date: 1990 – 2010

# Results

**N=2622**
potentially relevant references identified from electronic databases; eligible for screening by title/abstract

**N=1274**
references excluded as duplicates (N=1212) or without abstract in English (N= 62)

**N=991**
references excluded after screening by title/abstract

**N=357**
potentially relevant references; eligible for screening by full-text

**N=51**
references excluded because full-text not found (N=33) or without full-text in English/French/Spanish/Portuguese/Italian (N=18)

**N=191**
references excluded after screening by full-text

**N=115**
relevant references; eligible for data extraction
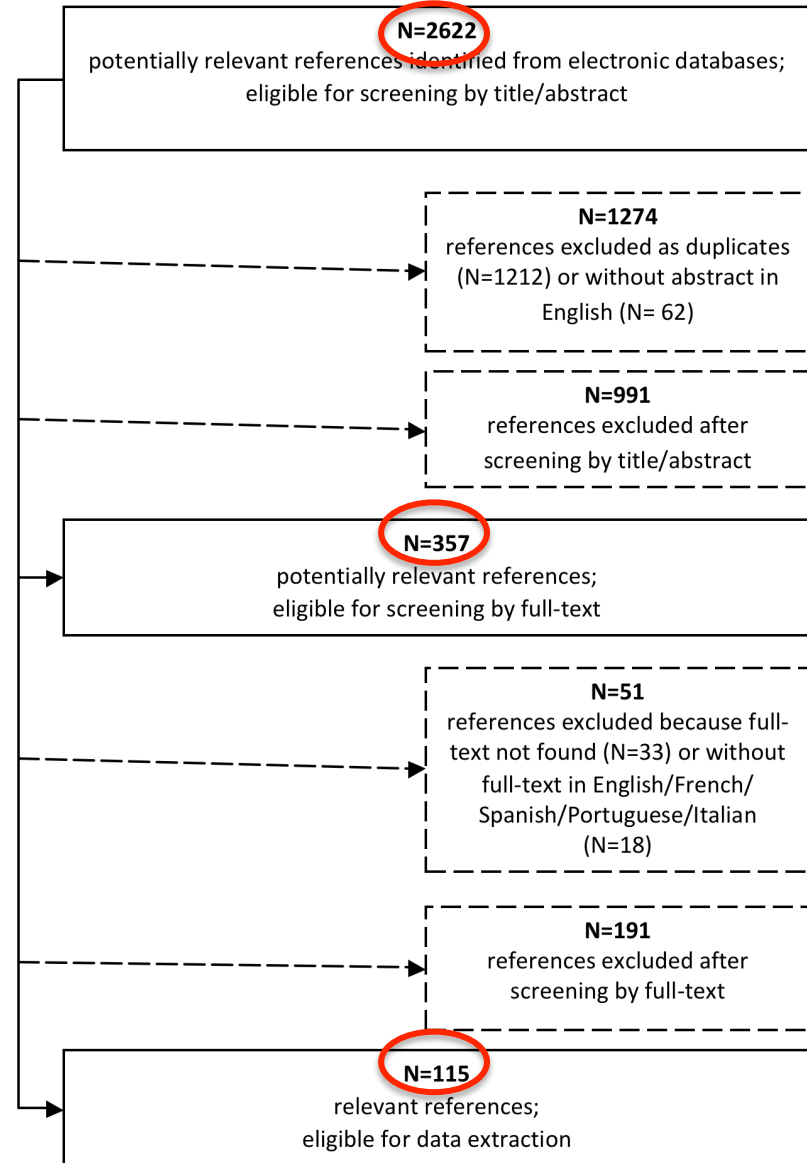
Searches

Screening by title/abstract

Screening by full-text

# Study characteristics

Suicide dimensions

Poverty measures

Setting and study population

| Variable | % |
|---|---|
| **Suicide dimension** | |
| Fatal behaviour | 42 |
| Non-fatal behaviour | 42 |
| Suicide ideation | 2 |
| Multiple | 14 |
| | |
| **Financial poverty measure** | |
| Absolute poverty | 1 |
| Relative poverty | 18 |
| Socio-economic status | 30 |
| Unemployment | 15 |
| Economic/financial problems | 11 |
| Debt | 8 |
| Support from the welfare system | 1 |
| Economic crisis | 6 |
| National aggregate indicator (GDP, Gini) | 3 |
| HDI | 0 |
| Multiple | 7 |
| | |
| **Region (World Bank classification)** | |
| Sub-Saharan Africa | 11 |
| South Asia | 32 |
| East Asia + Pacific | 13 |
| Middle East + North Africa | 14 |
| Latin America & Caribbean | 13 |
| Europe & Central Asia | 13 |
| Multiple | 4 |
| | |
| **Country income group (World Bank classification)** | |
| Low income | 11 |
| Lower-middle income | 47 |
| Upper-middle income | 42 |

# Study characteristics (cnt/d)

Suicide-poverty association

| Poverty dimensions | Relationship with poverty | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Suicide a consequence of poverty | Poverty a consequence of suicide | Unclear association | No association found |
| Absolute poverty | 1 | | | |
| Relative poverty | 3 | | 17 | 1 |
| Socio-economic status | 3 | | 26 | 7 |
| Unemployment | 2 | | 12 | 3 |
| Economic/financial problems | | | 13 | |
| Debt | 2 | | 6 | 1 |
| Support from the welfare system | 1 | | | |
| Economic crisis | 2 | | 4 | |
| National aggregate indicator (GDP, GNI) | 2 | | 1 | |
| HDI | | | | |
| Multiple | 1 | | 5 | 2 |
| TOTAL | 17 | | 84 | 14 |

# Causal chain

Only those studies where **causality was clearly identified** in the methodology:
- 26 which looked at the correlation between poverty and suicide
- 5 which used poverty as a control variable and
- 26 which considered poverty within a multivariate regression analysis

Only the pathways **from poverty to suicide**



?

SUICIDE

POVERTY

Unemployment
Low income
Low income inequalities (=mass poverty)
Debt
Macro-economic crisis (e.g. agricultural crisis in South Asia)
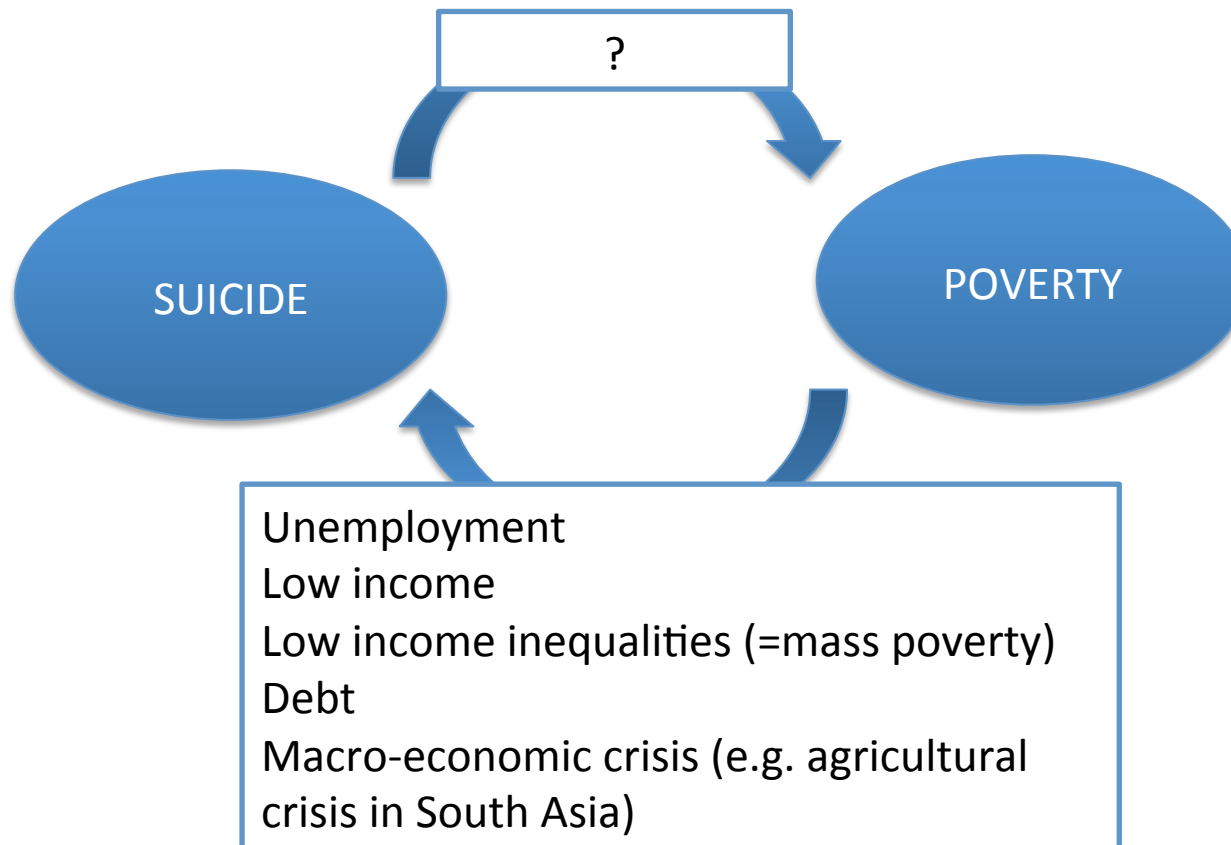
# Next steps

- Robust research on suicide and poverty in LMICs

- Evaluation of the impact of interventions on poverty on suicide

- Evaluation of the impact of interventions on suicide on poverty

# Thanks