



LGBTQ+ Mental Health Disparities

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Mental Health



- Mental health disorders are a **leading cause of disability** around the world.
- About **one in eight people** in the world lives with a mental disorder.
- **Anxiety and depressive disorders** are the most common disorders.
- **More than 70%** of people with mental health conditions **receive no treatment**.



Untreated
mental illness
can lead to
the tragic
consequence
of suicidality.

Suicidality

Understanding Suicidality

- Suicidal thoughts
- Suicide plans
- Suicide attempts
- Completed suicide

Indicators of Suicidality

- Thoughts of death
- Making a suicide plan
- Hopelessness

Mental Health Risk Factors

- Depression
- Anxiety
- Substance Use

Global Suicide Rates

~ 800,000 deaths annually

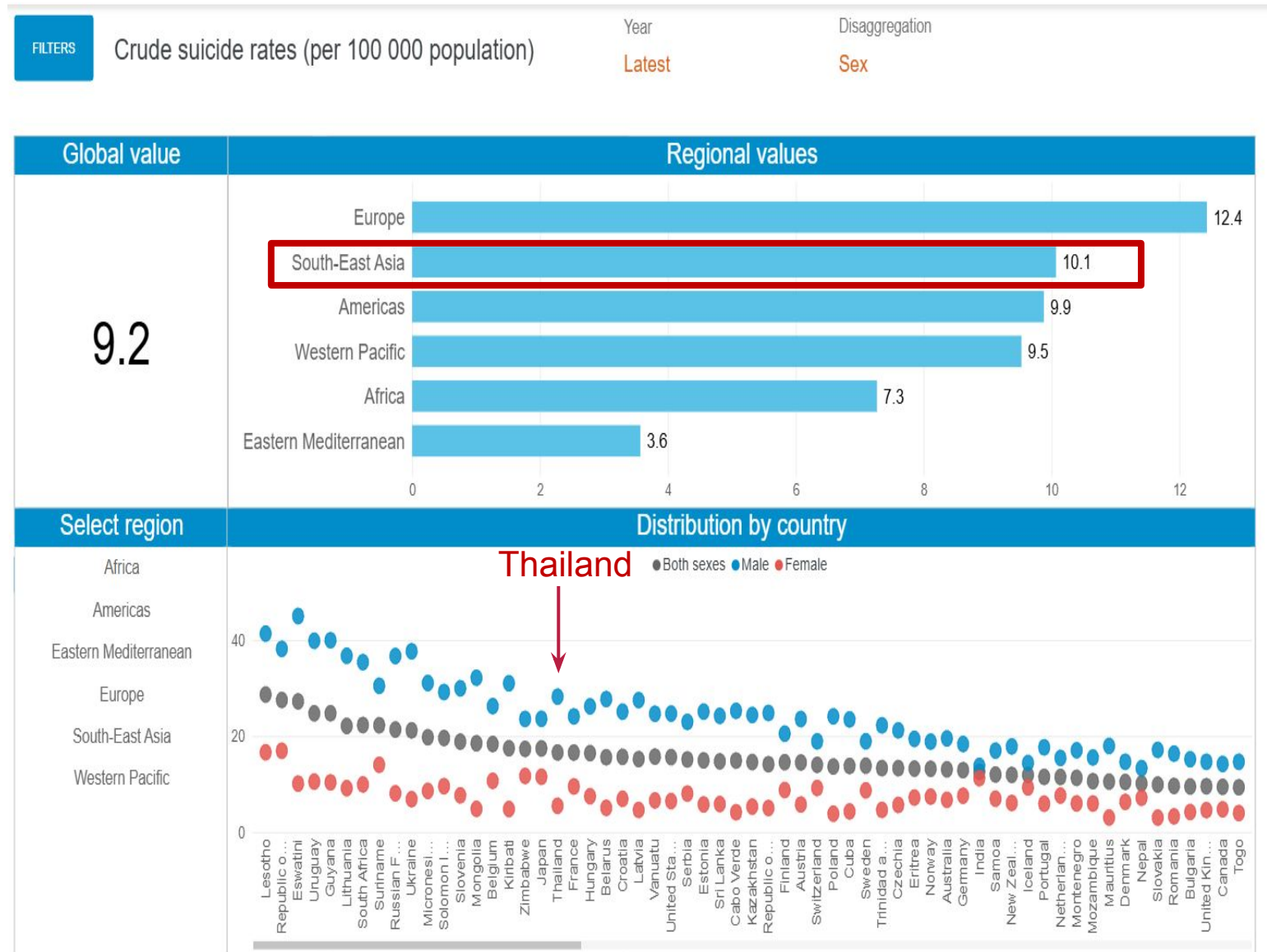
~ 77% occur in LMIC

WHO, 2021



Suicide, A Real Pandemic

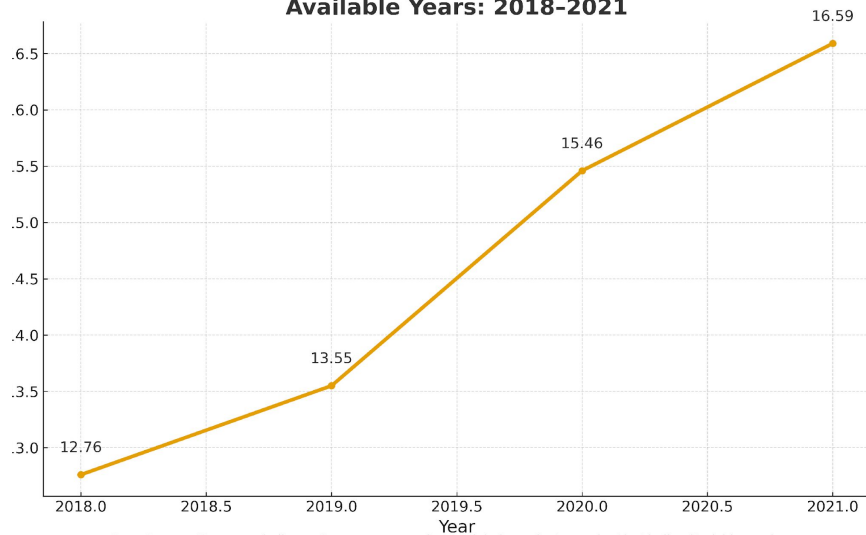
Global Suicide Rates (2021, WHO)



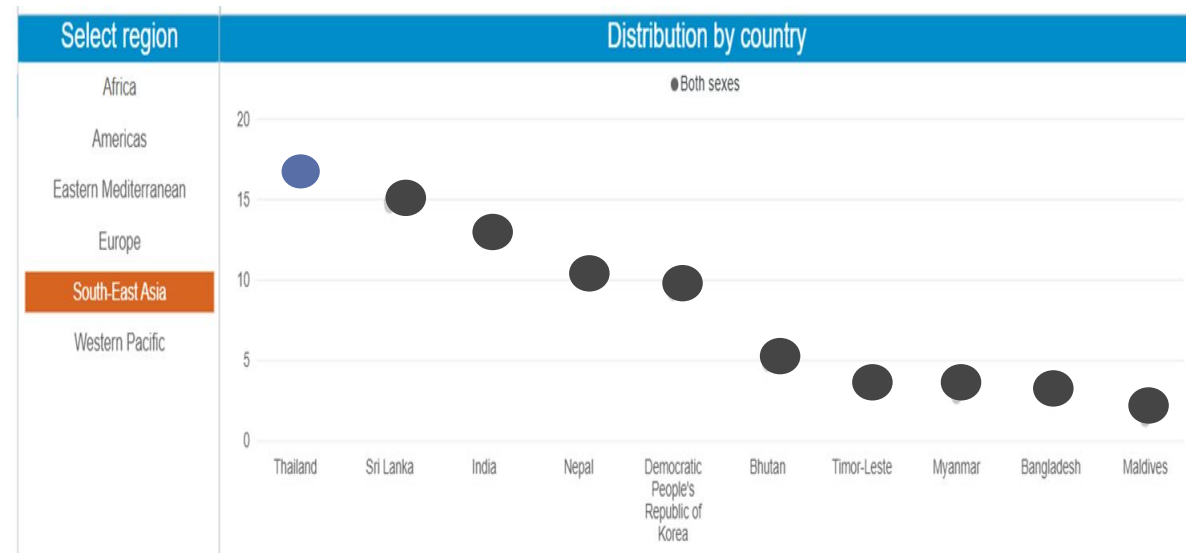
Suicide Rates in Thailand

Rates are Increasing Over Time

Thailand: Crude Suicide Mortality Rate (per 100,000 Population)
Available Years: 2018-2021



Rates are Highest Among ASEAN Countries





Risk Factors for Suicide

Risk Factors



**Psychiatric
Factors**



**Demographic
Characteristics**



**Socioeconomic
Factors**



**Health
System Factors**



**Situational
& Life
Stressors**



**Means of
Suicide**

Risk Factors



Demographic Characteristics

Demographics: LGBTQ+ Individuals



- Research from many parts of the world has documented higher rates of suicidality among LGBTQ+ individuals (Marchi et al., 2025).

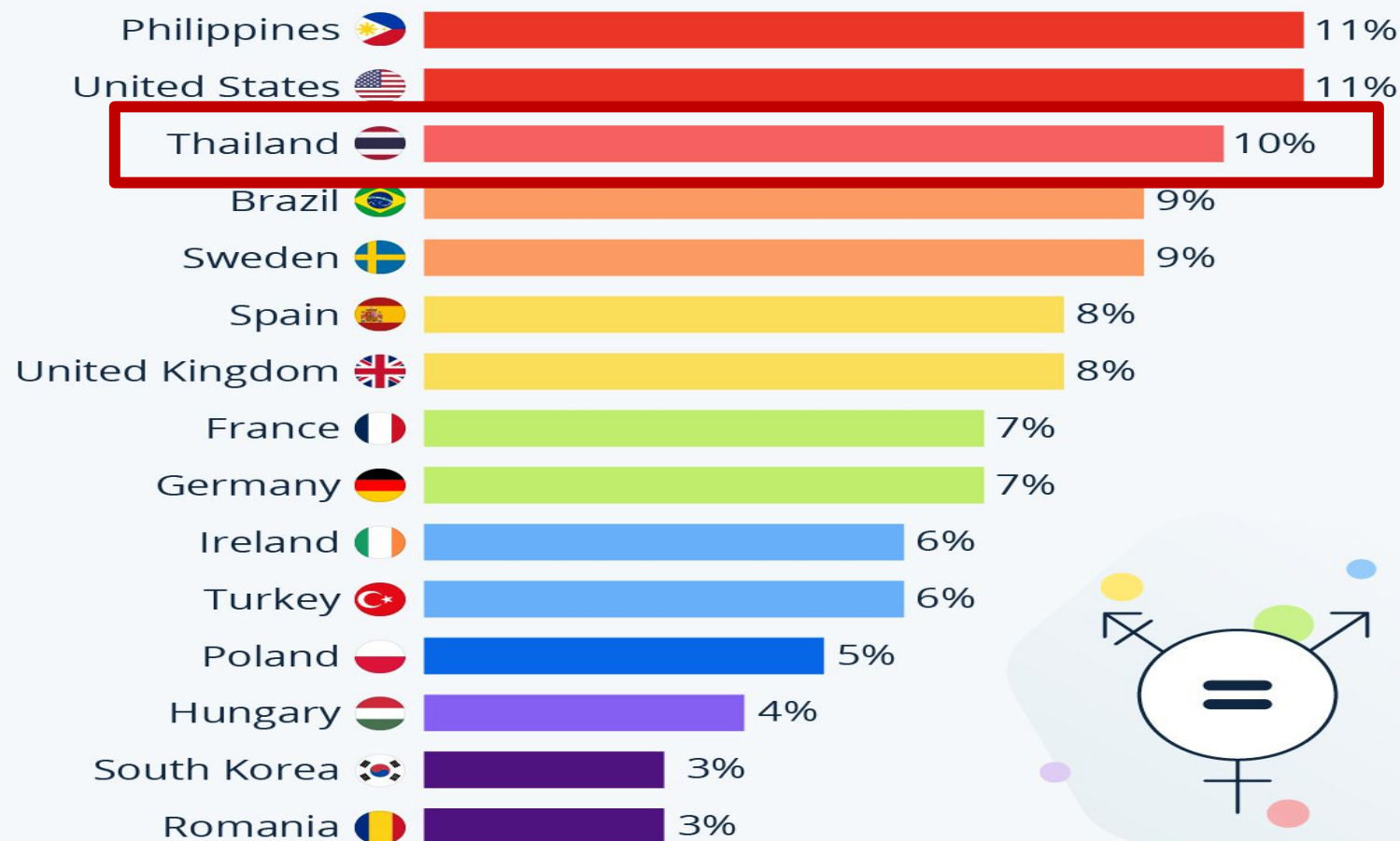


Global Estimates

About 8% of the global population identifies as LGBT+

Where It's Most & Least Common to Be LGBT+

Share of respondents who identify as LGBT+, by country

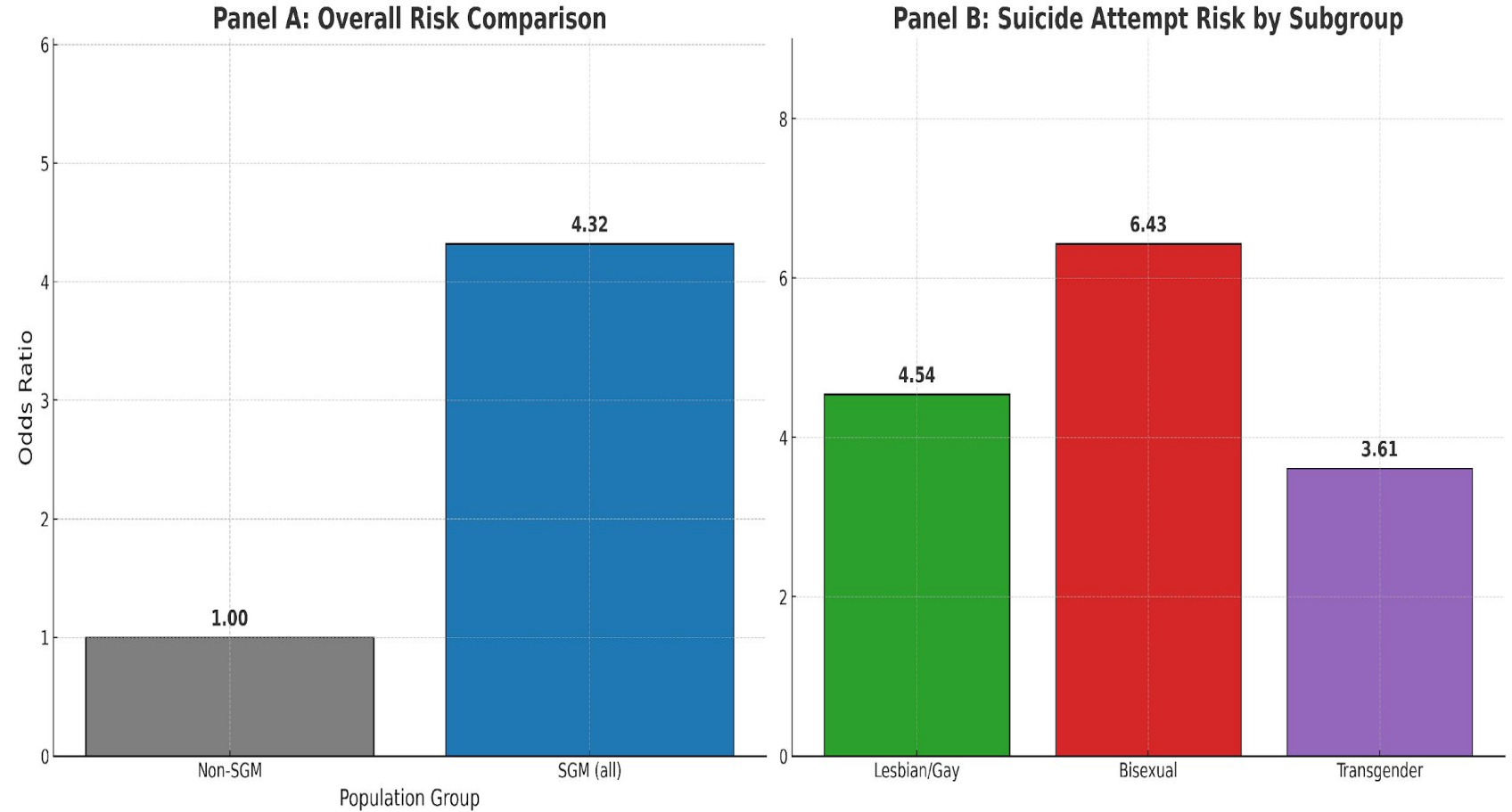


2,000 - 60,300 respondents (18 - 64 y/o) Apr. 2023 - Mar. 2024
Source: Statista Consumer Insights



LGBTQ+ and Suicide Disparities

Global Odds of Suicide Attempts Among LGBTQ+/SGM Adults vs Non-SGM Adults
(Marchi et al., 2025)

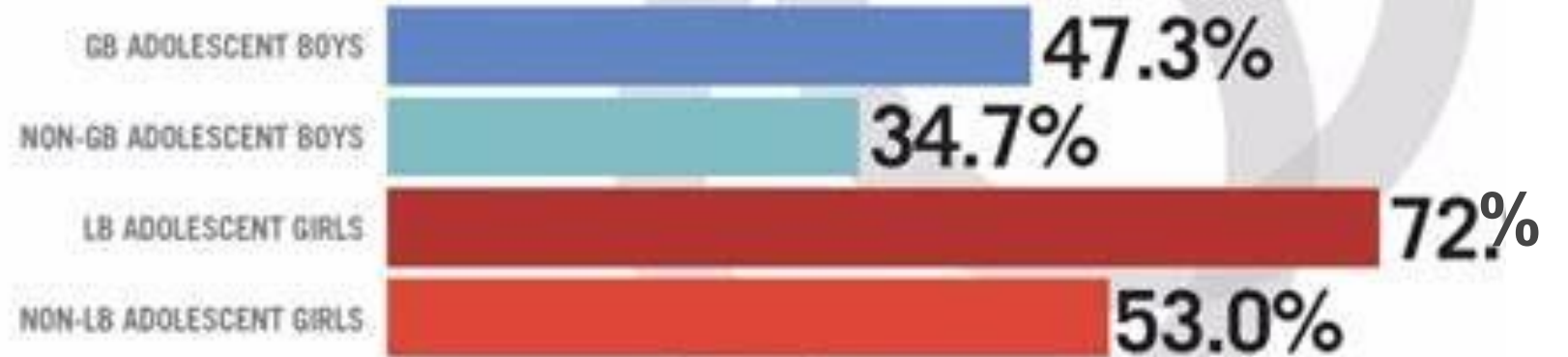


Source: Marchi M. et al. (2025), International Journal of Social Psychiatry, DOI:10.1177/00207640251367069.

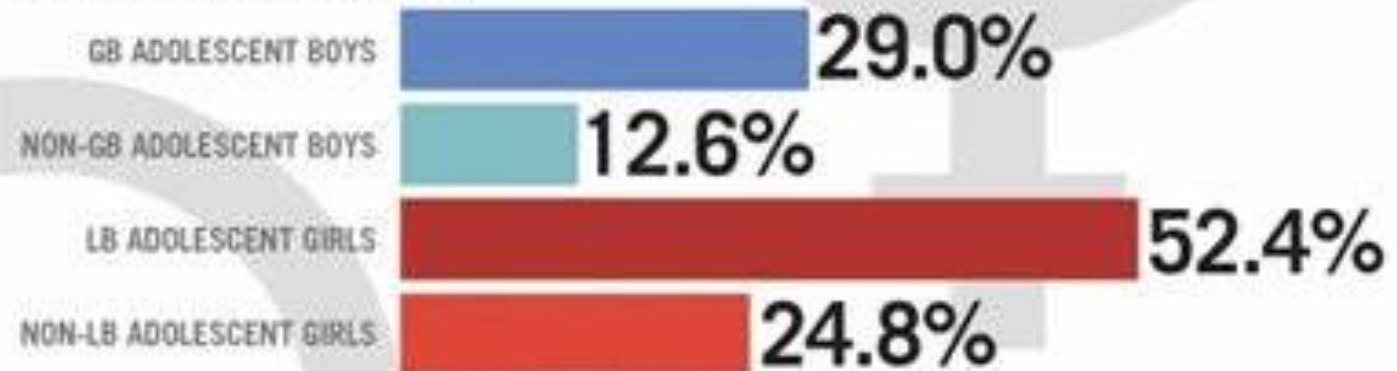
Note: Only suicide attempts had sufficient data for pooled global estimates.

Suicidality Among Adolescents

Thought About Suicide



Attempted Suicide





Understanding Suicidality Risk among LGBTQ+ Individuals

Individual-Level Risk Factors

- ☐ Prior suicide attempt
- ☐ Poor emotion regulation
- ☐ Chronic pain or illness
- ☐ Psychiatric disorder
- ☐ History of trauma



INDIVIDUAL RISK FACTORS ARE IMPORTANT. HOWEVER, THEY ONLY TELL US WHO AND NOT WHY

Social Determinants of Health (SDOH)



- The SDOH are recognized as the factors responsible for individual-level differences in health.
- The SDOH are the conditions and environments in which people live their lives.
- The SDOH include five key domains:
 - Economic stability
 - Education
 - Neighborhood and physical environment
 - Community and social context
 - Health care system

Community and Social Context

- Research suggests a strong and detrimental effect of **social factors** on health and well-being.
 - Discrimination
 - Social rejection and exclusion
 - Violence exposure
- Social factors are known to increase mental health disparities among LGBTQ+ individuals.





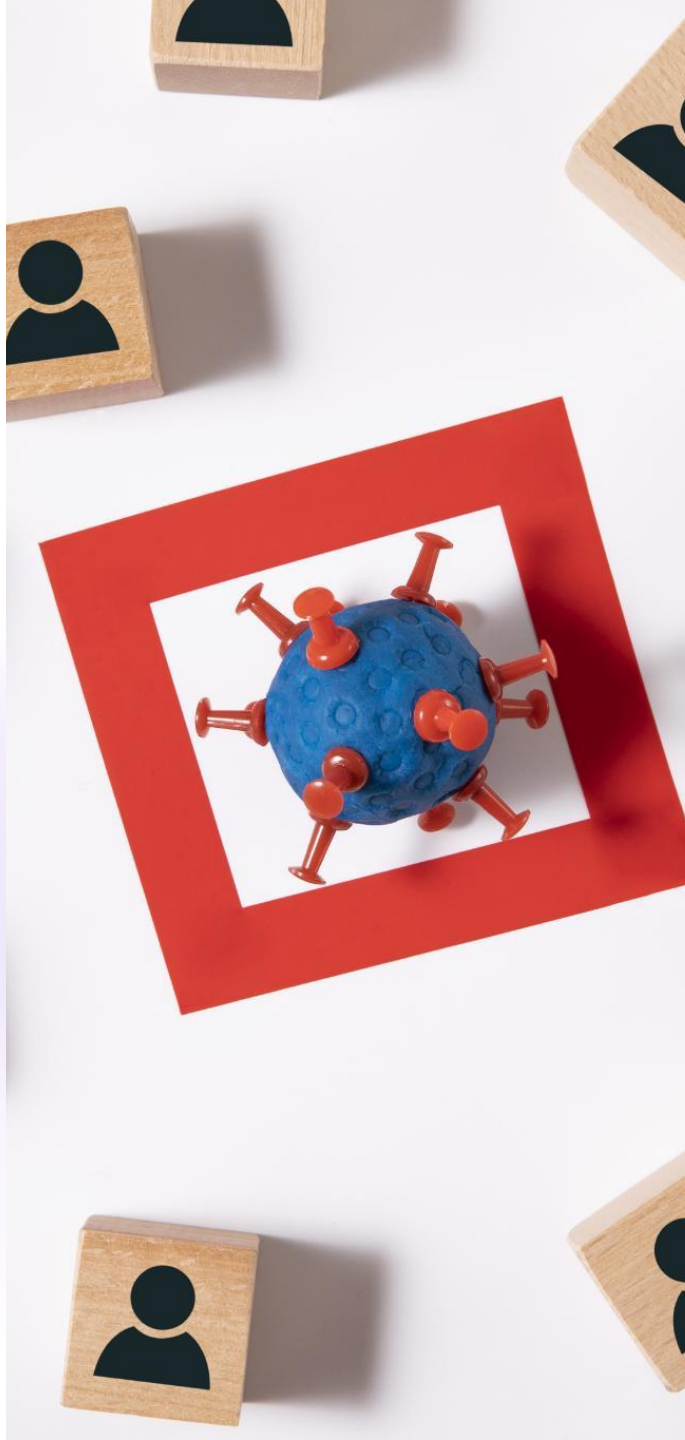
Discrimination and social exclusion as primary risk factors

Impact of Discrimination

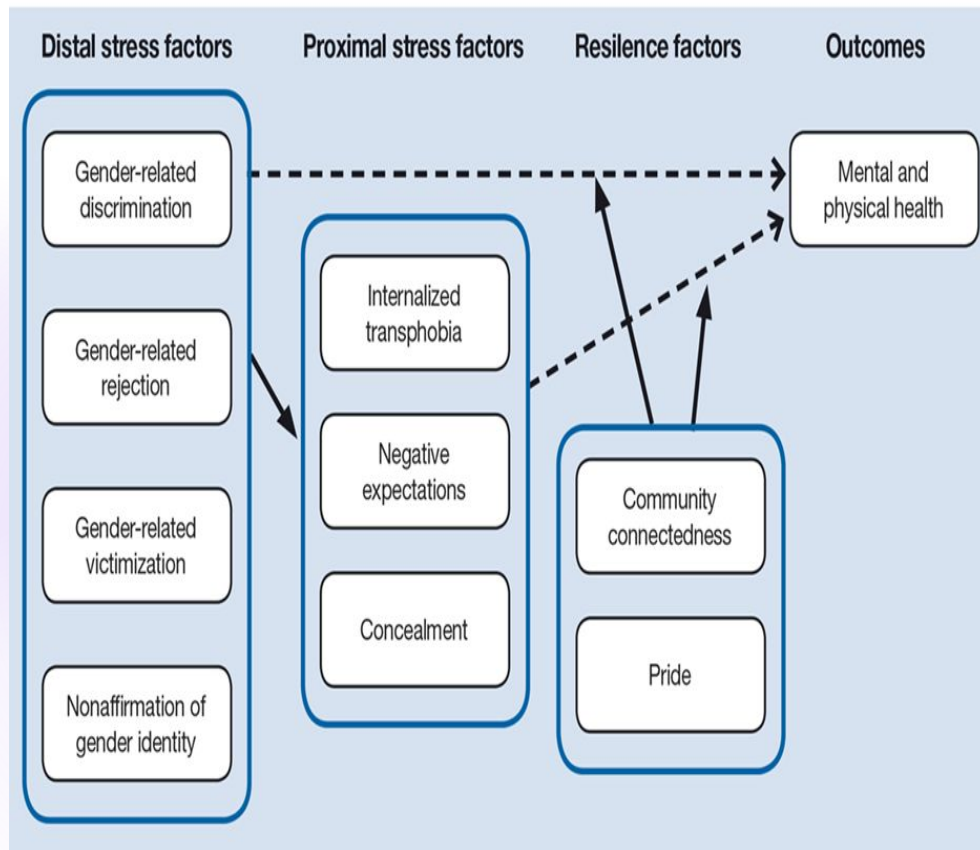
Discrimination leads to bullying, harassment, and denial of services, increasing mental health risks in LGBTQ populations.

Consequences of Social Exclusion

Social exclusion causes isolation, reduced support, and internalized stigma, elevating psychological distress.



Conceptual framework linking discrimination to poor mental health



Minority Stress Theory Overview

The theory explains how stigma and discrimination create chronic stress for minority groups and impacts mental health.

External and Internal Stressors

External stressors include discrimination and harassment; internal stressors involve internalized stigma and identity concealment.

Mental Health Impacts

Chronic stress from minority stressors leads to increased depression, anxiety, and suicidality risks.

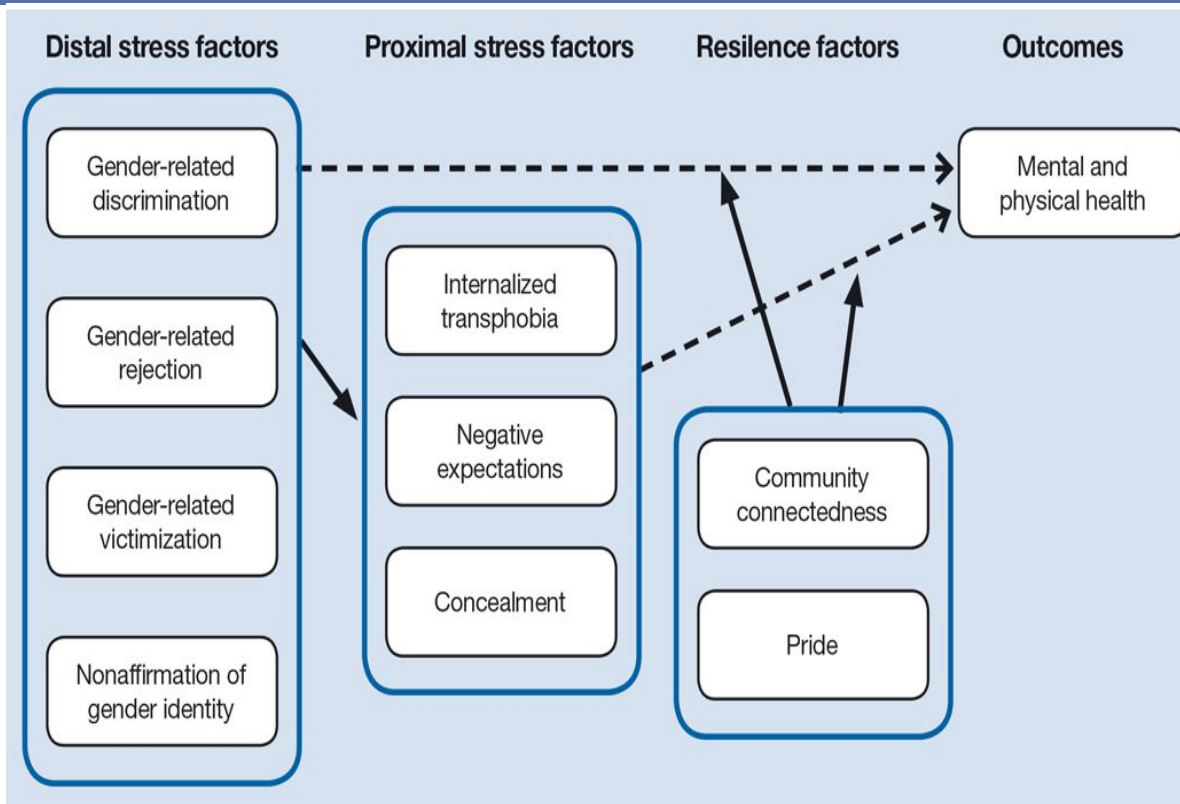
Importance of Social Context

The social environment influences mental health outcomes, underscoring the need for structural interventions.

Minority Stress Theory (Meyer, 2003)

MST explores how the experiences of social factors - stigma and discrimination - impact mental health

Social Factors



- De Lange et al. (2022) conducted a meta-analysis that examined 44 studies focusing on LGBT adolescents and young adults.
- **Distal minority stressors—such as bias-based victimization, bullying, and negative family treatment—increased risks of suicidality.**

Gaps in the Literature: Underrepresentation of Globally Diverse Samples

- Nearly all studies are conducted in **Western, English-speaking countries**, particularly the U.S.
- There's limited exploration of how minority stress and suicide risk operate in **non-Western or legally hostile environments**.



ORIGINAL ARTICLE

The influence of minority stress on indicators of suicidality among lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender adults in Thailand

Priyoth Kittiteerasack✉, Alicia K. Matthews, Alana Steffen, Colleen Corte, Linda L. McCreary, Wendy Bostwick, Chang Park, Timothy P. Johnson

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THE INFLUENCE OF MINORITY STRESS ON LEVEL OF DEPRESSION AMONG THAI LGBT ADULTS

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RESEARCH REPORTS

Loneliness mediates the association of minority stress and depression in sexual and gender minority populations in Thailand

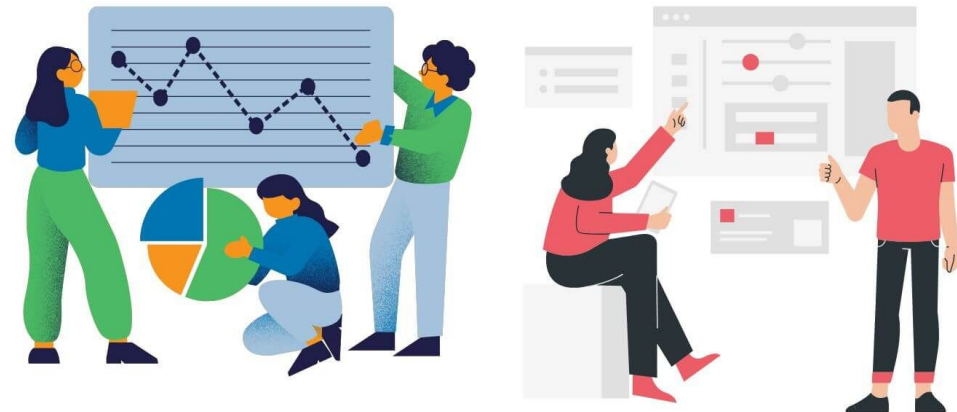
Priyoth Kittiteerasack✉, Alicia K. Matthews, Alana D. Steffen

First published: 03 August 2022 | <https://doi.org/10.1002/nur.22255>

Study of Suicidality among LGBTQ+ Individuals in Thailand (N = 411)

- Cross-sectional descriptive survey study
- Thai LGBTQ+ adults (N=411)
- Recruited from 7 Rainbow Sky Association clinics
- Measures:
 - Mental health
 - Minority stressors
- Demographics
 - Age = 29 years
 - Male = 90%
 - College education = 77%

Research Design



Minority Stressors

High Stress = 57.4%

Discrimination = 53.7%

Victimization = 76.2%

Internalized homophobia = 30.6%

Hopelessness = 37.7%

Loneliness = 42.3%

Rates of Suicidality

Lifetime suicidal ideation = 39.0%

Past 12-month suicidal ideation = 19.0%

Lifetime suicide attempt = 13.1%

Future risk for suicide (Yes to 12-month SI
OR past attempt) = 25%

Correlates of Suicide Risk

Social Risk Factors

- Discrimination
- Victimization
- Victimization Worry
- Level of Outness

Psychological Risk Factors

- Stress
- Social Isolation
- Loneliness
- Hopelessness





SUICIDE PREVENTION

IMPLICATIONS

Strategies for Education, Practice, Care, and Policy

Inclusive Nursing Education

Nursing curricula should integrate LGBTQ mental health and suicide prevention to prepare nurses effectively.

Supportive Practice Environments

Foster psychological safety for staff and patients through inclusive and supportive practice settings.

Trauma-Informed Patient Care

Employ trauma-informed and culturally sensitive care to support marginalized individuals effectively.

Advocacy and Policy Change

Nurses should advocate for anti-discrimination laws and increased mental health funding for systemic change.



Implications for Community Engagement



Increase Awareness in LGBTQ+ Communities of Risk Factors and Warning Signs

Implications for Research

- Additional research is needed to understand risk and protective factors better.
- Culturally targeted mental health treatments are needed.
- Family and community-based approaches are needed to reduce discrimination and social exclusion.





Actionable insights for nursing practice

Early Identification and Screening

Integrate mental health screening into routine nursing assessments to identify suicidality early and provide timely support.

Inclusive and Stigma-Free Care

Create safe, stigma-free environments and use trauma-informed, culturally sensitive approaches, especially for LGBTQ populations.

Education and Advocacy

Educate patients and families about mental health resources and suicide prevention while advocating for systemic policy changes.

“Mental health is an integral part of our general health and well-being, and a basic human right.” WHO

*“**Stigma, discrimination, and violence** against LGBTQ+ individuals undermine their health and violate their human rights.” – WHO, 2022*



**World Health
Organization**

THANK
YOU!

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