Author's response to reviews

Title: Factors associated with suicidal behaviors in mainland China ---a meta-analysis

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Author's response to reviews:

Dear Prof Jukka Hintikka and Mr Jimmar Dizon,
We do appreciate you and reviewer for the kind comments and suggestions. We revised our manuscript according to the reviewer’s suggestions and answered questions point by point (we added them in the second page). We asked for help with language from the Edanz (www.edanzediting.com/bmc1) again. Thank you again!
Best wishes
Yours sincerely
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Response to reviewers
Reviewer’s report:
The revised manuscript is much better than before. The authors answered the reviewer’s questions properly. However, I think the authors need to pay attention to the grammatically incorrect and the continuity of the language, which I have made some examples as below:

#Abstract
1#Result: “In China, based on pre-2000 data, … while post-2000 data indicated that gender had no effect on completed suicide.” suggested to be change to “In China, before 2000, females had a significantly higher rate of completed suicide than males, while after 2000, no significant gender difference was found.”
---We do thank you for your good suggestion, we changed this sentence.

#Introduction
The whole introduction needs to re-construct to improve the languages’ continuity,

1#the second paragraph: “China has long been recognized as one of the countries with the highest suicide rate…”had syntax errors.( one of … the highest???).
-----Thank you! We rewrote this sentence as follows: “China has long been recognized as having a high suicide rate, with 21 percent of the world’s population, but 30–40 percent of the world’s suicides”

#Methods:
1#selection of studies:” The inclusion criteria addressed all study types.” What does it mean??
-----This sentence means we included cross-sectional, case-control, and cohort studies if we can identified from literatures. We changed it into “Studied design included cross-sectional, case-control, and cohort studies”. Thank you!
2#selection of studies: “studies designed with the purpose of analyzing risk behaviors other than suicide among Chinese people, but that included suicide ideation, suicide attempt or completed suicide, were included in the meta-analysis.” What does it mean?
---Thank you, we rewrote this sentence as follows: “We also included the studies that were designed with the original purpose of analyzing risk behaviors other than suicide among Chinese people, but the information on the risk factors for suicide ideation, suicide attempt or completed suicide were provided”.

Discussion
The whole discussion is too vague, each paragraph in this part, the authors wrote in the same way# previous studies indicated…..were risk factors of suicide, in our meta analysis, we also found …, I suggest the author giving a deepen discussion. Besides, syntax errors also need to be corrected.

1#Second paragraph:” In the subgroup analysis, … which hinted that the impact of gender on suicide in China is gradually decreasing. ” I think this sentence is
wrong. The results indicated females’ risk was decreasing, but it doesn’t have the same mean to males.

---Thank you for your good question. From Zhang et al. report, suicide rate of both females and males was decreasing between 1987 and 2008, but decrease in female suicide rate is more than males. (Zhang J, Jing J, Wu XY, Sun WW, Wang CT: A Sociological Analysis of the Decline in the Suicide Rate in China. Social Sciences in China 2011; 5:97-113)

2#Second paragraph:" … which is due the economic development … ” I should be change to“ which is due to the economic development …”

----Thank you for your good suggestion. We change this sentence according to your kind suggestion.

3#Third paragraph:" The socio-family environment... is significantly associated with a higher risk of completed suicide” should be change to” ... were significantly associated ...”, The same errors were also found in other place in this manuscript. For example, Second paragraph:"Previous reviews also reported..., are…”,”the fifth paragraph’ etc.

---Thank you so much! We check through the whole manuscript in order to correct this kind of mistakes.

4#Fourth paragraph:" However, the included studies measured mood disorder subjectively as with/without sadness, depression, and despair.” I can not understand it in this context.

--- We are sorry we did not describe the idea clear. We mean the included studies did not quantify psychiatric/psychological factors, just qualitatively measured them using with/without sadness, depression, and despair. We rewrite this sentence and the last sentence as follows: “However, the included studies qualitatively described mood disorders using with/without sadness, depression, and despair, rather than quantitatively measured it with a standard instrument, which may result in different criteria implemented in different studies to decide with or without these mood disorders. Therefore, a standard scale in the future study is needed for measuring mood disorders in order to compare between studies.” We hope it is clearer now.

5#The last paragraph: “Second, risk assessment is necessary to identify modifiable or treatable high-risk factors and available protective factors.” Does it mean risk assessment is not necessary to identify unmodifiable or untreatable high-risk factors…?

---Thank you for your question. We didn’t express the meaning clear. We means to identify modifiable or treatable high-risk factors and available protective factors are more important than to identify unmodifiable or untreatable high-risk factors because we can take countermeasures addressing the former. We changed this sentence into “Second, risk assessment is more necessary to identify modifiable or treatable high-risk factors and available protective factors in order to take effective countermeasures”

6#The last paragraph: “Third, to make reliable inferences on cause-effect mechanisms, case-control or cohort studies are needed.” It is not identified by
your study, it is an essential condition when making causality inferences.

---Thank you for your good suggestion. In this study, we found the present studies were cross-sectional studies, cross-sectional studies can not provide very strong evidence in terms of cause-effect inferences, so we suggested further studies should consider case-control or cohort studies. We didn’t express this ideal clearly and changed the sentence into “Most of the present studies were cross-sectional studies, therefore the future researches designed with case-control or cohort studies are needed in order to make reliable inferences on cause-effect mechanisms”.

7# The last paragraph “Because there are many factors associated with suicide, preventive programs that simultaneously address these multiple factors would be most appropriate for use in China, what does it mean?

---Thank you for your question. We apologize that we didn’t express the meaning clear. We changed it into “Intervention programs in China that simultaneously address multiple factors associated with suicide would be most appropriate since suicide is multi-factorial health problem”

Totally, the question posed by the authors are well defined, the method is appropriate, but I don’t think the writing is acceptable, especially the introduction and the discussion, in which the language lack of logicality and continuity, therefore, I highly suggest the author reconstruct those parts.