Methodological Quality Assessment of Observational Studies: Legend

Cohort		Cross-sectional		Case-control	
External validity *(The extent to which the results of the study provide a correct basis for applicability to other circumstances)*					
1	Representativeness of the sample for the target population	1	Representativeness of the sample for the target population		
2	What percentage of selected individuals agreed to participate? **(in baseline cross-sectional where applicable)**	2	What percentage of selected individuals agreed to participate?	1	What percentage of cases and controls selected agreed to participate? **(in baseline cross-sectional where applicable)**
Internal validity *(The extent to which systematic error, bias, is minimised in a study)*					
Performance Bias *(Systematic differences in Measurement of Exposure)*					
1	How was circumcision status ascertained?	1	How was circumcision status ascertained?	1	How was circumcision status ascertained?
		2	Were assessors of circumcision status blindedto HIV status?	2	Were assessors of circumcision status blinded to HIV status?
				3	Was the same method of ascertainment of circumcision status used for cases and controls?
Detection Bias *(Systematic differences in outcome assessment)*					
2	How was HIV status ascertained?	3	How was HIV status ascertained?	4	How was HIV status ascertained?
3	How was HIV status confirmed?	4	How was HIV status confirmed?	5	How was HIV status confirmed?
4	Were assessors of HIV status blinded to circumcision status?	5	Were assessors of HIV status blinded to circumcision status?	6	Were assessors of HIV status blinded to circumcision status?
Attrition bias *(Systematic differences in follow-up)*					
5	Were both groups followed-up for the same amount of time?				
6	Adequacy of follow-up of cohorts percentage of participants included in the final analysis)	6	Percentage of participants included in the final analysis?	7	Percentage of participants included in the final analysis: percentage HIV positive participants (cases)? Percentage HIV negative participants (controls)?
Selection Bias / Control of confounding *(Systematic differences in comparison groups)*					
7	Demonstration that no person was HIV positive at the start of the study			8	How were the cases selected?
				9	How was the control group selected?