Evidence Project Risk of Bias Tool: Instructions for completion

First author's last name: record the last name of the first author of the article/report

Year of publication: record the year the article/report was published

Title of article/report: record the article/report title

Cohort (Y/N): If the study includes a cohort that completed both the baseline assessment and the follow-up assessment(s), record Y (yes). If the study used a serial-cross sectional design with different individuals (even if they are from the same population) completing the assessments, record N (No).

Control or comparison group (Y/N): If the study included a control and/or comparison arm in addition to the intervention arm, record Y. If the study only had an intervention arm, record N.

Pre/post data (Y/N): If the study presented data from both before (baseline) and after the intervention, record Y. If data are only presented post-intervention, record N. Note that this is any data from before and after the intervention; it does not need to be with the same individuals (i.e., it could be from a serial cross-sectional study rather than a pre/post study).

Random assignment to intervention (Y/N/NA/Unclear/NR): In multi-armed study designs, if participants are randomly assigned to the intervention and control/comparison arm, record Y. This is true for both individual and group randomized designs. If participants self-select into the intervention or if assignment to the intervention is not random, record N. If the study does not have a separate control or comparison group, record N/A. If you cannot tell whether there was random assignment based on information provided in the article, record Unclear. If nothing was reported related to this question, put NR (for “not reported”).

Random selection of participants for assessment (Y/N/Unclear/NR): If authors use a probability sample to select participants (defined as a study in which the investigators pre-assess a sampling frame and randomly select groups or people from the specified population), record Y. Similarly, if authors use a mixed sampling strategy, (for example, they have a non-probability sample of schools but then within schools randomly select students), then also record Y because they randomly selected participants for assessment at some level (i.e., at one sampling frame). If authors used a non-probability sample (defined as a study in which the investigators use convenience or self-selected sampling strategies), record N. If you cannot tell whether a probability or non-probability sample was used based on the information provided in the article, record Unclear. If nothing was reported related to this question, put NR (for “not reported”).

Follow-up rate of 80% or more (Y/N/NA/Unclear/NR): If the study had a follow-up rate of 80% or more, record Y. If the follow-up rate was less than 75%, record N. This should be from baseline to the first follow-up. For studies that are post-intervention only or serial cross-sectional in nature, record N/A. If the authors do not report the follow-up rate, or if you cannot tell what the follow-up rate was based on the information provided in the article, record Unclear. If nothing was reported related to this question, put NR (for “not reported”).

Comparison groups equivalent on sociodemographics (Y/N/NA/Unclear/NR): Socio-demographic characteristics include things like age, gender, occupation, etc. If the study arms (i.e. intervention and control or comparison groups) are equivalent on socio-demographic characteristics, record Y. If there are significant differences between one or more of the study arms on socio-demographic characteristics, record N. If there are multiple measurements of socio-demographic characteristics, use the baseline measurement. If the study does not have a separate control or comparison group (Ex: pre/post studies), record N/A. If the study has a control or comparison group but the authors don’t report whether the groups were equivalent on socio-demographics, or if you cannot tell whether they are equivalent based on information provided in the article, record Unclear. If nothing was reported related to this question, put NR (for “not reported”).

Comparison groups equivalent on baseline outcome measures (Y/N/NA/Unclear/NR): If the study arms are equivalent on outcome measures at baseline, record Y. If there are significant differences between one or more of the study arms on outcome measures at baseline, record N. If the study does not have a separate control or comparison group, record N/A. If the study has a control or comparison group but the authors don’t report whether the groups were equivalent on outcome measures at baseline, or if you cannot tell whether they are equivalent based on information provided in the article, record Unclear. If nothing was reported related to this question, put NR (for “not reported”).