



Consideration of Values When Setting Research Priorities

A value-oriented guidance tool for priority-setting exercises

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Hasselt University (Belgium)	28-29 November 2023



priorities
↔
values





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KNOWLEDGE IN ACTION

MISSING VALUES



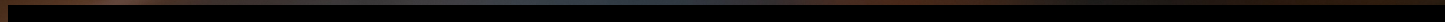
**Lost: values relevant to research priority setting
in nutrition reserach. Stakeholders suffer.**

If found, please contact GFBR

SUBSTANTIAL REWARD



gaining insight...

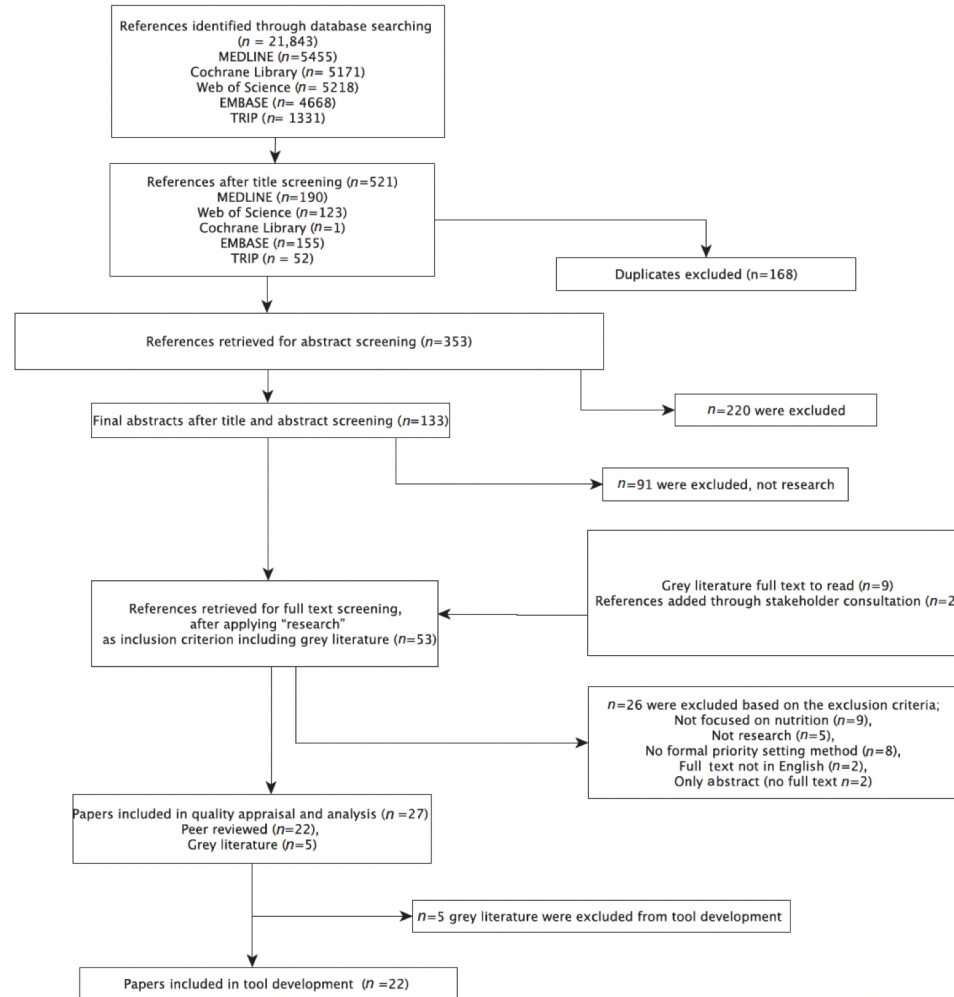




hard choices
&
difficult trade-offs

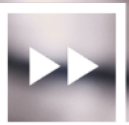


scoping review – nutrition research



heterogeneity of teams & topics





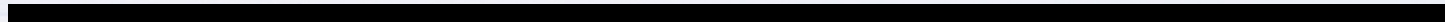
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lack of
systematic
approaches



extracting values



8 clusters

Value	Pure basic research	Pure applied research
Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Dissemination – Research translation – Timeliness – Answerability (21, 23–25, 35–42, 44–49) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Commitment – Effectiveness – Acceptability – Community concerns and demands – Accessibility – Affordability – Education prevention (16–17, 21–25, 35, 37–38, 40–42, 44–48)
Understanding of the problem	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Long-term consequences – Burden – Comprehensiveness (Global) – Quantification – Specificity (16–17, 21–25, 35–49) 	—
Feasibility	Research infrastructure (16, 21, 23–25, 36, 38, 40, 42–43, 46–47)	Infrastructures <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Deliverability – Expertise – Funding – Network (16–17, 21–25, 35, 37–38, 40–49)
Efficacy—cost effectiveness	—	Applied research is carried out in the most cost-effective way (24–25, 41–42, 46–48)
Equity	Equal opportunities for all ethnic groups to conduct research, equal inclusion of all ethnic groups and vulnerable groups in research addressing nutrition problems (23, 43)	Equal opportunities for all ethnic groups to implement research, equal inclusion of all ethnic groups and vulnerable groups in research implementation addressing nutrition problems (23–25, 35, 37, 40–41, 43, 45, 47–49)
Sound methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Measurability – Validity – Appropriateness – Reliability – Standardization of definitions and cutoff – Representative – Participatory research – Social grounding and perceptions – Transparency (16, 21–25, 35, 37–44, 47–48) 	Accountability Safety (do no harm) (16, 22, 24–25, 35–37, 44, 48)
Sustainability	Doing research to evaluate and monitor the implemented interventions (21, 47)	Respect for environment Adaptability Prevention Capacity building Education Evaluation and monitoring (16, 21–25, 35, 37–40, 42–45, 47–49)
Novelty	Exploring new methods, new approaches, and new interventions (16, 22–24, 37–40, 43–44, 46–49)	

feasibility - impact - accountability



Value		Relevance	Decision/points to consider
FEASIBILITY			
Answerable	The research hypothesis is both clear and has the potential to be answered	<input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> NA	
Realistic	The infrastructure to undertake the research is considered (e.g., funding, expertise, sufficient prior knowledge, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> NA	
	The infrastructure necessary to deliver the applied research is considered (e.g., funding, expertise, network, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> NA	
Supported	The necessary stakeholders (e.g., government, funders, researchers) commit to the implementation	<input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> NA	
TBD	<i>(Empty row to add a value)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> NA	
IMPACT			
Relevant	The research advances scientific knowledge and/or practice (e.g., definition, burden, scope) and is addressed at a suitable moment in time e.g., there is a sense of urgency	<input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> NA	
Practice-oriented	Translation and implementation of research results are considered	<input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> NA	
Accessible	The accessibility of the applied research (e.g., affordability, proximity, reachability) by the target population is maximized	<input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> NA	
Effective	The research has the potential to achieve the desired outcomes	<input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> NA	
Context-sensitive	Social or cultural disapproval by the target population <i>and</i> demands and preferences of the target population are taken into account	<input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> NA	
Specific	Research is sufficiently targeted/focused to certain problems/populations/contexts	<input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> NA	
Comprehensive	A wide range of relevant elements (scope, long-term effects, contextual approach) are considered in the research	<input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> NA	
	If applied, different approaches including preventive approaches are considered	<input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> NA	
Empowering	The pure research enables the target population to promote their own health (e.g., through prevention, improved capacities for self-care)	<input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> NA	
Innovative	The research topics go beyond traditional methods, approaches, and thinking around the topic	<input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> NA	
TBD	<i>(Empty row to add a value)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> NA	
ACCOUNTABILITY			
Reported	Dissemination of research findings beyond the research team is anticipated (e.g., publication, public presentation)	<input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> NA	
Transparent	Research data, methods, and evidence are publicly reported	<input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> NA	
Sound	The research uses appropriate, valid, and reliable methods	<input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> NA	
Environmental friendly	The research takes into account environmental sustainability and minimizes environmental harm	<input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> NA	
Cost-effective	Efficient use of resources to achieve the maximum impact	<input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> NA	
Sustainable	The applied research targets long-term improvements (e.g., capacity-building, adaptability)	<input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> NA	
Quality assured	The research has a monitoring and evaluation plan	<input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> NA	
	The applied research has a monitoring and evaluation plan	<input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> NA	
Inclusive	The research adopts participatory approaches in which different stakeholders are represented	<input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> NA	
	If it is applied research, it is not increasing inequity in society and seeks to maximize fairness	<input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> NA	
TBD	<i>(Empty row to add a value)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> NA	

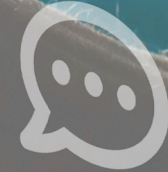
¹ NA, Not Applicable; TBD, To Be Determined.



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FEEDBACK





open-ended
approach



setting priorities

Value		Relevance	Decision/points to consider
FEASIBILITY			
Answerable	The research hypothesis is both clear and has the potential to be answered	<input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> NA	
Realistic	The infrastructure to undertake the research is considered (e.g., funding, expertise, sufficient prior knowledge, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> NA	
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TBD	<i>(Empty row to add a value)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> NA	



Thank you!

PERSPECTIVE 

Perspective: Consideration of Values When Setting Priorities in Nutrition Research: Guidance for Transparency

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ABSTRACT

Nutrition research can guide interventions to tackle the burden of diet-related diseases. Setting priorities in nutrition research, however, requires the engagement of various stakeholders with diverse insights. Consideration of what matters most in research from a scientific, social, and ethical perspective is therefore not an automatic process. Systematic ways to explicitly define and consider relevant values are largely lacking. Here, we review existing nutrition research priority-setting exercises, analyze how values are reported, and provide guidance for transparent consideration of values while setting priorities in nutrition research. Of the 27 ($n = 22$ peer-reviewed manuscripts and 5 grey literature documents) studies reviewed, 40.7% used a combination of different methods, 59.3% described the represented stakeholders, and 49.1% reported on follow-up activities. All priority-setting exercises were led by research groups based in high-income countries. Via an iterative qualitative content analysis, reported values were identified ($n = 22$ manuscripts). Three clusters of values (i.e., those related to impact, feasibility, and accountability) were identified. These values were organized in a tool to help those involved in setting research priorities systematically consider and report values. The tool was finalized through an online consultation with 7 international stakeholders. The value-oriented tool for priority setting in nutrition research identifies and presents values that are already implicitly and explicitly represented in priority-setting exercises. It provides guidance to enable explicit deliberation on research priorities from an ethical perspective. In addition, it can serve as a reporting tool to document how value-laden choices are made during priority setting and help foster the accountability of stakeholders involved. *Adv Nutr* 2018;9:671–687.

Keywords: nutrition, priority setting, values, guidance, tool, ethics

Introduction

Poor diets are the leading risk factor for ill health and mortality worldwide (1). Nutrition epidemiology examines associations between diet and health, and informs actions to improve population well-being and health. Research

prioritization is key to make targeted choices, optimize the global investment, and accelerate progress in nutrition research in general. Research priority setting is a formal procedure of generating consensus about a set of research questions that are considered when guiding resource allocation (2). There is no golden standard to prioritize research. Many comprehensive approaches to health research prioritization exist and provide structured as well as flexible options for stakeholders to reach consensus (3).

Transparency about values that underlie this process is key (4). Values are “the things and events in life that people desire, aim at, wish for, or demand” (5). A proper and systematic consideration of values during the process of a priority-setting exercise has the potential to improve the quality of research by enhancing relevance, uptake, and societal impact (6, 7). Stakeholders involved in the process come with their own values and interests (8). Reflections on whose interests are served are relevant for readers and they enhance transparency and accountability.

Perspective articles allow authors to take a position on a topic of current major importance or controversy in the field of nutrition. As such, these articles could include statements based on author opinions or points of view (opinion articles) or those of the author and are not attributable to the funder(s) or the publisher, Editor, or Editorial Board of *Advances in Nutrition*. Individuals with different positions on the topic of a Perspective are invited to submit their comments in the form of a Perspectives article or in a Letter to the Editor.

Supported by a scholarship from the Schlumberger Foundation's Faculty for the Future Program (www.schlumberger.com) (to D.H.).

Author disclosures of potential conflicts of interest and author contributions are found at the end of this article. Address correspondence to C.L. (e-mail: carl.lachat@ugent.be).

Supplemental table 3 as MS word table is available from the “Supplementary data” link in the online posting of the article, and from the same link in the online table of contents at <https://academic.oup.com/advances/>.

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