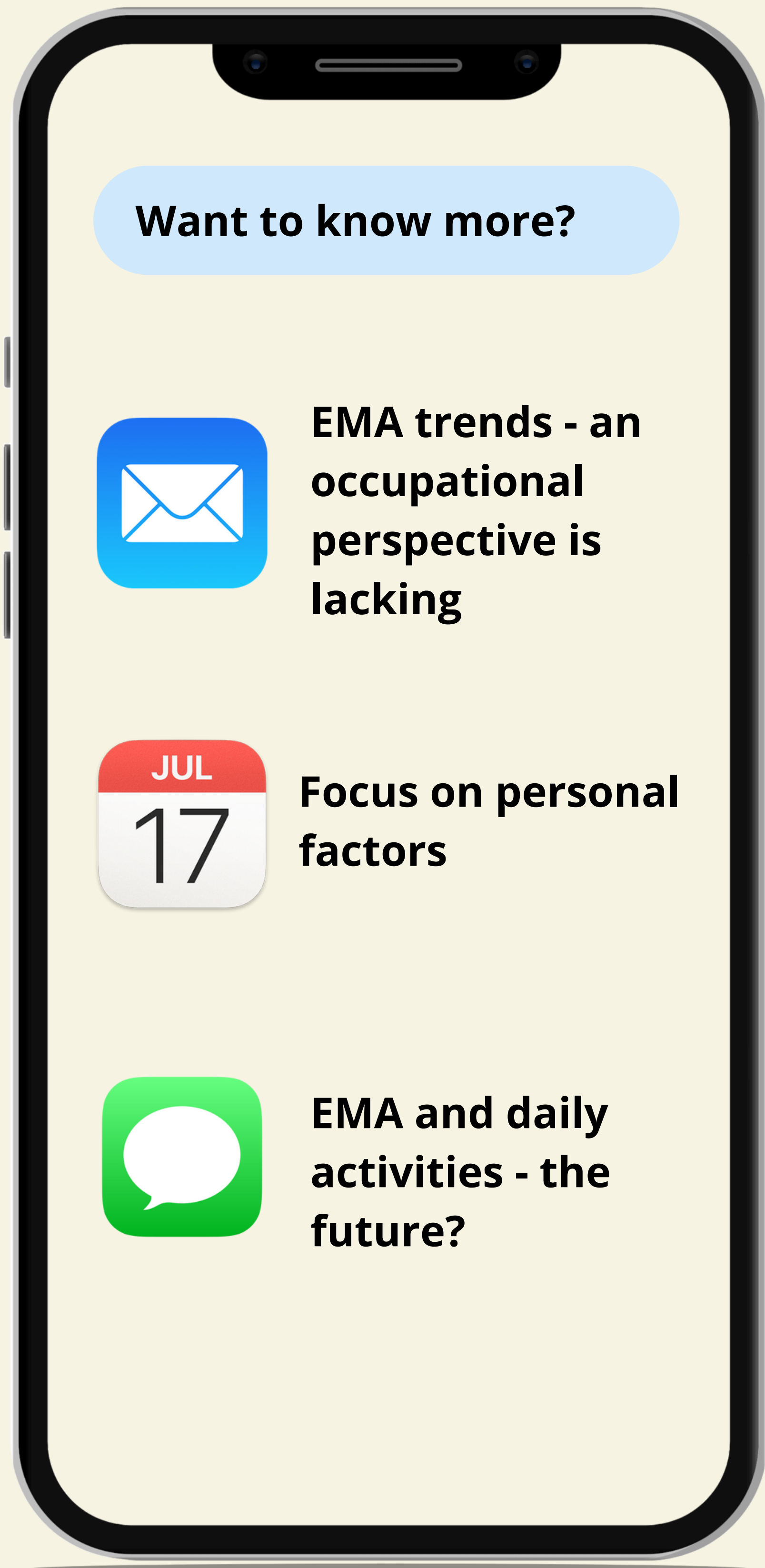


Understanding people’s lives as they live them

Monitoring daily activities with EMA: a bibliometric analysis

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EMA trends - an occupational perspective is lacking

Capturing and understanding real-life data is essential for fostering engagement in meaningful activities. Ecological Momentary Assessment (EMA) enables researchers to study occupations as they naturally occur, allowing participants to engage in their daily activities while briefly pausing to record experiences that happened just moments earlier.

A bibliometric study was conducted using Web of Science to explore trends in monitoring daily activities through EMA by analyzing existing literature.

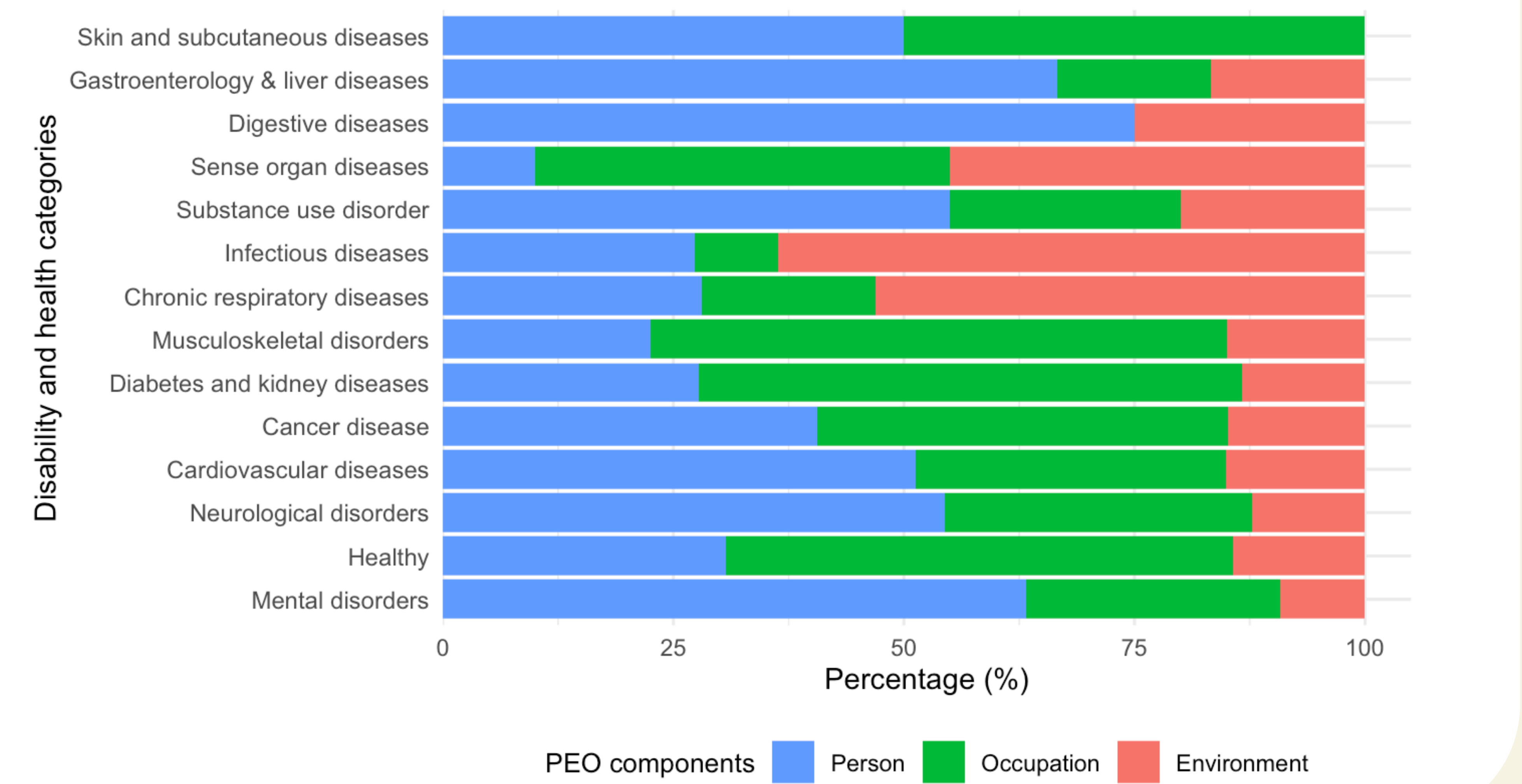


Focus on personal factors

A data search was conducted in Web of Science on February 17, 2025, using R software, identifying 3,693 publications. The analysis focused on (1) the distribution of disability and health populations, and (2) lived health and engagement in daily activities based on the PEO model.

The distribution of research focus across PEO components reveals three main patterns. Many studies emphasize personal factors, especially in digestive (75%), liver (66.7%) and mental (63.2%) disorders. Other domains highlight occupation (e.g., musculoskeletal disorders at 62.5%) or environmental factors (e.g., infectious diseases at 63.6%). Some areas, like skin and sense organ diseases, show more balanced or atypical distributions, with notable gaps in occupation or environment focus.

EMA studies on daily activities largely focus on personal factors then occupational and environmental dimensions



Want to know more?

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EMA and daily activities - the future?

This bibliometric analysis examined EMA research on daily activities in disability and health populations, guided by the PEO model. The findings show a strong focus on personal factors, with limited attention to occupation and environmental contexts. Mental disorders dominate the field, comprising around 75% of EMA studies, while neurological disorders receive only 3% of the focus. This likely reflects EMA’s origins in psychology, where self-report is central. Nonetheless, EMA offers untapped potential to monitor real-world functioning in neurological and other underrepresented health domains.