

Childhood Neglect and Pain-Related Outcomes Among Older Adults

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01. Background

Within the limited literature examining adversity among older adults with chronic pain, studies have focused on sexual abuse as an adverse childhood experience but have not examined other adverse childhood events such as emotional and physical neglect.

02. Objective

Examine the role of childhood neglect on pain-related outcomes among older adults.

03. Methods

Participant recruitment (N = 14) involved advertisements of the study purpose and inclusion criteria. Participants included Canadian older adults (i.e., at least 65 years of age) living with chronic pain. Participants were asked to complete a set of online questionnaires consisting of questions on childhood adversity, resilience, and pain.

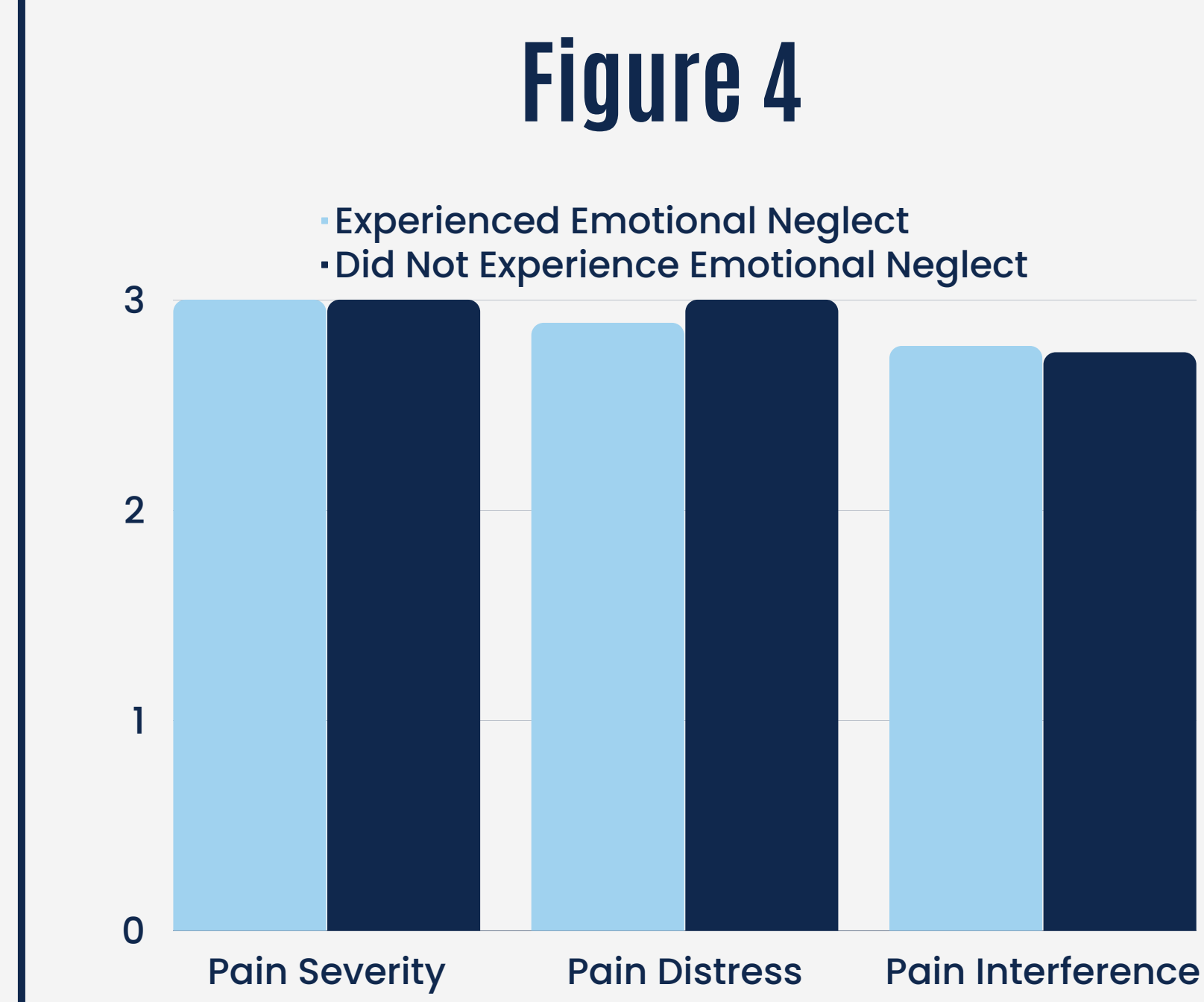
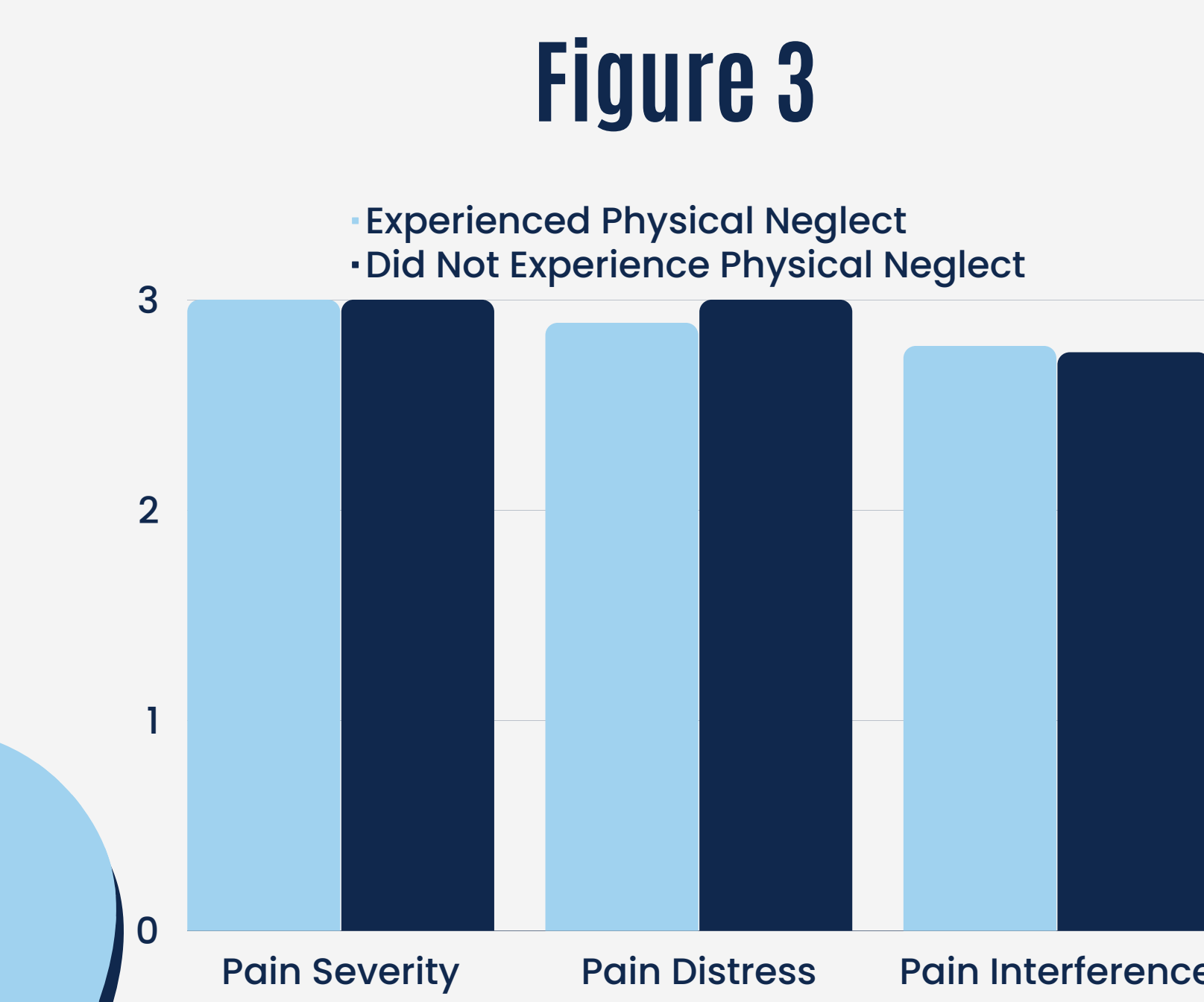
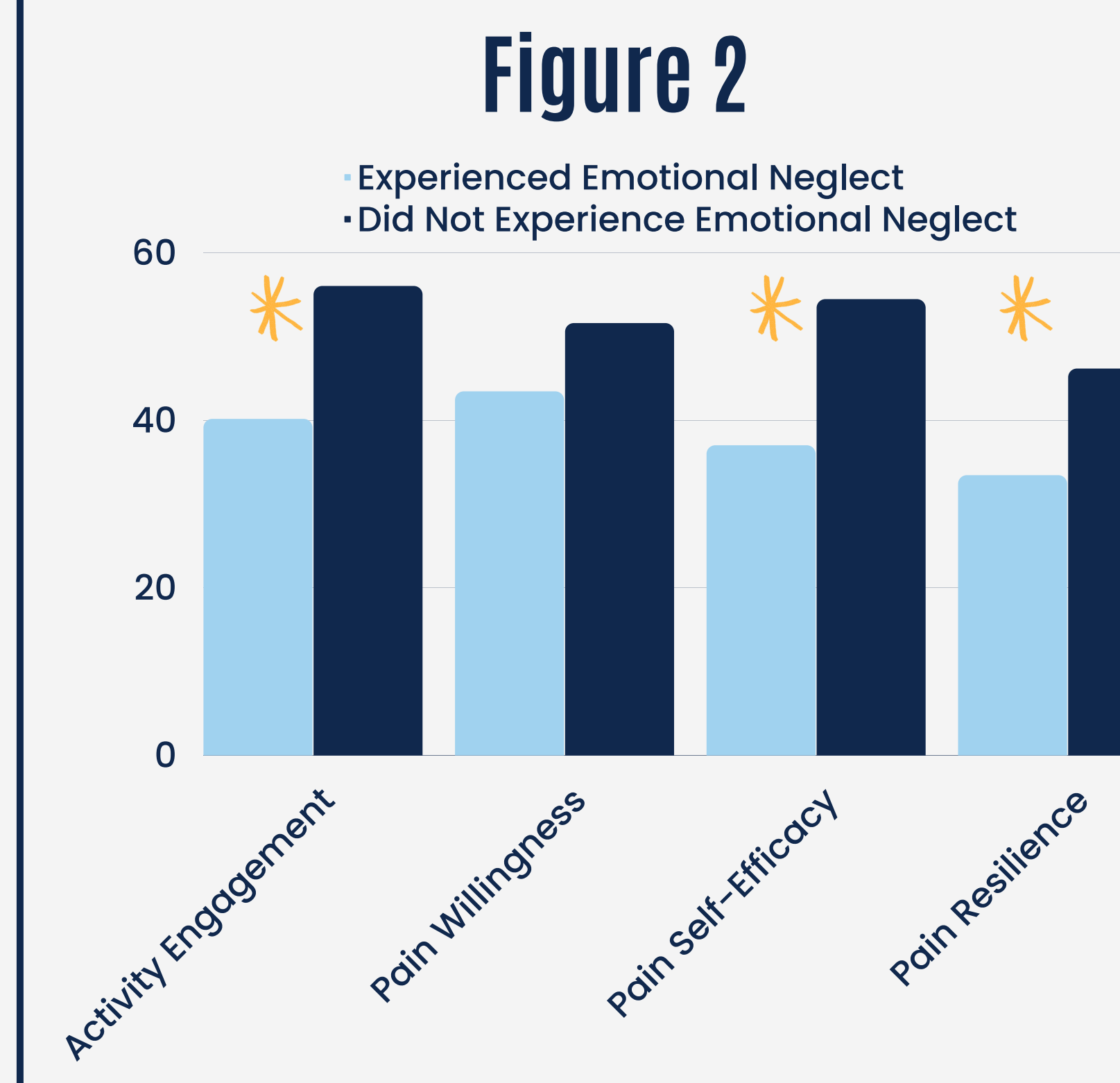
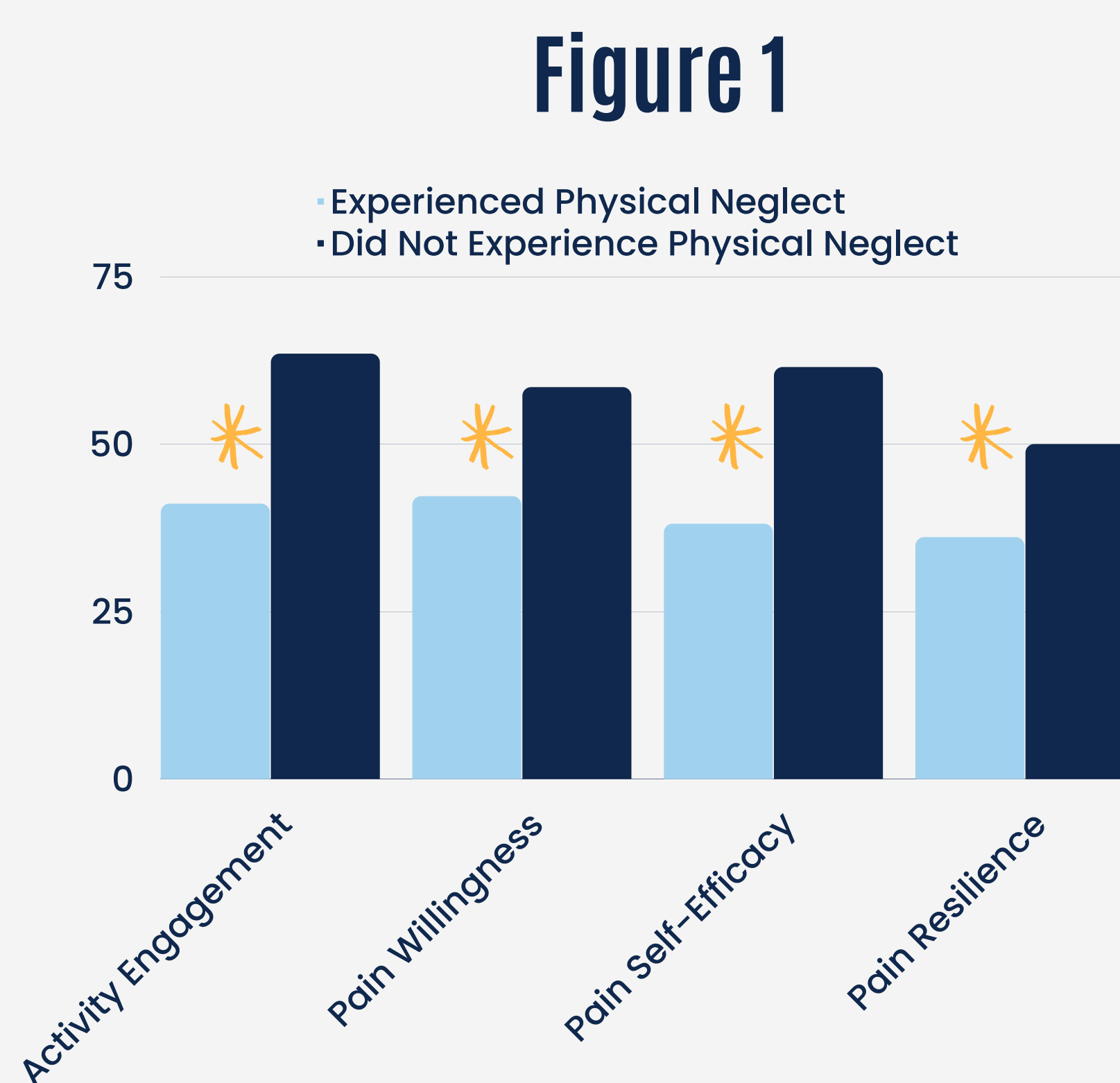
04. Results

Preliminary results show that, among older adults, participants who experienced childhood physical abuse had significantly lower levels of activity engagement, pain willingness, pain self-efficacy, and pain resilience compared to participants who had not experienced childhood physical neglect (Figure 1); participants who experienced childhood emotional neglect experienced significantly lower levels of activity engagement, pain self-efficacy, and pain resilience compared to participants who had not experienced childhood emotional neglect (Figure 2); and participants who did and did not experience physical neglect (Figure 3) or emotional neglect (Figure 4) did not significantly differ with regards to pain severity, pain-related distress, or pain-related interference.

IMPORTANT!
Results are preliminary, so caution should be taken when interpreting these results.

05. Clinical Implications

Older adults with chronic pain who experienced childhood neglect may present for treatment with reduced willingness or ability to engage in activities of importance to their well-being regardless of the severity of their pain or the distress or interference that the pain causes. When working with chronic pain patients, it will be important to consider the role of neglect on pain outcomes and treatment progress.



06. Future Research

Future research should include more representative samples, employ longitudinal studies to examine causal relationships, and design treatment for activity engagement, self-efficacy, and resilience.

07. References

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