

# Caregiver Oral Health Literacy in a Hospital-Based Pediatric Dental Clinic

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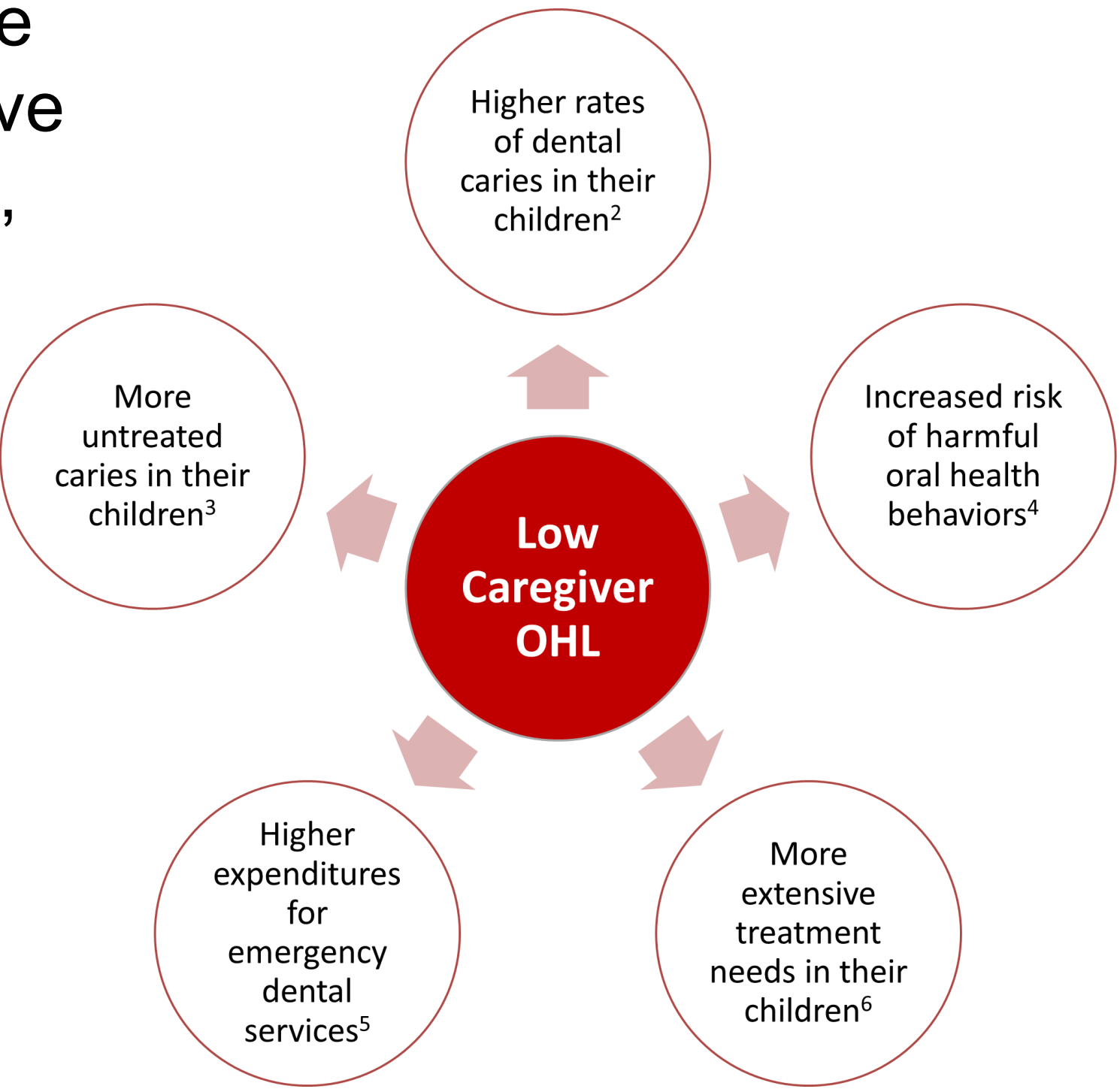
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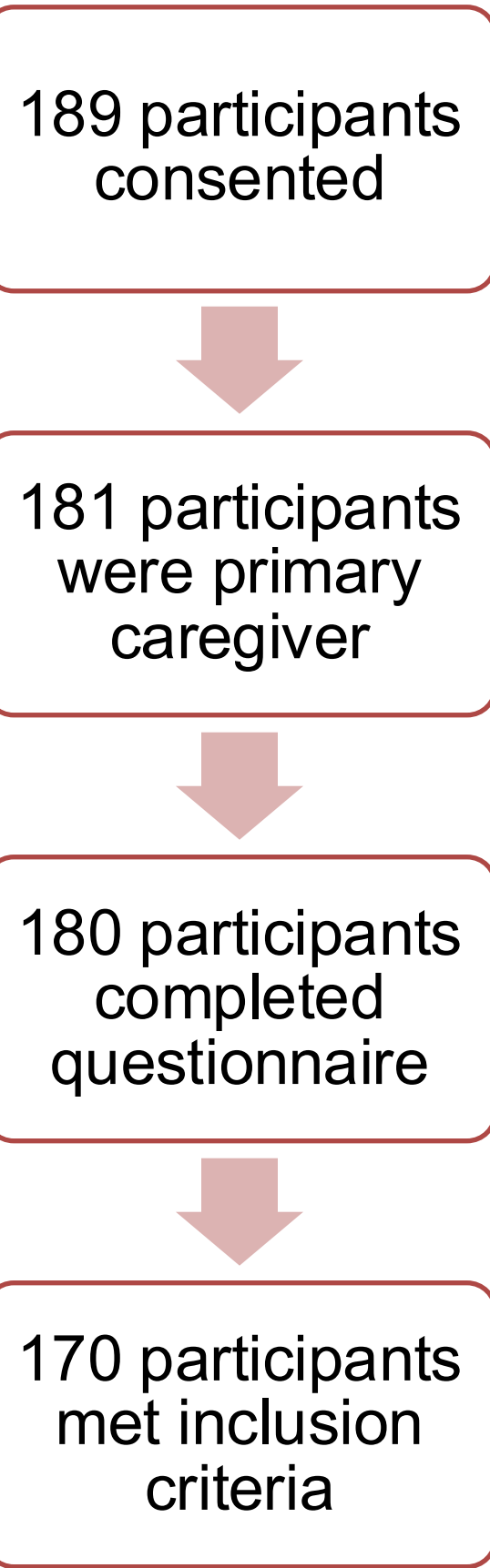


## INTRODUCTION

- Oral health literacy (OHL) is the degree to which individuals have the capacity to obtain, process, and understand basic oral and craniofacial health information and services needed to make appropriate health decisions.<sup>1</sup>
- The goal of this study was to assess the OHL of caregivers presenting to a hospital-based pediatric dental clinic and to identify social factors that may impact OHL.



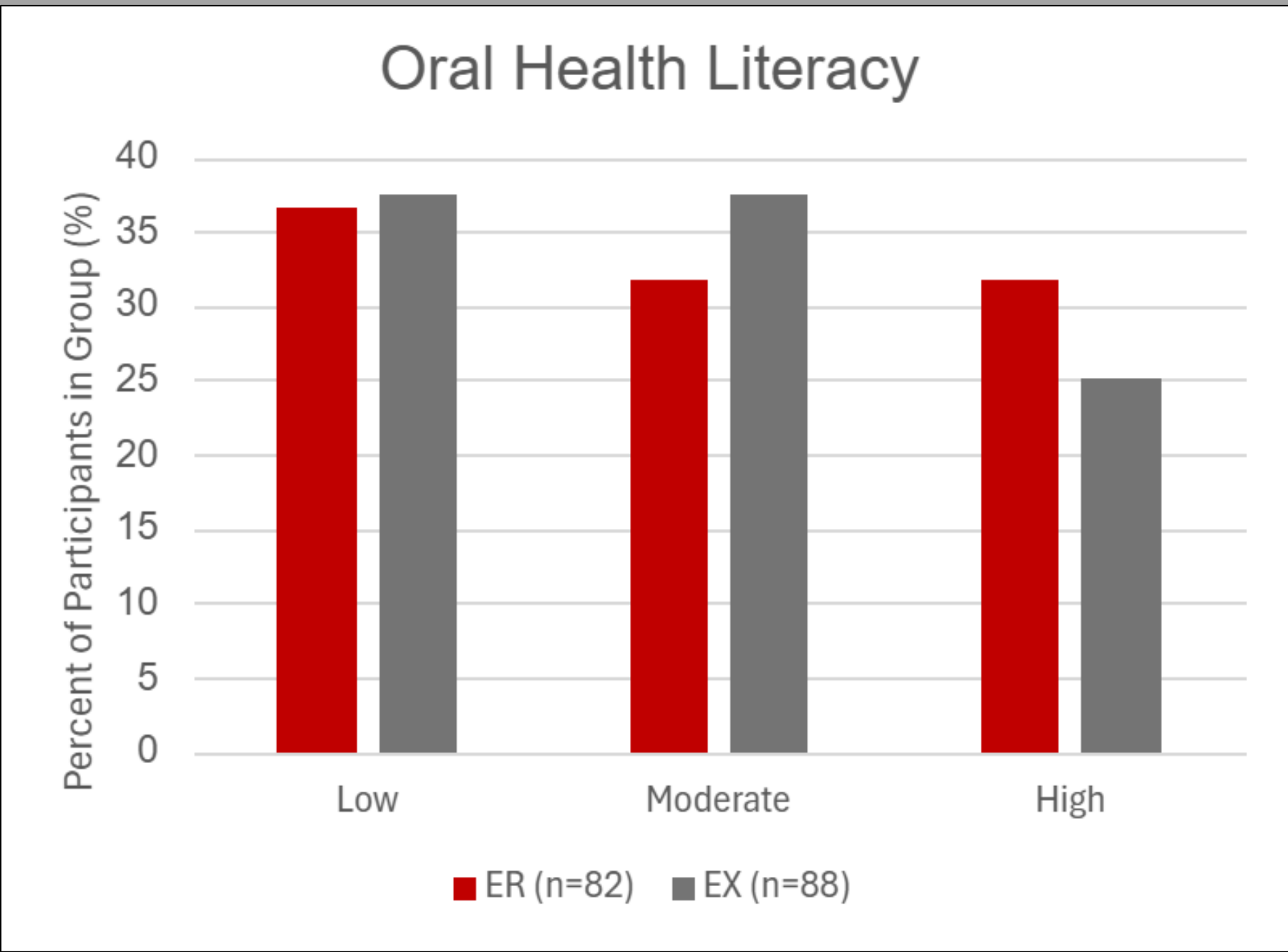
## METHODS



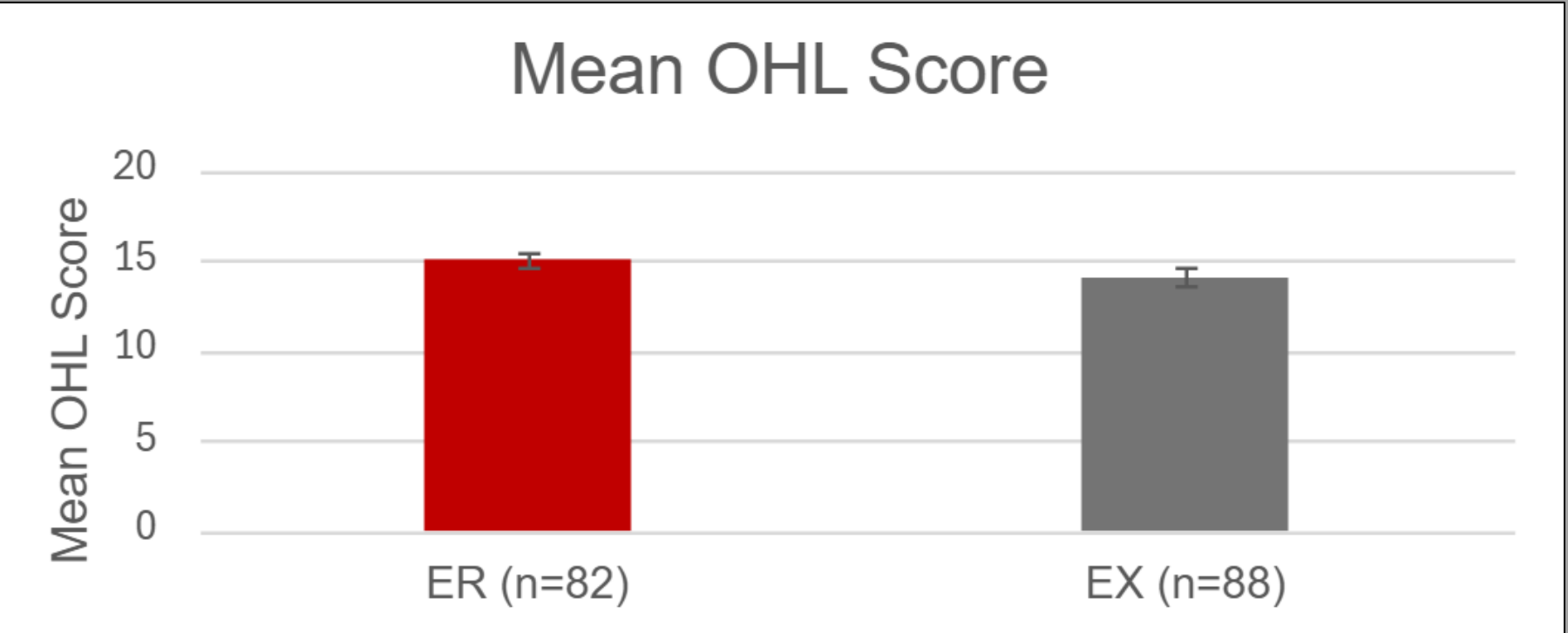
- Questionnaires containing the 23-question OHL assessment, Comprehensive Measure of Oral Health Knowledge (CMOHK)<sup>7</sup>, were distributed to English-speaking and English-reading caregivers of patients age 0-17 years presenting for emergency (ER) or hygiene (EX) visits.
- Patient information including age, race, and social determinants of health (SDoH) data was collected.
- CMOHK was categorized as low (0-13), moderate (14-17), or high (18-23) based on approximate tertiles of sample distribution.
- Statistical analysis included descriptive statistics, Wilcoxon rank-sum test, Fisher's exact test, and Pearson's Chi-square test.

## RESULTS

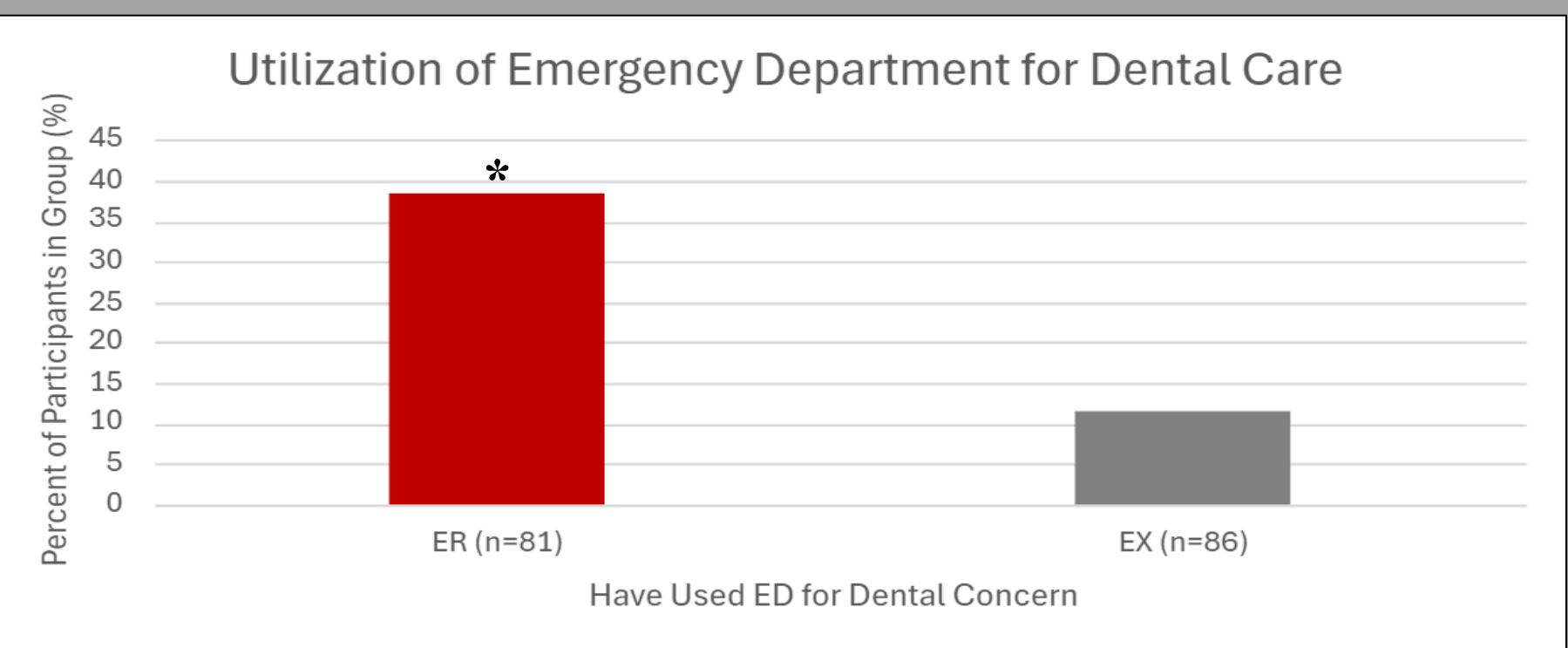
**Figure 1.** There was a range of OHL scores and no clear difference in the OHL of caregivers in the ER and EX groups.



**Figure 2.** There was no significant difference in mean caregiver OHL scores between ER and EX groups ( $p = 0.219$ ; Wilcoxon rank-sum test).



**Figure 3.** Significantly more caregivers in the ER group used the emergency department (ED) for dental services for their children than those in the EX group ( $p < 0.001^*$ ; Pearson's Chi-square test).



## DISCUSSION

**Table 1.** Relationship between caregiver OHL and social determinants of health.

	Low OHL	Moderate OHL	High OHL	P-value
Total Participants (n)	63	59	48	
Child Race (n, %)				0.001324 <sup>a</sup>
White	12 (19%)	23 (39%)	28 (58.3%)	
Black	38 (60.3%)	27 (45.8%)	17 (35.4%)	
Other	12 (19%)	8 (13.6%)	3 (6.2%)	
Unknown	1 (1.6%)	1 (1.7%)	0 (0%)	
Financial Resource Strain (n, %)				0.5988 <sup>b</sup>
Yes	11 (17.5%)	13 (22%)	7 (14.6%)	
No	52 (82.5%)	46 (78%)	41 (85.4%)	
Housing Needs (n, %)				0.102 <sup>b</sup>
Unmet	10 (15.9%)	4 (6.8%)	10 (20.8%)	
None	53 (84.1%)	55 (93.2%)	38 (79.2%)	
Transportation Barriers (n, %)				0.6024 <sup>a</sup>
Yes	5 (7.9%)	2 (3.4%)	3 (6.2%)	
No	58 (92.1%)	57 (96.6%)	45 (93.8%)	
Food Insecurity (n, %)				0.7196 <sup>b</sup>
Yes	13 (20.6%)	11 (18.6%)	12 (25%)	
No	50 (79.4%)	48 (81.4%)	36 (75%)	

<sup>a</sup>: Fisher's Exact

<sup>b</sup>: Pearson's Chi-square

- There was not a significant difference between the caregiver OHL of patients presenting for emergency dental visits and preventive hygiene visits.
- There was no significant association between caregiver OHL and various SDoH at this hospital-based pediatric dental clinic.
- Significantly less of the caregivers presenting with their children for hygiene visits had previously used the ED for dental care compared to those presenting for emergency visits.
- Limitations of this study included inability to generalize to non-English-speaking and general population and incomplete and/or inadequate responses to questionnaire.

Scan for references:

