

# EXPANDING SELF-CARE INTERVENTIONS IN ETHIOPIA: Client and Provider Experiences with Piloting DMPA-SC Self-Injection

## AUTHORS

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## BACKGROUND

DMPA-SC is gaining recognition as an easy-to-use injectable contraceptive. According to Ethiopia's 2019 miniDHS, injectables are the most popular modern contraceptive method among married women aged 15-49 in Ethiopia. The introduction of DMPA-SC self-injection offers an opportunity to increase access and choice of family planning methods for women in the country.

This pilot study explores the feasibility of DMPA-SC self-injection in the context of Ethiopia.

## METHODS

This mixed-methods study sampled 400 clients between 18-49 years, seeking contraceptive services at six study sites around Addis Ababa.

- **Safety** of DMPA-SC self-injection was assessed by measuring client competency to self-inject at enrollment and again at three months.
- **Acceptability and feasibility** were examined through enrollment and during three month follow-up survey.
- Additional qualitative assessment gathered perspectives from 15 family planning providers' on their experiences with DMPA-SC for SI.

## RESULTS

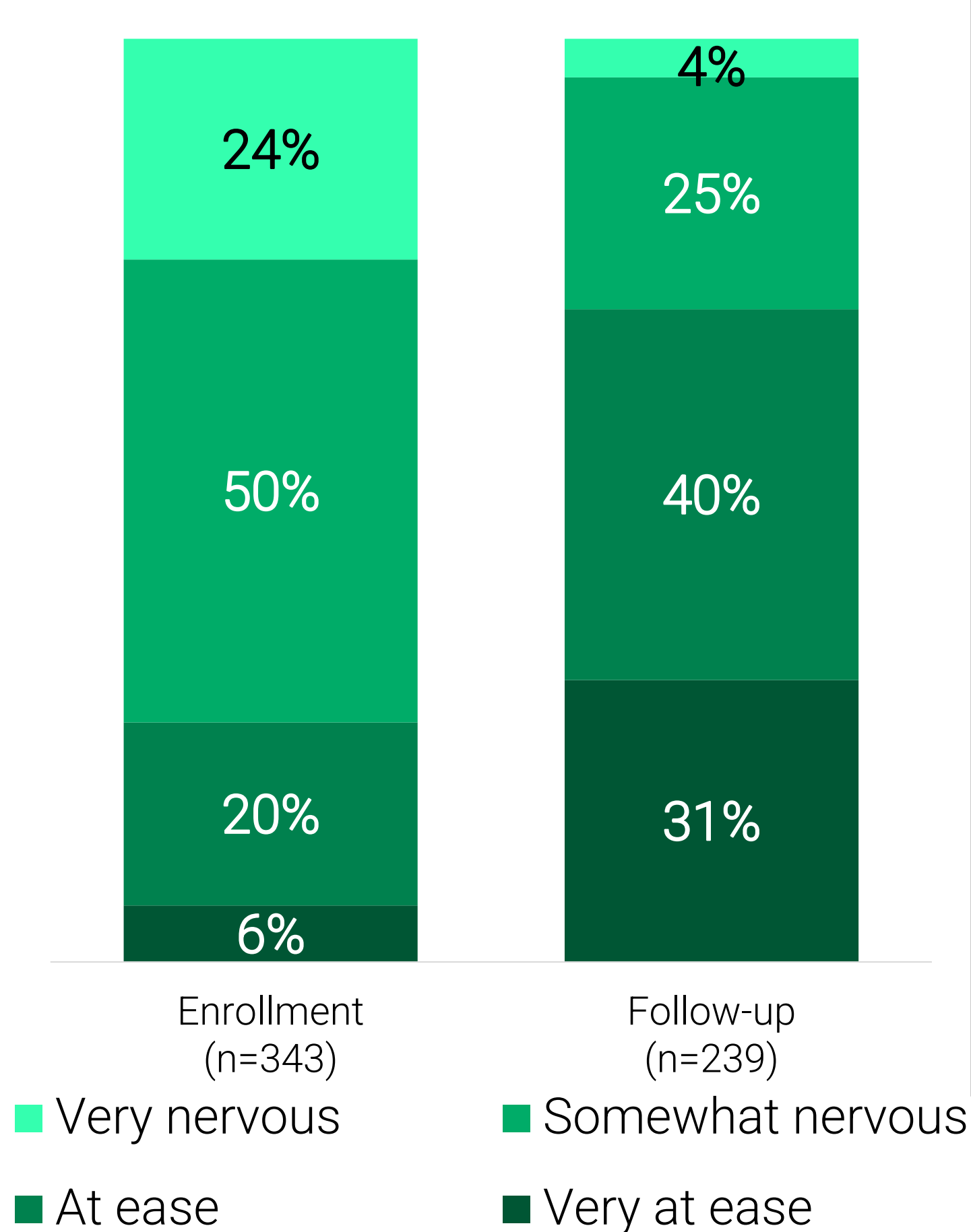
Key findings of the pilot study include:

- There was a high level of self-injection competency after the initial training (95.3%) and 3-months later (83.1%)
- There is no statistically significant difference in the 3-month self-injection competency rates by participant characteristics
- Participants reported feeling more confident and at ease with DMPA-SC self-injection over time.
- There were high levels of satisfaction and acceptability among clients and providers.
- Most clients said they would like to continue with DMPA-SC self-injection.
- Family planning providers in the study recommend DMPA-SC self-injection to be continued.

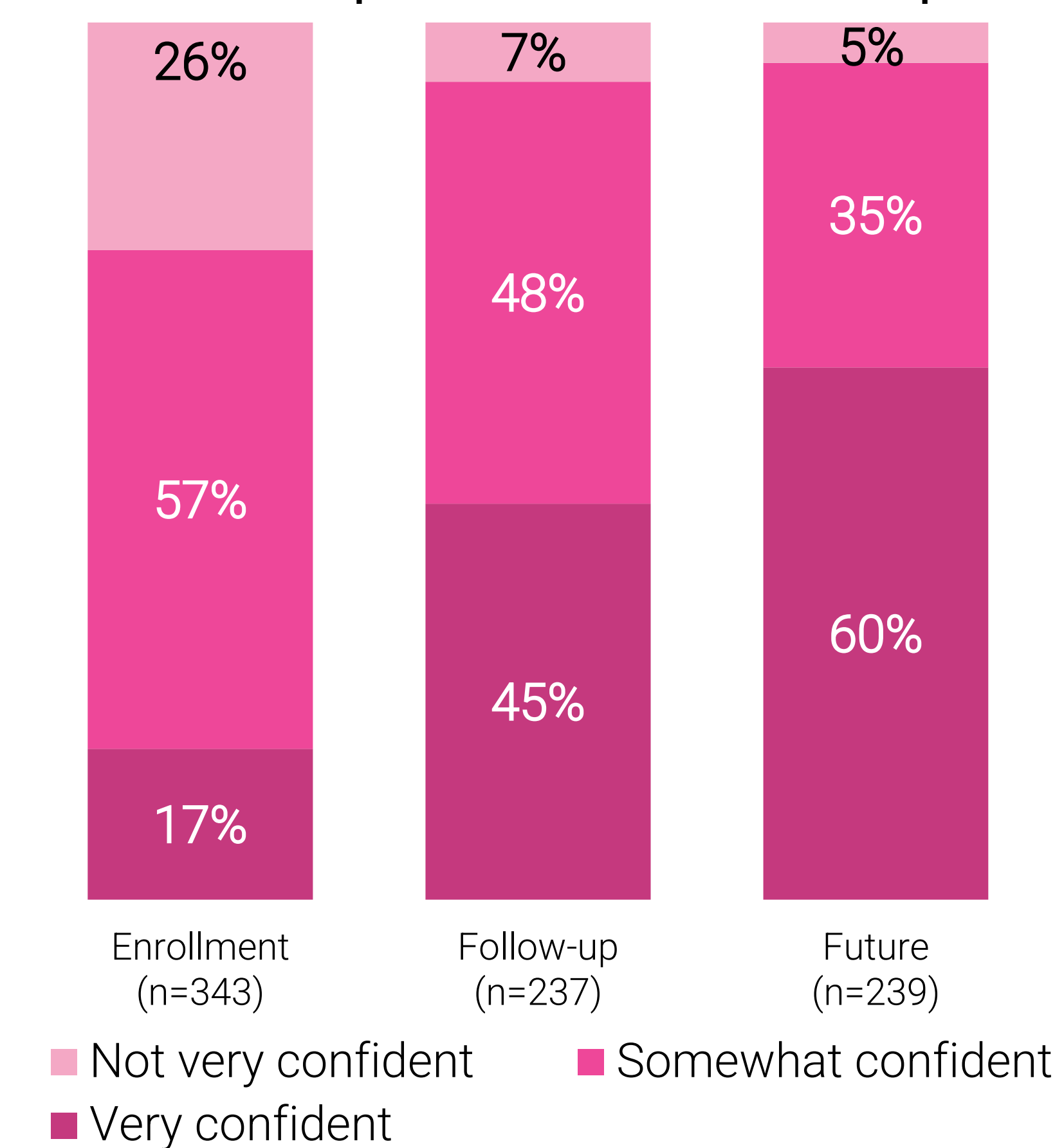
## CLIENT EXPERIENCES

At follow-up, participants reported feeling more comfortable and confident with self-injection compared to enrollment.

Increased comfort with self-inject after three months



Increased confidence with DMPA-SC self-inject after three months; clients anticipate increased improvement with more practice

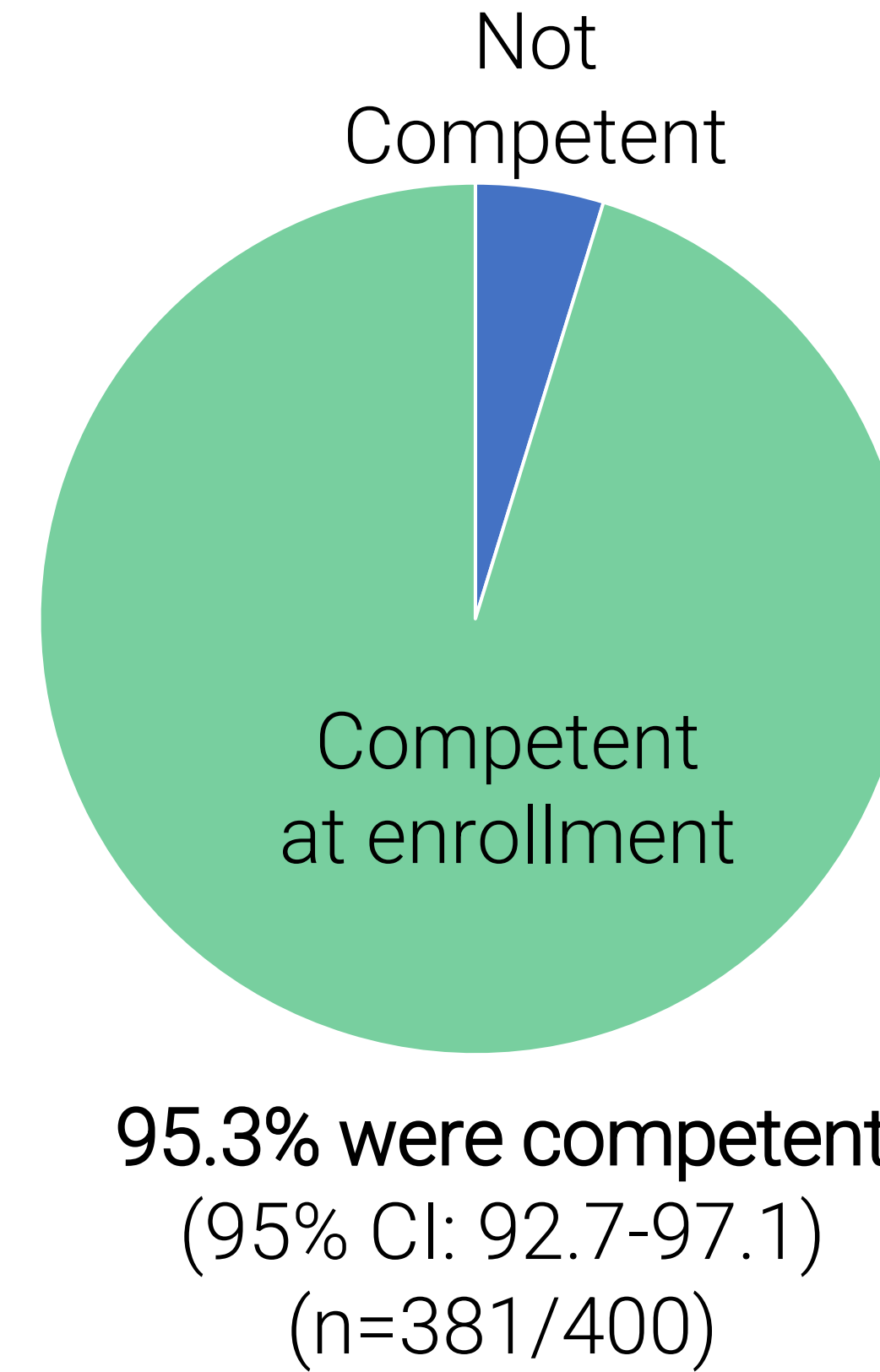


## The potential of self-inject in Ethiopia

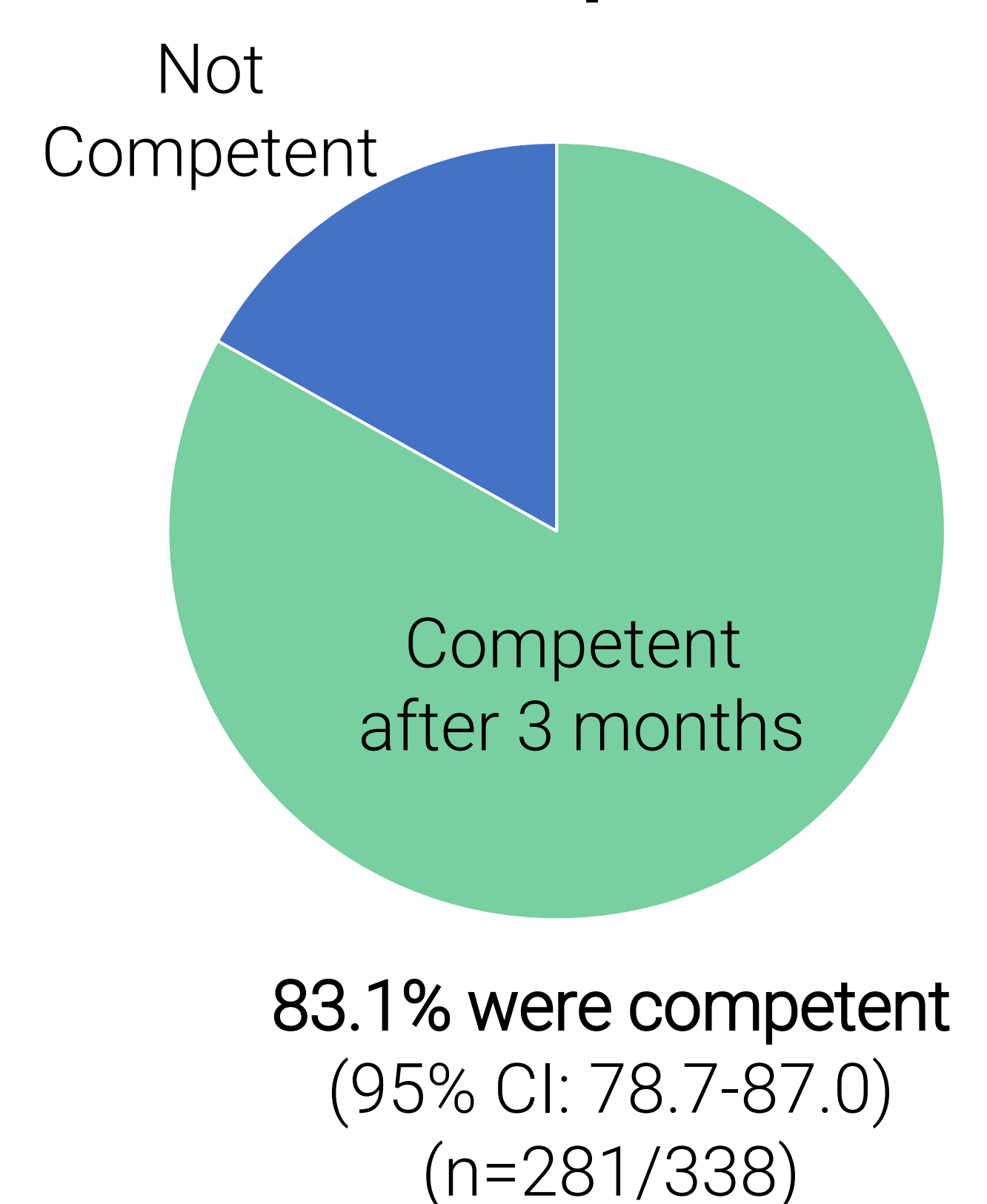
Introducing DMPA-SC for self-inject in Ethiopia could play an important role in addressing the family planning needs of women and girls. Self-inject offers more autonomy than other methods and promotes self-care practices. Moving forward, strong commitment from the Ethiopian Ministry of Health, partner organizations, donors, and other key stakeholders is vital.

## COMPETENCY TO SELF-INJECT DMPA-SC

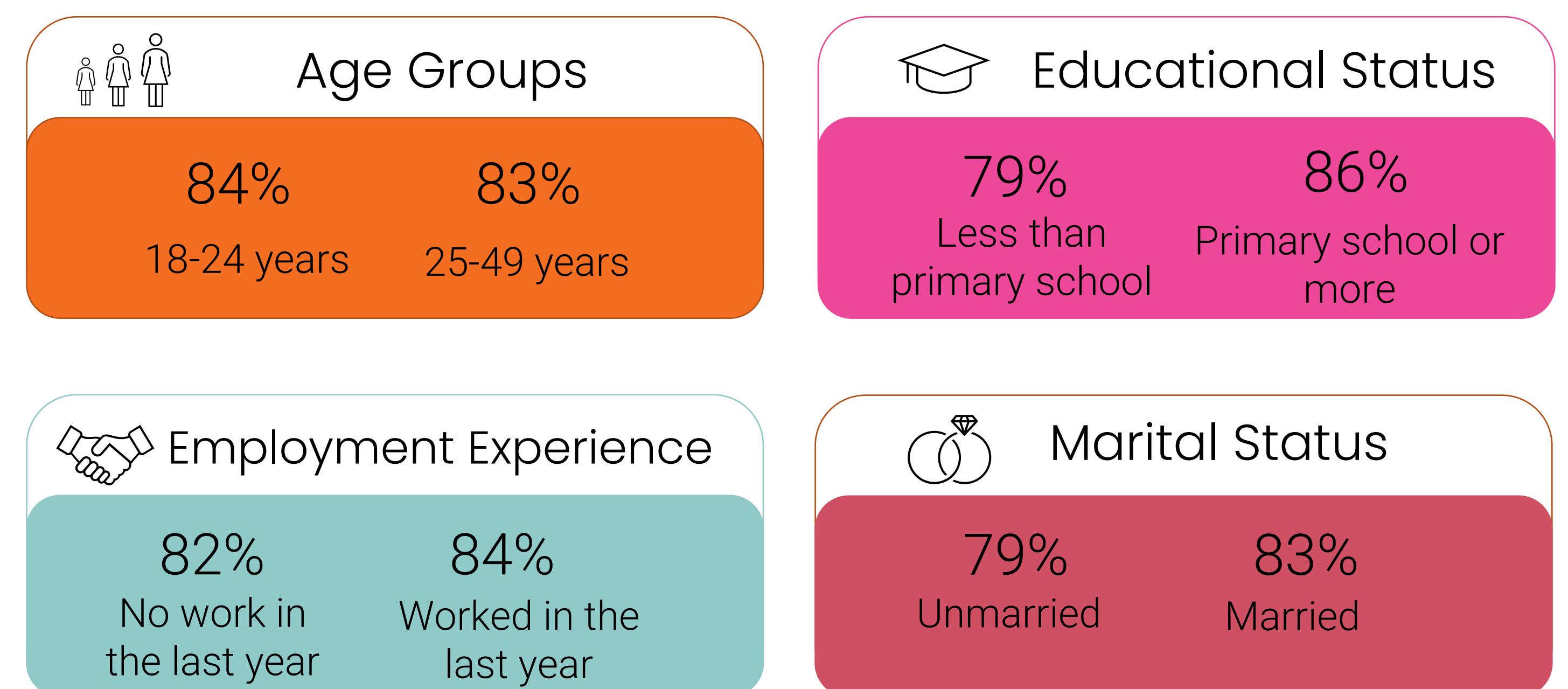
### Enrollment Observation



### Follow-up Observation



## 3-MONTH SELF-INJECTION COMPETENCE BY PARTICIPANT CHARACTERISTIC



The 3-month competency rates were compared by various sociodemographic indicators such as participants' age group, marital status, employment status, and educational attainment. **There was no statistically significant difference in the competency rates across any of the groups compared ( $p > 0.05$  for all).**

## FAMILY PLANNING PROVIDER EXPERIENCES

Family planning providers recommended a) DMPA-SC SI be added to the method mix and b) engaging HEWs to offer DMPA-SC training.

*The big thing is to reduce the time mothers spend here. [DMPA-SC self-injection] minimizes the time they spend. It reduces our job burden. It has benefits for them and us if they use it.*

-FP Provider

*It is good to give self-injection training in the community by a health extension [...] Because a health extension worker knows each family well, she is able to communicate freely with them because they meet every day. So, it's good.*

-FP Provider

## CONCLUSION

The Ethiopian MOH has a unique opportunity to expand family planning access and choice for both women and adolescent girls. The results from the DMPA-SC self-inject pilot study will demonstrate to the MOH that women who receive training on DMPA-SC— even those with low levels of education— can competently self-inject and that it is a method in which they are interested. These results will be integrated into the DMPA-SC self-injection national introduction plan and will lead to the development of policies and guidelines that reach new users by expanding Ethiopia's method mix.

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