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Listening to the Demand

# Survey

Second of a two-part baseline study researching men's views and use of Cambodia's sex industry

51 Khmer and 23 foreigner men who seek sex with other men were interviewed in Phnom Penh and Siem Reap between February and April of 2014

Connections with Khmer men were made through various men's health clinics in Phnom Penh and Siem Reap

Foreign men were approached and asked to participate in the survey at bars in Phnom Penh and Siem Reap commonly known to be frequented by homosexual and bisexual clientele

Ethical Principals outlined by The Sexual Violence Research Initiative out of South Africa in 2008 were followed

# Demographics

# Sexual Orientation

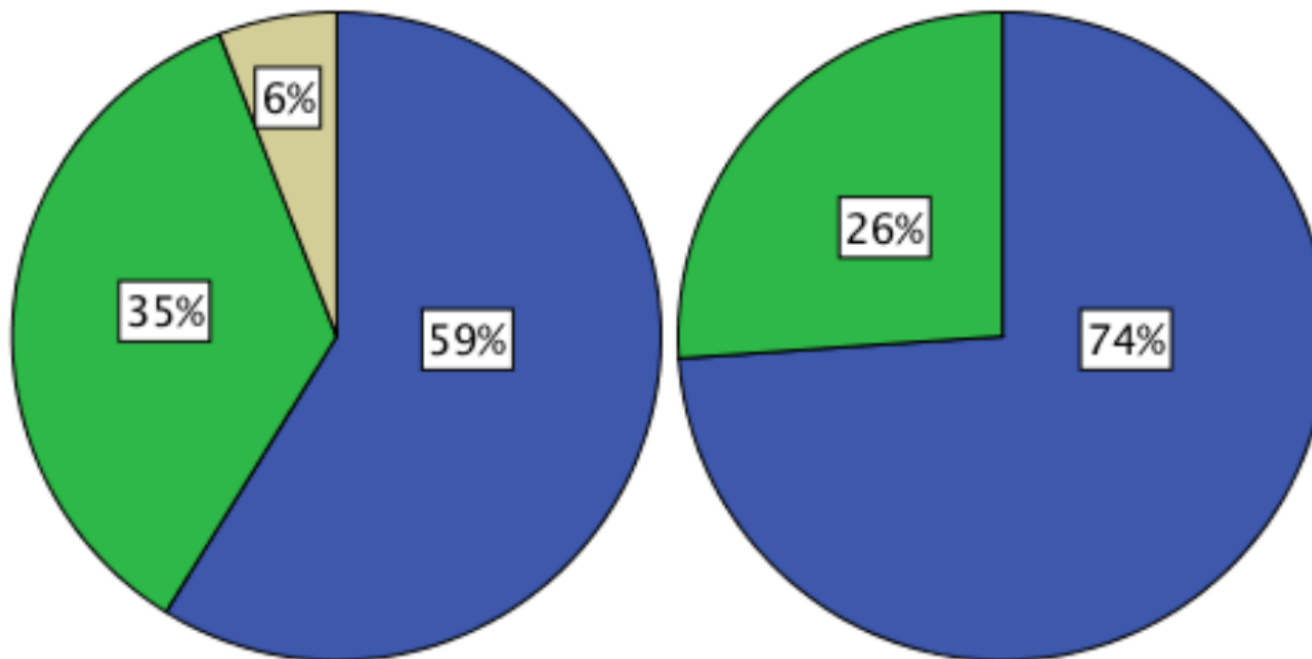
What is your nationality?

**Khmer**

**Foreigner**

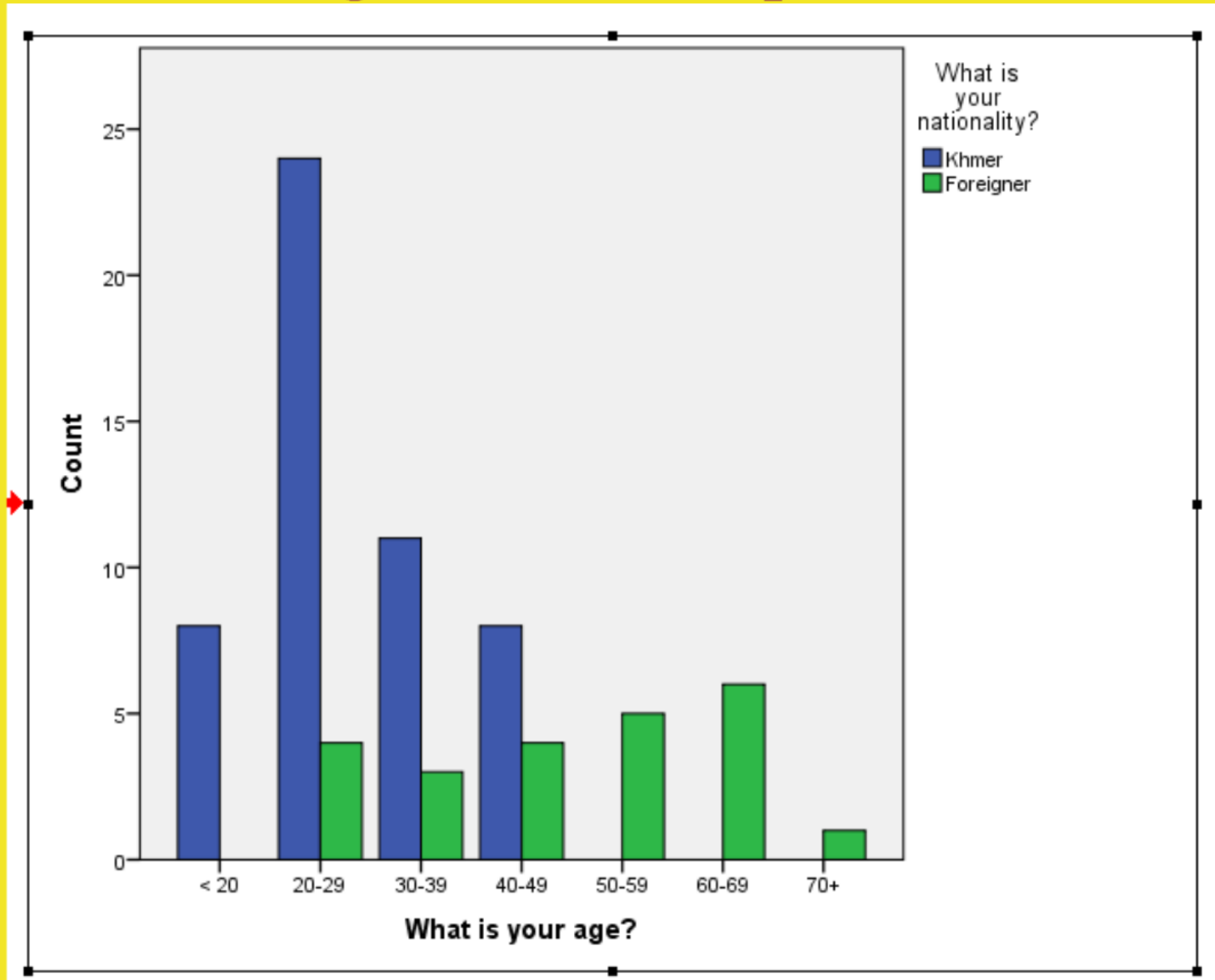
How would  
you define  
your sexual  
orientation?

■ Homosexual  
■ Bisexual  
■ Heterosexual

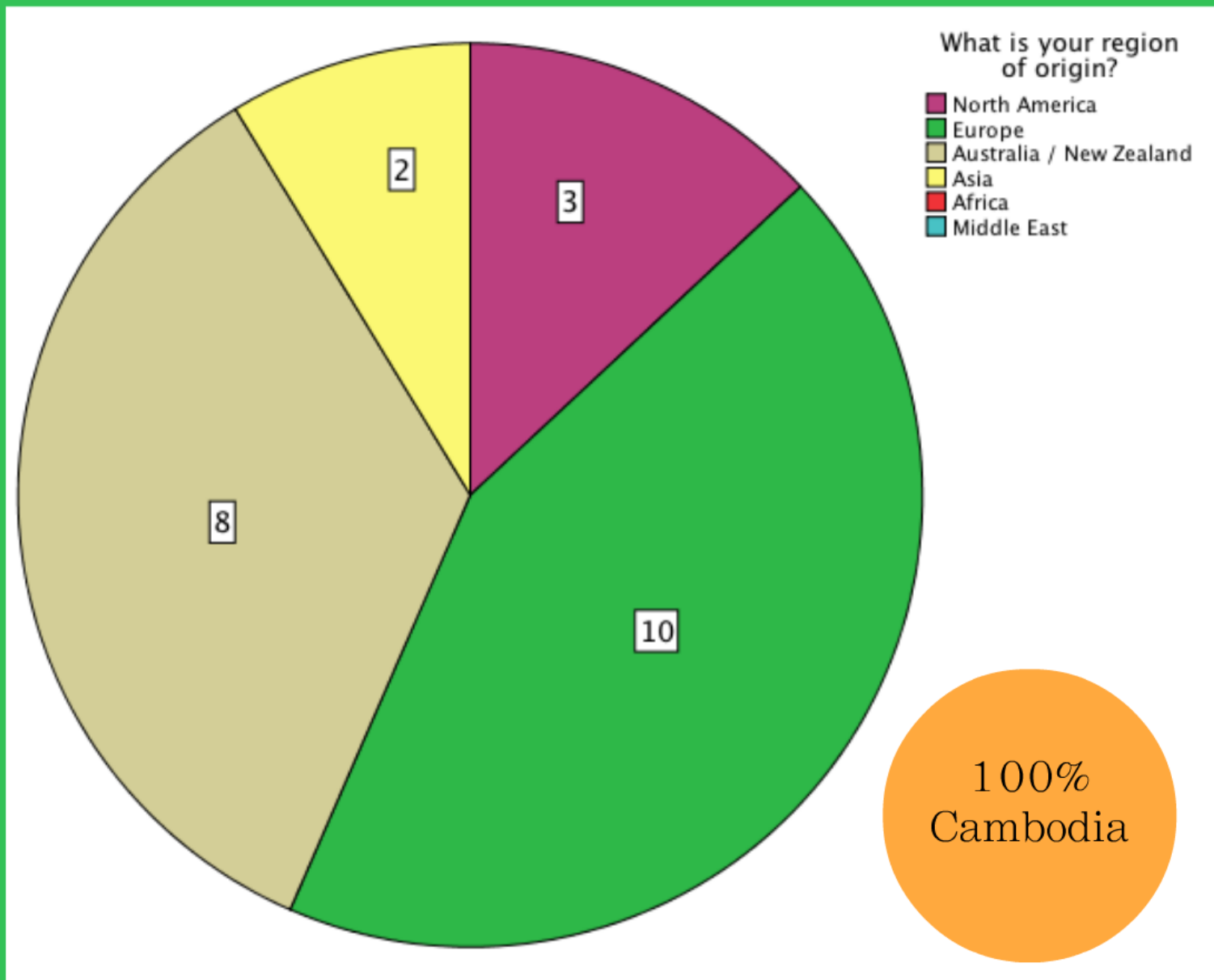




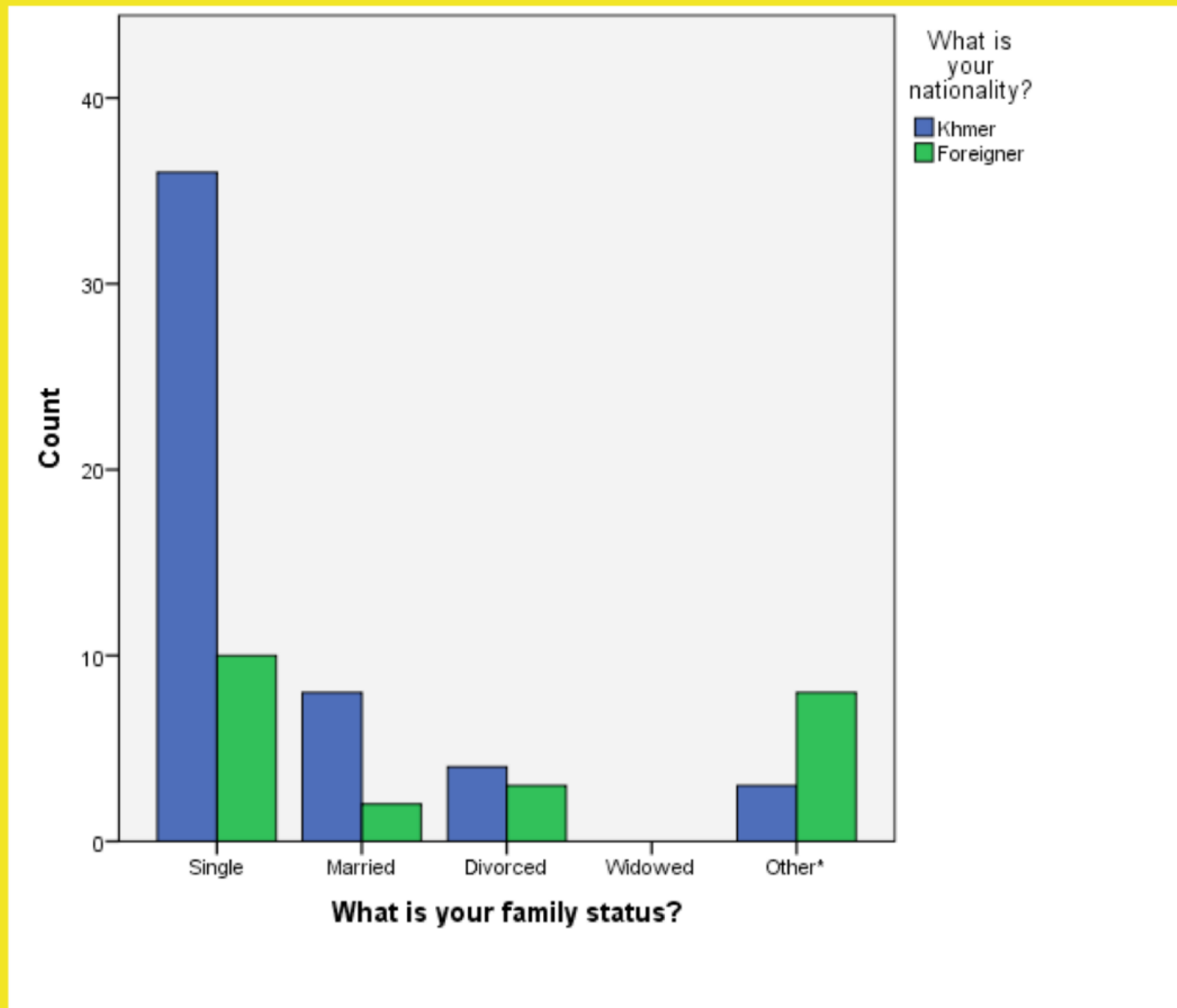
# Age of Participants



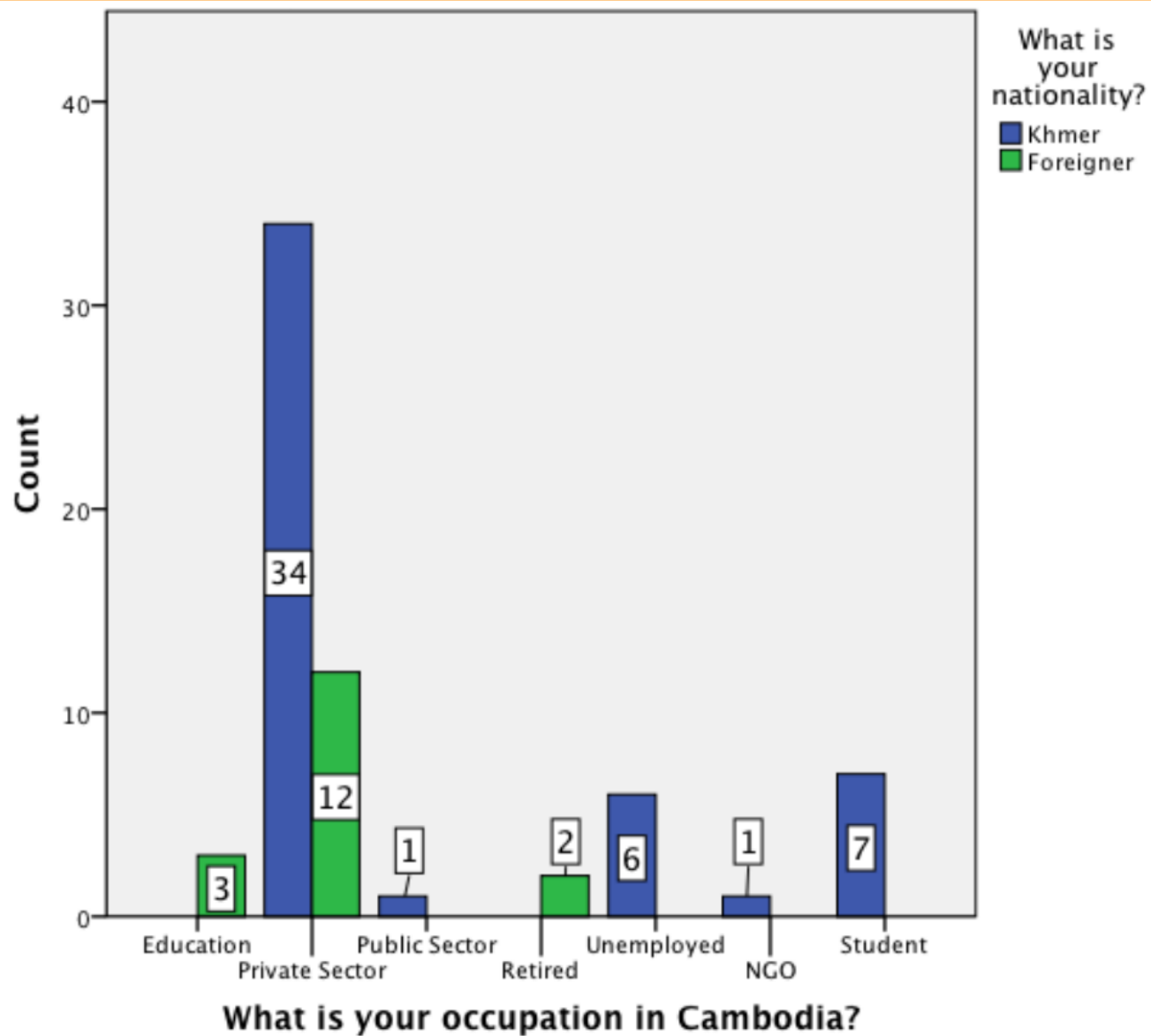
# Country of Origin



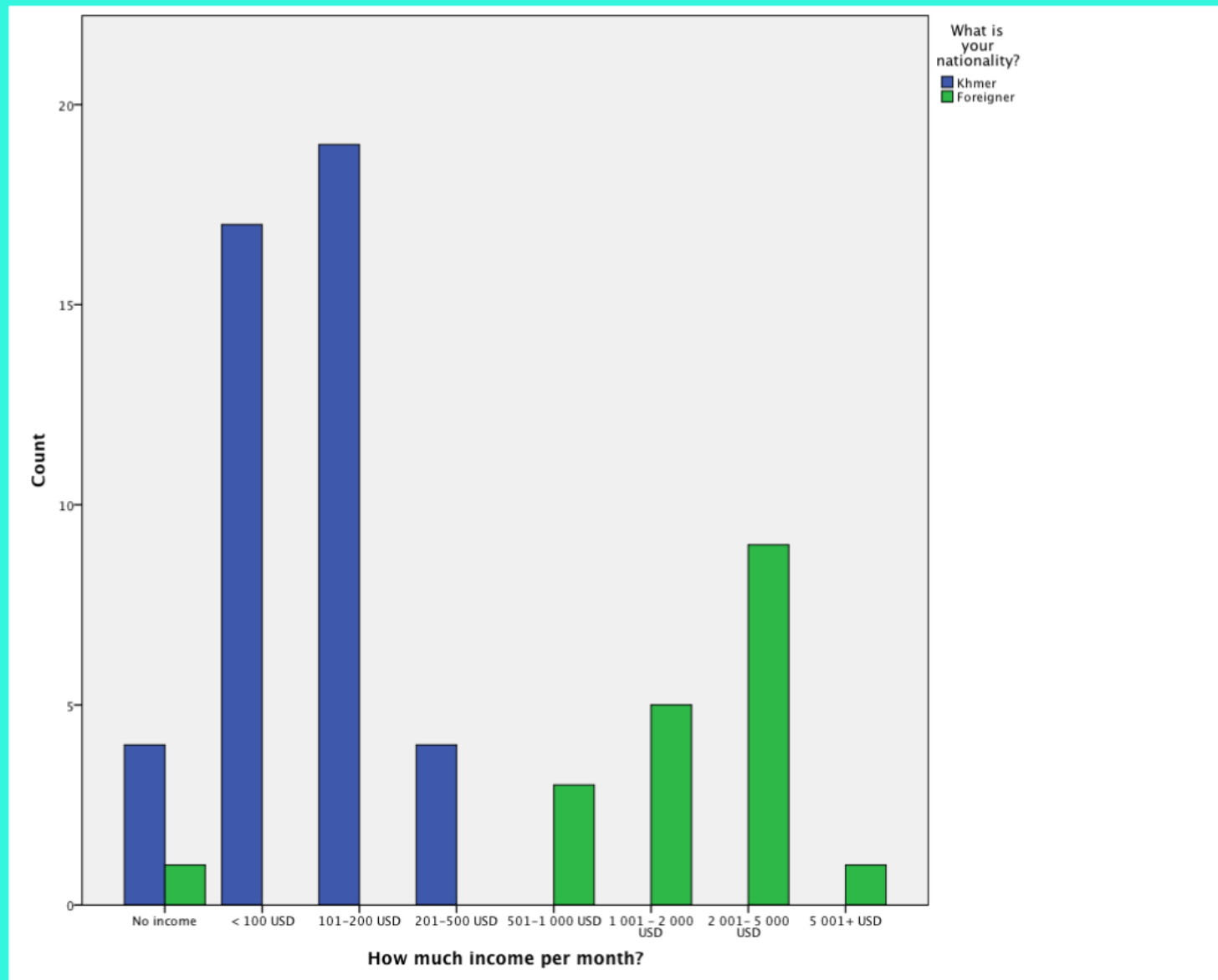
# Marriage Status



# Occupation



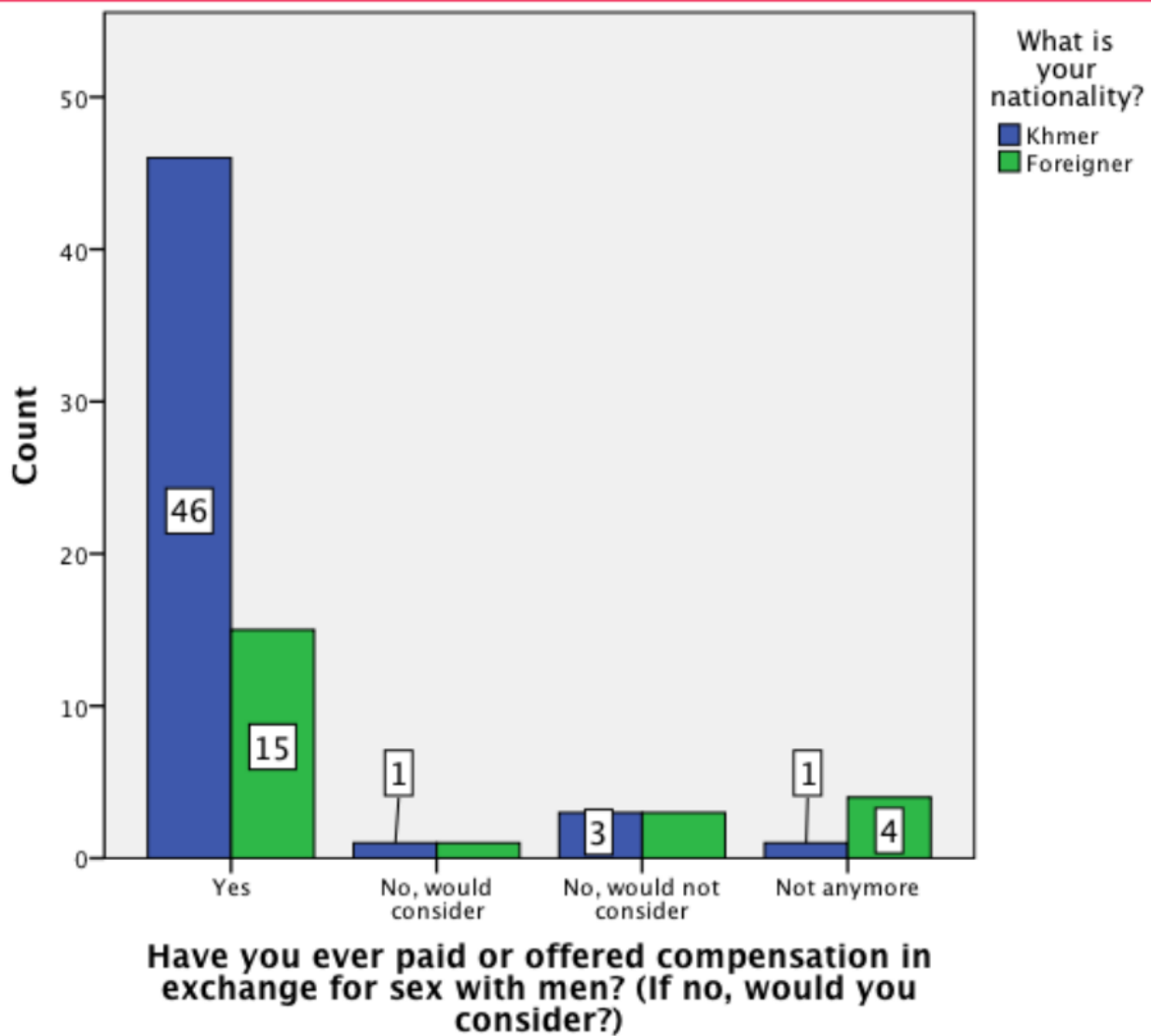
# Income



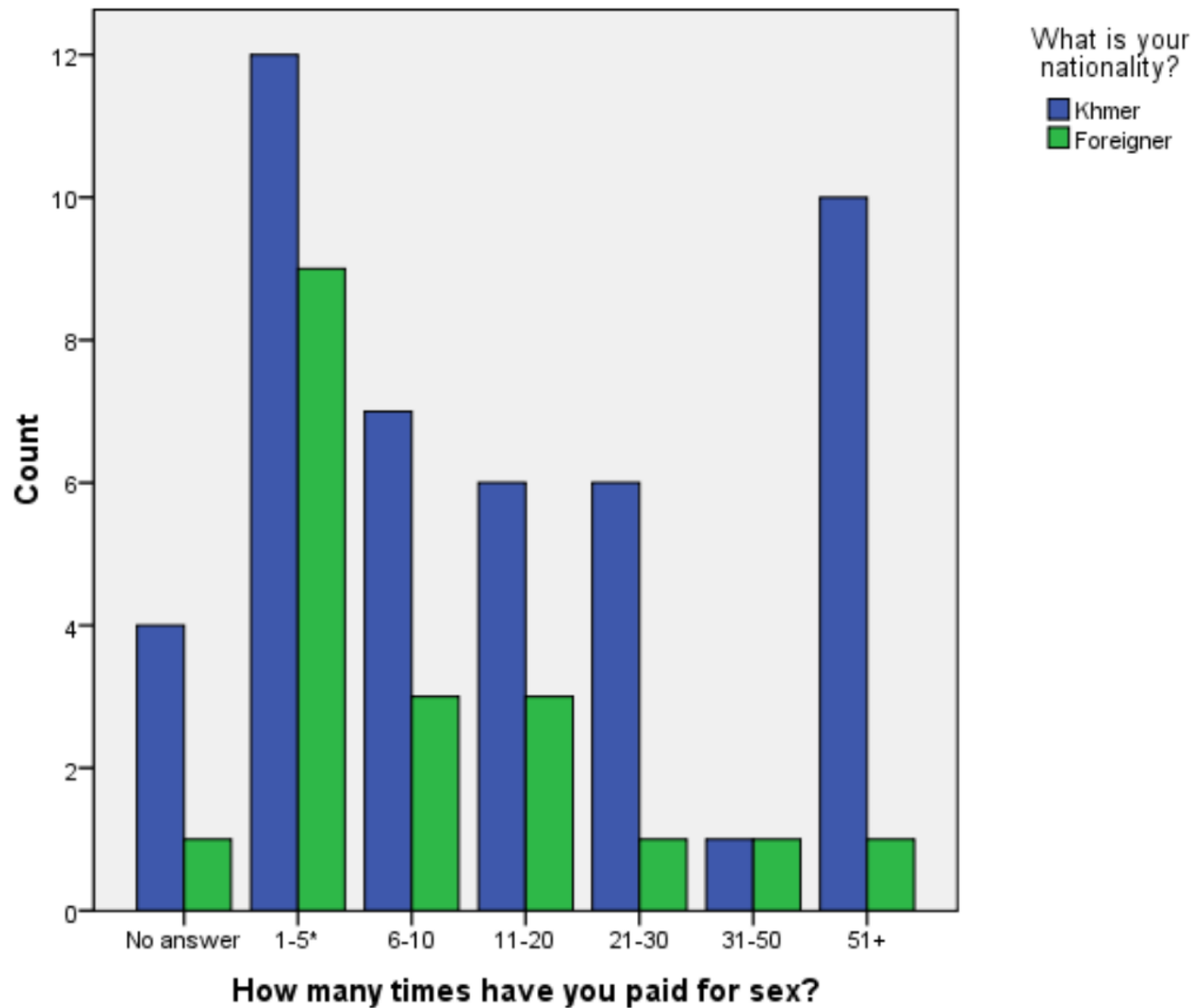


# Payment Of Sexual Services

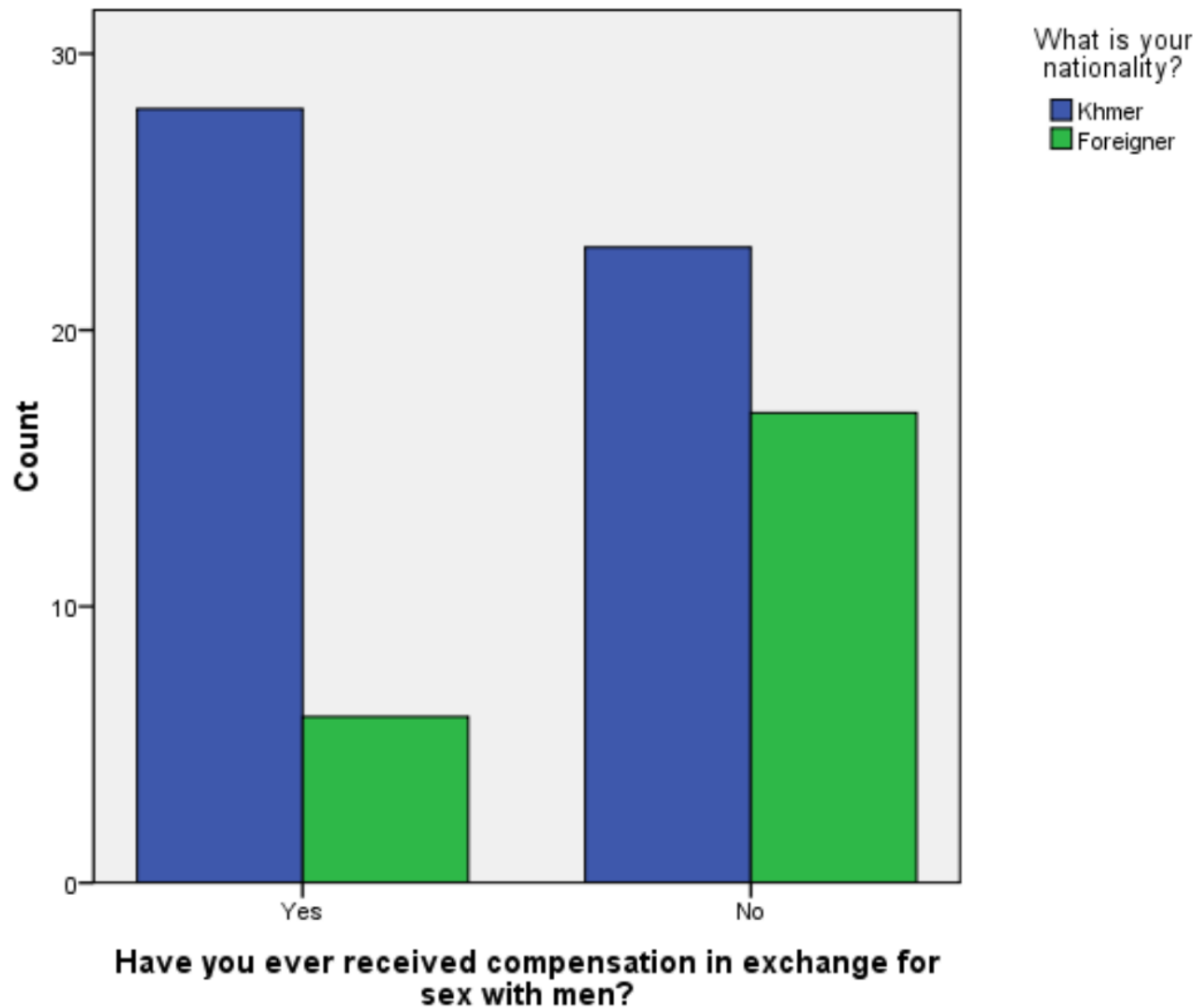
# Paid for Sexual Services



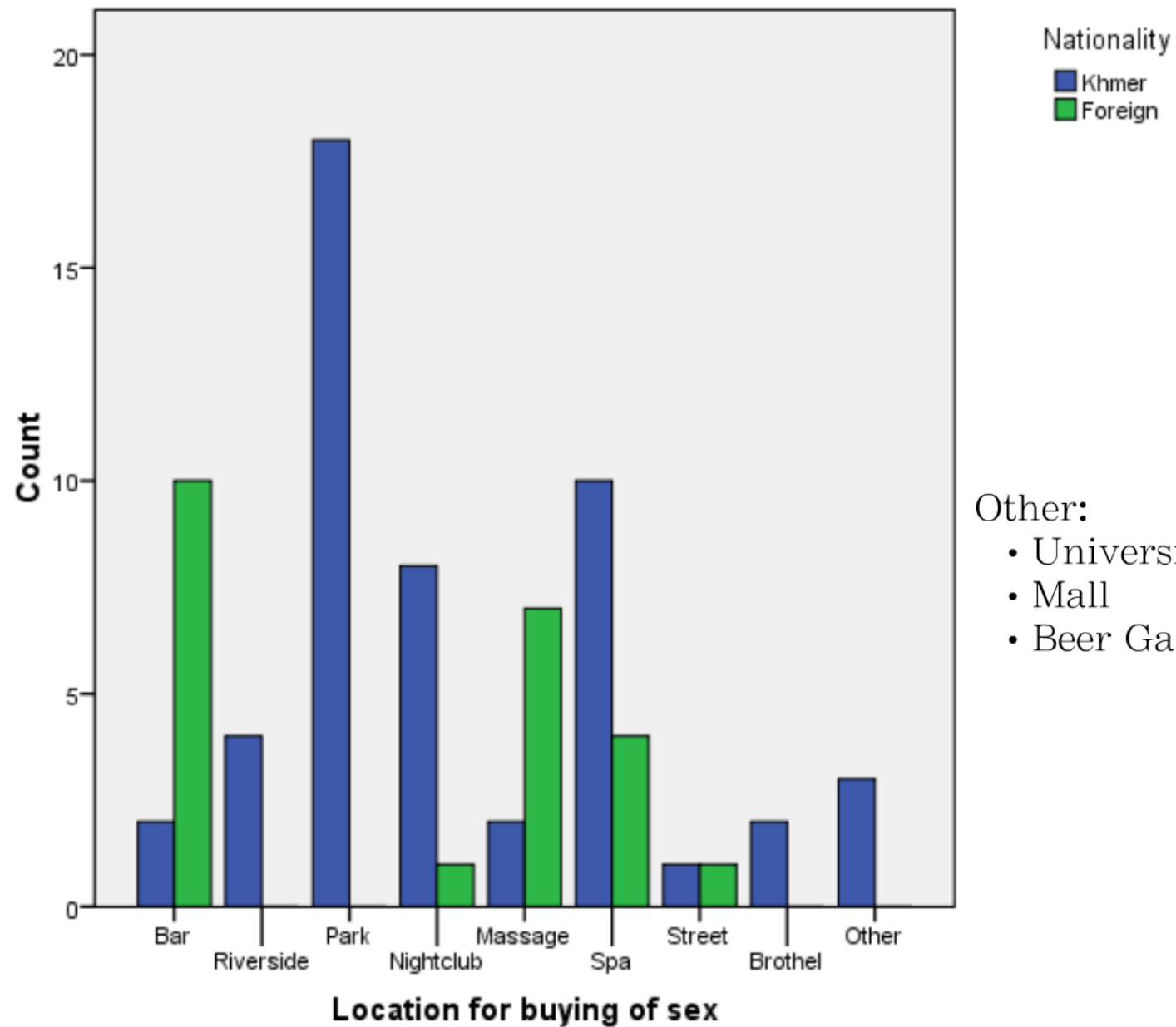
# Frequency of Payment



# Received Compensation



# Location

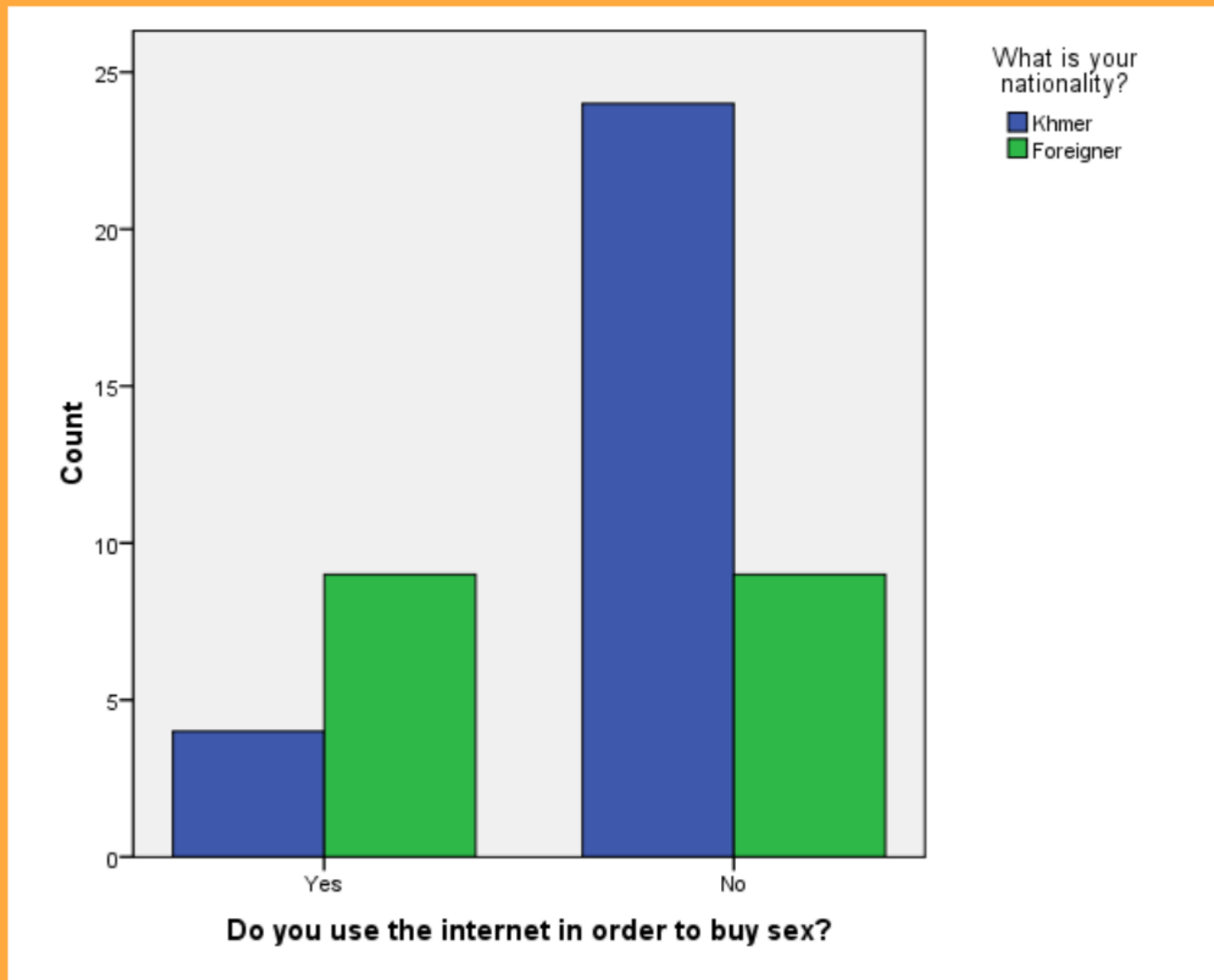


Other:

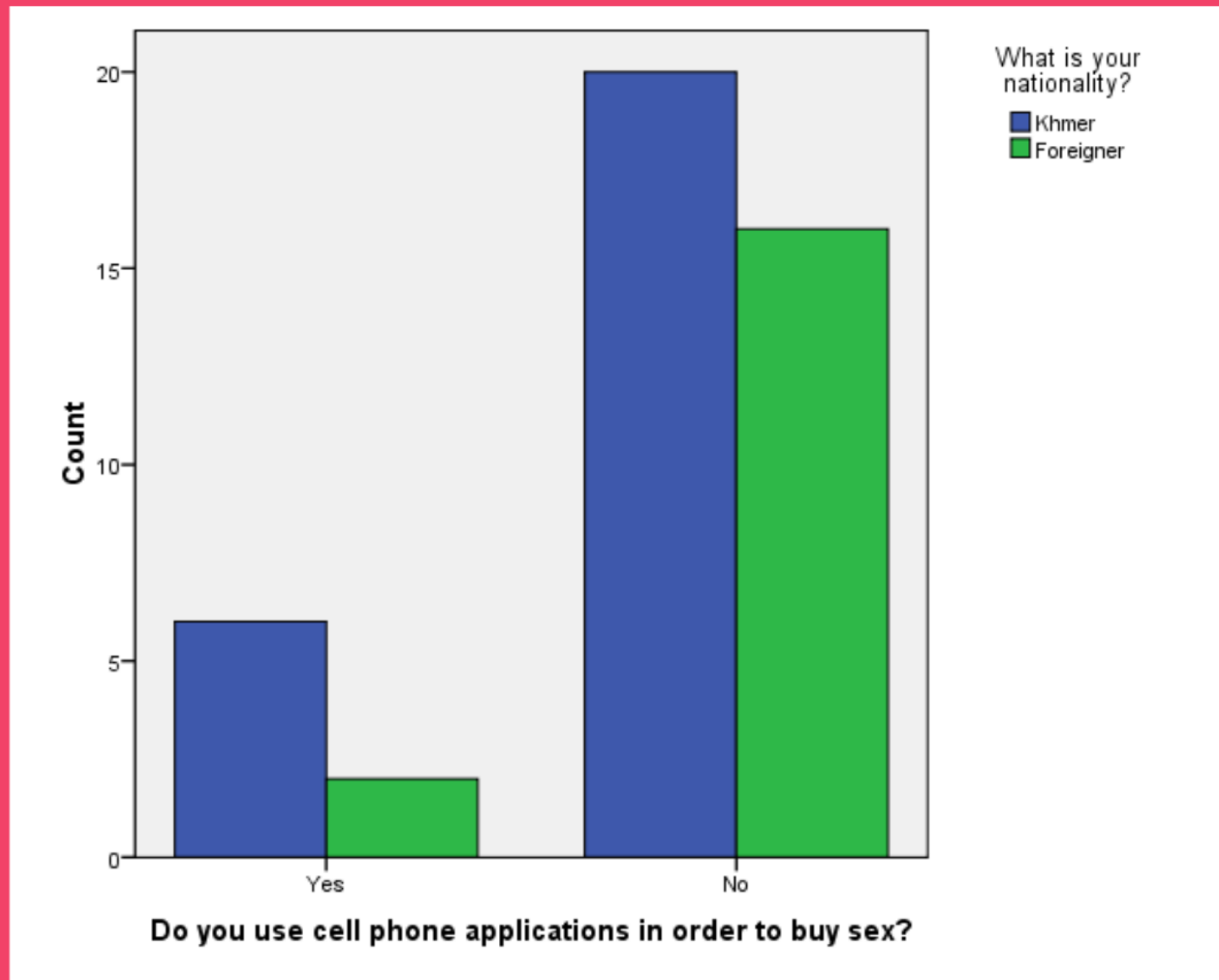
- University
- Mall
- Beer Garden



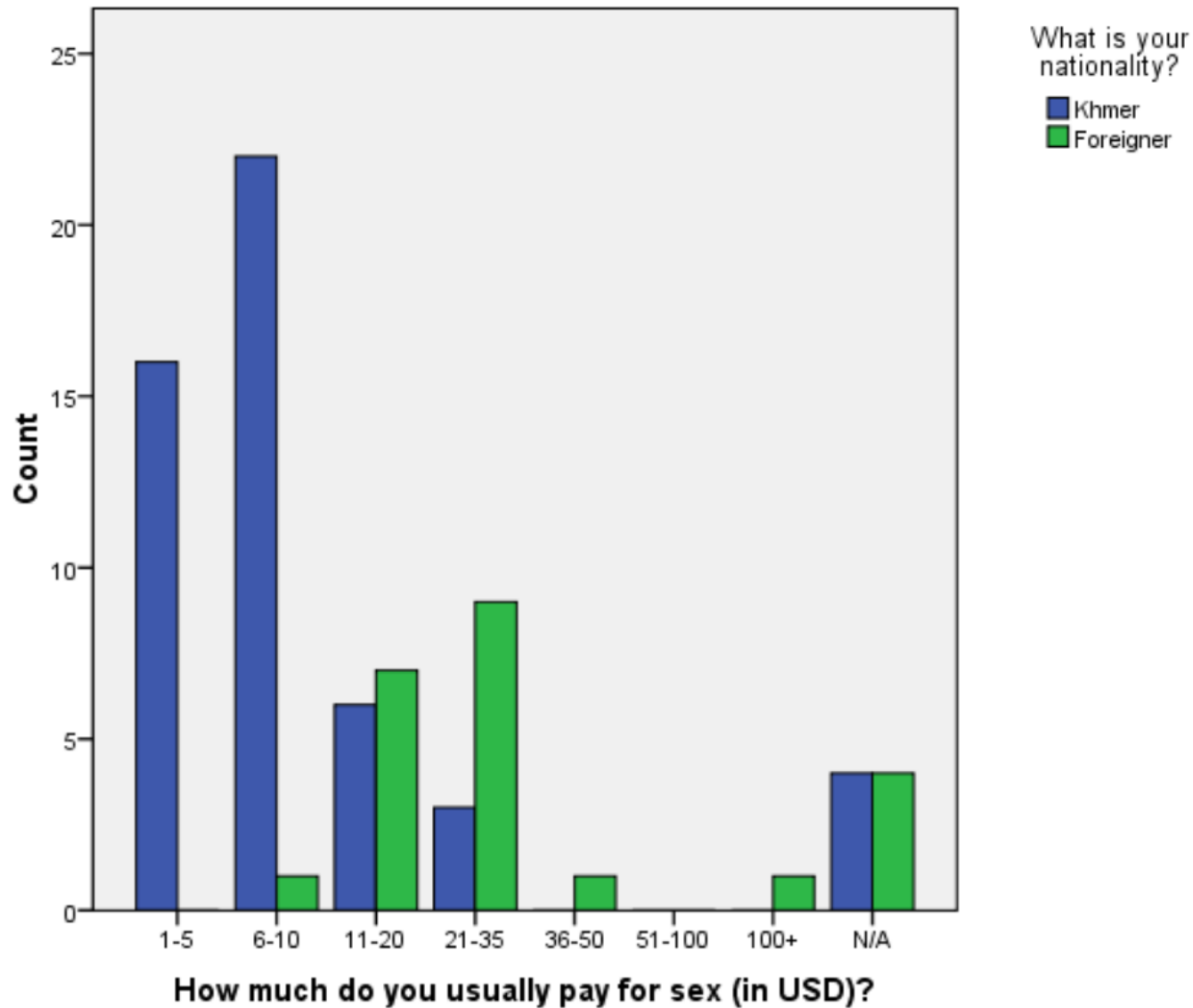
# Use of Internet



# Use of Mobile Applications



# Price



# Erotic Massage

16/23 (70%) of the foreigners and 23/51 (45%) of the Khmer men interviewed had experienced an erotic massage.

## Foreigners:

### - The men who said yes:

-Yes, but I stopped it

-It was normal

-I prefer erotic massages

“I didn't solicit it. It was offered to me. I was a bit confused.

On the whole, it was enjoyable and different,  
but I don't want another one”

### - The men who said no:

-"No, but maybe I'll have one while I'm here."

-"No, but I have been offered a happy ending more than once."

## Khmer:

### - The men who said yes:

-I have had sex with a masseur after a massage

-Once, I just wanted to try it

-I want to feel aroused

“I used to go, but I don't like going there.

The guys who go to spas, saunas as clients are too girly."

### -The men who said no:

-"No, because I don't like it. I prefer saunas."

-"I've never been before."

# Massage a form of prostitution?

16/23 (70%) of the foreign men and 39/51 (77%) of the Khmer men interviewed found erotic massage to be a form of prostitution.

Foreigners:

Why are they different?

- It's only to relieve tension or stress
- It's value added, it's an optional extra

“Here in Asia, it's considered a normal part of massage for stress relief.”

Why are they not different?

- It involves sexual contact and/or services
- It's an erotic trade for money
- It's disguised prostitution
- Masseurs do it for extra money

“It's part of the sex industry. It's getting masturbation rather than just getting an erection, for example.”



# Massage a form of prostitution? Continued

Khmer:

Why are they different?

- "If they want to have sex, they will ask the masseur. It is not automatically included in the price."

- "It happens between guests of spas and saunas with an agreement between clients, not the staff."

Why are they not different?

- It is a turn-on and often leads to sex

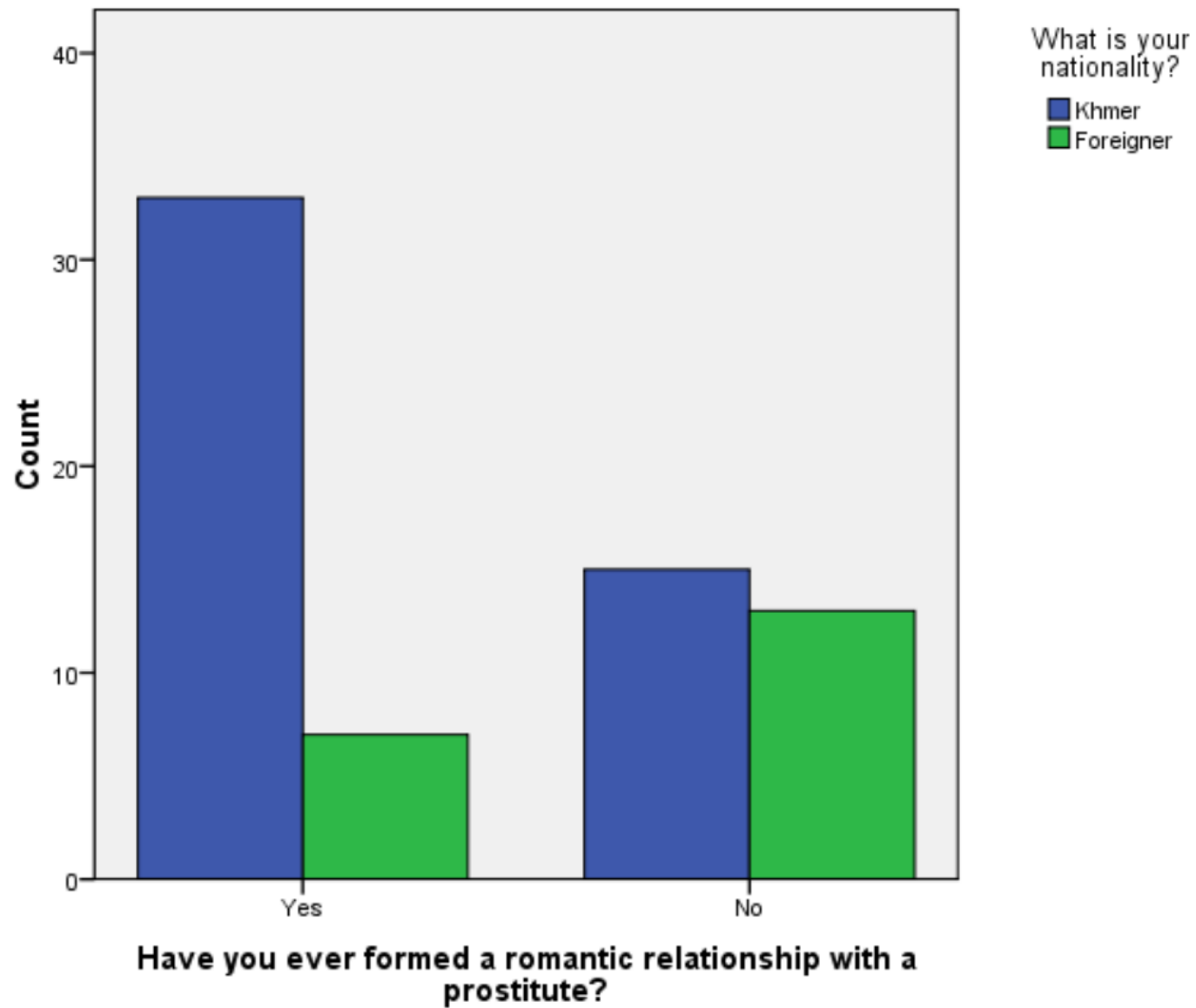
- They provide sex services, It's a disguised form of prostitution

- Masseurs asked me if I wanted sex services

- It's a way for the masseurs to get tips

"I have a friend that works there.  
Even if it's just a massage business, if people  
want to buy sex from the masseurs, they can."

# Relationship



# Relationship Continued

## Foreigners:

- Had or wanted to have a boyfriend but prostitution got in the way
- Helping his Cambodian boyfriend financially
- Romantic and/or emotional

"...Even with Cambodian men who are not prostitutes, as a foreigner, you need to support the one you're going out with because of the difference in living standards. But that is different from 'paying for sex' as such."

## Khmer:

- Sweetheart
- Gifts
- Helping boyfriend financially
- Friendship
- It didn't last long

"I like hanging out with prostitutes. After having sex with some of them, I found out that they were good guys and took them out to eat."

# Minors

Do You Know of Other Men who  
Have Had Sex With A Minor?

12/51 (24%) Khmer men said yes  
8/23 (35%) foreign men said yes

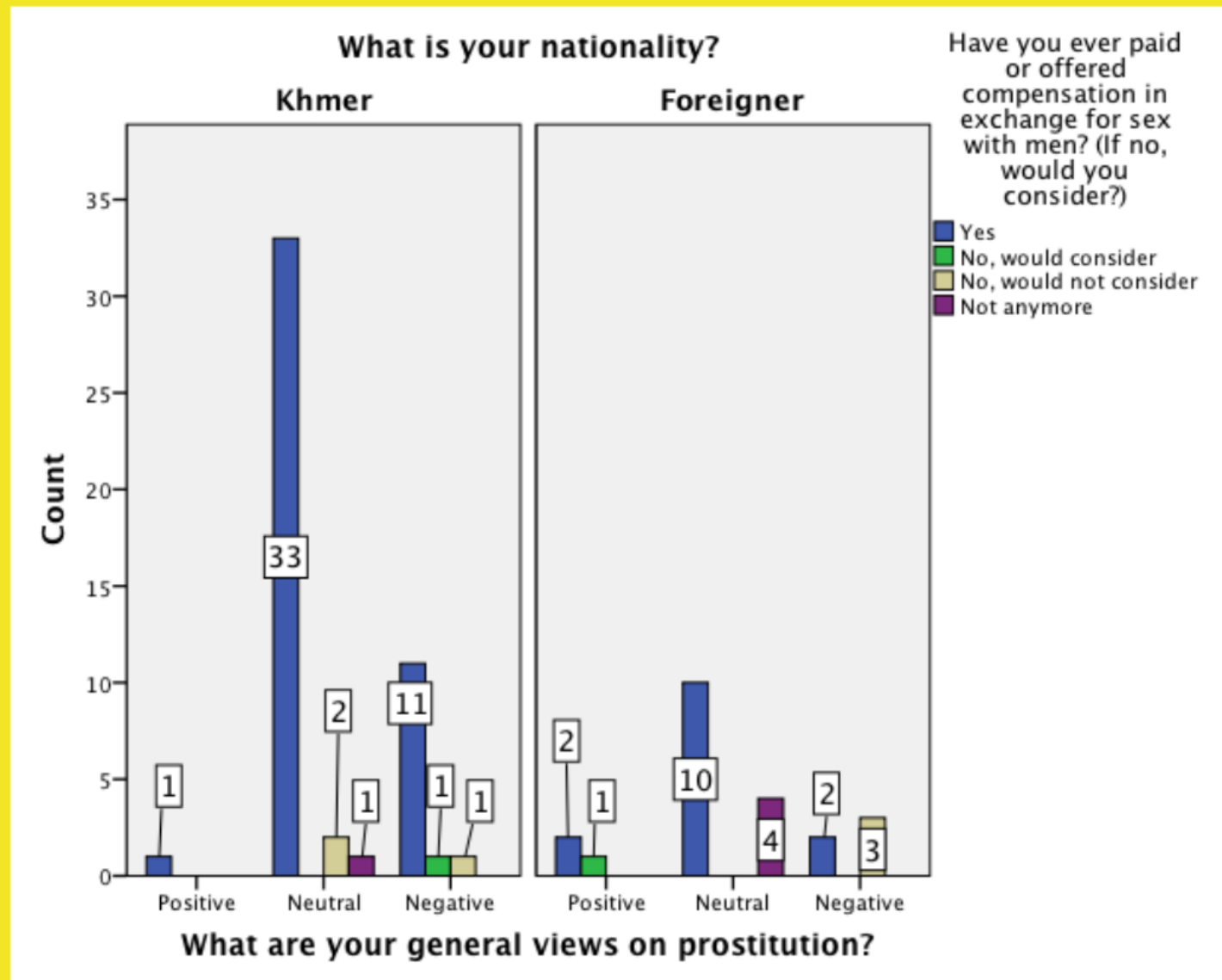
Have You Ever Been Offered a  
Minor for Sex?

8/51 (16%) Khmer men said yes  
12/23 (52%) foreign men said yes

# General Views of The Sex Industry



# View of Prostitution



# Positive Views of Prostitution

Foreigners:

- Prostitutes should be respected
- It's a legitimate profession
- It's an individual's choice
- It's the oldest profession

“Men working in prostitution should get better protection as a profession for healthier outcomes. It becomes a moral problem when it becomes forced or goes against somebody's will.”

Khmer:

"I need it. If there are no prostitutes, where will I go to get it?"

# Neutral Views

## Foreigners:

- Prostitutes need money, lack skills or alternatives, can be exploited
- Depends on the prostitute's situation, it's OK if their rights are upheld and they're not being forced into it
- There can be good reasons for being a prostitute

“I was a prostitute because it made me feel loved... But there are a lot of negatives that come along with it.”

## Khmer:

- It's their business or choice
- We cannot judge, they do it to survive, they need money, lack alternatives
- It should be a priority to protect themselves

“Nobody should judge the people who are forced to do this work because of economic or social problems.”

# Negative Views

## Foreigners:

- It's physically and/or emotionally dangerous
- Negative towards prostitution not prostitutes
- Poverty and drug push factors
- It's not an acceptable way to make money

“It's negative for prostitutes but it is more complicated than this. For some, prostitution is the only way to stay alive. I ask myself whether I would rather work in a factory or have sex with customers who are kind for a lot more money.”

## Khmer:

- Not good, dangerous for individual and/or society
- Disease
- An unacceptable way to make money
- It's illegal

# Pros of Prostitution

## Foreigners:

- It's available on demand
- No commitment, emotional attachment, and/or no expectations
- No pros
- Many prostitutes are attractive men
- Prostitutes are professionals, they know what they are doing, provide a service

“The adventure, the journey, the thrill of a nice sexual meeting.”

## Khmer:

- It's fun, it feels good, makes me happy
- It relieves stress, makes me feel comfortable, provides a sexual release
- It's a way of making money/a living
- They provide a professional service
- Ready access for people without partners

“There are only pros. It makes me feel good. Men my age, who are not superstars or attractive, need to get sex services. It doesn't mean that we want to buy them, but we have to use money.”

# Cons of Prostitution

## Foreigners:

- Risk of encountering theft, immediate threats to safety and health, being in an unknown environment
- It's not genuine desire, it's a business
- Risk of disease
- Ambiguity about romantic relationship and compensation
- Lack of intimacy, it's just sex, no long-term
- Having sex with a stranger

“It has not much to do with intimacy. It's not that emotional... There is also the risk of encouraging them to stay in the industry rather than leaving it.”

## Khmer:

- Risk of disease
- It costs money
- There are no cons
- Lack of trust causing fear and/or doubt
- Risk of encountering theft or immediate threats to safety

"Sometimes, I have bought someone I thought to be a woman for sex, but then found out that they were a transgender. But it was already too late as I was in the mood for sex, so I did it anyways."

# Difference in Prostitution Between the East and West

## Foreigners:

- Poverty is a driving factor into prostitution in Cambodia
- There is a more open attitude towards prostitution as a means to make money in Cambodia
- Lack of opportunity in Cambodia
- Larger demand for prostitution in the East due to its cheap sex and the demand from the local population

“There's a lot more prostitution in the East because there's much more poverty and a lot more clients because there are the locals plus a lot, a lot of tourists.”

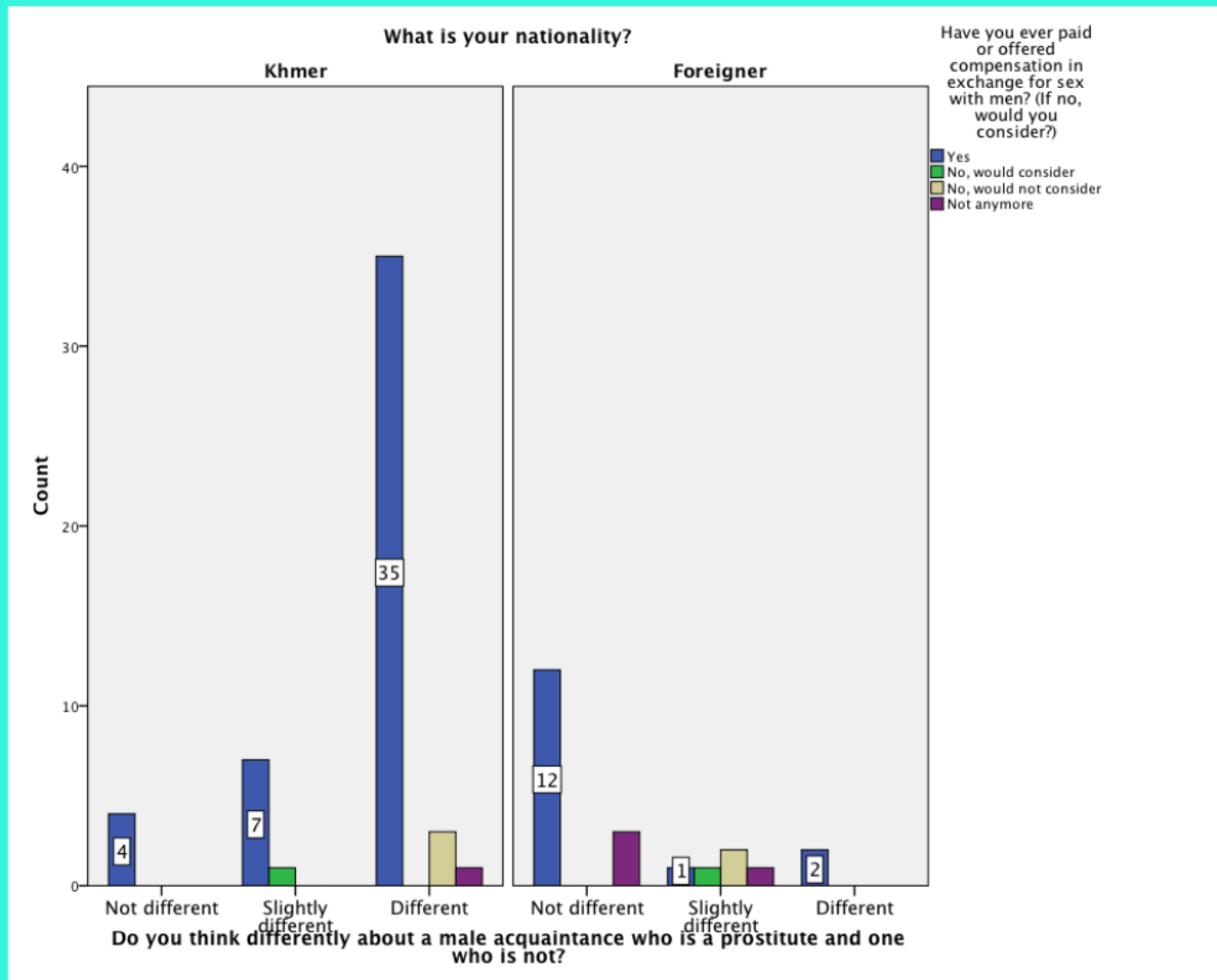
## Khmer:

- The West is better in terms of how they are treated, how much they are paid and the services they give
- Price
- Difference in execution of law regarding prostitution
- More openness to prostitution/sexuality in the West

“Western countries have proper places to have sex. In Cambodia, we have sex in public places such as parks.”



# Difference Between A Prostitute and Non-Prostitute?





# Why Different?

## Foreigners:

- Some prostitutes do it for easy money
- Different nature of their job and position. Limited skills and options.
- Difficult to trust prostitutes
- Bad morals

"I try to take people the way they treat me. It would be hard for anyone to not look down on them."

## Khmer:

- Different nature of their job and position. Limited skills and options.
- Motivated by money
- More vulnerable than others
- Deceive their clients

"In society, they are not different, but in sex, they are different."

# Why Not Different?

Foreigners:

"Only in the way that we see people differently because of the differences between their professions."

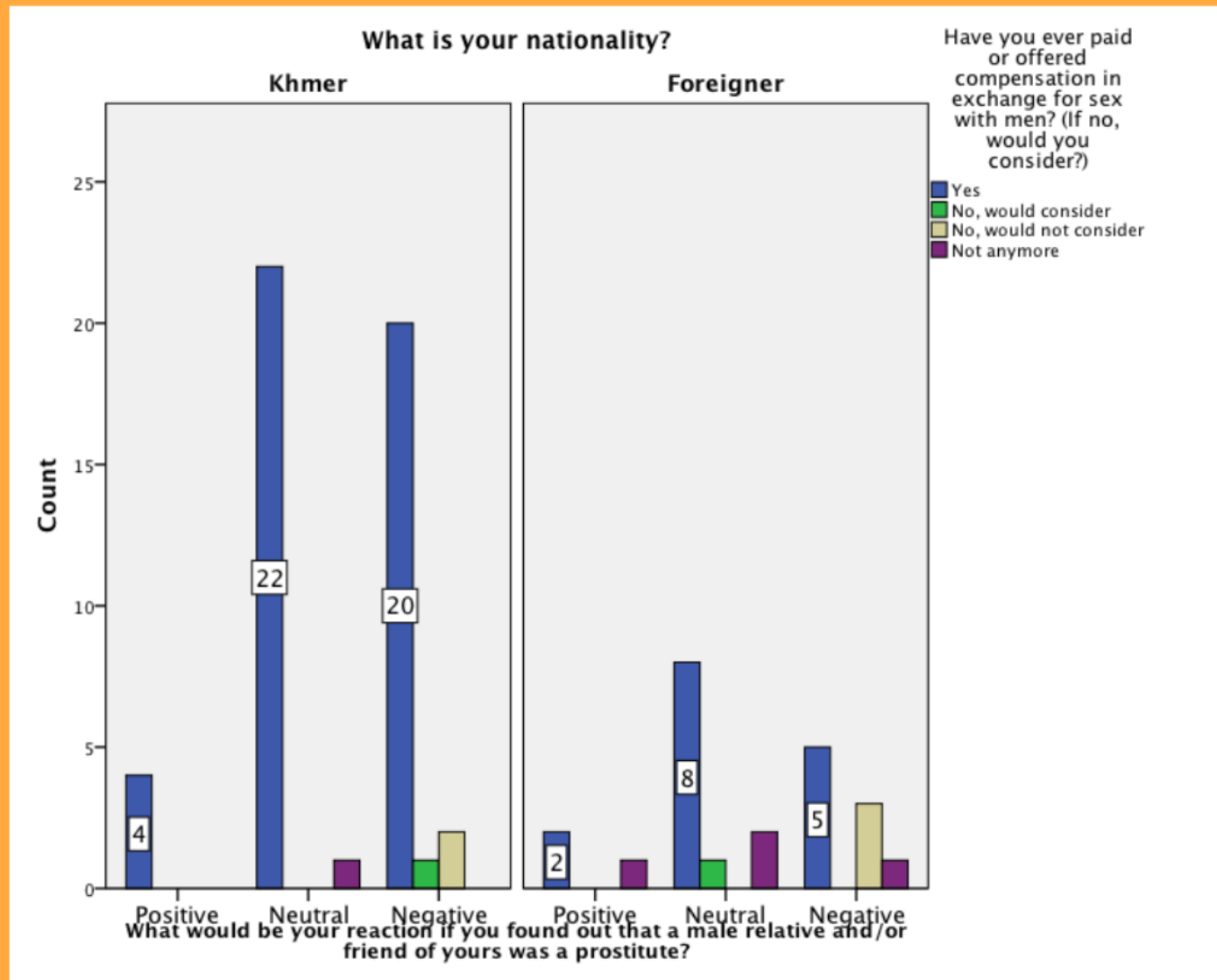
"One has a job, the other hasn't. It's up to them."

"In the gay community, it's very overlapping, grey and not such a big deal. I see it as a fact, not in a judgemental way."

Khmer:

"Prostitutes do it in public. Some normal men receive money privately."

# Reaction if Family or Friend were a Prostitute



# Relative or Friend

## Foreigners:

- Listen to them, support them and accept them
- As long as they're happy and enjoy it, it's their choice
- It would be unexpected and a surprise
- I would be unhappy

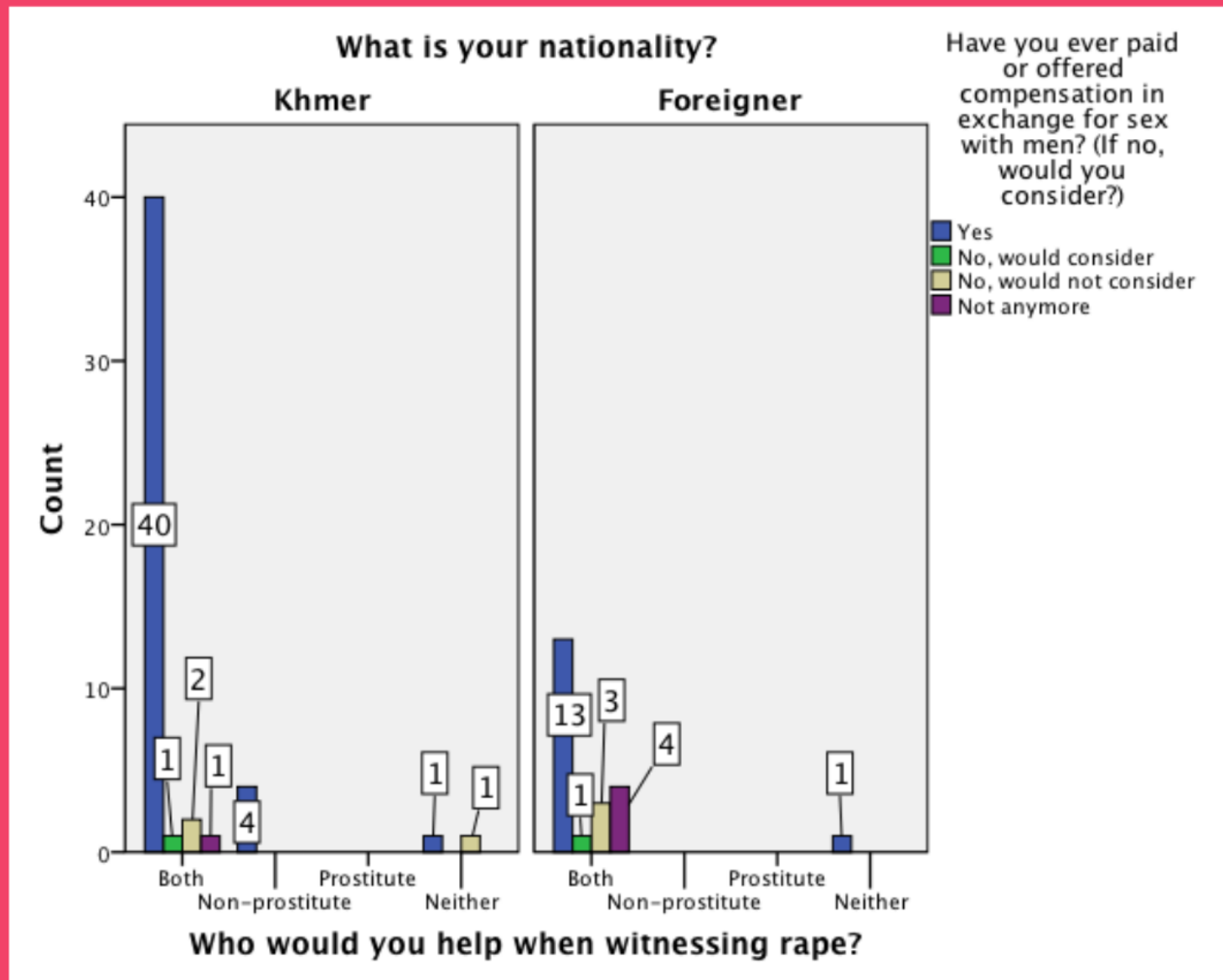
"The ramifications in Cambodia {of being a prostitute} are not serious. There's more room to leave it in the past. In Cambodia, it is sensed as a weakness to dwell on the past."

## Khmer:

- Encourage them to stop
- I would be fine with it
- I would be sad
- There would be no reaction; it's normal.

"I wouldn't feel happy for them. I look to prostitutes to give me what I want and gratify my desire. I wouldn't feel happy that someone I know would be a prostitute."

# Who Would You Help?



# Rape Scenario Continued

## Foreigners:

- Help both
- Rape is wrong whenever
- There is no difference between the two
- Call the police

“In England, I wouldn't get involved. I would call the police. Here, calling the police is no good, so I would turn a blind eye.”

## Khmer:

- Help both
- Rape is against the law and human rights
- If there was preference, help the non-prostitute because they are not used to it, whereas a prostitute would be.
- Feel pity for both

“I would help both. I wouldn't discriminate against them. Then I would try to sleep with them.”

## Conclusions

- It is not clear in Cambodia when a sexual encounter will turn into a transaction.
- There appears to be a lot more respect for the individual prostitute within the MSM community of Cambodia, as opposed to the MSF community, in our previous research.
- There appears to be a marginalization of transgender men within the MSM community in Cambodia.
- Education of the Cambodian population on different sexualities specifically one that encourages respect of men who have sex with men. This respect will also allow the MSM community the right to make their own life choices without fear of societal repercussion.
- Many of the foreign men felt that they were helping their partner financially through paying for sex. But, when this relationship turned into one of dependency on the exchange, both parties walked away feeling exploited.



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