

## **Ethical Issues Pertaining to Tamed Elephants in Sri Lanka: A Philosophical Study**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The entwined history of humans and elephants is fascinating but often sad. People have used elephants as beasts of burden and war machines, slaughtered them for their ivory, exterminated them as threats to people and ecosystems, turned them into objects of entertainment at circuses, employed them as both curiosities and conservation ambassadors in zoos and deified and honored them in religious rites. The main objective of this paper is to identify the ethical issues pertaining to tamed elephants in Sri Lanka. The sub objectives are to find out how humans use elephants as tools and entertainment and examine the ethics of training and legal protection actions needed. Research methodology used in the study was largely based on qualitative approach which analyses the relevant documentary sources from books, journals and web sites relating to this area. A descriptive research design with survey method was applied in this study. The findings reveal that there are issues related to the tamed elephants in Sri Lanka. They can be identified as management practices, poaching for ivory, logging elephants, using occasions and capture of elephants for captivity. Animals also have their rights. There are accepted codes of practice for the keeping of tamed elephants, which include the 'Five Freedoms' a captive elephant must enjoy. They are the freedom from Malnutrition, Terminal physical discomfort, Injury and disease, Fear and stress and the freedom to express normal patterns and behavior. So it is important to take some actions to protect the ethics related to the tamed elephants to safeguard the future of these valuable animals.

***Keywords:*** *Elephants, Ethical issues, Tamed elephants, Humans, Ethics*

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