

# The Study on Ethical Implications of Using Animals in Circuses for Entertainment with Special Reference to Chennai

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**Abstract:** *The use of animals in circuses for entertainment raises a significant number of ethical concerns. These concerns center around the potential for animal suffering, the unnaturalness of the environment and activities, and the inherent exploitation of animals for human enjoyment. Training animals for circus performances often involves harsh methods, including physical punishment, deprivation, and psychological manipulation. These methods can cause significant physical and psychological harm to animals. Objectives for Exploring the Ethical Implications of Using Animals in Circuses for Entertainment: To understand the scope of the issue, To investigate the potential harms inflicted upon animals in circuses, To evaluate the justifications for using animals in circuses, To analyze the legal and ethical frameworks surrounding animal use in circus, To explore alternative forms of animal entertainment, To inform public opinion and policy decisions. Modern circuses often prioritize flashy tricks and spectacle over genuine education about animal behavior and conservation. Animals are treated as commodities, exploited for human amusement, and denied their intrinsic value as sentient beings. Animals are deprived of the freedom to make their own choices and live according to their natural instincts. Performing unnatural and often dangerous tricks can cause physical injury and psychological trauma. The total number of sample respondents in the age group of 18-50 years are collected .The overall sample size collected through queries 206.The statistical tools used are Graphical representation the independent variables are age groups, gender, educational Qualifications, occupation and Place of residence*

**Keywords:** Animal Welfare, Training methods, Exploitation, Public policy and legislation, Alternative forms

## I. INTRODUCTION

Early circuses often showcased exotic animals, such as lions, elephants, and tigers, performing tricks and stunts. These performances were viewed as a form of education and scientific advancement, allowing people to observe and learn about wild animals. In the 20th century, circuses became increasingly commercialized, with animal acts becoming a central attraction. Training methods often involved force and coercion, causing physical and psychological harm to the animals. There is no single international treaty or convention that specifically prohibits the use of animals in circuses. However, several international agreements and declarations address animal welfare concerns, including: Universal Declaration on Animal Welfare (2018), Convention on the Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), Animal Welfare Act (AWA), World Organization for Animal Health, Animal Welfare Act 2006. The ethical implications of using animals in circuses for entertainment are complex and multifaceted, influenced by various factors: Different animal species have unique needs and instincts. Confining them in cages, forcing them to perform unnatural tricks, and depriving them of natural behaviors can cause significant distress and suffering. Training methods, The lack of adequate space, exercise, and enrichment in circuses can negatively impact animal welfare. Public opinion towards animal circuses has become increasingly negative in recent years. Some countries have banned or restricted the use of wild animals in circuses, while others have implemented stricter regulations on animal training and living conditions.

The use of animals in circuses for entertainment remains a controversial issue, with arguments on both sides raising ethical concerns. Here are some of the current trends in the debate: The rise of animal-free circuses and other forms of entertainment that do not exploit animals offers a viable alternative for audiences seeking amusement. The rise of animal-free circuses and other forms of entertainment that do not exploit animals offers a viable alternative for audiences seeking amusement. Virtual reality could be used to create immersive experiences that allow audiences to interact with animals in a safe and ethical way. This analysis examines the ethical implications of this practice across different countries, considering their legal frameworks, cultural contexts, and public perceptions. The European Union has strict regulations on the use of animals in circuses, with some countries banning wild animals completely and others imposing stringent welfare standards. The United States has no federal laws banning the use of animals in circuses, although several states have enacted their own restrictions.

## OBJECTIVES

- To investigate the potential harms inflicted upon animals in circuses
- To analyze the legal and ethical frameworks surrounding animal use in circuses
- To find alternative forms of animal entertainment
- To know the impact of social media and public opinion on the use of animals in circuses.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

**D Mota-Rojas (2022)** Exhibiting animals in circuses continues to be a popular practice today in some countries such as Germany, Spain, or Australia. However, animals' biological needs are not always prioritized due to the inadequate diets, reduced housing spaces, deficient social interaction, and handling that predisposes them to develop stereotypes and alter mental states due to chronic stress. Animal circuses are considered a controversial practice that can decrease the welfare of animals. Understanding the possible negative consequences on animal welfare (mental state and physical health) could contribute to planning strategies to improve the quality of life of wildlife animals exhibited in circuses worldwide. (Mota-Rojas et al. 2022)

**DA Fennell (2021)** Animals are used in tourism in many ways. Some uses are more benign such as ecotourism (e.g., viewing elephants in natural settings), while others induce significant levels of suffering, pain and distress with the denial of dignity and respect (e.g., elephants performing at a circus). What is missing is a comprehensive overview of how just these uses may or may not be. (Fennell and Sheppard 2021)

**C Winter (2020)** A range of ethics positions was identified including rights, ecofeminist, ecocentric, welfare, utilitarian, and instrumental. Some studies challenge the ontological bases, and therefore the moral considerability of animals used in tourism: speciesism, native/introduced, a wild-captive continuum and domestic animals (Winter 2020)

**E Marinova (2019)** Ethical issues related to animal rights have gained significant exposure in the past few decades. As a result, animal welfare concerns have continuously been at the forefront of public debate. This has had a major impact on Western culture, expressed in the growing popularity of lifestyle changes towards reducing and abandonment of animal use across different industries. (Marinova and Fox 2019)

**S Nance (2019)** Several factors are known to affect children's identification of human emotions, but information is virtually nonexistent regarding how they develop their ability to identify animal emotions. In this study we approached factors likely to influence children's identification of animal emotions in zoos settings, such as age, variables related to information and experience with animals, the quality of animal facilities and children's sensitivity to the animals' captive environments. (S Nance 2019)

**T Grant (2018)** This special issue explores the role particularly of live animals on the stage, from the early modern era to the present time. The contributions deal with visual and textual representations of performing animals, typologies of animals in the theatre, the hybridization of the drama with the circus, the zoo and the cinema, as well as the semiotic transfer of animal roles from the text to the stage. (Grant, Ramos Gay, and Alonso Recarte 2018)

**SP McCulloch (2018)** Animal health and welfare policy in the UK often raises important ethical questions. Bovine tuberculosis and badger culling and the use of wild animals in circuses are good examples of controversial policy issues. In the UK, animal health and welfare advisory bodies such as the Farm Animal Welfare Committee do not have adequate expertise to inform the moral dimensions of such policy issues (McCulloch and Reiss 2018)

**CG Scanes (2018)** Animals play important roles in entertainment, leisure activity, and related economic activities. Nature, predominantly animal-based tourism, generates about US\$3.2 billion in Southern Africa, with free ranging wildlife-watching in Africa focusing on the big five African animals (African elephant, Cape buffalo, leopard, lion, and rhinoceros).(Scanes 2018)

**T Moorhouse (2017)** Wildlife tourism is a huge global market, the revenue from which can promote local livelihoods and tourist education, enact conservation, and improve animal welfare. Such benefits arise if wildlife tourist attractions (WTAs) prioritise ethical deliverables above financial profit, but recent work has shown that the majority of WTAs have substantial negative animal welfare and conservation impacts.(Moorhouse, D’Cruze, and Macdonald 2017)

**MF De la Fuente (2017)** perception on animal welfare is vital to promote people awareness and changes in attitudes towards this subject. Here we present a short review on public perception of animal welfare in different instances and the factors influencing each one of them. While the great public concern towards farm and laboratory animals resulted in increased efforts to assess animal welfare in these instances, less attention has been given to pets, captive wild animals and their use for entertainment purposes(C. De la Fuente et al. 2017)

**S Brando (2016)** Good animal welfare and quality of life matters first and foremost to the individual animal, but is also fundamental to meaningful and successful conservation, research and education programs. It is important to consider the animal’s perspective and the species-specific requirements that are not always compatible with our entertainment goals.This chapter will focus specifically on the topic of entertainment and performing captive wild animals in zoos, marine parks and circuses worldwide and which conditions need to be fulfilled to warrant good animal welfare, i.e. thriving captive wild animals.(Brando 2016)

**HS Proctor (2013)** In this review, we examined what is being explored and discussed, regarding animal sentience, within the scientific literature. Rather than attempting to extract meaning from the many complex and abstract definitions of animal sentience, we searched over two decades of scientific literature using a peer-reviewed list of 174 keywords. The list consisted of human emotions, terminology associated with animal sentience, and traits often thought to be indicative of subjective states.(Proctor, Carder, and Cornish 2013)

**DA Fennell (2013)**The paper broadly examines the concept of welfare from an interdisciplinary standpoint, including how it is defined and measured, the importance of sentience, pain and suffering in understanding welfare, and methods of enhancing animal welfare. The paper expands on animal welfare as it applies to tourism scholarship and tourism industry practice.(Fennell 2013)

**A Shani (2012)** Despite the considerable incorporation of animals in entertainment and leisure venues, only limited efforts have been geared towards exploring the ethical aspects of using animals in these initiatives. This lack of attention is especially evident in the tourism literature, despite the great relevancy of animal-based attractions to the tourism industry. Consequently, the purpose of the current research was to fill the gap in the literature by investigating tourists’ attitudes toward various animal-based attractions, using survey that was administered to tourists in the Central Florida area.(Shani 2012)

**MA Graner (2012)** The use of exotic animals in entertainment is commonly seen in the Netherlands. Although the number of animals used for entertainment purposes decreases by the years, many are still being used in zoos, circuses and on farms. Today, animal welfare is an important issue of debate, and more and more people oppose animal use in entertainment. However, reaching consensus on the topic proves to be difficult. (Graner 2012)

**M Parker (2011)** This paper defines the circus as an institutionalized questioning of forms of stability and classification, and then enquires as to how such effects are produced. I begin with the cultural representations of the circus, and then move through sections on community, movement and economic organization. This order is intended to illustrate that the production of mystery is a complex affair, and that cultural and economic descriptions of this particular form of organization are necessarily entangled.(Parker 2011)

**N Carr (2011)** The contemporary justification for zoos is based on their ability to act as sites of wildlife conservation. Alongside this is the reality that zoos have historically been defined as sites for the entertainment of the general public and continue to be dependent on the revenue raised through visitor receipts.(Carr and Cohen 2011)

**W Atkins-Sayre (2010)** People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) faces a daunting task in creating support for animal rights and convincing individuals that they share substance with animals. PETA challenges the animal/human divide by articulating a shared identity through discursive and visual appeals. (Atkins-Sayre 2010)

**M Cole (2009)** Welfare of animals in counseling is explored, followed by a synopsis, possible future directions in research and a conclusion. The manual designed for counselors draws from this review and the writer’s experience to provide thoughtful and practical information for the practitioner interested in Animal Assisted Therapy. (Cole 2009)

**R Ballantyne (2007)** Research in these settings provides a valuable foundation for the emerging field of non-captive wildlife tourism. In particular, valuable lessons regarding the potential impact of wildlife encounters on visitors’ conservation attitudes and behaviour can be drawn from research in zoos and aquariums. This paper explores those aspects of wildlife encounters that appear to contribute most to conservation learning. (R Ballantyne 2007)

**III. METHODOLOGY**

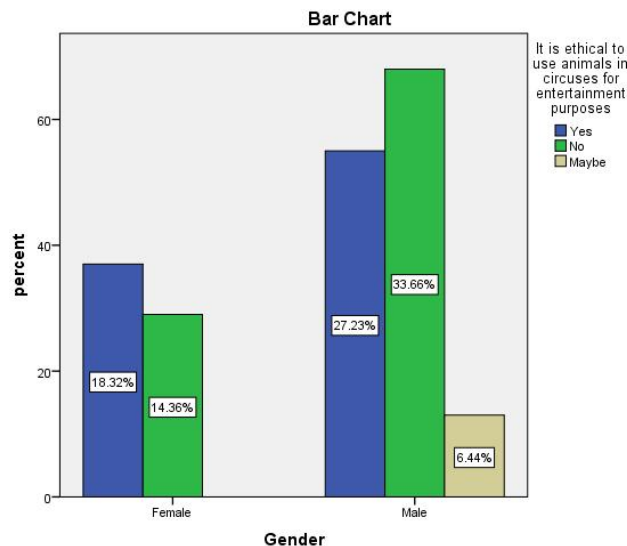
The nature of the study is an empirical method. The methodology used by the researcher is a convenient sampling method to collect samples. An attempt has been made in this research to study the ethical implications of using in circuses for entertainment. According to the data utilized in it, it is entirely derived from secondary sources. to the Significance of this research. The present study is based on primary data collection by the Researcher and the secondary data from books, journals, and online sources. The author Carried out empirical research by a convenient method. The total number of sample respondents in the age group of 18-50 years are collected .The overall sample size collected through queries 206. The independent variables are age groups, gender, educational Qualifications, occupation and Place of residence. The dependant variables are It is ethical to use animals in circuses for entertainment purposes, Any local or national regulations regarding the use of animals in circuses, Using animals in circuses for entertainment is ethically acceptable, Ethical concerns to associate with using animals in circuses, the welfare of animals in circuses is adequately protected.

**HYPOTHESIS**

- **Null Hypothesis(H0)** :There is no significant relation between Ethical concerns to associate with using animals in circuses and gender
- **Alternative Hypothesis (H1)**:There is significant relation between Ethical concerns to associate with using animals in circuses and gender

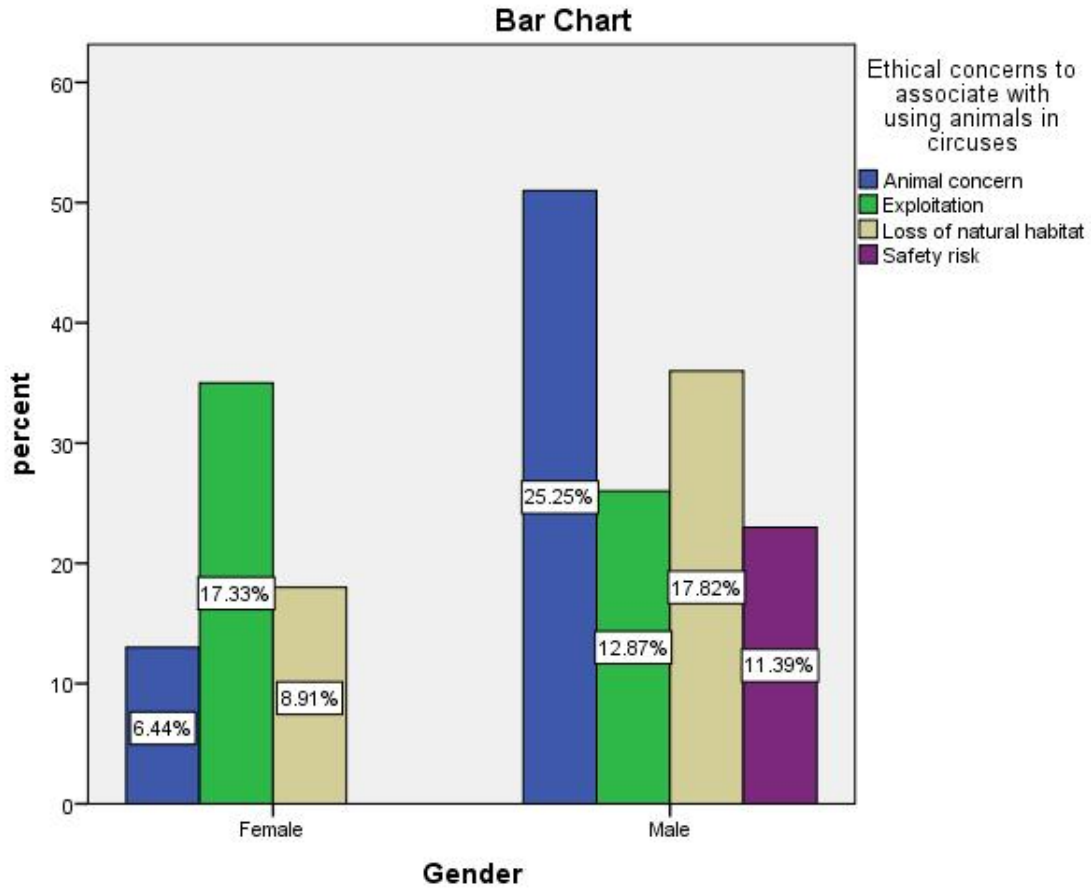
**IV. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**

**FIGURE 1**



**LEGEND** Figure 1 represents the overall performance of the sample population with regards to gender about ethical usage of animals in circuses for entertainment purposes

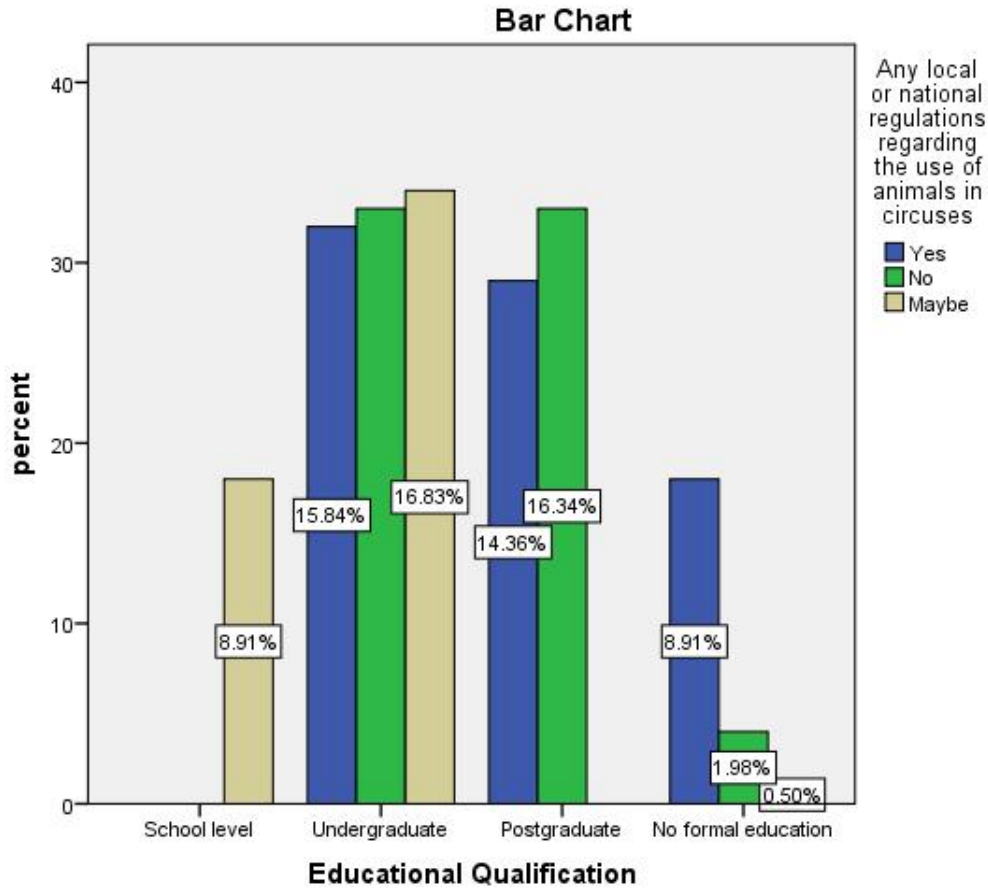
**FIGURE 2**



**LEGEND**

Figure 2 represents the overall performance of the sample population with regards to gender about Ethical concerns to associate with using animals in circuses

**FIGURE 3**

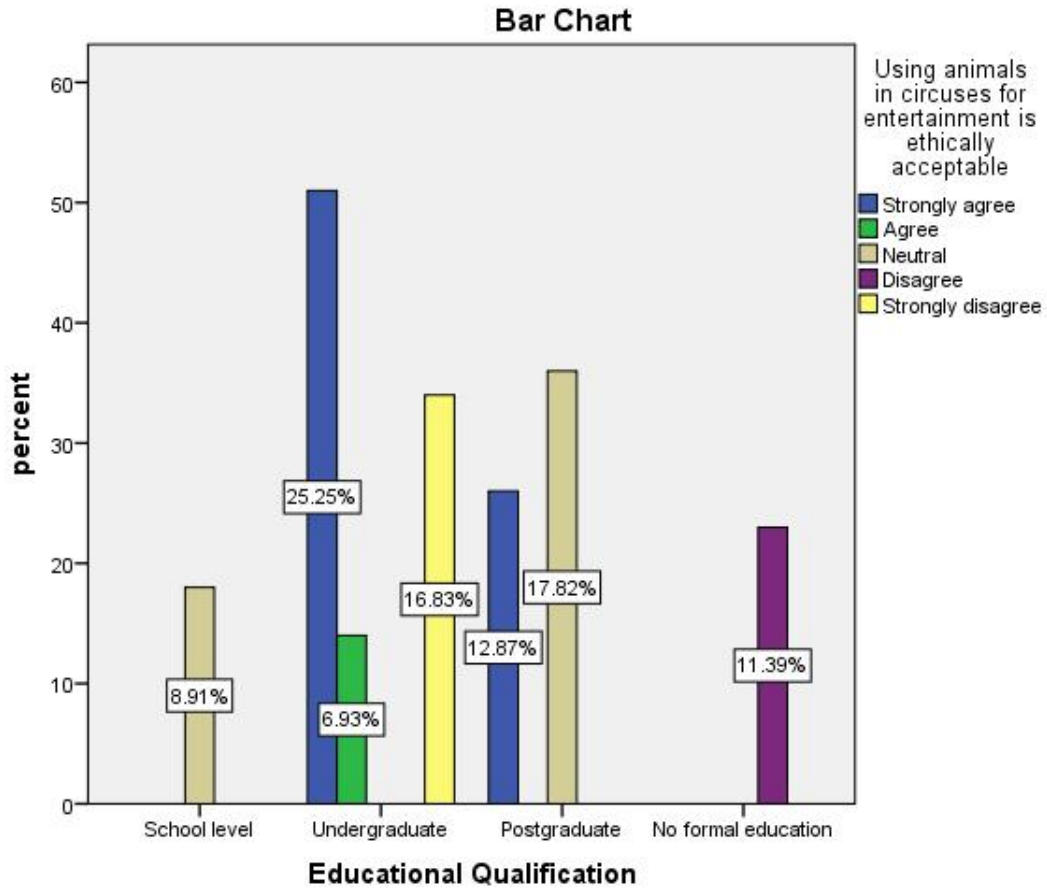


**LEGEND**

Figure 3 represents the overall performance of the sample population with regards to education qualification about any local or national regulations regarding the use of animals in circuses



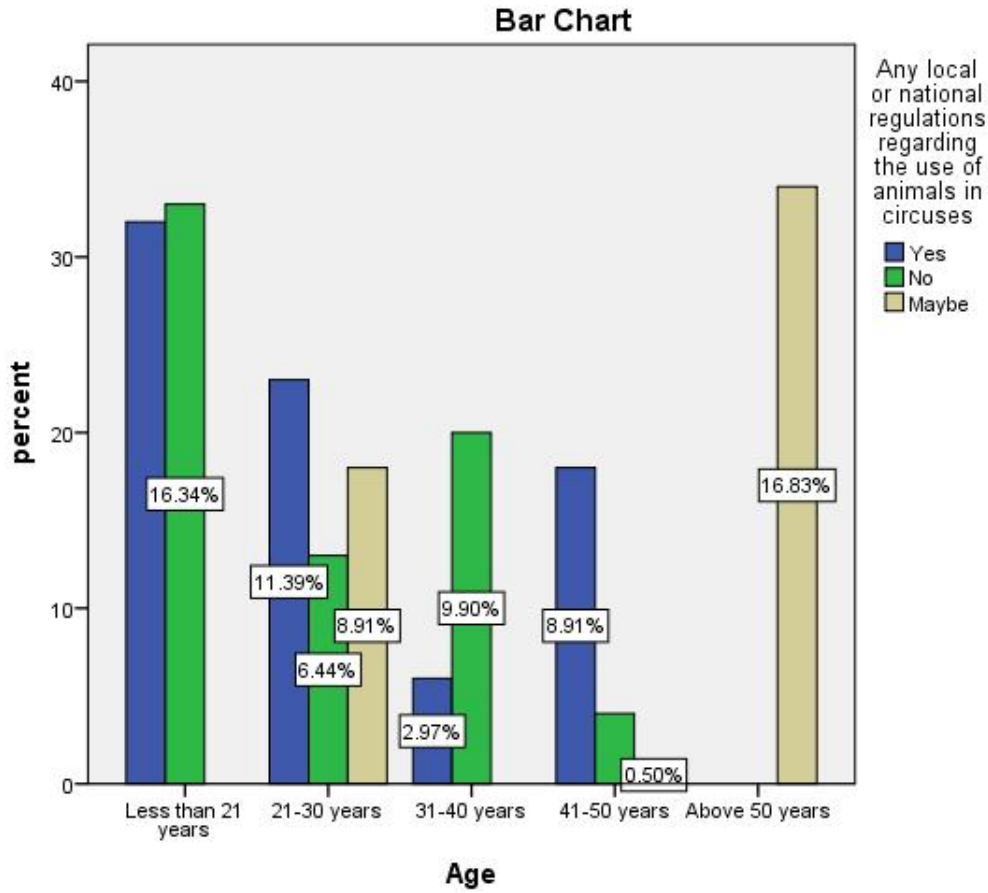
**FIGURE 4**



**LEGEND**

Figure 4 represents the overall performance of the sample population with regards to education qualification about Using animals in circuses for entertainment is ethically acceptable

**FIGURE 5**

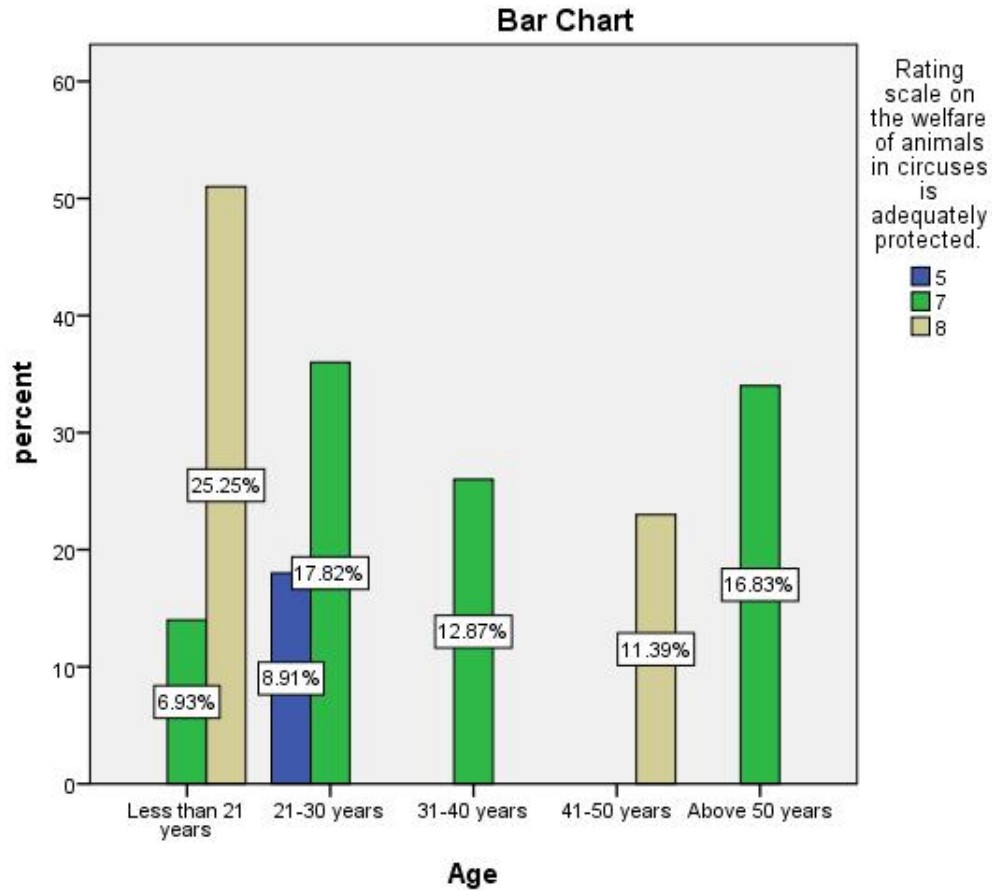


**LEGEND**

Figure 5 represents the overall performance of the sample population with regards to age about Any local or national regulations regarding the use of animals in circuses



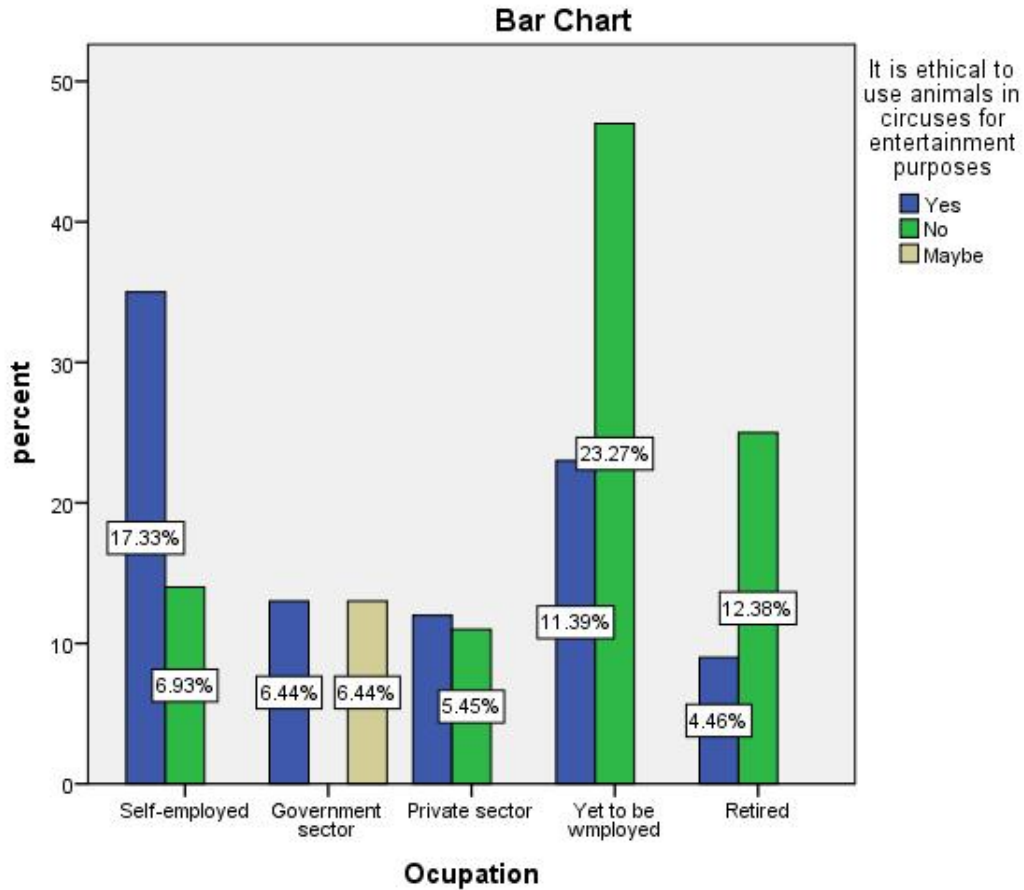
**FIGURE 6**



**LEGEND**

Figure 6 represents the overall performance of the sample population with regards to age about the welfare of animals in circuses is adequately protected.

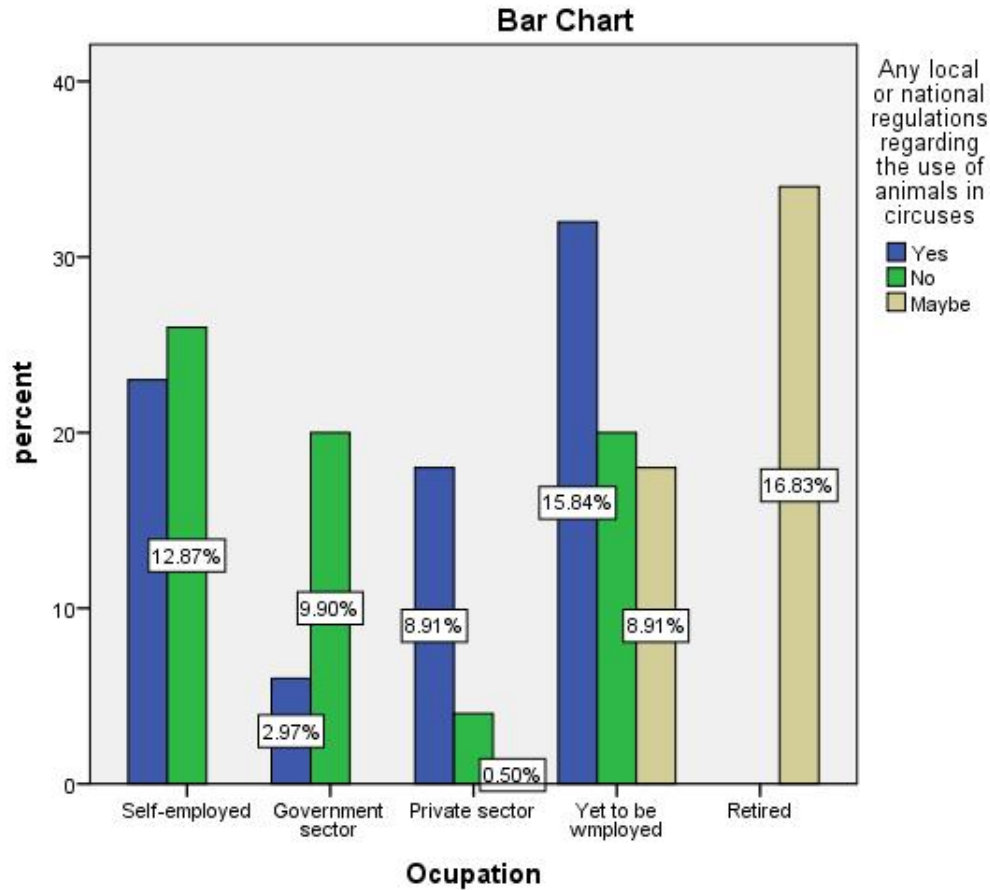
**FIGURE 7**



**LEGEND**

Figure 7 represents the overall performance of the sample population with regards to occupation about ethical usage of animals in circuses for entertainment purposes

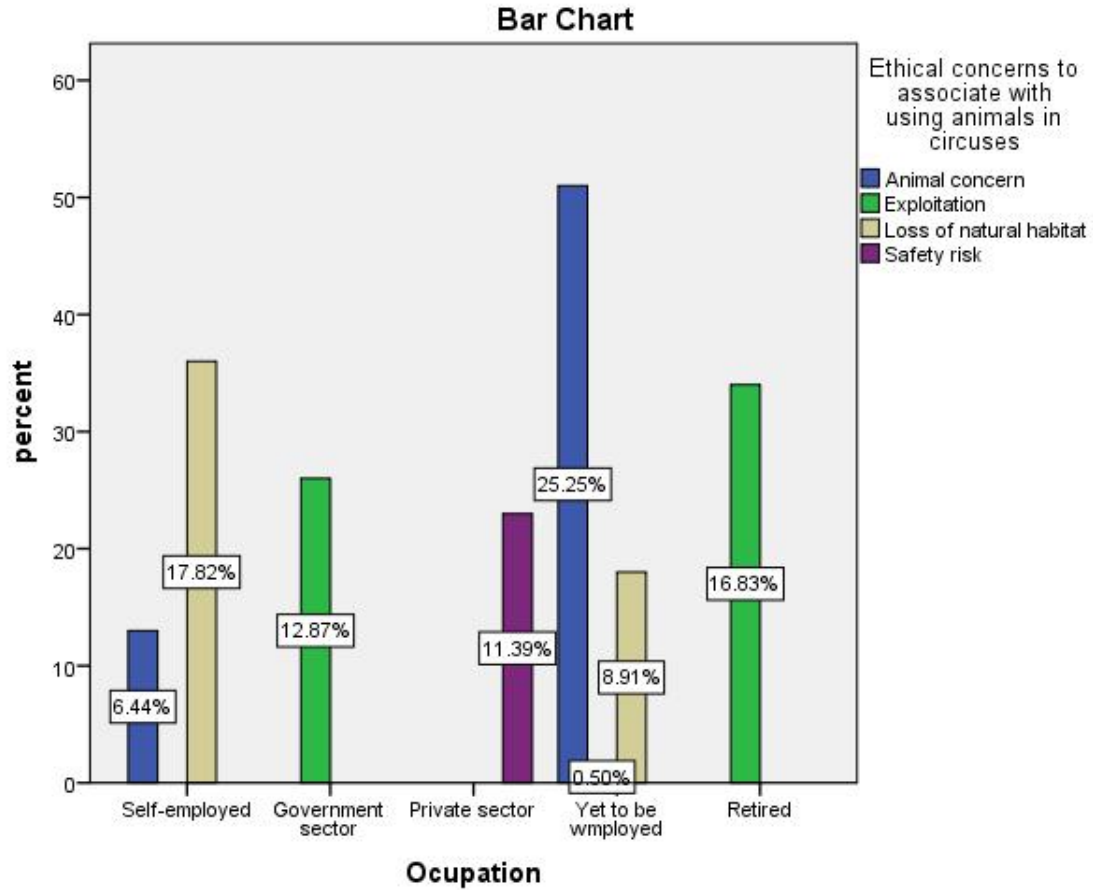
**FIGURE 8**



**LEGEND**

Figure 8 represents the overall performance of the sample population with regards to occupation about any local or national regulations regarding the use of animals in circuses

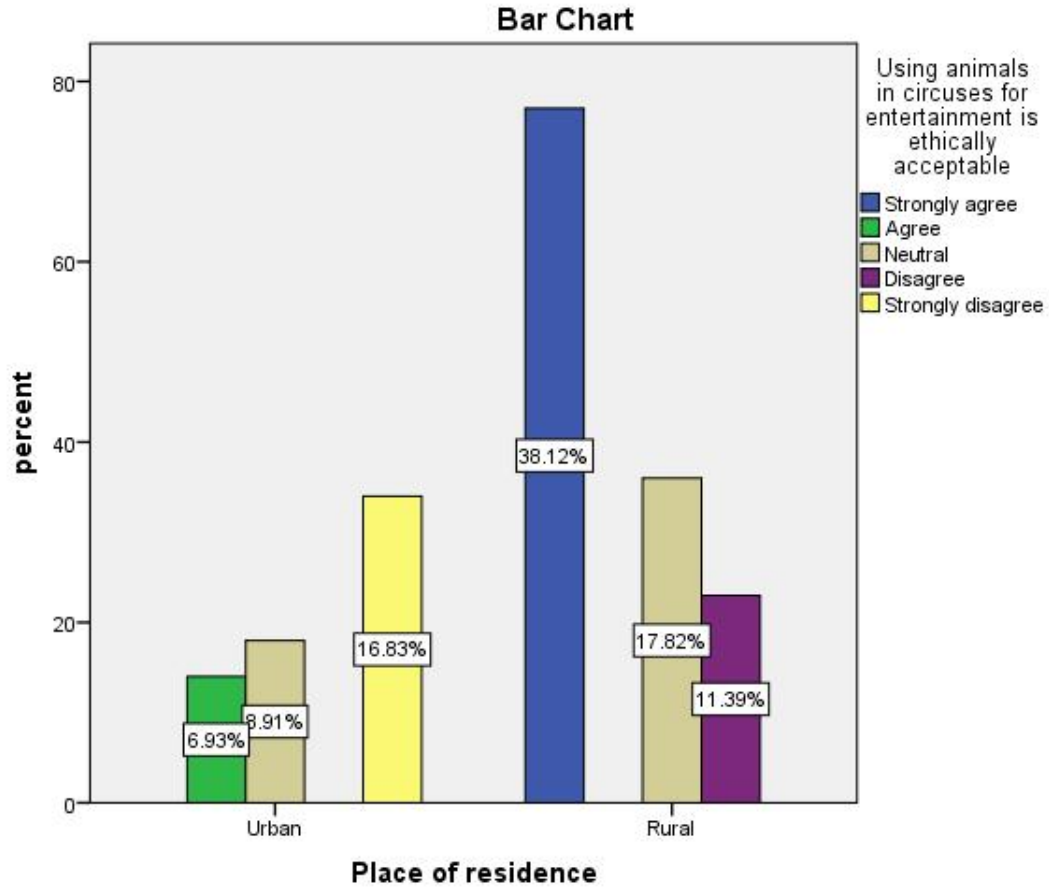
**FIGURE 9**



**LEGEND**

Figure 9 represents the overall performance of the sample population with regards to occupation about Ethical concerns to associate with using animals in circuses

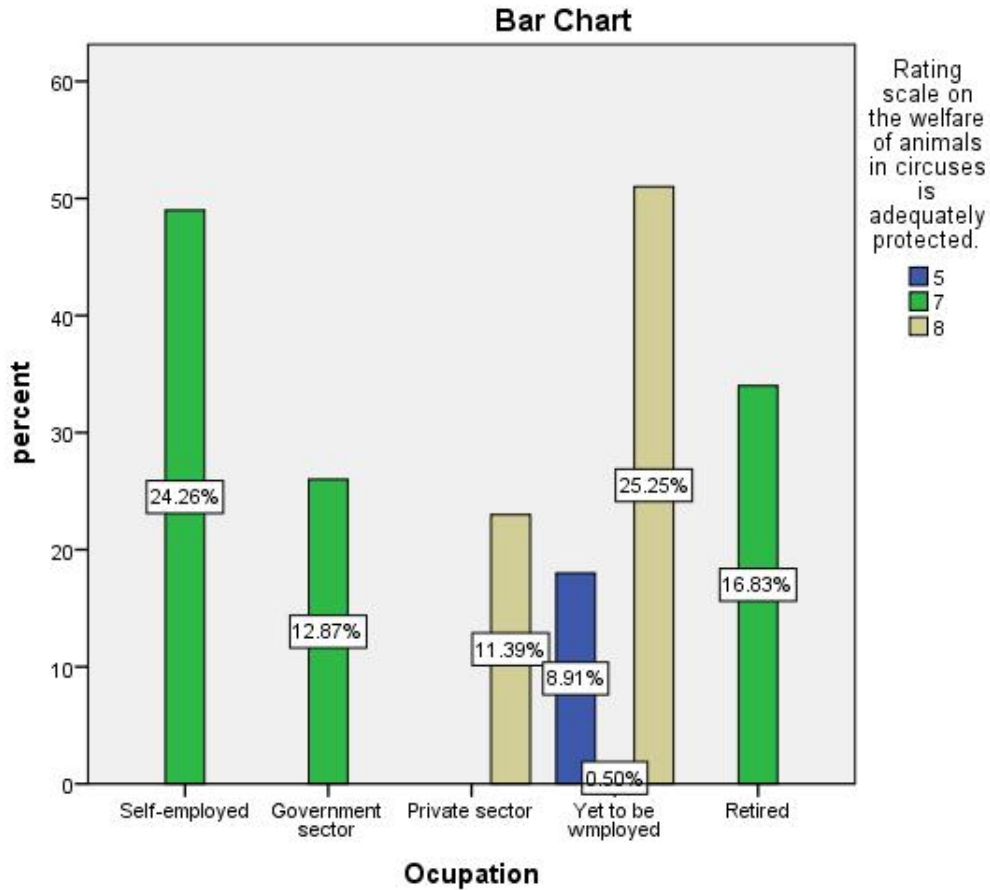
**FIGURE 10**



**LEGEND**

Figure 10 represents the overall performance of the sample population with regards to place of residence about Using animals in circuses for entertainment is ethically acceptable

**FIGURE 11**



**LEGEND**

Figure 11 represents the overall performance of the sample population with regards to occupation about the welfare of animals in circuses is adequately protected.

**TABLE 1**

**Ethical concerns to associate with using animals in circuses \* Gender Crosstabulation**

Count		Gender		Total
		Female	Male	
Ethical concerns to associate with using animals in circuses	Animal concern	13	51	64
	Exploitation	35	26	61
	Loss of natural habitat	18	36	54
	Safety risk	0	23	23
Total		66	136	202

**Chi-Square Tests**

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	32.541 <sup>a</sup>	3	.000
Likelihood Ratio	38.687	3	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.016	1	.313
N of Valid Cases	202		

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 7.51.

**LEGEND**

- Null hypothesis : There is no significant relation between the Ethical concerns to associate with using animals in circuses and gender
- Alternative hypothesis : There is a significant relation between the Ethical concerns to associate with using animals in circuses and gender
- Interpretation: The calculated p value is 0 .Since p value is <0.05, alternate hypothesis is rejected at 5% level of significance. So there is no significant relation between the Ethical concerns to associate with using animals in circuses and gender

**V. RESULTS**

**Figure 1** represents the overall performance of the sample population with regards to gender and the majority of respondents (33.66%) opted it is not ethical to use animals in circuses for entertainment purposes. **Figure 2** represents the overall performance of the sample population with regards to gender and the majority of respondent (25.25%) opted animal concern is one of the major Ethical concerns to associate with using animals in circuses. **Figure 3** represents the overall performance of the sample population with regards to education qualification and the majority of respondents (16.83%) was not aware of any local or national regulations regarding the use of animals in circuses. **Figure 4** represents the overall performance of the sample population with regards to education qualification and the majority of respondents (25.25%) strongly agreed with using animals in circuses for entertainment is ethically acceptable. **Figure 5** represents the overall performance of the sample population with regards to age and the majority of respondents (16.83%) was not aware of about any local or national regulations regarding the use of animals in circuses. **Figure 6** represents the overall performance of the sample population with regards to age and the majority of respondents



(25.25%) highly rated the welfare of animals in circuses as adequately protected. **Figure 7** represents the overall performance of the sample population with regards to occupation and the majority of respondents (23.27%) opted it is not ethical to use animals in circuses for entertainment purposes. **Figure 8** represents the overall performance of the sample population with regards to occupation and the majority of respondents (16.83%) was not aware of any local or national regulations regarding the use of animals in circuses. **Figure 9** represents the overall performance of the sample population with regards to occupation and (16.83%) some of people opted exploitation of ethical concerns to associate with using animals in circuses. **Figure 10** represents the overall performance of the sample population with regards to place of residence and the majority of respondents (38.12%) strongly agreed with using animals in circuses for entertainment is ethically acceptable. **Figure 11** represents the overall performance of the sample population with regards to occupation and the majority of respondents (25.25%) highly rated the welfare of animals in circuses as adequately protected. **Table 1** represents the chi square test to find the significant relation between the Ethical concerns to associate with using animals in circuses and gender.

## VI. DISCUSSION

**Figure 1** represents the overall performance of the sample population with regards to gender and the majority of respondents (33.66%) opted that it is not ethical to use animals in circuses for entertainment purposes because Trainers may use whips, electric shocks, and other forms of punishment to force animals to perform tricks. This can cause animals to experience fear, anxiety, and even physical injury. **Figure 2** represents the overall performance of the sample population with regards to gender and the majority of respondent (25.25%) opted animal concern is one of the major Ethical concerns to associate with using animals in circuses because Circus animals are forced to perform unnatural and often physically demanding tricks that go against their natural instincts and behaviors. Circuses do not contribute to the conservation of wild animal species. Instead, they exploit these animals for entertainment, often removing them from their natural habitats and disrupting their populations. **Figure 3** represents the overall performance of the sample population with regards to education qualification and the majority of respondents (16.83%) was not aware of any local or national regulations regarding the use of animals in circuses because Governments and animal welfare organizations may not be doing enough to raise public awareness about these regulations. Even when regulations exist, they may not be effectively enforced. **Figure 4** represents the overall performance of the sample population with regards to education qualification and the majority of respondents (25.25%) strongly agreed that using animals in circuses for entertainment is ethically acceptable because Circus animals can provide entertainment and enjoyment to audiences, especially children. They can perform impressive tricks and stunts that can be captivating and awe-inspiring. **Figure 5** represents the overall performance of the sample population with regards to age and the majority of respondents (16.83%) was not aware of about any local or national regulations regarding the use of animals in circuses because Information about local and national regulations regarding circus animals may not be readily available or easily accessible to the public. This can make it difficult for people to learn about the regulations and understand their implications. **Figure 6** represents the overall performance of the sample population with regards to age and the majority of respondents (25.25%) highly rated the welfare of animals in circuses as adequately protected because Circus animals are often kept in cramped, barren, and unsanitary enclosures that lack adequate space, stimulation, and enrichment. Instead, they exploit these animals for entertainment, often removing them from their natural habitats and disrupting their populations. **Figure 7** represents the overall performance of the sample population with regards to occupation and the majority of respondents (23.27%) opted that it is not ethical to use animals in circuses for entertainment purposes because animals have certain fundamental rights to be free from pain, suffering, and exploitation. Using animals in circuses deprives them of these rights and violates their basic right to a life of well-being. **Figure 8** represents the overall performance of the sample population with regards to occupation and the majority of respondents (16.83%) was not aware of any local or national regulations regarding the use of animals in circuses because strongly agreed with using animals in circuses for entertainment is ethically acceptable because Animal welfare organizations may be focused on other issues, such as factory farming or animal testing, and may not prioritize educating the public about circus animal regulations. **Figure 9** represents the overall performance of the sample population with regards to occupation and (16.83%) some people opted exploitation of ethical concerns to associate with using animals in circuses because Animals cannot provide their consent to be used in circuses, and they are often taken from their natural habitats

against their will. This raises ethical concerns about the exploitation of animals. **Figure 10** represents the overall performance of the sample population with regards to place of residence and the majority of respondents (38.12%) strongly agreed that using animals in circuses for entertainment is ethically acceptable because Circuses do not contribute to conservation in a meaningful way. They often remove animals from their natural habitats, disrupt social structures, and have a poor track record of breeding endangered species successfully. **Figure 11** represents the overall performance of the sample population with regards to occupation and the majority of respondents (25.25%) highly rated the welfare of animals in circuses as adequately protected because Some people may argue that the welfare of animals in circuses is adequately protected because there are regulations in place to govern their treatment. However, these regulations are often weak and poorly enforced. **Table 1** represents the chi square test to find the significant relation between the Ethical concerns to associate with using animals in circuses and gender.

### **VII. LIMITATION**

Animals are sentient beings with intrinsic value and the right to live free from human exploitation. Their use for entertainment is seen by many as a violation of their rights and dignity. Animals in circuses are often treated as commodities, valued for their entertainment value rather than as individuals with their own needs and interests. Circuses often portray animals as happy and content, ignoring the suffering and exploitation that often occur behind the scenes. This can negatively impact public understanding of animal welfare and contribute to the acceptance of animal cruelty. Many countries have weak regulations governing the treatment of animals in circuses, which can lead to inadequate enforcement and continued suffering for animals. The public often lacks access to information about the training methods and living conditions of animals in circuses, making it difficult to hold operators accountable for animal welfare violations.

### **VIII. SUGGESTION**

There are significant ethical concerns surrounding the use of animals in circuses for entertainment. These concerns center on the potential for animal suffering and the exploitation of animals for human amusement. Research consistently shows that circuses fail to meet the physical and psychological needs of animals. Animals are often subjected to harsh training methods, including physical punishment and deprivation, to force them to perform unnatural tricks. Performing unnatural acts can lead to injuries and chronic health problems for animals. Using animals solely for human entertainment is considered by many to be exploitative and disrespectful to their sentience and intrinsic value. Some circuses claim to prioritize animal welfare and provide their animals with good living conditions and enrichment activities. Choose entertainment options that do not exploit animals for human amusement. Donate to organizations that provide rescued circus animals with proper care and rehabilitation. Contact your local representatives and advocate for stricter regulations or bans on animal circuses. Educate yourself and others about the ethical concerns surrounding the use of animals in circuses. Support animal-free circuses and other forms of entertainment that do not exploit animals. Advocate for policies that ban the use of wild animals in circuses. Consider alternatives to circus entertainment that do not involve animal exploitation.

### **IX. CONCLUSION**

Circus animals typically live in cramped and barren enclosures, lacking the space and stimulation necessary for their physical and mental well-being. Constant travel and confinement lead to stress, anxiety, and abnormal behaviors. Animals are often subjected to harsh training methods involving punishment and coercion to force them to perform unnatural tricks. This can lead to physical and psychological injuries, including fear, depression, and even death. Circus environments fail to provide for the natural behaviors and instincts of animals. They are deprived of opportunities to socialize, forage and engage in other species-specific activities. Implementing stricter regulations on animal training, housing, and transportation is crucial to ensure their well-being. Circuses should be transparent about their animal welfare practices and accountable to independent oversight bodies. Raising public awareness about the ethical concerns surrounding the use of animals in circuses can encourage more responsible choices and support for alternative forms of entertainment.

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