**S1 Table. Number of responses given for each question in both the expert (E) and mahout (M) questionnaires and answer options where applicable.**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Question  | Numberresponses | Question style | Answer options |
| E.1 How many years have you worked in MTE? | 23 | O | NA |
| E.2 What is your job in MTE? (eg.vet/ mahout/ sin oke) | 23 | O | NA |
| E.3 Name | 23 | O | NA |
| E.4 Age | 23 | O | NA |
| *Do you notice any differences (compared to current mahouts) in terms of …*  |
| E.5...Average mahout age when you started working? | 23 | M | Younger/Older/No change/ Unsure |
| E.6...General mahout experience level when you started working? | 23 | M | More experienced/Less experienced/No change/Unsure |
| E.7...Length of time mahouts spent in the job when you started working? | 22 | M | Longer/shorter/No change/Unsure |
| E.8...General (mahout) attitude towards the job when you started working? | 22 | M | More positive/More negative/No change/Unsure |
| E.9...Stability of (mahout) job when you started working? | 22 | M | More stable/Less stable/No change/ Unsure |
| E.10...General treatment/ well-being of elephants when you started working? | 22 | M | Better/Worse/No change/Unsure |
| E.11 Please explain any other differences between working in the past and now | 22 | O | NA |
| E.12 When do you think the changes occurred? | 17 | O | NA |
| M.1 Handler name | 210 | O | NA |
| M.2 Handler age | 210 | O | NA |
| M.3 When did you become a mahout? | 208 | O | NA |
| M.4(a) Did you work as pae cheik (apprentice)? | 176 | M | Yes/No |
| M.4(b) If yes, how long did you train as pae cheik? | 32 | O | NA |
| M.5 How many elephants have you worked with in total? | 208 | O | NA |
| M.6 Do you prefer to ride male or female elephants? | 170 | M | Male/Female/No preference |
| M.7 Would you want to ride a dominant bull, known to be difficult? | 167 | M | Yes/No/Don’t know |
| M.8 How do you see this job? | 170 | M | Long term/Short term/Depends on other options |
| M.9 How many members of your family (and who) are handlers (sin-gaung/ mahout/ apprentice)? | 206 | O | NA |
| M.10 Are you married? | 173 | M | Yes/No |
| M.11 How many children do you have? | 173 | O | NA |
| M.12 If you have children, do you think they will be a mahout too? | 82 | M | Yes/No |
| M.13(a) Have you been involved in the taming process? | 172 | M | Yes/No |
| M.13(b) If yes, how many times? | 120 | O | NA |
| M.14(a) Do you think traditional taming is good for the elephants? | 143 | M | Yes/No |
| M.14(b) Why? | 114 | O | NA |
| M.15(a) Would you change anything about the traditional taming process? | 138 | M | Yes/No |
| M.15(b) Why? | 50 | O | NA |
| M.16 How do you feel during traditional taming when the calves are in the breast band? | 142 | M | Upset/Pity, but it’s necessary/Normal/Unsure |
| M.17(a) Do you think it's possible to tame using only reward, no punishment? | 123 | M | Yes/No/Sometimes |
| M.17(b) Why? | 70 | O | NA |
| *How much do you agree with the following statements …* |  |  |
| M.18(a)...Elephants are obedient | 171 | L | 1-5: Definitely(1)/Quite(2)/Unsure(3)/Not really(4)/Definitely not(5) |
| M.18(b)...Elephants are friendly  | 170 | L | 1-5  |
| M.18(c)...Elephants are responsive | 136 | L | 1-5 |
| M.18(d)...Elephants are interesting | 170 | L | 1-5 |
| M.18(e)...You like working with elephants | 169 | L | 1-5 |
| M.18(f)...You know a lot about elephant health | 171 | L | 1-5 |
| M.18(g)...You like working with other mahouts | 169 | L | 1-5 |
| M.18(h)...Elephants are dangerous | 172 | L | 1-5 |
| M.18(i)...Elephants like to socialise with people | 172 | L | 1-5 |
| M.18(j)...Being a mahout is a good job | 171 | L | 1-5 |
| M.18(k)...Elephants are clever | 172 | L | 1-5 |
| M.18(l)...You are patient with your elephant | 172 | L | 1-5 |
| M.18(m)...Lots of experience is needed to be a mahout | 170 | L | 1-5 |
| M.18(n)...Elephants are beautiful animals | 166 | L | 1-5 |
| M.18(o)...Elephants can feel a lot of pain | 170 | L | 1-5 |
| M.18(p)...You enjoy spending time with elephants | 171 | L | 1-5 |
| M.18(q)...You have a lot of experience with elephants | 169 | L | 1-5 |
| M.18(r )...You have a lot to learn about being a mahout | 171 | L | 1-5 |
| M.18(s)...You understand your elephant’s behaviour | 170 | L | 1-5 |
| M.18(t)...You’d like to learn more about elephants | 169 | L | 1-5 |
| M.18(u)...You have a special bond with your elephant | 171 | L | 1-5 |
| M.18(v)...You will always be a mahout | 161 | L | 1-5 |
| M.19 What is your present elephant’s ID number | 191 | O | NA |
| M.20 What is your present elephant’s date of birth | 191 | O | NA |
| M.21 What is your present elephant’s sex | 190 | M | Male/Female |
| M.22 How long have you worked with this elephant? | 188 | O | NA |
| M.23 How easy is your elephant to control | 187 | M | Easy/Reasonable/Difficult |
| M.24(a) Do you experience difficulties with this elephant? | 110 | M | Yes/No |
| M.24(b) If yes, what are they? | 34 | O | NA |
| M.25 Does your elephant respond to commands given by other mahouts or only to you? | 151 | M | Only own mahout/Some others/Everyone |
| M.26 Does your elephant hit the ground with its trunk/ swing it at other elephants/ mahouts | 167 | M | Yes/No |
| M.27 Does your elephant ever shake its head when approached? | 166 | M | Yes/No |
| M.28 What does your elephant's behaviour (in M.26/27) indicate? | 162 | M | Difficult/Normal/Friendly/Unsure |
| *How important are the following to the way your elephant responds to commands? ...* |
| M.29(a)...Relationship length between the mahout giving command and elephant | 118 | M | 1-4: Very important(1)/Reasonably important(2)/Not important(3)/Unsure(4) |
| M.29(b)...Behaviour of the elephant | 120 | M | 1-4 |
| M.29(c)...Social status of elephant | 120 | M | 1-4 |
| M.29(d)...Use of tools (e.g. ankush) | 121 | M | 1-4 |
| M.29(e)...Age of elephant | 122 | M | 1-4 |
| M.29(f)...Authority of command | 122 | M | 1-4 |

Question style is denoted as O (Open ended), M (Multiple choice) or L (Likert scale)