

Working Conditions and the Porters' Socio-economic Welfare in Mountain Tourism: A Case of Mount Kilimanjaro in Tanzania

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Abstract: The purpose of this paper was to address the working conditions of tourist porters in the Kilimanjaro Region, Tanzania. The study employed the cross-sectional research design. Since the actual number of porters was unknown by the time of data collection, the researchers randomly sampled 141 porters who were willing to participate in the study. The data collection tools included a questionnaire with both open-ended and closed-ended items and face-to-face semi-structured interviews. Quantitative data was analyzed through descriptive statistics and regression analysis. Qualitative analysis, on the other hand, was done through content analysis. The researchers informed all the respondents about the purpose of the study and assured them of confidentiality regarding the obtained information. The study concludes that the park is committed to managing luggage weight limits and providing visitors and porters with well-maintained facilities from time to time but there was a doubt on the quality of those facilities. The study further concludes that mountain gear and equipment are essential elements for effective porters' working conditions. The study recommends that time to time follow up should be done by the government to ensure that the standard luggage limit is adhered by establishing a proper reporting system that will track porters' records. The porter association should foster transparency among park officials, tour operators, porters, and tourists to ensure that all stakeholders are aware of the luggage weight limits, equipment maintenance procedures and ethical standards.

Keywords: Socio-economic welfare; porters; working conditions; mountain gear; protection policies.

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Introduction

Tourism has contributed to the socioeconomic well-being of surrounding communities directly or indirectly through the creation of local labor (Pekerşen & Kaplan, 2022; Regmi & Walter, 2017; Kosmaczewska, *et al* 2016). Tourism has been used as a means to alleviate poverty in surrounding communities through creating local labors, products

and services that benefit the local community which is known as pro-poor tourism (Demkova *et al*, 2022). One of the local labors created in tourism, specifically mountain tourism, is mountain trekking and hiking which are done by porters who are employed to carry equipment, supplies and gear on treks or expeditions in mountainous regions. According to Upasana and Boban (2018), mountain

trekking and hiking are among the tourism activities that portray the tourism industry worldwide. Trekking activities on Mount Kilimanjaro are done by porters. Most of the porters are from unprivileged families and therefore are poor people (Wilson & Dashper, 2022). These people face poor working conditions in performing their duties despite (Demkova *et al*, 2022).

Porters are responsible for carrying luggage, equipment and tools during the climbing expedition, thus making the trekking experience easier, more accessible and memorable. However, porters seldom have any formal language training but they are expected to learn on the job (Schellhorn, 2010). Given these circumstances, they somehow lack bargaining power in fighting for improved working conditions. Hilman (2021) argued that porters only unite and collaborate when there is a natural disaster. This is an evidence that the working conditions can only be improved by the wish of the companies engaging in tourism. It is an indisputable truth that improving the working conditions of porters will also improve the mountain climbing business.

In Tanzania, where the highest mountain in Africa is found, trekking and hiking have been a practice for a long time (Cleth, 2015). Porters in Mount Kilimanjaro have been engaging in trekking and hiking since the mid to late nineteenth century (Hadfield, 2020). The estimated thousands of porters of Mount Kilimanjaro (Peaty, 2018) are predominantly young males who face volatile income cycles and spend extended time away from home (Ostermann, 2015). In the study conducted by Barott (2018), mountain porters are a vital element of the tourism labor segment. However, they continue experiencing poor working conditions despite being considered the backbone of the trekking industry because of their immense role in making trekking accessible to trekkers around the world (Hilman, 2021).

Cleth (2015) conducted a descriptive survey in Tanzania to assess challenges facing tour guides and porters in Kilimanjaro National Park. The challenges identified were mountain sickness, bad weather conditions and lack of communication. Hadfield (2020) argued that there are many studies that have been done on the tourism sector without examining the contribution of porters' working conditions on their economic welfare. The study of Peaty (2018) and Melubo (2017) highlighted that the scarcity of

porter-related laws and inadequate implementation pose challenges to improving the working conditions associated with porter activities.

Several initiatives have been undertaken to enhance the working conditions of porters. In Tanzania, the establishment of Kilimanjaro Porters Assistance Project (KPAP) in 2003 stands out as one of such effort aimed at improving the working conditions and overall livelihoods of these porters (Maeso, 2017). The KPAP carries out various activities to achieve its objectives, including raising public awareness about the proper treatment of Kilimanjaro porters, assisting climbing companies in implementing fair and ethical procedures for their porters, providing climbing gears free of charge and offering educational classes to empower and motivate the porters and mountain crews. All these measures are implemented to ensure that the working conditions faced by the porters are not harsh and that continuous improvements are made to their working environment.

Despite the efforts and initiatives, the Kilimanjaro porters are still facing socio-economic welfare challenges (Intrepid Foundation, 2018). Working conditions like outdated travel gears and carrying luggage above the weight limit (18kg) still exist and these tend to have an impact on their welfare. Furthermore, matters related to the hiring rate, wages and tips still show low amounts and it varies from one agency to another. Porters are paid less compared to what was recommended in the Government Notice Number 228 of June 2008 as reflected in Cleth (2015). Additionally, it was revealed that pressure from guides to carry heavy loads and undertake quick ascents increases porters' susceptibility to High Altitude Sickness (HAS) (Melubo, 2017).

A study by the Adventure Travel Trade Association (2019) revealed that the quality of mountain gear used by the porters is different in terms of quality compared to those used by tourists. Furthermore, replacement and improvement done on worn out and outdated equipment by the tour operators is not done frequently. This affects their working conditions which in turn affect their social economic welfare. These situations have led to the decline of the welfare of these porters as chances of being hired are reduced due to their massive number and upon being hired, they are underpaid while being subjected to tiresome and dismal working conditions. Given all the challenges and the

interventions that have been made, there is a scant evidence on how each aspect of the working condition has contributed to the porters' socio-economic welfare. Therefore, this study dealt with working conditions and the porters' socio-economic welfare in mountain tourism, particularly at Mount Kilimanjaro in Tanzania.

Empirical Literature Review

A study by Angling (2020) on porters' rights and working practices in mountain tourism revealed that policies have not adequately covered issues on porters' activities. Existing policies are limited to the tariff, guided trekking and organizational aspects of the porters' Association. Some barriers in budgeting and communication appeared to determine that such policies are not yet effectively implemented. Monitoring and evaluation systems are carried along by the National Park. In addition, the absence of policies on porters' working conditions has been indicated to contribute to unfavorable working conditions, including excessive workloads and uncertain weight limitations.

During their study on enhancing the welfare of mountain porters in Nepal, Upasana and Boban (2018) observed a significant issue pertaining to the identification and verification of porters. The absence of proper records for porters combined with the unfortunate practice of guides and porter leaders exploiting them were established challenges. The porters were hired informally on an ad hoc basis without any contract. Trekking agents had no ways of verifying the experience level, honesty and strength of porters. Since they relied primarily on their networks to hire porters, good porters did not have any credible mechanism to signal their abilities. In addition, extractive guides and porter leaders often engaged in opportunistic behavior by demanding commissions from porters in return for trekking opportunities.

The study of Barott (2018) sought to determine the common impediments to porters' well-being. The study discovered that porters are composed mainly of young individuals looking to make a career in the enticing business of trekking and mountaineering tourism. In a study conducted by Maeso (2017) on the economic, labor and social impacts of seasonality in tourism, a particular focus was given to the situation of porters. The study revealed that during the high season, the intensity and duration of porter jobs have significant effects on their families, leading to the emergence of a well-known

phenomenon known as "key children." These are underage individuals who are left alone while their parents work long hours.

Cleth (2015) conducted a study on challenges facing tour guides and porters in Kilimanjaro National Park. The study established that working environments of porters were not friendly due to the fact that they lacked pension funds permanent contracts and life insurance. The majority of porters and guides faced various challenges such as mountain sickness, bad weather conditions and lack of communication.

In a study conducted by Intrepid Foundation (2018) on raising awareness and promoting societal engagement regarding mountain porters, it was discovered that there is a lack of industry-wide standards for porter welfare. Apart from any existing local laws and governmental enforcement, each company and tour operator is responsible for establishing their own protocols and guidelines in this regard. Porters climbed the mountain and worked hard but they did not get enough salary. IRTs (2015) in Peru reported that the porter law has been in existence for almost 20 years. Despite the fact that numerous companies have raised wages over time to keep up with inflation, the law has remained unchanged and has not adapted to accommodate necessary demands. The study further discovered that porters' protection laws are largely non-existent, inadequate or poorly enforced.

A study conducted by ATTA (2019) focused on porters' welfare and their reliance on local authorities, tour operators and travelers. The study revealed significant variations in working conditions for porters across different countries and companies. It also highlighted a universal lack of understanding regarding the challenges faced by these men and women on a daily basis. The report emphasized issues such as low wages, hazardous working conditions, inadequate nutrition, and minimal support from employing companies.

Multiple studies conducted by Angling (2020), Barott (2018) and Upasana and Boban (2018) specifically examined the situation of porters in Indonesia and Nepal. However, these studies primarily focused on working conditions and strategies for improvement without delving into the socio-economic welfare implications of such conditions. Additionally, the existing empirical literature by Angling (2020), Barott (2018), Upasana and Boban (2018) and Maeso (2017) failed to relate

working conditions and porters' social-economic welfare. This study aims to bridge these gaps.

Theoretical Underpinnings

The study applied the Walden's theory published by Thoreau in 1854 (Veblen, 1899) and the Social theory of poverty to examine the effect of working conditions on porters' socio-economic welfare. The dominant theory utilized in the study was Walden, which specifically addressed the impact of working conditions on porters' socio-economic well-being. This theory operated on several key assumptions, including the importance of self-reliance in both economic and social aspects, with a particular emphasis on financial self-reliance. Another assumption was the value of simplicity in lifestyle and consumer activities. Lastly, the theory emphasized the concept of patience, suggesting that compromise is unnecessary since changes will eventually occur over time (Thoreau, 2004). While the Walden theory primarily focused on the wages component of the porters' economic environment, it did not address broader issues related to economic, political and social systems that result in limited opportunities and resources for porters to achieve sufficient income and well-being. To encompass these aspects, the study incorporated the Social theory of Poverty.

The Social theory of poverty asserts that poverty is influenced by economic, political and social distortions, indicating that individuals are not solely responsible for their poverty, but rather the systemic limitations imposed by the economic, political and social systems play a significant role. Bradshaw (2006) argued that regardless of their competence, poor individuals are disadvantaged due to the structural nature of the economic and political systems. In summary, the study employed Walden's theory to examine the impact of working conditions on porters' socio-economic welfare, focusing mainly on wages. To address the broader systemic issues affecting porters' opportunities and resources, the Social Theory of Poverty was used.

Methodology

Study Design

The study employed the cross-sectional research design as data collection and gathering occurred at a single point in time enabling a snapshot of the population's characteristics and providing valuable insights into the prevalence and distribution of the variables under investigation. The researchers and data-gathering assistants simultaneously collected

and gathered data from a diverse group of participants for this specific study. The design was appropriate for this study because it also enables the researcher to examine the relationships between different variables, in this case, working conditions and porters' social economic welfare.

Population and Sampling

The study focused on the economic welfare of porters operating in Mount Kilimanjaro within Moshi in the Kilimanjaro Region. The selection of the study area was based on three criteria. Firstly, conducting research on porters operating on an internationally recognized landmark allowed insights into the welfare and working conditions in such a vital area. Secondly, the selection was advantageous due to the large number of porters in Moshi Municipality, which represented their actual situation. Lastly, the Kilimanjaro region, being an early tourism destination in Tanzania, provided a time frame advantage for assessing changes in welfare and working conditions over time. The target population for the study was the Kilimanjaro mountain tourist porters. Since the actual number of porters was unknown by the time of data collection, the researchers randomly sampled 141 porters who were willing to participate in the study.

Instruments

The data collection tools included a questionnaire with both open-ended and closed-ended items to gather a wide scope of understanding of the phenomenon from the porters. Additionally, face-to-face semi-structured interviews were conducted with key informants who were the personnel working in porter associations. The information collected during the interviews was recorded using notebooks and phone recorders.

Validity and Reliability

In order to measure validity, the research instruments were prepared under the guidance of experienced researchers. Prior to the actual data collection, a pilot study was conducted to a similar population with 30 respondents who filled the questionnaire. Through a statistical test in table 1, the questionnaire yielded a Cronbach's Alpha of above 0.7 for each variable, which means that it was reliable enough to be used in the field.

Statistical Treatment of Data

The study employed both qualitative and quantitative techniques. Quantitative data was analyzed through descriptive statistics and

regression analysis. Qualitative analysis was done through content analysis.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations were regarded. The researchers informed all the respondents about the

purpose of the study and assured them of confidentiality regarding the obtained information. The researchers obtained consents from the respondents before data was collected.

Table 1: Reliability test

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	Comment
Wages & tips	0.798	Reliable
Working conditions	0.823	Reliable
Porter Associations	0.877	Reliable

Table 2: Demographic characteristics of the respondents (n = 141)

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Sex		
Male	107	75.9%
Female	34	24.1%
Age		
18-25	48	34%
26-35	63	44.7%
36-45	17	12.1
Above 45	13	9.2
Marital Status		
Single	54	38.3
Married	69	48.9
Divorced	15	10.6
Widowed	3	2.1
Number of years worked		
<5 years	12	8.5
6-10	49	34.8
11-15	61	43.3
Above 15	19	13.5
Education Level		
Informal	17	12.1
Primary	85	60.3
Secondary	31	22
College	8	5.7
Family size		
None	32	22.7
1-3 Children	72	51.1
Above 3	37	26.2

Results and Discussions

Demographics of the Respondents

Table 2 shows that the majority of the tourist porters who participated in the study were males (75.9%). The porter activities attracted a small number of women (24.1%). The higher proportion of males probably is because of the males dominated tourism. This is because the occupation requires physical attributes of which men can fit. The findings are in line with Cleth (2015) who also found that the number of males is more than the number of females when it comes to tourist porter activities.

Regarding the age of the respondents, the majority (44.7%) were aged between 26 and 35 years followed by 34.0% who were aged between 18 and 25 years. The remaining percentages of 12.1% and 9.2% belonged to two groups of porters, aged between 36 to 45 and those above 45 respectively. Therefore, the majority of respondents were 35 years and below due to the nature of the tasks involved in such occupation. The findings are in line with Ndekirwa *et al.*, (2018) who equally found that older porters are more likely to reject human pottage activities. As far as marital status is concerned, the majority (48.9%) were married,

followed by 38.3% who were single, 10.6% who were divorced and 2.1% who were widowed.

The majority of respondents (43.3%) had worked for 11 to 15 years while the minority had worked for five or lesser years. In terms of education, majority (60.3%) of respondents were primary school leavers while the minority (5.7%) were college leavers. The rest had completed informal and secondary education. In terms of family size, the majority (51.1%) had one to three children while 26.2% had above three children and 22.7% did not have children.

Research Question 1: What are working conditions of Porters in the mountain tourism at Mount Kilimanjaro?

This section presents results on the porters' working conditions in terms of Mountain Gear and Equipment, policies and porter protection laws and part time employment as shown in table 3. the following scale was used to interpret the mean score of respondents: 4.50-5.0= strongly agree,

3.50-4.49 = agree, = 2.50-3.49 = undecided, 1.50-2.49 = disagree and 1.00-1.49 = strongly disagrees.

Mountain Gear and Equipment

According to findings in Table 3, respondents agreed that luggage weight limit is something that is paid a lot of attention to by park officials (3.5177) indicating that this is an important aspect of their operations. This finding implies that park officials recognize the significance of managing luggage weight for various reasons, such as ensuring visitor safety, protecting natural resources, and complying with transportation regulations. Results further show that replacements and improvements are done on worn out and outdated equipment is an ongoing activity (3.7305). It suggests that the park is committed to maintaining the quality and functionality of its equipment. This finding implies that the park acknowledges the importance of providing visitors with well-maintained facilities and experiences.

Table 3: Descriptive statistical on agreeability of respondents (n = 141)

SN	Item in the Questionnaire	Mean	Std. Dev	Mean Interpretation
Mountain Gear and Equipment				
1	Luggage weight limit is something that is paid a lot of attention to by park officials	3.5177	0.8751	Agree
2	Replacements and improvements done on worn out and outdated equipment is an ongoing activity	3.7305	0.9991	Agree
3	Luggage weight limit is something that is paid a lot of attention to by park officials	2.8936	0.8426	Undecided
Policies and porter protection laws				
1	Policies in place are adequate enough to facilitate the smooth performance of the activity	2.8936	0.8100	Undecided
2	Porters' protection laws are existent and play a part in protecting porters' remunerations and their physical health.	2.9450	1.2100	undecided
3	Periodical adjustments and amendments are done to these policies and porters' protection laws to keep up with the situational changes	3.5177	0.8800	Agree
Part-time employment				
1	Working part-time facilitate the smooth performance (including resting) of the activity given the nature of the activity	2.4113	1.0356	Disagree
2	Periodical employment is favorable to keep up with other personal activities either economic or social.	2.4965	0.8753	Disagree

However, respondents were undecided about whether luggage weight limit is something that is paid a lot of attention to by park officials (2.8936). It suggests a lack of clarity or mixed views among the respondents. This implies that there may be a need for better communication and transparency from park officials regarding their policies and practices

related to luggage weight limits. It highlights the importance of providing clear guidelines to tourists to avoid confusion and potential negative experiences. However, one of respondents through the qualitative data revealed that "sometime we are forced by tour operators to carry bags weighing more than the allocated weight of 18 kilograms.

They do so in order to reduce the running costs of their companies but at the expense of our health.” This implies that respondents were sometimes overburdened beyond the required limit and therefore this finding raises implications regarding the ethics and responsibility of tour operators in adhering to luggage weight limits and ensuring the safety of their clients. It emphasizes the need for proper regulation, enforcement and accountability mechanisms to address such practices and protect the health and satisfaction of tourists. Such results are supported by Ndekirwa *et al.*, (2018) who argued that many porters have been coerced into carrying loads over the limit by some companies.

Policies and Porter Protection Laws

According to findings in Table 3, respondents agreed that periodical adjustments and amendments are done to policies and porters’ protection laws to keep up with the situational changes (3.5177). This implies that the governing body responsible for formulating and implementing these policies recognizes the importance of responding to changing circumstances and adapting regulations accordingly. It reflects a commitment to staying informed about emerging challenges and ensuring that the protection of porters remains effective over time. The need for periodical adjustments and amendments indicates the involvement of relevant stakeholders in the policy-making process.

However, respondents were undecided about whether Policies in place are adequate enough to facilitate the smooth performance of the activity (2.8936) and whether Porters’ protection laws are existent and play a part in protecting porters’ remunerations and their physical health (2.9450). The findings indicating uncertainty about the adequacy of policies and the existence and effectiveness of porters’ protection laws suggest a need for comprehensive evaluation and improvement of the existing regulatory frameworks to enhance the remuneration and physical health protection of porters. This implication underscores the importance of conducting a thorough assessment of the current policies and laws, identifying gaps and implementing necessary changes to ensure that the regulations effectively support and safeguard the well-being of porters. Results from Cleth, (2015) also indicated the existence of such policies and some positive effects brought about with their existence although the implementation of such policies is something that still experiences some hindrances.

Part-time Employment

Regarding part time employment, respondents disagreed that working part-time facilitates the smooth performance given the nature of the activity (2.4113) and that Periodical employment is favorable to keep up with other personal activities either economic or social (2.4965). The disagreement among respondents regarding the facilitation of smooth performance through part-time employment and the favorability of periodical employment for balancing personal activities suggests a need to reconsider employment arrangements within the activity. This implies the importance of exploring alternative work schedules and ensuring stability in employment to optimize performance, work-life balance, and financial security for individuals involved in the activity.

During the interview with one of the KPAP personnel, the interviewee had this to say:

A job as a porter is very appealing as no professionalism is needed, it requires little to no training but just the ability to carry mandated 18 kgs of gear and bags in large sacks that they balance on their head and backpacks. So it is a loss for the company to give a porter contract while a guide can select cheap freelancers at the national park entrance gates.

This can have implications for the job security, earnings and overall welfare of tourist porters, potentially leading to challenges in their livelihood and economic well-being. Such results can be cemented by the results from the study conducted by Bijaya, (2016) which showed that big tour agencies draw from pools of unemployed workers rather than relying on regulars, and use the long-term unemployment of these porters to the advantage of their bottom line in negotiations.

Research Question 2: Is there a significant relationship between working conditions and porters’ social-economic welfare at Mount Kilimanjaro?

This research question sought to establish the relationship between working conditions and porters’ social-economic welfare as reflected in table 4. The research question called for hypothesis testing as follows: There is no significant relationship between working conditions and porters’ social-economic welfare at Mount

Kilimanjaro. This hypothesis was tested through regression analysis as reflected in table 4.

By looking at the model in table 4, the R^2 is 34% implying that the independent variable affects the

dependent variable by 34%. This indicates an existing relationship between the variables. The remaining 66% may be contributed by other factors that were not covered in this study.

Table 4: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics					
					R Square Change	F Change	df 1	df2	Sig. Change	F
1	0.586 ^a	0.343	0.347	0.872	0.343	34.016	3	137	.000	

a. Predictors: (Constant), Mountain gear & equipment, Policies & Laws, Part-time employment

b. Dependent Variable: Porter Welfare

Table 5: The ANOVA Test

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	77.556	3	25.852	34.016	0.000 ^b
	Residual	104.12	137	0.760		
	Total	181.676	140			

a. Dependent Variable: Porters welfare

b. Predictors: (Constant), Mountain gear & equipment, Policies & Laws, Part-time employment

Table 6: Coefficient for Multiple linear regression equation (n = 141)

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients Beta	T	Sig. (2-tailed)	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error				Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	0.459	0.416		3.512	0.001		
Mountain Gear & Equipment	0.221	0.102	0.573	2.337	0.013	0.645	1.550
Policies & porter laws	0.165	0.105	0.594	3.633	0.028	0.732	1.366
Part-time Employment	0.345	0.141	0.552	3.143	0.017	0.867	1.153

R-square = 0.34; F 34.016; Sig. 0.000; Mean square 25.852

a. Dependent Variable: Porters Socio-Economic welfare

b. Predictors: (Constant), mountain gear and equipment, policies and laws, part-time employment.

The results from the ANOVA display a level of significance of 0.000 thus concluding the significance of the model since $p \leq 0.05$. The F test value produced 34.016 indicating a large enough figure to support the fitness of the model thus showing a significant and important relationship between working conditions and porters socio-economic welfare concluding that mountain gear and equipment, policies and porter protection laws, and part-time employment are vital predictors of the porters' welfare.

Table 6 further shows the existing relationship between specific independent variables and the dependent variable. The results indicate that the predictor variables were all statistically significant with the p-value which is lesser than the critical value (0.05). Particularly, mountain gear and

equipment correlated with the social economic welfare ($r=0.013$), policy and porters' law correlated with the social economic welfare ($r=0.028$) and part-time employment correlated with the social economic welfare ($r=0.017$). In all cases, the correlation was positive. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected and we maintain that there is a significant relationship between working conditions and the porters' social-economic welfare at Mount Kilimanjaro. This suggests that mountain gear and equipment, policy and porters' law as well as part-time employment, affect the porters' social economic welfare. Therefore, improved mountain gear and equipment, policy and porters' law, as well as part-time employment increase the porter's social economic welfare. Findings of this study are similar to those by Uysal et al. (2016) and by Ali et al. (2013) which showed that tourism activities have

a significant effect on the wellbeing of residents. Therefore, findings in this study build up the existing body of knowledge.

Conclusion s and Recommendations

Conclusions

Based on the findings, the study concludes that the park is committed to managing luggage weight limits and provides visitors and porters with well-maintained facilities from time to time but there was a doubt on the quality of those facilities. There is periodical adjustments and amendments that are done to the policies and porters' protection laws to keep up with the situational changes. The study finally concludes that there is a positive relationship between working conditions and porters' social economic welfare. Mountain gear and equipment, policy and porters' law and part-time employment are the essential elements for effective working conditions.

Recommendation

Based on the conclusions, the study recommends that time to time follow up should be done by the government to ensure that the standard luggage limit is adhered by establishing a proper reporting system that will track porters' records. It should enforce robust regulations and guidelines regarding luggage weight limits, equipment maintenance and ethical practices within park operations and tour operator responsibilities. The porter association should foster transparency among park officials, tour operators, porters, and tourists to ensure that all stakeholders are aware of the luggage weight limits, equipment maintenance procedures and ethical standards. Amendments of policies should be participatory to enable stakeholders incorporate their views. Finally, the government and tourism companies should prioritize improving the working conditions of porters, with a focus on enhancing mountain gear and providing necessary equipment.

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