

**The availability and utilisation of reference services in Zanzibar university
libraries**

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This study assessed the availability and utilization of utilization of reference services in Zanzibar university libraries to undergraduate students. The study sought to establish the best ways to enhance reference services in the three institutes. Primary data were collected using questionnaires, face-to-face interview, and direct observation. Secondary data on the other hand was collected through documentary review of both printed and non-printed sources. Qualitative data was subjected to content analysis whereas quantitative data was analyzed with the help of SPSS. A total of ninety-nine respondents made up of lecturers, students, directors and librarians were involved as the sample for this study. The study found that the majority of the respondents were aware of the availability of reference services but their utilization by undergraduate students and lecturers was inadequate. However, the low level of access to and utilization of reference services by students and lecturer arose not only because of below standard services, but also due to factors such as lack of awareness of importance of reference services by library users inadequate facilities and equipment, shortage of funds and limited information seeking skills. This status made the university libraries sometimes fail to meet the information needs of their clients. On the basis of these findings the study recommends budget improvement, staff training, automation of libraries, boosting of information flow promotion and marketing of reference services and increasing of facilities, and other resources.