

**The effectiveness of quality standards and export performance of Tanzania SMEs :The  
case of Dar es salaam and Arusha**

**Silas Wilbert Ng'habi**

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The study examined the effectiveness of quality standards and performance of Tanzania food SMEs in international export markets, the case being Dar es salaam and Arusha. The study more specifically sought to address the international standards use by national SMEs to penetrate in international markets, the extent that the used food quality standards affect competitiveness of food SMEs, the means of awareness that relate to food quality standards and SMEs performance in the international markets. Descriptive research design was used in the study. A sample of 110 respondent was selected for this study. Data collected were analysed and processed by qualitatively and quantitatively using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) computer software. The findings revealed that, respondents used microbiological, foreign matter and packaging standards to ensure that the produced products adhered to quality control specifications. However, respondents reported that food quality enables the SMEs to integrate into domestic lucrative, regional, global trade and investment networks and vice versa. Likewise, respondents reported that food quality standards awareness was mainly disseminated through television, radios and newspapers that can reach a good number of people. From the findings, this sensitized consumers to always be aware and well- informed of the fact that the commodity to be consumed meets quality required but with a through certification. It is concluded that the increase of competitiveness through assurance of the quality of products, services and works executed increased market efficiency. Form the findings of the study, a number of recommendations have been offered to enhance quality products of the food SMEs and competitiveness.