

Value addition is a strategic approach to enterprise development that is perceived to influence growth of new enterprises while creating jobs for owners and their employees. Technological applications are cited as a challenge to rural women business owners in terms of accessibility and cost. On the other hand, value addition could maintain the vibrancy and sustainability of agricultural production sector. In most African countries including Kenya, rural agriculture is highly feminized; the bulk of rural agribusiness are women owned. Enterprises' value rating and competitiveness depend on value addition strategies selected for use by business owners. In agricultural production, rural based enterprises apply a wide range of post-harvest value addition options within their means to remain competitive. Vast literature suggests that rural economic growth can be best achieved by promoting women agri-based activities. It is estimated that upto 95% small scale agricultural production is lost in post-harvest wastages; post-harvest value addition reduces post-harvest wastages which go hand in hand with catalysis of promotion of rural women enterprises. Kenya's agricultural production is dominantly marketed at primary production with limited value addition. The study explored the relationship of value addition strategies and growth of women owned agri-based enterprises in rural areas in Kenya through the following four objectives: to establish the relationship between branding strategy and the growth of agricultural products and the growth of women owned agri-based enterprises in rural Kenya; to determine the relationship between branding strategy of agricultural products and the growth of women owned agri-based enterprises in rural Kenya; to establish the nature of valued additions in women owned agri-based enterprises. The study used stratified survey research design and anchored on business growth model, the organizational life cycle theory, resource-based view theory and porter's value chain theory. The study targeted 1626 women business owners out of whom 488 respondents were selected using stratified sampling method and purposive sampling for the 13 key respondents sampled from a total of 35. Quantitative data was collected using questionnaires, while interview schedules, observation schedules and focus group guide were used to collect qualitative data. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to perform statistical analysis and results were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The study found a positive and statistically significant relationship between packaging strategy and growth of rural women owned agri-based enterprises ($r=.956; p < 0.05$), significant positive relationship between branding strategy and growth of rural women owned agri-based enterprises ($r=.216; p > 0.05$), and positive and significant relationship between linkage strategy and growth of rural women owned agri-based enterprises ($r=.957; p > 0.05$). The qualitative analysis revealed that value addition is determined by stakeholders' support in availing appropriate technology, finances, infrastructure and that traditional methods of value addition are less likely to meet quality standards set by highly bureaucratic costly government procedures in order to promote growth of enterprises. It was concluded that growth of women owned agri-based enterprises had a confluence with all the value addition strategies used as demonstrated in positive correlation explained in the text however, branding strategy showed a low positive correlation. The study recommends more support on use of technology in value addition strategies for competitive advantage and growth of women owned agri-based enterprises in rural Kenya. Further research should target other counties of Kenya for comparative findings on variety of strategies of value addition used on agricultural products processed by women in these other zones. Future studies should focus on establishing and evaluating influence of value addition practices on large organizations for comparative purposes.