

WHAI RAWA: THE ROLE OF MĀORI WOMEN IN THE MĀORI ECONOMY



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INTERNSHIP REPORT
UNIVERSITY OF OTAGO
2018

This internship report was produced by the authors as part of a supported internship project under the supervision of the named supervisor and funded by Ngā Pae o te Māramatanga. The report is the work of the named intern and researchers and has been posted here as provided. It does not represent the views of Ngā Pae o te Māramatanga and any correspondence about the content should be addressed directly to the authors of the report. For more information on Ngā Pae o te Māramatanga and its research, visit the website on www.maramatanga.ac.nz

Ngā Pae o te Māramatanga Summer Studentship: Research Report

Whai Rawa: The role of Māori women in the Māori economy

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Acknowledgements

The Project Team would like to acknowledge the funding provided by Ngā Pae o te Māramatanga.

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Purpose

The Whai Rawa Small to Medium Enterprise (SME) project aimed to investigate the role of Māori women in the Māori economy. Māori women have a vast and positive impact on the economy and their perspective and understanding of the ‘Māori economy’; and the roles they have in developing intergenerational growth within the small-to-medium sized sector, is an important part of this.

Key research already undertaken through the Whai Rawa SME project has identified that the Māori economy is made up of increasingly diverse socio-economic structures. Within those are a number of ways that individuals contribute and participate within the economic frameworks whether *at iwi*, *hapū* or *whānau* levels; paid employment or otherwise. To further understand the complex ways that women (in particular) participate in the Māori economy, the Nga Pae Summer internship project developed a literature review that aimed to explore more deeply the role that Māori women have in the Māori economy.

Nga Pae o te Māramatanga Internship Report

The following report comprises a literature review which seeks to explore the role of Māori women in the Māori economy. It will sit alongside the position papers already developed for the Whai Rawa SME project, and will add depth to the overall Whai Rawa SME project.

There is a plethora of literature about the Maori economy, but a very limited amount of literature that focuses specifically on Māori women in the Māori economy. The following literature review has focused more broadly at the international literature on diverse economies in order to situate Māori women in a wider context, as well as looking more closely at the situation in New Zealand, the Māori economy as a diverse economy, the general role women play in the economy, and on Māori women in business. As such, this review will only identifies gaps which need to be filled through further research, it also contributes to the conversations surrounding Māori women in the Māori economy, and helps to shape a better understanding of the role women play in diverse economies the world over.

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Introduction

Women have always played a fundamental part in the growth of economies across the world. After all, half of the world's brainpower lives in the minds of women (Barros, 2018). However, this is not reflected in the literature. While there exists a wealth of research on the economy in general, it is only applicable to the behaviour and input of males, and despite this, has long been presented as valid for both sexes, portraying a very distorted picture of economies the world over (Swedberg, 1987). In the modern world, women represent the largest minority there is (Arendt, cited in Torlak and Torlak, 2016). This is especially true when looking at the case of Māori women in New Zealand.

As with women across the world, the participation, contribution, and important role Māori women play in the economy is far reaching. Anecdotal evidence suggests that Māori women play a significant role in developing and sustaining the cultural, social, and economic lives of Māori communities. This is seen through studies which demonstrate that Māori women spend more time caring for others and do more voluntary and community work than non-Māori women and men (Te Puni Kōkiri, 2013). Māori women remain the driving force behind *kōhanga reo* (Māori immersion early childhood education), *kura kaupapa* Māori (Māori immersion schooling), and a myriad of other Māori development initiatives, and have actively contributed to growth and expansion of programmes and services for not only the Māori community, but for the country as a whole (Simmonds, 2011). While the impact Māori women have had on Māori social and cultural growth and development has been the focus of a growing body of research, the same is not true when it comes to reporting on the impact on the economy.

The following literature review seeks to uncover the current literature surrounding this topic. First an overall account of the literature surrounding the role women play in the global economy is presented. Following this is a brief overview of the history of New Zealand, as well as a discussion surrounding the literature which focuses on the Māori economy, and Māori entrepreneurs. In order to understand the position of Māori women in the Māori economy today, it is necessary to first understand how the current situation came to be. Therefore, this aspect of the review will provide context, enhance understanding, and will highlight the gaps that exist in these critical discussions when it comes to Māori women. Finally, a presentation of research surrounding the specific contribution, participation, role, and impact Māori women have on the

Māori economy will be presented, tying together all aforementioned discussion, and emphasising the need for more discussion around this crucial topic.

Women in the Economy

There are a number of factors that explain the lack of literature surrounding the role women play in business, that stems from a longstanding imbalance in the way we look at gender across all aspects of society. Often, information of the role women play in the economy is a by-product of a broader research focus (Tremaine and Lewis, 2010). However when talking specifically about the gap that exists in the literature surrounding women in the economy, one such reason for the inequities that exist, according to Justin Wolfers (2018), is that women's voices are scarce in the field of economics. Wolfers (2018) posits that this scarcity has significant flow on effects to the types of conversations that economists are having, and the type of literature they are publishing, and argues that this significant discrepancy seems to be true across almost all fields of literature, which explains the limited pool of research that currently exists. However despite this, there have been a number of pioneering researchers who have sought to change this reality, and in doing so have created an ever growing field of research which seeks to improve understanding of the role women play in all sectors of the economy. Interestingly, the majority of the following publications which align with the above statement, are written by women.

Ester Boserup, in 1970 provided some of the pioneering research on this topic, in her study titled 'Woman's Role in Economic Development'. Boserup's (1970) study focused on the contribution that woman have made, and continue to make in economic development, and highlighted how this process, through policy and other avenues, has been largely biased against women (Boserup, 1970). Martha Darling's report, titled 'The role of women in the economy: a summary based on ten national reports', published in 1975, is another piece of founding work on women in the economy, that was written in response to the upward trend in the employment of women since the end of WWII. In her report, Darling (1975) notes the increase in the number of women in the workforce, as well as the broadening of careers women are pursuing, and discusses the equilibrium that women needed to maintain between work and family, and how different this was to the experience of men. It seems that she wrote it as a way to look at creating a global approach to better understanding the role of women in the economy.

Further works which sought to highlight the role of women in the economy includes the work of Bose, Feldberg and Sokoloff (1987). In their book titled 'Hidden Aspects of Women's Work', Bose, Feldberg and Sokoloff (1987) discuss the multi-dimensionality of the role women play in the economy, and provide insight into the experiences of different women in different sectors of the economy, emphasising the weight of the contribution women make to economies around the world. These sentiments are echoed in a report published by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (1998). In their report, Anne-Marie Couderc, Deputy Minister for Employment in Charge of Women's Rights in France suggests that women provide an essential opportunity for economic and social development and progress worldwide. She explains that women have a different vision, born out of vastly different circumstances to those faced by men, and highlights that when social structures leave women no possibility for evolving their careers, and when civil society closes its doors on them, women are forced to pave their own paths (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, 1998). She finishes by saying that through this path formation, women are naturally drawn to innovation, to creation and to the development and management of their own successful businesses (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 1998).

Studies conducted in the new millennium have focused on highlighting similar truths. Katherine Gibson (2002) argues that in order to understand how economies work, it is necessary to identify the full range of economic identities that people occupy, namely those of men and women. Gibson (2002) uses the lens of diverse economies to explain the value of focusing on more than just profit maximisation and capitalism, and notes that while the role of women in economic development is not widely discussed, at a local level, women seem to be at the forefront, as primary agents of progress. This point emphasises the fact that while the role of women in the economy is seldom talked about, this does not reflect the weight of their contribution to economic growth and development. Further studies on women and the economy include those conducted by Fielden and Davidson (2010) and Tremaine and Lewis (2010). Fielden and Davidson's (2010) contribution to this discussion is centred around providing varying perspectives and experiences of women in entrepreneurship from different parts of the world. Their work helps to fill the gap that currently exists in the literature on female entrepreneurs within the SME (small and medium sized enterprise) sector, and on the role of women in the

economy, by highlighting the factors that differentiate the contribution of women to the economy, as well as presenting the contrast that exists between barriers and challenges faced by men and women who seek to establish themselves in the business world (Fielden and Davidson, 2010). Tremaine and Lewis (2010) add to the discussion surrounding the role of women in SMEs, highlighting that women have only emerged as a specific field of interest in the last two to three decades. They reflect on the situation that existed in the 1970s, whereby second wave feminism aroused a desire for institutional and political change, which influenced researchers to see women as a separate group who could not simply be assumed to have the same characteristics and needs as men (Tremaine and Lewis, 2010). However, they conclude by saying that while this field of research is growing, much more needs to be done if a more accurate picture of the economy is desired (Tremaine and Lewis, 2010).

New Zealand

Māori are the indigenous people of Aotearoa, New Zealand. Prior to colonisation, Māori thrived as an innately innovative and entrepreneurial people, with almost 1000 *hapū* (regional sub-tribes) independently asserting control over their own lands, waterways, resources, and people (Tapsell and Woods, 2008). Māori worldviews were based on the principles of *kaitiakitanga* (protection and guardianship over people and natural resources), *whakapapa* (framework binding all things), *whanaungatanga* (relationships with people and the environment), *auahatanga* (creativity and innovation) and *tinō rangatiratanga*. Māori people were heavily engaged in entrepreneurial ventures, and were eager to create new opportunities for growth and development that aligned with their values (Warriner, 2007). However, the arrival and later settlement of the British from 1769 would change this evermore.

In 1840, the Treaty of Waitangi, a written partnership between Māori and the British Crown was signed, promising the protection of their *tinō rangatiratanga*, in exchange for sovereignty and the right of pre-emption (Tapsell and Woods, 2008). For Māori, this partnership went beyond these provisions, and was seen as a mechanism with which Māori could collectively engage with new opportunities to stimulate development within their communities (Tapsell and Woods, 2008). However, these aspirations were not realised. From 1852, successive settler governments continuously developed legal mechanisms that stripped Māori communities of their lands,

resources, language, culture, and economic livelihood, completely disregarding their Treaty obligations, and leaving Māori people to ruin (Tapsell and Woods, 2008). Despite this, Māori have fought relentlessly to have their rights under the Treaty of Waitangi recognised, and in doing so are well into the treaty settlements process, whereby Māori are being granted compensation and justice for the transgressions of the settler government since 1840 (Tapsell and Woods, 2008).

New Zealand has come a long way in the past almost two centuries since the signing of the Treaty. In 1975, the Waitangi Tribunal was established to process claims relating to Crown breaches of the Treaty, and since its establishment, over 26 final settlements have been written into law. The Treaty settlements process, along with a tenacious and concerted effort from the Māori people to champion Māori development has led to the development of Māori tribal economies, as well as the building of a Māori economy with an asset base of over \$42.6 billion, which is set to continue to increase in the years to come (Te Puni Kōkiri, 2013).

The settlements process has been integral to the development of the Māori economy, primarily through *iwi* settlements and the resultant formation of Māori tribal economies. However, the strength of this correlation has historically led to the assumption that Māori tribal economies and the Māori economy are one in the same (Nana, 2015). This is not the case. While Māori tribal economies make up a large portion of the Māori economy, they do not represent the whole picture (Nana, 2015). This perception has meant that in the past, the diversity of the Māori economy has largely been ignored, as the entrepreneurial efforts of those who do not fall under the umbrella of tribal economies, but who still contribute to the Māori economy, were not taken in to account. Fortunately, this has started to change.

Māori Economy

The Māori economy has been defined and redefined numerously throughout the years. Simply put, the Māori economy is made up of all assets owned, and income earned, by Māori (New Zealand Institute of Economic Research, 2003). Ideologically, it has been described as a vehicle for Māori economic development that is not specific to growth on an individual or fiscal level, but rather, is determined with regard to collective aspirations of *whanaungatanga* (kinship),

kotahitanga (unity), *kaitiakitanga* (guardianship), and *mana whenua* (ownership and control of land) (New Zealand Institute of Economic Research, 2003). It is an economy that epitomises Māori values, knowledge and ideologies, and is distinctly Māori, by Māori, with Māori, for Māori (Henry, 2007).

The Māori economy is something that has been researched extensively over the last few decades. Initial studies on the Māori economy were conducted by the likes of Raymond Firth (1929), who provided insight into the social and economic organisation Māori people had before contact with Western civilisation. This was a pioneering piece of literature in which parallels can be drawn with regard to the values, methods of production, and systems of organisation Māori possessed before contact, with what the Māori economy looks like today. In a similar, yet much more recent study, Hazel Petrie (2002) discusses the Māori economy prior to colonisation, highlighting the entrepreneurial spirit that has always been evident among Māori, as well as the importance of its underlying value systems, and the complexities that arise in an economy as diverse as the Māori economy. Alexis Bunten (2010) adopts this thinking in relation to indigenous tourism, and likens the Māori experience to that of the indigenous peoples of Alaska, and the struggles that come with weighing up the costs and benefits of participation in tourism, and commercialising culture and cultural assets, while still maintaining authenticity (Bunten, 2010). Her study talks about the notion of ‘culturalising commerce’, redefining what it means to contribute to an economy with different bottom lines (Bunten, 2010). Frank Scrimgeour and Catherine Iremonger (2011) build on this discussion, presenting the notion that Māori economic development and entrepreneurship has always been underpinned by values such as sustainability. Scrimgeour and Iremonger (2011) posit that despite the devastating impacts of colonisation on the Māori economy, Māori economic growth is steady, and continues in most instances to be underpinned by Māori values, and by a quadruple bottom line of development and maximisation in all areas - social, environmental, cultural, and economic (Scrimgeour and Iremonger, 2011).

Building on the notion that the Māori economy is underpinned by more than simply economic gain, Ruckstuhl et al. (2013), in their study on science, innovation, and the Māori economy, suggest that the Māori economy operates under a much broader ethos than that given by traditional definitions of neoliberal economies. They claim that as well as working towards

capital growth, they also work under social, cultural and moral imperatives, and in particular, cultural values and systems of traditional knowledge (Ruckstuhl et al., 2013). Katherine Gibson (2002) offers a more in-depth conceptualisation of the Māori economy, in her study on women, identity and activism in Asian and Pacific community economies. She suggests that in order to understand the Māori economy in its own right, it is important to first disengage with economic thinking from a capital-centric, neoliberal perspective (Gibson, 2002). This is because thinking of an economy from this standpoint locates all economic difference within a field in which capitalist market, wage labour, and capitalist production are established at the centre, where everything else is seen to be contained within capitalism, looked at in relation to those key factors (Gibson, 2002). Her research suggests that disengagement from the neoliberal definition of what constitutes an economy allows us to look at economies through a lens in which capitalism is not the sole subject of inquiry (Gibson, 2002). This study lends itself to research which has reconceptualised the Māori economy as a diverse economy.

Cameron and Gibson-Graham (2003) argue that traditional conceptualisations of the economy are gendered and one sided. In their study, Cameron and Gibson-Graham (2003) explore ways in which the role, contribution, and participation of women in the economy and explains how these factors can be better envisaged and understood both in their own right, and also as a significant portion of the economy, when they are looked at through a more inclusive and diverse lens. Maria Bargh (2011) also adds to this thinking, specifically defining the Māori economy as being a diverse economy. In Bargh's study, she explains that a more highly populated economic environment is visible when you look at the Māori economy through a wider lens than would be provided through the lens of a traditional definition of economy (Bargh, 2011). Amoamo, Ruwhiu and Carter (2017) further this notion in their paper which proposes that the diverse economies framework enables a deeper understanding of the Māori economy in its many distinctive forms and more accurately represents the rich diversity of Māori enterprise than that of the conventional Western narrative surrounding notions of economy. All of these studies point to the diversity of the Māori economy, and highlight that the value of the Māori economy lies in recognising diversity. Discussion relating to the contribution of Māori women to this prosperity through diversity is scarce. Hence the aim of this project is to develop a more inclusive view of the Māori economy to widen the scope of what makes up Māori economic activity.

While discussion surrounding what constitutes the Māori economy has grown substantially in the last few decades, it is only comparatively recently that the state of the Māori economy has been given the same attention. The New Zealand Institute of Economic Research (2003) conducted a substantive study on the Māori economy, discussing the state of the Māori economy today, and identifying key factors that are driving Māori economic growth. In their study, it is highlighted that Māori businesses often pursue multiple objectives and bottom lines, and marks one of the first times the Māori economy has been looked at comprehensively through the use of multifaceted analysis techniques (New Zealand Institute of Economic Research, 2003). Following this, in 2011, was a literature review published by Carter, Kamae and Barrett which examined literature surrounding Māori economic development, and explored the diversity that exists within tribal economies. 10 years after the study conducted by the New Zealand Institute of Economic Research (2003), Ruckstuhl et al. (2013) published a useful report that looks broadly at the Māori economy, and presents case studies of different aspects of the Māori economy, as well as a collection of businesses that contribute to the Māori economy. Published in the same year was a report conducted by Te Puni Kōkiri (2013), their report provided an updated account of the state of the Māori economy from an industrial, contextual, as well as geographic basis, which highlighted the prosperity of the Māori economy (Te Puni Kōkiri, 2013). However, it did not specifically look at gender, or the specific input or contribution Māori women are having on this growth.

Other reports on the Māori economy and Māori economic development include that of Smith, Tinirau, Gillies and Warriner (2015). The aim of their report was to identify critical success factors for Māori economic development from an iwi perspective, and to develop appropriate economic development models. While this report, like the others, provides great insight into Māori economic development, it does not look at the role Māori play in this. This is the case for all of the reports discussed above. While they all provide valuable information about the Māori economy, defining what it is, who contributes to it, what forms its foundations, how different factors influence it, and how far it has come, none of these studies have looked specifically at the role women have played in its development, which implies that while the picture of the Māori economy is far more populated than it once was, there still exists significant gaps in the literature, and in the way we approach research in this field.

Māori Entrepreneurship

As previously exhibited, Māori are an inherently entrepreneurial and innovative people, whose culture possesses a natural affinity to the land and its resources, and whose worldviews are embedded in all aspects of their being (Warriner, 2007). Indeed, entrepreneurship has always having been a key part of Māori society (Pihama and Pinehira, 2005). This situation still true today, as despite the ongoing destructive impacts of colonisation, Māori have created a strong economy and asset base by harnessing their entrepreneurial spirit and utilising their natural resources. In fact in 2001, international research by the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor found Māori to be the most entrepreneurial people in the world (Petrie, 2002).

There is a growing literature base surrounding Māori economic identity (Anderson, Dana and Dana, 2006; Whitehead and Annesley, 2005; O’Sullivan and Dana, 2008) and on Māori entrepreneurial identity (Keelan and Woods, 2006; Warriner, 2009; Tapsell and Woods, 2008; Te Puni Kōkiri, 2007). Māori entrepreneurs are increasingly thriving as “bicultural pioneers who walk between distinct yet intricately woven worlds of strategic business decisions, tribal policies, family politics and assessing opportunities on a regular basis” (Mataira, 2000: 559). Māori values are embedded in the entrepreneurial activity of Māori people, constructed through a distinctly Māori worldview. The term ‘Kaupapa Māori’ is an expression of this notion of the interconnection between entrepreneurial activity, cultural values and worldviews. Keelan and Woods (2006) developed a model of Kaupapa Māori entrepreneurship, called the ‘Māuipreneur’. This model is based on Māui, a well-known male character of Māori mythology, who is an exemplar of entrepreneurial behaviour. It illustrates the intersection of the foundations of kaupapa Māori, with that of entrepreneurship, and is far-reaching in terms of its value. However, while it is a fantastic model that highlights the entrepreneurial spirit of Māori in general, it is more geared towards males than females - a theme seen throughout all fields of literature.

Māori women in the Māori Economy

Prior to colonisation, Māori women were the weavers, the cooks, and the carers of children, but they were also healers gardeners, warriors and entrepreneurs (Tremaine and Lewis, 2010). The same is true today. Despite the devastating impacts of colonisation, women remain at the centre of growth and development across all aspects of society. Their own determination, initiative, and

innovation, alongside legislature such as the Equal Pay Act 1960, the Equal Pay Act 1972, the Race Relations Act 1971, the Human Rights Commission Act 1977 and the State Sector Act 1988, and an ideological shift in public policy has helped paved the way for Māori women in business today (Tremaine and Lewis, 2010). As such, while Māori women remain central to the functions of the home, and to childcare, they also occupy almost all branches of our modern economy. They are doctors, lawyers, teachers, politicians, managers, and business women.

Discussion surrounding the impact Māori women have had, and continue to have on the economy is limited at best. Where this subject is discussed, it is typically as a subset of a larger body of research, rather than as a specific research focus. However, an example where this was not the case, is one study conducted by Horsfield and Evans in 1988. In their study, titled 'Māori women in the economy: a preliminary review of the economic position of Māori women in New Zealand', Horsfield and Evans (1988) investigate the participation of Māori women in the economy. However, while this represents one of the only studies who focused explicitly on Māori women in the economy, it is written from a Western perspective, guided by a distinctly Western conception of economy.

This emphasises the gap that exists in the literature, especially seeing as this is one of the only publications that focuses specifically on Māori women in the economy. While this report is on its own in its specific focus, a number of researchers have commented on Māori women in the economy, as a part of larger literary works. One such study was conducted by the Ministry of Economic Development in 2008, which sought to report on women in SMEs in New Zealand. The report highlights that women, and in particular Māori women, face more boundaries when entering the business world than men, and provides empirical data on the employment of Māori women compared to women of other ethnicities, as well as their rates of self-employment, being employers, being unpaid workers, and being employees (Ministry of Economic Development, 2008). Of particular note in this study, was the Ministry of Economic Development's (2008) acknowledgement of the limited research available on Māori women in business, emphasising that this is a topic that requires significant attention. Hekia Parata, in a publication released by the New Zealand Government (2011) echoed the sentiments presented by the Ministry of

Economic Development (2008), emphasising the need for more celebration of the contribution Māori women make to all parts of the economy.

Other studies that touch on Māori women in the economy include those completed by Henry and Pringle (1996), McNicholas and Humphries (2005), Simmonds (2011), and Te Puni Kōkiri (2013). In their study, Henry and Pringle (1996) addresses the intersections of ethnicity and gender through comparative analysis of the experiences of Māori and Pākehā women as leaders and managers in New Zealand. While their study is useful in providing some insight into the experiences of Māori women in leadership and management roles, and highlights some key similarities and differences between the experiences of Māori and non-Māori women in business in New Zealand, it does not talk specifically about the impact that these experiences have on the economy. McNicholas and Humphries (2005), offer a different perspective, exploring the experiences of female Māori accountants in corporate environments and discussing the challenges that come with maintaining their identity in such a mono-cultural institution as the accountancy profession. Their paper also talks about a Māori accountant's network that was set up with the help of Māori women in accountancy in response to these identity centered challenges, who wanted to create a space for new knowledge and practices that seek to enhance their professional careers as accountants without diminishing the values held within their Māori world views (McNicholas and Humphries, 2005). While not specifically related to women in business, this paper forms an important part of a wider field of career literature that sheds light on the experiences of Māori women working in the corporate world.

In a more entrepreneurship centered study, Simmonds (2011) examines the intersection between being Māori and female, and discusses the concept of Mana Wahine, and describes it as being an extension of Kaupapa Māori theory. It seems that this model is similar in its foundation to Keelan and Woods' (2006) 'Māuipreneur', except for women, and is therefore relevant in that it offers an epistemological framework that could prove to be highly effective in further study surrounding the specific role of Māori women in the economy. However, while this study did briefly touch on Māori women in the economy, its primary focus was on decolonising politics from a Māori feminist perspective. Focusing more on quantitative research, the report published

by Te Puni Kōkiri (2013) noted the need for greater acknowledgement of Māori women in business, and highlighted that Māori women have the world's third highest entrepreneurship rate.

Conclusion

Women have always been at the heart of social, cultural and economic growth and development the world over. As with women across the world, the participation, contribution, and important role Māori women play in these fundamental aspects of society is widespread. However, the specific impact women, and Māori women in particular, have on the economy, is seldom discussed or investigated in formal academic research. This literature review sought to assess the current literature surrounding this topic. In an attempt to form a well-rounded picture of the current literary landscape, topics ranging from women in the economy across the world, New Zealand history, the Māori economy, and Māori entrepreneurship. However, while these fields of study helped to paint a picture of the general contribution of women to the economy, and the situation in New Zealand, there was little evidence bringing these two branches together, which demonstrated a significant gap in the literature. This gap in literature was further emphasised by the extremely limited research available on Māori women in the economy in particular. While the available evidence points to a strong presence of women in the economy, and an even stronger impact, this notion has not yet been adequately investigated. Perhaps this is a reflection of the gender disparities in academia? Most of the publications reviewed above were written by women, which indicates that this might be some. While all works examined in this review contributed to our understanding of Māori women in business and added some insight into this largely overlooked topic, none specifically or purposefully addressed the topic, nor presented an accurate assessment of the role of women in the Māori economy. Thus, as echoed in many of the publications cited above, further research into the role, contribution, impact and participation of women, specifically Māori, in the economy, needs to be undertaken if we are to better understand the economy within which we operate.

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