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**KIA MAU KI TŌ IWITANGA:**  
**THE ROLE OF MĀORI IDENTITY AND IWI IDENTITY IN POSITIVE  
EDUCATIONAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL OUTCOMES.**

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

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Psychology

at Massey University, Manawatū campus,  
New Zealand.

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MASSEY UNIVERSITY  
GRADUATE RESEARCH SCHOOL

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## ABSTRACT

University student engagement is increasingly recognised as a major determinant of academic success and general wellbeing for Māori. Cultural identity is seen as a key resource in this domain, and the notion of academic self-concept has been shown to be important in other research contexts. The present study considered the relationships between both academic engagement and academic self-concept, and academic achievement, wellbeing, life meaning and life satisfaction in a sample of New Zealand Māori students. The moderating effects of Māori identity and Iwi identity were also examined. A group of 171 Māori students from Massey University completed an online survey. Major findings were that (a) Māori identity moderated the relationship between engagement, and both academic achievement and life meaning for internal students; (b) Iwi identity moderated the relationship between both engagement and academic self concept, and life meaning for internal students. Despite limitations, these findings have important implications for Māori students, tertiary education providers, and those involved in the development and implementation of tertiary education policy. The findings also highlight the need for future research to focus on the specificity of Iwi identity as a more specific measure of Māori identity.

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