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**A COMPARISON STUDY OF MAORI AND PAKEHA  
EMOTIONAL REACTIONS TO SOCIAL SITUATIONS  
THAT INVOLVE WHAKAMAA.**

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements  
for the degree of Master of Arts in Psychology,  
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Clive Banks

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## ABSTRACT

The impact that culture has on the experience and expression of emotion is a topic of great debate amongst emotion theorists. The present study investigated the relationship between culture and emotional reactions to social situations that involve whakamaa. More specifically, the study had four goals. The first was to investigate the patterns of Maori and Pakeha emotional reactions to a number of social situations. Second, the relationship between Maoritanga and the strength and/or type of emotional reaction to a number of social situations was investigated. Third, the levels of Maoritanga of rural and urban Maori was compared. Fourth, rural and urban Maori patterns of emotional reactions to a number of social situations were compared. A total of 48 Maori and 63 Pakeha randomly selected from the telephone directory for the East Cape/Gisborne region of New Zealand completed a self report questionnaire. The questionnaire gathered demographic information and required the participants to rate how strongly they would feel 9 specific emotions in reaction to four short stories. Maori participants were also asked to complete a Maoritanga measure. The findings indicated that: Maori and Pakeha participants responded with different patterns of emotion to some types of social situation but not others; urban and rural Maori participants had similar levels of Maoritanga; urban and rural Maori responded similarly to the social situations outlined in the present study; and Maoritanga, as measured, was not related to the strength of emotional reaction to the short stories. However, it was suggested that these conclusions be moderated by the limitations of the study. Future research recommendations and the practical implications of the findings are discussed.

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