Specifically Pacific:
Engaging Young Pacific Workers

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Te Manatū Whakahiato Ora

MINISTRY OF PACIFIC ISLAND AFFAIRS
Successful Pacific Peoples

Contents

1.   *Executive Summary*

This research was prompted by a commitment to exploring how to enhance the engagement of younger workers, particularly young Pacific people. Employee engagement is the extent to which workers are connected to and committed to their work and their organisation, and the effort they make while at work.

It is important to better understand the factors impacting on and influencing the workplace engagement of young Pacific people, given that the proportion of young Pacific people in the workforce is increasing in the face of an overall declining labour force. As discussed in the literature review (Section 3), there is very little research on young Pacific people and work beyond statistics on employment, unemployment, workforce participation, educational qualifications etc. While the statistics are showing improvements over time, the status of young Pacific people remains negative compared with young New Zealanders overall. This is of particular concern because, while the youth labour force is declining overall, the proportion of young workers who identify as Pacific is increasing. From the literature it is evident that there is currently a paucity of information on young Pacific people's engagement at work.

This research begins to address this knowledge gap by providing more understanding of young Pacific employees' drivers for workforce participation, their career aspirations and expectations, and the enablers and barriers to participation, progression, and engagement in the workplace. This research also explores the relationship between young Pacific workers and organisations by exploring employers' understanding of young Pacific workers' engagement, their expectations of young Pacific workers, and their perceptions of the barriers and enablers to their engagement.

To address the research questions, the EEO Trust commissioned the Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs to conduct qualitative interviews with 20 employees and six managers from six EEO Trust member organisations.

The research strengthened and built on the findings of the literature review, identifying the following factors as key enablers for engagement:

– Organisations recognising the importance of family and Pacific cultural values for young Pacific workers;
– Positive relationships with managers, developed through inclusive two-way communication and regular feedback on performance;
– Opportunities for career development and training; and
– Having a network of Pacific role-models and/or mentors in the workplace.

The implications of the study are:

– Organisations can draw on Pacific values by getting to know young Pacific workers' families and involving them in resolving work issues when needed.
– Organisations can utilise Pacific cultural metaphors in order to incorporate Pacific identities and values in the workplace.
– Managers need to recognise the potential of young Pacific workers and actively motivate young Pacific workers who often lack self-confidence and belief in their abilities.
– Managers also need to develop pathways within their organisations that match the aspirations and competencies of young Pacific workers.
– Formal Pacific networks provide opportunities for senior Pacific managers and supervisors to mentor young Pacific workers.

This research provides useful initial insights into the relatively unknown area of engaging young Pacific workers in New Zealand. Much more research in this area is needed in order to formulate effective organisational policies and measures to engage and retain young Pacific workers.

2.   Introduction

Employee engagement is the extent to which workers are connected and committed to their work and their organisation. *Fully engaged employees are defined as being "truly connected with their organisation. They believe in what the organisation is trying to accomplish and are much more likely to give their all in helping their organisation succeed."* In contrast, disengaged employees are *"neither satisfied with their work nor committed to the organisation, doing the bare minimum to get by – or less – and in the extreme, act as a drain on effective organisational functioning …"* (JRA, 2007, p3).

There is very little research on young Pacific people in New Zealand workplaces beyond statistics on employment, unemployment, workforce participation, educational qualifications etc. While the statistics are documenting improvements over time, the status of young Pacific people remains negative compared with young New Zealanders overall. This is of particular concern because, while the youth labour force is declining overall, the proportion of young workers who identify as Pacific is increasing.

Young people in general start out with relatively high levels of engagement in their paid work, but this soon declines. They often feel alienated, that they do not fit into workplaces, are disengaged from workplace systems and structures, and often feel their ideas are undervalued or ignored. They need to feel that what they are doing is meaningful, and be able to see how it connects to the bigger picture of the organisation and wider society.

Key influences on engagement for workers in general and young workers in particular include management and supervisory styles; opportunities for advancement, training and development; being aware of and accommodating the wider life needs of workers, and consistency between the job description and induction process and the reality of the job. The extent to which these apply in a particular workplace could be investigated as a means to developing a strategy to improve the engagement of young workers.

Attempts to engage younger workers, particularly young Pacific workers, need to take into account their characteristics. The number of young people working full-time is declining, those who are working full-time may be less skilled and have fewer career opportunities, many young people feel that their education is not relevant to their jobs, and many young women and migrants perceive discrimination and a lack of equal opportunity in the workplace.

Young Pacific workers are an increasingly significant workforce but remain little understood. This study concentrates on the current and potential role of these workers and how to build their workplace engagement in the future.

In order to develop a research proposal, a brief review was carried out of the literature on employee engagement, young people in the workforce, and Pacific workers in New Zealand.

Research questions were then developed to inform this study involving young Pacific employees and managers from six different EEO Trust member organisations. It aims to explore the drivers for workforce participation of young Pacific employees, their career aspirations and expectations, and the enablers and barriers to participation, progression, and engagement in the workplace.

Research questions for managers explored their understanding of young Pacific workers' engagement, their expectations of young Pacific workers, opportunities for training and up-skilling, and their perceptions of the barriers and enablers to engagement for young Pacific workers.

The report is structured as follows:

– Literature review: This review covers literature on employee engagement, international and New Zealand literature on engaging younger workers, and literature on Pacific workers in New Zealand.
– Research findings: This chapter discusses the key themes from the interviews. It is divided into sections on: Pacific cultural values and the workplace, employee perspectives, and managers' perspectives.
– Implications and conclusions: The final chapter highlights the key findings of the research.
– Appendices with research methodology, a description of the study participants, and references.

3.   *Literature Review*

3.1 Workforce engagement, key influences and how to enhance it

The New Zealand-based 2007 JRA report on engagement identified that only 25% of New Zealanders were fully engaged in their work and 28% were disengaged. It also shows that engagement increases with age: workers aged 20-30 were the least engaged and those aged over 40 the most engaged. Those under 20 were also engaged, but engagement declined rapidly to reach a low point in the mid-20s (JRA, 2007).

Women were more engaged than men. Private-sector employees were more engaged than those working in the public sector, and those in manual and technical roles were the least engaged occupational groups. This is consistent with the UK CIPD study (2006) which that found workers in lower-skilled jobs were less engaged than professionals and managers.

Disengagement has been shown to have a negative effect on financial outcomes, while engagement has a positive effect, mostly through cost savings through improved staff retention, increased customer satisfaction, and improved performance (EEO Trust, 2007a; JRA, 2007; Gebauer and Lowman, 2009). An EEO Trust pilot study in 15 New Zealand organisations found a positive relationship between employee engagement and self-reported productivity (EEO Trust, 2007b).

A UK study (CIPD, 2006) found that engaged employees performed better, took less sick leave and were less likely to resign. Drizin and Hundley (2008) also noted an improvement in the quality of products because engaged employees cared more, resulting in reduced product returns and complaints. They also mentioned a reduction in labour disputes when employees were more engaged.

A broader functional definition of engagement by Hundley et al (2007) defines workforce engagement as *"an ongoing process to recruit, retrain, reward and retain productive and effective employees by enhancing understanding of organisational practices and employee priorities, attitudes, behaviours and intentions"* (p. 7).

The main influence on workforce engagement identified by Drizin and Hundley (2008) from US surveys is the relationship between workers and their supervisors and/or managers. The UK CIPD (2006) report also found that to engage employees, organisations needed to focus on management, leadership and communication. *"Supervisors and senior line managers can make or break levels of employee engagement"* (p. 13).

Another UK government report cites an organisation where research demonstrated *"that 80% of the variation in engagement levels was down to the line manager"* (MacLeod & Clarke, 2009, p. 80). This report also identified lack of awareness by managers of the organisational benefits, or lack of knowledge about how to address engagement issues, as key barriers to employee engagement, as well as lack of interest and commitment to it (MacLeod & Clarke, 2009, p. 66).

The Towers Perrin Global Workforce Study also found "*senior management's sincere interest in employee wellbeing*" was at the top of their list of drivers of employee engagement (Gebauer and Lowman, 2009, p. 13). The following points are taken from the US national workforce engagement benchmark studies by Drizin and Hundley (2008):

– A total of 77% of employees had a positive relationship with their supervisor, and relationships were poorer in larger companies (5000+). [1]
– Employees who believed their supervisors performed well were much more likely to be engaged.
– Those who did not think positively about their supervisor's performance were five times more likely to be disengaged.
– Supervisors who encouraged participation in company-sponsored social events and provided work-related training and education were viewed much more positively than supervisors who did not support such initiatives.
– A total of 90% of employees who thought positively about their supervisors were committed to their organisation.
– Employees with a negative attitude towards their supervisor were four times more likely to not be motivated to work hard (11% vs 3%).
– Employees with a positive attitude to their supervisor were more likely to say they were likely to remain with the company, even if offered a similar job with higher pay (75% vs 37% with a negative attitude).
– Employees who received training and development were less likely to be disengaged.

Supervisors and managers can contribute to improved engagement in a number of ways (Drizin & Hundley, 2008; CIPD, 2006):

– Emphasise how the job contributes to organisational outcomes, why it is important, and ensure that expected outcomes/performance are clear.
– Try and make the job more engaging by increasing responsibilities, providing variety by rotating tasks, building in some autonomy and providing opportunities to improve skills.
– Make the physical work environment as comfortable and pleasant as possible, and ensure equipment functions properly.
– Treat everyone fairly.
– Provide regular feedback on performance and invite feedback from employees.
– Align espoused values with actual practice – walk the talk.
– See training as an investment rather than a cost.

Employee engagement is multi-faceted: it involves behaviour (working hard), intentions (to remain in the job), attitudes (employee relationships with supervisors and colleagues, and teamwork) and priorities (where work fits in relation to other activities and responsibilities) (Hundley et al, 2007; Drizin & Hundley, 2008).

The key drivers of engagement identified in the JRA survey of New Zealand workplaces were: getting a personal sense of achievement from the job, feeling there was a future in the organisation, and having a personal sense of belonging to the organisation. However, where organisations have a lot of low-skill or unskilled

1. A total of 17 EEO Trust member organisations have 5000 or more employees.

jobs, there may not be much room for personal achievement and career development. A basic level of training and development is important, however, to equip employees with the knowledge, skills and experiences they need to be "continuously engaged in performing meaningful work that adds value to the organisation" (Hundley et al, 2007, p. 181).

Hundley et al (2007) and Gebauer and Lowman (2009) also identified opportunities for advancement as a top-five driver of engagement, but a national benchmarking study in the US found that many employers did not understand how lack of opportunities inhibited engagement.

Rewards and recognition are also important and should include both the tangible, such as pay, and the intangible, such as being thanked. Most employees want to feel personal accomplishment in their work. Employees in larger organisations are more likely to feel unrecognised and unrewarded for their contributions (Hundley et al, 2007).

Organisational orientation/induction is another key driver of engagement, as a lack of proper training and support for new employees can result in an early exit. New employees need a clear understanding of the aims and values of the organisation and the role they play. The US national benchmark surveys found that engagement dropped after 12 months in a job. For two out of three people, this was due to a poor fit between duties and responsibilities compared to the job description, a lack of challenge, or lack of commitment to workforce diversity (Hundley et al, 2007).

Performance management is another component of workforce engagement. A lack of clearly-defined performance goals and realistic objectives is a problem for many employees (Hundley et al, 2007).

To perform above the minimum, employees need to feel *like part of the family* (Drizin & Hundley, 2008, p. 46), with personal and psychological attachment to the company. They also need the appropriate skills and competencies.

Opportunities for employees to have input into decision-making was a top-10 driver identified in the Towers Perrin Global Workforce Study (Gebauer & Lowman, 2009, p. 13). Gebauer and Lowman sum up the way to close the engagement gap as: know them, grow them, inspire them, involve them and reward them (p. 17).

Employees appreciate organisations that are concerned about their "holistic wellbeing", according to Drizin and Hundley (2008, p. 117). A number of other sources show evidence of a positive link between good work-life balance and engagement (CIPD, 2006; EEO Trust 2007a&b). Towers Perrin[2] sums up the way to close the engagement gap:

"Companies need to understand their employees as well as they understand their customers to design a work environment and experience that will drive higher engagement and performance."

This is consistent with the UK government report which notes two levels at which employee engagement needs to be addressed: one is a set of activities and targets, but the second is a more integral holistic and systemic approach as part of overall business strategy (MacLeod & Clarke, 2009, p. 72).

2. www.towersperrin.com/tp/
    getwebcachedoc?webc=HRS/
    USA/2008/200802/GWS_
    handout_web.pdf

3.2 Engaging younger workers in New Zealand and overseas

There has been much focus on the current generation of younger workers ("Generation Y") and how they differ from previous generations in terms of workplace attitudes, behaviour and expectations. This report focuses on how to engage this age group and what prompts disengagement.

Research shows mixed findings for the relative engagement level of younger workers, partly due to differing outcomes for the very young and those at the higher end of the youth age group. The JRA 2007 engagement survey found that people in their 20s were the least engaged of all age groups, and those under 20 had high levels of engagement.

This is consistent with the findings reported above of reduced engagement after 12 months. Hundley et al (2007) found that workers aged 18-24 were more positive than older employees about the organisation meeting employee needs. They point out that a diverse workforce requires diverse workplace solutions – for example, an appreciation that younger people's needs are different from those of older workers. However, in a broader grouping of young people, the UK CIPD (2006) report found lower levels of engagement for workers under 35: 26% compared with 41% of those over 35.

A UK study by Vodafone (2008) found a new style of working by Gen Y that included portfolio careers, career breaks, and switching industries – all of which deviate from the linear career path of previous generations of men. This study also found that people aged under 30 were more likely than older people to agree that their main reason for working was to earn money.

In this report, the lack of long-term direction associated with non-linear career paths was thought to explain the reduction in motivation and engagement amongst young workers. The authors of this study concluded that employers' focus on short-term, bottom-line goals had contributed to this move away from a linear career path. They said that employers had created a culture where "*the psychological contract between employer and employee is loosened, the portfolio CV is prized, and long-term loyalty is devalued*" (p. 15).

Researchers say that supervisors and managers have a critical role to play in improving the engagement of young workers. Managers need to practise two-way communication and they also need to demonstrate their commitment to the organisation and be perceived as fair in their treatment of employees.

As New Zealand research by Forsyth et al (2009) found, there were more differences within generations or age groups than between them. All workers would be more engaged if consulted and given feedback and opportunities to develop. However, Forsyth et al also found differences. For instance, they showed that the current younger generation was less emotionally stable, less agreeable, and more self-centred. This had implications for teamwork, customer service, performance and decision-making under pressure.

They advise choosing "*managers with the skills to tune into their people (and help existing managers learn these skills)*" (p. 109). They also suggest creating social support networks to buffer emotional issues and embed employees into organisations. Recognition of results validates workers and builds self-efficacy, and it is important to discuss career paths and development opportunities.

Management styles should be mentoring in style rather than dictatorial and hierarchical. The old command-and-control style of management will not work with this generation. Managers need to explain why something has to be done, rather than just ordering that it be done (Gallo, 2008).

Other key elements for engaging young workers are to make training hands-on rather than classroom-based and, where possible, self-paced and followed up with feedback and coaching. A UK study found that for 16 to 24-year-old office workers, workplace social activities are associated with the intention to stay with an organisation (You at Work, 2008).

3.3 New Zealand research on young workers

The number of young people in New Zealand's workforce is declining. In 2006, 17.5% of the New Zealand labour force was aged 15-24 with a projected decline to 16% in 2016, down to 15% in 2021, and remaining at around 15-16% through to 2061.[3]

Young workers are more vulnerable to downturns in labour market conditions due to lower skill levels and less work experience (Household Labour Force Survey, 2008). In the 12 months from March 2008 to March 2009, people aged under 25 made up 44% of the unemployed, while those aged 15-19 comprised 19% of the unemployed.[4]

From 1985-2004, the proportion of 15-24 year olds who were in paid work only (not studying) declined as the proportion combining paid work and study, or just studying, increased (Stillman, 2006). This analysis did not include Pacific peoples, but found that, despite improvement, Māori were not gaining relative to Pākehā.

Given the closer outcome of Pacific to Māori than Pākehā on other employment and education statistics, these outcomes are likely to apply to Pacific youth also. Study rates increased most for Māori aged 15-19. However, young Māori are less likely than Pākehā to combine paid work and study, and more likely to be neither studying nor in paid work. In the 20-24 age group, rates of increase for study were similar for both groups, with the overall participation rate for Pākehā remaining more than double that of Māori.

Other studies show that young people aged 15-24 who identify as Pacific or Māori are more than twice as likely as Pākehā /European to not be in employment, education or training. For Pacific youth, in the year to June 2007 16% were unemployed compared with 8% of Europeans and 17% of Māori (Department of Labour, 2007)[5].

Nearly half of young Pacific people aged 15-24 were not in the labour force in 2007 (49%) compared with 27% of European and 43% of Māori. Young Pacific (21%) and Māori (25%) New Zealanders in this age group are twice as likely to be parents as young New Zealanders overall (11%), and this accounts for a third of those not in the labour force for Pacific people aged 20-24. However, males are less likely than females to be in employment, education or training.

Educational outcomes for young Pacific New Zealanders are improving but remain comparatively poor.

3   Using series 5M medium
    assumptions series of National
    Labour Force Projections:
    2006 base – 2061, Statistics
    New Zealand 2009.

4   Statistics New Zealand,
    Household Labour Force
    Survey, March 2009, Table 4.

5   Data source for Department of Labour,
    2007, was Household Labour Force
    Survey, Statistics New Zealand.

Figure 1

Proportion of ethnic groups aged 15-29 with no educational qualification, 1996 & 2006
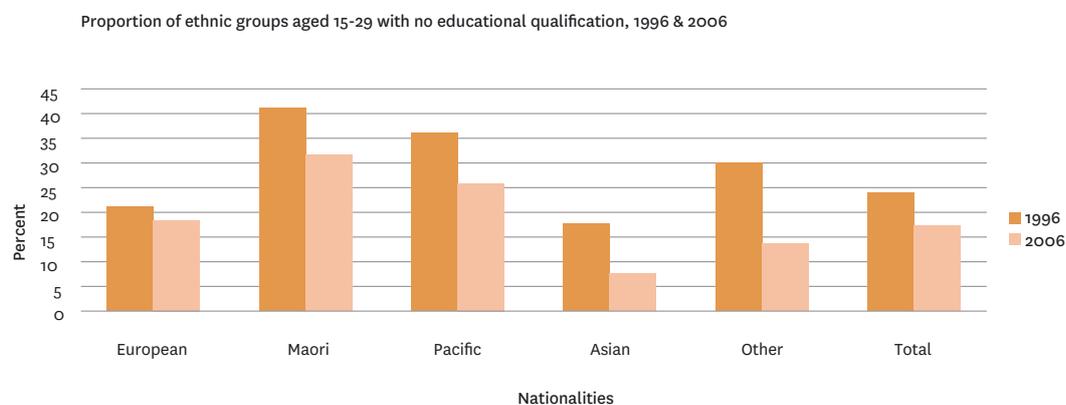
While young Pacific people were more likely to have an educational qualification in 2006 than they were in 1996, and twice as likely to have a degree, they still lag, along with Māori, well behind the New Zealand average and other ethnic groups. In 2006, 26% of young Pacific people had no qualification compared, with 18% of all young people living in New Zealand.[6]

Figure 2

Proportion of ethnic groups aged 15-29 with a university degree, 1996 & 2006
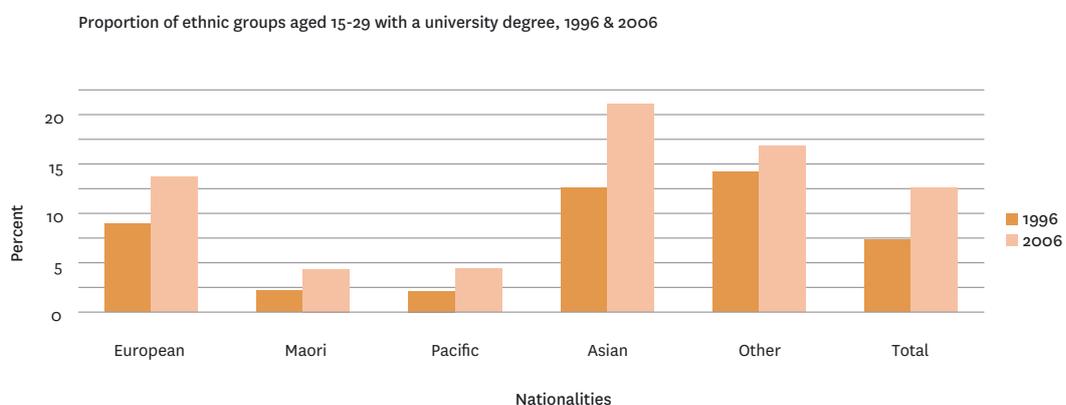
A 2004 survey of 866 workers aged 15-34 found that 11% listed their main activity as part-time work; 33% were students and 9% were primarily caring for children. Some of these were also doing part-time work. The main reasons for part-time work were study or caring for children.

6   Source: Statistics New Zealand
     customised tables from NZ Census
     prepared for EEO Trust April 2009.

Graph source: Statistics New Zealand
customised tables from NZ Census.

Most part-timers worked in the services and sales area (Dupuis et al, 2005). Nearly half of those in permanent part-time work would prefer to work full-time, and two out of three temporary part-time workers would prefer full-time employment if the right job came along (McLaren & Dupuis, 2006).

Dupuis et al also found high mobility between jobs, lack of relevance of education to jobs, and that social capital (family, friends and other individuals in one's community) were important in finding a job. A parallel study of young Māori (Cunningham et al, 2005) found similar outcomes to the main study, but Māori were more likely to have temporary jobs, be more mobile between jobs, and have less access to social capital to help them find jobs.

Māori were also likely to partner and have children younger. They had lower qualifications, less access to formal career guidance, and were more likely to use informal networks to identify job opportunities. Pacific youth were not specifically studied, but, as indicated above, their education, work and childbearing patterns are closer to Māori than to Pākehā, so findings for Māori youth are likely to be relevant to Pacific youth also.

Inkson et al (2007) carried out qualitative interviews with young people on how they saw the world of work. While most respondents thought it was easy to get a job, getting a good job was more difficult, and it was considered easier to get a job if you knew the right people. Others found it hard to get a job, especially those with lower qualifications or children, or those from migrant groups that felt discriminated against by employers (this also may include non-New Zealand-born Pacific youth). The youth in Inkson et al's study felt that interpersonal /communication skills, qualifications and experience were what employers were looking for, rather than competence.

Most planned their career or working lives in some way. Families were a major influence on study and work choices, sometimes by helping them find work, but sometimes young people felt pushed by their families, with negative effects. Employers were also seen as a source of advice and acted as role-models for young workers.

Almost half of the young people said their dream job was a continuation of what they were doing or related to personal interests, or perhaps owning a business. Very few linked dream jobs with wealth and leisure, but about 7% dreamed of being a celebrity.

They said that barriers to employment achievement included personal factors such as confidence, external factors such as women's family responsibilities, relationships with employers, and discrimination by employers (e.g. against migrants).

Research on young New Zealanders' perceptions of career success (Gardiner, 2006) found that competence, work-life balance and advancement were the most highly-rated concepts of career success. Young men rated advancement more highly, while women rated balance and competence more highly. Those aged 15-26 rated advancement more highly, and those aged 27-34 rated competence and balance more highly.

Massey's Labour Market Dynamics Group also researched non-standard work in relation to young New Zealanders (Dupuis & McLaren, 2006). The numbers of people of all ages doing non-standard work – that is, anything other than a single full-time permanent job for a wage or salary – increased from 1986 to 1996 then plateaued until 2001.

The numbers of 15-19 year olds doing non-standard work increased more than for older people. Part-time employment was high for people aged 15-19, particularly those working in sales and service. Multiple jobs, mainly in education, hospitality and retail, were more common among full-time workers, students, and women aged 30-34, and less common among those aged 25-29.

Temporary workers were mainly students aged 15-19, with men more likely than women to be in temporary work. The young people in this study generally felt positively about non-standard work.

Research on young migrants in New Zealand (Ward, 2008) has found that while they increasingly orient themselves towards wider New Zealand society, they also maintain a strong sense of their heritage and culture. They wish to participate in the new society and retain their own cultural identity.

Family values such as parental obligations and children's rights decline with second-generation migrants – those born in New Zealand. The migrant youth in this study reported higher levels of discrimination on the basis of ethnic or cultural background (42%) than other young New Zealanders (16%). This held true for those born here as well as more recent migrants.

At the same time, these young people were less likely to report suffering psychological distress and more likely to report better social adaptation, although this declines for those born in New Zealand. The conclusion is that participation in the new society should be encouraged, while maintaining cultural identity.

3.4 Pacific workers in New Zealand

The Pacific population is younger than the general population, with 30% aged under 15 in 2006, compared to 22% of the overall population aged under 15. Thus while the youth labour force is declining overall, the proportion of young Pacific workers is projected to grow from 7% of the youth labour force in 2006 to 9% in 2016, rising to 10% in the 2020s (Figure 3).

Figure 3

Percentage of labour force aged 15-24, projected
to 2026 from 2006 base, by ethnic group
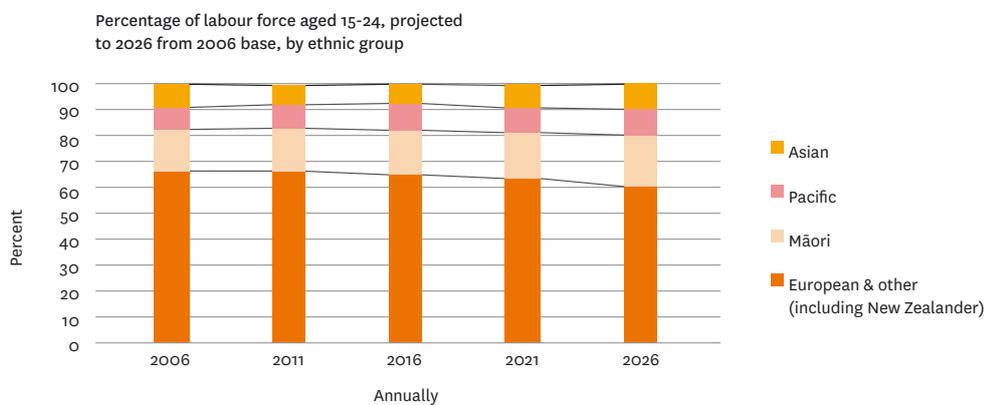
Most Pacific people living in New Zealand were born here (59%). For people aged 15-29, this increases to 67%, and for those aged under 15 it is 87%.[7] Cook Island Māori, Niueans and Tokelauans are most likely to be born in New Zealand, while Samoans and Tongans are more likely to be recent immigrants.

Two-thirds of all Pacific people in New Zealand live in the greater Auckland region, and one-third live in Manukau. Just over one in four people in Manukau identifies as a member of a Pacific ethnic group, and close to one in three of those are aged 15-29. Many commute from other areas such as Waitakere, which has a relatively large number of Pacific people but little industry to employ them.

A desired outcome of the Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs' *Pacific Economic Action Plan* (2007) was to develop a highly-skilled and versatile Pacific workforce and to increase:

– Participation in creative, emerging and growth industries;
– Participation in leadership and decision-making bodies;
– Participation in Modern Apprenticeships;
– Labour-force participation of Pacific women.

"Personal and professional development should be encouraged for Pacific employees and they must be equipped with the right skills to meet the ever-changing labour market demands."

7   Statistics New Zealand,   Graph source: Data produced
     2006 Census QuickStats   for EEO Trust by Statistics
     about Pacific peoples,   New Zealand, January 2009,
     Table 7.   using series 6M medium
                                     assumptions.

3.4.1 Impact of economic recession

Pacific workers, along with Māori, were hardest-hit by the downturn from the mid-1980s to mid-1990s. The unemployment rate for Pacific people rose from 6.6% in 1986 to 28% in 1991, compared with an increase from 11.3% to 25.4% for Māori.[8]

However, when the economy improved, the unemployment rate for Pacific people improved more than that for Māori, falling to 6.5% by March 2007. It appears that while Pacific people do better than Māori when the economy is doing well, they are more likely to lose their jobs in a downturn. There is also a difference in the proportions participating in the labour force, with Pacific people less likely to be available for work than Māori.

In the current economic downturn, Pacific people experienced the greatest increase in unemployment of any ethnic group from March 2008 to March 2009 – a 61% increase in numbers and a 4.4 percentage-point increase in the unemployment rate. This compares with a 27% and 0.8 percentage-point increase for Pākehā, and increases of 35% and 1.3 percentage points overall (Household Labour Force Survey, March 2009).

Analysis by industry sector shows that manufacturing, wholesale/retail and transport/storage/communication were the only sectors to have lost employees in both the March 2008 to March 2009 period, and the December 2008 to March 2009 quarter.[9] Education and "other services" shed jobs in the last quarter only. All other sectors increased employee numbers over both the 2008-2009 year and the first quarter of 2009.

Pacific and Māori also have high levels of workplace injury claims as a result of their over-representation in more dangerous occupations.[10]

At the time of the 2006 Census, Pacific youth (14%) were more likely than other young people (10%) to work in manufacturing, and were under-represented in retail and hospitality (Figure 4). They were also under-represented in transport, postal and warehousing, and were over-represented in administrative and support services. They were only slightly under-represented in professional, scientific and technical services (4% compared with 5% for all 15-24 year olds).

8   The Social Report 2008, Ministry of
     Social Development, p.47.
9   Household Labour Force Survey, March
     2009, Table 7.
10   The Social Report 2008, Ministry of
     Social Development, p.53.

Figure 4

Young people by industry, Pacific and total, age 15-24 years
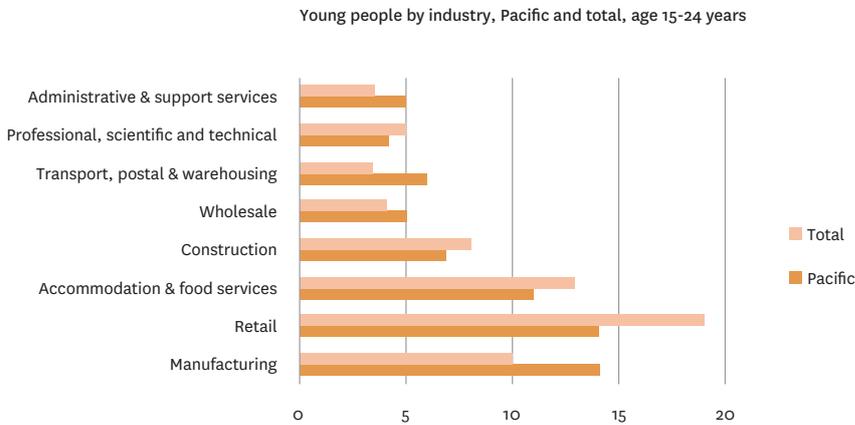
The most common occupational groups for Pacific youth aged 15-29 were labourers, sales workers, clerical and administrative, and technicians and trades. Pacific youth were over-represented among labourers (18% compared with 15%) and clerical and administrative (13% compared with 10%) and under-represented among professionals (7% compared with 14%) and managers (6% compared with 10%). Manual and technical roles have also been associated with low levels of workforce engagement (JRA, 2007).

Figure 5
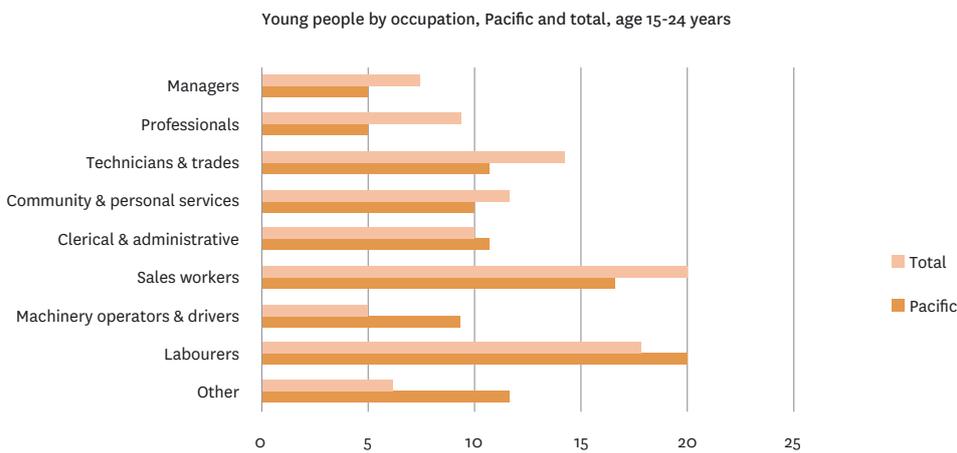
Young people by occupation, Pacific and total, age 15-24 years

Pacific workers are over-represented in low-paid, semi-skilled or unskilled occupations as reflected in their average weekly income – in 2008 it was $482. This compares with $573 for Māori and $741 for Pākehā.[11] The wage gap between Pacific and non-Pacific remains even when they are the same age and have the same qualifications (NZIER, 2005, p. v). This difference is strong and statistically significant, but the reasons are not clear. Further research into how employers view Pacific employees might provide clarification.

In the 2006 Census, a third of Pacific people did not have any educational qualification, but this varied from 39% of Cook Islanders to 27% of Samoans and 16% of Fijians, compared with 23% of Europeans, 36% of Māori and 11% of Asian peoples.[12] While young Pacific people's educational qualifications are improving – just 26% of 15-29 year olds have no qualification – they still lag behind all other New Zealanders in their age group except Māori.

In a November 2008 briefing paper to the incoming Minister of Pacific Island Affairs, education and skills training were identified as the keys to improving the economic and employment position of Pacific people in New Zealand (Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs, 2008). In the workplace, according to the briefing paper, this means increasing their representation in the Modern Apprenticeships scheme and their inclusion as a target group in the New Zealand Skills Strategy launched in July 2008.

Unemployment levels are higher for Pacific than non-Pacific people, even when age and qualifications are taken into account (Humphris & Chapple, 2002). The higher levels of unemployment and lack of educational qualifications experienced by older Pacific workers is likely to have had a flow-on effect to their children, the current younger generation.

According to an Australian study (Pech et al, 2008), young people whose parents had no qualifications or were not in paid work were more likely to not be in paid work, education or training themselves.

Pacific people report similar levels of overall satisfaction with their work-life balance as other groups, although they are slightly less likely than Māori and Pākehā to rate it as "*very*" satisfactory.[13]

A Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs report (2005a) identifies the key barriers and issues facing Pacific public servants:

– Lack of recognition of Pacific peoples' values and culture;
– Lack of appreciation for the value of diversity;
– Unclear communication;
– Insufficient education, training and development;
– Lack of input into decision-making;
– Lack of access to information and opportunities;
– Organisational culture;
– Feeling trapped within a confined structure.

11   Statistics New Zealand, New Zealand Income Survey, June 2008 quarter, reported in the Briefing to the Incoming Minister of Pacific Island Affairs, November 2008.

12   Callister, P., 2008, p. 6.

13   The Social Report 2008, Ministry of Social Development, p.55.

Many of these are also factors identified in section 2.0 of this report as key drivers of engagement. Suggested solutions include:

– Identifying cultural skills as relevant to the business and including them in remuneration and appraisal systems;
– Introducing pay parity by recognising experience as equal to qualifications;
– Clearly defining job competencies and including them in job descriptions and performance measures and rewards;
– Developing a formal mentoring programme.

Another Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs report (2003) on strategic directions for Pacific youth in New Zealand identified three key themes: identity, leadership and prosperity. For Pacific youth, prosperity is about strong, healthy families and relationships (i.e. not material acquisition).

Ward et al (2008) found that New Zealand-born Samoan youth had reduced family values, as measured by parental obligations and increased children's rights, compared to those born in Samoa. They concluded that Samoan young people valued culture and dual identity, and therefore recommended policies and practices that encouraged the maintenance of traditional language and culture.

A Ministry of Pacific Islands Affairs briefing paper (2008) says that a strong cultural identity is important to participation in social and economic life. "*Connection with cultural identity – who you are and where you come from – is important for all migrant groups, particularly during transition into a new society, which can take several generations*"(p. 10).

A UK report on how workers adapt their identities at work found that "*58% of people changed their personality and identity to fit in at work*" (Vodafone, 2006, p. 2). Perhaps Pacific people feel they have to leave their Pacific identity at the door when they enter the workplace.

Some key points emerged from the Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs (2003) study on strategic directions for Pacific youth in New Zealand:

– They do not have clear economic aspirations or pathways to achieving economic goals;
– Family and culture are a key source of strength and identity, and church is also a strong influence;
– They want to know more about their culture;
– They need exposure to positive Pacific role-models;
– They need support to balance Pacific values and life in New Zealand;
– They need to be acknowledged as strong and potential leaders, given more opportunities to take on leadership positions, and actively supported to develop leadership potential;
– They need more exposure to, and interaction with, Pacific leaders in innovative and emerging industries;
– They may lack inspiration, confidence, self esteem and motivation;
– They also lack support, encouragement and culturally-relevant information/ knowledge;
– They need clear career pathways.

Other points to consider when working with or researching Pacific people:

– Pacific people are diverse. Groups have varied beliefs and values, and notions and structures of status, authority, tradition, obligations and power vary. The majority of Pacific people living in New Zealand are Samoan (131,103), followed by Cook Islands Māori (58,011), Tongan (50,478) and Niuean (22,476).[14]
– Appreciation of cultural difference is important for running a successful consultation process. Pacific peoples themselves need to participate in finding solutions.
– Use more than one consultation method – for example, a fono may work well for older people, but appeal less to younger people.
– Ensure the message is clear by checking in advance with people from the target group.

Some relevant guidelines on Māori cultural needs at work might be extrapolated to Pacific peoples (State Services Commission, 1993):

– Cultural differences should be recognised and respected by management and staff.
– Information on cultural issues should be provided to all staff at induction.
– Retain and develop the potential of all staff – offer development and training opportunities, study leave, scholarships, mentoring, secondments, exchanges and rotational programmes.
– Recognise skills brought from cultural/community roles and activities, such as leadership.

14   Briefing to the incoming Minister
     of Pacific Island Affairs, Nov. 2008.

3.5 Summary

While the statistics on young Pacific people and employment show improvements over time, the status of young Pacific people remains negative compared with young New Zealanders overall. This is of concern as, while the youth labour force is declining overall, the proportion of young workers who identify as Pacific is increasing.

However, by drawing on research on employee engagement, young people and work, and Pacific employment, this review suggests avenues for future research. For example, it may be useful to explore how workplaces could increase the engagement of young Pacific staff by tapping into their desire for a sense of belonging. There are many other overlaps/similarities between issues identified for Pacific workers and drivers of engagement.

It is important to recognise the diversity within Pacific cultures. However, research shows that Pacific youth overall see prosperity in terms of families and relationships rather than material wellbeing. They tend not to have clear economic or career goals. Mentoring and development of leadership potential are recommended to help improve their employment and economic situation.

The majority of young Pacific people were born in New Zealand and may be negotiating conflicts between their cultural and family traditions and those of Pākehā New Zealand. These conflicts may manifest themselves in the workplace.

Young people in general start out with relatively high levels of engagement in their paid work, but this soon declines. They often feel alienated, feel they do not fit into workplaces, are disengaged from traditional systems and structures, and often feel their ideas are undervalued or ignored. They need to feel that what they are doing is meaningful, and be able to see how it connects to the bigger picture of the organisation and wider society.

Key influences on engagement for workers in general and young workers in particular include management and supervisory styles, opportunities for advancement, training and development, being aware of and accommodating the wider life needs of workers, and consistency between the job description and induction process and the reality of the job. The extent to which these apply in a particular workplace could be investigated as a means to developing a strategy to improve the engagement of young workers.

Attempts to engage younger workers, particularly young Pacific workers, need to take into account the characteristics of these workers. The number of young people working full-time is declining. Those who are working full-time may be less skilled and have fewer career opportunities. Many young people feel that their education is not relevant to their jobs, and many young women and migrants perceive discrimination and a lack of equal opportunity in the workplace.

The Pacific workforce is younger than the total workforce. Māori and Pacific workers of all ages have low education and skills, and high levels of unemployment and early parenthood. Young people and Pacific people are heavily affected by economic downturns due to a combination of low skills, qualifications and experience, and high levels of reliance on manufacturing work.

To conclude, this review provided a context for undertaking research into how to engage young people, particularly young Pacific people, in the workforce, and suggested some avenues this research could take.

4. *Research Findings and Discussion*

This chapter outlines the key themes and findings from the research, beginning with a discussion of the importance of Pacific cultural values for young Pacific employees and the implications for workplaces. This is followed by a discussion on employee aspirations, expectations, enablers and barriers. The chapter concludes with the managers' perspectives.

4.1 Pacific cultural values and the workplace

The importance of the collective and family relations for Pacific families in New Zealand is well established (Macpherson, Spoonley & Anae, 2001). The family orientation of Pacific cultures influences many of the behaviours of young Pacific people.

The findings of this study also demonstrate the importance of family in relation to employee engagement. All the participants acknowledged that Pacific cultures are family-oriented and, in general, value collective wellbeing more than individual gain.

4.1.1 Importance of family

Parents are often the key influencer in their children's decision making on educational and career pathways. The participants' stories show that their parents value education highly and have a strong desire for their children to gain high qualifications. For one employee, this resulted in him leaving a supervisory role in a food franchise to further his education:

I also worked for a [food franchise] where I became a supervisor ... but I left because of my parents' expectations that their kids would do well at school. (Simi, male, travel, tourism, and transport).

After leaving his supervisory role to complete his secondary schooling, Simi secured employment with his current employer in an industry he is passionate about. Similarly, Losa's parents insist she leaves her current job to seek employment in the field in which she gained her Bachelor's degree. However, Losa enjoys her current job and is committed to staying with the organisation:

So definitely my parents are always on my back about [my degree] but they're starting to come around and they do understand that I've got my own obligations now. I've grown up to make my own decisions, cause sometimes they think I'm still a little girl and they make decisions for me and I'm like no. (Losa, female, travel and tourism industry)

Some participants acknowledged their parents' desire for them to gain a tertiary qualification but felt that it would be best to enter the workforce instead as the quote below illustrates:

My parents wanted me to go to university but I didn't want to go because I didn't want to waste my parents' money so I said I'll try and find work. (Luka, male, retail)

The following quote illustrates the support one young man received from his parents when it came to pursuing a career.

Mum and Dad were always pushing me to get me interested in jobs other than the types of work they work in like labouring jobs… they were a strong motivation for me to get a good job. (Feleti, male, finance)

Parents and family were also a key motivator, influencer and support once the young people had secured employment.

It's the family that is what keeps us going and focus on what makes us keep going… for me family is my first priority. I'm just glad my parents and husband is supporting. (Leilani, female, health)

My parents, they were always there for the children … to succeed you have to work hard. (Vini, male, media)

Definitely I talk to my parents about what's happening at work you know like my shifts and stuff like that. (Losa, female, travel, tourism, and transport)

These findings support previous research that identified healthy families and relationships as more important than material acquisition for Pacific youth in New Zealand (Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs, 2003). When parents understand the work commitments of their children, they can be supportive. The employees interviewed said that if parents and family understood their work commitments, obligations, expectations and issues, they could provide them with advice and support them better.

4.1.2 Work-life balance

Balancing time for work, family and self was a challenge identified by several participants, particularly in the health and finance industries.

Trying to juggle responsibilities around work, family, studies and church sometimes is a barrier. (Hana, female, health)

It's really hard to work full-time and try to study to upskill when you have a young family. (Ana, female, finance)

Pacific employees often have multiple, important roles outside work. Negotiating the demands of their work and personal life presents a challenge that at times can have a significant negative impact on their work. Losa spoke at length about her difficulties in negotiating her personal and professional life. The following extract explains her dilemma:

Cause I also play for my church. I'm actually a pianist as well. So Saturdays and Sundays it's like oh I've got choir practice and stuff like that so if I had another person at my church that can help me out that can also play piano it would really reduce the workload on me, but I love what I do and I do love coming to work and I do love doing the things outside of work… I make sure that I don't work during Sundays so I either do shift swaps and that's the thing I have to do way in advance before Sundays. Because they, my shift, knows Sundays I have to go to church so on the earliest, I either finish early before 12 or if we're working a late, an afternoon shift I start no later than 2 so I start after 2, cause that's what time church is. It is hard cause I try and do, I try and explain to my manager and they do say to come to them if we have any concerns, anything, but when I do explain I've got commitments like this I know it's not their responsibility as well. (Losa, female, travel, tourism, and transport)

Families are critical to keeping Pacific youth engaged and motivated at work. They also help young Pacific people negotiate the two worlds in which they live, and find a balance between their professional and personal lives. Being able to share their work experience with their parents is helpful to some young Pacific people.

Plus for my parents to know what I do, it makes our relationship better. They have a better idea of what I do and what happens every day. (Junior, male, media)

I share everything with my parents, always tell the truth to your parents … it doesn't matter if you do bad things, parents will always be there to help you because they want you to do well. (Luka, male, retail)

In the following extract Pita explains trying to manage his personal and professional life. He talks about how he aims to leave his work at work, while recognising that his job is unique and fulfilling and requires most of his time and attention. Consequently, he does not have much time for social activities and family. He finds it useful to discuss his work with his family in an effort to help them understand his work obligations.

At the moment in terms of organisation there wasn't much taken away from here … from my personal point of view you have to spend a lot of time to also understand that sometime the pressure can be a lot … you have to re-adjust the work because the demand is quite huge so it is useful to discuss that with your family … am very happy to work here. (Pita, male, health)

Maintaining a healthy balance between their professional and personal lives was a major challenge for the young Pacific people interviewed, particularly for those employed in the health and finance industries. Although many of the young people wish to advance their careers, they find this difficult if they have young families.

4.1.3 Sense of belonging in the workplace

A sense of belonging has been identified as an enabler for employee engagement (Drizin & Hundley, 2008; JRA, 2007), but given the value that Pacific cultures place on relationships and their orientation towards collective wellbeing, a sense of belonging at work is critical to young Pacific people's engagement. For example, the employees interviewed in this study described the benefits of understanding how their positions fit within the wider context of the organisation.

Manager holds team meetings ... there are also a "whole of [organisation] thing" ... the more your branch grows the better, you feel good, and the more you want to do it. If the feedback is good about your branch, it makes you and the whole staff feel good. (Feleti, finance, male)

Feleti's comment illustrates how understanding different roles as part of the whole organisation helped him to achieve a sense of belonging not only within his branch but in the organisation as a whole. The employees interviewed often spoke of positive and supportive relationships with colleagues as critical to enjoying their work.

So far I love it here. I love interacting with people. I love working with my team here, it's not just islanders and Chinese, Indians. (Lita, female, finance)

Yeah I do enjoy coming to work… I have a great team here and my mum works here too. You know so everyone is supportive, if I need to finish work early because I have to pick up my daughter then I know that someone on my team can cover for me and I'd do the same for them too if they needed me. (Sina, female, travel, tourism and transport)

Sina and Lita's quotes indicate that having a supportive team is important for many young Pacific workers, particularly if they can rely on fellow team members in times of need. This is also supported by Losa's earlier quote about how her team members understand her church obligations and try to accommodate her needs.

The employees also articulated a sense of belonging in terms of having a positive relationship with their manager and being valued by their manager and the organisation.

For myself, it is important how the bosses feel about me. The more you feel valued the more you want to come to work. You want to do what you have to do ... The manager is enthusiastic, tells us off and she is straightforward ... if you do something wrong she will tell you but she is very supportive. (Feleti, male, finance)

We have briefings every day and we get recognition for what we did… our shift managers and management are quite good and they realise that we perform better when there is a good relationship. (Tane, male, travel, tourism and transport)

As Tane notes, it is important that managers verbalise recognition of good work to foster caring working relationships.

The employees interviewed also felt valued when they were given the opportunity to voice their opinions.

I must say I do feel very valued. Supervisors say 'oh so what do you think about that?' Putting my five cents in. Production meetings where we get to discuss the week that was … it does make me feel good, especially when the boss gives you feedback. (Junior, male, media)

For employees, being valued by their managers is an important enabler for participation, progression and overall engagement. This can be shown through simple acts such as praising good work or asking employees' opinions. Unsurprisingly, young Pacific workers feel engaged with organisations that have a familial attitude through supportive team members and managers who demonstrate that they value their staff. From an organisational view, a sense of belonging can be created through an organisational culture that promotes teamwork, openness and friendship.

4.2 Employee perspectives

This section outlines other key themes from the interviews with young Pacific employees, including career pathways, employee aspirations, employee expectations, and enablers and barriers to engagement.

4.2.1 Career pathways

The pathway into employment for the health and media employees was planned and structured, largely because the majority of employment opportunities in these two industries require tertiary qualifications. The health and media participants shared a strong personal desire for careers in their industries during their secondary schooling.

I didn't actually realise that you had to study to be in [this industry]. And so I spoke to my careers counsellor and teachers and they said, well, you know there's a certain degree, you know if you want to go into that the qualification is going to help. That's the key to the door into the industry and so that's when I knew oh damn it I have to go and study … but once I got that [industry] bug I've never looked back. (Junior, male, media)

I knew exactly what I had to do at university so as long as you get good marks you could go through and I chose [organisation] because it's closer to home and I love my home, the community that I come from … I want to make a difference to my community. (Pita, male, health)

For the participants in the media and health industries, their passion for their industries strongly correlates with their workplace engagement as they had secured their jobs through hard work and motivation. For this reason, and unsurprisingly, their experiences differed to the rest of the participants in terms of their workplace engagement.

Most participants in the other four industries used conventional entry pathways into their employment, such as responding to advertisements and through recruitment agencies. Most of those working in the finance industry responded to advertisements, and, although some did not get the job that they applied for, they managed to secure another position within the same organisation.

I interviewed and applied for a permanent job but I didn't get it … but the lady who interviewed me asked whether I would do a part-time job and I said yes. But I'm working full-time now. (Feleti, male, finance)

Company websites and recruitment agencies were also useful for many of the interviewees when they were seeking employment.

I had a month to look for a job and staying at home makes you crazy. Straight away I went on the website and applied and I went in for the interview and they gave me a call a week later and gave me a job. (Lita, female, finance)

I just applied online, just on the website. I didn't know anybody that worked for the company so I actually did my own research to see if they had any vacancies and I just applied online ... I just applied for a whole range[of jobs]. (Ali, travel and tourism industry)

Other participants, particularly those working in the manufacturing and retail industries, were unemployed for longer and registered with recruitment agencies to gain temporary employment while seeking permanent jobs.

I got through to this job through a [recruitment agency] where I was temping for about three months and after that I got asked to go through some tests. They then interviewed me after the test and one of the bosses told me I was successful. (Mataio, male, manufacturing)

Took me a long time to get a job after tertiary training, probably a year … I was told that there was a job available here so I came through to [organisation] as a temp through [recruitment agency]. (Malia, female, retail)

The remainder of the participants secured employment via family and friends.

4.2.2 Employee aspirations

A few of the interviewees had career aspirations beyond the scope of their current industry, largely because they wished to move overseas. However, the majority wanted promotions into roles the next level up from their current position.

I still see myself in two to three years working here, but not in the role now, but something higher. Maybe a consultant. (Lita, female, finance)

There are several positions that I want to get … to becoming a line maintenance manager, It's like a technician role. In that role my background including things I learnt at school would become very useful. (Tane, male, travel, tourism, and transport)

Employees were aware of potential roles for future progression, an important factor in staff retention. Like Tane, Losa, who works in the same organisation, aspired to progress in her current organisation but in an entirely different department that would utilise her tertiary training.

Losa: Definitely I would like to establish a career as a lawyer within this company cause the company is very established and I really do, I really do admire the way that the company has grown and ... hopefully starting from the bottom level I can get a better understanding of operations and then hopefully make my way up to becoming a lawyer for the company eventually.

Interviewer: Have you spoken to anyone about becoming a lawyer for [organisation]?

Losa: Not yet. Cause I have spoken to anyone who has been working as a lawyer for the company so I'm going to eventually find out through HR or other avenues or even ask my manger how to go about that. But I haven't had the chance to do it at the moment.

The aspiration to become supervisors and managers often stems from employees encountering Pacific supervisors and managers. They are not necessarily the employees' direct managers, but knowing that Pacific peoples are in management roles inspired and motivated the employees interviewed.

Definitely so then you know that's your aspiration for moving into those sort of [supervisory] roles knowing that she or he is a P.I. so I'm a P.I. too so I actually can do that job if I put my mind to it and stuff. (Losa, female, travel and tourism industry)

I would aspire to achieve what the current manager has achieved and I think she would be very happy for me … I would like to beat her in what I can achieve and I think she would really like that. (Hana, female, health)

Hana had previously spoken of her current manager and how she inspires and motivates her because she is a Pacific Island woman and also because she is supportive and trustworthy. Lita also spoke of aspiring to becoming a top consultant in her branch. A motivating factor for her is the fact that the current top consultant is Samoan.

She's a top consultant here and so I look up to her of course because I want her job. That motivates me to get where she is, together we can have success. We talk all the time and she tells me to work hard, it's not easy. (Lita, female, finance)

These quotes demonstrate that most of the employees interviewed wanted to continue working in the same organisation and aspired to be promoted in the near future.

4.2.3 Employee expectations

Most of the employees interviewed felt that they had a clear understanding of their employers' expectations of them and understood how these expectations were linked to various service standards and quality and safety requirements. Some felt that the expectations of the role and job competencies were clearly outlined at the beginning of their employment and that this was helpful as it gave them a clear direction.

My [position] guidelines are quite specific and you know loud and clear what is expected … I know I am performing my role. (Tevita, male, retail)

I am meeting the employer's expectations … they will tell you what you're doing wrong but will also be quite straight when you need to change the way you are doing things. (Leilani, female, health)

I understand my boss's expectations and I think he made that clear in the first meeting, this is what this is about and just watching the show you get a fair idea of how, but like I said … the senior mentors they tell you what's wrong and that needs fixing and it's always quite scary, you know, when you're the youngest of the lot and you don't feel like is it alright … (Junior, male, media)

As illustrated in Junior's quote, critiquing an individual's work can enable growth and ensure employee and employer expectations are aligned, but there is a risk that a young person will feel intimidated and inadequate, particularly if he or she is in the minority in the workplace.

A key difference between the industries involved in this research is the level of training and skill required. Those working in health and media had specialised skills and did not enjoy as much on-the-job training as the employees interviewed from the other industries.

Losa commented on the quality of the trainers.

My expectations were towards like how the job was, how we do the job, and definitely the training aspect of it as long as we get trained to do the position … and it depends who you get on the training because you know you can get somebody that, I get really bored easily with people that don't have an interest in what they're teaching or what they're training the staff with, so I find that a real turn-off in me like I can't concentrate. (Losa, female, travel and tourism industry)

Clearly defined job competencies and roles, and on-the-job training were two key and common themes for most of the participants. These results support findings of US surveys that one main reason why employees leave within the first 12 months of employment is a poor fit between the actual duties and responsibilities compared to the job description (Hundley et al, 2007).

4.2.4 Enablers for engagement

The following section outlines the four key enablers to workplace engagement as identified by the employees interviewed. These are the role of managers, effective communication, opportunities for career development, and the need for role-models and mentors.

Relationships with managers

The employees interviewed noted that relationships with their managers were critical. Most spoke highly of their supervisors and credited them for keeping them in the organisation. Some noted that their supervisors had been very supportive and patient, had nurtured the young staff and provided them with guidance and knowledge to enable them to work efficiently. Malia, for example, spoke of how in the short time she had worked for her organisation, she had managed to rapidly progress to a permanent and enjoyable role.

My supervisor I had back then ... he knew that I would find a permanent so he just taught me everything I had to know. He was a really good teacher. He was Niuean. (Malia, female, retail)

Management knows people's aspirations ... the supervisor usually knows it and my supervisor knows. [Supervisor] is quite good, she gets involved. (Mika, male, manufacturing)

Mika is referring to his European manager who takes a hands-on approach with her team and with whom he shared his aspirations. Consequently, she provided him with a number of options to progress into his area of interest within the organisation.

At the time of the interviews, the employees from the travel, tourism, and transport organisation had just experienced a change in managers. Their previous manager had been of Pacific descent, unlike their new manager.

My former manager supported me to do well, I am happy to come to work ... Managers should come down to the level of workers. (Simi, male, travel, tourism and transport)

We've changed over managers now. My previous manager totally understood because he was also Pacific Island so he knew himself what it's like to be Pacific Islander ... I'm not saying that she, my manager doesn't really understand, but I kind of know where she stands, cause she's the manager and she's focusing on the whole aspect of representing the company ... so I try to keep an open mind about her obligations towards the company and our team. (Losa, female, travel, tourism, and transport)

Reflecting international literature, the employees in this study confirmed that relationships with managers are vital to their engagement (Gebauer & Lowman, 2009; MacLeod & Clarke, 2009). Managers can help foster a positive relationship by giving time to their employees, sharing their knowledge, and helping employees meet their aspirations. As previously mentioned, Pacific people value relationships and will respond well to those to whom they feel closely affiliated.

Effective communication

According to the employees interviewed, managers need to be approachable so that employees feel at ease when trying to communicate with them. They also understand that unless they talk to their managers, their managers will not be able to help them.

With management they really understand even though they're Palagi. Whatever it is, if you sit down and explain your situation with them … I think they are really understanding. You just need to speak with them. (Lita, female, finance)

I have a supervisor in another department, she's Māori … and I can talk to them about anything … and I have a close relationship with them. Supervisors are supportive [of all staff]. (Malia, female, retail)

While Malia said that supervisors were supportive of all staff, she singled out a particular supervisor from another department whom she finds more approachable and easy to talk with than her direct manager.

The employees also said that sometimes they would like to speak with their manager but he or she seems to be too busy.

I would like to have a one-to-one with the manager but sometimes the manager would be too busy. (Simi, male, travel, tourism and transport)

From the employees' perspective, effective communication includes receiving regular feedback on work performance. Simi said that receiving only negative feedback was unhelpful and other participants spoke of the importance of positive feedback and recognition of good work.

Everyone from our line meets with the supervisor and management and it helps us to know what is working … they let us know how we're progressing and stuff. (Mataio, male, manufacturing)

And others say, great work on the project last night, but I would change this or do things like this, and I would say, oh I didn't think about that. So things like that, it helps you build as a worker and as a colleague here. So I really appreciate that. (Junior, male, media)

Effective communication is an important enabler for the participation, progression and engagement of Pacific youth in the workforce. As the quotes above highlight, effective communication needs to be reciprocated between managers and employees to improve and maintain positive and productive work relationships. The findings from this study support current literature that identifies effective communication and providing regular feedback on performance as enablers to engagement in the workplace (Drizin & Hundley, 2008; CIPD, 2006).

Opportunities for career development

All employees spoke of their desire and need for training. The organisations had different ways of providing training but many of the young people were given learning opportunities after receiving a promotion or moving into another part of their organisation.

A couple of the organisations provided their workers with the opportunity to study while they worked, giving them flexible shifts that enabled them to attend lectures. This was either informal or more formal and included regular upskilling or training sessions provided by the organisation. For example, the retail organisation provides an opportunity for staff to gain qualifications from a local tertiary provider. All opportunities for learning and further education were looked upon favourably by participants, who saw it as a significant reason to remain in their organisation.

I recently had up-skilling training and I was fortunate to be a part of that training which is in a way a form of recognition of your work, which is important. What they're doing right now is good providing upskilling opportunities … that is very important for me. (Tane, male, travel, tourism, and transport)

I have, and the company does have, a programme called OPI, Opportunities for improvement. So if you want to improve something in your department you do the paperwork and you can just write it down instead of going to a face-to-face with them. (Malia, female, retail)

We have training all the time, we have different courses that we get sent to at our head office and depending on what it is that we need training in, then we get that training so that we know the right information that we can give to our people. (Vai, female, finance)

Many of the young people did not mind which department the organisation needed them to work in as long as they were given the necessary training and skills to perform their duties. For example, Eme gained skills and experience in different departments of her organisation.

Further training available in basically everything cause I had worked in three departments. (Eme, female, retail)

Training opportunities were considered invaluable by the young people interviewed and a strong motivator to remain in the workplace. Thus the interviews support the view that employers should view training as an investment rather than a cost (Drizin & Hundlye, 2008; CIPD, 2006).

Role-models and mentors

A common and significant theme was the need for good mentors and role-models. Vini said that he benefited greatly from his mentor's experience in the industry and organisation as he was able to help Vini with his technical skills and give him advice on future directions. Vini firmly believes that mentoring is the key to success in any workplace.

Mentoring is huge and we don't do it enough here. That's what's important about mentors is that they have a vested interested in you and they want you to succeed. So if you're looking at getting more Pacific people into successful places I would say a mentor is number one … I didn't know how to be a journalist, I got taught by the best, by my mentor. (Vini, male, media)

Other employees identified senior Pacific staff who were not their direct managers or supervisors as great mentors and role-models who inspired and motivated them to be more productive in their work and to make the most of their opportunities and potential.

I'm only 22. [Name] and other senior mentors are really supportive. They help with my [work] and I want to get to a stage where I feel good. You know, like, I'm getting heaps of [work] out there but they're really supportive of what I'm doing. (Junior, male, media)

I think our young P.I. people need a kick in the backside ... they need someone to push them ... I had no role-models and didn't even know who may have been there ... now I know people and things about role-modelling. I think it would be good for our young people. They are very clever but having someone there to support and advise would be really useful. (Hana, female, health)

Hana's insight into the need for mentors and role-models to advise and support Pacific youth was shared by the managers interviewed.

The young people interviewed for this study confirmed the importance of mentoring and role-models for young Pacific people, resonating with the findings reported in research with Pacific public servants who recognised the importance of developing a formal mentoring programme as a driver for engagement (Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs, 2005a).

4.2.5 Barriers to engagement

This section outlines barriers to engagement which include lack of confidence and lack of opportunities for career progression.

Lack of confidence and motivation

Most employees admitted that lack of confidence could be a barrier to their progression within their organisation.

My mentor even told me, when there was a supervisor role for my department when I first started, he told me to apply but I had the feeling I was embarrassed to apply for it. I would have no qualifications for the job and that was the only reason why I didn't apply for it. I didn't apply for it but then, when it came to the case that they announced who got it, he said to me did you apply for it and I go, no I didn't. He was really upset with me that day. (Malia, female, retail)

You know and sometimes I always have self-doubt but you've just got to believe. (Vini, male, media)

The interviewees were reluctant to elaborate on why exactly they lacked confidence. However, it could be a reflection of their youthfulness and inexperience.

The interviewees also noted that one of the biggest barriers was their lack of motivation and determination, but few could articulate why they lacked determination or motivation to progress at work.

Myself, it's myself that will probably stop myself from getting where I need to get. (Feleti, male, finance)

Myself, I'll say if you want to get there you have to have more determination for yourself. (Hana, female, health)

Lack of opportunities

Most of the employees commented that lack of opportunities was a barrier to their engagement with their employer. The two main reasons were the unavailability of any positions they wanted and because they did not have the necessary qualifications for their desired position. Although some had high aspirations to find positions higher up in the organisational hierarchy, they said there were very few of these positions available. This was a common theme for the young people employed in the media and travel, tourism, and transport industries.

They have to wait for an opening in that area to actually upskill so it kind of does drain the motivation cause you think man I've been working here for so long, I'm still in the same position ... You just have to wait for someone to leave or not come back to take those positions. (Sina, female, travel and tourism industry)

One barrier is that there's not many opportunities. You gotta be starving for a job. (Junior, media, youth)

Junior's comment reflects the competitive nature of the media industry. Vini echoed that in the media industry you need to "be competitive to be successful". Monty, the media manager interviewed, admitted that within his industry there were very few opportunities and that competition for roles and positions was always fierce.

It's very hard to have a career in [media] because everything is funded for a certain amount of time so the life and professionalism that we could offer anybody is limited. Industry is very exploitative so if you don't mind working for nothing then there's lots of opportunity there … Media is very competitive and people look to us and we go to our communities for their expertise. (Monty, manager, media)

Some of the challenges of the media industry are not common to the other industries involved in this study. However, other interviewees noted that few opportunities were available further up the organisational ladder. In many cases it becomes a waiting game. For some of the participants, another block was a lack of the necessary tertiary qualifications for senior roles.

I applied for a senior consultant job in another branch but I didn't get it. I mean I have experience but I don't have qualifications. Personally with me I don't have qualifications, and so I applied for a position in another branch but I didn't have the qualifications so if I had the degree I probably would have got it … so you know having the qualifications gives you some security and something to fall back on. (Ana, female, finance)

Ana did note that if she remains with the organisation longer, her experience may counter her lack of tertiary qualifications.

The findings from the study reveal that young Pacific employees do aspire to become senior managers but they are not confident that such roles are available with their current employer and they may look elsewhere for senior roles.

4.3 Managers' perspectives

This section outlines the key themes from the interviews with managers, including managers' expectations of their workers, opportunities for career development, recognising and rewarding potential, and the managers' experience of managing Pacific workers.

4.3.1 Expectations

All the managers said they had the same expectations of their young Pacific employees as of other employees.

I have exactly the same expectation as any other employee. They all have to go through the same goals and ultimately that's what I expect. (Haley, female, health)

This sentiment was echoed by Ronnie, a retail manager, who commented several times that he had the same expectations of all his workers.

Our expectations are reliability, for people to be eager and keen … We have the same expectations for any colour, creed or whoever they are. (Ronnie, male, retail)

The managers all said they hoped that their Pacific employees would do well and become managers themselves.

4.3.2 Opportunities for training and career development

The managers interviewed acknowledge that they have a role in up-skilling their workers. However, Monty, a manager from the media organisation, says that given the size of the industry, his organisation has limited capacity to provide further training.

The managers from the other industries spoke about various training programmes and opportunities they provide, with the rider that it is up to each employee to make the most of these opportunities.

Our workers are provided training for the types of work they do … [we] do give opportunities for workers to do other training courses … but some Pacific Island workers just take things for granted, they don't look for opportunities and need motivation to take further training. (Alvin, male, manager, travel, tourism, and transport)

Phoebe, a finance manager, also spoke of the need for staff to have a positive attitude.

I hire on attitude. I cannot teach someone attitude, but I can teach them skills. If you got the right attitude, that attitude can take you anywhere, but if you have a bad attitude, it's going to be harder to change that attitude. (Phoebe, female, manager, finance).

The managers said they are happy to train people who are eager to learn and have a positive attitude. Ronnie's organisation provides training for all employees, however, other opportunities are given to those who demonstrate they are competent and are able to handle extra demands.

We skill them in each of the different skills and training dependent on the area or department they're in, so they might get a certificate. You give them confidence … It's surprising … we ask can you do this, she says yes and then we asked can you do that, and she says no and so we say, ok we'll get you training in that. They benefit from their work and so do we. Colour and creed don't matter to me. If you can show that you can do the job, then we'll give you the opportunity. (Ronnie, male, retail)

The managers interviewed said they actively encourage Pacific youth to utilise and access the opportunities are available to them. For example, Haley described how her organisation recognises that some people have life experiences that would make them suitable for a particular role but lack the necessary technical skills. Her organisation is willing to provide employees with potential the technical skills to advance their career.

We can encourage people to do things they may want to pursue … we can take a 22- or 30-year old with life skills into the fold and provide the support and nurture them into the work we do … we have had the privilege of witnessing a couple of very successful Pacific people who have been allowed to be pathwayed into the sector … and they have been very successful. (Haley, female, health)

From the managers' comments, it is evident that there are opportunities for young Pacific workers to up-skill provided they wish to learn and have a positive attitude.

4.3.3 Effective communication

The managers agreed that effective communication was an enabler to engagement of young Pacific workers. Phoebe and Maia both emphasised the need to be clear with employees on their work duties.

Sometimes working with someone we explain our expectations and you'll find that once that person knows he would give 110 percent … People need an open-door policy … if I get a naughty worker I would give them a bit of advice … if they do something bad I would sit them down and ask, "why did you do that?" (Maia, female, manager, manufacturing)

If they do do a bad job you need to tell them, it's the honest truth and that's what everyone wants, honesty and integrity … When praise is due, it is paid. (Phoebe, female, finance)

4.3.4 Managing Pacific workers

From the interviews, it is clear that non-Pacific managers had not received any cultural competence training to manage Pacific workers. Many of the insights presented here are based on the managers' experience of working with young Pacific workers. Some come from Pacific managers who provide examples of their management practices with young Pacific workers.

Valuing Pacific culture

The managers interviewed acknowledged the importance of work-life issues for Pacific workers, as well as the importance of family and Pacific cultural values.

Pacific Island workers are more family-orientated. [The] majority of Pacific Island youth workers are influenced by their families. (Alvin, male, travel, tourism and finance)

I think as an organisation we need to be aware of Pacific and Māori employees … they are very family-orientated and focused and we need to recognise that. (Haley, female, health)

Thus, some of the managers said they tried to get acquainted with their workers' personal lives. The female managers in particular made it their business to get to know their staff members' families.

For Pacific Islanders, family is a really big thing, they rely on them to get them here sometimes … when they are in trouble I just let the family know and they are very happy to come here and talk things with me. The issues they have, the families are happy to support them. (Maia, female, manager, finance)

I know each of my staff individually outside of work. It's my job to know their family because they look after them outside of the job. (Phoebe, female, manager, finance)

Phoebe, being Pacific herself, also recognised the importance of understanding and knowing one's cultural identity. One way in which she incorporates her culture into the workplace is to use cultural metaphors.

I use the jandal, you know every Pacific person knows about the jandal (laughs) and that's just a small way of bringing home life into the workplace. (Phoebe, female, finance)

The use of cultural metaphors, such as the Japanese garden, American football and, perhaps now the Pacific jandal, in management practice has been advocated as a way of understanding culture and addressing cross-cultural challenges (Gannon, 2003).

The non-Pacific managers explained the differences between their culture and their workers' and recognised that it was important to have a good understanding of the place and value of family for their Pacific and Māori workers.

The whole family thing, that was strange to me when I first started, like how Māori treat funerals, like it goes for days and then you have the unveiling 12 months later. It was sort of like, what's going on, and I didn't understand it because I come from the UK, and now I understand it and I notice it now, especially the importance of family. (Ronnie, male, manager, retail)

The health and media managers often spoke of the importance of having an increased Pacific workforce given their client base. Monty spoke of one of his Tongan staff whom he admires and values because of his strong Tongan cultural identity.

And you know Junior, totally at home in both his cultures, in the Palagi world that we live in and in the Tongan world that he's part of. Language is critical … Increasingly, we have more young Pacific who are doing stories for Pacific communities and are learning to be journalists and are doing it the right way. (Monty, male, media)

Haley recognised the importance for a health organisation with a predominantly Pacific client base to increase the number of Pacific workers.

I think as an organisation we need to be aware of Pacific and Māori employees … they are very family-oriented and focused and we need to recognise that … we need Pacific people because a huge number of our clients are Pasifika and so it is important that our organisation is aware of the patients' cultural needs. (Haley, female, health)

Therefore, it seemed that the Pacific and non-Pacific managers interviewed had a good understanding of Pacific cultural values and the importance of family.

Building confidence

The managers interviewed recognised that Pacific youth tend to lack self-confidence and the ability to promote themselves in order to advance within the organisation.

The majority of Pacific Island workers are more humble and reserved … self-promotion is not an easy thing for Pacific Islanders … most Pacific peoples have strengths but some are too scared to get ahead. (Alvin, male, travel, tourism, and transport)

The attitude was bad … because you have to make them feel good about themselves and at one time I left crying so you have to put them in an environment which makes them feel safe. (Maia, female, manufacturing)

You give them confidence … It's surprising. Can you do this, can you do that, and she says no and so we say ok we'll get you training in that. They benefit from their work and so do we. (Ronnie, male, manager, retail)

From the managers' interviews, it is clear that they see themselves as having to motivate their workers by boosting their confidence. In return, the managers, particularly Ronnie in retail and Maia in manufacturing, found that their employees' productivity and attitude improved greatly. The managers identified creating a safe environment and providing good feedback as ways to help build staff confidence and self-belief.

Maia noted the importance of trust between the manager and the employee in building employees' confidence.

Motivation, we try to empower them when they come here, teach them trust and responsibility. Those are some of the key things … there has to be give and take. (Maia, female, manager, manufacturing).

The managers recognised that many of their Pacific workers lacked self-confidence. To build that confidence, the managers talked about creating a working environment that is safe and relationships with young Pacific workers that are based on trust.

Pacific mentors

Some of the managers interviewed identified a need for formal Pacific mentoring programmes to help young Pacific workers achieve their potential. This was similar to the views shared by the employees.

There is a need for a mentoring programme for Pacific Island workers because it is hard for Pacific Islanders who come under a lot of pressure of expectations from their families … I am harder on my Pacific Island staff to allow them to achieve to their potential. (Phoebe, female, finance)

There is also the need for good mentors to give support … we need to provide opportunities to motivate and sometimes, non-Pacific managers don't know how to. (Alvin, male, manager, travel, tourism, and transport)

It was evident that Pacific mentors are best placed to help Pacific youth realise their potential.

The managers interviewed seemed to value and, to a large extent, understand Pacific cultural values. The Pacific supervisors and managers were well equipped to respond to workplace cultural issues, and some of the non-Pacific managers interviewed for this study have been able to negotiate the cross-cultural divide.

4.4 Summary

This chapter has presented key themes from the interviews with employees and managers. From these two perspectives, it is clear that their views often coincide. Effective communication, opportunities for career development and the need for Pacific role-models and mentors in the workplace were identified by both employees and managers as key enablers for engagement.

Pacific employees noted that a sense of belonging in the workplace, their relationships with their managers and with other team members were important to them. These factors are consistent with Pacific cultural values with their orientation towards family and collective wellbeing.

The managers provided examples of strategies to help engage Pacific youth. These centred on involving and getting to know the families of their staff as well as building the confidence and self-belief of young Pacific workers.

5. Implications and Conclusions

This research has confirmed the findings of the literature review that a number of strategies are available for New Zealand organisations wanting to better understand and engage with their young Pacific workers. Notably, it also found that role-models are important for young Pacific employees.

5.1 The importance of Pacific and family values

Organisations need to recognise the importance of Pacific and family values. Many young Pacific workers have roles and responsibilities outside the workplace that are considered as important as work. Balancing their work and non-work commitments is critical for Pacific youth.

Employees noted that they felt engaged in the workplace when:

– They were able to rely on their team members to cover their shift when required to meet their family and church obligations;
– They felt a sense of belonging in the workplace through feeling valued by management and the organisation;
– Senior management understood the importance of their cultural values and acted accordingly by working with staff to find solutions to manage work-life balance.

The managers interviewed acknowledged the importance of Pacific cultural values and attempted to incorporate these values into their management practices. These practices include:

– Getting to know young Pacific workers' families;
– Involving family members in any work issues facing young Pacific people;
– Creating a sense of belonging through an organisational culture that promotes teamwork, openness and friendship;
– Incorporating cultural metaphors such as the 'jandal' in the workplace;
– Recognising and valuing the different competencies that Pacific workers bring to the workplace, particularly in terms of meeting the needs of Pacific clients and/or consumers.

5.2 Employee relationships with managers

Both the employees and managers interviewed recognised that fostering and building positive working relationships were important drivers to engagement. They identified effective communication and providing regular feedback as two key factors.

Effective communication involves inclusive two-way communication where employees and managers can discuss their expectations and concerns. This requires managers to be approachable and employees to feel comfortable in verbalising any concerns or issues. Managers and employees also noted that clear job descriptions, competencies and expectations are enablers for engagement.

Managers providing regular feedback on staff progress and performance was also identified as being an enabler. This includes recognising and reinforcing positive outcomes as well as providing advice on how employees can improve their performance. The managers interviewed in this study also recognised that it is their role to help motivate and build young Pacific workers' confidence.

5.3 Opportunities for further training and career development

Both employees and managers recognised that opportunities for further training and career development were important for engaging and retaining young Pacific workers. The employees appreciated any opportunity to build their skills and competencies, however, some noted that within their current organisations there were only a limited number of desirable positions available.

The managers noted that employees who have good attitudes and are motivated and eager to learn are rewarded with training opportunities. However, some managers also said that some young Pacific workers lack the motivation to make the most of training opportunities. It might therefore be beneficial for managers to undertake some motivational training to help them get the most out of their young Pacific workers. Managers could also be proactive in helping young Pacific workers develop career pathways that align with their aspirations and interests.

5.4 Pacific role-models and mentors

The employees and managers identified the need for Pacific role-models and mentors to help motivate and engage young Pacific workers. The benefits of having Pacific role-models and mentors were well described by the employees.

Organisations could formalise a network of Pacific senior managers and supervisors to mentor young Pacific workers. This research has identified that informal networking currently takes place in some organisations, however, an organisation-led initiative could reinforce an organisation's commitment to its young Pacific workforce.

5.5 Further research

From this study, it is clear that further research in this area is warranted. Possible research could include:

– A replication of the current study with more organisations, particularly in industries where young Pacific workers are over-represented;
– A literature review on Pacific cultural-competency training for organisations and managers;
– A feasibility study on developing a Pacific cultural-competency training programme for managers;
– Evaluation studies to investigate the effectiveness of different engagement interventions for young Pacific workers, including an evaluation of Pacific role-model and mentor networks;
– Investigations and explorations into Pacific families' understandings and perspectives of organisational culture and work practices in New Zealand.

5.6 Conclusion

This research provides useful initial insights into how best to engage young Pacific workers in New Zealand. The findings suggest that the enablers and barriers to workplace engagement for young Pacific workers are multi-layered, involving a complex mix of individual, family, cultural, and organisational elements. It is evident that the managers interviewed, both Pacific and non-Pacific, for the most part feel they understand their young Pacific workers and are aware of the key issues impacting on workplace engagement. The current management practices identified in this study are perceived as working well by these managers and provide a useful basis for establishing some working guidelines on how to manage young Pacific workers.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Research Design and Methods

This chapter provides an outline of the research methods used in this study and provides some demographic detail of the participants in this study.

Qualitative methodology

Qualitative research emphasises multiple meanings and interpretations of the same places, events and structures rather than imposing a dominant, correct, or even representative interpretation (Creswell, 2007). Qualitative research is also used to explore research questions in depth rather than to make broad generalisations (Rapport, 2004, p.12).

This research study undertook an inductive iterative qualitative approach. The inductive approach allows researchers to make theoretical inferences from the data generated at the general level. The general process of the approach involves collecting data from participants. The researcher analyses the data to form themes or categories. These themes or categories are developed into broad patterns or theories which can then be compared with the literature on the topic.

Semi-structured interviews

Semi-structured interviews are a flexible interviewing method that allows the researcher to explore new topics or questions during an interview. Prior to the interview, the researcher typically draws an interview framework in which questions are grouped by topics (Hay, 2000). This type of interview method is to facilitate a pseudo conversation that allows the interviewee to tell their story in their own way (Kitchin & Tate, 2000). However, researchers are able to refocus the interview if need be.

Both youth employees and their direct line managers were interviewed to gain insight into both groups' perspectives and experiences. This provided a useful comparison of the main issues and highlighted both confluence and anomalies between expectations, experiences and events.

A semi-structured interview schedule was developed which allowed for the use of open-ended questions to explore question zones of interest. The semi-structured interview under the auspices of Pacific research guidelines and protocols:

– Enables the researcher to probe for as much detail as possible within the question zones
– Can take discussion beyond surface-level explorations
– Allows participants to maximise subjective experiences and freely discuss their realities and thoughts.

Question zones

Questions centred on the areas identified as significant within the preliminary literature review, aiming to provide in-depth understandings of young Pacific employees. They included:

1. **Drivers** for workforce participation
2. **Aspirations and expectations**
3. **Current and potential role/s**
4. **Influences**
5. **Barriers** to participation, progression and engagement
6. **Enablers** to participation, progression and engagement

Questions were developed for youth employees[15] and for line managers[16], with the questions for managers focusing more on the nature of the relationship between the organisation and the employee. The question zones for managers were:

1. Employers' **understanding** of Pacific young people in the workforce
2. Employer **expectations and aspirations**
3. Employers' understanding, **awareness, and perceptions** of their Pacific workers
4. **Training and up-skilling opportunities**
5. **Level of engagement** with Pacific Workers
6. **Barriers and enablers**

Study Participants

A purposive sample of EEO Trust member organisations was sought. This included one large organisation from each of the following six industries:

1. Health
2. Finance
3. Manufacturing
4. Media
5. Retail
6. Travel, tourism, and transport

The EEO Trust approached the organisations and requested their participation in the study. Organisations were then sent information sheets and appeals through managers and/or team leaders throughout their organisation to recruit participants into the study. Each organisation was provided with:

1. A manager appeal;
2. A Pacific youth employee appeal; and
3. A poster which briefly outlined the project.

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15   See Appendix 1
16   See Appendix 2

The Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs research team followed up on recruitment and interviewing. Table 1 provides brief demographics of the employees:

Table 1: Employee Participants

Industry	Employee	Gender	Age	Ethnicity
Health	Pita	Male	25	Samoan
	Leilani	Female	23	Fijian
	Hana	Female	25	Samoan
Finance	Feleti	Male	20	Samoan
	Lita	Female	19	Samoan
	Vai	Female	27	Samoan
	Ana	Female	24	Kiribati
Manufacturing	Mareko	Male	23	Tongan
	Mataio	Male	23	Cook Islander
	Mika	Male	20	Samoan
Media	Vini	Male	27	Samoan
	Junior	Male	22	Tongan
Retail	Tevita	Male	22	Samoan
	Luka	Male	25	Samoan/Chinese
	Malia	Female	26	Samoan
	Eme	Female	20	Cook Islander
Travel, tourism, & transport	Sina	Female	23	Cook Islander
	Losa	Female	24	Samoan
	Simi	Male	21	Samoan
	Tane	Male	22	Cook Islander

A total of 20 employees from six organisations were interviewed. All employees worked full-time. They were of Samoan, Cook Island, Fijian and Kiribati ethnicity with 12 participants identifying as Samoan, representing over half of the sample. There was an even mix of men and women. The youngest employee was 19 years old at the time of the interview.

One manager from each of the organisations was interviewed. The managers were of mixed ethnicity with half of the sample having some Pacific ethnicity. Again, there was an even gender mix. The following table provides a brief description of the managers:

Table 2: Manager Participants

Industry	Manager	Gender	Ethnicity
Health	Haley	Female	NZ European
Finance	Phoebe	Female	Tongan/NZ European
Manufacturing	Maia	Female	Māori/European
Retail	Ronnie	Male	European
Media	Monty	Male	Samoan/NZ European
Travel, tourism, transport	Alvin	Male	Samoan

All the interviews were transcribed and analysed thematically. The following chapter identifies and discusses the key themes.

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