

REPORT 4

CURRENT REALITY REPORT

Understanding how the **current realities** of **Pacific communities** and **business leaders** in South Auckland will **impact** on **Pacific people's participation** in the Future of Work

An Initiative of Alo Vaka:
The Auckland Pacific Skills Shift

MARCH 2022



MATANGI FOU

A **thriving local economy** supported by
a **thriving Pacific community**



Acknowledgement

We wish to acknowledge and thank those who participated in a representative cohort that was convened to provide insights for the current reality analysis. We are grateful for their time and valuable knowledge for contributing to the development of this report.



The Cause Collective

The Cause Collective is a community organisation that aims to create the conditions for communities to thrive from this generation to the next. The organisation is focused on transforming the way in which community and public services are experienced by individuals, families and whole communities.

As a population-focused organisation, TCC has a particular interest in Pacific peoples across Aotearoa, underserved and South Auckland communities. The organisation works upstream to address the causes of complex problems and further downstream to strengthen prevention systems. This is achieved by delivering end-to-end services to communities, clinical and provider networks and to delivery partners.

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MATANGI FOU

Matangi Fou is the name of an initiative that partners Pacific communities and business leaders with The Cause Collective, to deliver a set of breakthrough initiatives to support the Future of Work. These initiatives aim to create conditions for transformation in the labour market for Pacific workers and their families. The initiatives have a focus on Pacific peoples who live in South Auckland but are designed for scale with communities facing similar challenges.

The shared goal we are working towards is that the Pacific workforce actively participates in quality employment opportunities in new and emergent industries. Transformation looks like a thriving local economy supported by a thriving Pacific community.

Note on terminology used in this report

For the purposes of Matangi Fou, the terms **Future of Work** and **jobs of the future** are used interchangeably to describe employment opportunities in new and emergent industries. The terms also refer to the reconfiguration of existing industries which will need to respond to demographic shifts, globalisation, COVID-19, climate change and technology advancement. These terms consider that some jobs and industries will cease to exist if they are unable to adapt to labour market conditions.



Understanding how the **current realities** of **Pacific communities** and **business leaders** in South Auckland will **impact** on **Pacific people's participation** in the Future of Work.

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About this Report

This report provides an overview of the current realities facing Pacific communities and business leaders in South Auckland and how this may impact on their participation in the Future of Work. The analysis was undertaken by The Cause Collective in 2021 with input from a representative cohort of Pacific communities and system stakeholders from South Auckland.

The report considers Pacific people's lack of participation in the Future of Work as a complex problem and seeks to understand the causal relationships between the undesirable experiences of Pacific communities and business leaders, and their attitudes and behaviours about the jobs of the future. This work has resulted in the identification of two primary causes of the problem and provides insight into the key features of the problem. The analysis dives beneath the surface-level challenges to understand what is causing the problem to exist and why it is persistent and difficult to change.

A Future Reality Report has also been developed and considers how the challenges expressed in this report can be overturned and pathways to jobs of the future for Pacific communities can be realised.

Methods used

A representative cohort was identified to take part in shaping the current reality analysis. The cohort included representatives from Pacific communities that were identified at a neighbourhood level. This included individuals employed, unemployed and who had experienced a disruption to employment conditions because of COVID-19. Representative business leaders from The Cause Collective's Business Community of Practice were also identified and provided input in the process. The Cause Collective's changemakers also participated in the process. There was a total of 12 participants who provided input into this process.

Participants were asked a **focusing statement** to surface a broad range of **challenges** that people considered when thinking about the Future of Work and **new and emergent industry opportunities**.

Initial engagements with the cohort focused on explaining the Future of Work and the intention behind Matangi Fou. Participants were asked a focusing statement to surface a broad range of challenges that people considered when thinking about the Future of Work and new and emergent industry opportunities.

A total of 57 data points were derived to analyse through this process. The raw data was validated using categories of legitimate reservation which is a tool used to 'sift and sort' through the data to eliminate redundant information. The dataset was then used to identify causes and effects between the different data points. This included causal loops and the interrelationships that existed between data points.

When analysing Pacific data, the critical thinking team applies the organisation's cultural frames of reference which are grounded in Pacific values and pedagogy, underpinned by the principles of Nga Vaka o Kāiāga Tapu¹.

Limitations

A current reality analysis is based on a snapshot in time and is contingent on what is happening for people during that period. This analysis was undertaken during a COVID-19 Level 3 lockdown and prior to the Omicron outbreak, so it is not clear what bearing (if any) those events have had on participant responses. Furthermore, there has been significant developments in international markets which have occurred after the analysis was completed. New Zealand has only begun to see the flow-on effects to the cost of living and the economy as this report was being published.

A further limitation on the analysis is that it only includes what people are comfortable to disclose. There may be information withheld for their own reasoning (e.g. financial hardships, job and education status, business profits and loss).

Definitions

The following distinctions are made for the terminology used about supply and demand side entities:

Supply-side entities: business, business owners, entrepreneurs, government, education and training institutions and sector leaders.

Demand-side entities: individuals, families and communities, faith-based groups, cultural groups and their leaders.



¹Nga Vaka o Kāiāga Tapu are eight Pacific ethnic-specific evidence-based frameworks developed in partnership with Pacific communities nationally and the Ministry of Social Development. These frameworks share a set of principles which guide practitioner practice to uphold the wellbeing of Pacific families and communities.

Summary of the Analysis

The problem

The problem statement is [Pacific people's lack of participation in the Future of Work](#).

The problem is complex and difficult to change because it involves cross-sector entities and requires action on both the supply and demand sides of the labour market.

The downstream effects of the problem

The problem manifests itself as a set of challenges which are faced by Pacific peoples and South Auckland businesses daily. The people who are affected by this problem describe those challenges as:

- The education system not preparing Pacific students for the Future of Work now.
- Education and training supply-side entities not customising pathways from a student's current reality, including the social and economic challenges they face, and the cultural, human and social capital they possess.
- Pacific communities and many business leaders not being aware of what the career opportunities will look like in new and emergent industries.
- The negative stereotypes that exist about Pacific peoples and whether they are productive members of the labour market which leads to unconscious bias in the employment system.
- Apathy and acceptance that Pacific peoples and other population groups may not be active contributors to the Future of Work.
- Digital inequities which see Pacific peoples not having the same level of access or participation in technology based industries.
- Business leaders focusing on 'survival mode' and not planning for the Future of Work, particularly after the impacts of COVID-19.
- Pacific communities focusing on 'survival mode' and not being interested in the Future of Work because of COVID-19, entrenched mindsets and fear of the unknown.
- Pacific peoples and business leaders not being able to connect what the Future of Work in new and emergent industries means for current roles.
- Pacific peoples thinking that the Future of Work does not include them (e.g. they don't have the skills or confidence, they have not been exposed to 'the future' or feel excluded in conversations about 'the future').
- Pacific people, business leaders and government agencies are unaware that Pacific people's lack of participation in the Future of Work is a complex problem that will impact on the country's future labour market.

The upstream causes of the problem

Many of the daily challenges experienced by Pacific workers, communities and business leaders shared similar features. These challenges represent the ‘tip of the iceberg’ and point to underlying causes holding the problem in place. A Current Reality Analysis (CRA) has identified two primary causes of these surface-level challenges:

The supply-side only does what is necessary and sufficient for this point in time.

The demand-side is not aware of what the jobs of the future will be, or how the future of work relates to their current reality.

Key findings

The key findings from this report are:

1. There is little to be gained by focusing on the downstream effects of the problem. Instead there are greater gains to be made if the focus is upstream on what causes Pacific peoples not to participate in the Future of Work in the first place.
2. Both supply and demand side entities are operating under conditions which elicit survival mode responses to their current reality, with COVID-19 identified as a major contributor to this.
3. The gap between the current reality experienced by Pacific peoples and the Future of Work is significant. This has led to Pacific communities being unable to articulate clearly what the Future of Work will look and what their contributions will be.
4. Most businesses are caught up in their day-to-day operations and for many reasons they are unable to step back and think critically about the Future of Work and how they will participate. This makes productive investment difficult and consideration of Pacific workers as a key enabler of their future business objectives unlikely.

Conclusion

In the absence of targeted interventions that address the two primary causes, it is unlikely we will see meaningful shifts in the conditions which are holding this complex problem in place. This is because the underlying mental models² held by system stakeholders, inertia existence, resource constraints and the impacts of COVID-19 are powerful forces that entrench the problem.

²Mental models refers to the patterns of behaviour, attitudes, beliefs and values systems.

Setting the Scene

Pacific peoples in South Auckland comprise 8.1 percent (381,642) of the total population in Aotearoa New Zealand with 63.9 percent residing across the Auckland region³. Pacific peoples cover eight main ethnic groups⁴, most of whom are New Zealand-born (66.4%) and maintain strong connections with their Pacific homelands, and their communities and cultures here in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Approximately 81 percent (256,923) of the South Auckland population by local board area lives in deprivation 8, 9 and 10 areas with Pacific peoples making up almost half of this cohort (48 percent)⁵. Suburbs such as Māngere, Ōtāhuhu, Ōtara, Manukau Manurewa and Clendon are uniquely diverse and are home to a high proportion of Pacific peoples who live there.

Pacific peoples will make up a **third** of the Auckland workforce by **2026**.

The median age for Pacific peoples in South Auckland is 22.1 years, compared with 23.9 years for Māori and 38 years for all New Zealanders⁶. It is because of this youthful age profile that we will see Pacific peoples make up a third of the Auckland workforce by 2026. Pacific peoples will be a significant contributor to the Future of Work.

Pacific unemployment and underemployment rates are the highest of any ethnic group in Aotearoa New Zealand. While the unemployment gap has closed somewhat, Pacific peoples remain anchored in the lowest paid and least secure employment sectors. Economic projections tell us that the Pacific population has the least favourable long-term financial outlook of all population groups⁷. As the youngest, fastest growing population group, this becomes a problem for all New Zealanders if that disparity is not addressed as a priority.

³ Statistics New Zealand (2018). Pacific peoples ethnic group. <https://www.stats.govt.nz/tools/2018-census-ethnic-group-summaries/pacific-peoples>

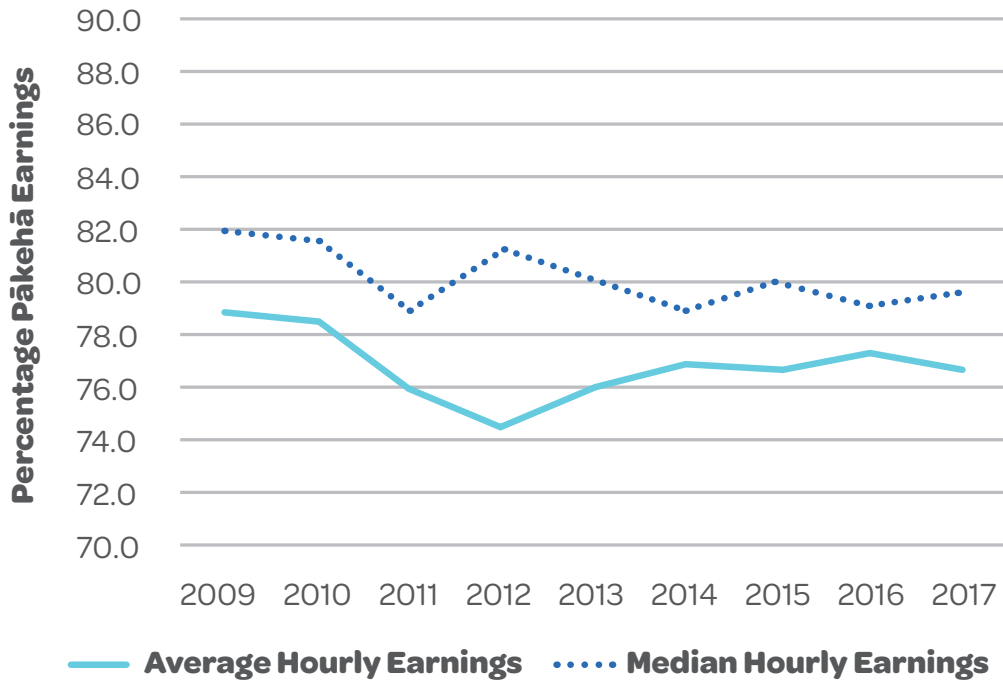
⁴ Statistics New Zealand (2018) Samoa, Cook Islands, Tonga, Fiji, Niue, Tokelau, Tuvalu, Kiribati.

⁵ The Cause Collective (2022). Statistical Analysis of Ethnic Wage Gaps in New Zealand.

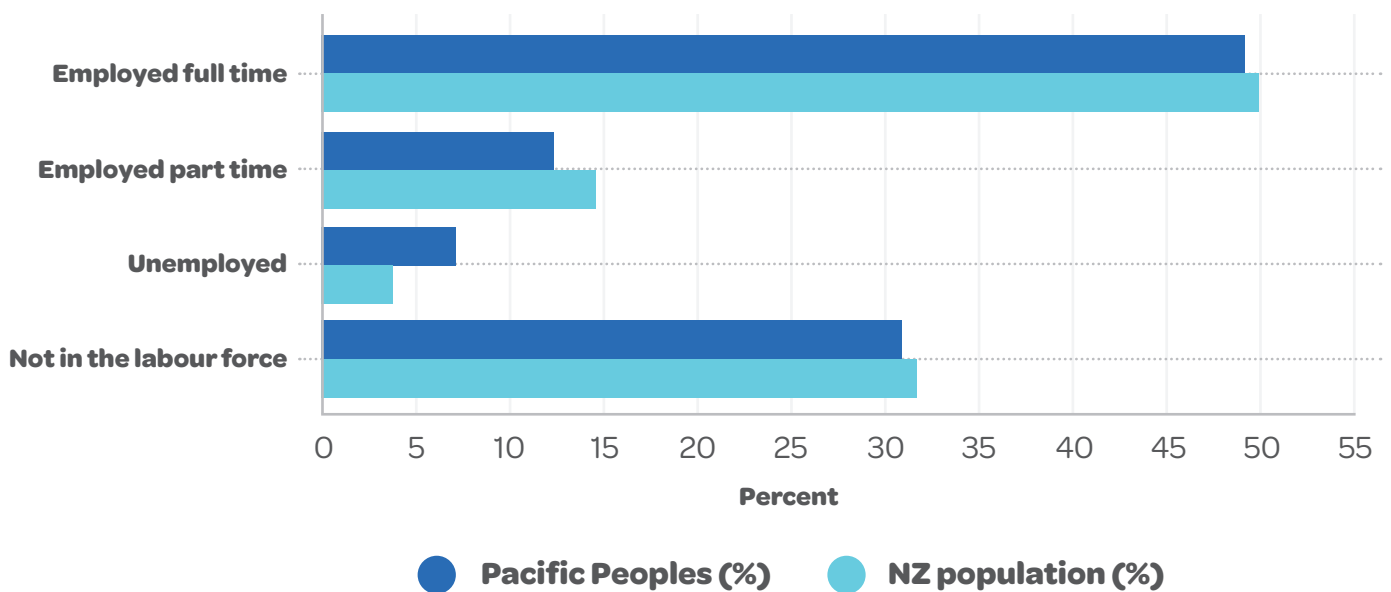
⁶ The Cause Collective (2022).

⁷ The Cause Collective (2022).

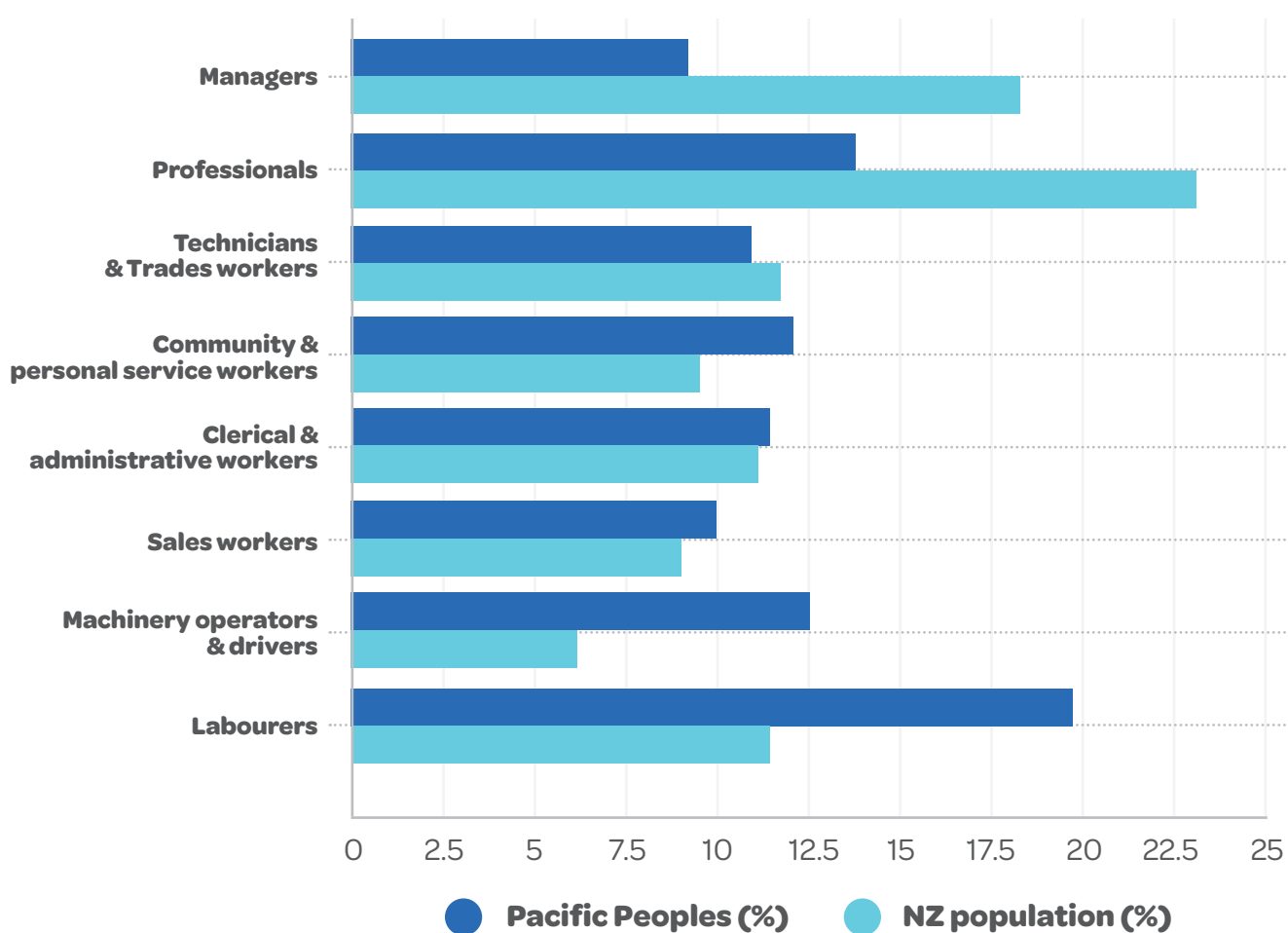
Ratio of Pacific peoples' average wage to Pākehā average wage



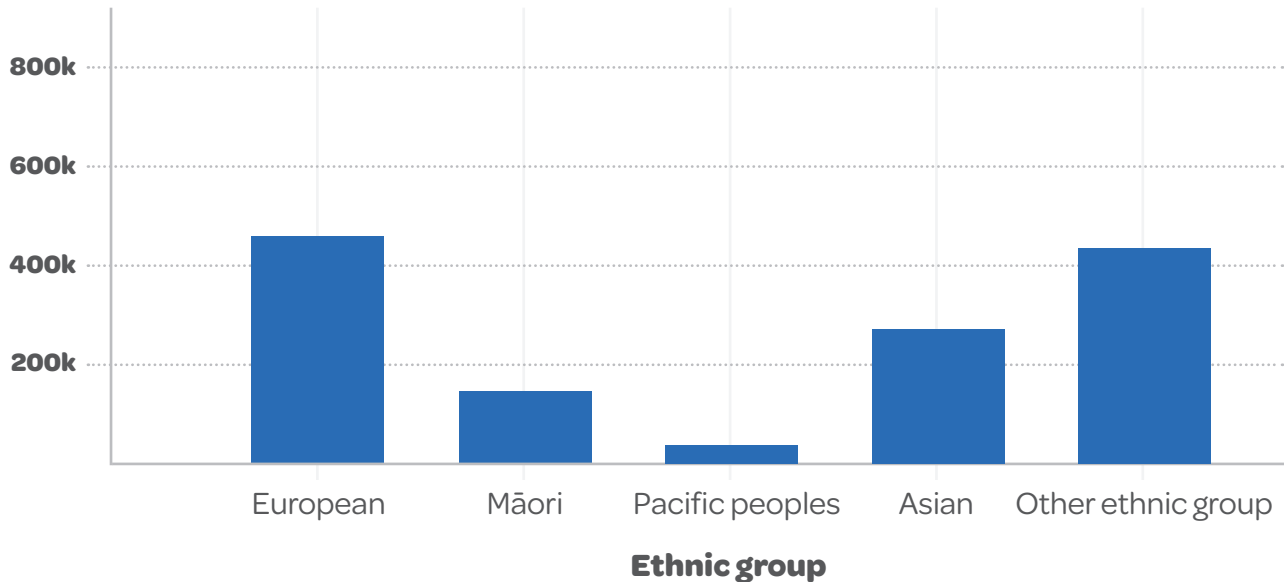
Work and labour force status, Pacific peoples compared with NZ population



Occupations, Pacific peoples compared with NZ population ethnic groups, 2018 Census



Median net worth (\$) at pre-retirement age (55–64 years) by ethnic group, year ended June 2021



Pacific migration

When considering the Future of Work, the historical context of Pacific peoples in the labour market in Aotearoa New Zealand is important. This encounter history provides understanding of why Pacific peoples are more likely to be employed in lower-skilled occupations which comprise over 30 percent of Pacific workers⁸. Many of these occupations have been identified as having a high suitability for automation or technology disruption in the near future.

The first wave of migration occurred in the 1950s and 1960s due to labour shortages in the New Zealand economy. Pacific peoples were recruited into low-skilled and low-paying jobs that could not be filled in the New Zealand workforce. During the 1970s the recession saw the Pacific workforce no longer required and blamed for the social and economic downturn facing the country. Pacific peoples were portrayed as “immigrants taking New Zealander’s jobs”⁹. This led to immigration policies that saw the introduction of the “dawn raids”, a discriminatory policy that unfairly targeted Pacific peoples as illegal immigrants or ‘overstayers’. Pacific peoples were often uplifted in the early hours of the morning and sent them back to their Pacific island nations. This history remains etched within the memory of many Pacific families, and through our Matangi Fou work, we have found it has influenced Pacific communities’ views of the Future of Work.

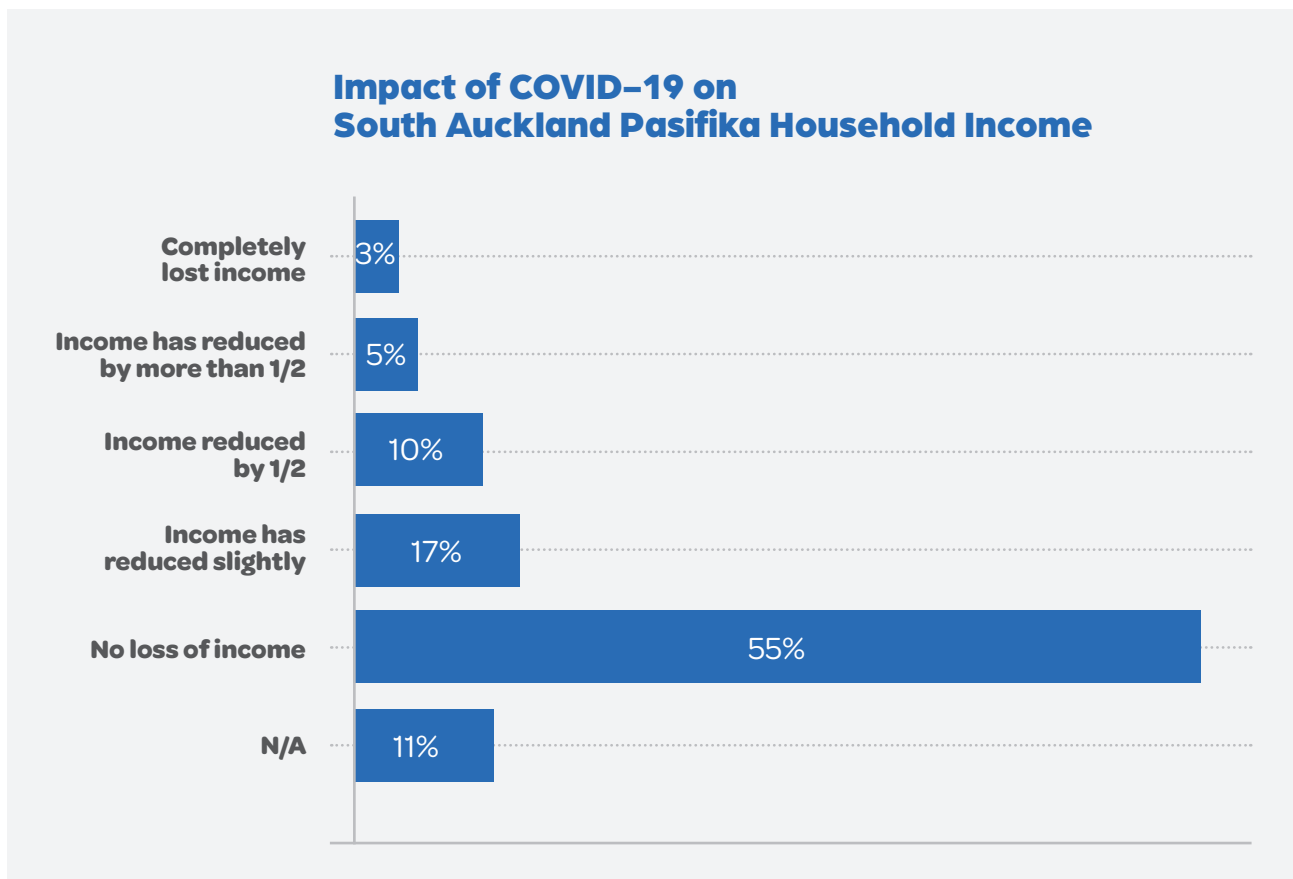
⁸ Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment; The Southern Initiative; The Auckland Co-Design Lab. (2018). Pacific people’s workforce challenge: Accelerating the advancement of Pacific peoples’ in the workforce. <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5cf74c8f2829e20001db724f/t/5d0dc61017e3300001d3aa5e/1561183812123/Pacific+Peoples+Workforce+Challenge.pdf>

⁹ New Zealand History (2022). The dawn raids: causes, impacts, and legacy. <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/culture/dawn-raids>.

Impacts of COVID-19

The impacts of COVID-19 have been far-reaching into the Pacific community in South Auckland as this community has featured prominently in every outbreak since 2020. Data released in the early stages of the pandemic from the Ministry of Health estimated that:

- More than a third of Pacific households in South Auckland have been financially impacted by COVID-19.
- Nearly one in five (18%) Pacific households in South Auckland have lost half or more of their income.
- One in four (25%) Pacific households in South Auckland have someone who has experienced reduced pay or hours, and 13% of Pacific households have someone who lost their job. Two thirds (66%) of those who lost their job are still out of paid work.
- 71% of Pacific employees work in industries at high risk from COVID-19, vs 60% in Aotearoa New Zealand's overall population¹⁰.



¹⁰ Colmar Brunton (2021). Impacts of COVID-19 on Pacific peoples living in South Auckland. https://www.health.govt.nz/system/files/documents/pages/impact_of_covid-19_on_pacific_peoples_living_in_south_auckland.pdf

Because Pacific communities already experience socio-economic disadvantage, the flow on effects of the pandemic could be far reaching into the future for Pacific families. Data shows that it took 10 years for the Pacific unemployment rate to recover to its previous level following the impact of the Global Financial Crisis (GFC)¹¹. Treasury notes that COVID-19 will likely impact population groups differently, with Māori, Pacific peoples, young people and low-income households most often to experience the detrimental effects of an economic recession. A prioritisation of Pacific peoples will be required address the economic inequities and inequalities that will result from COVID-19¹².

Data shows that it took **10 years** for the **Pacific unemployment rate** to **recover** to its previous level following the impact of the **Global Financial Crisis (GFC)**.



¹¹ Stats NZ (2020) Census data shows employment recovery post 2008 global financial crisis; Stats NZ, downloaded October 2021; <https://www.stats.govt.nz/news/census-data-shows-employment-recovery-post-2008-global-financial-crisis#:~:text=M%C4%81ori%20and%20Pacific%20employment%20recovering,9.6%20percent%20respectively%20from%202013>.

¹² The Treasury (2020) "Living Standards Framework and He Ara Waiora CoVID-19: Impacts on Wellbeing; The Treasury, Wellington, New Zealand; p23.

The Problem

This report considers Pacific people's lack of participation in the Future of Work as a complex problem.

We know it is a complex problem because there are many interconnected parts which make defining it and solving it difficult, and there is unlikely to be a 'silver bullet' solution. This is because the problem is systemic and requires a multi-sector and industry-wide response to solve it.

Complex problems are often entrenched in systems and communities and have persisted for long periods of time, sometimes over generations. The approach to problem solving therefore requires a greater insight from those who are most effected by the problem, and both an analysis and synthesis of data to understand what is really going on.



Complex problems are often **entrenched** in **systems** and **communities** and have **persisted for long periods of time, sometimes over generations.**

What Bothers People

A representative cohort of 12 participants from Pacific communities, South Auckland business leaders and The Cause Collective was established to help inform the Current Reality Analysis. Cohort participants were asked a focusing statement to surface a broad range of challenges that people considered about the Future of Work. The focusing statement was: **When I think about the Future of Work, it bothers me that...** This question elicited 57 data points from participants that were validated and analysed using critical thinking tools, and by applying cultural frames of reference to help understand responses from diverse Pacific perspectives.

The challenges articulated by cohort participants were symptoms of the downstream effects that Pacific community and business leaders in South Auckland experience. The challenges touched on a range of different sectors from education, business, immigration, welfare and employment. This indicates the problem is systemic and will have its origins further upstream.

The problem soup

Cohort data was analysed and the emergent themes from the analysis are outlined below which we refer to using the 'problem soup' analogy. This describes the fluid nature of the problem and the varying ingredients 'thrown into the mix', which make the problem. The synthesised themes are detailed in the summary at the beginning of this report.

The education system does not adequately prepare Pacific students for the Future of Work

Participants stated that Pacific young people were unable to reveal their talents and entrepreneurial abilities in the education system. It is preparing young people to work in current industries without thinking what those industries might look like in a post-COVID economy and further down the track into the next decade.

Participants also stated that education and training was not able to be customised to a young person to help them identify direct pathways to the Future of Work. Participants felt that if you did not have access to mentors, or an understanding of how to navigate through the education and training system, you were left to find your own pathway. Where inequality and inequity exist, participants felt this was setting Pacific young people up to fail.

Positive and negative stereotypes of Pacific workers from South Auckland

Several participants felt that there was a negative stereotype of Pacific peoples from South Auckland which could impact their ability to be promoted, or to actively compete with non-Pacific workers for the jobs of the future. Some Pacific participants commented on their personal experiences and unconscious bias in employment systems, having to work twice as hard to receive the same recognition as non-Pacific workers.

Other participants commented that Pacific workers were some of the most dedicated in the workforce but were perceived to be the opposite. Examples include workers having to juggle family commitments because there was only one car in the family, or a worker having to take time off work for a family funeral. Other cohort participants stated that in their experience, Pacific peoples greatly valued their jobs, especially when they may be the sole income earner. These workers were often the first to work and last to leave, and they demonstrated great loyalty to their employers.

Pacific peoples are considered acceptable 'collateral damage'

Some participants reflected on the historical events of the migration of Pacific workers to Aotearoa New Zealand. Many commented that this was a negative experience as it was followed by a time where Pacific workers were treated as 'criminals' in many parts of society and they lost their jobs. Some participants felt that there was still a prevailing view that if Pacific peoples were displaced in the labour market because of automation or technological change, then Government and industry wouldn't care because they viewed Pacific peoples as 'expendable'.

Entrenched mindsets

Many participants reflected observations of Pacific families who seemed to be caught in a cycle of poverty and were quite content to continue to remain welfare dependent. Participants commented that many of these families were multi-generation beneficiaries. Their children had not had the opportunity to be exposed to a different way of living, or to see that the Future of Work was inclusive of them too.

Several participants commented about the over representation of Pacific peoples in lower paid jobs and that their attitude towards taking a promotion was apathy. The reasons given for this were that Pacific peoples didn't have the confidence to put themselves up for promotion because they thought others were better qualified and they were grateful just to have a job.

Lack of access and application of technology

Participants spoke of Pacific exclusion in the digital economy due to a lack of access to digital devices, poor computer literacy and the costs of connectivity for Pacific families. It was stated that while Pacific peoples may have smart phones, they could not always afford data and that this was becoming a critical infrastructure resource necessity - like power, water and shelter. It was mentioned that Māori and Pacific peoples needed to be able to access this resource for participation in the future Aotearoa New Zealand.

Some participants said in their experience, businesses did not respond to existing workforce challenges by considering technology as an enabler. Rather, they would find workarounds like offshoring operations or automating people out of the system. Others stated that if employers couldn't get the workforce they needed, they would defer to options like robotics, artificial intelligence, and advanced sensor packages. What would be left they said, would be the more highly skilled jobs which Pacific and South Auckland communities were not being prepared for.

Good is acceptable

Some participants talked about the pressures to deliver in the current operating environment and how business was responding to this pressure. A common theme that emerged was that if there were problems that arose in meeting business objectives they would be tolerated if they were not an immediate impediment to delivery. Another way to describe this was if things were 'good' that was acceptable, as opposed to things being 'great' (efficient and effective). One participant provided an example of the disruption of introducing new technology versus hiring another person to do the work. In this scenario the short-term solution of hiring a person was viewed as less disruptive and was acceptable to the business. The short-term solution would not address the problem but defer it for another day.

Focus on business needs of today – as opposed time to plan for tomorrow.

Several participants spoke about small to medium business resilience, saying businesses weren't equipped to adapt and embrace the future when they were focused immediately on the challenges of today. These participants spoke about the 'here and now' and that uncertainty was a major concern for business leaders, as they did not know how to soften the negative impacts of an economic recession. Thinking about such things as the makeup of their future workforce, technological advancements and what was happening locally were not viewed as immediate priorities.

Another participant commented that one of the greatest challenges facing small to medium businesses was not having the time and bandwidth to think deeply or critically about what was coming. Many participants were unable to connect their current business operations and worker roles with what this might look like in 5 to 10 years, and what they should do now to prepare for an 'unknown future'.

With COVID-19 the future is not clear

Participants talked about the impacts of COVID-19 and stated that the full impact was yet to be felt by business and community alike. Key concerns were identified as follows:

Pacific community COVID-19 concerns:

- Unable to find new jobs following redundancies or being laid off due to cost pressures and closures.
- Not being able to adapt quickly to post-COVID changes in the workplace.
- Young people sacrificing their education and career pathways to get work to support their family's immediate needs.
- Employed young people were concerned that professional development will not be prioritised as businesses become more concerned about their survival.
- Family stresses being taken to work and impacting on worker wellbeing.
- Workplace stresses coming home and impacting on family wellbeing.
- Cost of living in Auckland and Pacific people's wages.

South Auckland business COVID-19 concerns:

- Survival and how to bounce back from the impacts of COVID-19 on cashflow, reserves, productivity and supply chains.
- Adequate and ongoing support for new and emergent industries to seed innovation during labour market disruption.
- Skill shortages and knowledge workers needed as business adapts to changes to the labour market.
- The flow on effects of what happens internationally – how do we learn to live with COVID-19 long-term beyond a crisis response?
- Reviewing new business practice that emerged in response to COVID-19 – what to keep, what to discard, what were the learnings, what made business more productive, and the true cost of COVID-19 on daily operations post-pandemic (e.g. sick leave, ongoing surveillance testing, flexible working arrangements).
- The mental wellbeing of workers - both the immediate and the long tail impacts on workers' health, and health and safety obligations to support the workforce.
- Planning and preparation for both bust and boom conditions in a post-pandemic economy.



What Excites Pacific Workers

Pacific workers of the representative cohort were also asked about what excites them about the Future of Work and the opportunities it may present. The responses were synthesised into the following key themes:

Having autonomy over my work – We are excited to have more flexibility in where we work and how we work in the future. This is important for balancing my family commitments.

Having options for job opportunities – We are excited to build the skills that will enable us to pick jobs we want and not just the jobs that we are able to get now.

Working locally – We are excited to work and live locally as this would mean spending less time commuting to and from work and more time with family.

Opportunities to live my dream – We are excited to build our own products and services that align with our values and what's important to South Auckland.

Study that is flexible – We are excited about studying in ways that can fit around work commitments, with the ability to do it online, in the workplace and not always in a lecture theatre. I can potentially do it with other members of my household so we can support one another.

Expanding my horizons – We are excited to be exposed beyond the borders of South Auckland to opportunities that could put us on the world stage and uplift our families financially.

Showcasing Pacific and South Auckland talent – We are excited about online curatives and social media platforms becoming more accessible to tell our stories, and market our products and services.

Finding the Cause of the Problem

From the data points and analysis of the surface-level challenges, temporal interrelationships were mapped to arrive at the most probable primary causes. The analysis applied seven steps of legitimate reservation testing to validate the existence of the challenge and to help determine causal pathways. The analysis found that in this case, there were two primary causes that hold the problem in place which are described below.

Primary cause	The supply-side only does what is necessary and sufficient for this point in time.	The demand-side is not aware of what the jobs of the future will be, or how the future of work relates to their current reality.
How the cause manifests itself	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The supply-side’s focus is on the symptoms and not the causes of the constraints in productivity. • Attention on Pacific workers is not ‘necessary’ now, and therefore not a priority. • Small to medium size businesses do not have the means to access cost saving smart technology to improve productivity and therefore fall back on manual labour. • It is not easy for the supply-side to decouple itself from its current realities e.g. qualification frameworks, import and export markets, seasonal variation. • Limited capital is invested in supporting immediate returns in a COVID-19 environment and post-pandemic world, not medium to long term plans. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The vision of the future is unclear which keeps people focused on the ‘here and now’ – what they can see. • Pacific families continue to direct their young people towards traditional career pathways of lawyer, doctor, accountant – what they know. • Career aspirations in new and emergent industries are deferred in favour of meeting the immediate needs of the family. • The current reality reinforces negatively held mindsets about whether Pacific peoples have the necessary skills and qualifications to participate in new and emergent industries.

The conditions which hold the problem in place

Once the two primary causes were identified, the conditions which hold the problem in place were analysed by examining the causal pathways. The conditions which make each primary cause persistent and difficult to change are identified in diagram one below:

Diagram One: Conditions holding the primary causes in place



The behaviour and attitudes which reinforce the conditions

To understand why it is difficult to shift the conditions which hold the problem in place, analysis was completed on why the demand and supply side entities put up with the problem. This surfaced a set of common behaviours and attitudes which appeared in the analysis. These are summarised in the statements below:



"We think things are not really that bad, they will get better with time."



"We're grateful just to have a job / to be turning a profit in the current climate."



"There is not much we (employers, employers) can do about the problem, it's out of our hands."



"We don't know what the real problem is."



"If we look to change what we're currently doing it will result in job losses."



"The pressure of the current reality disables any meaningful thought about the future reality."



"There are too many rules and red tape to do what we really want to do for the Future of Work."



"We can't afford the capital."



"We can't afford the time off work to retrain staff."



"I've got other urgent priorities."



"If it's not right in front of me [the issue], I don't have any additional capacity to deal with it".



"I don't know my own potential, or I am not confident that I can do what is required in the Future of Work so it's safer to stay with what I know - the status quo."

Discussion

The Current Reality Analysis tells us that there is little to be gained by focusing on the symptoms which show us how our complex problem manifests itself in the everyday lives of Pacific communities and business leaders. This work suggests that there are greater gains to be made if there is a focus upstream on what is causing Pacific peoples to not participate in the Future of Work in the first place.

When considering the analysis and the feedback from both supply and demand sides, it becomes evident that Pacific communities, businesses, entrepreneurs and academic institutions all report operating in difficult conditions with 'survival mode' responses to their current reality. The conditions created through COVID-19 are a major contributing factor to the current reality. The disruptions to operations have not all been negative, with positive effects reported through greater flexibility in work arrangements and online learning platforms for supply-side entities. COVID-19 has also forced many businesses to accelerate thinking about innovation, emergent industries and the Future of Work as part of their current reality. Many have had no choice but to decouple themselves from their existing limitations (e.g. sourcing local supply chains and delivery from both geographic and virtual locations).

Pacific peoples have reported negative changes to their employment, children's schooling and working conditions. There have also been reports of limited access to digital devices or connectivity, with many commenting on the hardship they have experienced personally, or someone in their family has experienced since COVID-19. Pacific communities continue to focus on addressing immediate needs which hinders their ability to plan for a future reality including a change in career.

The analysis is unclear about the positive effects COVID-19 has had (if any) on the Pacific community's current reality. However, current disruptions to labour market conditions present an opportunity to introduce new thinking, targeted interventions and pathways that will leapfrog Pacific peoples into the Future of Work.



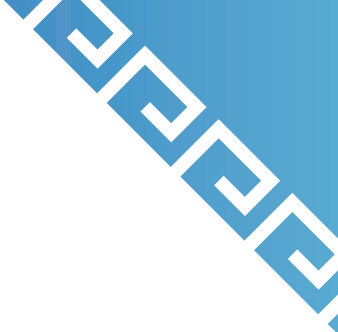
Summary

The analysis suggests that Pacific workers see the benefits of participating in the Future of Work and they hold aspirations about their career pathways. However, the gap between their current reality and the Future of Work is significant. Pacific communities are unable to articulate clearly what the Future of Work will look and what their contribution will be.

Similarly, supply-side stakeholders do not have the time to adequately complete the mental mileage required to consider how the Future of Work will impact their industry and business. This is because they are focused on addressing issues that pertain to immediate constraints in their productivity, and there is no compelling reason for them to prioritise differently. The analysis suggests that business planning about who their future workforce will be, the types of jobs they will fill, and how to create the pipeline now, will not be considered by most business leaders who are focused on their survival in the current reality. This is particularly true of small to medium businesses. This will leave New Zealand with a few 'rockstar' industries in a relatively stable economy, but this will be insufficient to lift aggregate productivity. Nor will it result in more Pacific peoples being equipped to take positions in the jobs of the future.

In the absence of targeted interventions to address the primary causes we are unlikely to see meaningful shifts in the conditions which are holding this complex problem in place. This is because the underlying mental models held by system stakeholders, inertia existence, resource constraints and the impacts of COVID-19 are powerful forces that are entrenched. The Future Reality Analysis Report that is published in the Matangi Fou series provides insight into what interventions will help to overturn the primary causes identified in this report.





This report is part of a Matangi Fou series of working documents that informed development of the published report **“Pacific Peoples and the Future of Work”**.

- 1. Insights Report**
- 2. Pacific Young Entrepreneurs Storybook**
- 3. Insights for Business Leaders**
- 4. Current Reality Report**
- 5. Ecosystems Report**
- 6. Our Future Now Report**
- 7. Personas and Pathways Report**

These reports can be downloaded from: www.matangifou.nz



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