David O. McKay's Educational Model for Mormon Schools in the Pacific, 1906–1940

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Abstract

David O. McKay's influence permeated every aspect of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormon) educational activity in the Pacific from 1906 to 1970. Looking at his innovations in Church education practices and policies, which promoted more productive schools and individuals within the LDS Church in the Pacific, provide a pattern. McKay provided an international and global lens that was applied towards the Church educational efforts, most especially, at what was to become BYUH. His ideas and model of establishing schools can be duplicated by other entities where children are devoid of the opportunity for education.

Key Words: Educational Model. Pacific Education, Innovation, Schools, Administration, Mormon, Educational System

By the mid-1970s, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormon) had 75 elementary, middle and high schools in 66 countries (Plewe 141). The LDS Church Education program was remarkable for its reach and its adaptability, most especially in the Polynesian Islands. In the world there is nowhere with a higher ratio of Latter-day Saints (LDS) than in the South Pacific. For instance, in Samoa, LDS comprised 13 percent of the population and in Tonga, 20 percent of the population boasted LDS, compared with the United States which had less than 1 percent of the population in 1970 (*Church History in the Fulness of Times* 551). Out of compassion for Church members who lacked educational opportunities, by 1971, schools were established in American Samoa, Western Samoa, Tonga, Tahiti, Kiribati, and New Zealand serving 7832 students (Report Prepared for Church Commissioner of Education).

Seeing the success of Mormon (The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints) schools in the South Pacific, some have questioned the reasons behind such growth. The answers lie in the leadership of one man: David Oman McKay (1873–1970). McKay's presence and forceful personality raised the profile of Church educational programs. "The church schools in the Pacific, which had limped along for nearly a century as units of the local missionary organizations, were built up, given professional faculties filled with American personnel, an American board of education, and upgraded to a full educational system" (Griffiths 279).The proliferation of Mormon schools in the Pacific can be used as an example not only of what education can do for an individual, but also of what one person's education can do to improve many lives. In this case, education is used to advance thousands of individuals living in many nations.

In 1873, David O. McKay was born in the small pioneer settlement of Huntsville, Utah. As an adult, his influence would greatly alter the educational experience of myriads of students as he was placed in key positions of educational influence in his hometown, his state, and the Mormon Church. Ultimately, he was instrumental in enlarging the educational opportunities of future Oceanic generations. Historically, McKay was an educator during an era when American education was at a crossroads.

While serving as president of Weber College in 1906, McKay became an Apostle or general Church leader of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormon). The nature of McKay's assignments as a General Authority in this Church suggests the scope of his influence on Church education policy and ultimately on the peoples of the Pacific (Gibbons 30). For the next five decades, he emphasized education in his addresses and decisions and insisted that Church funds be funneled into educational areas (see Armstrong

Educational Model for Mormon Schools in the Pacific

McKay's influence permeated every aspect of LDS Church educational activity in the Pacific from 1906 to 1970, including missionary activity, political issues, internalization of the Church, ethnic and moral challenges, school administration, and gospel education. Looking at his innovations in Church education practices and policies, which promoted more productive schools and individuals within the LDS Church in the Pacific, provide a pattern that can be duplicated.

Before his era in most of the Pacific Islands, the majority of educational systems were private generally either set up by Catholics or Methodists. In addition, there were a few government-sponsored schools. These government schools were only for the elite. For those that were not financially secure, education became impossible. As the Church began to have converts in different areas of the world, the need developed for these Latter-day Saints to be educated. During the first decade of the twentieth century, Mission presidents, sometimes assisted by local boards of one configuration or another, usually oversaw the work of the schools; but, there was little coordination between schools within an island group and even less between countries or missions (Britsch 200). In the Pacific, Church schools had existed almost from the beginning of Church efforts in the region, but the direction taken by the Church during David O. McKay's administration led to dramatic improvements in the facilities and staff in the Pacific schools. The Latter-day Saint K–12 systems built during the 1950s and 60s were popular among the Church membership in their respective nations (Griffiths 215).

The educational design that McKay developed brought a new coordination between schools and always followed the same distinct pattern. The Church would first apply to each government for permission to create their own schools. The most important factor in these requests was that the Church was willing to bring in their own system (i.e., build their own buildings and provide their own finances and teachers). The Church was also willing to function under the British educational system which was required by most Pacific governments rather than bringing the American Common School model to the Pacific. These Mormon-founded schools eventually became satellite schools for students in other countries to attend where there was no other opportunity for higher forms (equivalent to high school in the United States).

As the Church established schools in the Pacific, a constellation system began to develop that served as feeder schools for students to eventually attend an institution of higher learning, the Church College of Hawaii (CCH), which is now Brigham Young University–Hawaii (BYUH). As students came to BYUH, a global educational Pacific setting immerged where LDS students received college education and many eventually returned home to become leaders in their own countries. However, some students saw the advantages over their third world culture and joined the work force and did not return to their homelands.

Before McKay, most young Latter-day Saints in the South Pacific in Kiribati, Taiwan, Rarotonga, Tahiti, or Vanuatu, would end their schooling at form four. This same situation did not occur in the North Pacific where government and other private schools were much more accessible. The Church started making schools available with enrollment including Latter-day Saints and non-members alike. This educational model took root in an experience McKay had three decades before he became the president of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Church Commissioner of Education 1919–1922

In 1919, under leadership of President Heber J. Grant, a new LDS Church Commission of Education was created to assume the responsibility of the administration over Church education. David O. McKay was appointed as the first Church Commissioner of Education (Roberts and Sadler 191).

With this responsibility, McKay was asked to conduct a worldwide tour of all Church schools and missions. Traveling more than 62,000 miles, he visited all LDS schools and missions worldwide [except for one in South Africa]. It was while visiting Hawaii, Tahiti, and New Zealand, that McKay made a profound educational commitment.

Much of the force behind this commitment stemmed from an experience he had on the island of Oahu at a Church-owned elementary school in the small town of Laie. While there, he participated in a flag raising ceremony on 7 February 1921. He was impressed with the many nationalities including *Haloes* (Caucasians), Hawaiians, Japanese, Portuguese, Chinese, and Filipino children all pledging allegiance to their new country, America. At that time, McKay envisioned the same scene duplicated on a large scale, with the community of Laie becoming the intellectual center of the Pacific. He recorded his feelings on that day:

> As I looked at that motley group of youngsters, and realized how far apart their parents are in hopes, aspirations, and ideals, and then thought of these boys and girls, the first generation of their children, all thrown into what Israel Zangwell had aptly called the 'Melting Pot' and coming out Americans, my bosom swelled with emotion and tears came to my eyes, and I felt like bowing in prayer and thanksgiving for the glorious country which is doing so much for all these nationalities. But more than that, when I realize that these same boys and girls have the opportunity of participating in all the blessings of the Gospel which will transform the American into a real citizen of the Kingdom of God. (Doxey 86)

It was while watching this scene unfold that McKay began to formulate a goal for LDS education in the Pacific. Griffiths explains what happened in McKay's mind that day,

> Different nationalities one day interacting as "one nation, one country, one tongue," denoting a truly globalized society of Latter-day Saints, one transcending national boundaries. But the last line of his statement also captures his "international" perspective. McKay saw America as just as important as the Church of Christ in creating this new society. The "global" community of Latter-day Saints would emerge under the leadership of America. McKay returned from the venture with a new perspective on the worldwide mission of Mormonism. (86)

This perspective stayed with him for the next thirty-four years and under McKay's direction as Church Commissioner of Education, church policy was to create Mormon schools in the Pacific. In 1951, when he became President of the Church, one of his first official acts was to establish a college in the Pacific as a part of his educational model. When the Church College of Hawaii (CCH) was dedicated in 1955, McKay said that it would not only educate young Mormons, but would significantly impact the world at large: "From this school, I'll tell you, will go men and women whose influence will be felt for good towards the establishment of peace internationally" (McKay). When McKay became President of the Church in 1951, some of the first decisions McKay made involved overseeing the development of Church schools in the South Seas (The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, *James Moyle* 18–21).

Bringing Their Own System

Throughout the 19th and early 20th century, Latter-day Saints followed the practice of gathering to a central location, rather than remaining in their host societies. At the zenith of gathering, the practice brought thousands of Mormon converts to the American West. In 1906, the Church brought about a change in policy: members of the Church were no longer encouraged to move to Utah to gather with the Saints. Instead, Latter-day Saints were counseled to be "faithful and true in their allegiance to their governments, and to be good citizens," and to "remain in their native lands and form congregations of a permanent character" (*Messages,* 222). Following this directive, Mormon Polynesians began to gather for physical and spiritual protection in their own nations: they gathered to Sauniautu in Samoa, to Tiona in Tahiti, to Laie in Hawaii, and to Rarotonga in the Cook Islands. As Griffiths explains, "McKay's programs brought back an old practice, with a new twist. Instead of gathering to Church headquarters, the school programs were part of establishing a gathering place in each nation. In Hawaii, New Zealand, and the other locations, the gathering began with a school. . . . This practice worked well in the South Pacific, given the vast oceanic distances between the different communities of Church members" (Griffiths 104). Church schools were the vehicle through which Latter-day Saint education would be taken outside of the United States. The most difficult problem was how to pay for it.

McKay said, "It is going to cost a lot of money to build this institution [i.e., LDS Church Education System]. I believe we will have to shrink this estimate somewhat unless we can devise a program which will save money and also bring into existence the kind of buildings we want." A volunteer building program in the Pacific was then developed that became one of the chief cornerstones in McKay's plan to establish the Church's own system.

In 1954, "1400 young men were called, along with 150 labor missionary families from the mainland as supervisors to direct the work" in schools and colleges. These workers came from Australia, New Zealand, Samoa, Tonga, Fiji, Hawaii, and Tahiti—all through the South Pacific areas in order to fulfill McKay's vision of establishing Pacific schools (Cummings, *Mighty* 276).

An example of this building program can be found on the Island of Tonga. In 1950, eight men—five from the United States and three from New Zealand—were called to work on a project of building a school on the island of Tongatapu. It was intended that the men would provide supervision and laborers would be hired. Because of a shortage of labor, this was impossible. The President of the Tongan Mission, Evon W. Huntsman, then called a group of young Tongans on a special mission to build the school and the Church would make available food and shelter—to be provided by local members of the Church. These construction workers were to receive no wages, but they would be taught a trade as they worked. The results of this trial program were excellent.

As Historian David Cummings explains,

> In Polynesia, because of the scarcity of good public secondary schools . . . led to the building of four high schools: the Church College of New Zealand at Temple View, which is a junior-senior high school, the junior-senior high school in Pesega, Western Samoa, the Mapusaga High School in American Samoa and Liahona College, a high school, in Tonga. Construction of the necessary buildings for these schools was one of the major objectives that led to the launching of the Building Program of the Pacific.

> All four of these secondary schools, were built and functioning before the close of 1960. They were the most modern and best equipped by far of any in their respective areas. With the three primary schools in Samoa they comprised an integrated system of education, made homogeneous by Church sponsorship, geography, similar administrative problems and a student body that was predominantly Polynesian. . . .And being so clearly a homogeneous system, it was a most logical move when, in 1957, the General Authorities organized the Pacific Board of Education and gave it charge of all Church schools in the Pacific. (*Mighty* 252)

All of the Church schools in the Pacific were subsequently built, including the seven million dollar Church College of Hawaii, utilizing these "building missionaries" (Hartshorn, *Mormon Ed.* 190). According to McKay, this building system would save the church over $1,300,000 (Cummings, *Mighty* 277).

So successful was the implementation of the model that the Church formed the Pacific Board of Education on 21 June 1957 (McKay Diary 6 June 1957). A letter from the First Presidency gave the new Pacific Board of Education charge over the "Church College of Hawaii, the schools in Tonga, Samoa, New Zealand, and other Pacific schools as they may develop." McKay felt that a separate board of education for the Pacific Schools was necessary so that educators who were familiar with the problems and needs of the Polynesians could effectively guide the educational needs of the schools in preparing leadership for the Church and for the societies in which the schools were located (Hartshorn, *Mormon Ed.* 187–8). "The Church schools in the Pacific," wrote the Pacific Board of Education in 1961, "fitted with perfect naturalness into an integrated system of education, made homogenous by Church membership, geography, similar administration problems and a student body predominantly Polynesian. Such a system under centralized control would relieve the First Presidency of supervisory detail while remaining directly responsible to their authority" (Britsch 204).

Government and Missionary Work

As the Church opened up schools, it was vigilant in keeping regulations and rules that each government set forth. Church schools also became adept at petitioning Island governments.
The Church also made sure that Mormon schools became academically competitive with other Pacific schools, "both private and government, by adhering to the government-prescribed examinations" (Harris 277). The Church followed the British system, spent resources, and trained to prepare students for exams. Eventually through great effort, LDS students became competitive with their Pacific counterparts.

Manscill was an eyewitness to the McKay model implementation in Fiji at the Latter-day Saint (LDS) Tech School where students' proficiency became equivalent to students from other schools and eventually excelled other student bodies.

Opened in 1979, staffed with local teachers, the acronym LDS began to stand for "The Low Down School" because in the first year students failed both form 4 exams and school C exams in the three major subjects: science, mathematics, and English.[1] The next year student scores went from failing in the 40 to 50 percentile to passing in the 85 to 95 percentile. Scores were published in the local newspapers and the LDS Tech School began to have a completely different reputation. Then the Church added a sports curriculum and built the best gym in the South Pacific adjacent to the school. Eventually all the Olympic players who played for Fiji were graduates of LDS Tech. By 1984, other subjects were added and LDS Tech became known for having the best drama club, winning the most Spelling Bees, and having a string orchestra that played at the Prime Minister's Inauguration. The former "Low Down School," became the school that everyone wanted their children to attend and some Fijians were even joining the Mormon Church just to get their children enrolled. This emergence of LDS Tech is the embodiment of McKay's model which was successful not only in Fiji but also across the South Pacific as well (Manscill Interview 20 Jan. 2017).

Constellation of Schools Feeding BYU–Hawaii

As we have seen, McKay's interest in church schools and international expansion were synonymous in the early years of his presidency. His creation of networks of schools paralleled the growth of the Church. The story of the school at Laie, where McKay visited in 1919, was repeated on a smaller scale throughout the islands. As Griffiths informs, "The majority of the educational department of the Church went on a spree throughout the South Pacific in the 1950s and 1960s" (Griffiths 86, 100).

Schools were constructed in Hawaii, Samoa, Tonga, Tahiti, Fiji, and New Zealand. At the highest activity of construction, the building of over thirty-seven Church schools was underway simultaneously. At the same time, original American personnel searched for replacements in the local population (Griffiths 227). The Mapusaga High School in America Samoa is a great example of the formula and pattern McKay set forth in establishing this network of schools. In 1960, only one government school existed on the island, with only eighty students admitted. Church leaders decided to meet the needs of youth by building the Mapusaga High School providing education for 500 students (Hartshorn, *Mormon Ed.* 195). Mapusaga High School is an interesting example of how programs fit needs. There were almost no schools when it opened. Fifteen years later, the Church sold it to the government because their school system had greatly improved. During that next fifteen years, four other high schools were also constructed, along with the LDS Tech Trade School in Fiji, which also emphasized skills and the trades.

Brigham Young University–Hawaii: The Melting Pot

Because of McKay's experience in Laie, it made it the most likely place he would establish an educational center. While visiting the islands in 1936 and again in 1941, McKay encouraged local and mission leaders to lay plans for the establishment of a college there. The plans finally moved forward when McKay became the president of the Church in April of 1951 (Hartshorn, *Mormon Ed.* 187, 190).

An official announcement came on 21 July 1954, calling the school "a long step forward in giving them [the Polynesian Saints] educational opportunities of the same nature as are provided for members of the Church living on the mainland" ("Church to Establish College in Hawaii"). Within a year, the site had been selected at Laie, and ground was broken. Speaking at the dedication of the grounds, McKay laid out how the school fit into his vision of the international expansion of the Church:

> From this school, I'll tell you, will go men and women whose influence will be felt for good towards the establishment of peace internationally. Four hundred and fifty million people waiting to hear the message over in China, a noble race. I've met them. I don't know how many million over in Japan. You prepare to go and carry that message. Three hundred and fifty million down in India. We have scarcely touched these great nations, and they're calling today. (Law 67–8)

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[1] Examinations resembling the United Kingdom School Certificate were adapted in most of the educational systems in the Pacific. To gain School Certificate proper, students had to achieve an average score of at least 50 percent and a "C" grade (50–64%) or better in at least four subjects (including English and mathematics) – although students could progress to the sixth form (year 12) if they narrowly missed these criteria. The School Certificate Examination was usually taken at age 16 with performance in each subject being graded as; Fail, Pass, Credit or Distinction.

As Griffiths explains, "The establishment of the Church College of Hawaii clearly showed McKay's international aspirations, and the role he intended Church education to play in it" (95–7). Labor missionaries, who voluntarily contributed $1,250,000 in labor, built the campus. The CCH was to give students the opportunity for education they had not had previously. "Before its opening 2% or 3% of LDS Hawaiian students were having a college experience by 1960, 40% were attending." The college opened in September 1955, with an initial enrollment of 158 students which grew to nearly 950 in eight years, making it the largest and fastest growing private college in Hawaii (Hartshorn, "Mormon Ed." 199–200). At the same time, cultural classes in the high schools were developed that included curriculum, language and local culture.

McKay's role in the establishment of Church colleges was pivotal. He provided an international and global lens that was to be applied towards the Church educational efforts, most especially at what was to become BYUH. After high school, a substantial percentage of ambitious LDS graduates wanted to continue their education, and the answer was the CCH. The college was unique in that students attending from various areas of the South Pacific felt as though they were among their own people, yet it was located near Honolulu providing a broader experience. "Of cardinal importance, it shares Hawaii's long tradition of racial tolerance; in fact, it gives a living demonstration in a student body representing her many racial strains. Whether Hawaiians, Orientals, Maoris, Tongans, Samoans or Caucasians from New Zealand or Australia, students find its atmosphere congenial" (Cummings, *Mighty* 253). In this, McKay achieved his goal of establishing a global academic center as part of his educational model.

Beginning in 1959, qualifying students were accepted to attend the Church CCH. Part of the goal of the CCH was to provide students with work experience while on campus, gaining leadership skills, and the ability to step into management roles if they returned to their home countries. To this end, the idea of a Polynesian Cultural Center (PCC) built next to the campus at Laie was proposed. Two reasons for building the center were to (1) provide employment opportunities for students attending the CCH and (2) help students retain their native culture and heritage. When some Church and school leaders heard the proposal for the PPC, they responded by asking, "Why do you want to preserve the cultures of the Polynesians? It's better to educate them, Europeanize them." When McKay was directly approached with the idea he declared, "There will be a Polynesian Cultural Center," and with that the debate was over (Pratte 9–10).

In the initial planning of the PCC, there were several concerns. "One apprehension was in developing a method for students to succeed in their academic pursuits while simultaneously performing with Hollywood flair before tourists." To make sure students would retain their first priority of seeking an education, "even though an entertainment-oriented culture was emerging to provide a synergistic relationship with CCH, [McKay made it clear] that the CCH faculty at the college remain in control rather than outside business and Hollywood interests." With the PCC there was another concern in Laie that the "center was going to be a *palangi* (white) exploitation of the Polynesian community." Richard Wooton, CCH second president, saw the situation as "anything but exploitation." Rather, he saw the center as providing a way for "people with all these beautiful cultures—the dance, the song, and architecture, the whole culture" to learn what they needed to function well in American culture "most rapidly and most happily" if they participated in a celebration show and took "a great pride in their own culture" (9). Wooton also assured that the center's director would be Polynesian. "Wooton's sensitivity and leadership helped to defuse a potentially tense and polarizing issue. It was the issue that came to be identified with the CCH and later BYUH for the rest of its history and one which helped make the institution among the best known in the world for its success in practicing inter racial and inter-cultural relations. As McKay's successor, Harold B. Lee expressed, "The Church College of Hawaii, the Polynesian Cultural Center and Hawaii tie[d] the community, Church and Pacific rim together into an international educational system" (Pratte 8). The center has since become "one of the foremost tourist attractions in tourist thronged Hawaii" (Cummings, *Centennial* 1, 19–20). It also provides employment opportunities for half of the student body today (2017) (Butler and Lambert 225–6).

Professor Phillip C. Smith conducted research on how the CCH worked as an instrument of cultural reinforcement and helped international students adapt to educational standards in the United States in order to prepare themselves for citizenship in the global world. According to Smith, "Work experiences such as those created at the PCC for BYUH students serve as important areas for reinforcing classroom learning, enhancing cultural awareness and learning and reinforcing values" (64, 68). This mix of vocational, on-the-job training and traditional course work can be seen as representative of McKay's basic educational philosophy.

However, McKay insisted that a purely vocational institution was not the avenue to pursue. He urged that the institution at Laie someday become a four-year liberal arts college. The CCH followed this directive after McKay's death, when it became BYU–Hawaii (BYUH) in 1974.

In accordance with McKay's vision, BYUH has achieved the goal of becoming the great melting pot for Latter-day Saints and a great global educational Pacific setting. BYUH today
(2017) is seen as the pre-eminent international center of learning in the Pacific. It has the most diverse student body of any university in the United States, with nearly half of the 2400 students coming from 70 nations, and is the most ethnically diverse campus per capita in the United States ("Which college or university is most ethnically diverse?").

As part of McKay's plan, BYUH's alumni would influence the countries where they come from as they return to civic, educational, business, and Church leaders. However, as time went on, LDS Church leaders became concerned with the "brain drain" or emigrations of students who had acquired knowledge, technical and cultural skills due to intermarriage, political instability or lack of opportunity in their homelands. In particular, leaders were concerned when CCH graduates or students failed to return to their homelands in Tonga, Samoa, Tahiti, Fiji, and other Polynesian countries to help raise the standard of living ("Following the Vision"). The development of the PCC and other programs helped to dissuade this "brain drain" and eventually students have returned to their native countries. Many return to be with family and to teach in the school system that McKay's model developed. McKay successor, Howard W. Hunter fourteenth president of the Church, observes this success and calls the CCH "a leavening factor" for the Pacific. He relates, "These young people who came up, got an education, gone back to their islands, and have gone into education, into businesses, into government service and into the professions—we have leavened the Pacific through that school. . . . I think the school first was an inspiration to President McKay and secondly, I think the inspiration that he had with respect to the Polynesian Culture Center has made it possible for the inspiration that he had regarding the education and the South Pacific to come about" (Hunter 5).

Because of BYUH's location, many students are drawn to it, specifically from the Pacific Rim and Asia. There they learn and grow in that environment as they observe other cultures and other countries represented witnessing much of the world around them. As the *Deseret News* declared,

> Since its establishment, the college has become the keystone of the Church educational program in the Pacific. From the schools in Samoa, Tonga, Tahiti, New Zealand and even from Hong Kong and Japan as well as from the mainland, students come to train as teachers and leaders, to help enrich the lives of their countrymen. (*Deseret News Church News* 19 Oct. 1963)

The Importance of English

One of the main goals at BYUH and the LDS High Schools today (2017) is that all students become proficient in English, so that students can return to their countries as international communicators. This goal stems from McKay who insisted that all curriculums be taught in the English language. Robert L. Simpson, a mission president in New Zealand during the period, noted, "David O. McKay stressed the importance of everyone learning English. If it was not their first language it should be their second language. Behind all this teaching in their schools which [were] established in Samoa, Tonga, New Zealand, and Fiji, they were all using English as the language. He was very insistent about that" (Simpson Interview). Keith Oakes, an administrator during this time remembered, "David O. McKay thought the students should be taught in English. He thought they should learn English. In fact, he felt that the gospel was revealed in English and should be taught in that language" (Oakes Interview). Phil Boren, an American teacher brought to Samoa in the late 1960s, recalled signs posted all over the schools reminding the students to speak English (Phil and Reesa Boren Oral History 10). As these students learned English they became "intercultural brokers," because "they know how to communicate back and forth between cultures and shift codes in a very sophisticated way" (Marsden).

Teacher Training

No matter where LDS youth lived, McKay seemed to feel that they should be provided with qualified instructors. He felt that young members of the Church everywhere should have access to facilities equal to those at Brigham Young University in Provo, and that LDS educators serving elsewhere in the world should be just as certified and trained as those in the United States (Oakes Interview).

When the Pacific Board took control under McKay's presidency, it immediately began to increase the professionalism and efficiency of the schools by moving away from using missionaries as teachers and hiring professional native educators to staff its institutions. This policy was not always easy to implement. Early on schools in the Pacific were dominated by American personnel and during the 1950s and 1960s consisted primarily of American expatriates (Taylor 38–39). For instance, the 1970 Church College of Western Samoa yearbook shows that thirty out of forty faculty members were Americans (*Ata Lafoia Yearbook* 5–10).

One major problem was getting CCH graduates to return to Mormon schools on their native islands. The challenge has been that the large percentage of students, after seeing the improved economy and job opportunities in the United States, have not returned to their native communities. However, various programs were developed to entice LDS teachers to return. One example of a program took place in Samoa. Many graduates of Church schools in Samoa attended BYUH in a work-study arrangement with the understanding that they return to Samoa upon receiving their baccalaureate degree. As a result, there were more qualified teachers at the Church schools in Samoa (Harris 272–3).

Adaptation

As LDS schools increased internationally, President McKay decided to bring all the schools under one administration umbrella. On 15 October 1964, the Executive Committee of the General Church Board of Education met with the Pacific Board of Education "for the purpose of affecting a transfer of the schools in the Pacific to the Church Board of Education." General Church authorities were also promptly sent to visit the Pacific schools "for the purpose of establishing the soundness of the proposed budget and determining the present condition of the facilities, staff, etc." On 4 November 1964, the First Presidency released a public statement on the subject of the transfer (The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, "General Church Board of Education Minutes"). This step put the Pacific schools on equal footing with other LDS schools and made them part of an even larger system.

The worldwide K–12 Mormon schools reached an apex in the mid-1970s with seventy-five different schools operating around the world. In 1970, a new Commissioner of Education, Neal A. Maxwell was appointed. He felt strongly that each Church school should be examined "in the context of its own environment and adapting to fit local needs" (The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, *By Study and Also by Faith* 299). Maxwell remarked, "I recall . . . looking at our schools in the Pacific. They were good schools, but they had not been looked at or evaluated for quite a while. Here, in some cases, would sit the superintendent's beautiful luxurious home on top of a hill near the school. Good superintendents, good families. But was that signal we wanted of the American on top of the hill? Shouldn't we begin to bring in system administrators out of these various cultures?" (The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, *By Study and Also by Faith* 298; Griffiths 237). Under McKay's directive, Maxwell felt strongly about using more local leadership in Church schools. Curriculum was also looked at to see if it could better fit the local culture. Maxwell explained the kind of incongruences he found: "In one of those schools, we were giving a class in agriculture and it was the wrong agriculture for that island" (The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, *By Study and Also by Faith* 298; *Deseret News Church News* 10 Feb. 1973 15).

Conclusion

As David O. McKay watched a small flag ceremony at an elementary school in Laie, Hawaii, he pioneered the ideas and practices that have since become the reality of a chain of schools that have greatly impacted thousands of lives in the Pacific. McKay's educational aims and purposes were applied in countless ways in the development of these Mormon schools in the South Seas. Leon Hartshorn, former Department Chairman of Church History and Doctrine at Brigham Young University, believes that during these years (1921–1970) McKay was "more responsible than any other man in the Church for the great growth of the educational program in the Pacific" (*Deseret News Church News* 7 Sept. 1963).

McKay fused his interests in Church schools and international expansion, creating in the early years of his presidency several different networks of schools. Before these new programs could emerge, McKay undertook a complete reorganization of the Church's educational structure. McKay's policies in the Pacific represented a major shift in the direction of Church education, even the fundamental function of the Church itself.

Before McKay's inclusion in the Mormon hierarchy, LDS educational efforts were to work in conjunction with local governments; but, with the Pacific school system, the Church established "a separate educational program for its membership. This move grew partly out of necessity to provide for local members, given the inadequate resources of the local governments" (Griffiths 104).

With McKay's innovations, some questions lingered including, "Would the establishment of a Church school system become standard in *every* country with underdeveloped school systems?" and "As the Church expanded globally, how much of its resources would be devoted to providing for the secular education of its members?" (Griffiths 104).

David O. McKay died in January of 1970. That same year a survey was sent out to all Church Schools to review the history of the administration of the Church Educational System. The 1,100-page report contained recommendations for McKay's system in the future (Taylor; The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, *By Study and Also by Faith* 298). Chief among the recommendations was to now rely on local governments for secular education and focus instead on religious education.

The 1971 survey made it clear that "Church schools will not accommodate the great number of LDS students who can qualify to attend. Financial resources of the Church are not sufficient to provide secular education for all members" (Taylor). And it was clear that the Church could not provide elementary, secondary, vocational and technical, and college training for all Church members who can qualify to attend. Therefore a policy was adopted that only where educational opportunities in basic secular education were not available unless provided by the Church, would the Church continue to provide secular education (Griffiths 155–6). "Policy in 1971 made it clear that the Church would not duplicate educational efforts of governments or other systems." As conditions were constantly changing in each Pacific Island, governments would require continual evaluation of the need for LDS schools. For instance, during the 1960s and 1970s, the United States government expended millions of dollars improving the public education system in American Samoa, making Mapusaga High School a serious duplication of "otherwise available opportunities." The school was donated to the Samoan Government in 1975 (Britsch 208).

Although McKay's death and the diminishing of Mormon schools in the Pacific were simultaneous, his ideas and pattern of establishing schools can still be duplicated by other entities where children are devoid of the opportunity for education.

Appendix A

Latter-day Saint Schools in the Pacific (as of 2016)

E = Elementary School, M = Middle School, H = High School

Fiji
Fiji Primary (K–8)
Fiji Technical (9–12)
Hawaii
BYU–Hawaii (University)
Laie (E) (Closed)
Indonesia
Jakarta (1–6) (Closed)
Kiribati (Gilbert Islands)
Moroni (9–12)
New Zealand
Church College of New Zealand (9–12) (Closed)
Samoa (American)
Mapusaga (K–7)
Mapusaga (9–12) (Closed)
Mesepa (K–8) (Closed)
Samoa (Western)
Church College of Western Samoa (7–12)
Church College of Sava'i (H)
Fa'aala Primary (K–6) (Closed)
Pesega (E) (Closed)
Makeke (M) (Closed)
Neiafu (M) (Closed)
Nukunuku (M) (Closed)
Vaini (M)
Saineha (H)

Samoa (Western cont.)
Talofo'ou (M)
Pangai (M)
Pakilau (M)
Lotofago (E) (Closed)
Feleima (E) (Closed)
McKay (E) (Closed)
Navu (E) (Closed)
Sanuniatu (K–8)
Vailu'utai (E)
Vaiola (E)
Tahiti
Papeete (K–6) (Closed)
Tonga
E'Ua (M)
Ha'afeva (M)
Ha'ateiho (M)
Ha'alaufuli (M) (Closed)
Ha'akame (M)
Havelu (M)
Kolonga (M) (Closed)
Liahona (M)
Liahona (7–12)
Mu'a (6–8)
Mu'a (M)

Source: Adapted from Leon R. Hartshorn, "Educational Institutions," in *Historical Atlas of Mormonism,* ed. S. Kent Brown, Donald Q. Cannon, Richard H. Jackson, (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1994), 142–145 as cited in Casey Paul Griffiths, "The Globalization of Latter-day Saint Education" (PhD diss., Brigham Young University, 2012), Appendix C.

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