

# Free essay on macdonaldization of society

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MacDonaldization refers to the process by which the principles of the Macdonald fast food restaurant become dominant in more and more sectors in the world (Kivisto, 2011). Many sectors in a good number of economies today are moving towards applying the concepts used by the MacDonald's. Rationalism on the other hand refers to a process whereby traditional methods of thinking are being replaced with more modern ones which are based on the end or means. Rationalization emphasizes on efficiency in carrying out activities as well as formalized social control.

Macdonaldization involves five major principles, namely: calculability, efficiency, predictability, increased control and substitution of human by non-human technology. Efficiency refers to using certain ways that allow an organization to achieve results faster and at a reduced cost. The idea has become very popular in the society as it is presented in such a way as to appear to benefit the customer. People have in this light embraced the idea whole-heartedly. On the contrary, the main beneficiaries of this principle are the businesses. This is because customers end up being turned into employees while at the same time paying higher prices for the services. According to Kivisto (2011), the customers end up performing activities that were initially being performed for them. This helps the businesses to save on costs of hiring a large number of employees. A good example of such scenarios include at gas stations, in ATMs, in restaurants among others.

Another principle of Macdonaldization is that of calculability. This stresses on things that can be counted and quantified. According to this principle, all that people require is quantity rather than quality. It argues that if a large quantity of a certain product is regularly supplied to a person who needs it,

then this will be more important than the quality of the good supplied. It rationalizes that a large quantity would serve the same purpose as high quality. This principle also extends further to cover the aspect of time, where quicker is viewed as better. What saves time is preferred regardless of its impacts either on the body or the environment. This has also been extended a little further into the world of competence. The amount of initials before or after one's name has been taken to indicate the person's level of competence. This has been majorly applied by people searching for jobs, where it is thought that added initials will impress the prospective employer.

In addition to that, predictability is also another paramount aspect of Macdonaldization. According to Weber, bureaucracies operate with a lot of predictability (Kivisto, 2011). People in one office know exactly what those in other offices are doing. Things are done in such a way that no surprises are experienced and nothing out of the ordinary happen. People know what kind of service they are going to receive and when they are going to receive it. People already know what to expect and so this guides them in their decisions and choices. People want to be assured that they will enjoy the same kind of product or service today and tomorrow, just as they did the previous day. Some of the industries which have highly capitalized on people's need for predictability include the movie industry, and writers and publishers in addition to those in the fashion industry. In the movie industry, this has been manifested by the development of sequels into movies. Directors and movie producers do not want to invest in doing a completely new movie. They want to work on something that their consumers have tasted and are comfortable with.

The last principle of Macdonaldization is that of increased control through the replacement of non-human for human technology. Human beings are the most unpredictable elements of any system, controlling them has the effect of enhancing overall control. Machines and robots being easier to control are taking places used to be occupied by people. Just as the MacDonald's are aiming to control their employees and customers, so are many other spheres of life. Everything is done according to instructions and people are not allowed to think. They are merely there to oversee the process taking place. Most things have become automated and things are done by a mere touch of a button. Coffee makers, ovens and other home appliances have been designed to tell the cook when the food is ready. They are capable of turning themselves on and off. Instructions on packaged foods are also made to take the work of cooking from the cook.

Macdonaldization has brought with it a number of benefits to human beings. It has enabled people to have access to services at whatever time they please. Most service providers are now operating round the clock. Banking and shopping have greatly improved as a result.

The variety of products and services people can enjoy has also been increased. This is as a result of the automation in manufacturing plants. According to Weber, Macdonaldization has also ensured that large quantities of products and services are availed to consumers. The process of offering services has also been fastened as a result. This is because machines employed in different sectors are faster than human attendants.

However, this has not been achieved without any inconveniences and problems being experienced. The regulations that were put in place to control efficiency in these bureaucracies have in most cases degenerated into inefficiency. This is normally occasioned with a lot of 'red tape' regulations. People have thus ended up not receiving the services they expected. The employees on the other hand have become unclear on what their roles are. Majority of them are also angered by the fact that machines are replacing them in today's world. This has led to industrial sabotage and other industrial unrests caused by the employees (Kivisto, 2011).

Another disadvantage of the MacDonaldization arises from its insistence on large quantities. This has resulted into large quantities of low quality products being produced. This has not been received well in the market by consumers. In addition to this, Macdonaldization has increased the level of unhealthy lifestyles among people. According to Kivisto (2011), "The foods served are less nutritious, loaded with stabilizers and flavor boosters, fats, salt and sugar".

According to Weber, the whole idea of Macdonaldization has also extended its tentacles into the world of newspapers (Blaikie, 2009). Some newspapers such as the Boca Raton in the US have invented a new way of presenting information in printed press. Instead of having long stories spreading into a number of pages, the newspaper presents articles in the briefest way possible. It uses pictures and other fun articles to achieve this, which has earned it the nickname of a 'McPaper'. Positivism argues that data gained from sensory experiences and the logical and mathematical treatments of

such data are together the exclusive source of all authoritative knowledge. In this study of MacDonalidization, people's feelings and perceptions are used to state and formulate information on its impact. The general effect MacDonalidization has been explained using people's perceptions and feelings about it.

## **References**

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