

How McDonaldization Leads to Rationalization

Rationalization and McDonaldization are more similar than they seem at first glance. The idea of rationalization predates the creation of fast-food chain restaurants. With the introduction of these fast-food chain restaurants came the term McDonaldization. It soon became apparent that with the use of McDonaldization, rationalization can spread faster and more easily than it ever could before.

The ideology of rationalization was created by German scientist Max Weber. Weber believes that rationalization is determined by a growth in society where the society becomes increasingly concentrated on efficiency and predictability. This can be seen in large institutes and companies, where they are more concerned with the quantity of their product being spread rather than the quality of it. This can also be seen in the government. World governments have become obsessed with trying to predict events. They try to predict how people will react to certain ideas they push and they try to predict how any possible enemy will react to certain things they do.

The rationalization of society is not instantaneous. It is a long process that takes years of careful work to perfect. The rationalization of society is the replacement of traditions and values with rationality and reason. Governments and institutions push for rationalization for the sole purpose of control. If you have a large population of people, not everyone will reason the same way. This leads to differences in society that are not beneficial to those in power. Rationalization fixes this, by setting a status quo. The advantage of rationalization to those in power is that it makes society fair and efficient. There are no differences in society and cultures/belief systems are thrown out the window to stay within the institute's boundaries.

Ritzer wrote a book in 1993 called “*The McDonaldization of Society*”. In the book, Ritzer explains that McDonaldization is the process of society adopting characteristics that would be considered to be used only in fast-food chain restaurants. Ritzer believes that McDonaldization has 4 main attributes: efficiency, calculability, predictability, and control. Efficiency refers to how fast a product can be produced and sold to the public. Organizations find the fastest way to complete each task, focusing solely on quantity over quality. Calculability means that sales should be quantifiable compared to taste. This is yet another way that focuses on quantity over quality. McDonalds is said to even see quantity as quality. Predictability applies to the notion that no matter what location of a chain restaurant a customer goes to, they automatically predict that they will receive the same product. They will see the workers in the same uniform and the product they order will come out looking exactly the same as they would expect at the main restaurant location they frequent. Finally, control is the standardization of employee uniforms and the replacement of human employees with technology. Control can also refer to the method that each product is made. The higher ups in the company find the best, fastest method to make a product, and standardize that method for all workers to strictly follow. This can also be seen in the menu. You as a customer can make minor changes to a product you order, but you don’t have full customizability of said product.

As I stated before, McDonaldization is a subdivision of rationalization. McDonaldization is a rational strategy that uses these 4 principles to narrow the scope to consumers. This narrow scope can spread to other industries, leading to irrational outcomes. These irrational outcomes mainly consist of quantity over quality. I feel that

the 1900's, you could buy a product that would last you for a lifetime such as vehicles. Now, buying the same product, I feel that these products don't last as long as they once did. The quality of the product has been overshadowed by the push for quantity, leading to malfunctions and difficulties that were once not present.

Rationalization and McDonaldization are very similar ideologies. What separates them from each other is the scale that they are used. Rationalization is used on a much bigger scale than McDonaldization. I believe that it is used by governments and institutions to push world order and to maintain control over a society. McDonaldization is used on a much smaller scale, such as in fast-food chain restaurants. However, even though McDonaldization is used on a smaller scale, it can quickly escalate and spread to other industries, eventually leading to a full rationalization of that society.

In conclusion, with the use of McDonaldization, institutions and government bodies alike can manipulate society however they like. McDonaldization allows these institutions to reach smaller demographics that they likely would not have been able to reach otherwise. They can push ideas and constructs much faster. This empowers them, leading them to create what they believe to be a more fair and efficient society.