

# Globalisation, McDonaldisation and Religion

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## ABSTRACT

Given these stated definitions of globalization and a general description of what the process is comprised of, very little has been written or said about the correlation between Religion Globalization McDonaldisation. Given the fact most people of the world believe in a religion and/or a higher spiritual being, it is surprising that the phenomenon of globalization and its influence on Religion and rationalization associated with the American fast food company McDonalds. and vice-versa has not been further evaluated. Therefore, it is the initiative of this paper is to discuss and clarify the effects of globalization, both positive and negative, upon Religion, its belief system and practices.

**Key words :** Religion

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## Introduction

The in thinking about relationship between religion and globalization and McDonaldisation (which itself is the part of globalization these days, one of two views immediately comes to mind.)

First, there is the way in which globalization flattens out cultural differences, erodes local customs and beliefs, and spreads a secular, capitalist way of life that is at odds with religions of all sorts. At the same time, there is the way in which religion serves as the source of globalization's greatest resistance and as a haven for those standing in opposition to its ubiquitous yet often subtle power. In both of these views, the relationship between religion and globalization is antagonistic—one of struggle and conflict.

## Objectives Of the study

The objective of this paper is to discuss and to primarily define the term globalization. Secondly, it will discuss the relationship between globalization, McDonaldisation and religion, through critically studying the positive and negative interactions and repercussions upon each other. Finally, the paper will conclude by discussing the relationship between both from the perspective of McDonaldisation & also

proposes recommendations that are crucial for bringing about equality within the process of Globalization.

## Methodology:

The research design for the present paper is descriptive research design. The nature of data which was collected and used for this research article is secondary source such as textbooks, journal research paper, dailies and websites.

## Definitions and Aspects of Globalization

Globalization is an umbrella term that refers to increasing global connectivity, integration and interdependence in the economic, social, technological, cultural, political, and ecological spheres. It is a unitary process inclusive of many such sub-processes, perhaps as best understood as enhanced economic interdependence, increased cultural influence, rapid advances of information technology, and novel governance and geopolitical challenges (Wikipedia)

**The Encyclopedia Britannica** says that globalization is the

"Process by which the experience of everyday life ... is becoming standardized around the world."

Other scholars have specifically stated that 'globalization is defined as a process through

which an increasing proportion of economic, social and cultural transactions take place directly or indirectly between parties in different countries' (Radice, 3).

**The Holy Quran states:** 'O Mankind, we have created you male and female, and have made you races and tribes, that you may know each other' (Al Quran 49:13).

**In Hinduism, Swami Vivekananda states:**

"Help and not fight, assimilation and not destruction, harmony and peace and not dissension are the substance of my faith"

**The McDonaldization of society**

'McDonaldization', according to George Ritzer, is a process of rationalization associated with the American fast food company McDonalds. The 'McDonaldization of Society' describes how the principles which lie behind McDonalds are spreading throughout the world and into every area of life. Thus, investigation into the changing character of contemporary social life, McDonaldization affects not only the restaurant business, but also education, work, health care, travel, leisure, dieting, politics, the family, and virtually every other aspect of society. McDonaldization has shown every sign of being an inexorable process by sweeping through seemingly impervious institutions and parts of the world.

In today world of continuous growth and expansion, the lines of religious borders are becoming blurred. According to Merriam Webster, globalization is defined as the development of an increasingly integrated global economy marked especially by free trade, free flow of capital, and the tapping of cheaper foreign labor markets (2007). The exponential growth that businesses are experiencing is forcing corporations to expand into international territories at a rapid pace. With the growth of these companies comes an interesting dynamic of religious blending. During global expansion, oftentimes employees are transferred overseas, bringing their culture, lifestyle, and religious beliefs with them. This is one small part of the grander effects of globalization & McDonaldization. The blending of cultures caused by globalization over the past few

decades has fostered an environment of increased religious intolerance.

While at one point, religions were strictly separated by geographical borders, the religious landscape has drastically changed over time. Blending cultures, ethnic groups, and political beliefs has created a new type of society. This society has become much more diverse in terms of backgrounds and beliefs. Ellingson says, Globalization and modernization has further resulted in increased contact between people of different religion, language and ethnicity (Ellingson, 2004) When societies merge, they adopt and incorporate the new culture into their fold. Mogensen speaks about the blending of societies, stating that the consequences of globalization are leading toward a society of more religiously diverse countries (2006). With this diversity comes increased conflict and intolerance.

In countries such as the United States of America, cultural diversity and religious freedom are important concepts. The United States has often been called the melting pot of the world, freely allowing immigrants from all backgrounds and incorporating their religious beliefs. Radhakrishnan reports, among the major religions of the world Christianity accounts for one-third (33 per cent), followed by Islam (22 per cent), Hinduism (16 per cent), Buddhism (6 per cent), and Confucianism (4 per cent) (2004). This blend of world religions has come from the affects of globalization. Ellingsen further discusses the blending of religions, stating that globalization has not only increased contact between people of different religious backgrounds, but also people of different languages and ethnicities (Ellingsen, 2004). This merging has led to increased numbers of religious conversions. Denmark, for example, has seen an increased number of conversions between religions (Mogensen, 2006).

While religious diversity is prevalent due to the effects of globalization & McDonaldization some argue that globalization fosters religious segregation. Ellingsen (2004) states:

While the optimists are confident that the process of globalization and modernization

will lead to prosperity and peace or in other words a global village in part by diminishing the relevance of religion, other scholars take the quite opposite view - arguing that the modernization and globalization process make people feel more insecure and alienated, increasing the importance of traditional values as well as the level of hostility. As a result we will be witnessing a resurgence of religion and religious clashes.

Ellingsen's viewpoint is shared by others as well. Incidents such as the terrorist attacks on America World Trade Center are often blamed on religious intolerance. Radhakrishnan refers to the attacks as a counter-blast against globalization (2004). He further states that George Bush, a 'born-again Christian' referred to the 'retaliatory strikes' against Afghanistan as a 'crusade' (2004). Commenting on the Iraq conflict, Radhakrishnan (2004) states:

Radhakrishnan further discusses this issue, saying, While on religion and globalization, it is important to know whether globalization unites or divides religions; results in newfangled religions; and has a direct nexus with fundamentalism and religion-linked terror (2004). Furthermore, in regard to the religious tolerance in the United States, Fredericks (2007) states:

While the current religious-based conflicts are causing significant disruptions across the globe, the future is alarming. Based on the trends of religious conflicts, the end is not in sight. Ellingsen states, conflicts over identity are not a new, but rather a continuing trend (2004). Religious conflicts are growing amongst nations where the government is of different religious backgrounds than the attackers. Ellingsen (2004) provides the following chart to illustrate:

Society has not completely adopted a high level of tolerance for world religions. However, the effects of globalization are slowly changing the political and religious climate around the world. As nationalism and globalization progress, the unification and tolerance of blended societies will increase.

#### **Conclusion:**

You, and I, and everyone else have few options:

- Promote acceptance among people to hold modern & traditional beliefs that are strange to us, without hindrance.
- To continue living in a world saturated with religious intolerance. We will then experience more religiously-based wars, terrorism, and civil disturbances, as we have seen recently in Afghanistan, Bosnia, , India, Pakistan, Palestine, Israel, Sri Lanka, Sudan, etc
- Number of Armed Intrastate Conflicts by Type, 1946-2002
- In an ever-growing environment, globalization and McDonaldization is helping to produce and increase commerce. McDonaldization indirectly increases industrialization and economic growth in areas that were previously under-developed. With the increase of free-trade and utilization of cheaper foreign labor markets, third-world countries have increased employment rates and boosted economies. However, it has a downside as well. The increased blending of different groups has led to insecurity and conflicts caused by the mixing of the groups. Globalization will continue to grow economy in foreign markets, but this growth comes at an extreme price, conflicts in the name of religion.
- The ultimate cause of the 9/11 terrorist attacks was religious hatred and unacceptance of Mcdonaldized beliefs It is your decision to make. What kind of a world do you want for yourself and your children? (2004).

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