

ABSTRACT

Empirical Evidence for Time Policy - Temporal Digital Change in China and Germany

This paper offers a critical stance and new insights into time policy based on cross-cultural, quantitative research through extensive data findings discussion. In an online survey of internet users in Germany (n=123) and China (n=91) and P&P interviews of off liners (Germany n=45, China n=41), that considered socio-demographics, temporal online habits and duration of use, we investigated the change of temporal understanding as a nine-dimensional construct of social time in Germany and China (Faust, 2016; Faust & Jin, 2020). It was hypothesized, that temporal change takes place equally in both Germany and China according to Krotz (2001) idea of homogenization, and that the more people get exposed to digital media, the more the sub-dimensions of temporal understanding are altered. More specifically, some sub-dimensions were supposed to decline (e.g., planning the future, monochronicity, ...) and others supposed to increase (e.g., pace of life, polychronicity, ...) Through quantitative data analysis i.e. bivariate correlation and multivariate regression analysis we generated evidence that 8 of 9 sub-dimensions increased and that temporal digital inequalities among different marginalized communities. i.e., differences between users and non users, rural-urban differences, gender and age differences, exist (Faust & Jin 2020). Such simultaneous increase of these sub-dimensions and temporal marginalization can lead to conflicting temporalities.

This increase in temporal understanding, which can be defined as conflicting temporalities, produces stress and hinders well-being and affects the labor market as was shown in previous studies (Reinecke et al. 2018, Bradley 2017, Gregg 2011, 2018). In the West, such conflicting temporalities can be framed within the context of time policy (Nowotny 1995, Rinderspacher 1998). This implies that through permanent availability, connectivity and flexibility a new temporal order is established, and thus it is particularly urgent to integrate time-outs and downtime in day-by-day activities. Hence, we see that more slow media movements are urgently needed (Rauch 2018). Moreover, the condition of late or post modernity needs more thorough and explanatory approaches including empirical perspectives on temporal change, with particular emphasis on countries of the Global South. In an international perspective, such conflicting temporalities in Germany and China are inextricably linked to sustainable living globally. Similar to Reisch (2015), we will therefore discuss the study results on the

backdrop of three Sustainable Development Goals (sustainable cities, good health and well-being, and gender equality), formulated in the UN 2030 agenda (United Nations, 2018).

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