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**ACADEMIC ASSESSMENT**

**2023 Sichuan University Model United Nations Conference**

**UNESCO**

Topic: Improve the Conservation of Cultural Heritage by Innovative Technology

**Questions:**

*The development of digital technology gives new opportunities for cultural heritage conservation. However, some people may think that the excessive application of digital technology may destroy the essence and core of cultural heritage.*

What do you think is the limitation of the application of digital technologies in the conservation of cultural heritage? You may write a small essay to show your thoughts.

**Requirements:**

1. Please use Font “Times New Roman”, line spacing: 1x, and send it in **Word format**;
2. Pay attention to the structure of the passage and the accuracy of the language;
3. No more than 1000 words;
4. If there are any quotations, please indicate them by endnotes;
5. You may use some cases of cultural heritage conservation to prove your opinions.

**Answer:**

The advancement of digital technology has undoubtedly brought about significant changes to various aspects of our lives, including the way we learn, entertain, travel, and even appreciate cultural heritage. Thanks to digital technology, we now have the ability to preserve and record invaluable cultural heritage, such as the Palace Museum. According to a recent news report by China Daily, the Palace Museum in Beijing has launched a new project that utilizes advanced digital technology to record and preserve the intricate details of its cultural relics[i]. This project not only allows people to appreciate these cultural relics in unprecedented ways but also helps to safeguard them for future generations. However, it's essential to recognize that digital technology should be used with caution and limitations. Digital technology sometimes can have a significant negative impact on cultural heritage. Because of some disadvantages, we must be aware of something.

The restrictions on the use of digital devices mean that not all people can benefit from them, as they can often be much more expensive than a museum ticket. While a visit to a museum may cost only 30 RMB, purchasing a mobile phone can cost much more. If a museum puts more effort into digital technology, it cannot guarantee the quality of the physical visit.

For example, if a museum spends money on developing a mini-program on WeChat or creating a VR model of some scenes, they may have less money to update exhibits or invest in other areas that enhance visitors' experience. Furthermore, if the museum invests less in advertising, it may struggle to attract visitors from outside. For instance, seeing elegant and attractive pictures on social media may influence people to visit those places instead of other museums or exhibitions. It is essential for museums to consider balancing the use of digital technology and the traditional physical visit to ensure they provide a high-quality experience for all visitors, regardless of their access to digital devices.

Over-reliance on digital technologies in museums can lead to a loss of basic skills, such as speaking, and a lack of social interaction. This can result in staff members becoming overly reliant on recorded videos to replace the traditional practice of verbally explaining exhibits. This over-reliance can lead to mistakes and embarrassment, as staff may forget important details or encounter accidents during the exhibition.

For instance, during a recent visit to the Sichuan Museum, staff members provided visitors with a mobile phone containing pre-recorded audio files for each exhibit. Throughout the visit, the staff provided no explanation and only directed visitors to listen to the audio files. This experience was unsatisfactory, and visitors were left feeling disconnected from the museum and its exhibits. When visitors asked questions about the exhibits, the staff simply directed them back to the audio files, without providing any additional information or insight. This over-reliance on digital technology without limitations can decrease people's appreciation for our cultural heritage to some extent. It is crucial for museums to strike a balance between using digital technology and maintaining the traditional practice of verbal explanation. Staff members should be trained to provide informative and engaging verbal explanations, which can enhance visitors' understanding and appreciation of exhibits. In addition, while digital technology can be a useful tool, it should not replace human interaction and social skills, which are fundamental to the museum experience. Overall, it is essential for museums to use digital technology to enhance the visitor experience while also preserving the fundamental aspects of museum visits.

Some current digital technology in museums can have significant environmental impacts, including contributing to electronic waste and depleting natural resources. While some may argue that digital technologies do not directly contact cultural heritage, the truth is that some cultural heritage is incredibly fragile and susceptible to damage from technology use.

One example is the Dunhuang frescoes, which are known to be incredibly delicate and must not be touched due to the risk of corrosion from the grease on human fingers. However, the use of cameras and other digital technologies can also pose a threat to these invaluable artifacts. Research has shown that the light emitted by cameras can cause negative impacts on the frescoes, including the oxidation and blackening of the murals. According to reports from the ChinaDaily, it is the infrared and ultraviolet rays present in camera flashes that have the energy to break the fiber in the organic material, leading to significant damage over time[ii]. To protect cultural heritage, it is essential to limit the use of digital technologies that pose a risk to these delicate artifacts. Instead, museums should invest in developing new, more environmentally-friendly technologies that can capture and preserve cultural heritage without causing harm. Furthermore, it is crucial to address the issue of electronic waste generated by digital technologies used in museums. Proper disposal and recycling of digital equipment should be a priority to reduce the environmental impact and preserve natural resources. As technology continues to advance, museums must prioritize sustainability and find ways to integrate digital technologies without harming the environment or cultural heritage.  
 That’s’ my opinion about the limitation of the digital technology in protecting cultural heritage. Thanks for your watching.

Reference：

1. Xinhua "Palace Museum integrates Chinese culture, sci-tech" ChinaDaily 2023-02-27 <https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202302/27/WS63fc1cdca31057c47ebb10a2.html>
2. Family Education Newspaper "Why is flash prohibited in museums" 2022-12-20 https://mp.weixin.qq.com/s\_\_biz=MjM5MjA3MTM3Ng==&mid=2650911181&idx=3&sn=1d025e35cd55c48a694da549cd557a47&chksm=bd5efa728a29736444ba17e616ace067edc77a3b8149a59ac339558c8246ab38293a734b0ae2&scene=27