Try not to become a man of success, but rather try to become a man of value.

---Albert Einstein

Abstract

Technology influences culture and culture influences technology, and technological innovation leads to social innovation as society adapts to new technology and then seeks new solutions (Moore, 2014). Under these circumstances, three remarkable changes have appeared in the museum field: (1) the integration of museums and cultural industries, (2) the integration of technology and museums, and (3) a shift from being object-centered to visitor-centered. These three remarkable changes have facilitated Chinese museums to disseminate culture using different methods in China. The dissertation focuses on Chinese museums in China and explores how Chinese museums as part of cultural industries facilitate the communication of culture through three aspects above in China.

In order to answer the main research question, the dissertation proposes three studies and set up in line with three research objectives. Correspondingly, cultural policies theory, management theory and visitor satisfaction theory were employed. Two quantitative methods (a policy analysis and semi-structured interviews) were used in Chapter 4 and 5, respectively. One qualitative method (online survey) was used in Chapter 6. The findings indicate that (1) Chinese museums play a significant role in cultural industries and Chinese cultural policies support and encourage museums as part of cultural industries; (2) human resources, technology and finding are three key factors to affect the development of museum digitalization; (3) perceived usefulness, perceived usability and museum image have a positive influence on visitor satisfaction of museum websites, and continuance intention is positively influenced by visitor satisfaction. Only perceived usability has a mediating effect on continuance intention via visitor satisfaction.

From the theoretical angle, the dissertation makes a fresh contribution to existing museums studies and results in a comprehensive understanding of museums and cultural communication in China. From the practical angle, the findings of the dissertation make museum experts and scholars to reconsider museums studies from a mixed view of cultural policies, management and visitors. From the policy angle, the
findings contribute to policy makers when they are formulating plans or rules related to museums, cultural industries, digitalization, and visitors.

The three changes facilitate museums to disseminate culture in China and are a circle relationship. Chinese cultural policies were considered as the most important factor to drive museums to participate in the development of cultural industries. Museums can turn cultural resources into wealth to purchase the newest technology to expand their communication channels to maximize their audience attendance, aiming to achieve their goal of social value and economic value, which is consistent with the cultural principle that considers both social and economic benefits at the same time. According to visitor studies, the government might formulate cultural policies to encourage the development of museums with the advancement of the new technology.

Key words: Chinese museums, culture; cultural policies; cultural industries; museum management, digitalization, visitors, museum website

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