Research on the Types of Organizational Structure of Immersive Theater in China

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Abstract. In recent years, the performance form of Chinese drama has developed very widely and gradually began to present the outline of immersive theater. At the same time, the significant changes brought by the Internet era make it difficult for the traditional stage theater to meet the diverse needs of the public, and immersive theater is no exception. Facing the opportunities and challenges brought by environment and technology, immersive theater should actively strengthen the management of organizational structure to adapt to the development of The Times. This paper studies the immersive theater in China, sorts out the concept and function of immersive theater and communicates with the managers of significant theaters through interviews, analyzes the organizational structure and advantages and disadvantages of most immersive theaters in China, and puts forward some suggestions for the optimization of organizational structure. Finally, this paper makes a simple plan for the future development of immersive theater in China.

Introduction

In the field of art management, the organizational structure and structural optimization of a theater is one of the most controversial issues. In the course of years of practice, the organizational structure has evolved into a combination of multiple types and gradually complicated. At present, there is little research on the organization type and optimization of theater in China. There has been little research into the growing immersive theater. The purpose of this study is to study the types of organizational structure and structural optimization of immersive theater in order to explore the optimal future planning of immersive theater.

The Concept of Immersive Theater and It’s Essential Role

The Concept of Immersive Theater

The word "Immersive Theatre" comes from the English word. We see it as a new form of art. In traditional drama, the actors only perform on the stage, while the audience only watches, and even if there is a little interaction, it is limited to a single moment or paragraph. The origins of immersive theater can be traced back to the modern theater of the 19th century. This concept is first reflected in theatrical performances. The performers on the stage cooperate with the audience to complete one song, one clip, or even one performance so that the audience also becomes part of the stage and performance. This model evolved into what is now known as "immersive theater." In such a play, the audience does not merely "watch" but "experience the drama" instead of "watching the drama." They can fully enter into a fictional narrative framework, as spectators, as participants, as spectators, and as characters.

"Punchdrunk," a leading British theatre company, is considered a pioneer of immersive theatre. "No more sleep," an immersive play based on Shakespeare's "Macbeth," was released in 2011 and quickly became a global hit, winning rave reviews in New York. While the concept of immersive drama keeps coming to our attention, some troupes in China are also experimenting with immersive performances. In June 2015, Meng Jinghui's mermaid by the stagnant water premiered at the

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1Punchdrunk was founded in 1998 by Jacob Stone: VJ mixing at underground dance parties and shooting video.
bee hive theater in Beijing. The theater was transformed into a maze, with 16 actors shuttling back and forth in different but interlaced spaces, meeting, talking, and parting. This plot is deducing a love tragedy about body derailment and affection congenial. The audience can take the initiative to follow the role at will, but also can stop, can be far away, can also be close to watch; They can wander freely, with no fixed purpose, or they can choose different routes and follow the clues of the actors or stories. Actors interact with the audience according to the needs of the story. The actors and the audience also change the form of watching the drama and become part of the show. In short, it is a mature attempt similar to "no more sleep."

The concept of "immersion" is becoming more and more successful in both China and the west. Indeed, more and more artists are relying on the concept of immersion to define their work. The concept of immersion has been widely used, but its ubiquity has not undermined its popularity but expanded its scopes, such as theater, film, games, dance, and fine arts.

The Importance of Immersive Theater

When the audience enters the regular theater, they can predict what they get, such as seats, programs, ice cream, popcorn, stage, and so on. Maybe some people lose themselves when they go to the theater to watch movies, temporarily forget the troubles and troubles in life and are substituted into another world. Nevertheless, no theater can interact with the audience like an immersive theater, and such performances leave an impression that goes far beyond just watching. The audience is no longer confined to the seats in the theater, but actively explore the story in space, and devote themselves to the theater situation.

In immersive theater, the audience is not just passive spectators, they are part of the story, and no matter how small the characters are, they are in the act. The theater encourages the audience to participate and enjoy the performance, which is a novel and interactive live experience that can attract a large number of people to come and get curious. Immersive theater broke the "fourth wall" that traditionally separates performers from audiences. It broke the boundary of the stage and the audience, to subvert the traditional theater many definitions, the experience was not so much to see a play or one thousand people participated in a roadshow, as did a wandering in the real and unreal dream.

Its success reflects the needs of today's audiences. In today's digital world, audiences are looking for more personal experience and authenticity. As a new art form, immersive theater is diverse, flexible, and can extend to a wide range of fields. It is time for us to have a deeper understanding of immersive theater.

The Present Situation of the Organization Structure of Immersive Theater in China

The Concept of Organizational Structure

Organizational structure is the fundamental premise for an organization to achieve efficient internal operation and achieve excellent performance. Organizational structure is the basic form or framework expression form of division of labor and collaboration within an organization, and it is also a system that outlines how to guide activities to achieve the goals of activities. It is usually expressed as a combination of an organization's human resources, authority, responsibility, work content, objectives, working relationship, and other elements.

Organizations of almost all sizes are using organizational structures. It determines the specific hierarchy within the organization. A successful organizational structure determines the work items of each employee and the position of the employee in the overall system, which enables the company personnel to remain efficient and focused. In short, the organizational structure lists the responsibilities of each employee so that the company can achieve its goals.

The differences of individual organizations, the environment in which the organizations are located, the operating policies, and the self-owned capital and other factors lead to the differences in
organizational structure forms. Due to the above factors, the following primary ways of the organizational structure have been formed: linear organizational structure, functional organizational structure, linear functional organizational structure, divisional system, simulated decentralization system, and matrix organization.\(^3\)

**The Present Situation of the Organization Structure of Immersive Theater in China**

Through in-depth interviews with domestic experts on immersive theater, the author learned that most theaters in China adopt the organizational structure mode of line-staff organization. Although some theaters have undergone some adjustments, the main organizational structure of enterprises has not changed substantially. The organizational structure is as follows:

![Organizational Structure Diagram](image)

The line-staff organization is also called the production area system. It is based on the linear system and the functional system, drawing on the advantages of the two forms and established. At present, most of our enterprises adopt this organizational structure.\(^4\) Therefore, most immersive theaters in China also adopt the organizational structure mode of line-staff organization, with multiple departments set up based on the company's regular needs and combined with the performance, ticketing, and service work. The functions and work contents of each department are different. They need to cooperate to ensure the regular operation of the theater, to fulfill various operating targets and requirements of the theater.

**Thoughts on Immersive Theater**

Nowadays, the competition in the performance market is increasingly fierce. More and more cultural enterprises try their best to attract consumers. Enterprises can gain advantages and create more economic value in the fiercely competitive environment. This phenomenon requires cultural industry practitioners to provide innovative, national, and artistic performances.

Cultural confidence is encouraged in today's society, so audiences span a more extensive range of ages than ever before. When audiences watch drama, they will think from more and more angles,

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\(^3\)Zheng Xinwen. Introduction to art management [M]. Shanghai: Shanghai Music Publishing House, 2008: 151-164.

\(^4\)Jin Dongri. Modern organization theory and management [M]. Tianjin: Tianjin University Press, 2010: 42-50.
such as performance content, colorful performance forms, novel ideas, unique stage technology, comprehensive services, whether the audience can get artistic enjoyment in a safe and comfortable environment, and can get a rich cultural experience. These aspects also become the theater departments need to consider the issue, which is also the significance of setting up each department.

**The Advantages of the Line-staff Organizational Structure**

**Rational Decision Making.** The performance of the theater usually requires the joint efforts of all departments, and the power of each department is equal. Although each department is responsible for some of them, all aspects of the performance are related. Moreover, the performance reception and performance services are mostly dealing with people. At any time, we need to be prepared to deal with emergencies and significant situations flexibly. Usually, all the complicated series work is done by the top leadership to ensure the overall control and work arrangement of the performance is carried out in an orderly way. Meanwhile, the performance can fully display its cultural connotation and maintain a consistent style in operation.

**Clear Career Path.** Different departments have different work contents, work objectives, and job responsibilities. According to the individual's technical expertise and ability, employees are placed in the corresponding departments so that they can achieve development with the help of experts, which provides a clear way for employees to be promoted. On the other hand, the wide variety of departments in the organizational structure provides more opportunities for the promotion of competent employees.

**Growth and Expansion of the Enterprise.** This organizational structure is very suitable for the growth and expansion of enterprises. Employees can get professional and precise training in their respective departments. Each department has the most intuitive understanding of the corresponding part of the performance project and has a long-term continuous exercise of the skills and working ability of the industry and department. This organizational structure guarantees that the crucial departments in the development of the theater have the corresponding personnel to be competent. The employees can fully understand the uniqueness of the industry and the importance of the department and reserve talents for the future development of the company. On the other hand, professionals in departments can share information and further optimize the departments they belong to, which also helps to achieve the highest performance of the enterprise.

**The Disadvantages of the Line-staff Organization and the Optimization Plan**

Now, the domestic each big theater is bright with linear unity form of organization structure mode, theater work in years of inertia, is adapt to the mode of existence. However, the expanding market and tide wait for no man, shows the development of educational services with each passing day, increasingly fierce competition, more and more promoter and the audience into the market, has brought about significant changes to the development of for it. For the theater, the pressure of survival and development continues to expand, and the organizational structure mode of line-staff organization has been greatly challenged. Without changes, it will be challenging to adapt to the breakthrough of market scale and the growth of audience demand.

**Lack of Contact between Departments.** Communication between departments is weak, resulting in poor coordination between departments and a lack of team spirit. Usually, complicated projects require the cooperation of multiple departments, but this organizational structure has some disadvantages in the cooperation and communication between different departments. Employees may lack attention and knowledge of events outside their department, which creates barriers to communication and cooperation. It is also easy to get stuck in a mindset where employees only care about their department and ignore the rest of the company. Cooperation and cooperation between departments are poor; many of the work of the department directly to the top leadership to submit instructions to deal with; this not only aggravates the burden of the top leadership but work efficiency is also lower.

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5Qingshui Yuzhi and Gao Weimin. Organizational structure and work development of modern theater. Dramatic Art, 1988: 85-92.
Increased Management Costs. Because of the large number of experts appointed in the organizational sector and the large cost involved, which increases administrative costs. Due to increased costs, SMEs cannot afford such professionals.

Unreasonable Personnel Allocation. Personnel utilization rate is not high, for a long time in the need to deal with their work and unexpected business needs of the department, pay more time and energy. Various departments are busy and idle unevenly, but wages and salaries have not been withdrawn, which is not conducive to unity development and business development.

In order to overcome the shortcomings of too independent departments and uneven staffing, various comprehensive committees and conference systems can be established. In this way, we can coordinate all aspects of work, play a communication role, and help senior leaders make suggestions.\(^6\) Due to the increase in functional departments, it has brought unprecedented pressure to the organization and management, and various management tasks of the enterprise have higher task requirements. If we want to give full play to the advantages of a straight-line functional organizational structure, a highly specialized human resources department is bound to be established. Regarding the increase in management costs, although expensive capital is spent, hiring experts and senior staff can also help build the company's image and increase the value of the company. It is recommended that when hiring experts, the top leadership must be carefully considered and repeatedly considered. The human resources department evaluates the performance of experts every six months or a year, letting them take advantage of their rights and take personal responsibility.

Future Development Planning of Immersive Theater

Chain Theater Expansion Strategy. The theater is vital to the life of a large city and its citizens. However, the number of theaters in the city is not in direct proportion to the increasing cultural consumption demand, and a single-stage performance cannot meet the audience's diverse consumption needs. Today, several domestic immersive theaters have settled in many cities, and the classic immersive theater is worthy of continuing to flourish in our city. Shortly, immersive experiences will be as convenient as watching movies.

Application of Virtual Reality Technology. The introduction of science and technology into the theater, virtual reality technology with its realistic 3D effect, as well as the experience of substitution, is bound to bring a technological shock and reform tide to the theater. Virtual reality USES new technologies to create multi-sensory immersion, blurring the line between reality and fiction, and upgrading the immersive experience of theater. This innovative experience combines theater and actors with cutting-edge technology. Bring the audience to every scene in the plot, and even choose the development of the plot from the perspective of the protagonist. This only enhances the audience's pursuit of personal experience and authenticity.

Large-scale Industrialization and Industrialization Development. It is estimated that by 2020, China will enter a moderately prosperous society in all respects, and its economy will enter a period of relatively mature and stable development.\(^7\) The state will actively support the development of the cultural industry. With a large number of funds going into the cultural and creative industries, the future development direction of the theater will not only rely on ticket sales but also expand the multidimensional strategic cooperation with other industries and brands. Expand investment and financing, build the large immersive theater, increase brand influence, fully capture current hot spots and people's new spiritual needs, add more types of themes in immersive theater, and create more novel characters, so that every customer can get aesthetic experience in immersive theater.

Summary

This article is based on the management of the immersive theater in China; this article has a specific understanding of the organizational structure of the theater. A preliminary study was made

\(^6\)Duff. Principles of management science. Beijing: China, Machine Press, 2012.
\(^7\)Robbins. Organizational behavior. Beijing: China, Renmin University of Press, 2014.
on the organizational structure of the linear functional system, and the optimization plan of the organizational structure was put forward through the research. At the same time, the immersive theater in China was planned to suit the development strategy and era of the enterprise. However, due to the limitation of time and material resources, and the influence of various variables, the research of this paper needs to be further explored, and the feasibility of the scheme needs to be further demonstrated in cooperation with practice in the future.

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