

Research on China's Academic Publishing Funding System: A Postprint Citation Analysis of Funded Academic Publishing Projects Based on the Chinese Citation Database

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Abstract

[Purpose/Significance] Since the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, the policy environment for publishing has undergone significant changes, and academic publishing faces new opportunities and challenges. “High-quality development” will be the “main theme” of future academic publishing development. [Method/Process] Based on bibliometric analysis and using the academic publishing funding system as an observational perspective, this paper selects publishing funding projects established by three types of funding entities—government departments, scientific research institutions, and publishing houses—as case studies. It analyzes the academic evaluation function, differentiated incentive function, and market-oriented operation function of these three types of projects, and explores pathways to improve academic publishing quality. [Results/Conclusion] At the macro level, government departments should further enhance the exemplary and guiding role of leading national-level publishing funding projects. At the meso level, scientific research institutions should establish academic publishing funding projects with institutional or regional attributes to achieve differentiated incentives. At the micro level, publishing houses should pioneer initiatives in academic publishing standards and market-oriented operations, and create academic publishing brands.

Full Text

Preamble

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Abstract:

[Objective/Significance] Since the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, the policy environment for publishing has undergone considerable changes, presenting new opportunities and challenges for academic publishing. “High-quality development” will be the main theme of future academic publishing. [Method/Process] This paper employs bibliometric analysis, using the academic publishing funding system as an observational lens. It selects publishing funding projects established by three types of sponsors—government departments, research institutions, and publishers—as case studies to analyze their academic evaluation functions, differentiated incentive functions, and market-oriented operation functions, thereby exploring pathways to improve academic publishing quality. [Result/Conclusion] At the macro level, government departments should further leverage the demonstrative and guiding role of national-level publishing funding projects. At the meso level, research institutions should establish academic publishing funding projects with institutional or regional attributes to achieve differentiated incentives. At the micro level, publishers should take the lead in piloting academic publishing standards and market-oriented operations to create academic publishing brands.

Keywords: Academic publishing; Publishing funding; Citation analysis

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In December 2021, the National Press and Publication Administration issued the *14th Five-Year Plan for the Publishing Industry*, which proposed improving the incentive mechanism for high-quality publications, establishing a coordinated linkage mechanism among high-quality publishing, social benefit assessment, awards and recognition, and resource allocation, and continuing to implement macro-control over publishing to optimize the allocation of publishing resources such as ISBNs and ISSNs [1]. In April 2022, the General Office of the Communist Party of China Central Committee issued the *National 14th Five-Year Plan for Philosophy and Social Sciences*, explicitly calling for increased support for outstanding academic publications. These policies indicate that China's academic publishing will focus on transitioning from “high-quantity growth” to “high-quality development” over the next three years and beyond, with the primary goal of guiding and encouraging the production of high-quality works.

This paper employs bibliometric analysis, using the academic publishing funding system as an observational perspective, to explore pathways for improving

academic publishing quality by optimizing the funding system and highlighting the distinct functions of various funding programs.

1. Opportunities and Challenges for Academic Publishing in the New Era

Since the 18th Party Congress, the Party and the country have achieved historic accomplishments and transformative changes. The deepening of reform, opening-up, and socialist modernization has created two miracles: rapid economic development and long-term social stability. The extensive and profound social transformations and grand, unique practical explorations have provided fertile ground for theoretical innovation and academic development, while the solid material foundation and relatively well-designed institutional framework have offered vast space for academic publishing. Consequently, academic publishing has entered a crucial strategic opportunity period. Simultaneously, to achieve high-quality development, academic publishing faces practical challenges.

1.1 Strategic Opportunities for Academic Publishing

China's academic publishing has distinctive characteristics and fundamental principles: it must uphold the Party's comprehensive leadership, remain people-centered, follow new development concepts, prioritize quality, place social benefits first, and maintain overall coordination. From the perspective of governance, the publishing industry must "adhere to the Party's management of publishing, better fulfill government responsibilities, further strengthen and improve the Party's comprehensive leadership over publishing work, and promote the construction of a publishing governance system that combines administrative management, social governance, and corporate and industry self-discipline" [1].

Therefore, the guiding ideology, basic principles, and policy planning play a pivotal role in the development of academic publishing. President Xi Jinping emphasized that propaganda and ideological work must focus on the central task and serve the overall interests, with a broad perspective, grasping general trends, and focusing on major issues to identify entry points and focal points for work, planning according to circumstances, acting in response to trends, and advancing with the times. How to present the historic achievements and valuable experiences of great transformations to the public through publishing, transform theoretical innovations and academic developments into outstanding academic publications, and convert favorable policies provided by the Party and the state into innovations in academic publishing systems and mechanisms constitutes an important proposition for academic publishing in the new era.

First, China's academic publishing policies must uphold the Party's comprehensive leadership and remain people-centered. In 2018, the Publicity Department issued the *Trial Measures for Evaluating the Social Benefits of Book Publishing Units*, emphasizing that evaluations must adhere to the correct political direc-

tion, publishing orientation, and value orientation, focus on content production, encourage high-quality works, and enhance publishing quality.

Second, China's academic publishing policies consistently prioritize social benefits while upholding the Party's comprehensive leadership and people-centered approach. In September 2015, the General Office of the CPC Central Committee and the State Council issued the *Guiding Opinions on Promoting State-Owned Cultural Enterprises to Prioritize Social Benefits and Unify Social and Economic Benefits*, stressing that cultural enterprises must always prioritize social benefits while achieving unity between social and economic benefits. In 2018, the fifth meeting of the Central Committee for Comprehensively Deepening Reform reviewed and approved the *Opinions on Strengthening and Improving Publishing Work*, emphasizing the construction of a publishing system and mechanism that prioritizes social benefits and unifies social and economic benefits. This represents the Party Central Committee's explicit call to strengthen and improve publishing work, pointing the way for further high-quality development of the publishing industry.

Third, China's academic publishing policies advocate high-quality development of academic publishing. To promote high-quality development of the publishing industry during the 14th Five-Year Plan period and advance the construction of a publishing powerhouse, the National Press and Publication Administration issued the *14th Five-Year Plan for the Publishing Industry* in 2021, and the General Office of the CPC Central Committee issued the *National 14th Five-Year Plan for Philosophy and Social Sciences* in April 2022, both proposing new work requirements and policy support for the "high-quality development" of philosophy and social sciences publications.

From the national policy perspective, it is evident that under the macro background of "high-quality development," "prioritizing social benefits and improving publishing quality" will be the main theme of the publishing industry's development during the 14th Five-Year Plan period and beyond.

1.2 Realistic Challenges Facing Academic Publishing

To achieve "high-quality development," academic publishing faces numerous challenges. At the macro level, it must address how to better serve the overall situation and meet national strategic needs. At the 30th collective study session of the Political Bureau of the 19th CPC Central Committee, President Xi Jinping pointed out the need to accelerate the construction of China's discourse and narrative system, use Chinese theory to explain Chinese practice, elevate Chinese practice to Chinese theory, create new concepts, categories, and expressions that bridge China and the world, and more fully and vividly present Chinese stories and the intellectual and spiritual power behind them. Compared with these requirements, China's academic publishing has not yet completed the transformation from a publishing giant to a publishing powerhouse. For instance, there are few academic classics, most disciplines have not

formed independent and complete academic thought systems, and some works still adopt Western theoretical frameworks to interpret Chinese practices. The discourse influence of academic works remains weak, the discourse system is still in a learning and following stage, and overseas publishing faces a communication bottleneck of “going out but not getting in.” The brand recognition and international influence of academic publishing overseas are relatively weak.

Focusing on academic publishing itself, experts from academic and publishing circles have reached consensus on specific problems at the micro level, mainly manifested in an excessive number of mediocre works, widespread low-level repetition, and insufficient high-quality academic works. Liu Mingqing [2] argues that current humanities academic publishing exhibits a tendency toward content “bubble-ization,” with overall quality needing improvement. Liu Yonghong [3] conducted a questionnaire survey of over 120 publishers, revealing generally low satisfaction with the academic level of academic works in China, primarily due to problems in the topic selection review process and lax quality control. Feng Huiping et al. [4] found through questionnaire surveys that over 70% of readers believe less than 30% of academic works have genuine reference value, reflecting the reality of having “plateaus but no peaks” in China’s publishing field.

Addressing these micro-level problems and macro-level challenges requires not only enhanced original creativity in academia but also strengthened planning and communication capabilities in the publishing sector, and more importantly, government departments to strengthen top-level design and improve relevant policy systems and support mechanisms.

1.3 Improving Quality-Oriented Funding Mechanisms

Books are quasi-public goods with strong positive externalities. Beyond serving as tools that generate economic profits for various enterprises in the publishing industry chain, they carry numerous non-economic functions such as educating the public, disseminating knowledge and ideas, and improving social and cultural standards. Academic books, as carriers of professional knowledge, possess distinct quasi-public good attributes. Generally, the supply of public goods with positive externalities is relatively insufficient, and market mechanisms that rely primarily on price regulation experience some degree of “failure,” requiring government intervention as an exogenous force to correct market competition mechanisms.

In the current academic publishing market, high-quality works suffer from long-term insufficient supply while low-quality works are oversupplied. This imbalanced supply-demand relationship weakens the positive externalities of academic books. Therefore, government departments must intervene to improve academic publishing quality, regulate the quantity of academic book publications, increase the effective supply of high-level academic works, and ensure the quasi-public good attributes of academic books.

To address quality issues in academic publishing, both academic and publishing circles have conducted in-depth research. Some directly target problems to analyze internal institutional mechanisms; others compare domestic and international publishing environments and policies to propose learning from foreign practices. As an intermediate link in the “achievement-funding-publication” chain, improving the top-level design of a quality-oriented academic publishing funding system represents an important pathway.

If we view academic publishing funding projects as public goods in the publishing market, government departments and university/research institutions are the suppliers of funding projects, authors are the demanders, and publishers, from the perspective of academic publishing funding, provide funding and can thus be considered suppliers.

Government departments, research institutions, and publishers, as suppliers of academic publishing funding projects, provide the vast majority of funding. Liu Yonghong [3] concluded through questionnaire surveys that the economic benefits of academic works primarily come from research funds and publishing funds. Although these projects differ in funding scope, published academic works show that various funding functions do not exhibit distinct characteristics and differences.

As demanders of academic publishing funding projects, authors always have “funding demand impulses” and maintain a funding game relationship with suppliers. Authors prioritize applying for publishing funding projects established by government departments, research institutions, and publishers or funding support provided by publishers. If selected, they gain both academic honors from project funding and reduced financial burdens. If not selected, they seek to cover publication costs through their own research project funds or discipline construction funds. If neither channel works, the final resort is self-funded publishing, as shown in Figure 1 [Figure 1: see original paper].

In other words, the three funding sources form an inverted triangle relationship. The proportion of funds in the second part (research project funds, discipline construction funds, etc.) and the third part (self-funded) varies according to the funding situation of the first part (special funding from government departments, research institutions, and publishers).

This shows that authors have relatively elastic demand for publishing funding projects. Suppliers should control the supply quantity of projects to reasonably guide authors’ publishing funding needs. Under the premise of selecting academic masterpieces and enhancing academic honors, they should improve the publishing funding system, highlight the differentiated orientation functions of various funding projects, reduce the funding quantity for low-quality academic works, and avoid forming a “tiered funding” effect in the academic publishing market.

This paper’s analytical approach starts from the supply of publishing funding projects, selecting funding projects established by three main sponsors—

government departments, research institutions, and publishers—and employing citation-based bibliometric evaluation to assess the academic influence of publicly funded publications. Although citation-based bibliometric evaluation is not the sole indicator of academic influence, this paper uses it as a reference indicator for evaluating academic works, aiming to discover the influence of publications with different funding methods and intensities in the academic community. From this perspective, it explores pathways to improve academic publishing quality by optimizing the academic publishing funding system.

2. Highlighting Academic Evaluation Functions: Leveraging National Funding Projects to Lead Disciplines

National-level funding projects refer to various publishing funding projects led by government departments and oriented toward the national scope. Zhang Xi-aohui [6] argues that China's national publishing funding system can be divided into comprehensive publishing funding systems and specialized publishing funding systems. The National Publishing Fund is currently China's most important comprehensive publishing funding system, covering all disciplinary directions and carrier types. Specialized publishing funding systems primarily provide funding for specific publishing fields or particular publishing processes, including the National Ancient Books Compilation and Publishing Funding Project, the Chinese Academic Translation Project, and the Silk Road Book Publishing Project.

Publishing funding systems in the philosophy and social sciences field, besides targeting specific funding recipients, also feature vertical discipline-specific funding characteristics. Selected projects are chosen vertically from various disciplinary fields, such as the National Philosophy and Social Sciences Achievement Library, the National Social Science Fund Post-funding Project, and the Ministry of Education's Philosophy and Social Sciences Research Post-funding Project.

These funding projects not only play a commanding role in directing academic publishing through topic selection but also function to some extent as academic achievement evaluation mechanisms. For instance, in original academic research, the National Philosophy and Social Sciences Achievement Library is a recognized influential academic publishing funding project in China's academic community. Its funded projects often represent the development level and research height of relevant disciplines in China, undoubtedly playing a demonstrative and leading role in publishing academic masterpieces. The National Social Science Fund Post-funding Project and the Ministry of Education's Philosophy and Social Sciences Research Post-funding Project serve similar functions.

This paper uses the National Philosophy and Social Sciences Achievement Library as an example, conducting quantitative analysis on the quality of academic publishing funding project outcomes by comparing citation data with those of major academic publishers in China's humanities and social sciences field.

Xie Shuguang et al. [7] scored and ranked 101 academic publishing institutions across six dimensions: academic publishing capacity, academic publishing resource integration capacity, academic product processing capacity, academic product marketing and communication capacity, digital publishing capacity, and international publishing capacity. Among the top 20 institutions in humanities and social sciences academic publishing capacity are: Social Sciences Academic Press, Peking University Press, China Renmin University Press, Science Press, Law Press, China Social Sciences Press, People's Press, Beijing Normal University Press, Zhejiang University Press, Guangxi Normal University Press, Economic Science Press, Tsinghua University Press, Zhonghua Book Company, The Commercial Press, Intellectual Property Publishing House, Higher Education Press, China Machine Press, Nanjing University Press, China Agriculture Press, and Wuhan University Press. These 20 publishers basically represent the publishing standards for academic books in China's humanities and social sciences field.

Analysis of citation data for academic books published by these 20 representative publishers reveals that from 2011 to 2018, they published 534,320 academic books with total citations of 4,563,269, averaging 8.5 citations per book. This data basically represents the citation situation of academic books published by major academic publishers in China, as shown in Table 1 .

From 2011 to 2018, the National Philosophy and Social Sciences Achievement Library funded 453 projects, with total citations of 29,659, averaging approximately 65.5 citations per project—far exceeding the 8.5 average for the 20 major academic publishers, as shown in Table 2 .

As shown in Figure 3 [Figure 3: see original paper], the longer the time since publication, the greater the difference in average citations between the National Philosophy and Social Sciences Achievement Library and major academic publishers in the humanities and social sciences field. This fully demonstrates that as a national-level project, the Achievement Library possesses high academic influence and leadership in academia.

Further analysis of the Achievement Library's citation data by discipline (Figure 4 [Figure 4: see original paper]) reveals that disciplines such as Party History and Party Building, Law, Education, Archaeology, Marxism-Leninism and Social Sciences, Political Science, and Chinese Literature have greater influence, with citation counts exceeding the average and surpassing those of major academic publishers. In contrast, Military Science, Statistics, and Demography show weaker influence, with lower citation counts—particularly Military Science and Demography, which fall below the average of major academic publishers. Additionally, although Sports Science, Education, and Party History and Party Building show high citation counts, the number of selected works in these disciplines is relatively small, not matching the overall scale of disciplinary development.

Thus, we can leverage the evaluation function of national funding platforms to

exert their current academic leadership role nationwide and construct a vertical system of discipline-specific publishing funding to achieve research excellence. First, based on existing national projects, discipline-specific sub-series should be established to highlight the academic evaluation function of funding projects in various disciplines. For example, sub-series such as “Party History and Party Building,” “Law,” and “Management” could be created within the National Philosophy and Social Sciences Achievement Library to select academic masterpieces from each discipline and further highlight the academic achievement evaluation function. Second, while ensuring academic quality, the library should closely focus on the central work of the Party and the state to select outstanding achievements with relatively concentrated research themes. This approach would both consolidate disciplinary development foundations and facilitate the coordinated advancement of building Chinese-characteristic philosophy and social sciences disciplinary, academic, and discourse systems.

In fact, the historical discipline is establishing a vertical publishing funding system for the national historical community. For instance, the Chinese Academy of History has established an “Academic Publishing Funding Project,” primarily divided into “Academic Library Projects” and “General Funding Projects.” It selects and funds high-quality historical research achievements nationwide that adhere to the standpoint, viewpoint, and methodology of historical materialism and systematically study Chinese history and culture. Application requirements, qualification review, and evaluation rules are tailored to the actual conditions of historical research. The “Academic Library Project” has effectively played a demonstrative and leading role in China’s historical community. Since its establishment, it has published works such as *Contemporary Russian Historical Research* and *Studies on Protestantism and Roman Catholicism During the Reformation Period*, which have not only gained recognition from the historical community for their quality but also exerted academic leadership.

3. Highlighting Differentiated Incentive Functions: Controlling the Scale of Institutional Publishing Funding Projects and Weakening Universal Funding

In the academic publishing funding field, publishing funding projects established by research institutions occupy the dominant position. These projects are numerous and diverse, primarily targeting faculty and researchers within universities, academies of social sciences, and party schools (administrative institutes) to alleviate concerns about publicly publishing academic achievements, thus possessing some universal benefits. However, it should be noted that some achievements with low academic value and limited publishing significance have been mixed in, negatively impacting the overall quality of academic publishing.

Since its inception in 2011, the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences Innovation Project Academic Publishing Funding Project has funded over one thousand projects. Funded books are generally divided into two categories. Books se-

lected for the Academy Library Project receive not only full publication funding but also post-funding support in the form of royalties. Key project books are divided into two categories using 300,000 characters as the standard, with full funding provided according to actual publication costs. As a representative funding project in China's philosophy and social sciences field, citation analysis can reveal differences in academic influence among achievements recognized by expert review at varying academic levels.

Analysis of Chinese Academy of Social Sciences Innovation Project Academic Publishing Funding Projects published from 2011 to 2018 shows that Academy Library projects averaged 24.4 citations, higher than the 15.2 and 12.1 citations for key projects (over 300,000 characters) and key projects (300,000 characters and under), respectively.

The Academy Library project's average citation count also far exceeds that of academic books published by major humanities and social sciences publishers. Only key projects (under 300,000 characters) from 2017-2018 had average citations lower than those of major publishers in the same period. This indicates that Academy Library books possess higher academic influence than key project books and those published by major academic publishers. From the perspective of academic influence, these books have high academic value and should maintain existing funding policies that provide post-funding support and rewards through publication fees and royalty subsidies.

The publishing industry generally considers a 300,000-character work sufficient for academic discourse, so this threshold is used to further subdivide key project book citation data. Key projects (over 300,000 characters) averaged 15.2 citations, while key projects (300,000 characters and under) averaged 12.1 citations. Although a gap exists, the difference is not substantial, indicating that the academic influence of funded key projects is not highly correlated with work length. Based on this, if we improve the existing publishing funding system from the perspective of enhancing publishing quality and saving publication funds, we propose adopting a fixed-amount funding method for key project books based on the 300,000-character standard.

Combining the above case, books with different funding intensities demonstrate different academic influences. Funding sponsors can establish multiple tiers within the existing funding system, including incentive funding, full funding, and fixed-amount funding. By controlling funding scale through different intensities, they can improve publishing quality. After expert review, funded academic achievements can be categorized into tiers. For exceptionally outstanding works, besides funding publication costs, royalties can be awarded as rewards. For relatively excellent works, full publication funding can be provided based on actual word count. For works with good academic quality, fixed partial funding can be provided according to the 300,000-character standard, with authors covering excess costs. This approach would, on one hand, pressure authors to streamline their work length and reduce self-publishing costs, while on the other hand, use saved funds to support more academic publications and improve fund

utilization efficiency.

4. Highlighting Market-Oriented Operation Functions: Supporting Publishers' Academic Publishing Standard Mechanisms and Strengthening Academic Publishing Brands

The *14th Five-Year Plan for the Publishing Industry* emphasizes “persisting in prioritizing social benefits...correctly handling the relationship between the ideological and industrial attributes of publishing and between social and economic benefits, actively fulfilling publishing social responsibilities, focusing on publishing’s social impact, promoting mainstream values, disseminating positive energy, and fulfilling publishing duties and missions” [1]. Publishers are state-owned sole proprietorships or state-controlled enterprises that must participate in market competition as market entities while also serving as state departments providing high-quality spiritual products to the people, achieving unity between social and economic benefits.

In the academic publishing market, due to the limited readership of academic works, publishers find it difficult to obtain high profits from market sales. Instead, they primarily rely on publishing funding subsidies to maintain operations through market mechanisms. Therefore, publishers need more support from competent authorities in terms of policy and funding to adhere to academic standards and build academic brands. In utilizing publishing funds and market mechanisms to create academic publishing brands, publishers have successfully explored two representative models.

The first model involves publishers absorbing social capital to establish academic publishing brands, achieving unity between social and economic benefits. The “SDX & Harvard-Yenching Academic Series,” jointly planned by SDX Joint Publishing Company and the Harvard-Yenching Institute, exemplifies this approach. Its establishment of an academic committee and recommender system, along with its independent and rigorous academic review and selection system, has been emulated by numerous publishers.

Citation analysis of the “SDX & Harvard-Yenching Academic Series” reveals that works published between 2011 and 2018 averaged 63.0 citations, showing significant advantage over citation counts of academic books published by major humanities and social sciences publishers during the same period. This substantiates the strong academic influence of the “SDX & Harvard-Yenching Academic Series.”

The second model involves competent authorities and publishers jointly establishing publishing funding projects to create academic publishing brands. For example, the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences supports the China Social Sciences Press in establishing the “Chinese Academy of Social Sciences Doctoral Dissertation Library,” funding several publications annually with positive

results.

Citation analysis of the “Chinese Academy of Social Sciences Doctoral Dissertation Library” reveals its strong academic influence in humanities disciplines: 40 books were cited 427 times total, averaging 10.7 citations per book, while 32 social science books were cited 161 times total, averaging 5.0 citations per book. This demonstrates that the Doctoral Dissertation Library has established certain brand recognition. Since 2019, the National Office for Philosophy and Social Sciences has also launched the National Social Science Fund Excellent Doctoral Dissertation Publishing Project, aiming to select and publish outstanding doctoral dissertations nationwide with in-depth research, high innovation, and significant development potential. This shows that this type of national publishing funding project has also gained national-level attention and recognition.

The success of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences Doctoral Dissertation Library brand stems primarily from two factors. First, competent authorities provided the China Social Sciences Press with certain support in publishing funds and management policies during the brand’s initial establishment, helping the publisher start well. Established in 2007, the Doctoral Dissertation Library received not only partial funding support from the competent authority from the beginning but also emphasized strengthening institutional construction, implementing the *Management Measures for the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences Doctoral Dissertation Library* issued in the name of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences. The publisher refined the review mechanism according to these measures, formulated the *Academic Work Style Guidelines of China Social Sciences Press*, and strictly controlled academic quality in publication topic selection. Second, the China Social Sciences Press conducted market-oriented operations for the library brand, recommending key titles to major Xinhua bookstores, private academic bookstores, and university and public libraries nationwide; showcasing key projects at events such as the Beijing Book Fair, national library collection fairs, and the Beijing International Book Fair; and holding new book release conferences with invitations to central-level media for enhanced promotion and publicity.

Thus, under China’s current publishing management system, leveraging competent authorities to establish distinctive academic publishing brands and providing publishing funding and royalty subsidies for outstanding academic achievements represents an effective way to achieve unity between social and economic benefits. Competent authorities should provide partial subsidies for publishing funds, strengthen institutional construction and standardized management, and support publishers in organizing and planning excellent publication topics and establishing academic publishing brands. Publishers should strengthen institutional construction in selection mechanisms, adhere to quality and standards as guides, strictly implement academic publishing norms, and refine brands to be meticulous and substantive.

Conclusion

Through policy analysis of national academic publishing and bibliometric analysis of academic publishing funding projects in the China Citation Database, this paper draws the following conclusions:

First, in the academic publishing field, government departments, research institutions, and publishers are important funding sponsors. At the macro level, government departments lead national publishing funding projects to coordinate with national medium- and long-term development plans, demonstrating exemplary and guiding effects. At the meso level, research institutions lead the establishment of academic publishing funding projects with institutional or regional attributes, covering relatively narrow scopes and providing certain internal incentive effects. At the micro level, publishers lead the creation of academic publishing brands, pioneering in academic publishing standards and market-oriented operations to form certain brand effects.

Second, the three funding sponsors—government departments, research institutions, and publishers—form an orderly operating academic publishing funding system. In terms of coverage, they form an organic combination of macro, meso, and micro dimensions, each performing its own duties to achieve comprehensive coverage of publication topics. In terms of functional implementation, the three parties should form a differentiated funding pattern, focusing on different aspects while maintaining academic quality to avoid the homogeneous competition pattern formed by “tiered funding.” The three sponsors should form effective synergy to jointly promote the improvement of academic publishing quality.

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Note: Figure translations are in progress. See original paper for figures.

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