

Exploring the Cultivation Path of Editorial Talent in the Publishing Industry from the Perspective of High-Quality Development (Postprint)

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Abstract

[Purpose] To implement the high-quality development concept and construct a talent cultivation pathway that aligns with the developmental needs of the publishing industry. [Method] This study, grounded in an understanding of the essence of high-quality development and the current predicaments facing editorial talent development in the publishing sector, adopts the literature research methodology integrated with practical work experience. [Results] Four recommendations for editorial talent cultivation are proposed: reducing quantity while enhancing quality to optimize the working environment for editorial personnel; intensifying training to elevate the comprehensive competencies of editorial staff; establishing clear planning to define career development trajectories for editorial personnel; and implementing scientific selection mechanisms to expand the talent sourcing channels for editorial staff. [Conclusion] The high-quality development of the publishing industry is contingent upon the construction of a robust editorial talent team; therefore, the exploration of editorial talent cultivation pathways should be based on the characteristics of editorial work and the principles of editorial professional growth.

Full Text

Exploring the Cultivation Path of Editorial Talent in the Publishing Industry from the Perspective of High-Quality Development

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Abstract

[Purpose] To implement the concept of high-quality development and construct a talent cultivation path that meets the evolving needs of the publishing industry. **[Method]** This paper employs literature research methods combined with practical work experience, grounded in an understanding of high-quality development's connotation and the current dilemmas facing editorial talent development. **[Results]** Four recommendations are proposed for cultivating editorial talent: (1) reduce quantity while increasing quality to optimize editors' work environment; (2) strengthen training to enhance comprehensive skills; (3) provide clear planning to define development directions; and (4) implement scientific selection to broaden talent sources. **[Conclusion]** The high-quality development of the publishing industry depends fundamentally on building a strong editorial talent team. Cultivation paths must be explored according to the characteristics of editorial work and the laws of professional growth.

Keywords: high-quality development; editing and publishing; talent cultivation; growth path; cultural powerhouse construction

The concept of “high-quality development” was first explicitly mentioned in the report of the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China in October 2017, and has since extended to various industries as an important guiding principle. As the core of the cultural industry, a crucial window for Chinese culture to “go global,” and a vital carrier for cultural inheritance, the publishing industry should resolutely implement this concept, prioritize social benefits while achieving unity between social and economic returns, promote and inherit Chinese culture, stimulate the cultural innovation and creativity of the entire nation, and contribute to building a socialist cultural powerhouse. In December 2021, the National Press and Publication Administration issued the *14th Five-Year Plan for the Development of the Publishing Industry*, which clearly states: “With promoting high-quality development of the publishing industry as the theme, deepening supply-side structural reform in the publishing sector as the main thread, promoting reform and innovation as the fundamental driving force, producing outstanding works as the central link, and meeting the people's growing needs for learning and reading as the fundamental purpose, provide more substantial, richer, and higher-quality publishing products and services to the people, and promote better quality, higher efficiency, stronger competitiveness, and greater influence in the publishing industry” [1]. This highlights the nation's emphasis on high-quality development and its critical importance for the publishing sector.

Industry development cannot proceed without talent development. Editorial talent constitutes the foundational force for publishing development. Only with high-quality editorial talent can the publishing industry form new quality productive forces and achieve genuine high-quality development. Building a high-quality editorial talent team serves as an important guarantee for advancing the

construction of a socialist cultural powerhouse [2]. In September 2021, President Xi Jinping emphasized at the Central Talent Work Conference: “We have entered a new journey of comprehensively building a modern socialist country and advancing toward the second centenary goal. We are closer than at any time in history to achieving the grand goal of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation, and we are more eager for talent than at any time in history. Talent is an important indicator of a country’s comprehensive national strength. We must enhance our sense of urgency, attach greater importance to independent talent cultivation, and accelerate the establishment of a competitive advantage in human resources” [3]. This underscores the importance of talent cultivation in the new era, particularly for the publishing industry, which must prioritize editorial talent development within the context of high-quality development.

However, analysis of existing literature reveals that research on high-quality publishing development focuses primarily on four aspects: necessity studies, connotation studies, bottleneck studies, and strategy studies. Strategy studies tend to emphasize controlling scale and adjusting structure, creating content value and building brands, applying new technologies and developing new products, and fostering quality consciousness [4]. Research on cultivating high-quality editorial talent remains relatively scarce, making it difficult to achieve scale effects and provide comprehensive, systematic value references for editorial talent cultivation under the high-quality development framework. Therefore, it is essential to strengthen exploration of editorial talent cultivation paths by integrating industry characteristics and practical work experience, thereby forming new quality productive forces that meet both contemporary requirements and industry development needs, and promoting high-quality development in publishing while contributing to national cultural powerhouse construction.

1. Understanding the Connotation of High-Quality Development in the Publishing Industry

A profound understanding of high-quality development’s connotation in publishing constitutes an important prerequisite for exploring editorial talent cultivation paths. Huang Han [5] argues that high-quality development represents a new development concept in which publishing enterprises are guided by producing outstanding works, supported by high-quality talent, guaranteed by efficient operational mechanisms, based on advanced publishing technologies, and centered on international brands as core competitiveness. Liang Yihong [6] contends that the connotation includes ensuring publication quality, building a strong talent team, optimizing existing systems and mechanisms, applying modern publishing technologies, and enhancing international communication capabilities. Lu Xianhe [7] summarizes the connotation as following the law of quantitative and qualitative change and adhering to “four orientations”: political orientation, problem orientation, goal orientation, and innovation orientation. Li Zhizhang [8] provides a nearly comprehensive summary, including following Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era,

maintaining correct political direction, prioritizing social benefits while unifying them with economic benefits, providing publishing products and services that meet people's spiritual and cultural needs, adhering to new development concepts, promoting innovation-driven development, and facilitating integrated development of traditional and digital publishing.

Overall, current understandings of high-quality development in publishing concentrate on five dimensions: publishing products, publishing talent, publishing technology, institutional mechanisms, and international communication. The importance of publishing talent is evident. Although the publishing industry's nature, forms of expression, and operational mechanisms may evolve with the times, the crucial role of editorial talent in its development cannot be overlooked. Particularly in the intelligent era, as the publishing industry undergoes unprecedented profound transformation, it must remain people-centered and prioritize editorial talent cultivation to maintain its cultural essence while adapting to future social development, and to uphold cultural creativity amid technological penetration and ideological impact.

2. Dilemmas in Editorial Talent Development in the Publishing Industry

The “market-centered” publishing concept, while addressing deficiencies in planned publishing, enhancing market adaptability and competitiveness, and promoting marketization and diversification, has also led to limitations. Excessive focus on immediate market demand has caused publishers to neglect long-term valuable publications, increasing operational risks and creating imbalances between economic and social benefits [9]. Fluctuating reader demands have intensified competition, yet massive publication output has failed to truly satisfy readers, instead causing resource scarcity and rising costs. Under survival and development pressures, publishing units frantically chase reader demands and develop new products while having little energy to optimize internal mechanisms, explore distinctive features, or cultivate editorial talent, creating a vicious cycle that prevents substantive improvement.

In this context, editorial talent in the publishing industry faces the following development dilemmas:

2.1 Rising Public Demand for Spiritual and Cultural Products but Insufficient Quality

In contemporary society, rapid economic development and improving living standards have led to increasingly diverse and sophisticated public demands for spiritual and cultural products. However, the quality of published cultural products has not significantly improved to meet these growing needs. The main causes are excessive commercialization of the cultural industry and fragmentation of social life [10]. Excessive commercialization drives publishers to seek quick profits, focusing on high-return, fast-turnaround projects that create serious homoge-

nization while underinvesting in core content creation. This severely compresses creative and refinement time, preventing the production of high-quality publications. The fast-consumer mentality also makes creators impatient, unable to immerse themselves in life, accumulate materials, and conceive carefully. Instead, they chase hot topics and trends, adopting formulaic creation models that lack unique perspectives and profound connotations. Additionally, low market entry barriers allow creators with varying competence levels to enter, further lowering overall product quality. This contradiction between rising public demand and declining product quality poses a significant challenge and obstacle to editorial talent development.

2.2 High Production Costs but Low Income Levels for Editorial Talent

In publishing development, the contradiction between relatively high production costs and relatively low income levels for editorial talent has become increasingly prominent, severely constraining healthy industry development. Production costs involve multiple pressures: rising raw material costs, particularly paper prices affected by market supply and demand and environmental policies; high copyright acquisition costs due to intense competition for quality content resources; and substantial investments required for digital publishing platform construction, technology development, and personnel training to adapt to digital trends. In stark contrast, editorial talent receives relatively low compensation [11] despite serving as the core element in the publishing process, undertaking crucial tasks such as topic planning, content review, and author communication. This misalignment between effort and reward stems primarily from limited overall profit margins in publishing, squeezed by digital transformation impacts that reduce profitability and constrain human resource budgets. This phenomenon not only affects editors' motivation and creativity but also causes severe talent loss, impacting sustainable industry development.

2.3 Rising Professional Competency Requirements but Insufficient Development Opportunities

Driven by technological innovation and evolving times, the publishing industry faces profound transformation, with publishers imposing higher professional competency requirements on editors while providing inadequate opportunities for improvement. Editors must now possess not only solid writing skills and keen topic judgment but also content innovation capabilities aligned with contemporary trends and reader needs. Under digital technology's impetus, they must master digital skills and new media operation capabilities. However, some publishers insufficiently value training, with limited budgets resulting in outdated content and monotonous methods, particularly lacking training in digital publishing technology and new media operations [12]. The industry also lacks comprehensive exchange platforms and long-term learning mechanisms, providing few opportunities for experience sharing and knowledge exchange, making it difficult for editors to access cutting-edge knowledge and advanced concepts.

Heavy daily workloads and prolonged pressure leave editors with little time for self-improvement. This imbalance between competency requirements and development opportunities severely constrains both individual career development and the industry' s innovative capacity and market competitiveness.

2.4 Rapid Social Development but Slow Editorial Talent Growth

In today' s era of rapid social development, daily technological advances, and multicultural integration, the publishing industry faces profound impacts. However, editorial talent grows relatively slowly, struggling to adapt to the industry' s fast-paced development. Readers increasingly demand diverse publications with depth, breadth, and innovative formats. Meanwhile, big data and artificial intelligence applications in publishing require editors to possess corresponding technical capabilities and innovative thinking. Yet editorial work' s unique nature demands long-term knowledge accumulation and experience 沉淀 to develop the textual sensitivity and value judgment essential for the role. Furthermore, editorial talent cultivation primarily occurs through on-the-job training, while university education remains overly theoretical and relatively outdated, further prolonging the growth process [13]. Consequently, editors often become overwhelmed addressing new challenges without time for deep experience accumulation, resulting in slow personal growth that affects both individual career development and industry innovation.

3. Recommendations for Cultivating Editorial Talent

3.1 Reduce Quantity and Increase Quality to Optimize Editors' Work Environment

First, improve topic quality through strict screening. Topic planning determines publication quality. Publishers should conduct in-depth market research to identify profound and innovative topics while abandoning low-quality, follow-the-trend projects. Simultaneously, establish rigorous multi-round review mechanisms for comprehensive quality control in content and language, reducing low-quality output and increasing the proportion of high-quality publications. Second, optimize workflows to allow editors to focus on core business. Editors are often burdened with trivial tasks. Publishers should introduce automated office software, streamline publishing processes, eliminate redundant steps, and establish efficient collaboration mechanisms to improve editorial efficiency. Third, avoid blind expansion and develop distinctive features. Publishers should analyze their resources, brand positioning, and market orientation to focus on specialized fields, enhance market competitiveness through differentiated advantages, abandon industrial thinking, emphasize connotative development [14], and achieve sustainable, high-quality development. A favorable work environment helps editors develop correct cognitive orientation and devote themselves wholeheartedly to cultural production, thereby creating more high-quality, valuable publications that better satisfy the people' s growing spiritual and cultural needs.

3.2 Strengthen Training to Enhance Editors' Comprehensive Skills

First, deepen professional knowledge reserves. Beyond regular training on editorial standards, publishing regulations, and copyright management, publishers should strengthen internal and external communication based on practical work needs to facilitate professional knowledge growth and career experience accumulation. Second, improve communication and collaboration effectiveness. Publishing involves multi-departmental coordination. Publishers should organize team collaboration and project communication skills training that simulates real work scenarios to enhance editors' efficiency in communicating with authors, designers, and distribution staff, ensuring smooth project progression. Third, expand innovative thinking capabilities. Publishers should encourage editors to attend industry seminars and introduce brainstorming and creative inspiration training methods to stimulate innovative ideas in topic planning and content presentation, creating competitive quality publications. Training constitutes the primary and crucial pathway for improving editors' comprehensive abilities, requiring publishers to construct comprehensive and effective training systems from multiple dimensions [15].

3.3 Provide Clear Planning to Define Editors' Development Directions

First, combine targeted and non-targeted cultivation. For editors with clear career orientation and expertise, implement targeted cultivation to deeply develop their professional capabilities and help them become "expert-type" talent. For newcomers with undefined career directions, implement non-targeted cultivation through reasonable arrangements and timely guidance to help them identify their interests and strengths, thereby clarifying their career path for long-term development. Second, improve compensation and basic security systems. Beyond clarifying development directions, publishers must provide competitive compensation packages matched to positions, thereby motivating editors to strive upward according to career plans while contributing to enterprise development and national cultural construction. Given editorial work's unique nature, editors should also emphasize their own career planning, establish long-term ambitious goals, and continuously learn and improve to maximize their professional value.

3.4 Implement Scientific Selection to Broaden Editorial Talent Sources

In the publishing industry's dynamic development, traditional selection methods focusing primarily on major and academic credentials can no longer meet diversified and innovative development needs. Overemphasis on these criteria may overlook potential talent with interdisciplinary knowledge and innovative thinking, limiting editorial team vitality and creativity. Therefore, scientific selection systems should be established for comprehensive candidate evaluation, emphasizing comprehensive qualities including political literacy, cultural accomplishment, innovation capability, and collaboration skills. Additionally,

publishers should strengthen university-enterprise partnerships by establishing deep cooperation with universities to jointly develop talent cultivation programs, participate in curriculum design, integrate cutting-edge industry knowledge, and build a “professional talent + publishing practical skills” cultivation system [16] that aligns academic learning with industry needs, enabling early identification and cultivation of outstanding talent to inject fresh blood and drive continuous industry progress.

The era has endowed editors with new missions [17]. Coupled with public attention to publication quality and national requirements for high-quality development, publishing enterprises should prioritize editorial team building. Beyond improving overall competence and skill levels, they should follow editorial growth patterns and strengthen professional and even scholarly cultivation of editorial talent [18] to promote healthy and sustainable publishing industry development.

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

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