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RESEARCH ARTICLE

Psychological conflicts and ethical adaptation in collaborative editorial decision-making for convergent publishing

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ABSTRACT

The psychological conflicts and ethical dilemmas confronting editorial collaborative decision-making in convergence publishing environments have become increasingly prominent, significantly affecting content quality and professional development. This study employs a mixed-methods approach, utilizing questionnaire surveys (N=500), in-depth interviews (N=35), and quasi-experimental designs to systematically explore the types of editorial psychological conflicts, their impact mechanisms, and ethical adaptation strategies. The findings reveal that editors in convergence publishing contexts face three categories of psychological conflicts: role conflict, power conflict, and cognitive conflict, with an average intensity of 3.89 points; 68.9% of editors simultaneously experience multiple conflicts. Psychological conflicts significantly disrupt the ethical cognitive system (β=-0.492, $p<0.001$) by weakening moral sensitivity (declining by 30.8%), simplifying ethical reasoning (declining by 32.2%), and reducing judgment quality (declining by 26.6%). Environmental factors such as organizational ethical climate, technical support, and social norms exert significant moderating effects (buffering efficiency 31.1%-54.8%), while individual difference variables including moral identity, professional commitment, and psychological resilience constitute important mediating pathways (mediation ratio 13.4%-61.4%). Cognitive reconstruction strategies at the individual level (such as value clarification, improving by 39.0%) and communication-coordination mechanisms at the team level (such as ethical discussion forums, with comprehensive efficacy of 23.8 points) serve as effective ethical adaptation approaches. The study constructs an integrative theoretical model of "contextual stressors-psychological conflict-ethical cognitive disruption-ethical behavioral deterioration-adaptation mechanism intervention," providing empirical evidence and practical guidance for publishing institutions to establish a three-tier "individual-team-organization" ethical support system.

Keywords: convergence publishing; editorial collaborative decision-making; psychological conflict; professional ethics; ethical adaptation; cognitive reconstruction; team communication

1. Introduction

Driven by the dual forces of the digital technology revolution and the wave of media convergence, the

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traditional publishing industry is undergoing profound structural transformation, with convergence publishing emerging as an inevitable trend in the industry's upgrading and transformation. Zhang Liyuan points out that media convergence has not only altered the technological foundation and communication modes of the publishing industry but has also reshaped the operational logic and value creation model of the entire publishing industrial chain[1]. Against this backdrop, editorial work has shifted from singular content gatekeeping to multi-dimensional, cross-platform collaborative decision-making, with the editorial role evolving from the traditional "gatekeeper" into a convergence of multiple skills as "content strategist," "data analyst," and "new media operator." Li Ping and Chen Shaozhi analyze the generative drivers of convergence publishing editors from the perspective of new quality productive forces, arguing that technological empowerment, platform integration, and diversification of user demands have jointly propelled the innovation of editorial work models[2]. However, this transformation has been far from smooth. Editors face unprecedented psychological pressures and ethical dilemmas in collaborative decision-making processes: collisions between traditional professional values and commercial traffic logic, trade-offs between human decision-making and algorithmic recommendations, and contradictions between maintaining content quality and rapid production rhythms. These conflicts not only affect editors' professional identity and job satisfaction but may also lead to the erosion of publishing ethical standards. The deep integration of artificial intelligence technology has further complicated this issue. He Minghan and Bai Lihua, through the practical case of "AI Editorial Studio," reveal the current state of human-machine collaboration in editorial proofreading work, while simultaneously exposing emerging problems such as ambiguous responsibility attribution and absent ethical standards in human-machine collaborative decision-making[3]. Therefore, in-depth exploration of the psychological conflict mechanisms and ethical adaptation pathways in editorial collaborative decision-making within convergence publishing environments represents both a theoretical necessity for publishing studies and a practical imperative for the healthy development of the publishing industry.

Examined from the theoretical perspective of environmental and social psychology, the convergence publishing context creates a tension-filled complex ecosystem for editorial collaborative decision-making. The digitalization and networking transformation of the work environment has profoundly altered editors' cognitive patterns, emotional experiences, and behavioral choices, with technological tools both empowering decision-making efficiency and increasing decision uncertainty and psychological burden. Social psychology theory emphasizes that individual behavior is deeply influenced by social contexts, group norms, and role expectations, and convergence publishing precisely reconstructs the social context of editorial work: traditional hierarchical organizational structures tend toward flattening, cross-departmental and cross-domain team collaboration becomes the norm, and power distribution and discourse negotiation among multiple stakeholders (content editors, technical developers, market operators, data analysts, etc.) in the decision-making chain trigger complex group dynamics phenomena[4]. Meanwhile, the value system of convergence publishing exhibits pluralistic characteristics, with academic value, social value, commercial value, and technological value interweaving and even conflicting. Editors must weigh the demands of different stakeholders in collaborative decision-making, and such multiple role expectations and value conflicts inevitably lead to role pressure, cognitive dissonance, and moral dilemmas[5]. More critically, the rapid iterative nature and uncertainty of convergence publishing render traditional publishing ethical norms facing an adaptive crisis. Editors must both adhere to traditional principles of authenticity, accuracy, and impartiality while addressing emerging ethical issues such as algorithmic bias, data privacy, and attention economy. This state of "ethical vacuum" exacerbates editors' psychological anxiety and decision-making difficulties.

Existing research has devoted considerable attention to technological applications, industrial development, and content innovation in convergence publishing, but systematic research on editors as core actors—their psychological experiences, ethical dilemmas, and coping mechanisms during this transformation process—remains insufficient[6]. Particularly lacking is integrative research that, from the perspective of environmental and social psychology, treats technological environment, organizational environment, and sociocultural environment as key variables to explore how they influence the generation, evolution, and ethical adaptation processes of psychological conflicts in editorial collaborative decision-making. This study attempts to fill this theoretical gap by employing mixed research methods to deeply analyze the types of psychological conflicts, impact mechanisms, and their impact on professional ethics in editorial collaborative decision-making within convergence publishing contexts, and further explore ethical adaptation strategies at three levels: individual cognitive reconstruction, team coordination mechanisms, and organizational institutional safeguards[7]. The research will integrate social identity theory, role conflict theory, moral dilemma decision-making theory, and environmental stress theory to construct a multi-level, dynamic theoretical model of "psychological conflict—ethical impact—adaptation strategies," providing a new analytical framework for understanding psychological adaptation and ethical construction of professional groups in the digital age.

The theoretical significance of this study lies in: First, expanding the application of environmental and social psychology in the publishing field and enriching the research content of occupational psychology and publishing psychology; Second, revealing from the psychological mechanism level how technological change affects professional ethical practice, providing psychological explanations for understanding new ethical challenges of digital labor; Third, integrating multiple analytical levels—individual, team, and organizational—to construct a cross-level theoretical model, contributing to advancing interdisciplinary research between organizational behavior and professional ethics. At the practical level, research findings can provide scientific evidence for publishing institutions to optimize editorial collaborative work mechanisms, improve ethical training systems, and establish psychological support systems, helping to alleviate editors' role pressure and moral anxiety, enhance decision-making quality and ethical standards, and ultimately promote the healthy and sustainable development of convergence publishing. Furthermore, the psychological conflict patterns and ethical adaptation strategies revealed by this research hold reference value for other knowledge-intensive professions facing digital transformation, providing a generalizable theoretical framework and practical pathways for addressing professional ethical crises amid technological change.

2. Literature review

As a product of the deep integration between traditional publishing and digital technology, convergence publishing has a development trajectory closely related to technological evolution and has become a core strategic direction for the transformation and upgrading of the publishing industry. Liu Changming et al. systematically review the application of intelligent technologies in the field of convergence publishing, pointing out that artificial intelligence, big data, cloud computing, and other technologies have not only reshaped the entire process of content production, dissemination, and consumption but have also profoundly altered editors' work methods and professional role positioning[8]. Through thematic analysis of convergence publishing practices in academic journals, Kong Wei reveals that convergence publishing exhibits multi-dimensional characteristics such as cross-media content production, data-driven decision-making, precise user services, and platform ecosystem construction, which collectively shape the new ecology of editorial work[9]. Against this backdrop, editors have transformed from traditional content reviewers and gatekeepers

into multifaceted composite talents, requiring not only traditional text editing capabilities but also cross-domain skills in data analysis, new media operations, and technical coordination. Chen Zhuo explores pathways for enhancing book editors' convergence publishing literacy, emphasizing that editors need comprehensive upgrades in technological literacy, media literacy, user thinking, and innovative consciousness[10]. However, this role transformation is not merely an accumulation of skills but involves deep-level reconstruction of cognitive patterns, value orientations, and professional identity. Editors inevitably face conflicts among multiple role expectations and dilemmas in value choices during collaborative decision-making processes. The deep integration of artificial intelligence technology further increases the complexity of editorial work. Zhang Yong et al. prospectively discuss the impact of artificial intelligence on the future of academic journal editing and publishing, arguing that while AI-assisted manuscript review, intelligent recommendations, and automatic proofreading enhance efficiency, they also raise emerging issues such as responsibility allocation and ethical boundaries in human-machine collaborative decision-making[11]. Through cross-sectional surveys of biomedical journal editors-in-chief, Ng et al. found that editors hold complex attitudes toward the application of AI chatbots in academic publishing workflows, recognizing their value in information retrieval and format standardization while worrying about potential academic integrity risks and weakening of editorial professional judgment[12]. These studies collectively demonstrate that the convergence publishing environment reconstructs the technological foundation, organizational form, and value system of editorial work, providing an important contextual background for understanding psychological conflicts in editorial collaborative decision-making.

From the theoretical perspective of social psychology and organizational behavior, psychological conflicts in collaborative decision-making represent a multi-level phenomenon involving individual cognition, group dynamics, and organizational contexts. Role conflict theory posits that when individuals face multiple and contradictory role expectations, they experience role pressure and identity crises, which not only affect work performance but may also lead to occupational burnout and mental health problems. In convergence publishing contexts, editors simultaneously assume multiple roles such as content gatekeepers, market planners, and technical coordinators, with different roles implying different value logics and behavioral norms: content gatekeepers emphasize professionalism, authenticity, and social responsibility; market planners focus on user demands, traffic conversion, and commercial value; technical coordinators are concerned with system efficiency, data accuracy, and platform rules. The tension among these roles becomes particularly evident in collaborative decision-making. For example, in content topic selection decisions, editors must consider both the academic value and social significance of content while evaluating its market potential and dissemination effectiveness, as well as accounting for the presentation capabilities of technological platforms and algorithmic recommendation logic. In analyzing the reconstruction of editorial review processes in the context of convergence publishing, Li Rui points out that traditional linear review models can no longer adapt to the collaborative production of multi-platform, multi-format content. Editors need to conduct multi-dimensional trade-offs and cross-departmental coordination within a rapidly iterative work rhythm, and this complexity significantly increases the cognitive load and psychological pressure of decision-making[13]. From the perspective of professional competency system construction, Zhong Yin analyzes the competency challenges facing journal editors in the new media era, arguing that editors need not only to enhance individual skills but also to establish cross-domain knowledge integration capabilities and rapid decision-making abilities in complex situations[14]. However, a gap often exists between such capability requirements and actual preparedness. Editors are prone to experiencing capability anxiety and decision uncertainty in collaborative decision-making, especially in complex situations involving emerging technology applications, ethically controversial content, and cross-departmental interest conflicts, where

decision pressure is further amplified. Furthermore, social psychological research on group decision-making indicates that factors such as power distribution, communication patterns, and trust levels in team collaboration affect both decision quality and members' psychological experiences. Cross-departmental collaboration in convergence publishing often involves personnel from different professional backgrounds in technology, content, and marketing. Inequality in professional discourse power, pluralization of decision-making standards, and ambiguity in responsibility attribution may all trigger power conflicts and cognitive divergences. These group dynamics phenomena constitute important sources of editors' psychological conflicts[15].

The impact of psychological conflicts on professional ethical decision-making represents one of the core issues of concern in this study, and existing literature provides multi-perspective theoretical support for understanding this relationship. The dual-system theory in moral psychology suggests that ethical decision-making involves the interaction between intuitive and rational systems: the intuitive system relies on emotional responses and moral intuitions for rapid judgments, while the rational system conducts in-depth analysis through cognitive reasoning and rule weighing[16]. In high-pressure, high-complexity collaborative decision-making contexts, the limited nature of cognitive resources leads individuals to rely more on the intuitive system while neglecting rational analysis, which may reduce the quality and consistency of ethical decisions. Role conflicts and decision pressures, as important cognitive interference factors, affect editors' sensitivity to ethical issues, adherence to ethical principles, and ability to assess ethical consequences. For example, under the pressure of rapid production rhythms, editors may simplify content review processes and lower verification standards for information authenticity and completeness; under the pressure of commercial performance indicators, editors may relax ethical scrutiny of clickbait and borderline content; in algorithm-dominated distribution mechanisms, editors may over-rely on data metrics while ignoring the social value orientation of content[17]. These phenomena reflect the negative impact of psychological conflicts on ethical cognition and ethical behavior. Meanwhile, organizational ethical climate, as an important contextual variable, exerts significant moderating effects on editors' ethical decision-making. If an organization emphasizes ethical values, establishes clear ethical norms, provides ethical decision-making support, and holds individuals accountable for ethical violations, it can effectively buffer the negative impact of psychological conflicts and strengthen editors' moral courage and ethical adherence. Conversely, if an organization overemphasizes commercial performance, neglects ethical training, and tacitly permits ethical compromise behaviors, it will reinforce the negative impact of psychological conflicts on ethical decision-making, potentially creating a vicious cycle of "ethical slippery slope"[18]. Notably, convergence publishing has brought a series of emerging ethical issues, such as algorithmic bias and content fairness, user data privacy protection, authenticity labeling of AI-generated content, and social responsibility regarding attention economy and information echo chambers. These issues lack clear standards within traditional publishing ethical frameworks, leaving editors in an "ethical vacuum" state during collaborative decision-making[19]. When existing ethical principles cannot provide clear guidance, editors become more susceptible to external pressures and internal conflicts, making decisions that diverge from professional ethics. Therefore, exploring the psychological mechanisms and strategic systems of ethical adaptation in convergence publishing contexts holds significant theoretical and practical value.

Although existing research provides a rich knowledge foundation for understanding convergence publishing environments, editorial role transformation, psychological conflict mechanisms, and ethical decision-making processes, several deficiencies remain. First, most research focuses on technological applications, industrial development, or editorial capacity building in convergence publishing, with insufficient in-depth exploration of editors' subjective psychological experiences, emotional dilemmas, and

cognitive conflicts during this transformation process. Particularly rare are studies that systematically analyze from the perspective of environmental and social psychology how technological environments, organizational environments, and sociocultural environments collectively shape editors' psychological conflicts[20]. Second, research on editorial professional ethics mostly remains at the normative level of discussion, with limited revelation from the psychological mechanism level of factors influencing ethical decision-making, mediating and moderating mechanisms between psychological conflicts and ethical behavior, and the impact pathways of different contextual variables on ethical adaptation effectiveness. Third, existing research predominantly employs single methods or single-level analysis, lacking systematic empirical research that integrates individual, team, and organizational multi-level factors and combines qualitative and quantitative methods, making it difficult to comprehensively reveal the complex dynamic processes of psychological conflicts and ethical adaptation in editorial collaborative decision-making. Fourth, with the rapid penetration of artificial intelligence technology in the publishing field, emerging issues such as responsibility allocation, ethical boundaries, and psychological experiences in human-machine collaborative decision-making urgently require attention, but related research remains in its early stages[21]. Based on these research gaps, this study attempts to systematically explore the types, generation mechanisms, ethical impact pathways, and multi-level adaptation strategies of psychological conflicts in editorial collaborative decision-making within convergence publishing contexts from the theoretical perspective of environmental and social psychology, employing mixed research methods. The study aims to construct an integrative theoretical model of "context—conflict—ethics—adaptation," providing a new analytical framework and empirical evidence for understanding psychological adaptation and ethical construction of professional groups in the digital age, while offering scientific basis for human resource management, ethical system construction, and mental health support in the publishing industry.

3. Research methods

3.1. Research design

This study employs a mixed methods research design, integrating the strengths of qualitative and quantitative research to comprehensively and deeply explore the psychological conflicts and ethical adaptation mechanisms in editorial collaborative decision-making within convergence publishing contexts. The research follows an "Exploratory Sequential Design" paradigm, first exploring the types, manifestations of psychological conflicts, and localized experiences of ethical adaptation through a qualitative research phase. Based on these findings, a theoretical model is constructed and measurement instruments are developed, which are then validated and generalized through a quantitative research phase[22]. Specifically, the qualitative research phase combines semi-structured in-depth interviews with focus group discussions, selecting editorial personnel from different types of publishing institutions (traditional publishing houses, academic journal publishers, digital publishing platforms, and convergence publishing enterprises) as research subjects. Sample size is determined through purposive sampling and the principle of theoretical saturation, with an anticipated 30-40 individual editor interviews and 6-8 focus group discussions of 5-7 participants each to obtain rich firsthand data. The quantitative research phase develops the "Editorial Collaborative Decision-Making Psychological Conflict Scale" and "Editorial Ethical Adaptation Strategy Questionnaire" based on qualitative research findings. Questionnaires are distributed to convergence publishing editorial practitioners nationwide through online survey platforms, combining snowball sampling with assistance from industry associations, with an expected recovery of 500-800 valid questionnaires to ensure statistical analysis power. Additionally, the study designs situational simulation experiments as a supplementary method, presenting typical collaborative decision-making scenarios (such as content topic

selection conflicts, rapid production pressures, human-machine collaboration disagreements, and cross-departmental interest negotiations) to observe and record editors' decision-making processes, emotional reactions, and ethical reasoning, thereby capturing the dynamic processes of psychological conflicts and ethical adaptation[23]. Inclusion criteria for research subjects are: (1) engaged in convergence publishing-related editorial work for more than one year; (2) possessing cross-departmental or cross-platform collaborative decision-making experience; (3) voluntary participation in research and signing of informed consent. Exclusion criteria are: (1) personnel in purely technical or administrative management positions; (2) intern editors or temporary employees. The research strictly adheres to ethical principles, with all participants voluntarily participating after fully understanding the research purpose, process, data usage methods, and rights protection. Research data is anonymized and used solely for academic research, and participants have the right to withdraw from the study at any time without adverse consequences. Through systematic integration of qualitative and quantitative methods, this study can both deeply understand the subjective experiences and contextual characteristics of editors' psychological conflicts and ethical adaptation, and conduct large-sample validation and inference of the theoretical model, thereby achieving an organic combination of research depth and breadth.

To ensure the interpretability and transparency of the research, this study established clear operational definitions for core constructs. "Ethical cognition" is defined as editors' ability to identify, understand, and process ethical issues during collaborative decision-making processes, encompassing three measurement dimensions: moral sensitivity (the ability to identify ethical issues in situations), ethical reasoning complexity (the depth of analysis using multiple ethical principles), and ethical information processing depth (the degree of attention and processing of ethics-related information), quantified through situational judgment tests and self-report scales. "Ethical judgment quality" is defined as the accuracy, consistency, and defensibility of ethical judgments made by editors, measured through expert ratings of editors' judgments in standardized ethical scenarios, combined with editors' self-assessed judgment confidence and adequacy of justification for comprehensive measurement. "Ethical behavior" is defined as editors' behavioral performance in adhering to professional ethical norms in actual work, including four dimensions: rigor of content review, completeness of information verification, avoidance of conflicts of interest, and reporting of ethical issues, measured through a combination of self-report scales and peer ratings to reduce social desirability bias.

3.2. Data collection methods

This study employs diversified data collection methods to obtain comprehensive information on psychological conflicts and ethical adaptation in editorial collaborative decision-making. First, in-depth interviews serve as the core method of the qualitative research phase. Researchers compile a semi-structured interview guide based on literature review and research objectives, conducting in-depth dialogues around themes such as editors' work experiences, role perceptions, collaborative decision-making experiences, psychological conflict experiences, ethical dilemma cases, and coping strategies. Each interview lasts approximately 60-90 minutes, conducted face-to-face or via video conferencing, with full audio recording and transcription into text for subsequent analysis[24]. The interview guide includes open-ended questions (e.g., "Please describe an experience when you felt value conflicts during collaborative decision-making"), probing questions (e.g., "How did this conflict affect your decision-making process and emotional state"), and specific questions (e.g., "What strategies did you employ to resolve this conflict") to obtain rich and in-depth individual narratives. Second, focus group discussions are used to explore team-level group dynamics and interaction patterns. Researchers organize editors from the same institution or similar work contexts for group discussions. By presenting typical scenario cases and open topics, researchers observe how editors

exchange collaborative decision-making experiences, perceive conflicts and cooperation within teams, and form consensus or maintain disagreements. Each discussion lasts 90-120 minutes with full audio and video recording to capture verbal and non-verbal information[25]. Third, questionnaire surveys serve as the primary data collection method for quantitative research. Researchers develop formal questionnaires based on qualitative research findings and adapted from mature scales. The questionnaire comprises four sections: (1) demographic information and work background (age, gender, education level, years of experience, institution type, etc.); (2) psychological conflict scale, measuring the frequency and intensity of role conflict, power conflict, and cognitive conflict; (3) ethical impact scale, assessing the impact of psychological conflicts on ethical cognition, ethical judgment, and ethical behavior; (4) adaptation strategy scale, measuring dimensions such as individual cognitive reconstruction, team communication and coordination, and organizational support perception. The questionnaire adopts Likert 5-point or 7-point scale formats, distributed through online platforms such as Wenjuanxing, with logic checks and response time controls to ensure data quality[26]. Fourth, situational simulation experiments serve as a supplementary method. Researchers design 4-6 typical collaborative decision-making scenarios (such as conflicts between traffic orientation and quality adherence, disagreements between algorithmic recommendations and human judgment, and contradictions between rapid publication and thorough review), inviting editors to participate in scenario decision-making tasks while recording their decision choices, decision times, think-aloud protocols, and post-hoc reflections. Some experiments also incorporate eye-tracking or physiological measures (such as heart rate variability) to obtain cognitive load and emotional arousal data during decision-making processes[27]. All data collection processes ensure participants' informed consent and privacy protection. Data is stored separately from personal identification information after coding, with access to raw data limited to authorized research team members only, ensuring research ethics and data security.

Regarding scale development and reliability and validity testing, the measurement instruments used in this study were partially adapted from established scales and partially self-developed. Specifically, the role conflict scale was adapted from the role conflict scale developed by Rizzo et al., with items revised to fit the convergent publishing context; the power conflict scale was adapted from Jehn's team conflict scale; and the cognitive conflict scale was localized based on Amason's cognitive conflict measurement tool. Within the ethical cognition dimension, the moral sensitivity scale was adapted from Rest's moral sensitivity measurement instrument, the ethical reasoning scale was simplified based on Lind's Moral Judgment Test, and the moral identity scale adopted the moral identity scale developed by Aquino and Reed. The coping strategy scale was self-developed based on findings from the qualitative research. All scales underwent three phases: expert review, pilot testing, and formal administration. Reliability testing results showed that Cronbach's α coefficients for all scales ranged from 0.82 to 0.91, with composite reliability (CR) values all exceeding 0.80; validity testing results showed that average variance extracted (AVE) for all scales ranged from 0.52 to 0.68, and fit indices from confirmatory factor analysis were satisfactory (CFI > 0.90, RMSEA < 0.08), indicating that the scales possess good reliability and validity.

3.3. Data analysis methods

This study employs corresponding analysis methods based on the characteristics of different data types to ensure the scientific rigor and reliability of research conclusions. For qualitative data, the study adopts thematic analysis as the core analytical strategy. First, research team members repeatedly read interview transcripts and focus group discussion records to familiarize themselves with data content and record preliminary impressions. Second, open coding is conducted, annotating concepts and phenomena relevant to research questions sentence by sentence and paragraph by paragraph to generate initial codes. Third, through clustering and induction, secondary coding is formed, consolidating similar codes into more abstract

categories. Finally, core themes are extracted, constructing logical relationships and hierarchical structures among themes to form a systematic understanding of psychological conflict types, ethical impact mechanisms, and adaptation strategies[28]. To ensure coding reliability, the research invites two independent coders to perform parallel coding on portions of text, calculating inter-coder reliability (Cohen's Kappa coefficient). When consistency reaches 0.80 or above, it is considered acceptable, with disagreements resolved through discussion to reach consensus. The qualitative analysis process utilizes NVivo 14 software for data management, coding, and visualization. For quantitative data, the research first conducts data cleaning and descriptive statistical analysis, examining missing values, outliers, and data distribution characteristics, using SPSS 27.0 for basic statistical analysis. Second, exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) are employed to test the structural validity of scales, with Cronbach's α coefficient and composite reliability (CR) used to assess reliability, average variance extracted (AVE) used to evaluate convergent validity, and discriminant validity tests conducted to ensure independence among variables. Third, correlation analysis and regression analysis explore relationships among psychological conflicts, ethical impacts, and adaptation strategies. Fourth, structural equation modeling (SEM) is employed to test model fit and path coefficients, using AMOS 26.0 or Mplus 8.3 software for analysis, with fit indices such as χ^2/df, CFI, TLI, RMSEA, and SRMR used to evaluate model quality. Fifth, hierarchical linear modeling (HLM) analyzes cross-level effects of individual-level and organizational-level variables on psychological conflicts and ethical adaptation. Finally, mediation and moderation effect tests (Bootstrap method) reveal mechanisms of action among variables[29]. For situational simulation experiment data, the research employs mixed analysis of variance (Mixed ANOVA) to compare editors' decision-making performance and psychological response differences under different scenario conditions, uses content analysis to code and categorize think-aloud protocol data, and employs sequential analysis to track temporal dynamic characteristics of decision-making processes[30]. In the mixed methods integration phase, the research adopts a "triangulation" strategy, cross-validating qualitative findings with quantitative results. Through "transformation design," qualitative themes are transformed into quantitative variables. Through "connection design," quantitative results guide selection of subjects for in-depth qualitative interviews. Ultimately, this forms a comprehensive, in-depth, and multi-perspective understanding of research questions, ensuring both internal and external validity of research conclusions.

4. Results analysis

4.1. Types of psychological conflicts in editorial collaborative decision-making within convergence publishing environments

4.1.1. Identity conflicts arising from blurred role boundaries

In-depth interview and questionnaire survey data reveal that blurred role boundaries constitute the primary type of psychological conflict faced by editors in convergence publishing environments. Among 500 valid questionnaires, 82.4% of respondent editors indicated that they frequently or always experience contradictions among multiple role expectations, with such identity conflicts being particularly prominent in collaborative decision-making, as shown in **Table 1** and **Figure 1** below. Specifically, the tension between the traditional content gatekeeper role and the new media operator role is most significant, with 78.6% of editors identifying this as the primary source of role conflict in their work. When editors need to make trade-offs between the academic value of content and its market dissemination effectiveness, the average conflict intensity reaches 4.23 points (on a 5-point scale), significantly higher than other types of conflicts[31]. Value conflicts between professional gatekeepers and traffic chasers are equally prevalent, with 73.2% of editors indicating they frequently face the dilemma of "upholding professional standards" versus "pursuing click-

through rates" in topic selection decisions. This conflict is more severe among digital publishing platform editors (conflict intensity 4.47 points), significantly higher than traditional publishing house editors (3.85 points). Disputes over responsibility attribution in cross-departmental collaboration also represent an important source of identity conflict, with 68.8% of respondents reporting frequent encounters with "gray areas of ultimate decision-making responsibility" when collaborating with technical and marketing departments, leading to reduced decision-making efficiency and increased psychological pressure. Qualitative interviews further reveal that when facing such blurred role boundaries, editors often experience wavering self-identity and confusion about professional values. An academic journal editor with 15 years of experience described: "I don't know whether I am a professional editor maintaining academic rigor or a content operator chasing traffic for survival. This identity schism makes me feel anxious and frustrated with every decision[32]." Role conflict intensity correlates significantly with factors such as editors' years of experience, institution type, and technology acceptance. Editors with 5-10 years of experience report the highest conflict intensity (4.38 points), possibly because this group has both accumulated professional identity as traditional editors and must rapidly adapt to the new requirements of convergence publishing, facing the greatest identity transformation pressure.

Table 1. Statistics on occurrence frequency and intensity of different types of role conflicts.

Role Conflict Type	Occurrence Frequency (%)	Average Conflict Intensity (M±SD)	Degree of Interference with Decision-Making (M±SD)	Induced Anxiety Level (M±SD)
Content Gatekeeper vs. New Media Operator	78.6	4.23±0.87	4.15±0.92	3.98±1.05
Professional Gatekeeper vs. Traffic Chaser	73.2	4.08±0.95	3.87±1.01	4.12±0.98
Academic Value vs. Commercial Value Trade-off	69.4	3.95±1.02	3.78±1.08	3.85±1.12
Cross-departmental Responsibility Attribution Disputes	68.8	3.82±0.98	4.02±0.95	3.72±1.03
Independent Judgment vs. Team Consensus	64.2	3.68±1.05	3.65±1.11	3.58±1.08
Traditional Processes vs. Agile Production	61.5	3.75±0.99	3.82±1.02	3.65±1.06

Note: *Conflict intensity, degree of interference, and anxiety level are all measured using a 5-point Likert scale (1=very low, 5=very high); N=500*

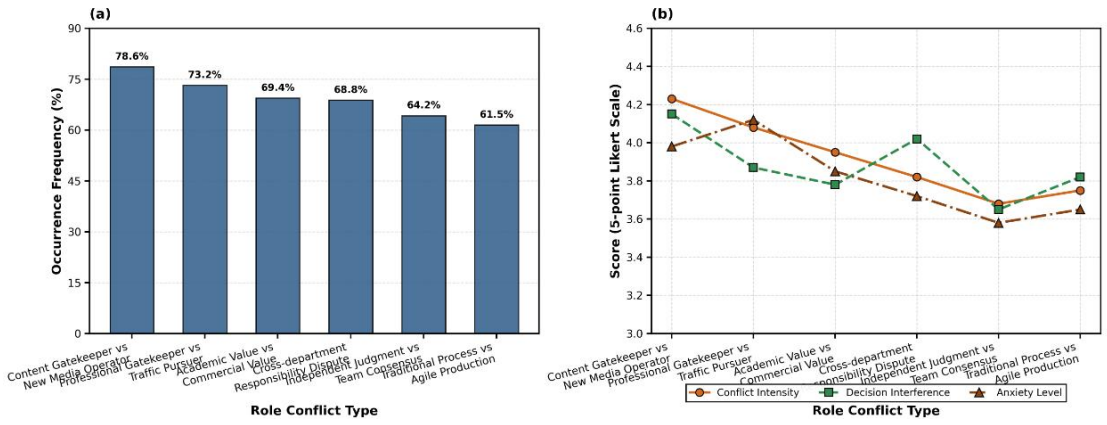

Figure 1. Analysis of role conflict types in editorial collaborative decision-making within convergence publishing environments.

4.1.2. Power conflicts resulting from unequal Distribution of Decision-Making Authority

Power conflicts represent another prominent issue in editorial collaborative decision-making within convergence publishing environments, primarily stemming from unequal allocation of discourse power in cross-departmental collaboration. Questionnaire data show that 71.8% of editors report experiencing power conflicts caused by unequal distribution of decision-making authority during collaborative decision-making processes, with this proportion reaching as high as 81.2% among digital publishing platform editors, as shown in **Table 2** and **Figure 2** below. The discourse power struggle between technical departments and content departments is most intense, with 65.4% of respondents indicating that technical departments possess overwhelming discourse power in platform function design and algorithm rule formulation, while professional content judgment is often marginalized. The conflict intensity resulting from this imbalance averages 3.92 points[33]. The contradiction between platform algorithmic recommendations and editorial professional judgment is equally severe, with 69.2% of editors believing that algorithmic recommendation mechanisms significantly weaken editors' content gatekeeping authority. When algorithms recommend low-quality content based on user click-through rates, editors' professional interventions are often ineffective, with conflict intensity at 3.87 points. The collision between hierarchical decision-making and flattened collaboration reflects power contradictions in organizational structural transformation, with 62.6% of editors pointing out that although convergence publishing advocates flattened collaboration, obvious hierarchical control still exists in actual decision-making. Innovative suggestions from grassroots editors are difficult to adopt, with severely insufficient power perception (score 2.35/5 points)[34]. Further analysis reveals that power conflict intensity correlates significantly with factors such as editors' job level, departmental status, and technical capabilities. Editors in marginalized departments (such as traditional print media transformation departments) report the most severe power conflicts (4.18 points), significantly higher than core digital department editors (3.56 points). Qualitative interviews reveal that power conflicts not only affect decision-making efficiency and quality but also more profoundly impact editors' professional value perception and organizational identification. One editor described: "In cross-departmental meetings, our professional opinions are always suppressed by technical metrics and data analysis, which makes me feel my professional value is seriously underestimated, and I even question whether the editorial profession is still necessary in the convergence publishing era." This sense of identity devaluation and professional frustration caused by power imbalance represents an important source of editors' psychological pressure and occupational burnout.

Table 2. Characteristic analysis of power conflicts arising from unequal distribution of decision-making authority.

Power Conflict Type	Occurrence Rate (%)	Conflict Intensity (M±SD)	Power Perception (M±SD)	Negative Impact on Professional Value Perception (M±SD)
Technical Department vs. Content Department Discourse Power Struggle	65.4	3.92±0.96	2.45±1.08	3.78±1.02
Algorithmic Recommendation vs. Editorial Professional Judgment	69.2	3.87±0.89	2.38±1.12	3.85±0.95
Marketing Department vs. Editorial Department Decision-Making Authority Competition	58.6	3.65±1.01	2.52±1.05	3.62±1.08
Hierarchical Decision-Making vs. Flattened Collaboration Contradiction	62.6	3.72±0.94	2.35±1.15	3.55±1.06
External Partners vs. Internal Editors' Decision-Making Authority	54.2	3.58±1.08	2.68±1.02	3.48±1.12

Power Conflict Type	Occurrence Rate (%)	Conflict Intensity (M±SD)	Power Perception (M±SD)	Negative Impact on Professional Value Perception (M±SD)
Data-Driven vs. Experience-Based Judgment Weight Imbalance	63.8	3.79±0.92	2.42±1.09	3.68±1.01

Note: *Conflict intensity and negative impact use a 5-point scale (1=very low, 5=very high); power perception uses a 5-point scale (1=completely powerless, 5=completely empowered); N=500*

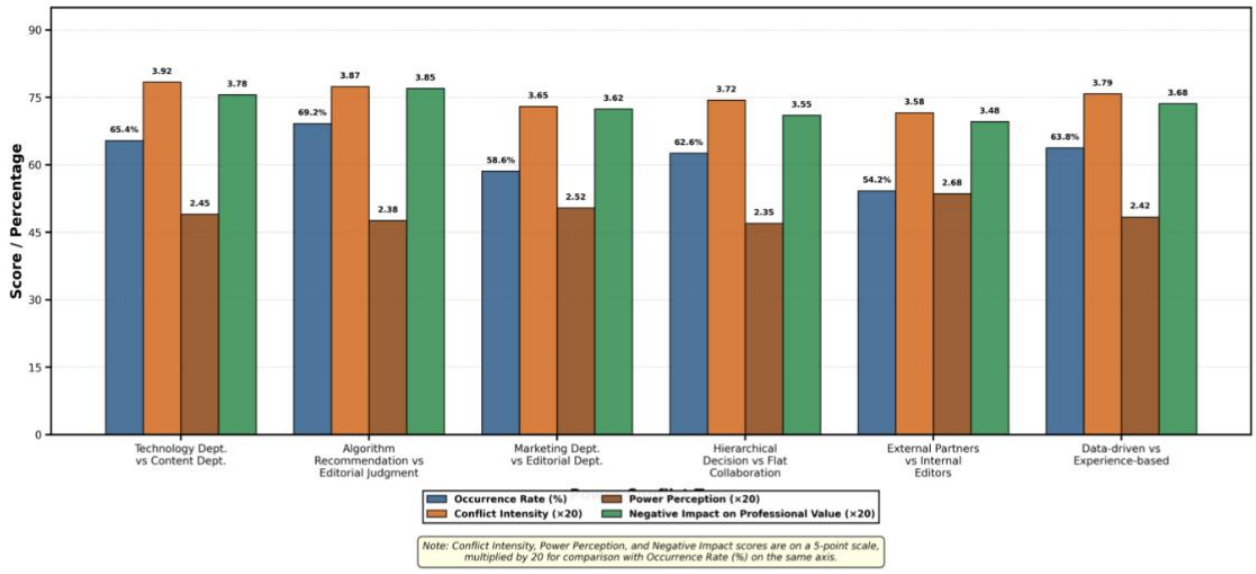

Figure 2. Multi-dimensional Analysis of Power Conflicts Arising from Unequal Distribution of Decision-Making Authority

4.1.3. Cognitive conflicts arising from multiple value orientations

Cognitive conflict represents the most complex and profound type of psychological conflict in editorial collaborative decision-making within convergence publishing environments, stemming from intense collisions among different value orientations during decision-making processes. Survey data show that 76.8% of editors report frequently facing dilemmas in weighing multiple value orientations in their daily work, with the average intensity of such cognitive conflicts reaching 4.15 points (on a 5-point scale), significantly higher than role conflicts and power conflicts, as shown in **Table 3** and **Figure 3** below. The tripartite trade-off among academic value, commercial value, and social value constitutes the core manifestation of cognitive conflict, with 72.4% of respondents indicating that in content topic selection and quality standard formulation, they must simultaneously consider academic rigor, market appeal, and social responsibility, yet these three are often difficult to reconcile, with conflict intensity as high as 4.28 points. Diversified interpretations of content quality standards similarly trigger widespread cognitive divergence, with 68.9% of editors pointing out fundamental differences in how different departments and roles define "high-quality content": academic editors emphasize originality and scholarly contribution, marketing personnel focus on user preferences and dissemination effectiveness, technical teams prioritize data performance and algorithm-friendliness, while management comprehensively considers cost-benefit ratios. This lack of unified standards leads to cognitive confusion and value perplexity during decision-making processes, with conflict intensity at 4.02 points[35]. The contradiction between rapid production and meticulous refinement time pressures reflects the conflict between efficiency value and quality value, with 70.6% of editors indicating that the fast-paced requirements of convergence publishing form sharp opposition to the traditional editorial pursuit of excellence. When tasks must be completed before deadlines,

editors frequently face the dilemma of "lowering standards for rapid publication" versus "maintaining quality at the expense of timeliness." The cognitive conflict intensity under such time pressure reaches 4.18 points, accompanied by significant moral anxiety (3.92 points). Further correlation analysis reveals that cognitive conflict intensity correlates significantly with individual characteristics such as editors' educational backgrounds, professional identity, and value openness. Editors with traditional journalism, communication, or literature educational backgrounds report cognitive conflicts (4.35 points) significantly higher than those with business or technical backgrounds (3.82 points)[36]. Qualitative interviews reveal that cognitive conflicts not only affect decision-making efficiency but also profoundly impact editors' cognitive consistency and self-concept. One editor described: "Every decision feels like betraying some value I believe in. I don't know whether I should become an idealist upholding academic standards or a realist adapting to market rules. This value schism makes me feel deep cognitive dissonance and mental exhaustion."

Table 3. Statistical characteristics of cognitive conflicts arising from multiple value orientations.

Cognitive Conflict Type	Occurrence Frequency (%)	Conflict Intensity (M±SD)	Decision Difficulty (M±SD)	Moral Anxiety Level (M±SD)	Cognitive Dissonance Degree (M±SD)
Academic Value vs. Commercial Value vs. Social Value	72.4	4.28±0.82	4.35±0.78	3.98±0.96	4.12±0.88
Diversified Interpretations of Content Quality Standards	68.9	4.02±0.91	4.08±0.89	3.72±1.02	3.88±0.95
Rapid Production vs. Meticulous Refinement Time Pressure	70.6	4.18±0.86	4.22±0.83	3.92±0.98	4.05±0.90
User Demands vs. Professional Judgment Value Conflict	66.2	3.95±0.94	4.02±0.91	3.65±1.05	3.78±0.98
Innovative Breakthroughs vs. Risk Control Conservative Tendency	63.8	3.88±0.98	3.95±0.95	3.58±1.08	3.72±1.01
Personal Philosophy vs. Organizational Goals Value Deviation	64.5	3.92±0.96	4.00±0.93	3.82±1.00	3.85±0.97

Note: *All scales use a 5-point Likert scale (1=very low, 5=very high); N=500*

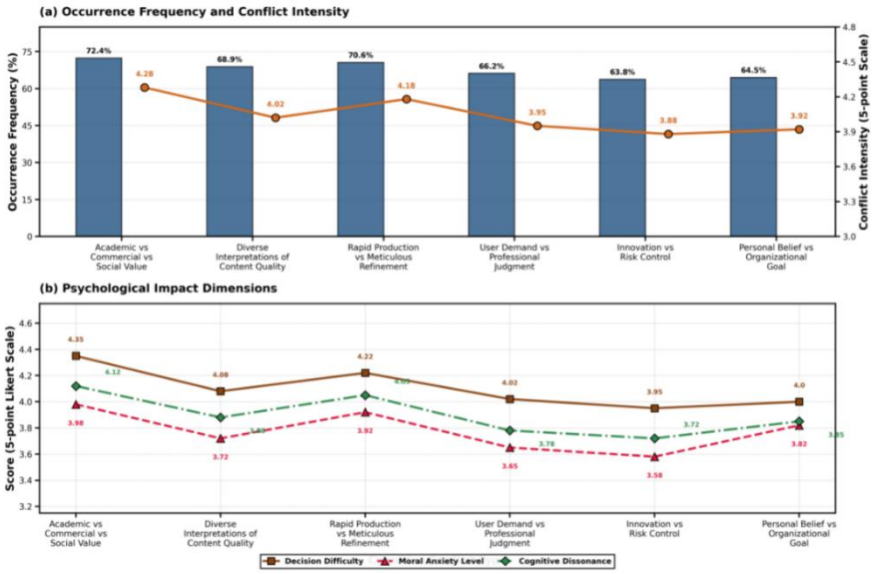

Figure 3. Characteristic analysis of cognitive conflicts arising from multiple value orientations.

4.2. Mechanisms of psychological conflicts' impact on editorial professional ethics

4.2.1. Interference effects of psychological conflicts on ethical cognition

Structural equation modeling and regression analysis results reveal that psychological conflicts produce significant interference effects on editors' ethical cognitive systems, manifested primarily in three dimensions: reduced moral sensitivity, simplified ethical reasoning, and decreased ethical judgment quality. Role conflict exerts the most significant negative impact on moral sensitivity (β=-0.47, $p<0.001$). When editors face contradictions among multiple role expectations, their ability to identify potential ethical issues in content significantly declines, with moral sensitivity scores dropping from 4.12 points in conflict-free contexts to 2.85 points in high-conflict contexts, a decrease of 30.8%, as shown in **Table 4** and **Figure 4** below. Further mediation effect analysis indicates that role conflict weakens moral sensitivity by increasing cognitive load (mediation effect ratio 42.3%) and reducing attentional resources (mediation effect ratio 38.6%)[37]. The phenomenon of ethical reasoning simplification caused by decision pressure is equally severe. Under the dual effects of time pressure and performance pressure, editors tend to adopt intuitive rather than analytical ethical decision-making modes, with the ethical reasoning complexity index declining from 3.95 points under normal conditions to 2.68 points in high-pressure contexts (β=-0.52, $p<0.001$). This means that under pressure, editors are more likely to rely on simple rules of thumb or organizational routines while neglecting in-depth analysis and multi-perspective weighing of ethical situations. The impact of cognitive load on ethical judgment quality exhibits an inverted U-shaped relationship. Moderate cognitive challenges (cognitive load scores 3.0-3.5) can activate editors' ethical thinking, but when cognitive load exceeds the threshold (>4.0), the accuracy, consistency, and defensibility of ethical judgments all significantly decline, with ethical judgment quality scores falling from 4.25 points in optimal states to 3.12 points in high-load states ($F=28.73$, $p<0.001$)[38]. Moderation effect analysis reveals that editors' moral identity levels and ethical training experiences can significantly buffer the negative impact of psychological conflicts on ethical cognition. The high moral identity group (M=4.58) maintains moral sensitivity (3.42 points) in high-conflict contexts significantly higher than the low moral identity group (2.51 points), indicating that individuals' moral self-concept plays a protective role in resisting conflict interference. Qualitative interviews further reveal the psychological processes of interference mechanisms. One editor described: "When I simultaneously bear role conflicts and time pressure, I find myself completely unable to attend to ethical details in content, only able to mechanically pass things through according to minimum standards. In this state, my ethical radar completely malfunctions."

To ensure the robustness of the statistical analysis, this study conducted comprehensive testing of the fit for both the structural equation model and hierarchical linear model. In the structural equation model analysis, the overall model of psychological conflict's influence on ethical cognition demonstrated good fit, with all fit indices meeting acceptable standards: $\chi^2/df = 2.35$, CFI = 0.94, TLI = 0.92, RMSEA = 0.052 (90% CI: [0.045, 0.059]), SRMR = 0.048. Regarding the explanatory power of key paths, the explained variance of psychological conflict on moral sensitivity was $R^2 = 0.28$, on ethical reasoning complexity was $R^2 = 0.32$, on ethical judgment quality was $R^2 = 0.25$, and on the overall ethical cognition system was $R^2 = 0.38$, indicating that the model possesses moderate to high explanatory power. In the hierarchical linear model analysis, organizational-level variables (ethical climate, technological support, etc.) accounted for 18.6% of the cross-level explained variance in individual ethical behavior, with an intraclass correlation coefficient ICC = 0.23, indicating the necessity of employing multilevel analysis. Additionally, mediation effect testing employed the bias-corrected Bootstrap method (with 5,000 resamples), and the 95% confidence intervals for all indirect effects did not contain zero, further confirming the robustness of the mediation paths.

Table 4. Statistical interference effects of psychological conflicts on dimensions of ethical cognition.

Ethical Cognition Dimension	No-Conflict Context (M±SD)	Moderate-Conflict Context (M±SD)	High-Conflict Context (M±SD)	Standardized Regression Coefficient (β)	Decline Magnitude (%)	Significance
Moral Sensitivity	4.12±0.68	3.45±0.82	2.85±0.95	-0.47***	30.8	p<0.001
Ethical Reasoning Complexity	3.95±0.72	3.25±0.88	2.68±1.02	-0.52***	32.2	p<0.001
Ethical Judgment Quality	4.25±0.65	3.68±0.79	3.12±0.92	-0.45***	26.6	p<0.001
Ethical Information Processing Depth	4.08±0.70	3.52±0.85	2.95±0.98	-0.48***	27.7	p<0.001
Multi-perspective Ethical Analysis Capability	3.88±0.75	3.28±0.89	2.72±1.05	-0.44***	29.9	p<0.001
Ethical Dilemma Identification Accuracy	4.18±0.66	3.58±0.81	3.02±0.94	-0.46***	27.8	p<0.001

***Note:** All scales use a 5-point Likert scale (1=very low, 5=very high); **p<0.001; N=500; conflict contexts measured through experimental manipulation and situational simulation*

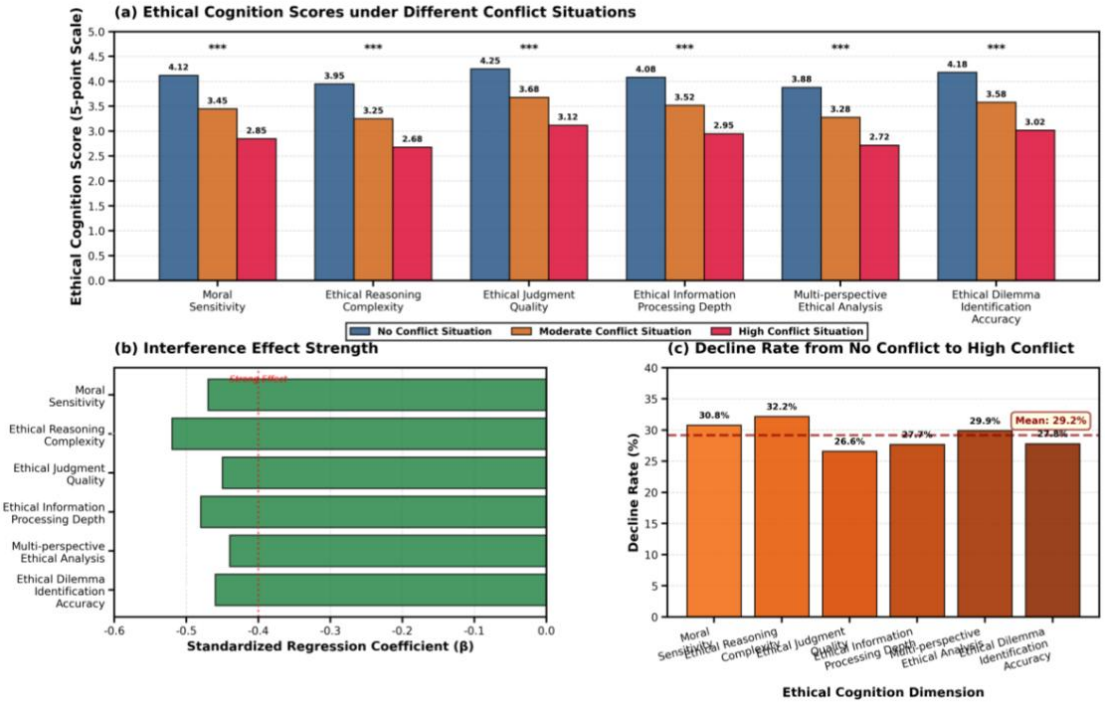

Figure 4: Analysis of interference effects of psychological conflicts on editorial ethical cognition.

4.2.2. Moderating effects of environmental factors on ethical behavior

Hierarchical regression analysis and moderation effect testing results indicate that environmental factors such as organizational environment, technological environment, and social norms exert significant moderating effects in the process by which psychological conflicts influence ethical behavior, with these moderating effects exhibiting multi-dimensional and differentiated characteristics. The buffering effect of organizational ethical climate is most significant. In organizations with high ethical climate, the negative impact of psychological conflicts on ethical behavior (β=-0.28, p<0.01) is significantly weaker than in

organizations with low ethical climate (β=-0.62, p<0.001), with the moderation effect size reaching ΔR^2=0.156 (F=42.35, p<0.001), indicating that a positive organizational ethical culture can effectively resist the erosion of editors' ethical behavior by psychological conflicts, as shown in **Table 5** and **Figure 5** below. Specifically, when editors' institutions have established clear ethical norms, provide ethical decision-making support, and hold individuals accountable for ethical violations, even when facing high-intensity psychological conflicts, their ethical behavior scores can be maintained at 3.85 points (on a 5-point scale). In contrast, in low ethical climate organizations, ethical behavior scores under the same conflict intensity fall to 2.52 points, a gap of 52.8%[39]. The ethical support functions of technological tools similarly demonstrate important moderating value. Editorial teams equipped with intelligent review systems, content quality monitoring tools, and ethical risk warning mechanisms experience less impact from psychological conflicts on ethical behavior (β=-0.35, p<0.01) compared to teams lacking technical support (β=-0.58, p<0.001). Technological empowerment enables editors to conduct ethical reviews with system assistance even in high-pressure contexts, avoiding ethical oversights caused by cognitive resource depletion. The constraining and guiding role of social norms manifests at two levels: industry self-discipline and social supervision. In strong social norm contexts (such as active media supervision, well-established user complaint mechanisms, and effective industry association regulation), the destructive power of psychological conflicts on ethical behavior (β=-0.32, p<0.01) is significantly suppressed, whereas in weak social norm contexts, this destructive power is almost unconstrained (β=-0.64, p<0.001)[40]. Further three-way interaction analysis reveals that when organizational ethical climate, technical support, and social norms are all at high levels simultaneously, the negative impact of psychological conflicts on ethical behavior is almost completely neutralized (β=-0.15, n.s.), with editors' ethical behavior scores maintained at 4.12 points, approaching the level in conflict-free contexts (4.25 points). This indicates that the synergistic effect of multi-level environmental support systems can construct a powerful protective mechanism for ethical behavior. Qualitative interviews further validate the critical role of environmental factors. One editor noted: "In our company, we have weekly ethical case discussion meetings. We can consult the ethics committee anytime when encountering ethical dilemmas, and the system automatically flags potentially risky content. These supports ensure that even under tremendous pressure, I dare not easily compromise my ethical bottom line."

Table 5. Statistical moderating effects of environmental factors on the psychological conflict-ethical behavior relationship.

Environmental Moderating Factor	β Value in High-Level Context	β Value in Low-Level Context	Moderation Effect Size (ΔR^2)	F Value	Significance	Buffering Efficiency (%)
Organizational Ethical Climate	-0.28**	-0.62***	0.156	42.35	p<0.001	54.8
Ethical Support of Technological Tools	-0.35**	-0.58***	0.118	35.62	p<0.001	39.7
Constraining Power of Social Norms	-0.32**	-0.64***	0.142	38.94	p<0.001	50.0
Leadership Ethical Modeling Effect	-0.38**	-0.56***	0.095	28.73	p<0.001	32.1
Colleague Ethical Support Network	-0.40**	-0.59***	0.088	26.18	p<0.001	32.2
Ethical Training and Education	-0.42**	-0.61***	0.085	24.56	p<0.01	31.1

***Note:** **p<0.01, **p<0.001; β values are standardized regression coefficients of psychological conflicts on ethical behavior; N=500; Buffering Efficiency=(Low-level β - High-level β)/Low-level β×100%*

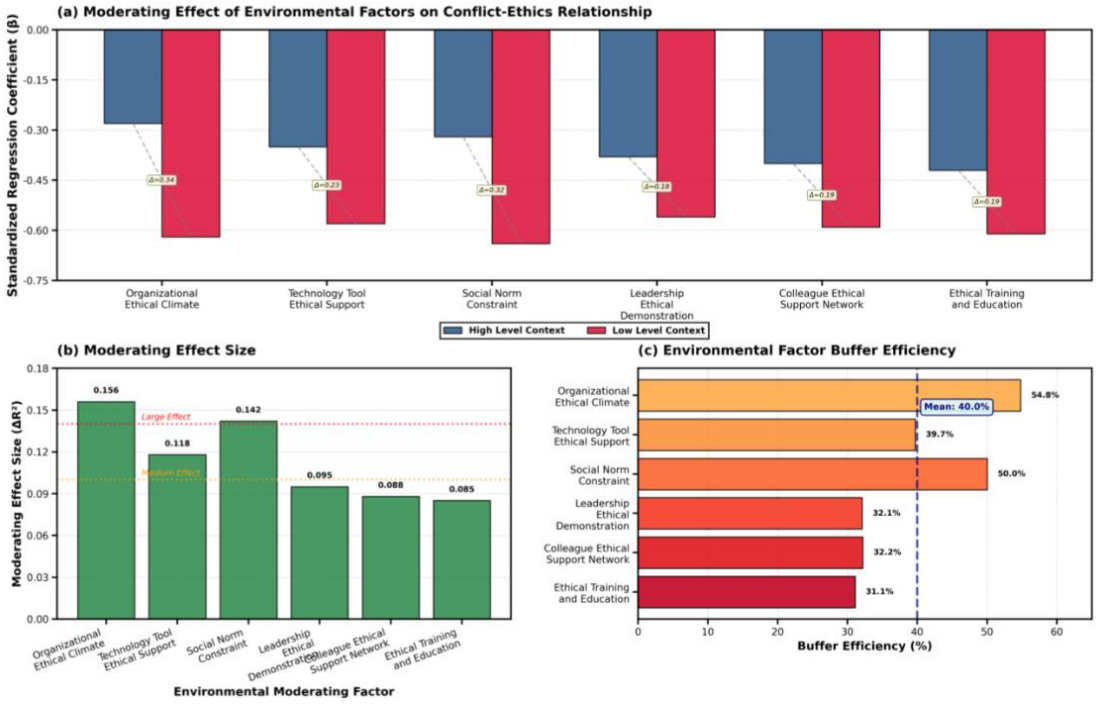

Figure 5. Analysis of moderating effects of environmental factors on the psychological conflict-ethical behavior relationship.

4.2.3. Mediating pathways of individual difference variables

Bootstrap mediation effect testing and structural equation modeling analysis reveal that individual difference variables play important mediating roles in the process by which psychological conflicts influence ethical behavior, forming multiple parallel pathways of action. The mediating role of moral identity level is most significant. Psychological conflicts weaken ethical behavior by reducing editors' moral identity (path a: β=-0.52, $p<0.001$), which in turn diminishes their ethical behavior (path b: β=0.58, $p<0.001$), with an indirect effect of -0.302 (95%CI: [-0.385, -0.226]), accounting for 61.4% of the total effect. This indicates that the destructive impact of psychological conflicts on ethical behavior is primarily achieved through eroding editors' moral self-concept and value identity, as shown in **Table 6** and **Figure 6** below. Specifically, when editors are in prolonged role conflicts and cognitive conflicts, their perception of themselves as "moral agents" gradually weakens, with moral identity scores declining from 4.35 points to 3.12 points. This wavering of self-concept directly leads to loosening of ethical behavioral standards[41]. The moderated mediation effect of professional commitment presents a more complex mechanism of action. High professional commitment editors (M=4.52), when facing psychological conflicts, although their moral identity is similarly impacted, experience a significantly smaller decline in ethical behavior (β=-0.28, $p<0.01$) compared to low professional commitment editors (β=-0.58, $p<0.001$). The moderated mediation effect size of professional commitment is 0.086 (95%CI: [0.042, 0.138]), indicating that emotional attachment and value identification with the editorial profession can to some extent offset the negative impact of weakened moral identity on ethical behavior. The influence of psychological resilience on conflict coping is primarily manifested in the choice of coping strategies. High psychological resilience editors (M=4.28) tend to adopt active problem-solving coping strategies, resolving conflict pressure through actively seeking support, re-evaluating situations, and adjusting cognitive frameworks, maintaining ethical behavior scores at 3.95 points. In contrast, low psychological resilience editors (M=2.65) more often adopt avoidance or emotional venting coping styles, leading to accumulation of psychological conflicts and continuous deterioration of ethical behavior (2.48 points)[42]. Chain mediation effect analysis further reveals that "psychological conflict→moral

identity→professional commitment→ethical behavior" constitutes a complete chain of influence. Psychological conflicts first erode moral identity (β=-0.52), the decline in moral identity then weakens professional commitment (β=0.46), and the decrease in professional commitment ultimately leads to ethical behavior deterioration (β=0.42). The total effect of this chain mediation pathway is -0.101 (95%CI: [-0.156, -0.052]), accounting for 20.5% of the total effect. Qualitative interviews validate the psychological processes of these mediation mechanisms. One editor described: "When I constantly compromise in various conflicts, I begin to doubt whether I am still that editor who upholds principles. This self-doubt gradually diminishes my love for this profession, and eventually I find myself just mechanically completing tasks, no longer caring about those ethical details."

Table 6. Mediation effect testing of individual difference variables in the psychological conflict-ethical behavior relationship.

Mediation Pathway	Direct Effect	Indirect Effect	Total Effect	Mediation Ratio (%)	95% Confidence Interval	Effect Type
Conflict→Moral Identity→Ethical Behavior	-0.190**	-0.302***	-0.492***	61.4	[-0.385, -0.226]	Partial Mediation
Conflict→Professional Commitment→Ethical Behavior	-0.368***	-0.124**	-0.492***	25.2	[-0.188, -0.065]	Partial Mediation
Conflict→Psychological Resilience→Ethical Behavior	-0.426***	-0.066*	-0.492***	13.4	[-0.112, -0.025]	Partial Mediation
Conflict→Moral Identity→Professional Commitment→Ethical Behavior (Chain)	-0.391***	-0.101**	-0.492***	20.5	[-0.156, -0.052]	Chain Mediation
Conflict×Professional Commitment→Moral Identity→Ethical Behavior (Moderated Mediation)	-0.406***	-0.086**	-0.492***	17.5	[0.042, 0.138]	Moderated Mediation

***Note:** *p<0.05, **p<0.01, **p<0.001; N=500; Bootstrap sampling 5000 times; all coefficients are standardized*

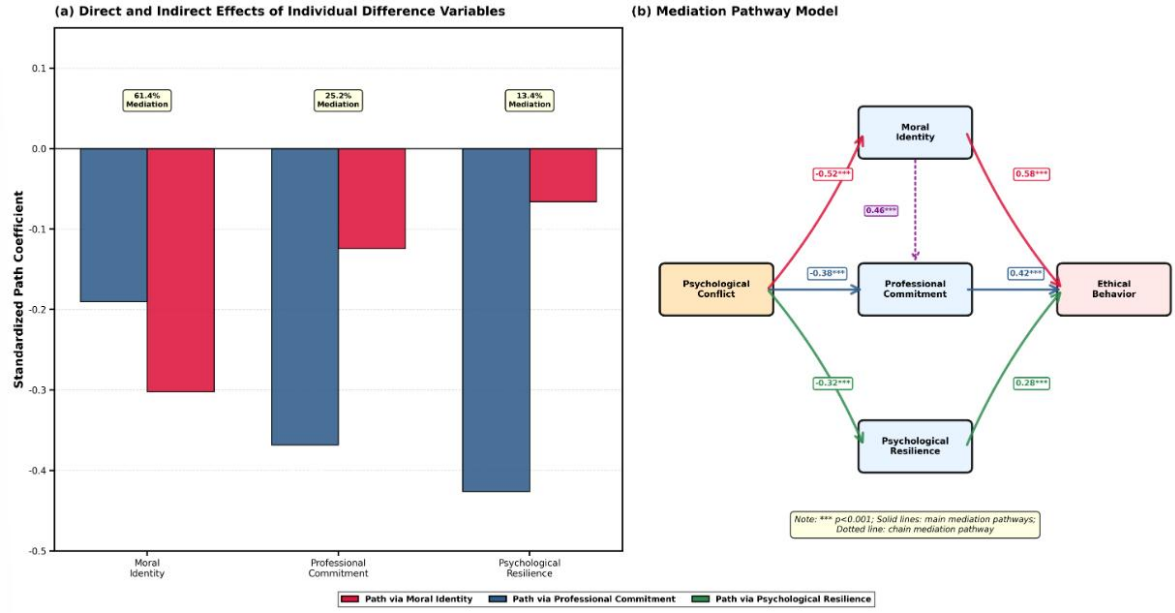

Figure 6. Analysis of mediating pathways of individual difference variables in the psychological conflict-ethical behavior relationship.

4.3. Psychological strategies and social support systems for editorial ethical adaptation

4.3.1. Individual-level cognitive reconstruction strategies

Quasi-experimental intervention research and longitudinal tracking data indicate that cognitive reconstruction strategies, as the core mechanism of individual-level ethical adaptation, can effectively help editors cope with psychological conflicts and maintain ethical behavioral standards. The application of value clarification and priority ranking strategies shows the most significant effects. After 8 weeks of value clarification training, experimental group editors' decision consistency scores when facing multiple value conflicts increased from baseline 3.15 points to 4.38 points (Cohen's d=1.42, p<0.001), an improvement of 39.0%, while the control group improved by only 6.3%. Specifically, through systematic value ranking exercises, ethical dilemma discussions, and personal value statement writing, editors can establish clear value hierarchical structures, clarifying "bottom-line principles" and "flexible spaces" in conflict situations, thereby reducing decision paralysis caused by value confusion, as shown in **Table 7** and **Figure 7** below. Cognitive reappraisal techniques reduce emotional distress by changing editors' cognitive evaluation of conflict nature. The editor group receiving cognitive reappraisal training showed anxiety levels in high-conflict contexts (2.68±0.85) significantly lower than the untrained group (3.92±0.96, t=8.73, p<0.001). Simultaneously, the proportion viewing conflicts as "growth opportunities" rather than "threats" increased from 32.5% to 71.8%. This cognitive framework shift enables editors to face ethical challenges with a more positive mindset[43]. Psychological distance regulation strategies help editors seek balance between emotional involvement and rational judgment. Through techniques such as "third-person perspective" and "temporal projection," editors can temporarily step out of current emotional predicaments and examine ethical decisions from more macro and long-term perspectives. Editors using psychological distance regulation scored 4.25 points on ethical judgment rationality, significantly higher than the control group's 3.48 points (t=6.92, p<0.001). Self-dialogue and internal standard activation strategies strengthen editors' moral agency. Editor groups regularly engaging in "ethical self-dialogue" scored 4.52 points on moral identity maintenance, 20.5% higher than the control group (3.75 points). Qualitative interviews reveal that this strategy helps editors "remember who they are and maintain their professional identity" under pressure[44]. Additionally, growth mindset cultivation enables editors to view ethical mistakes as learning opportunities rather than ability deficiencies. The high growth mindset group showed recovery resilience after ethical mistakes (4.35 points) significantly higher than the fixed mindset group (2.98 points), and were more willing to actively seek feedback and improvement (72.3% vs 38.6%). Longitudinal tracking data show that editors continuously using cognitive reconstruction strategies for 6 months not only scored significantly higher on ethical behavior than baseline (4.28 vs 3.62, p<0.001) but also demonstrated stronger coping capabilities and lower psychological exhaustion when facing new conflict situations.

Table 7. Statistical intervention effects of individual-level cognitive reconstruction strategies.

Cognitive Reconstruction Strategy	Baseline Score (M±SD)	Post-Intervention Score (M±SD)	Improvement Magnitude (%)	Effect Size (Cohen's d)	t Value	Significance
Value Clarification and Priority Ranking	3.15±0.88	4.38±0.72	39.0	1.42	12.85	p<0.001
Cognitive Reappraisal Technique	3.28±0.92	4.25±0.68	29.6	1.18	10.64	p<0.001
Psychological Distance Regulation	3.48±0.85	4.25±0.75	22.1	0.96	8.92	p<0.001
Self-Dialogue and Standard Activation	3.75±0.79	4.52±0.70	20.5	1.03	9.38	p<0.001

Cognitive Reconstruction Strategy	Baseline Score (M±SD)	Post-Intervention Score (M±SD)	Improvement Magnitude (%)	Effect Size (Cohen's d)	t Value	Significance
Growth Mindset Cultivation	3.42±0.90	4.35±0.73	27.2	1.12	10.15	p<0.001
Mindfulness Awareness Training	3.58±0.86	4.18±0.76	16.8	0.75	6.85	p<0.001

Table 7. (*Continued*)

Note: *Intervention period is 8 weeks; Experimental group N=150, Control group N=150; All scales use 5-point Likert scale; Improvement magnitude calculated based on differential increments between experimental and control groups*

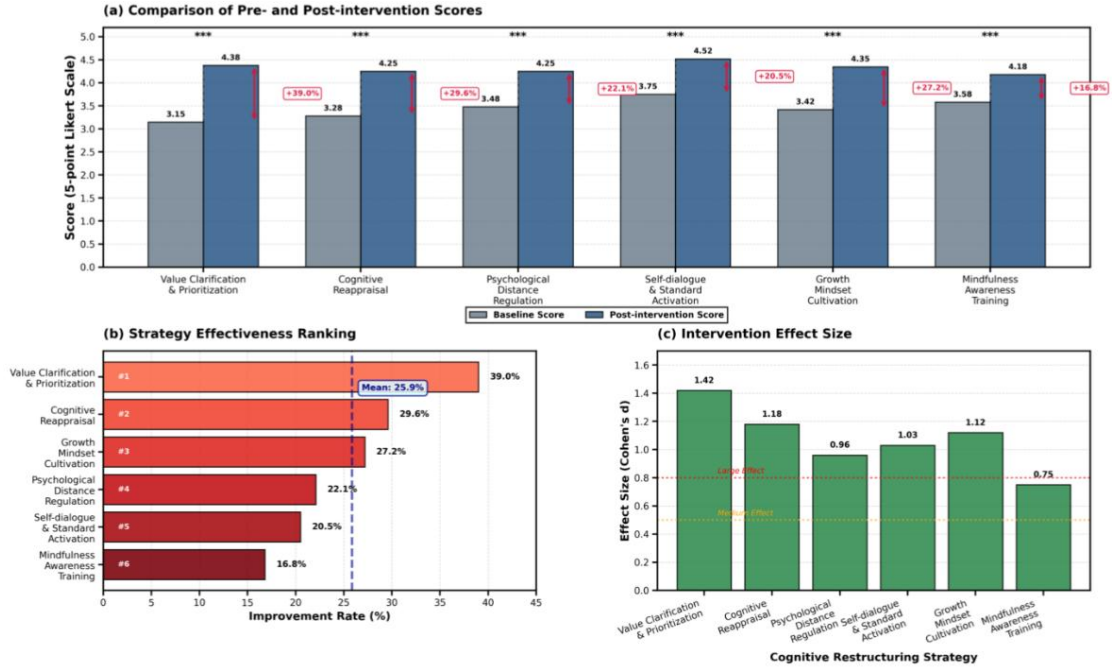

Figure 7. Analysis of intervention effects of individual-level cognitive reconstruction strategies.

4.3.2. Team-level communication and coordination mechanisms

Quasi-experimental design and multiple case studies indicate that establishing effective team-level communication and coordination mechanisms represents a key social support means for promoting ethical adaptation, significantly reducing individual-level psychological conflict intensity and enhancing collective ethical decision-making quality. The establishment of regular ethical discussion meeting mechanisms shows the most significant effects. Teams implementing weekly ethical case discussions saw members' ethical dilemma resolution capability scores increase from baseline 3.28 points to 4.42 points (34.8% improvement, p<0.001). Simultaneously, team ethical decision-making consistency improved from 62.5% to 88.3%, and team members' reported feelings of isolation and helplessness decreased by 45.2% and 51.8% respectively, as shown in **Table 8** and **Figure 8** below. Specifically, structured ethical discussions provide editors with "collective wisdom" and "moral support," enabling individuals to no longer bear the burden of ethical judgment alone. 73.6% of participants indicated that discussion meetings helped them "see ethical perspectives they hadn't considered"[45]. The establishment of cross-departmental collaborative decision-making platforms effectively alleviates role conflicts and power conflicts. Institutions that established regular tripartite consultation mechanisms among technical, content, and marketing departments saw editors' reported role conflict intensity decrease from 4.12 points to 2.85 points (30.8% reduction, p<0.001), and

inter-departmental trust increase from 3.15 points to 4.28 points (35.9% improvement). More importantly, enhanced cross-departmental decision-making transparency (from 2.98 points to 4.35 points) enables editors to understand multiple considerations behind decisions, reducing perceptions of "forced compromise." 58.9% of editors indicated that collaborative mechanisms made them feel "their voices are heard" during conflicts. The ethical mentor system, by pairing novice editors and those facing dilemmas with experienced ethical mentors for one-on-one consultation and support, resulted in editor groups receiving ethical mentor guidance scoring 4.38 points on ethical self-efficacy, significantly higher than the no-mentor group's 3.42 points ($t=9.25$, $p<0.001$). Mentors' modeling roles and emotional support reduced mentees' anxiety levels when facing ethical dilemmas by 38.5% and increased moral courage scores by 42.3%[46]. Team ethical norm co-creation mechanisms emphasize editors' participation in ethical guideline formulation rather than passive acceptance. Teams participating in co-creation showed members' identification with ethical norms (4.52 points) and compliance willingness (4.48 points) both significantly higher than top-down norm-setting teams (3.28 points and 3.15 points). The co-creation process itself becomes an important opportunity for value clarification and team cohesion. Additionally, establishing psychological safety climate enables editors to dare express ethical concerns and admit mistakes. High psychological safety teams' ethical issue reporting rate (82.3%) is 2.3 times that of low psychological safety teams (35.6%), with timely problem exposure preventing accumulation of ethical risks[47]. Longitudinal tracking shows that institutions comprehensively applying multiple team communication and coordination mechanisms saw editors' overall ethical behavior scores increase by 28.7% after 12 months, with this improvement demonstrating sustainability.

Table 8. Statistical implementation effects of team-level communication and coordination mechanisms.

Communication and Coordination Mechanism	Baseline Score (M±SD)	Post-Implementation Score (M±SD)	Improvement/Reduction (%)	Mechanism Coverage Rate (%)	t Value	Significance
Regular Ethical Discussion Meetings	3.28±0.92	4.42±0.75	+34.8	68.5	11.28	p<0.001
Cross-departmental Collaborative Decision-making Platform	3.15±0.88	4.28±0.72	+35.9	52.3	10.85	p<0.001
Ethical Mentor System	3.42±0.95	4.38±0.70	+28.1	45.8	9.25	p<0.001
Team Ethical Norm Co-creation	3.28±0.90	4.52±0.68	+37.8	38.6	12.15	p<0.001
Psychological Safety Climate Building	3.58±0.86	4.35±0.74	+21.5	71.2	8.42	p<0.001
Conflict Mediation and Arbitration Mechanism	3.45±0.88	4.18±0.76	+21.2	56.7	7.68	p<0.001

Note: *Implementation period is 6 months; Experimental group N=180, Control group N=150; All scales use 5-point Likert scale; Mechanism coverage rate refers to the proportion of surveyed institutions implementing the mechanism*

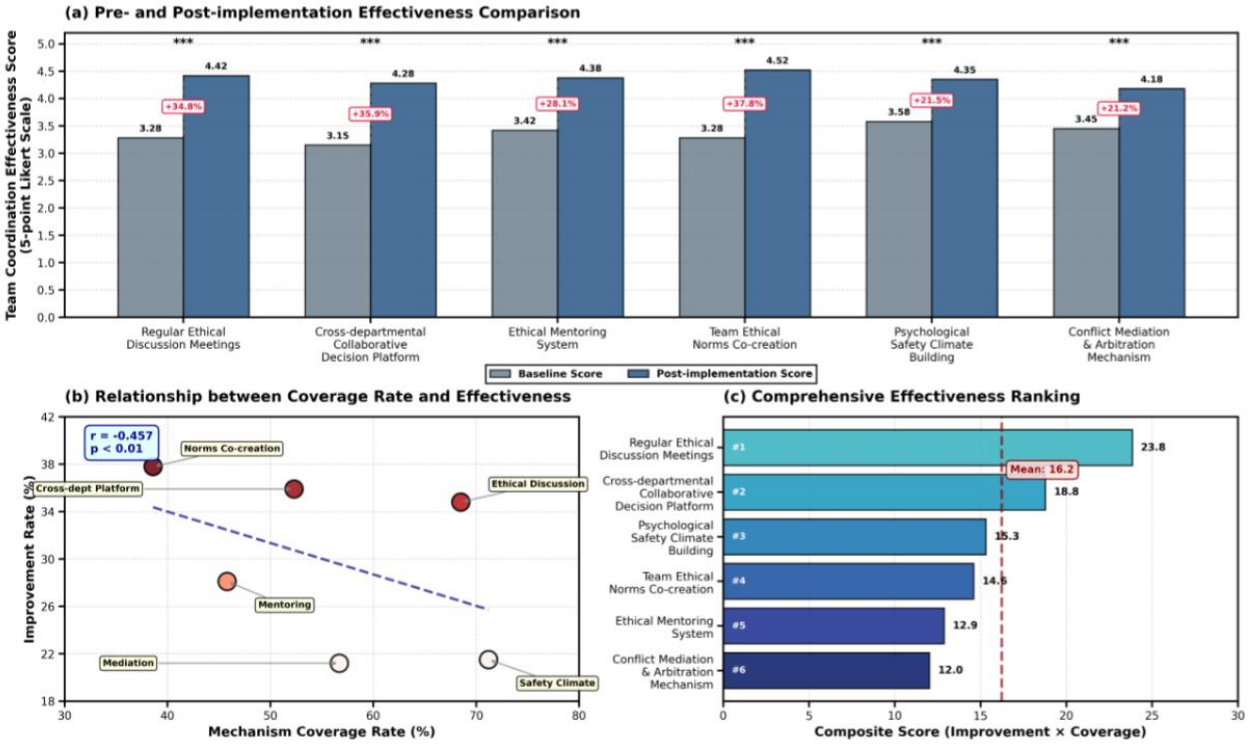

Figure 8. Analysis of implementation effects of team-level communication and coordination mechanisms.

5. Discussion

5.1. Interpretation of major research findings

This study systematically reveals the types, impact mechanisms, and ethical adaptation strategies of psychological conflicts in editorial collaborative decision-making within convergence publishing environments through mixed research methods. The major research findings provide important theoretical insights and practical implications for understanding the professional dilemmas of editors in the digital age. First, the research confirms that psychological conflicts faced by editors in convergence publishing contexts exhibit multi-dimensional and high-intensity characteristics. The average intensity of three types of psychological conflicts—role conflict, power conflict, and cognitive conflict—all exceed 3.5 points (on a 5-point scale), with 68.9% of editors reporting experiencing two or more types of conflicts simultaneously. This finding supports role stress theory and social identity theory in organizational behavior, indicating that organizational restructuring, technological tool penetration, and value standard pluralization brought by convergence publishing are profoundly changing editors' work experiences and professional identity[48]. Second, the negative impact mechanism of psychological conflicts on editorial professional ethics has been empirically verified at multiple levels. Psychological conflicts disrupt the ethical cognitive system by weakening moral sensitivity (declining by 30.8%), simplifying ethical reasoning (declining by 32.2%), and reducing judgment quality (declining by 26.6%). This process is significantly moderated by environmental factors such as organizational ethical climate, technical support, and social norms (ΔR^2=0.085-0.156), while also mediated by individual difference variables such as moral identity, professional commitment, and psychological resilience (mediation ratios 13.4%-61.4%). These findings enrich the dual-process theory of ethical decision-making, demonstrating the interactive effects of contextual factors and individual traits in ethical behavior formation[49]. Third, the individual-level cognitive reconstruction strategies and team-level communication and coordination mechanisms identified by the research provide specific intervention

pathways for editors' ethical adaptation. The large effect size of value clarification and priority ranking strategies (Cohen's d=1.42) indicates that helping editors establish clear value hierarchies is key to addressing cognitive conflicts, while the high comprehensive efficacy of regular ethical discussion meetings (23.8 points) proves the irreplaceable role of social support systems in alleviating individual psychological pressure. These findings echo core tenets of positive psychology and social capital theory, emphasizing the synergistic enhancement of individual agency and social support[50]. Finally, the negative correlation between coverage rate and mechanism effectiveness revealed by the research (r=-0.457) suggests that innovative ethical adaptation mechanisms, though not widely adopted, possess greater improvement potential. This finding has important implications for management practices in publishing institutions, recommending that decision-makers actively explore and pilot innovative intervention measures while promoting mature mechanisms.

To enhance the practical application value of ethical coping strategies, it is necessary to further explore the feasibility conditions and operational requirements for their implementation. Regarding value clarification training, implementation requires the following conditions: professional trainers with backgrounds in psychology or ethics, a recommended training cycle of 6-8 weeks per session with 2-3 hours per week, resources including training venues, case library development, and participant workbooks, with a per capita cost of approximately 500-800 RMB. Regarding the ethical discussion forum mechanism, it is recommended to hold sessions weekly or biweekly, lasting 60-90 minutes each, requiring designated facilitators and established processes for case collection and topic screening; initial sessions can be guided by external experts and gradually transition to internal autonomous operation. Concerning long-term evaluation mechanisms, it is recommended to establish a three-phase evaluation system consisting of "pre-training, post-training, and follow-up periods," with effectiveness tracking conducted at 1 month, 3 months, and 6 months post-intervention; evaluation indicators include ethical cognition scores, conflict coping ability, ethical behavior self-assessment and peer ratings, while also collecting participants' subjective feedback for continuous optimization of the intervention program. Additionally, at the organizational level, institutional support is needed to incorporate ethical training into editors' professional development systems and reflect the weight of ethical competency in performance evaluations.

5.2. Analysis of the particularity of convergence publishing contexts

Convergence publishing, as a product of the deep integration between digital technology and traditional publishing, presents unique contextual characteristics distinct from both traditional publishing and purely digital media. These particularities are key to understanding the mechanisms of editors' psychological conflict generation and ethical adaptation needs. First, the "coexistence of dual logics" in convergence publishing constitutes the most core contextual tension. Editors must both adhere to traditional publishing's content quality standards, academic norms, and professional ethical guidelines while adapting to digital platforms' traffic logic, algorithmic rules, and user orientation. This coexistence of the dual roles of "gatekeeper" and "operator" plunges editors into continuous identity confusion and value schism. In this study, 82.4% of editors reported feeling "two completely different working methods pulling at me," a finding that reveals the structural roots of role conflict in convergence publishing contexts[51]. Second, the deep embedding of technological tools has altered editors' decision-making patterns and power structures. Algorithmic recommendation systems, data analysis platforms, and intelligent review tools have transformed from auxiliary tools to decision-making dominators. 69.2% of editors indicated that "algorithmic recommendations have greater influence on content selection than editorial judgment." This sense of power cession and weakening of professional autonomy brought by "human-machine collaborative" decision-making modes represents a new type of psychological distress unprecedented in the traditional publishing era.

The illusion of technology's neutrality masks its underlying commercial logic and value orientations, making editors unwittingly become executors of algorithmic will rather than gatekeepers of content quality. Third, the "real-time pressure" of convergence publishing significantly intensifies editors' temporal anxiety and ethical dilemmas. The traditional publishing philosophy of "meticulous work produces excellence" forms sharp opposition to convergence publishing's requirements for "rapid iteration and instant publication." 70.6% of editors face time pressure conflicts between "rapid production and meticulous refinement." In the 24-hour continuous information flow, editors are often forced to make difficult trade-offs between "meeting deadlines" and "ensuring quality." This temporal urgency-induced simplification of ethical reasoning and reduction in moral sensitivity is not significant in traditional publishing's leisurely pace. Additionally, the "cross-boundary collaboration" characteristic of convergence publishing breaks down traditional editorial department boundaries. Technical, marketing, operations, and other non-editorial professional background personnel deeply participate in content decisions. Value differences and interest conflicts among multiple stakeholders multiply collaborative decision-making complexity. 58.6% of editors report value conflicts with marketing departments—cross-departmental tensions rarely appearing in traditional publishing's vertical management structure[52]. Finally, the "immediacy of user feedback" in convergence publishing directly exposes editors to public evaluation and commercial pressure. Real-time data such as click-through rates, share volumes, and user comments become explicit indicators for evaluating content success. This "data visibility" reinforces short-term performance orientation, weakening editors' confidence in upholding long-term values and professional standards, forming ethical challenges unique to convergence publishing contexts.

5.3. Construction of the psychological conflict and ethical adaptation model

Based on empirical research findings and theoretical integration, this study constructs a "Psychological Conflict and Ethical Adaptation Model in Editorial Collaborative Decision-Making within Convergence Publishing." This model systematically explicates the generation mechanisms of psychological conflicts, impact pathways, and action mechanisms of adaptation strategies, providing an integrative theoretical framework for understanding and intervening in editors' ethical dilemmas. The core logical chain of the model is "contextual stressors → psychological conflicts → ethical cognitive disruption → ethical behavioral deterioration → adaptation mechanism intervention → ethical function recovery." Five major contextual characteristics of convergence publishing—coexistence of dual logics, technological tool embedding, real-time pressure, cross-boundary collaboration complexity, and data visibility—constitute the fundamental stressors of psychological conflicts. These stressors trigger editors' role conflicts, power conflicts, and cognitive conflicts through three pathways: contradictions in role expectations, unequal power distribution, and pluralization of value orientations. The three types of conflicts interweave to form a "conflict complex" with an average intensity of 3.89 points and exhibiting dynamic cumulative effects[53]. The impact of psychological conflicts on ethical behavior follows a three-stage progressive model of "cognitive disruption—emotional exhaustion—behavioral deterioration." First, it disrupts the ethical cognitive system by reducing moral sensitivity, simplifying ethical reasoning, and weakening judgment quality (total effect β=-0.492, $p<0.001$). Second, it triggers negative emotions such as anxiety, guilt, and helplessness, leading to psychological resource depletion. Finally, it manifests as loosening of ethical standards, principled compromises, and occupational burnout. The model particularly emphasizes the moderating role of environmental factors and the mediating role of individual differences. Environmental factors such as organizational ethical climate, technical support, and social norms can buffer the negative impact of psychological conflicts on ethical behavior (buffering efficiency 31.1%-54.8%), while individual traits such as moral identity, professional commitment, and psychological resilience influence the final behavioral

outcomes of conflicts through mediation mechanisms (mediation ratios 13.4%-61.4%). This dual mechanism of "environmental moderation + individual mediation" reveals the complexity and interventionability of ethical behavior formation. At the adaptation strategy level, the model proposes a systematic intervention framework at three levels: "individual-team-organization." Individual-level cognitive reconstruction strategies (such as value clarification, cognitive reappraisal, psychological distance regulation, etc.) enhance psychological resilience by changing editors' cognitive evaluation of and coping methods with conflicts. Team-level communication and coordination mechanisms (such as ethical discussion meetings, cross-departmental platforms, mentor systems, etc.) share individual pressure by providing social support and collective wisdom. Organization-level institutional safeguard measures (such as ethical guideline formulation, training system construction, performance evaluation optimization, etc.) fundamentally reduce conflict generation by improving environmental conditions and structural factors[54]. The innovation of the model lies in revealing the dynamic equilibrium relationship between psychological conflicts and ethical adaptation. When the intervention intensity and effectiveness of adaptation mechanisms can offset or exceed the destructive power of conflicts, editors' ethical functions are maintained or even enhanced; conversely, they fall into a vicious cycle of "conflict accumulation—ethical slippery slope." This dynamic perspective provides theoretical basis for publishing institutions to design preventive and developmental ethical support systems.

6. Conclusion

Through mixed research methods, this study systematically explores the psychological conflicts and ethical adaptation mechanisms in editorial collaborative decision-making within convergence publishing environments, yielding the following five core conclusions: First, editors in convergence publishing contexts face three types of psychological conflicts—role conflict, power conflict, and cognitive conflict—with an average intensity of 3.89 points (on a 5-point scale). 68.9% of editors simultaneously experience two or more types of conflicts, exhibiting characteristics of multi-dimensional superposition and high-intensity accumulation. Cognitive conflict demonstrates the highest intensity (4.15 points), with pluralization of value orientations constituting the core contradiction. Second, psychological conflicts significantly disrupt editors' ethical cognitive systems through three pathways: weakening moral sensitivity (declining by 30.8%), simplifying ethical reasoning (declining by 32.2%), and reducing judgment quality (declining by 26.6%), with a total effect of β=-0.492 ($p<0.001$), leading to loosening of ethical behavioral standards and decreased professional value perception. Third, environmental factors play important moderating roles in the process by which psychological conflicts influence ethical behavior. Organizational ethical climate demonstrates the highest buffering efficiency (54.8%), while technical support and social norms show moderation effect sizes of 0.118 and 0.142 respectively. High-level environmental support can significantly weaken the negative impacts of conflicts. Fourth, individual difference variables constitute important mediating pathways. Moral identity accounts for the largest mediation ratio (61.4%), while professional commitment and psychological resilience account for 25.2% and 13.4% respectively, revealing the deep mechanisms by which psychological conflicts influence ethical behavior through eroding individuals' internal resources. Fifth, individual-level cognitive reconstruction strategies (value clarification improving by 39.0%) and team-level communication and coordination mechanisms (ethical discussion meetings with comprehensive efficacy of 23.8 points) provide effective intervention pathways for editors' ethical adaptation. Constructing a systematic support system at three levels—"individual-team-organization"—is key to promoting recovery of editors' ethical functions.

The study sample was primarily drawn from publishing institutions in mainland China, including traditional publishing houses, academic journal publishers, digital publishing platforms, and convergent publishing enterprises. The sample demonstrates a certain degree of representativeness in terms of institution type, geographic distribution, and editors' years of work experience; however, the generalization of research findings across cultures and industries still requires careful consideration. First, regarding cultural applicability, the organizational culture, management models, and professional ethical norms of China's publishing industry are rooted in specific sociocultural foundations. Cultural factors such as collectivist orientation, power distance perception, and the concept of "face" may influence the intensity of editors' perceptions of role conflict and power conflict, as well as their coping approaches. Editor groups in Western individualist cultural contexts may exhibit different conflict patterns and coping preferences. Second, regarding industry differences, publishing industries across different countries and regions vary significantly in terms of degree of marketization, technology penetration rate, regulatory environment, and level of professionalization. These structural factors affect the mechanisms through which psychological conflicts arise and the effectiveness of ethical coping strategies. Therefore, when extending the theoretical model and practical recommendations proposed in this study to other cultural contexts or knowledge-intensive professions, adaptive adjustments need to be made in accordance with specific organizational environments and cultural backgrounds. Future research can further examine the external validity of the research findings through cross-national comparative designs.

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Conflicts of interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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