

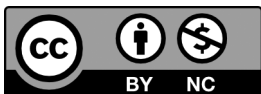
Influencing Factors of “Two Combinations” in Arming Youth’s Cultural Confidence

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Abstract: Against the backdrop of accelerating global transformations, intensified ideological competition and cultural conflicts have become increasingly prominent. How to strengthen youth cultural confidence through theoretical armament and address the challenges of the world and the times has emerged as a critical issue. This study employs structural equation modeling (SEM) to empirically examine the factors influencing youth cultural confidence through the “Two Combinations” theoretical framework. The research reveals that university factors dominate among multiple influencing elements. To effectively leverage the “Two Combinations” in enhancing youth cultural confidence, it is essential to reinforce universities’ primary role, optimize their curriculum systems, harness the functions of university-based mass organizations, and establish segmented groups for youth theoretical armament. These measures provide theoretical foundations and practical insights for overcoming the cultivation challenges of youth cultural confidence and improving the effectiveness of theoretical propaganda.

Keywords: Theoretical Armament; “Two Combinations”; Youth Cultural Confidence; Influencing Factors



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1 Origin of the problem

In June 2023, General Secretary Xi Jinping (2023) emphasized at the Symposium on Cultural Inheritance and Development: “Firm cultural confidence is essential for self-improvement. Only a nation with cultural confidence can stand firm, stand steadily, and go far.” The report of the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China pointed out: “Arming the youth with the Party’s scientific theories and inspiring them with the Party’s original aspiration and mission”(Xi, 2022a), explicitly proposing the strategic work requirement of “arming the youth with the Party’s

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scientific theories”. The youth, especially those in higher education institutions, are in the critical growth period of “joining and earning”, with their values, outlook on life, and worldviews at a pivotal stage of formation. However, the cultivation of cultural confidence among the youth today faces dual challenges: the weakening of traditional cultural identity and the infiltration of Western ideologies. When “every step forward in theoretical innovation must be matched by corresponding theoretical armament” (Xi, 2020b) becomes a fundamental principle of ideological construction, the theoretical armament of the youths’ minds should also keep pace. The “Two Combinations”, as a theoretical achievement of the Party’s innovative theories, have garnered widespread attention since their proposal. (Zhang, 2024)“Only by combining the basic principles of Marxism with the specific realities of China and with the excellent traditional Chinese culture can we correctly address the major questions posed by the times and practice.” (Xi, 2022a) Therefore, the theoretical armament of the youth through the “Two Combinations”, as a new field, urgently requires in-depth research to provide solutions for the modernization dilemma in building cultural confidence among the youth—new methodology.

The current Party’s theoretical innovation work faces urgent demands for modernization transformation: the traditional one-way indoctrination model struggles to adapt to the subjective cognitive characteristics of young people in the new era. At the same time, Western cultural hegemony continuously deconstructs mainstream value recognition through intelligent technological advantages. Against this backdrop, this paper focuses on the core proposition of “the impact of the Two Combinations theoretical armament on youth cultural confidence”, exploring three key dimensions through structural equation modeling (SEM): first, whether there exists a significant correlation between theoretical armament and cultural confidence; second, the applicability boundaries of the explanatory power of the classic “four-factor model” (family, university, society, individual) in ideological and political education; third, whether there exists a dominant factor among multiple influencing elements. Therefore, this paper aims to address the following questions: the relevance between the “Two Combinations” theoretical armament and youth cultural confidence; if such relevance exists, whether the classic “four-factor model” for analyzing the effectiveness of ideological and political education is applicable to the practical efficacy of the “Two Combinations” theoretical armament on youth cultural confidence; if applicable, which factor among family, university, society, and individual plays a dominant role, and then propose enlightenment suggestions for this dominant factor to enhance the impact of the “Two Combinations” theoretical armament on youth cultural confidence, thereby assisting young people. Be a firm believer and loyal practitioner of the lofty ideal of communism and the common ideal of socialism with Chinese characteristics.

2 Theoretical Basis and Research Hypothesis

2.1 The Generation Logic of “Two Combinations” Theory Armed in the Perspective of Spiritual Production

As early as the ancient Greek era, philosophers like Thales and Aristotle had initiated explorations into the production of spirit. Friedrich List, a pioneer of the German Historical School, formally proposed the concept of spiritual production. Marx’s theory of spiritual production evolved from the research achievements of his predecessors. Spiritual production refers to the creation of consciousness, specifically the production of “social relations of thought”. In the “Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844”, Marx initially outlined the social essence of conscious activity

through the concept of “spiritual creation”. In “The Holy Family”, he formally introduced the conceptual category of “spiritual production”. By the time of “The German Ideology”, Marx explicitly highlighted the interaction between material and spiritual production: “The production of ideas, concepts, and consciousness is initially intertwined with people’s material activities, material interactions, and the language of real life. Here, people’s imagination, thinking, and spiritual exchanges are direct products of material action”(Marx & Engels, 2012), emphasizing the dual nature of human practical activities as both “spiritual” and “productive”. The logical starting point of Marx’s theory of spiritual production lies in the fact that human needs determine human missions, and “real individuals” revolutionize the existing world through objective activities.

Throughout its century-long struggle, the Communist Party of China has consistently emphasized the importance of spiritual strength. In his article “Where Does Correct Human Thought Come From?” Mao Zedong (1999b) proposed that “material can be transformed into spirit, and spirit can be transformed into material”. Focusing on the central tasks of the Party and the nation’s development, while adhering to the physical and mental characteristics of young people, the Party has persistently armed youth with the latest theoretical achievements, forming valuable experience in using innovative theories to educate the youth. Since its founding, the Communist Party of China has upheld Marxism as its theoretical banner. This theory has armed and inspired a new generation of young people. “From November 1919 to July 1926, the New Youth Society published 46 political books in 57 volumes, including Marxist works such as *The Communist Manifesto*, *Class Struggle*, *History of Socialism*, and *ABC of Communism*, which played a significant role in transforming progressive democrats like Mao Zedong and Yun Daiying into Marxists.”(Tian et al., 2012) During the socialist revolution and construction period, the Party continued to arm the youth with the latest Sinicization of Marxism—Mao Zedong Thought. Mao Zedong (1999a) once stated that young students “should not only study their majors but also make ideological and political progress, which requires learning Marxism and current affairs”. With the vigorous development of opening-up and socialist modernization, the central tasks at each stage have varied. Resolution on Certain Questions in the History of Our Party Since the Founding of the People’s Republic of China emphasized the need to strengthen and improve ideological and political work, educating the youth with a Marxist worldview and communist morality(Editorial Group of Selected Important Documents of the 30 Years of Reform and Opening-up, 2008). In the new era, the Party Central Committee with Comrade Xi Jinping at its core has attached great importance to the youth and youth work, repeatedly stressing the cultivation of young people to “pursue lofty ideals, with a noble faith in Marxism and a firm belief in communism and socialism with Chinese characteristics engraved in their hearts”(State Council Information Office of the People’s Republic of China, 2022). A review of the Party’s historical efforts to arm the youth with innovative theories reveals that it has adapted to the times through continuous innovation, using advanced theories to arm the youth, thereby inspiring them with the Party’s original aspiration and mission to shoulder responsibilities in modernization efforts.

The spiritual production of each era is built upon specific material production foundations. At the celebration of the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Communist Party of China, General Secretary Xi Jinping first proposed the significant theoretical proposition of “the Two Combinations”. As this theory continues to enrich and innovate, it establishes the essential connections between the “history”, “reality” and “theory” of the Party’s innovative theoretical development (Han, 2021), becoming the fundamental guideline for arming the youth with the “Two Combinations” theory. The “Two Combinations” are innovative theoretical achievements summarized by our Party over more than a century of struggle, demonstrating strong vitality in the process of integration. In response to the current issues in

ideological and political education and theoretical propaganda, the “Two Combinations” further clarify the need to adhere to the basic principles of Marxism as guidance, integrating the “roots” of China’s excellent traditional culture, the “soul” of revolutionary culture, and the “essence” of advanced socialist culture, thereby “enhancing the confidence to be a China person with backbone and confidence” (Xi, 2021a). In exploring the process of arming the youth with the “Two Combinations” theory, the first step is to effectively utilize this powerful tool, enabling the youth to recognize the “Two Combinations” and the Party’s innovative theory, thereby stimulating their intrinsic motivation to learn, think, practice, and comprehend.

2.2 The relevance of the “Two Combinations” theory in cultural identity theory to the cultural confidence of youth

The “Two Combinations” theory, a century-old summary of the Communist Party of China’s historical experience, when integrated with youth ideological education, can strengthen cultural confidence among young people. Cultural identity serves as the prerequisite for achieving cultural confidence. Based on Stuart Halls cultural identity theory, he defines cultural identity as “a shared culture” and “the self-definition of a community”(McQuail, 2006: 82). The formation of shared culture relies on the crucial process of “articulation”. Hall states: “I use the term articulation to denote a connection or link that is not necessarily given... but requires emergence in specific existential contexts. It must be actively maintained through specific processes, is not eternal, but must be continuously renewed; it may disappear or disintegrate under certain circumstances, leading to the dissolution of old connections and the continuous formation of new ones” (Hall, 1985: 113-114).Halls concept of “articulation” essentially represents a dynamic interplay between articulated discourses and social forces. In this context, the articulated discourse refers to the “Two Combinations” theory, while social forces represent the practical outcomes of cultivating youth cultural confidence. Cultural identity serves as an emotional bond connecting the “Two Combinations” with youth cultural confidence. The “Two Combinations” reinforce cultural identity, providing theoretical support and practical frameworks for cultural confidence, while simultaneously...Cultural confidence feeds back to the “Two Combinations”, promoting theoretical innovation and practice deepening.

Once a theory has grasped the masses, it too becomes a material force. Theory is capable of grasping the masses as soon as it demonstrates ad hominem. (Marx & Engels, 2009: 11)In the context of the new era, the goal of the “Two Combinations” theoretical armament extends beyond fostering cultural confidence among youth—it also aims to ignite their practical drive to shoulder the mission of national rejuvenation. The essence of youth cultural confidence lies in their profound recognition and conscious practice of the Party’s innovative theoretical system, particularly the outstanding traditional Chinese culture, thereby advancing the great cause of national rejuvenation. Based on this, this paper explores whether the “Two Combinations” theoretical armament contributes to youth cultural confidence and proposes the following hypotheses:

H1: The deeper the theoretical grounding in the Two Combinations theory, the stronger the youths’ cultural confidence.

2.3 The Main Role of the University Factors in the Classical Four-Factor Model in the Efficiency of Theoretical Armament

From the perspective of cultural identity, revitalizing the vitality of youth cultural practices fundamentally

constitutes a systematic exploration of cultural confidence. President Xi Jinping has emphasized in his directives on the Marxist Theory Research and Construction Project for the new era: “We must enhance the relevance and effectiveness of learning and propaganda to ensure the Party’s innovative theories resonate more deeply with the people.” (People’s Daily, 2024) This directive elevates the study of theoretical communication effectiveness to new theoretical heights. As the “Two Combinations” theory matures, it has become a guiding principle and contemporary methodology for empowering ideological and political education and the Party’s theoretical propaganda in the new era. Against this backdrop, scientifically evaluating the practical efficacy of the “Two Combinations” theoretical armament has emerged as a crucial benchmark for assessing the effectiveness of ideological and political education and the Party’s theoretical propaganda in the new era.

Scholarly discussions on the factors influencing the effectiveness of theoretical dissemination predominantly draw from the classic “four-factor model” of ideological and political education, which identifies four key elements—society, family, school, and the individual student—each contributing to educational efficacy. (Tang & Long, 2005) This framework emphasizes the importance of fostering individual student development as the core, while leveraging the synergistic efforts of society, schools, and families to create a powerful educational synergy. This analytical paradigm holds significant reference value for the theoretical armament of the “Two Combinations” theory, particularly in the practical dimension of nurturing cultural confidence among youth, where a systematic examination of each element’s operational mechanisms is essential. Notably, current practices reveal structural contradictions such as weakened family education functions, misaligned school education orientations, and deficiencies in social education mechanisms. These issues urgently require the application of contradiction analysis to accurately identify critical dominant factors.

Within the four-dimensional framework of theoretical dissemination systems, universities—as institutionalized and systematic educational domains—hold unique strategic significance in precisely defining their educational functions. When applying the contradiction analysis method to deconstruct the “four-factor model”, it becomes evident that compared to the diffuse nature of family education, the non-systematic approach of social education, and the cognitive instability of young individuals, universities demonstrate distinct institutional advantages in constructing cultural identity and fostering cultural confidence. This is evidenced by their organized knowledge transmission systems, professional faculty teams, and structured curriculum frameworks. President Xi Jinping (2024b) emphasized the need to “advance the development of ideological and political courses alongside the theoretical armament of the Party’s innovative theories”. Particularly in the context of globalization, where value pluralism and intergenerational cultural differences pose dual challenges, universities are reshaping young People’s value recognition and educational practices regarding the theoretical core of the “Two Combinations” through a “dual-wheel drive” model that synchronizes ideological education with theoretical armament. This approach serves as both a crucible for nurturing cultural confidence and a spiritual high ground for theoretical empowerment. Accordingly, this paper argues that if university factors are identified as the core influencing elements in the theoretical armament of the “Two Combinations”, then enhancing university-related infrastructure could simultaneously elevate both the theoretical armament and young People’s cultural confidence. Assume the following:

H 2: The university factor is the core influence factor of the “Two Combinations” theory, and strengthening university construction helps to enhance the effectiveness of youth cultural confidence.

In conclusion, this study develops a theoretical framework for fostering youth cultural confidence through the “Two Combinations” approach, as illustrated in Figure 1.

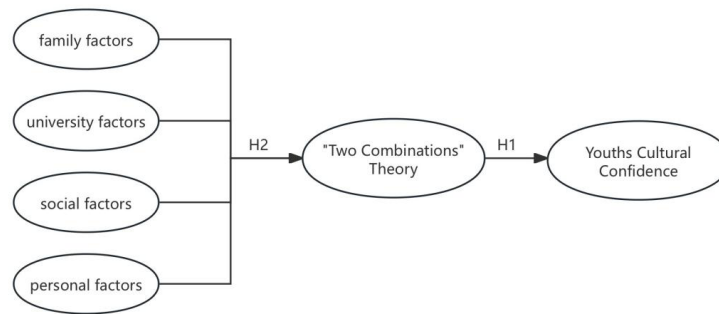


Figure 1 Theoretical Model

3 Empirical Analysis

3.1 Data Collection

This study employs the Likert scale for data collection, with its sample being college students. The questionnaire is designed based on the “Two Combinations” and the theoretical characteristics of youth cultural confidence, and is adapted into a format suitable for college students to read and comprehend. Subsequently, partial questions are refined through a pilot survey, followed by the formal investigation for data collection.

The data survey was conducted from February 2025 to mid-April 2025, covering 48 universities across various regions, including comprehensive institutions such as Nanjing University, Soochow University, and Jiangsu University. A total of 600 questionnaires were distributed to college students, with 560 valid responses collected. After excluding questionnaires that did not meet the analysis criteria, the valid response rate reached 93.33%, meeting the required standards. The demographic breakdown showed 56.60% female respondents (317 individuals) and 43.40% male respondents (243 individuals).

3.2 Reliability and Validity Testing

The reliability refers to the stability of data and the level of internal consistency. The internal consistency of the “Two Combinations” theoretical dimension and the youth cultural confidence dimension cognitive scale is verified by using SPSS23.0 software. Cronbach’s alpha coefficient is 0.899 and 0.904, which are higher than the standard requirements, indicating that the internal consistency of the questionnaire is high.

Validity primarily measures a scale’s ability to capture theoretical constructs or traits. In this study, validity refers to the scientific rigor and practical effectiveness of the Two Combinations theory in shaping youth cultural confidence. We conducted Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) and Bartlett’s tests of sphericity on the questionnaires’ multiple influencing factors. The KMO value reached 0.952 (≥ 0.500), and the Bartlett test showed statistical significance ($p < 0.001$), confirming the questionnaire’s strong validity and meeting the necessary analytical requirements.

3.3 Factor extraction

The results of the test of the reliability and validity indicate that the data of this study have good reliability, stability and consistency. In order to explain the extracted common factors, the factor loading matrix is rotated, and the factor

loading values lower than 0.5 are deleted.

First, we conducted an extraction of common factors for the core variable “Two Combinations” theoretical framework. The first three common factors yielded eigenvalues of 9.451, 1.859, and 1.203, all exceeding 1, indicating strong explanatory power over the data’s variance. Their combined explained variance reached 69.514%, effectively characterizing the original data’s variability. Second, an exploratory factor analysis was performed on the four-dimensional influencing factors (household, university, society, and individual) of the “Two Combinations” theoretical framework. Factors with eigenvalues above 1 were extracted, and the first four factors yielded eigenvalues all exceeding 1, with a combined explained variance of 69.276%, validating the rationality of the four-dimensional structure.

3.4 Model Construction

Based on the above analysis, we conducted further model construction and simulation by importing the data into AMOS25.0 software to establish a factor model of the “Two Combinations” theoretical armaments’ influence on youth cultural confidence (Figure 2). The model focuses on the driving effects of the “Two Combinations” theoretical armament, encompassing family factors (C1/C2), university factors (D6/D3), social factors (E5/E8), and personal factors (F4/F5). In summary, the factor model of the “Two Combinations” theoretical armaments influence on youth cultural confidence, along with brief explanations of its items, is presented in Table 1.

Table 1 The Model of Influencing Factors of the “Two Combinations” Theory Armed Youths Cultural Confidence

dimension	Item entry	Question number	Item entry description
family factors	Family tradition discussion	C1	Families often discuss topics such as the excellent traditional culture of China.
	family theory education	C2	Family Education of Youth with “Two Combinations” Theory
university factors	Integration into Ideological and Political Education Courses	D6	The Effective Integration of the Content of “Two Combinations” into Ideological and Political Courses in Colleges and Universities
	Party members take the lead in learning	D3	Party Members and Students Take the Lead in Learning the Two Combinations
social factors	Mainstream consciousness	E5	receptive to mainstream social ideologies
	environment effects	E8	susceptible to the social environment
personal factors	identification of cultural nihilism	F4	Identifying Cultural Nihilism
	resistance to Western cultural infiltration	F5	Identifying the infiltration of Western culture

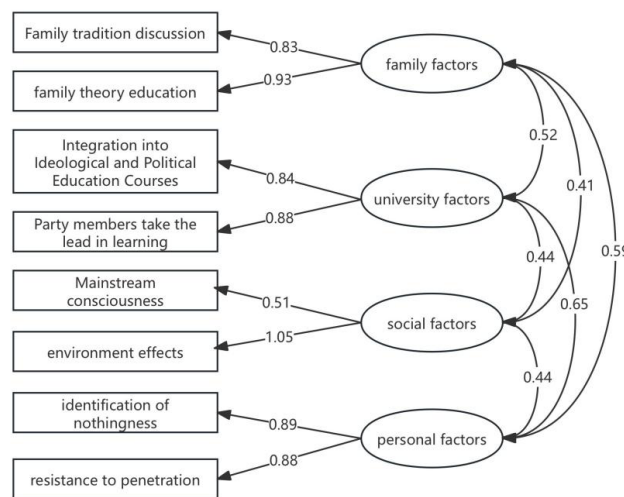


Figure 2 The Influence Factors Model of “Two Combinations” Theory Based on Youths’ Cultural Confidence

3.5 Hypothesis Testing Results

Given the strong fit of the model, after analyzing the relationships among influencing factors, we conducted tests of path significance on the full model of factors affecting youth cultural confidence using the “Two Combinations” theoretical framework. As shown in Table 2, the analysis revealed that the “Two Combinations” theoretical framework has a highly significant impact on youth cultural confidence (path coefficient=0.799, $p<0.001$), establishing it as the core foundation. Specifically, the university factor significantly positively influences the “Two Combinations” theoretical framework (path coefficient=0.541, $p<0.001$), with the effective integration of ideological and political courses (D6) and the leading role of Party members and teachers in learning “Two Combinations” (D3) serving as key drivers. The social factor shows a weak but significant impact (path coefficient=0.057, $p=0.027$), reflecting the implicit influence of public opinion (E5). Family factors (path coefficient=-0.048, $p=0.111$) and personal factors (path coefficient=0.073, $p=0.132$) did not pass the significance test. The model diagram is presented in Figure 3.

Table 2 Significance Test of Path Coefficients

	Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
Theoretical armament of “Two Combinations” <---Family Factors	-0.048	0.030	-1.596	0.111
Theoretical Armament of “Two Combinations” <---University Factors	0.541	0.062	8.792	***
The Theory of “Two Combinations” Armament<---Social Factors	0.057	0.026	2.213	0.027
Theoretical Armament of “Two Combinations” <---Personal Factors	0.073	0.048	1.508	0.132
Youth Culture Confidence<---Armed with the Theory of “Two Combinations.”	0.799	0.045	17.628	***
C1<---Family factors	1.000			
C2<---Family factors	0.877	0.047	18.463	***
D6<---University factors	1.000			
D3<---University factors	1.025	0.049	21.055	***
E8<---Social factors	1.000			
E5<---Social factors	0.682	0.101	6.735	***
F5<---Personal factors	1.000			
F4<---Personal factors	1.032	0.046	22.498	***

Note: *** indicates a significance level of 0.001.

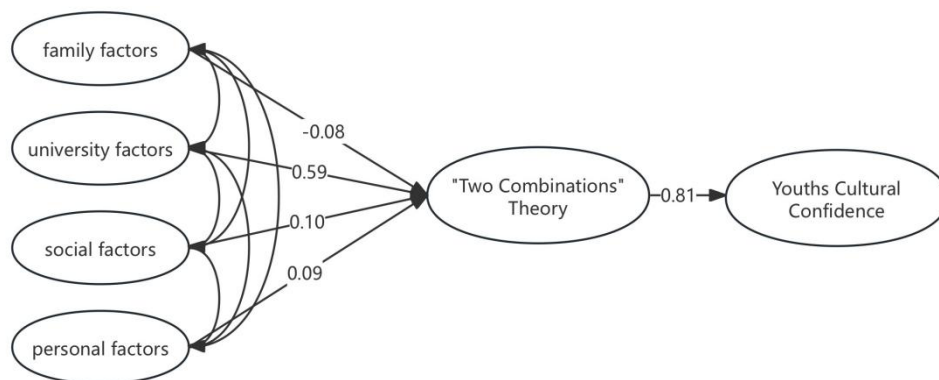


Figure 3 Theoretical Model of “Two Combinations” Influencing Youths’ Cultural Confidence

3.6 Model Fit Test

After establishing the model, further validation of its fit was conducted. This study employed several commonly

used metrics, including RMSEA and CFI. The final model fit results, processed with Amos 25.0, are presented in Table 3. The model demonstrates excellent fit, meeting statistical requirements, indicating a good overall fit between the model and the sample data, which is considered reliable for reference.

Table 3 Model Fit Test

metrics	Model value	standard	Conclusion
CMIN/DF	2.825	<3	good
GFI	0.956	>0.9	outstanding
AGFI	0.929	>0.9	outstanding
CFI	0.977	>0.9	outstanding
RMSEA	0.057	<0.08	good
SRMR	0.023	<0.05	outstanding
HOELTER ($\alpha=0.05$)	258	>200	The sample size is adequate

4 Conclusion and Implications

This study employs structural equation modeling (SEM) to systematically examine the factors influencing youth cultural confidence through the “Two Combinations” theoretical framework. By validating theoretical hypotheses, it establishes a direct correlation between this theoretical framework and youth cultural confidence, identifies its core determinants, and proposes actionable recommendations. These findings provide both theoretical foundations and practical insights for addressing challenges in cultivating youth cultural confidence and enhancing the effectiveness of theoretical education.

4.1 Research Findings

First, the relevance between the “Two Combinations” theory and the youths’ cultural confidence is significant.

Empirical results demonstrate a strong positive correlation between the depth of theoretical armament and youth cultural confidence (standardized coefficient (β)= 0.799, $p<0.001$), indicating that deeper theoretical armament through the “Two Combinations” theory correlates with higher youth cultural confidence. This finding validates that the “Two Combinations” theoretical framework can effectively cultivate youth cultural confidence through youth-oriented interpretation. The findings suggest that we should proactively leverage the “Two Combinations” theoretical armament to enhance youth cultural confidence, thereby achieving dual effects of “breaking” and “establishing” in ideological education.

Second, the classical “four-factor model” has explanatory power in the new era, but there are structural differences.

The cross-dimensional analysis based on structural equation modeling reveals that the four factors—family, university, society, and individual—exhibit explanatory power for the effectiveness of theoretical armament in line with the classical model framework (RMSEA=0.057, CFI=0.977). However, their effects demonstrate a gradient differentiation pattern, with the standardized influence coefficient of the university factor reaching 0.541 ($p<0.05$), significantly higher than family, social, and individual factors. This result indicates that among the influencing factors of the “Two Combinations” theory’s impact on youth cultural confidence, the university factor has emerged as the core influence factor, serving as the critical pivot for the transformation of theoretical armament efficacy.

Thirdly, the role of universities as the main position of the “Two Combinations” theory armament needs to be

deepened.

The data reveal that higher education institutions dominate the four-dimensional factors (accounting for 59% of the variance explained). Although theoretical education in universities has become a routine practice, it still faces deep-seated challenges in value transmission, including insufficient content relevance, lack of methodological innovation, and weak linguistic permeability. Notably, the data highlights three breakthrough pathways: integrating ideological and political courses with the “Two Combinations” content enhances cultural confidence; exemplary roles of Party members and faculty and students boost participation among non-Party members; and peer interaction creates ripple effects that accelerate theoretical acceptance, providing empirical evidence for addressing the “last mile” challenge in higher education.

4.2 Inspiration and Suggestions

4.2.1 Make Good Use of “Two Combinations” to Promote Youth Cultural Confidence

The practical efficacy of the “Two Combinations” theory stems from its methodological application. To achieve this, we must balance tradition with innovation—developing advanced methodologies and refined techniques. This requires upholding Marxism’s guiding role in ideological development while creatively transforming and innovating China’s outstanding traditional culture. Only through this dual nourishment can we cultivate a new generation of youth who embody both national pride and global vision, who preserve cultural roots while embracing innovative breakthroughs, thereby truly elevating their cultural confidence.

First, the guiding principle should be advanced, and the guiding position of Marxism in the ideological field should be adhered to.

The report of the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China pointed out: “Marxism is the fundamental guiding ideology for our party and country to be established and developed.” (Xi, 2022a) Any ideology or culture has a banner and soul that holds a dominant position. Establishing Marxism’s guiding role in the ideological field is fundamental for the Communist Party of China to raise the banner and set the direction. The guiding role of Marxism in the ideological field goes far beyond the simple realm of ideas and concepts, extending from the cultural domain to various fields such as politics and economics. Once issues of marginalization and loss of voice arise, they often foreshadow crises in various fields. In the process of promoting cultural confidence and strength among the youth, it is necessary to deeply understand Xi Jinping’s cultural thought, grasp the “Two Combinations”, guide and arm the youth, and establish a solid safety baseline for the cultivation of youth ideology. Specifically, the first requirement for implementing this fundamental system is to promote the comprehensive implementation of Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era by the entire party and society. General Secretary Xi Jinping (2020a) pointed out: “Propaganda and ideological work is to consolidate Marxism’s guiding role in the ideological field and to consolidate the common ideological foundation for the unity and struggle of the entire party and the people.” Ideological security belongs to the realm of national security, and the fundamental task of implementing the “Two Combinations” requires efforts in the new era. Under the guidance of the comprehensive national security concept, we must comprehensively enhance the effectiveness of national security education and patriotism education in the new era. Secondly, we should deeply comprehend the contemporary value of Xi Jinping’s cultural thought. This theoretical framework represents the latest academic achievement in the Party’s cultural development practices. Its original

contribution lies in accurately grasping the complex domestic and international situation under cultural pluralism, elevating cultural security to the strategic level of “what banner to hold high” and “what path to take”. Cultural security serves as the “moat” and “firewall” of ideology. To effectively engage with the youth in the new era, we must adhere to Xi Jinping’s cultural thought as our guiding principle, fortifying the cultural security defenses of the young People’s ideology. The first step involves deepening the study of Marxist theory, particularly the latest achievements of the Party’s innovative theories. Thirdly, we should proactively identify and respond to real-world challenges. In today’s world, undergoing unprecedented changes, Western ideological infiltration continues to intensify, while erroneous concepts like unilateralism, historical nihilism, and cultural revivalism persistently invade. As a special group prone to rebellion against traditional culture and identification with foreign ideologies, if we fail to maintain strict standards, young people may easily become “banana people”(Westernized individuals)—those brainwashed by Western values and hypocritical in their beliefs—or “flat people”(those lacking historical depth) lacking historical depth and focused solely on immediate gratification, disregarding the advanced advantages of socialism—the confused individuals who cannot discern right from wrong. The ideological and cultural security of the youth population urgently requires protection. While resolutely preventing and resisting such issues, proactive measures must also be taken to ensure that young people proceed in the correct direction.

Secondly, we should have excellent craftsmanship and adhere to the creative transformation and innovative development of excellent traditional Chinese culture.

As the spiritual lifeline and cultural foundation of the Chinese nation, China’s excellent traditional culture serves as the ideological source of the “Four Confidences”. During the 13th collective study session of the 18th Central Political Bureau, General Secretary Xi Jinping emphasized that promoting this cultural heritage requires “properly handling the relationship between inheritance and creative development, with a focus on creative transformation and innovative development”. This marked the first detailed elaboration on these concepts. He clarified: “Creative transformation involves adapting timeless cultural elements and outdated expressions to contemporary needs, infusing them with modern relevance and revitalizing their vitality. Innovative development means enhancing traditional culture through contemporary advancements, expanding its influence and appeal.” (Xi, 2014: 164) He further stressed: “Education on China’s excellent traditional culture should be a foundational project for strengthening cultural roots and shaping national identity, integrated throughout the entire talent development process.”(Xi, 2024a) The key principles include: 1) Balancing tradition and innovation. “Tradition” refers to upholding the fundamental system of Marxism’s guiding role in ideological work, adhering to the “Two Combinations” principle, and safeguarding the Communist Party of China’s cultural leadership and the cultural subjectivity of the Chinese nation(Xi, 2023: 11). This approach follows the inherent laws of cultural development. Integrate the essence of China’s excellent traditional culture into all aspects of the study, life, and work of the youth in the new era. Secondly, it is necessary to strengthen the cultural leadership of the Communist Party of China and place China’s excellent traditional culture within the context of building a strong cultural nation. It is essential to formulate and implement policies, guidelines, and strategies that align with the actual development of the national cultural cause, based on the specific conditions of the times and regions, thereby reinforcing the Party’s leadership over cultural work. Continuously consolidating the role of China’s excellent traditional culture in promoting the construction of a strong cultural nation is a practical choice and realistic response made by China’s excellent traditional culture in the new era to advance this goal. Always adhere to the Party’s leadership over culture to ensure the political correctness of arming the youth with the Party’s innovative theories. Thirdly, upholding the

position of Chinese culture is the primary task in fostering the cultural subjectivity of the youth in the new era. The Chinese nation once faced the urgent crisis of the extinction of its cultural heritage and the interruption of its cultural lineage, especially under the strong impact of Western culture, which once shattered the inherent cultural confidence of the Chinese people. Since the new era, in the process of creatively transforming and innovatively developing China's excellent traditional culture, it is imperative to uphold the cultural subjectivity of our nation, endowing China's excellent traditional culture with new content and new characteristics, so that it can radiate cultural traits with greater significance for the times.

4.2.2 The Main Role of Universities in the Propaganda of Theory to the Youth Should Be Strengthened

Universities are important venues where various forces compete for and control the youth, serving as the main channel for ideological and political education and the primary platform for the Party's theoretical propaganda. This is crucial for young college students to firmly enhance the "Four Consciousnesses", strengthen the "Four Confidences" and achieve the "Two Upholds", thereby establishing the common ideal of socialism with Chinese characteristics through the unity of knowledge, belief, and action, and enhancing their belief in socialism with Chinese characteristics and their confidence in the Chinese Dream of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

First, we should optimize the curriculum system of colleges and universities, and promote the "Two Combinations" into the teaching materials, into the classroom, and into the mind(s).

The "Two Combinations" principle serves not only as a core component of ideological and political education courses but also provides methodological guidance for their development in higher education institutions. Current university curricula face challenges, including outdated textbook versions that lag behind theoretical advancements, teaching models constrained by conventional practices, and abstract theories conflicting with young students' concrete thinking patterns. Integrating the "Two Combinations" into textbooks, classrooms, and students' minds can significantly enhance the optimization of higher education curricula. President Xi Jinping (2022b) emphasized, "The essence of ideological and political education lies in explaining principles. We must focus on teaching methods to deliver profound, thorough, and engaging explanations." First, digital intelligence should empower textbook revitalization. Through visual technologies, textbooks can "present meticulously curated symbols to cultivate collective identity and belonging among audiences"(Curran, 2006: 275). Educators should innovate textbook formats beyond traditional print materials by creating interconnected digital teaching resource libraries. They should systematically integrate the theoretical core of the "Two Combinations" as supplementary content, organically incorporating it into curriculum frameworks as essential academic support to optimize course design strategies. Second, establish student-centered classroom models. By aligning with contemporary trends, educators should innovate teaching methodologies, focusing on cultural phenomena and hot topics relevant to young students, and refining engaging instructional content that resonates with modern audiences. By employing diverse teaching methods, including case-based, heuristic, inquiry-based, and debate-style approaches, we empower students as active participants. Through the "Two Combinations" framework—which conveys specific positions, principles, and methodologies—we facilitate inter-subjective thinking, interaction, and discussion on relevant issues. Utilizing the latest achievements of Marxism, Sinicization, and modernization, we analyze social hotspots, enabling traditional classrooms to achieve modern transformation. Thirdly, we promote the synchronized development of "small ideological-political classrooms" and "large social classrooms". President Xi Jinping (2021b) emphasized: "Ideological-political education should not only be delivered in classrooms but also integrated into social

life.” He stressed the importance of “large ideological-political education”, urging its practical application through real-world connections. By organically combining these two educational dimensions, we ground our approach in social practice, actively expand classroom boundaries, and use “large ideological-political education” as a vehicle. This model unifies problem-oriented and demand-oriented approaches, establishing a two-way interactive mechanism between theoretical interpretation and real-world reflection. It guides young students to engage with dynamic cultural practices, deeply comprehend the scientific validity of the “Two Combinations”, and actively participate in real-world applications, thereby achieving seamless integration between academic knowledge and social life.

Secondly, we should give full play to the role of mass organizations in colleges and universities, and activate the power source of the “Two Combinations” theory.

President Xi Jinping (2017) emphasized: “Party mass organizations should strengthen grassroots foundations by focusing on enhancing their political nature, advanced nature, and mass character based on their actual conditions.” As advanced organizations that influence and unite students, university mass organizations should leverage the Two Combinations approach under the guidance of university Party committees to strengthen their bridging role, improve the capacity of Party and youth league cadres to serve young people, and advance from point to line to surface. First, enhance the leading role of university Party committees. As the core leadership force for institutional reform and innovation, university Party committees must focus on central tasks and serve the overall situation, guided by the Party’s innovative theories to fulfill the fundamental mission of moral education. On one hand, they should thoroughly implement the decisions and deployments of the Party Central Committee, conduct in-depth studies, and meticulously break down tasks. They should earnestly study President Xi’s important speeches, clarify the responsibilities of units, assign tasks to specific positions, and implement work through regular supervision and guidance. On the other hand, they should combine their institutional realities, conduct thorough research, and fully demonstrate the scientific system, core principles, and practical requirements of the Party’s innovative theories to educate and guide young people, activating the effectiveness of the Two Combinations in arming youth with these theories. Simultaneously, they should actively leverage local characteristics and fully explore regional traditions. First, integrate cultural resources. The Party committee should lead efforts to encourage universities to develop distinctive campus cultures, establishing a comprehensive education framework under Party leadership with interdepartmental collaboration and mass organization coordination, thereby enhancing organizational education functions. Second, strengthen the bridging role of mass organizations. Leveraging the strengths of student unions and student associations, university mass organizations should conduct diverse practical activities to reinforce their connecting role, laying a solid foundation for talent cultivation. As the bridge between the Party and youth, these organizations must prioritize political integrity, progressiveness, and mass participation. On one hand, they should deepen practical education through initiatives like summer “Three Rural Services” (cultural, technological, and hygienic services to rural areas) programs and social research to enrich youths’ practical experience. On the other hand, they should emphasize cultural education by organizing “Three Major Competitions” that integrate ideological guidance into academic innovation and cultural activities, creating signature programs with ideological depth, contemporary relevance, and youth-oriented characteristics. Third, enhance the service capabilities of Party and Youth League cadres. In the new era, these cadres must refine political literacy, improve theoretical knowledge, and strengthen practical skills to become politically reliable, highly competent, and ethically sound youth work leaders. A regular training mechanism should be established through specialized seminars, practical workshops, and job rotation programs. The system should enhance the ability of cadres to apply Marxist positions,

viewpoints, and methods in solving practical problems, and cultivate versatile talents who are well-versed in the ideological trends of the youth and skilled in ideological and political work.

4.2.3 Based on the Idea of Segmentation, We Should Build a Community of Youth Theoretical Armament

The current group of young college students in universities exhibits significant segmentation characteristics. To address the practical effects of theoretical armament based on the “Two Combinations” theory, it is urgently necessary to construct a differentiated community for theoretical armament among the youth. Liansi (2021) propose categorizing contemporary China’s youth into eight types: growth-oriented groups, instrumental groups, institutionalized groups, atomized groups, leverage groups, exemplary groups, knowledge-based groups, and marginalized groups. This paper creatively employs the concepts of growth-oriented groups, instrumental groups, and leverage groups to elaborate on the approach of building a theoretical armament community for the youth based on the idea of segmentation. The youth groups demonstrate different effects in absorbing the Party’s innovative theories, necessitating targeted educational strategies to achieve precise guidance.

First, we must focus on the growth-oriented youth demographic to address their cognitive blind spots. This group of university students demonstrates strong self-awareness yet exhibits a certain degree of confusion. During their ideological development, they navigate multiple dimensions of life direction exploration while grappling with growth dilemmas caused by social-cultural conflicts, urgently requiring systematic guidance to establish stable values. Leveraging the primary role of higher education, we should tackle theoretical learning challenges such as fragmented cognition, superficial engagement, and inadequate value internalization. To resolve this dilemma and advance the Party’s youth work, we must adopt the principle of “theoretical simplification and practical contextualization” to reshape cognitive pathways for theoretical armament and value integration mechanisms. On the one hand, we need to achieve “Two Combinations” through theoretical simplification. The Party’s innovative theories should be distilled into concise core content, then decoded into accessible language to create focal points for theoretical dissemination. Meanwhile, media channels should leverage efficient formats to break through “niche limitations”, enhancing the Party’s theoretical propaganda through multi-channel, multi-medium, and multi-dimensional communication effectiveness. On the other hand, the practical implementation of the “Two Combinations” is through scenario-based approaches. This scenario-based construction of the “Two Combinations” aims to transcend the temporal and spatial constraints of traditional education by reconstructing learning contexts through “micro-environments” and “light carriers”, presenting theories in more engaging and impactful ways. Utilizing online course platforms like China’s University MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses) and VR virtual interaction technologies creates immersive and interactive experiential spaces. These efforts are applied to the practical level of “large classrooms”, emphasizing the concept of “scale” to explore a tripartite empowerment mechanism involving “large classrooms”, “large platforms” and “excellent faculty”. By highly integrating and leveraging various educational resources and platforms, it gradually guides learners from being “passive observers” to becoming “active thinkers”, thereby stimulating the cultural subjectivity of young people.

Second, we must reshape the endogenous youth group and correct utilitarian tendencies. The term “endogenous group” refers to college students with strong competitive awareness but low empathy. These individuals are easily influenced by utilitarianism in society, often adopting a “distorted” approach to theoretical studies characterized by “utilitarianism” and “prioritizing instrumental rationality over value rationality”. This cognitive bias can be addressed through Maslow’s hierarchy of needs theory. The so-called “utilitarian orientation” fundamentally stems from the

youth's survival challenges in physiological and safety aspects—current employment pressures and high ideological-political demands within the system create “realistic inevitability”. These young people face academic and career pressures, generally exhibiting a proactive utilitarian mindset. Building theoretical education for youth should respect their needs and self-actualization while applying achievement motivation theory to emphasize emotional support and value guidance. Adopting the “Two Combinations” methodology, we should draw wisdom from traditional Chinese culture's “righteousness and profit” dialectic to alleviate performance anxiety and reshape youths' understanding of the meaning of struggles through Marxist practical perspectives. By reducing utilitarian competition tendencies, we should design tiered, rationalized task lists to...The youth group can get positive feedback in the process of accomplishing tasks in different stages, break the single evaluation dimension of “performance first”, realize the cultural identity and value guidance from inside to outside, and thus have more potential to go far.

Third, we must cultivate a leveraged youth group to activate a sense of community. A leveraged group refers to young people with strong voices, capable of guiding public opinion and ideology. Although this group is small in number, it has strong mobilization capabilities. Mao Zedong once inscribed for the founding of the Shaanbei Public School, saying: “We must cultivate a large number of people who are the vanguard of the revolution. These people possess political foresight. They are filled with a spirit of struggle and sacrifice. They are open-hearted, loyal, positive, and upright. They do not seek personal gain but only the liberation of the nation and society. They are not afraid of difficulties and remain firm and brave in the face of challenges. They are not arrogant or showy but are down-to-earth and practical”(Mao, 1991: 565). China must have a large number of such vanguard members, and the tasks of the Chinese revolution can be smoothly accomplished. “What is the role of the vanguard? It is the leading role, standing at the forefront of the revolutionary ranks.” For those information sources one does not trust, the more they are heard, the worse the response becomes. Therefore, to arm the youth with the Party's innovative theories, it is essential to convey relevant information through channels trusted by the youth. Starting with peers around them is a good approach. Leverage the leading and exemplary role of peers. To tap the vanguard role of this kind of young group, we should train them to be the contact person between the Party organizations at all levels and the youth masses, and make them the important disseminators and practitioners of the Party's innovative theories and thoughts such as “Two Combinations” to other youth groups and broader groups (Mao, 1991: 565).

4.3 Research Limitations and Future Prospects

Although this study systematically explored the relationship between “Two Combinations” theoretical armament and youth cultural confidence through structural equation modeling, along with its influencing factors, and reached conclusions with theoretical and practical value, limitations remain due to constraints in research methodology, data collection, and model design that need to be addressed in future studies. First, the sample coverage is limited. Although the study surveyed students from 48 universities in Jiangsu Province, meeting statistical analysis requirements, the sample source remains relatively concentrated, failing to adequately represent diverse regions, university types, and non-student youth groups nationwide. The generalizability of conclusions requires further validation. Future research should expand the sampling scope to include more regions and multi-level youth groups to enhance sample representativeness. Second, cross-sectional data cannot reveal causal dynamics. While this study used cross-sectional survey data to identify correlations and influence pathways between variables, it cannot strictly infer the temporal sequence and dynamic evolution of causal relationships. The formation of youth cultural confidence and the role of

theoretical armament constitute a long-term, dynamic process, which cross-sectional data struggles to capture. Future studies may employ longitudinal surveys or panel data to more accurately reveal the long-term impact mechanisms of theoretical armament on cultural confidence, third, variables. The measurement dimensions can be further expanded. While this study established an indicator system based on the classic “four-factor model” and validated its explanatory power, the item design may not fully cover all practical dimensions of the “Two Combinations” theoretical framework (e.g., new media communication, practical education carriers), nor did it incorporate potential mediating or moderating variables (e.g., youth political identity, cultural participation behaviors). Future research could develop more comprehensive and multi-level measurement tools by integrating theoretical advancements with real-world contexts to enhance model explanatory depth. Fourth, research methodologies could be further integrated and innovated. Although this study primarily employed quantitative methods supplemented by theoretical explanations, it still falls short in deeply describing the subjective experiences, cognitive processes, and emotional mechanisms of young populations. Future studies could combine qualitative interviews, text analysis, and experimental research to achieve methodological triangulation, thereby more comprehensively revealing the micro-level mechanisms and contextual differences of theoretical armament influencing youth cultural confidence.

In conclusion, future research could advance in the following directions: First, employ longitudinal designs or experimental interventions to clarify the causal relationship between the “Two Combinations” theoretical framework and youth cultural confidence. Second, expand sample diversity by conducting cross-regional and cross-group comparative studies. Third, develop more systematic influence mechanism models incorporating mediating variables such as cultural identity and practical participation, as well as moderating factors like historical context and social support. Fourth, promote innovative hybrid research methodologies to enhance the explanatory power and practical guidance value of the findings.

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Appendix

questionnaire

Number (by investigator):

A Questionnaire on the Influencing Factors of the “Two Combinations” Theory Armed Youths Cultural Confidence

Dear students:

Hello! We are graduate students from the School of Marxism at XX University. To understand the current status of the “Two Combinations” empowering young People’s cultural confidence, we conducted this survey. The “Two Combinations” refer to the integration of the basic principles of Marxism with China’s reality and the excellent traditional Chinese culture. This survey also analyzes the factors influencing the “Two Combinations” in empowering young People’s cultural confidence. We would like to invite you to participate in this survey.

Please select the option that best fits your situation after each question (single choice) and check the corresponding number with a “√”. Thank you!

I. basic information

1. Gender (XB): 1. Male 2. Female

2. Grade (NJ): 1. Freshman 2. Sophomore 3. Junior 4. Senior 5. Graduate

3. Major (ZY): 1. Science and Engineering 2. Humanities

4. Political affiliation (ZM): 1. Member of the Communist Party of China (including probationary members) 2. Member of the Communist Youth League 3. Other

5. Place of Origin (ZZ): 1. Rural area 2. Township 3. County town 4. Prefecture-level city 5. Provincial capital city

6. Family economic status (JJ): 1. Very poor 2. Poor 3. Average 4. Moderately wealthy 5. Very wealthy

II. core variable measurement

A. Below is the evaluation scale for the cognitive dimension of “Two Combinations”. Please select one option based on your own situation (single choice).

	Scale Items	Strongly agree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	in full agreement
theory cognition	A1. You clearly understand the complementary logic between Marxism and China’s reality as well as traditional culture.	1	2	3	4	5
	A2. You can accurately articulate the contemporary significance of China’s outstanding traditional culture.	1	2	3	4	5
	A3. Could you elaborate on how Marxism guides the innovation of traditional culture?	1	2	3	4	5
	A4. You have mastered the methodological principles for modernizing traditional culture.	1	2	3	4	5
	A5. Can you explain the significance of the “second combination” to the renewal of civilization?	1	2	3	4	5
practice cognition	A6. You are familiar with the combination of local traditional culture and red culture.	1	2	3	4	5
	A7. You have mastered the specific mode of “combination” theory in local practice.	1	2	3	4	5
	A8. You can design modern communication strategies incorporating traditional cultural elements.	1	2	3	4	5
	A9. How many times have you participated in cultural innovation initiatives guided by Marxist principles?	1	2	3	4	5
	A10. Can you name three or more typical cases of the Two Combinations?	1	2	3	4	5

Continued

Scale Items	Strongly agree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	in full agreement
A11. You think that the innovation of traditional culture does not need the guidance of Marxism.	1	2	3	4	5
A12. The innovation of traditional culture can be completely dependent on the guidance of western theory.	1	2	3	4	5
A13. You agree that the “Two Combinations” is the only path for cultural development.	1	2	3	4	5
A14. You believe that the dialogue between Chinese and Western cultures should maintain its subjectivity.	1	2	3	4	5
A15. You support analyzing cultural phenomena from a Marxist perspective.	1	2	3	4	5

B. Below is the evaluation scale for the dimensions of cultural confidence. Please select one option based on your own situation (single choice).

scale CONTENTS	Strongly agree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	in full agreement	
Cultural Transmission Behavior	B1. You often take the initiative to introduce traditional culture to others.	1	2	3	4	5
	B2. You are willing to invest time in learning traditional skills or classical texts.	1	2	3	4	5
	B3. You actively participate in cultural volunteer services.	1	2	3	4	5
	B4. You have developed a clear plan to enhance cultural competence.	1	2	3	4	5
	B5. Do you think you have devoted enough time to studying traditional culture?	1	2	3	4	5
Cultural Identity Attitudes	B6. Do you believe that today's youth should embrace a sense of mission in cultural heritage preservation?	1	2	3	4	5
	B7. China's excellent traditional culture is a precious treasure of our culture.	1	2	3	4	5
	B8. Cultural confidence is a more fundamental, extensive, and profound form of self-assurance.	1	2	3	4	5
	B9. The culture of socialism with Chinese characteristics is the spiritual force that inspires the whole people.	1	2	3	4	5
	B10. You take great pride in the modern value of traditional culture.	1	2	3	4	5
Critical Cultural Competence	B11. You would take the initiative to clarify when encountering cultural misinterpretations.	1	2	3	4	5
	B12. You can identify the phenomenon of Western cultural infiltration.	1	2	3	4	5
	B13. You can identify manifestations of cultural nihilism, such as denying historical continuity and devaluing traditional values.	1	2	3	4	5
	B14. The spread of Western culture does not require dialectical analysis.	1	2	3	4	5
	B15. You can critically inherit traditional culture.	1	2	3	4	5

III. Measurement of Influencing Factors

C. Below is a self-assessment scale for family influencing factors. Please select one option based on your own situation (single choice).

scale CONTENTS	Strongly agree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	in full agreement
C1. Your family members often discuss traditional culture topics.	1	2	3	4	5
C2. Your parents teach values through historical stories.	1	2	3	4	5
C3. Your family's book collection includes many classical works of traditional culture, such as *The Analects* and *Records of the Grand Historian*.	1	2	3	4	5
C4. Your family has the habit of participating in traditional cultural activities.	1	2	3	4	5
C5. Elders adopt an open and inclusive attitude toward their children's cultural choices.	1	2	3	4	5
C6. Your family education expenses include traditional culture training programs.	1	2	3	4	5

Continued

scale CONTENTS	Strongly agree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	in full agreement
C7. Your family often discusses cultural differences between China and other countries during gatherings.	1	2	3	4	5
C8. Your family rules are based on traditional cultural ethics.	1	2	3	4	5
C9. Your family members can clearly explain at least three aspects of family values.	1	2	3	4	5
C10. Traditional elements account for over 30% of household cultural consumption.	1	2	3	4	5

D. The following is a self-assessment scale for school influencing factors. Please select one option based on your own situation (single choice).

scale CONTENTS	Strongly agree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	in full agreement
D1. The ideological and political curriculum effectively incorporates the “Two Combinations” content.	1	2	3	4	5
D2. Campus cultural activities emphasize the innovation of traditional culture.	1	2	3	4	5
D3. Professional teaching embodies the Marxist methodology.	1	2	3	4	5
D4. The ideological and political education curriculum incorporates a traditional culture practice teaching module.	1	2	3	4	5
D5. The school offers a wide variety of traditional culture club activities.	1	2	3	4	5
D6. The academic evaluation system includes indicators of cultural innovation achievements.	1	2	3	4	5
D7. The school will regularly hold lectures on the Two Combinations.	1	2	3	4	5
D8. Cross-disciplinary curriculum integration: “Two Combinations” case-based teaching.	1	2	3	4	5
D9. The teaching team has experience in cultural heritage research projects.	1	2	3	4	5
D10. Campus media regularly publish special features on cultural interpretation.	1	2	3	4	5

E. Below is a self-assessment scale for social influence factors. Please select one option based on your own situation (single choice).

scale CONTENTS	Strongly agree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	in full agreement
E1. You are regularly exposed to cultural features in mainstream media.	1	2	3	4	5
E2. Using online platforms for communication and interaction can help you build confidence.	1	2	3	4	5
E3. The cultural consumption subsidy policy targets young people.	1	2	3	4	5
E4. Traditional cultural competencies are required in job recruitment.	1	2	3	4	5
E5. Perceived completeness of public space cultural signage system.	1	2	3	4	5
E6. Frequency of Contact with Cultural and Technological Integration Demonstration Projects	1	2	3	4	5
E7. You believe the social environment significantly shapes your cultural understanding and values.	1	2	3	4	5
E8. Cultural and Creative Products Spark Your Interest	1	2	3	4	5

F. Below is a self-assessment scale for personal influencing factors. Please select one option based on your own situation.

scale CONTENTS	Strongly agree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	in full agreement
F1. Are you following the latest developments in the Sinicization of Marxism?	1	2	3	4	5
F2. Monthly self-directed cultural study duration ≥5 hours.	1	2	3	4	5
F3. You believe that political beliefs are closely related to cultural confidence.	1	2	3	4	5
F4. Can identify at least 3 forms of cultural nihilism	1	2	3	4	5
F5. Visiting Revolutionary Memorial Halls to deepen your sense of identity with the nations history.	1	2	3	4	5

Continued

scale CONTENTS	Strongly agree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	in full agreement
F6. You can identify the phenomenon of Western cultural infiltration.	1	2	3	4	5
F7. You actively participate in cultural volunteer services.	1	2	3	4	5
F8. Develop a clear plan for enhancing cultural competencies.	1	2	3	4	5
F9. The personal value system includes the traditional ethical dimension.	1	2	3	4	5
F10. Cultural consumption decisions are driven by deep-seated identity.	1	2	3	4	5

G.Open questions:

G1. What methods would you use to learn about the “Two Combinations”?

(1) Thematic lectures (2) Political education classes (3) Online learning platforms (e.g., MOOCs) (4) Practical activities (5) Other_____

G2. Select the three most effective approaches and provide additional information:

(1) Education system (2) Media communication (3) Practical activities (4) Family influence (5) Other_____

G3: Suggestions on Guiding Cultural Innovation with the “Two Combinations”?

Check for any unanswered questions. Thank you again for your cooperation.