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Electoral Politics in Taiwan: 2008–2012

Abstract
This paper conducts an analysis of the implementation of the new electoral system (single-district, two-votes system) in practice in 2008. It is focused on the research of two aspects: first, the voter's awareness of the new electoral system; second, the impact of the new electoral system on the political party system. In the research methods, this article combines the analysis of an individual survey data and information on the election results, trying to find an answer to the question about Taiwan's voters knowledge of the electoral system situation, the factors that affect the knowledge of the electoral system, as well as the issues of the new electoral system's impact on the change and development of the political party system. The research has found out that: Taiwan's voter awareness of the current electoral system is not high. The further research into the relations between the knowledge of the electoral system and the voting choice, as well as the control of other possible factors of influence, showed that the voters who have a more correct and clear understanding of the electoral system have the tendency to vote for small parties. From the results of the general information, the practice of the electoral system indeed led to the decline in pluralistic views. The number of effective parties in the parliament has significantly decreased to that one before restructuring. The new electoral system has made survival difficult for small parties, while the rate of the wasted vote in the regional constituency increased dramatically, making it more difficult to represent pluralistic views. These possible problems caused by the new electoral system, also triggered reactions and initiatives among the domestic public concerning the reform of the electoral system in 2015.
Keywords: electoral system, political party system, political awareness, political preferences

Preface

In the late 1980s, Taiwan began to move toward political liberalization and democratization and in the same period other Asian countries, such as Korea or the Philippines also experienced the same political democratization stage. The important points in time in Taiwan's democratic political development include the establishment

of the DPP in 1986, the lifting of the martial law in 1987 and the end of the period of national mobilization in suppression of the Communist Rebellion in 1991, ending the cross-strait hostility and the irreconcilable position. The National Assembly and the legislator elections were respectively held in 1991 and 1992. The central representatives were directly elected by Taiwan's electorate, giving the parliament direct public support, and also providing a competitive arena for political parties. Taiwan's parties politics has gradually formed a competitive party system.

The conduct of elections provides several functions, such as finding a solution to political conflicts, expressing public opinion, giving a possibility of political participation and the provision of a regime legitimacy. Korea and Taiwan situated in Far East Asia, have stepped into the transitional period of democratization in the mid 1980 s, but the development of democracy in Taiwan was different from that in Korea. The local elections were held in Taiwan in the 1950 s[1], which also gave an arena and opportunity of political participation in the early period for the non-KMT party members. Though the elections in that period were not fairly competitive [You Ching-hsing, 1995, p. 190], yet the conduct of elections gave the non-party politicians an opportunity of contacts and cooperation, laying foundations for the establishment of non-party organisational groups[2]. Meanwhile, the conduct of local elections provided the general public with an opportunity of political socialization, through the process of elections, spreading the seeds of democratic values, as well as helping the public to become familiar with elections and democracy [Croissant, 2002, p. 6].

From the comprehensive election held for the first time in the Legislative Yuan in 1992, there have been so far seven elections held. The electoral system adopted before 2008 was the single-non-transferable vote system which was well-known by the majority of people. The seat allocation at large and in the overseas election was decided by the party vote, but voters had only one vote in polling[3]. Based on the content of the seventh constitutional amendment, the referendum adopted by the National Assembly, the legislators election from the seventh session adopted "the parallel voting" system, reducing the total seats to 113 seats[4]. Different electoral systems resulted in different political impacts, while the change of the electoral system influenced this country's

[1] South Korea held firstly the central level elections, then there were local elections organised in the early 1990s, therefore, to the opposition parties, the presidential elections and the parliamentary elections were an important stage.

[2] For example, "Non-party editors and writers association" in 1983, "non-party public officials research on public policy" in 1984, in October 1985 the Central Election Commission allowed non-party candidates to publish information in the election bulletin under the name of "Public Policy Research Society".

[3] With a 5% threshold for political parties.

[4] See Table 1 of the electoral system, total seats and seats allocation in the all previous legislative elections.

political development, the political party development and voters' behavior, so the pluralistic aspects of the electoral system reform and its political impact could be discussed. Limited to space and time, this article will focus on the following two aspects: (1) Voters' cognition of electoral system. (2) The development of party politics. This paper states that the discussion of the electoral system reform is mainly focused on the proportionality, while voters are the main subject of the electoral system. Voters having a correct understanding of the electoral system are the basic elements with which the electoral system project can be effective, so it is necessary to understand the voters'knowledge of the current electoral system. The electoral system project also affects the electoral strength of the party, further influences the dynamic development of the political party system, and it also has an important effect on achieving representative politics and representativeness, so there should be a more comprehensive discussion on this aspect. In the analysis of the aggregating individual survey data and the overall election results data, this paper attempts to answer these issues, including the situation of Taiwan voters' knowledge of the electoral system, the factors that influence the voter's understanding of the electoral system, as well as the impact of the new electoral system on the change and development of the party system.

Review of the Legislator Election and Party Representation from 1992 to 2012

As mentioned above, before 2008, the adopted legislative election system was the Single-Non-transferable vote system. In this system that was implemented in the Multi-Member District, voters can cast only one vote. The number of seats selected in constituencies varies, according to the candidates' votes number it is decided if they are elected and it does not need to exceed a half of the votes. Except the regional constituency seats, there are still at-large seats and overseas elected seats, which were in accordance with the proportion of party vote to allocate. The seats to be elected every year are shown in Table 1. There were 161 seats in 1992, 225 seats fixed in 1998–2004 and reduced to 113 seats after 2008.

Since 1992, there have been seven legislative elections held during which the adults at the age of over 20 had only the voting right. From Table 2 we can see that the number of voters was about 13.4 million in 1992, and it increased to about 17.9 million in 2012. Over the years the number of qualified voters has shown a positive growth rate, the number of voters at the average growth rate was about 4.7%. However, in the voting participation aspect of Taiwan, it showed a gradual downward trend (see Table 1). The voting turnout rate stood at 72% in 1992, while it dropped to about

66% in 2001, 60% in 2004, and 58.5% in 2008, the record low. Due to the legislative election and the presidential election held simultaneously in 2012, stimulating the voters' participation, therefore the voters turnout reached 74%. Over the years, the average of turnout rate was about 66.7%, the proportion of an invalid vote was between about 0.8% and 1.8%.

Table 1. The Legislative Election System and Seats Allocation: 1992–2012

Year	Electoral system	Seats
1992	Single-Non-transferable Vote (at-large and overseas election, seats allocation in accordance with the proportion of votes parties get)	Total seats: 161 District seats: 119 Aboriginal seats: 6 Seats at-large in the whole country: 30 Overseas election seats: 6
1995	Single-Non-transferable Vote (at-large and overseas election, seats allocation in accordance with the proportion of votes parties get)	Total seats: 164 District seats: 122 Aboriginal seats: 6 Seats at-large in the whole country: 30 Overseas election seats: 6
1998	Single-Non-transferable Vote (at-large and overseas election, seats allocation in accordance with the proportion of votes parties get)	Total seats: 225 District seats: 168 Aboriginal seats: 8 Seats at-large in the whole country: 41 Overseas election seats: 8
2001	The same as 1998	The same as 1998
2004	The same as 2008	The same as 2008
2008	Single-District, Two-Votes system in parallel voting	District seats: 73 Party seats: 34 Aboriginal seats: 6
2012	The same as 2008	The same as 2008

Source: Election Study Center in National Chengchi University [2014]; Central Electoral Commission [2013].

Table 2. The General Situation of Previous Legislative Elections: 1992–2012

Year	Population	The number of voters	The growth rate of voters (%)	Votes			The turnout rate (%)
				Total	The number of valid ballots	The number of invalid ballots	
1992	20,699,446	13,421,170		9,665,967	9,488,772	177,195	72.02
1995	21,263,225	14,153,420	5.17	9,574,388	9,442,136	132,252	67.65
1998	21,833,772	14,961,930	5.40	10,188,302	10,035,829	152,473	68.09
2001	22,350,363	15,822,583	5.44	10,469,005	10,327,855	141,150	66.16
2004	22,640,250	16,559,254	4.45	9,796,299	9,717,359	78,940	59.16
2008	22,925,311	17,179,656	3.61	10,050,619	9,890,776	15,9843	58.50
2012	23,224,912	17,916,954	4.12	13,328,271	13,091,881	23,6390	74.39

Source: Central Electoral Commission [2013].

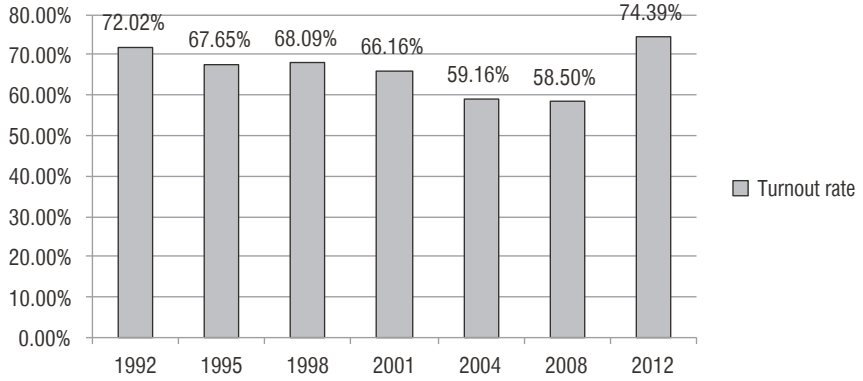

Figure 1. The Turnout Rate of Previous Legislative Elections

Source: Central Electoral Commission [2013].

After the democratic transition, many various political parties were set up, nominating candidates for elections. In addition to the KMT and DPP parties, the parties that have obtained seats in the parliament including the New Party set up in 1993, the People First Party set up in 2000 and the Taiwan Solidarity Union set up in 2001. Table 2 depicts the Legislative election's vote-getting situation of these parties over the years. Before the change to the electoral system (that is 1992–2004), the KMT's percentage of votes obtained showed a downward trend. Its percentage of votes obtained after 1995 did not exceed 50%, with only 28.6% of votes obtained in 2001. The DPP Party's ratio of votes obtained was 30%, exhibiting some fluctuations, with its highest votes of 35.7%. The New Party's best performance was in 1995, with votes of 13%. Later the ratio declined, with the votes of only 0.12% in 2004. As for the People First and the Taiwan Solidarity Union, they had not bad results in the 2001 and 2004 elections. In the first election after the electoral system change, these two political parties mainly focused on a party vote, not designating many candidates for the elections, so that the total votes obtained in districts did not exceed 1%. Of course, it highlighted the impact of the new electoral system for small parties on the nomination and the election strategy of political parties. As for the KMT and DPP, in the two elections after the electoral system change, the KMTs percentage of votes obtained returned to over 50%, and the DPP with the votes obtained rate was of about 38%. When in 2012, the KMT's ratio of votes obtained was about 48% and the DPP – of about 44%. Small parties almost disappeared in the regional constituency elections. In most constituencies the most competitive mode was between the KMT and DPP Parties. Intuitively, these results validate the idea of "the plurality in single-member district tendency forming the situation of two parties' competition" proposed by

the political scientist Duverger [1963, p. 205]. However, if it does, we will conduct afterwards the verification on the topic of the political party system.

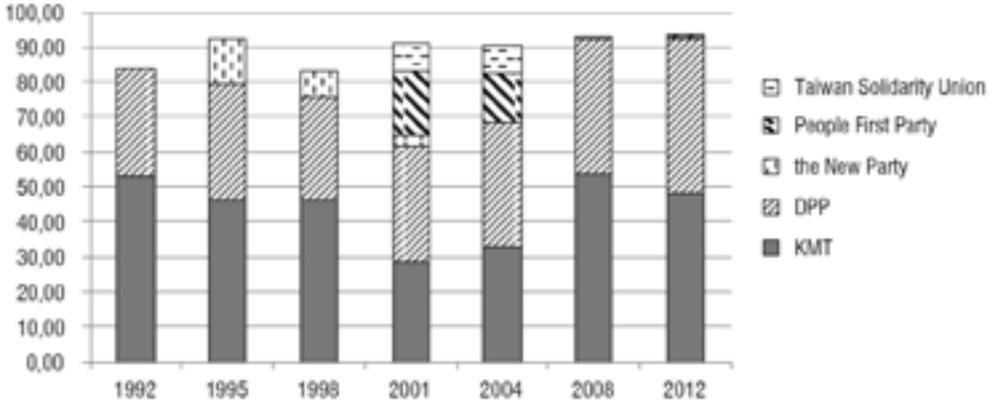

Figure 2. The Ratio of Votes Obtained Over the Years by Major Political Parties: 1992[5]

Source: Central Electoral Commission [2013].

As to the allocation of political parties in the parliament, until the fourth elections in 1998, the KMT's seats in the parliament could not exceed a half, while the DDP's seats were relatively stable at around 30%. The remaining seats were obtained by non-party persons or other political parties. The KMT failed in the 2000 presidential election. Some KMT members joined the People First Party, set up by James Soong, while some others joined the Taiwan Solidarity Union in 2001. So in the fifth elections in 2001, the ratio of votes obtained by the KMT decreased to about 30%, and that of the DDP increased to about 38%, the People First Party obtained about 20% of the seats, and the Taiwan Solidarity Union obtained about 6. The political forces in the parliament diversified, most of seats were no longer obtained by one single political party (the KMT). This phenomenon did not only explain the degree of the differentiation which increased significantly in the political party system, but it also indicated an increase in pluralism and complexity in the discussion about projects proposals in the parliament. However, the electoral system after a change restored to the state that one single political party holds more than a half of the seats. In the seventh elections in 2008, the KMT obtained more than 70% of the seats, and about 56% of the seats in the eighth election in 2012. Obviously, the electoral system change has an impact on the political parties' winning seats in parliament.

[5] The rate of votes obtained in the regional elections in 2008 and 2012.

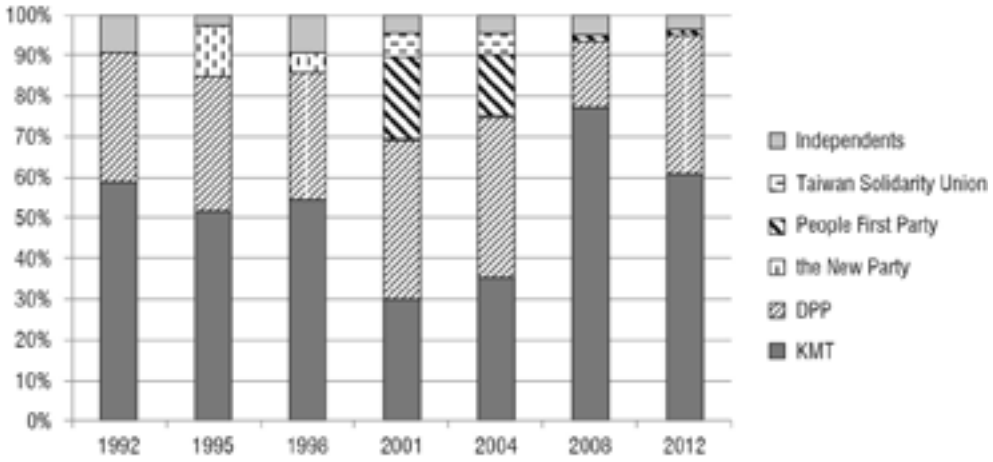

Figure 3. The Seats Rate of the Political Parties Over the Years: 1992–2012

Source: Central Electoral Commission [2013].

The Taiwan Voters' Understanding of the New Electoral System[6]

The electoral system change affected not only the political parties, but it also involved the actors that cast the votes, i.e. the voters. An election is a result of voting in practice by the voters. One of the factors in practice of the electoral system change which decides if the goal of the reform can be reached is whether voters have a certain understanding of the new electoral system and understand the realization as well as operation of the elections. In the 1990s, New Zealand changed the electoral system. The related research conducted in 1996, 1999, and 2002, along with the survey of

[6] The information used in this section is taken from the four-year research program (III) "*Taiwan's election and democratization study from 2005 to 2008*": Legislative election telephone survey in 2008" (TEDS2008L-T) (NSC 96–2420-H-002-025); "*Triennial research programs (3/3) "election and democratization study from 2009–2012": the Presidential and Legislative election telephone survey in* 2012" (TEDS2012-T) (NSC 100–2420-H-002-030); *the Four-year research program (1/4) "election and democratization study from 2012–2016" large-scale basis points survey face to face interview in 2013* (TEDS2013) (NSC 101–2420-H004-034-MY4). "*Taiwan's election and democratization study" (TEDS), the convener of the multi-year program was Professor Huang Chi of National Chengchi University*; TEDS2008LT was an annual program for the implementation of the 2008 r. legislative election, the plan manager was Professor Chu Yun-han; TEDS2012-T was an annual program for the implementation of the 2012 r. legislative election, the plan manager was Professor Huang Chi; TEDS2013 large-scale basis points survey face to face interview in 2013, the program manager was Professor Huang Chi. For more information, please refer to TEDS web page: http://www.tedsnet.org. The author thanked these institutions and persons who provided information, but the author himself is responsible for the content of this article. (the names of programs over the years please see: http://teds.nccu.edu.tw/intro^2/super_pages.php?ID=intro11).

the electoral system awareness suggested that more than a half of the voters had a correct understanding of the new electoral system [Karp, 2006, p. 717][7]. The article also discussed the further impact of the knowledge of the electoral system on voting behavior. The author pointed out that the level of knowledge of the electoral system has no significant impact on voting behavior [Karp, 2006]. Domestic study found out that people's awareness of the new electoral system is not high. The higher awareness of the new electoral system, the more possibilities of voting [You Ching-hsin, 2012].

According to the rolling data of the Taiwan elections and the democratization survey before the elections in 2008 and 2012, we had observed the understanding of the situation of the people of Taiwan in the new electoral system. In the meantime, the comparison of several periods also provided references whether in the course of time, people have more understating of the electoral system. According to Table 3 we know that among the questions of the electoral system understanding, the majority of Taiwan's population has a higher awareness of the term in office of legislators, and the percentage of correct answers showed a gradual upward trend year on year. On the threshold of party vote, there were 7.3% of the people who had the correct understanding in 2008, as well as in 2012 and in 2013, the percentage of the people who had the correct understanding was more than 10%. The ratio of the correct understanding was not high. As for the awareness of the seats won in districts, the percentage of the correct answers showed a downward trend. There were just 34% of the people with the correct understanding. The percentage of the understanding of the total selected seats and the number of the people who are entitled to vote was not high. Overall, the people have twice experienced "the baptism of the new electoral system", but their correct understanding of the new electoral system is not high.

Table 3. The Percentage of the Correct Answers of the Understanding of the New Electoral System

Questions / Year	District seats to be selected (%)	Vote count (%)	Party vote threshold (%)	Years of a term (%)	Total seats (%)	Total
2008	41.5	38.4	7.3	56.2	–	3,843
2012	39.0	11.7	11.6	70.1	4.9	4,806
2013	34.4	19.0	10.5	74.3	5.2	2,292
Disparity	–7.1	–19.4	3.2	18.1	0.3	

Description: collective data by telephone interviews in 2008 and 2012, data collected by face-to-face interviews in 2013.

Source: Chu Yun-han [2008], Huang Chi [2012; 2013].

[7] The questions mainly asked respondents which ballot decides the seats allocation of political parties in parliament.

The domestic and international research into political knowledge suggested that gender, education and political interests may be important factors which have an impact on the level of political knowledge [Delli Carpini, Keeter, 1997; Lin Chiung-chu, 2005; Lin Tsung-chi, Wang Shu-hua, 2007]. As for the measure of political knowledge, Jennings [1996, p. 229] pointed out that the public awareness of the government and system working, current events and historical facts are the aspects that framed political knowledge. Delli Carpini and Keeter [1997, p. 14] also thought that not every citizen is obliged to know all the aspects of politics, but at least as a citizen, he or she should have a basic understanding on the design of the system (such as the electoral process and government operations), domestic and international important issues, the political and the economic situation, the commitment of political parties or political figures and their performance. In other words, knowledge of the political system is the main aspect that forms political knowledge.

Karp's [2006, p. 720] research on Germany and New Zealand found out that the most important factors that affect the public awareness of the electoral system rules are political interests and education. You Ching-hsin who has started research into the 2008 survey data, pointed out that age, education, media contacts, political interests and political party identification are closely related to the public awareness of the electoral system. Those who exhibit a higher level of political knowledge might have higher political sophistication, and they might also have more complicated voting behavior. In other words, are those who have a higher understanding more likely to cause the situation of split voting?

As the majority of the legislative election districts face the situation of competition between the candidates from the KMT and the DPP parties, most of the small parties fight for the at-large seats. The issue whether such people who have more knowledge of the electoral system prefer to vote for small parties, allowing them to have the opportunity to cross the threshold for seats allocation, as well as improving the political pluralism competition, is what we can further observe.

To conclude, this above mentioned related research, based on the survey data of the year 2013, namely on the aspects of gender, education, political identity and political interests, firstly, discusses what features people must possess to have a higher awareness of the electoral system. Secondly, for the further discussion about the relations between the level of knowledge of the electoral system and the voting choice of party vote, it examines whether the people with a higher level of the electoral system knowledge have the tendency to vote for small parties.

Firstly, in terms of gender, and in addition to the legislator's mandate, the males have a higher proportion of the correct answers than the females to questions such

as: "the number of votes supposed to receive", "the seats to be elected in a regional constituency", "party vote threshold", "total seats to be elected".

Education has also an obvious connection with the correct knowledge of the electoral system. With the increasing level of education, there is also a growing trend in the gradually rising rate of the correct answers to questions such as: "the number of votes should be received", "the seats should be elected in a regional constituency", "party vote threshold, "total seats should be selected", etc., except for no obvious differences on the legislators' mandate.

In terms of party identification, those who identified themselves with small political parties (the New Party, the Taiwan Solidarity Union, the People Frist) have a higher rate of the correct answers than those who identified themselves with the KMT party and the DPP party in the area of questions such as: "the seats should be elected in a regional constituency", "party vote threshold, "total seats should be selected". This may also be related to the political parties' policy during the election campaign. During the legislative election in 2012, in order to fight for party vote, small parties published advertisements or promotional material to appeal to their supporters to vote, strongly conveying the rules of the electoral system, enhancing the voters' knowledge of the electoral system. For example, the Taiwan Solidarity Union and the New Party broadcast TV commercials to call on supporters not to forget to vote for the party. The Taiwan Solidarity Union also held a press conference, calling on their favorers with the words: "It's TSU's final battle. With the party rate vote not exceeding 5%, the TSU party will become a history" [Liberty Times, 2012]. It has deepened their favorers' knowledge of the electoral system and stimulated the supporters' further understanding of the electoral system.

In terms of political interests, the relevance can be found between political interests and the understanding of the electoral system. The higher political interests people have, the percentage of the correct answers to questions increases.

Table 4. The Analysis Crosstab of Gender and the Electoral System Awareness

	The number of votes should be received		The seats should be elected in a regional constituency		Party vote threshold		Legislator's period of term		Total seats should be elected	
	Wrong answer	Right answer	Wrong answer	Right answer	Wrong answer	Right answer	Wrong answer	Right answer	Wrong answer	Right answer
Male	78.5	**21.5**	58.6	**41.4**	83.9	**16.1**	24.6	75.4	92.2	**7.8**
Female	83.5	16.5	72.5	27.5	95.2	4.8	26.9	73.1	97.4	2.6
	χ^2=9.340 *df*=1 *P*<0.05		χ^2=49.075 *df*=1 *P*<0.05		χ^2=78.349 *df*=1 *P*<0.05		χ^2=1.522 *df*=1 *P*>0.05		χ^2=32.118 *df*=1 *P*<0.05	

Source: Huang Chi [2013].

Table 5. The Crosstab Analysis of Education and the Electoral System Awareness

	The number of votes should be received		The seats should be elected in a regional constituency		Party vote threshold		Legislator's period of term		Total seats should be elected	
	Wrong answer	Right answer	Wrong answer	Right answer	Wrong answer	Right answer	Wrong answer	Right answer	Wrong answer	Right answer
Primary school and below	91.1	8.9	72.5	27.5	97.1	2.9	27.2	72.8	97.9	2.1
Junior high school	87.1	12.9	67.4	32.6	94.5	5.5	22.3	77.7	92.6	7.4
Senior high school, senior vocational high school	85.1	14.9	66.4	33.6	90.7	9.3	23.3	76.7	95.4	4.6
Specialized school	77.3	22.7	63.2	36.8	85.6	14.4	26.1	73.9	94.8	5.2
University	69.6	30.4	61.0	39.0	83.3	16.7	29.1	70.9	93.5	6.5
	χ^2=96.916 *df*=4 *P*<0.05		χ^2=15.523 *df*=4 *P*<0.05		χ^2=64.778 *df*=4 *P*<0.05		χ^2=8.169 *df*=4 *P*>0.05		χ^2=13.545 *df*=4 *P*<0.05	

Source: Huang Chi [2013].

Table 6. The Crosstab Analysis of Political Party Identification and the Electoral System Awareness

	The number of supposed votes		The number of seats in a regional constituency		Party vote threshold		Legislator's period of term		Total number of seats	
	Wrong answer	Right answer	Wrong answer	Right answer	Wrong answer	Right answer	Wrong answer	Right answer	Wrong answer	Right answer
KMT	79.4	20.6	63.3	36.7	88.1	11.9	25.2	74.8	95.2	4.8
DPP	80.3	19.7	62.1	37.9	89.2	10.8	23.0	77.0	94.2	5.8
New Party	85.7	14.3	50.0	**50.0**	75.0	**25.0**	12.5	87.5	100.0	0.0
People First Party	74.4	25.6	53.5	**46.5**	81.4	**18.6**	9.3	90.7	86.0	14.0
Taiwan Solidarity Union	72.2	27.8	33.3	**66.7**	50.0	**50.0**	27.8	72.2	83.3	16.7
Neutral, non-response	83.6	16.4	71.9	28.1	92.4	7.6	29.3	70.7	95.7	4.3
	χ^2=7.716 *df*=5 *P*>0.05		χ^2=31.864 *df*=5 *P*<0.05		χ^2=43.949 *df*=5 *P*<0.05		χ^2=14.982 *df*=5 *P*<0.05		χ^2=14.078 *df*=5 *P*<0.05	

Source: Huang Chi [2013].

Overall, from the dual variable analysis, gender, education, political interests and political party identification have a really significant relevance with the individual's electoral system awareness. The level of awareness of the electoral system has a significant impact on whether to cast a party vote, and this is what will be discussed next in this paper.

Table 7. The Crosstab Analysis of Political Interests and the Electoral System Awareness

	The number of supposed votes		The number of seats in a regional constituency		Party vote threshold		Legislator's period of term		Total number of seats	
	Wrong answer	Right answer	Wrong answer	Right answer	Wrong answer	Right answer	Wrong answer	Right answer	Wrong answer	Right answer
Totally not interested	89.7	10.3	76.5	23.5	97.0	3.0	33.7	66.3	98.0	2.0
Almost not interested	81.6	18.4	69.0	31.0	92.9	7.1	25.2	74.8	97.2	2.8
Not too much interested	80.8	19.2	66.5	33.5	90.2	9.8	25.9	74.1	95.1	4.9
A little interested	75.8	24.2	54.7	45.3	83.4	16.6	18.6	81.4	91.7	8.3
Very interested	65.0	35.0	50.0	50.0	70.0	30.0	23.0	77.0	86.9	13.1
	χ^2=50.790 df=4 P<0.05		χ^2=64.123 df=4 P<0.05		χ^2=96.873 df=4 P<0.05		χ^2=31.156 df=4 P<0.05		χ^2=38.117 df=4 P<0.05	

Source: Huang Chi [2013].

According to Table 8, under the control of other factors, the level of awareness of the electoral system has an impact on the vote choice. Its coefficient is 0.28. That is, if the level of the people's correct awareness of the electoral system increases to one percent, the probability of voting for small parties on the basis of party vote will increase 1.32 times. Secondly, the political party identification has an important influence on the individual's vote choice. In general, the voters are inclined to vote for the parties with which they agree. According to Table 8, under the control of other factors, the political party identification has a significant impact on party vote. The interpretation of the coefficient and its results, as the New Party favorers' factor is positive, we can say that the probability that the New Party favorers' "voting for small parties instead of big parties" is 4.93 times of the neutral voters. The People First Party favorer's "voting for small parties instead of big parties" is 4.93 times of the neutral voters. Likewise, the KMT Party and DPP Party favorers have a higher probability than neutral voters that they will vote for big parties.

In terms of education, the probability that senior high school or senior vocational high school students and university students would vote for small parties instead of big parties, is 1.39 times and 1.57 times higher than among those who finished primary school. In other words, comparing with the voters who finished primary school or lower education, the voters who are senior high school or senior vocational high school students and university students are more likely to vote for small parties. With regard to the voters at the age of 50 to 59, there is a higher probability that they would vote for small parties rather than the voters at the age over 60. Under the

control of other factors, gender and political interests have no significant impact on the party vote's voting choice.

Table 8. The Logistic Regression Model Analysis of the Electoral System Awareness and the Party Vote's Voting Choice (Voting for Small Parties/big Parties)

	The estimated value of B		S.E	Exp (B)
Male (Female=0)	0.18		0.09	1.194
Age (60 and above=0)				
20–29 years	–0.31		0.22	0.736
30–39 years	–0.14		0.18	0.866
40–49 years	0.16		0.17	1.178
50–59 years	0.37	*	0.17	1.451
Education (primary school and below=0)				
Junior high school	–0.46		0.25	0.631
Senior high school and senior vocational high school	0.33	*	0.16	1.392
Specialized school	–0.23		0.22	0.794
University	0.45	*	0.18	1.566
Political party identification (neutral, non-response=0)				
KMT Party	–1.74	***	0.25	0.176
DPP Party	–1.29	***	0.24	0.276
New Party	1.60	*	0.81	4.930
People First Party	1.20	**	0.35	3.305
Taiwan Solidarity Party	0.98		0.53	2.671
Political interests	0.05		0.08	1.047
Electoral system awareness	0.28	***	0.08	1.322
Constant	–1.80		0.34	0.165
N	1617			
-2LL likelihood	972.177			
Cox & Snell R^2	0.083			
Nagelkerke R^2	0.167			

Description: small parties including the New Party, the People First Party, the Taiwan Solidarity Union, the Green party Taiwan and the People Party; big parties including the KMT Party and the DPP Party. + $p<0.10$, * $p<0.05$, ** $p<0.01$, *** $p<0.001$.
Source: Huang Chi [2013].

In other words, from the above presented analysis, with the experience gained in those two elections, the people of Taiwan do not have a high level of the overall electoral system awareness, while the level of the electoral system awareness is linked to people's gender, education, political interests and political party identification. In the course of the further examination of the factors which might have an impact, we found out that the voters who have a more correct electoral system awareness, are

more likely to vote for small parties. We also found out that the Taiwan Solidarity Union and the People First Party's favorers have a higher correct electoral system knowledge, of course. The knowledge of the electoral system's role in voting choice might be intervening variables, while the political party identification is the factor which has an impact on the voting choice.

However, the results in Table 8 show that under the control of the political party identification, the understanding of the electoral system still has a significant explanatory power on the voting choice of party vote. In other words, from the existing analysis, the rising of people's electoral system awareness is helpful for small parties to get party votes, and this is probably because that those who have a more correct understanding of the electoral system are more likely to have a deeper awareness of the practice and operation of the new electoral system, and its impact on politics. Furthermore, the results of the voters' vote impact on the performance of political parties. The rising awareness of the electoral system may affect the voting choice of the party vote and is related to the decrease in and the growth of small parties' force, and this will also affect the political system change.

Political Influence on the Electoral System Change

The former part of this paper discussed the public awareness of the new electoral system, and this part will further discuss the political influence on the electoral system change. The electoral system change has an impact not only on the voters' voting behavior, but it is also connected with the nomination of political parties, the motivation to participate in the election, the election campaign strategy, or even the political system. When discussing the impact of the electoral system on the political party system in Taiwan on various election levels, Li Po-yu [2006] cited as a measurement, the calculation formula of the effective number of parties, presented by Markku Lasskso and Rein Taagepera. He also pointed out the standard of the political party category. For example, the effective political party value of 1.5 means that there are two parties taking part in the election, with strength disparity; the effective party value of 2.0 means that there are two major political parties in duel situation; the effective political party value of 2.5 means that the political parties strength is two big parties and one small party; the effective political party value of 3 and above, means that there are many parties competing in the elections. Based on the above criteria and the effective number of parties as observation indicates, this paper is going to discuss the impact on the political party system in the electoral system.

Table 9.1 and 9.2 present various indicators before (1992 to 2004) and after (2008–2012) the electoral system change, including "the effective number of parties in the parliament", "the effective number of political parties in elections", "the vote rate of the ruling party", "the ruling party's rate of seats" and the proportion of votes which were not transferred into seats". Before the electoral system change, the effective number of political parties in the parliament and the effective number of political parties in elections showed an upward trend. The situation changed in 1992 from two big parties that competed to multiparty competition in 1995. Since the People First Party and the Taiwan Solidarity Union were set up, their first recommended candidates were elected to participate in the legislative election in 2001. It can be seen that the effective number of political parties (both in the elections and in the parliament) hit a historic number. After the electoral system change, the effective number of political parties in the elections decreased to 2.29 of the number in regional constituencies, showing the situation of two parties' competition in this period. The effective number of political parties in the parliament also decreased to 1.60 in the number in the districts, showing that although there were two political parties competing for the regional seats in the parliament, but there was a disparity of strength, while in 2012, the competition of seats in the parliament showed that it was the competition between two major political parties.

From the percentage of votes and seats obtained, it can be seen that the ruling party's percentage of votes exceeded 50% in 1995, but showed a downward trend. Although the percentage of votes obtained showed a downward trend, but until 1998, the ruling party had been able to hold over a 50% seats rate in the parliament, keeping 6% to 8% of the election dividend. After 2001, neither in the percentage of the votes obtained nor the seats rate, the ruling party did not exceed 40%, with only 4% of the election dividend in 2004, whereas the votes which were not transferred to seats, constituted almost or over ¼ of all votes in those years.

In terms of the new electoral system, the ruling party's percentage of obtained votes was more than 50%, while the seats rate was more than 70%, with the election dividend of about 20%. In 2012, the ruling party's percentage of obtained votes was not more than half, but the seats rate was still over 55%, and the proportion of votes in regional constituencies not transferred to seats was over 40%. This also shows that although combining the spirit of the majority rule and proportional representation, the way of seats allocation was not on the party vote basis. So in the spirit of proportionality, the new electoral system still prefers the way of the majority rule. Therefore, it is more beneficial to the big parties and easier to "create" a majority party.

Table 9.1. The Arrangement of the Political Effect of the Legislative Election System: 1992–2004

	The valid number of political parties (seats)	The valid number of political parties (votes)	The percentage of obtained votes by the ruling party	The seats rate of the ruling party	The votes that were not transferred into seats (%)
1992	2.19	2.48	53.02	59.01	25.81
1995	2.54	2.90	46.06	51.83	27.96
1998	2.49	3.14	46.43	54.67	23.97
2001	3.48	4.14	33.38	38.67	29.91
2004	3.26	3.76	35.72	39.56	23.27

Source: Election Study Center of the National Chengchi University [2014]; Central Election Commission [n.d.].

Table 9.2. The Arrangement of the Political Effect of the Legislative Election

	The valid number of political parties (seats)		The valid number of political parties (votes)*		The percentage of votes obtained by the ruling party*		The seats rate of the ruling party	The votes that were not transferred into seats (%)	
	District	At-large	District	At-large	District	At-large		District	At-large
2008	1.60	1.94	2.29	2.49	53.48	51.23	71.68	43.25	11.86
2012	2.05	2.64	2.32	3.03	48.12	44.54	56.63	45.72	6.39

* Calculated on the basis of the percentage of votes for the first phase party vote.
Source: Election Study Center of the National Chengchi University [2014]; Central Election Commission [n.d.].

From the individual data analysis it can be found that Taiwan's voters correct understanding of the current electoral system should be improved. The voters who have a more correct understanding of the electoral system, will have a deeper understanding of the practice and functioning of the new electoral system and the impact it may bring about. Therefore it can be found that they obviously tend to vote for small parties on the party vote. From the results of the entire information it can be seen that the practice of the new electoral system resulted in a decline in pluralistic views. The effective number of political parties in the parliament is significantly lower than before the system change. The main goal of the electoral system change was to achieve a stable majority. From this perspective, the new electoral system shaping the political party system was indeed developed toward the direction of two major political parties in the parliament.

Discussion and Conclusion

As for the electoral system reform, the scholar Taagepera suggested that the new electoral system should be put in practice at least three times [Farrell, 2001, p. 182],

because some effects which might come from the impact brought by the electoral system change, need some time to exploit. The sudden inference regarding the new system after only just one implementation would be too subjective. For example, in New Zealand in 1996, after the first implementation of the electoral system, the public generally was dissatisfied with it, but in 1999 when it was implemented for the second time, all parties were satisfied with the results of the elections (quoted from Sheng Chih-jen [2006, p. 69]). However, there is a lot of debate in New Zealand's society over the issue and if it is good for New Zealand's political development to change into a mixed-member proportional representation system. The voice that stands for the revision of the electoral system again has not stopped. Therefore New Zealand held a referendum on 26 November, 2011. The referendum's absolute majority resulted in 57.8% to 42.2% and confirmed that New Zealand will continue to adopt the system of a single-district, two-votes in the mixed-member proportional representation system [Electoral Commission, 2012].

After the implementation of the new electoral system twice, there is a lot of voice from the community about reviewing the electoral system. The new electoral system has caused problems for small parties to survive, while the rate of the wasted vote increased dramatically, making it more difficult to reflect on diversified views. Especially since 2014 the discussion has arisen on the implementation of the new electoral system and the possible problems it may cause. It has led to an intensive debate among various sectors of the community. The civic groups have also initiated reforms of the new electoral system [*Civil Movement*…, n.d.]. Our Legislative Yuan also convened the Constitutional Amendment Committee in May, 2015 to review the constitutional amendments to the electoral system[8].

The call for the electoral system review and reform demand was not only limited to Taiwan. The above mentioned New Zealand and England (a historical democracy) also held a referendum in 2010 to decide whether to change into the alternative vote system. Before modifying the electoral system, there should be an understanding of its political effects. There are many aspects of the political effects on the electoral system which could be observed, roughly from proportionality, the political party system and representativeness [Farrell, 2001, Chap. 7]. This paper focuses on the discussion of the proportionality and the political party system, finding out that although the parallel voting of the "single-district two votes system" conducted in 2008 integrated the spirit of the majority rule and proportional representation, however, due to the way of the seats allocation it was not based on the party vote, therefore in the spirit

[8] During the writing of this paper, the examination of the constitutional amendment had not been completed, yet.

of proportionality, it still tends to the characteristic majority rule and its easiness in creating the majority party.

The number of effective parties in the parliament decreased significantly compared with that before restructuring, thus reducing the number of pluralistic opinions aired in the parliament.

Finally, the analysis of this paper shows that Taiwan's people correct understanding of the new electoral system is not high. Karp [2006, p. 719] has pointed out that the wrong understanding of the electoral system might hurt the legitimacy of the election results. Therefore, in addition to the continuously advocated electoral system, in the future research direction of the electoral politics, the future government should continue to observe Taiwan's people knowledge of the electoral system. Above all, the subject to practice in the electoral system are voters and the voters' voting behavior, which affects the election results. If the majority of the voters do not have the correct understanding of the electoral system, it will have a profound influence on the whole political operation.

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