

Elections and Taiwan's Democratic Development

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Election in almost every year

◆ Since 1992, every year Taiwan has at least one election except in 1997, 2003, and 2007.

- Presidential elections: 5 times
 - 1996, 2000, 2004, 2008, and 2012
- Legislative Yuan elections: 7 times
 - 1992, 1995, 1998, 2001, 2004, 2008, and 2012
- Mayoral elections in major cities: 5 times
 - 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, and 2010
- Local (county magistrate) elections: 5 times
 - 1993, 1997, 2001, 2005, and 2009

◆ A total of 22 elections over the past 20 years

Impacts of Elections

◆ Elections shape Taiwan's Democratic Development

- Party system
 - KMT's splitters in mid-1990s and 2000
- Political cleavage
 - From ethnic identity to National identity
- Government system
 - Divided government under Chen Shui-bian

◆ Importance of elections

- Relatively high turnout
 - Always unpredictable
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Did elections matter?

A viewpoint from the general public

◆ Broad Pictures of Taiwan's public opinion

- Partisanship
- National identity
- Cross-strait relations

◆ Change of electoral institution

- Legislative Yuan elections
- Perception about the new electoral system

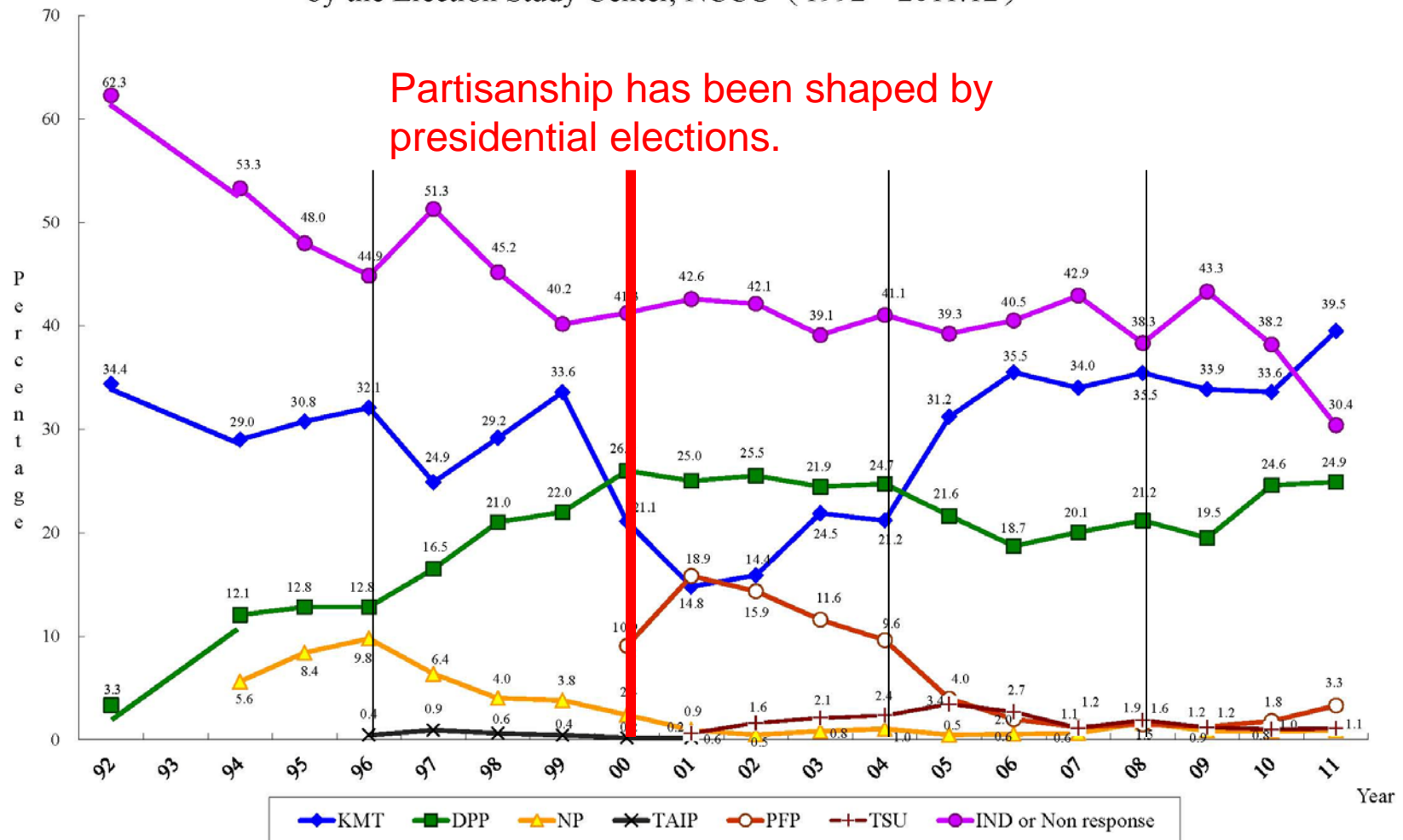
◆ Perception about presidential election

◆ Key to win elections

- Performance matter
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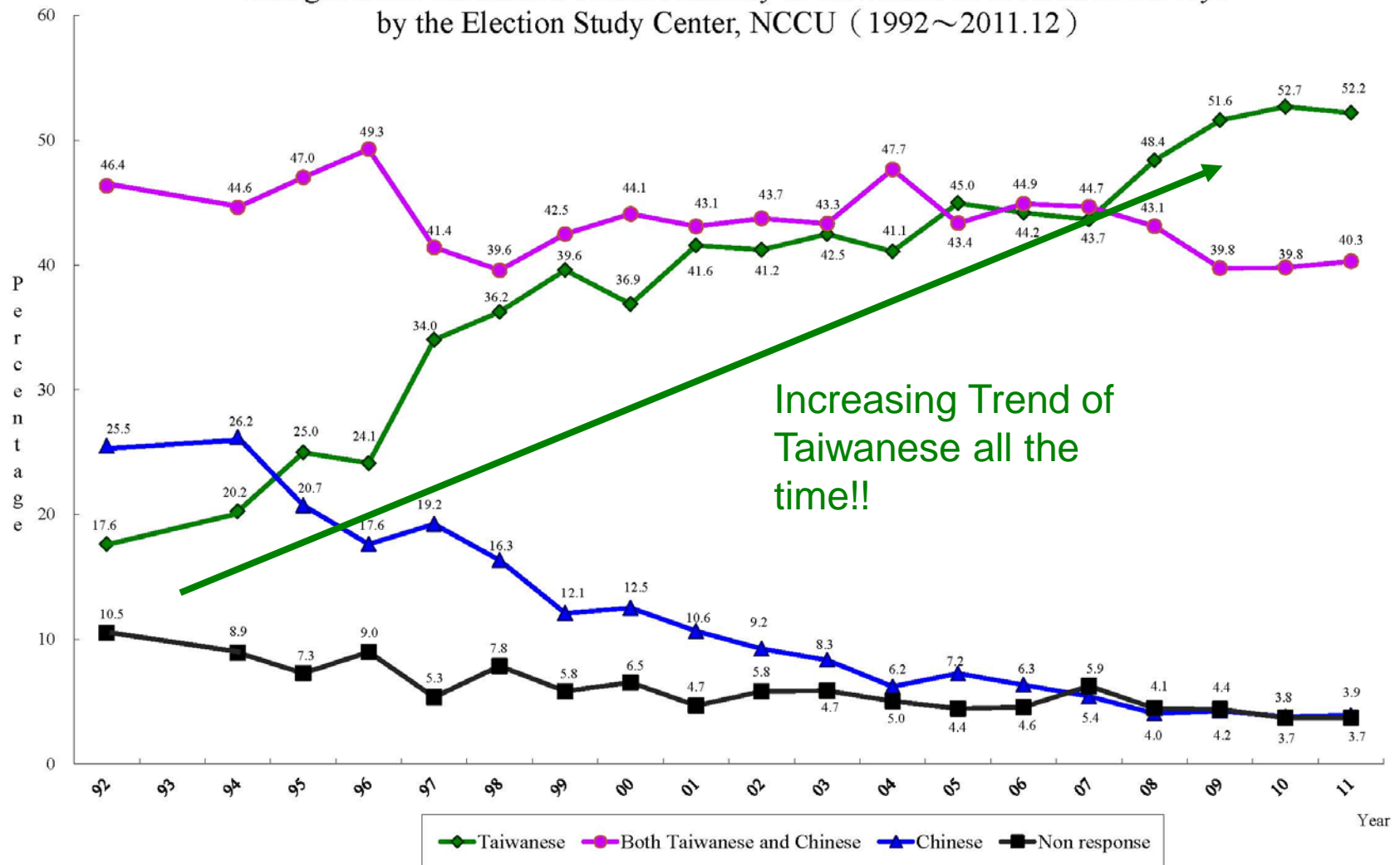
Partisanship

Changes in the Party Identification of Taiwanese as Tracked in Surveys
by the Election Study Center, NCCU (1992~2011.12)



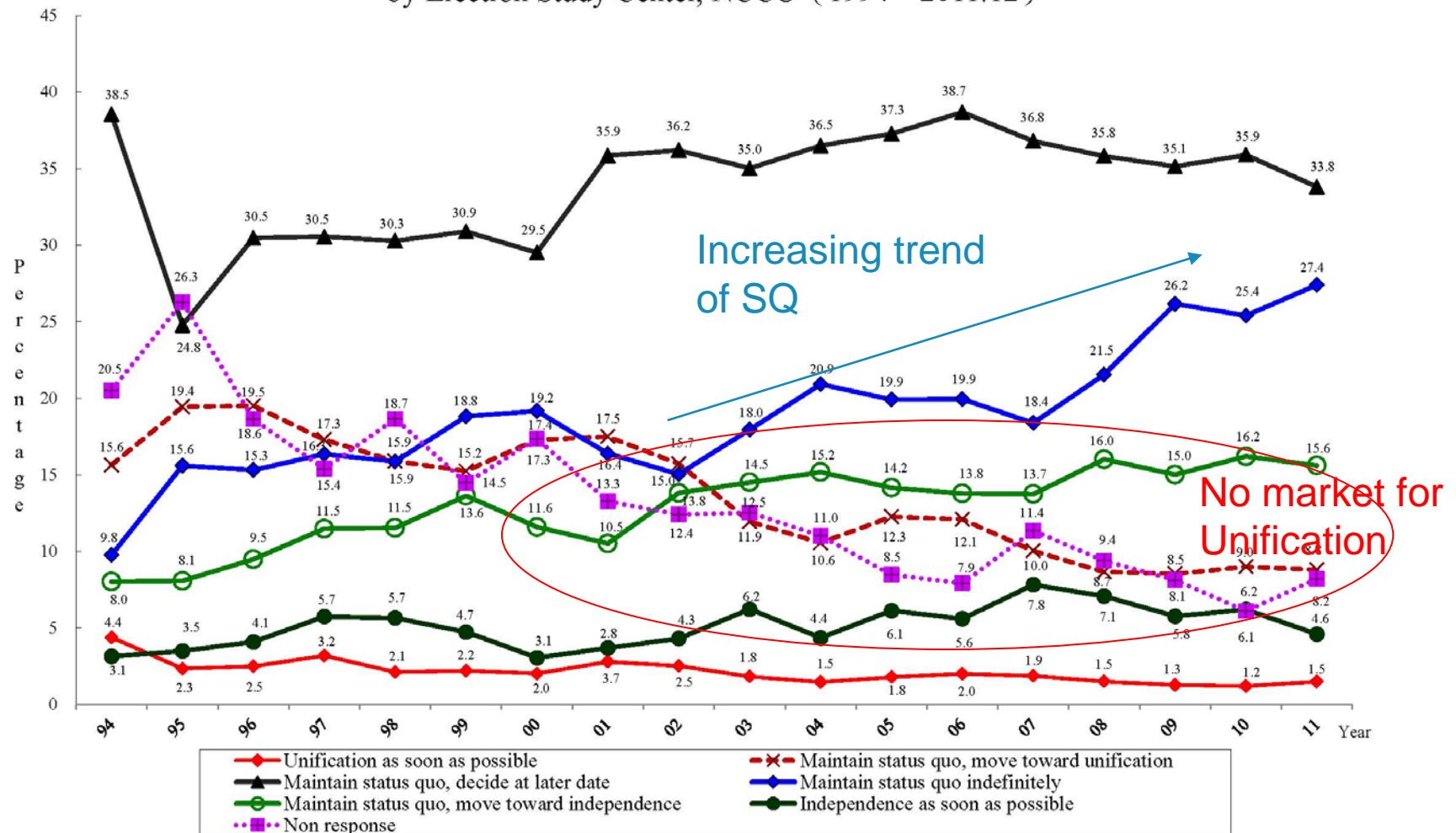
National Identity

Changes in the Taiwanese/Chinese Identity of Taiwanese as Tracked in Surveys
by the Election Study Center, NCCU (1992~2011.12)



Cross-Strait Relations

Changes in the Unification - Independence Stances of Taiwanese as Tracked in Surveys
by Election Study Center, NCCU (1994~2011.12)



Party Competition

◆ In the past decade, the two major parties have competed against each other while following the trends of public opinion. Yet, the two parties have different concerns:

- Sorting effects
 - KMT: maintain the SQ
 - DPP: Taiwanese identity

◆ Recent important Issues

- Economic Development
 - 11.7% in 2008
 - Cross-strait relations
 - 10.8% in 2008
 - Political stability
 - 8.8% in 2008
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New Electoral System for the Legislative Yuan

◆ Electoral Reform

- New Electoral System for the Legislative Yuan (parliamentary) elections since 2008.
 - From SNTV (Single-Non Transferable Vote) system to mixed single member district (SMD) with proportional representation based on national party votes (i.e., MMM: Mixed-Member Majoritarian system).
 - Voters cast two ballots: one for district candidate and the other for PR party list
 - Number of seats: from 225 to 113 Seats
 - SMD: 73
 - PR: 34
 - Aboriginal districts: 6 seats for 2 multiple member districts

2008	2012
KMT: 81 (district: 61) DPP: 27 (district: 13) PFP: 1 Non-partisan Solidarity Union: 3 Non-partisan: 1	KMT: 64 (district: 44) DPP: 40 (district: 27) TSU: 3 PFP: 3 Non-partisan Solidarity Union: 2 Non-partisan: 1

Two Party System in Legislative Yuan?

◆ Toward two party system?

- PFP and TSU successfully gained seats in the 2012 election.
- Both parties become significant minor parties as their party caucuses are able to join in the negotiation phase of the law-making process.

◆ The current electoral system is in favor of major parties.

Effective Numbers of Parties in Legislative Yuan (Laakso & Taagepera 1979)			
No.	Year	Electoral Rule	Effect # of Parties
2	1992	Single Non-Transferable Vote System	2.28
3	1995		2.54
4	1998		2.48
5	2001		3.47
6	2004		3.26
7	2008	Mixed-Member Majoritarian system	1.75
8	2012		2.23

Does the electoral rule make the difference?

◆ Under SNTV

- Party may nominate multiple candidates in a single mid-/large-size district
- Intraparty competition may become more severe than interparty competition
- From a party's perspective: need to nominate the "right" number of candidates

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◆ Under MMM in which the majority of the seats are determined by SMD (73 out of the total 113 seats)

- No way for a party to nominate multiple candidates
- From a party's perspective: need to nominate the "right" candidate
- Facilitate inter-party competition

Perception: New Electoral System I

Comparing the new electoral system with the old one, is it easier or harder to elect your ideal candidate?

much easier	8.5%
a little easier	12.3%
about the same	32.9%
a little harder	25.4%
much harder	9.6%
NA	11.3%
Sample Size	1240

Comparing the new electoral system with the old one, does it decrease or increase divisions in our society?

decrease a lot	2.7%
decrease a little	10.8%
about the same	26.8%
increase a little	28.7%
increase a lot	12.5%
NA	18.5%
Sample Size	1240

Perception: New Electoral System II

Comparing the new electoral system with the old one, does it decrease or increase vote buying?

decrease a lot	8%
decrease a little	17.2%
about the same	27.1%
increase a little	11.1%
increase a lot	8.4%
NA	28.2%
Sample Size	1240

Comparing the new electoral system with the old one, does it decrease or increase people's willingness to vote?

decrease a lot	10%
decrease a little	24.5%
about the same	35.2%
increase a little	10.4%
increase a lot	2.9%
NA	17%
Sample Size	1240

Perception: New Electoral System III

Comparing the new electoral system with the old one, is it better or worse for Taiwan's future democratic development?

much better	2.3%
a little better	24.5%
about the same	28.9%
a little worse	17.9%
much worse	4.1%
NA	12.3%
Sample Size	1240

Comparing the new electoral system with the old one, is the quality of the elected legislators higher or lower?

much higher	7.5%
a little higher	24.7%
about the same	31.3%
a little lower	10.2%
much lower	5.9%
NA	20.4%
Sample Size	1240

Pros and cons of the new electoral system

◆ Pros

- Less “extreme” candidates
- Relatively difficult for vote-buying

◆ Cons

- Focused on nurturing the district
- Small parties barely survived

◆ Major parties become electoral machine?

- Ex: same candidate nomination system by adopting polling primary
 - only care about competitiveness
 - Electability
 - Conflict resolution

Presidential Election on Major Cleavages

Do you think this presidential election helped to promote ethnic harmony, intensify ethnic conflict, or did it not have any influence in this area?

	2004	2008
promoted ethnic harmony	12.1%	20.6%
intensified ethnic conflict	55%	24.6%
no influence in this area	23.4%	40.8%
NA	9.5%	14.0%
Sample Size	1823	1905

Do you think this presidential election strengthened the popular consciousness for Taiwan independence, strengthened the popular consciousness for Chinese unification, or did it not have any influence in this area?

	2004	2008
strengthened Taiwan independence	44.8%	7.4%
strengthened Chinese unification	5.4%	23.4%
no influence in this area	32.8%	49.9%
both were strengthened	5.4%	1.6%
NA	11.5%	19.3%
Sample Size	1823	1905

Presidential Election on Democracy and Stability

Do you think this presidential election improved democracy in Taiwan, damaged democracy in Taiwan, or did it not have any influence in this area?

	2004	2008
improved democracy	32.4%	41.7%
damaged democracy	38.2%	18.3%
no influence in this area	19%	27.3%
NA	11.4%	12.7%
Sample Size	1823	1905

Do you think this presidential election promoted social stability, caused social instability, or did it not have any influence in this area?

	2004	2008
promoted social stability	10.6%	31.8%
caused social instability	67.1%	23.7%
no influence in this area	15.7%	33%
NA	6.6%	11.5%
Sample Size	1823	1905

Quality of Election and Future Perspective

Overall, did you think the electoral process in this presidential election was fair or not fair?		
	2004	2012
very fair	8.6%	10.8%
fair	35.1%	64.3%
unfair	28.9%	11.3%
very unfair	13%	3%
NA	14.4%	10.6%
Sample Size	1823	1905

After going through this presidential election, are you pessimistic or optimistic about Taiwan's future?		
	2004	2012
very optimistic	4.1%	4.5%
optimistic	29.4%	35.4%
neither optimistic not pessimistic	30.4%	33.7%
pessimistic	21%	14.4%
very pessimistic	5.2%	4%
NA	9.9%	8.0%
Sample Size	1823	1905

Perceptions about Elections

◆ Perception about the presidential election is improving:

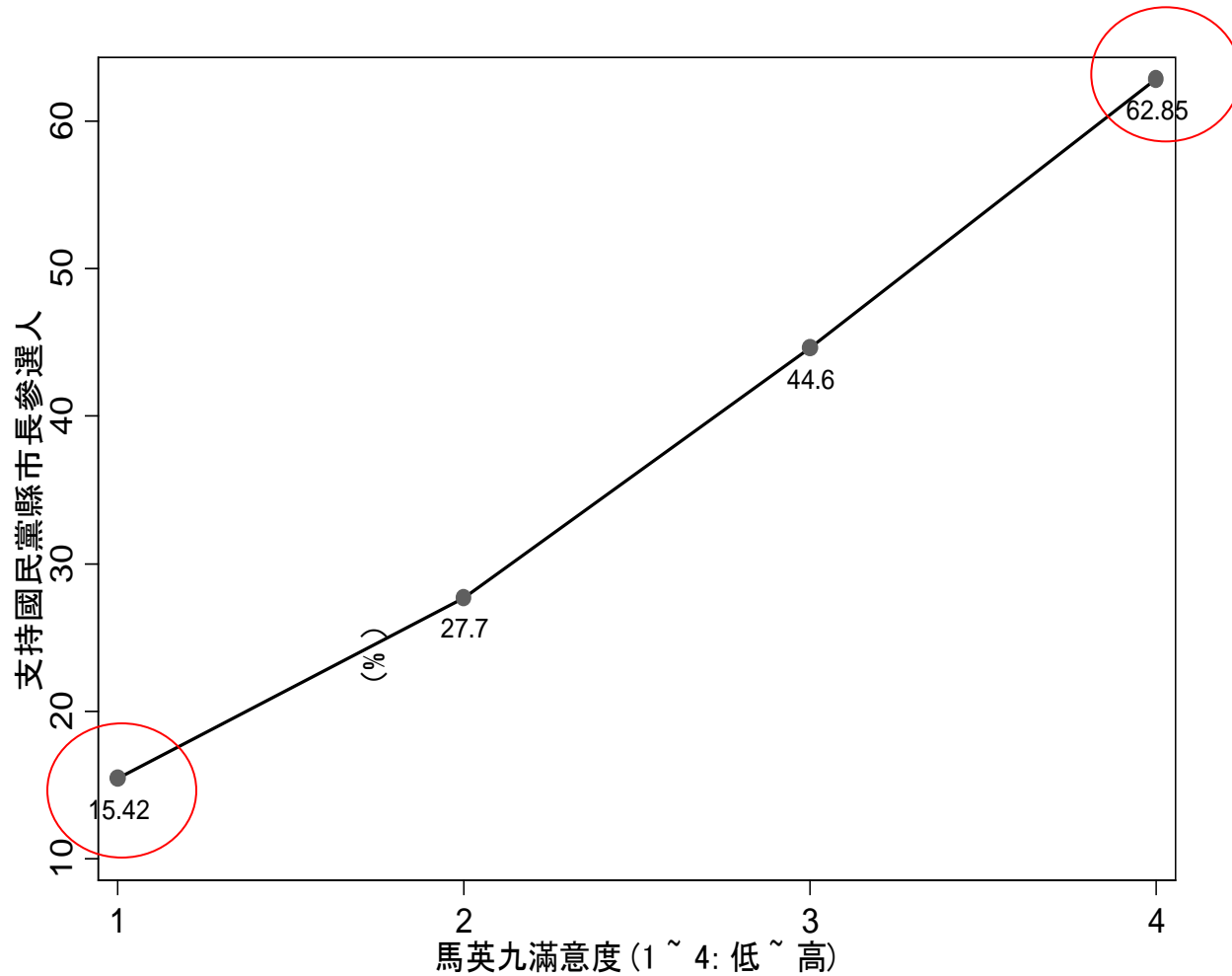
- Positive in 2008 compared with that in 2004
 - Maybe more positive in 2012 (will be analyzed in months)

◆ It is not about Taiwan independence

- Practical concerns
 - Better performance
 - Better governance
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Ex: Ma's approval rate and vote choice in local elections, KMT supporters

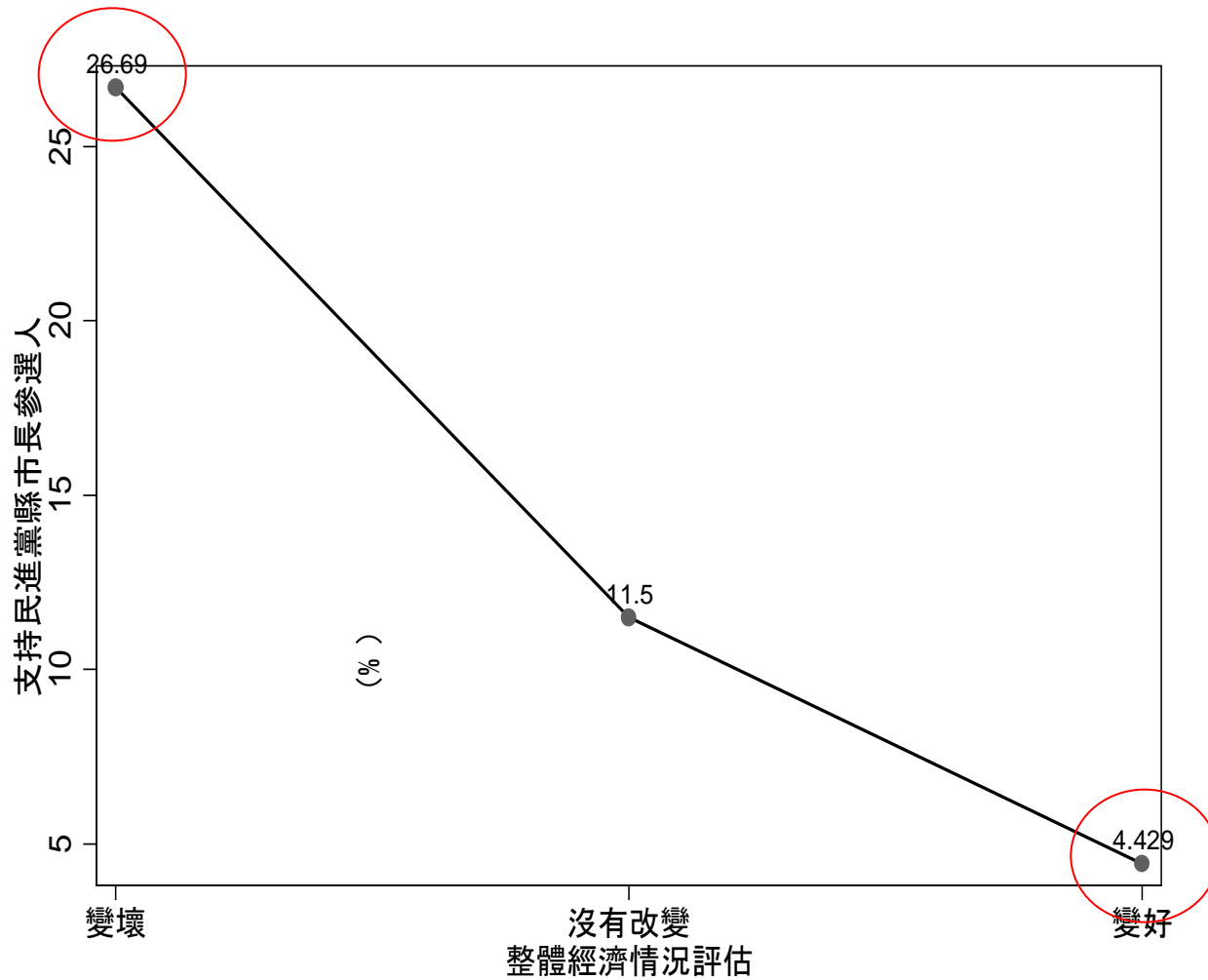
% Support
KMT county
magistrate
candidate



Ma's performance: 1-low; 4-high

Ex: Overall economic assessment and vote choice, DPP supporters

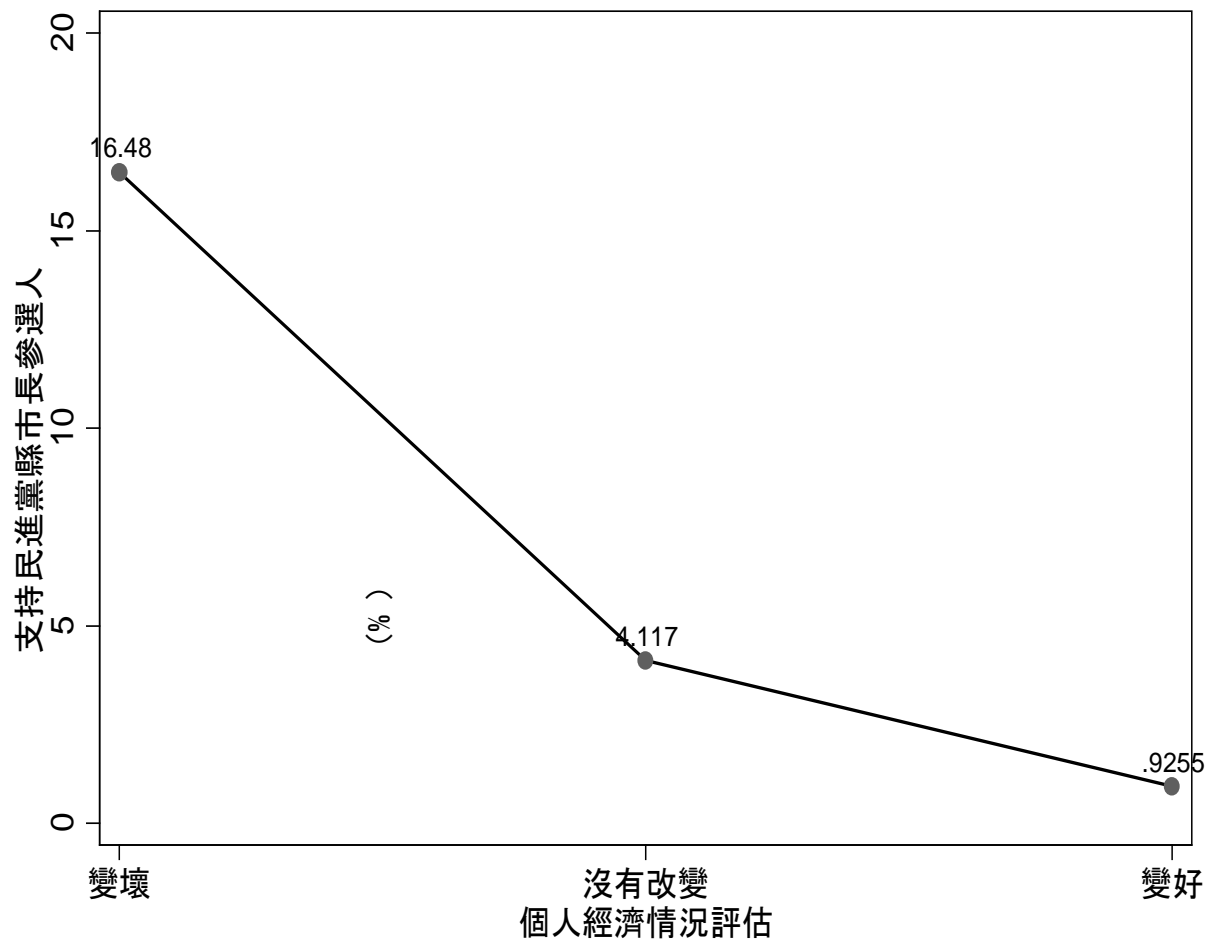
%support
DPP county
magistrate
candidate



Overall economic assessment: worse, not change, better

Ex: Personal economic assessment and vote choice, independent voter

%support
DPP county
magistrate
candidate



Personal economic assessment: worse, not change, better

Conclusion

- ◆ Elections reflect public opinion and shape party politics
- ◆ Did the new electoral system have broad impact?
 - Not much
 - Party system: a two-party system?
 - Balance between executive and legislative power
 - executive power dominates Taiwan's party politics
 - Better candidate (maybe yes)
 - Need better representation
 - By proportional party list
- ◆ What's important in elections?
 - Performance matter
 - Retrospective voting in both national and local level elections
- ◆ Major concerns
 - Polarization
 - North vs. South
- ◆ New political cleavage?
 - Social inequality
 - Have vs. have-not: but still see China's role behind the issues
- ◆ Bundle of elections
 - Create national swing
 - New political cycle

Thank You !

