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Behavioral Consequences of Open Candidate Recruitment

Candidate-selection methods (CSM) crucially affect the behavior of Members of Parliament (MPs). Extant research investigates the consequentiality of the selectorate, but is neglecting the candidacy dimension of CSM. But what are the behavioral implications of minimal candidacy-eligibility criteria (CEC)? I theorize that parties adopt closed CEC in safe districts to ensure nominating *loyalist* candidates, while they use open CEC in contested districts to attract *entrepreneur* candidates able to woo decisive swing voters. Using survey and observational data from Japan, where parties have concurrently been nominating candidates through open and more closed CEC, I show that *entrepreneur* candidates are more responsive to their districts but less active in the legislature, measured by different types of activities. These findings corroborate my expectations that *entrepreneur* candidates lack political experience and are sidelined by their more traditional colleagues. Moreover, the results broaden our understanding of how CSM affect MPs' behavior.

Introduction

Who can become a candidate for general elections? Recently, membership in political parties is seemingly losing in importance for political careers. An increasing number of parties have started expanding their supply of candidates, oftentimes reaching out to nonaffiliated citizens. Examples include Sebastian Kurz, Prime Minister of Austria, who hand-picked outsiders without party membership for his party list in 2017 (Austria Presse Agentur 2017). The German Social Democrats, too, have started experimenting with broadening their supply of candidates dramatically. The party placed a job advertisement on Facebook to find a suitable candidate for the *Bitburg-Prüm* district (Ripperger 2016). In

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the wake of political dealignment, including the erosion of partisan identification (e.g., Dalton and Wattenberg 2002), a decline in membership-based politics, and dwindling numbers of party members (e.g., van Biezen and Poguntke 2014), these trends in political recruitment seem only logical.

Selecting candidates for elections is one of the most important and consequential tasks political parties carry out. Parties' recruitment schemes determine the demographic, ideological, and geographic make-up of parliament enormously. The recent changes in parties' selectorates, that is, the party's body deciding on nominations, and especially the trend towards greater inclusion of rank-and-file members in primary elections for party leaders and general election candidates (see, e.g., Cross and Blais 2012; Pilet and Cross 2014), have been mirrored by medial attention and by academic studies exploring the consequences of these changes for electoral competition (Kenig 2009), representation (Lawless and Pearson 2008), or party unity (Indridason and Kristinsson 2015).

However, inclusive candidate-selection methods are not limited to the installment of primary elections or to other changes in the selectorate. The supply of would-be candidates, too, varies across parties and appears to open up. Yet, we know only little about the behavioral consequences of this variation and when the supply of candidates is opened up to citizens that lack party membership and prior political experience. What can voters, who often face a "take it or leave it" option, and parties alike expect from Member of Parliament (MP) that were, for instance, recruited in the wake of public calls for applications?

Although conventional views suggest that parties recruit candidates from their members and affiliated networks, not all parties require official membership to seek the party's nomination. In fact, parties often are aware of the electoral attractiveness of candidates that appear to be an alternative to more established political figures. One of the most recent examples is the landslide victory of *La République en marche* (REM) in France's 2017 legislative election. The party was launched in April 2016 by Emmanuel Macron, who himself was elected President in May 2017. Both Macron and his party are perceived as overcoming the traditional party divide of France's V. Republic. However, the party's appeal is equally due to the many fresh faces it presented to the voters. Roughly 19,000 citizens applied as candidate. More than half of the final pick of

525 has never held any elective office before (Par et al. 2017; The Economist 2017).

Fielding candidates untainted by establishment politics might generate votes and eventually a parliamentary majority as in the French case, yet many of these newly minted MPs feel ill-prepared for their legislative duties and have started considering quitting altogether (see Samuel 2017). Overwhelmed by the workload and underprepared due to a lack of prior experience, inactive MPs might serve to generate majorities in parliament but risk that policymaking shifts to the executive or extraparliamentary party entities. This lack of experience is something parties cannot induce through the whip. In the long-run, this trend of selecting inexperienced candidates can even contribute to premature coalition terminations (de Lange and Art 2011) and could eventually undermine the importance of legislatures.

Why do parties open up their supply of candidates? The examples above hint at a possible reason. In an era of declining membership-based politics (van Biezen and Poguntke 2014), securing majorities becomes more challenging. Parties are forced to appeal to an ever more diversified electorate. This entails that in many electoral systems parties face districts with weak and strong support. Below I theorize that in safe districts parties employ stricter Candidacy Eligibility Criteria (CEC) to sort out *loyalist* from free-riding candidates. In contested districts, however, parties are compelled to use more open CEC, thus broadening the supply of and attracting promising *entrepreneur* candidates, able to woo independent voters through their personality rather than the party's ideology. I hypothesize that these *entrepreneur* candidates, selected through open recruitment, exhibit a greater personal responsiveness to their district but underperform in the legislative arena. Lacking prior exposure to party politics and socialization that comes with party membership, these MPs are excluded from long-standing copartisan networks, ill-prepared for drafting legislative texts and for holding government accountable, and they might carry ill-fitting expectations of their legislative tasks and duties. This lack in legislative prowess has severe implications for party governance in democratic systems.

To address the theoretical implications, I take advantage of the Japanese case. The Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) and its center-right opponent the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), besides some smaller parties, have been recruiting candidates through

public job postings—known as *kōbo*—for general elections on a large scale for the last 20 or so years. The *kōbo* system as implemented by the DPJ and the LDP is more or less open to anybody with political ambition, and both parties have nominated a total of 189 *kōbo* selected candidates between 2000 and 2012. Out of these, 133 candidates were elected and entered parliament (Yu, Yu, and Shoji 2014). As Smith, Pekkanen, and Krauss (2013) shows, the majority of these candidates have never held any elective political office before and oftentimes became party members only in the process. At the same time, though, these parties also nominated candidates using more traditional ways, allowing for a sound comparison of candidate-selection backgrounds.

Using data from candidate surveys and data on legislative activity, measured by the number of parliamentary questions (PQ) and Private Member Bills (PMB) initiated and cosponsored, I show that *entrepreneur* candidates in fact return more often to their districts but are less engaged in the legislature. Instead of focusing on rather reactive legislative behavior or those regulated by the caucus leadership, for example, roll-call votes or floor speeches, the rather proactive behavior of PQs and PMBS allows for the comparison of the innate disposition, ability, and drive of MPs. These findings support my theoretical expectations about the legislative nonactivity and these MPs' weak standing in the party, questioning these candidates' value to the party in parliament.

While a growing number of studies is focusing on causes and consequences of the selectorate dimension (Hazan and Rahat 2010), we know relatively little about the behavioral consequences of more open candidacy requirements (a notable exception is Smith and Tsutsumi 2016). What can party leaders and voters alike expect from such candidates that often enter politics through the short-cut of applying for nominations in response to public calls for applications? This article offers the first empirical investigation of the behavioral consequences of variations of these requirements. By doing so, I address two major strands of the literature; my findings add to the literature on CSM and legislative politics. While CSM are primarily understood to shape the behavior of candidates and MPs through the degree of (in-)dependence felt toward the selector (e.g., Carey 2009), I show that CSM affects the behavior of political actors through a second channel, too, namely the candidacy dimension, that is the kind of personnel that is eligible to seek nomination.

Candidate Selection and Candidate Behavior

The study of CSM is influenced tremendously by the seminal work of Rahat and Hazan (2001) Hazan and Rahat (2010), who conceptualized candidate-selection mechanisms along four distinct dimensions—that is the selectorate, the candidacy, the decentralization, and the voting system. While most attention has been paid to the dimension of the selectorate (Faas 2003; Indridason and Kristinsson 2015; Kenig 2009; Kenig, Cross, Pruyssers, and Rahat 2015; Shomer 2009) and the degree of centralization (Langston 2006; Lundell 2004), the candidacy dimension failed to amass a similar degree of attention.

Although the country-specific contributions in Gallagher and Marsh (1988) offer a first overview of the characteristics party selectorates are looking for in candidates, no systematic analyses of how candidates recruited under different eligibility criteria are provided. Taking a step back and examining the supply of candidates more thoroughly, the work by Fox and Lawless (2005) and Lawless (2012) revolves around the formation of political ambition prior to political work or office and sheds light on the socioeconomics, the character traits, and familial socialization that encourage and foster these ambitions. However, their studies stop before entering the realm of political parties, their candidacy requirements, and the latter's behavioral consequences.

The United States, with its primary system and weak gate-keeping capacity of its parties, seems ideal to study the consequences of low-demanding CEC. Previous studies have suggested, though, that despite the *de jure* openness of the primaries, outsiders barely have a chance of securing a party's nomination. Most incumbents either go unchallenged or win against low-quality challengers (e.g., Carson, Engstrom, and Roberts 2007). Even in contests for open seats following retirement or death, mainly high-quality candidates with prior political experience at lower administrative levels secure the party's nomination (e.g., Hirano and Snyder 2014). Hence, the recruitment of candidates for Congress remains closed to an inner circle of career politicians.

The only study, so far, that examines the consequences of variation along the candidacy dimension is the one by Smith and Tsutsumi (2016). Relying on the same empirical example which will be used in this article, they show that new candidates recruited under more open-candidacy requirements exhibit more moderate policy attitudes than their counterparts recruited through

traditional channels. They also show that the open-recruitment scheme attracted more candidates without prior political experience and without local roots in their districts. However, the study's focus is limited to candidate characteristics and neglects to analyze parliamentary behavior.

Despite the mounting research on CSM and specifically the selectorate, virtually no study exists that investigates the behavioral and representational consequences of variations on what Hazan and Rahat (2010) call the "candidacy dimension" (save for Smith and Tsutsumi 2016). The significance of the candidacy dimension results from its easy changeability and power to eliminate a huge number of otherwise eligible citizens. It has been noted early on that the structure of a recruitment scheme affects the type of candidate coming forward, and the variation in the same should also lead to variation in the motivation and characteristics of those candidates (Black 1972). When allowing virtually everybody to seek nomination without any formal filter, that is official candidacy requirements, aspirants less interested in the party's policy position but more so in its electoral sway are likely to emerge, as I argue below. The next section will lay out my assumptions on why and when parties institute open recruitment and when they employ rather demanding CEC and how this shapes the type of candidate likely to come forward under each of these selection regimens.

Theory

Candidate selection is one of the defining functions parties fulfill in democratic systems. By presenting and preselecting a number of candidates to the electorate, parties reduce the voters' choice in terms of personnel tremendously and crucially determine the final composition of parliament. Oftentimes, voters face a "take it or leave it" option. But what can parties and voters expect from candidates selected under open recruitment: a candidate who is likely to have no prior political experience and who potentially is an opportunist trying to seize their chance of national office? What are the behavioral repercussions when aspirants for candidacy have to fulfill only a bare minimum of requirements?

CSM have been found to crucially affect MPs' behavior. The main mechanism how CSM affect the behavior of candidates and MPs is the level of (in-)dependence from the party leadership. Contingent on who is responsible for (re-)selection, candidates and MPs might cozy up to primary voters or toe the party line to

please the national party leadership (see Carey 2009). However, in this article I argue that a second channel exists through which CSM affect MPs' behavior. This second channel works directly via the personnel that is selected as candidates and, later on, take seat in parliament. Parties regulate their supply of candidates through more or less restrictive candidacy eligibility criteria (CEC). These requirements are often subject to parties' internal rules, easily malleable, and capable of eliminating a huge number of otherwise eligible personnel. Thus, parties that desire to arrive in parliament as a cohesive unit may set demanding criteria to only select committed candidates. In contrast, if parties are more interested in attracting electorally promising candidates, they should open up their selections to a more diverse set of candidates (Hazan and Rahat 2010, 20 f.).

The continuum of candidacy requirements runs from being completely open, with none to a few requirements, to highly closed, with multiple requirements. At the open end, parties do not impose any requirements, and candidates only have to abide to the legal requirements of minimum age and citizenship. However, moving toward more closed candidacy, parties may demand the fulfillment of additional requirements, the most common being party membership. Many parties expect aspirants to have joined the party a specified time before a nomination can be bestowed. Further requirements may include pledges of loyalty, monetary deposits, or recommendations from other party members (Hazan and Rahat 2010; Poguntke, Scarrow, and Webb 2016). As a result, and contingent on the opportunity structure CEC create, a varying set of aspirants is likely to emerge (Black 1972). One of the most important factors in candidates' pondering whether to run is the cost of candidacy—that is, the monetary costs associated with campaigning as well as the costs that accrue by fulfilling parties' CEC.

Accordingly, more demanding CEC imply higher costs of seeking candidacy. Costs might be low when joining the party at any time before the selection suffices, but they grow costlier when aspirants have to canvass sitting MPs for signatures or to do even more. This requires a great deal of networking and significant amount of time. Only aspirants that are highly committed and who have joined the party out of intrinsic—that is ideological—rather than instrumental reasons are likely to deem this ordeal worthwhile. In other words, the cost of candidacy associated with the party's CEC can be partly neutralized by the utility would-be

candidates derive from being a member and in good standing with other party members. From the party's perspective, costlier CEC create a structure of selective incentives that sort out free-riding candidates that are *only* in for the promise of office (Hazan and Rahat 2010, 21). Although all final candidates hope to win election, parties can ensure through demanding criteria that only those aspirants come forward that have proven their commitment to the party—that is party loyalists.

So what are the incentives for parties to employ open recruitment? For once, parties, like candidates, want to win elections to maximize their seats, be it to enter government or just to be in a better position to promote its platform. Following the logic of Galasso and Nannicini's (2011) model, I assume that parties use different variants of CEC to target specific districts, which differ structurally in their support. That is, parties face safe, contested, and hopeless districts. As Galasso and Nannicini (2011) have suggested for Italy, parties select *loyalists* in safe districts. By doing so, they ensure the election of its core personnel while simultaneously giving voters candidates ideologically close to them. In contested districts, however, parties tend to nominate high-valence candidates that are not necessarily associated with the party but who can woo independent voters, who vote based on idiosyncratic evaluations of candidates' personalities and not party affiliation.¹ How does this affect the CEC of parties? As parties usually have no shortage of willing candidates to run in safe districts, employing more demanding CEC deters those free-riding on the attractive party ticket and instead ensures the selection of committed candidates. In contested districts, however, parties may open up their selection and encourage applications from a broader and more diverse set of aspirants that are able to capture the swing vote. This promises the selection of the most attractive candidates and, in addition, to veil them in an aura of a seemingly enhanced open and democratic selection.

What type of candidate is likely to emerge under more open CEC? Installing more open CEC first and foremost has the consequence of reducing the cost of candidacy for aspirants. Instead of costly demands of membership, parties may merely ask candidates to pledge allegiance to the party's platform. Moreover, the party leadership may even advertise their search for candidates in newspapers (Yu, Yu, and Shoji 2014) or online. As a result, aspirants previously deterred by strict and costly CEC now feel encouraged to seek nomination. I name those candidates that respond to these

casting selections *entrepreneurs* as opposed to *loyalists*. These candidates take advantage when parties open up their CEC and benefit from the party's campaign machinery and support.

The candidacy of the entrepreneur candidate is the product of special circumstances. Only through the lowering of selection criteria and the encouragement of nonmember to apply are entrepreneur candidates put into the situation of being a candidate. For most of these candidates, this is a first. As they lack the socialization that comes with long-term party membership, they are unlikely to have undergone the same political trajectory as loyalist candidates. These include campaign experiences, elective office at lower administrative levels, and the establishment of a support network within the party. All this can put entrepreneur candidates at odds with the ideologically more zealous rank-and-file of the party (see, For example Shoji 2013).

In their bid for re-(s)election, entrepreneur candidates are thus well advised to make friends with the local party chapter. To credibly do so, they either have to produce some personal link with the district (Campbell and Cowley 2014; Shugart, Melody, and Suominen 2005) or show "good will" and engage with local politics and issues. By spending more time in the constituency, entrepreneur candidates can gather local knowledge, increase their name recognition, and can more plausibly claim to know "what it's like down here." Moreover, presence in the district may also serve to mend fences with suspicious rank-and-file members, who generally favor policy and ideology over personal advancement (van Haute and Gauja 2015; Young and Cross 2002) and on whose support future campaigns hinge.

H1: Candidates selected under more open-candidacy requirements are more likely to be responsive to their district and local party chapter, especially in their early terms.

As a corollary of the preoccupation with constituency work and the lack of political experience, entrepreneur candidates once in parliament are possibly in a difficult position to engage in the detail-oriented and intricate legislative process. Therefore, I expect them to struggle first in the legislative arena but to adapt later on when learning the rules of the game. Moreover, as entrepreneur candidates make their way into national politics via open recruitment, a short-cut compared to traditional political careers, more

seasoned candidates and MPs might hold grievances against them and exclude them from their support networks. Over time, however, entrepreneur candidates may earn their senior's trust and start working together with them: that is, with increasing time in parliament and exposure to its working mechanisms, entrepreneur candidates are likely to converge in their behavior with MPs selected under more closed CEC.

H2: Member of Parliament selected under more open-candidacy requirements are less likely to engage in proactive legislative activity in their early terms.

In the next section, I will elaborate on the background of the open-recruitment scheme administered by major Japanese parties and why they provide the perfect empirical example to assess these hypotheses.

Empirical Strategy and Data

Open-Candidate Recruitment in Japan

My hypotheses will be addressed by taking advantage of the unique Japanese case, where parties have been fielding two types of candidates concurrently since the early 2000s. The electoral reform of the mid-1990s left its mark on the CSM of the major Japanese parties. Confronted with a new electoral system using single-seat districts, the veteran Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) saw a centralization of its CSM (Asano 2006) and a demand for candidates with universal appeals, transcending the particularistic ones prevalent under the former SNTV system (e.g., Catalinac 2016). Among the opposition, the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ), a merger of several center left and centrist parties, formed and assumed the role of the main opposition party in the early 2000s. However, the DPJ's initial ambitions were cut short by a shortage of (quality) candidates and weak local organizations.

To overcome this shortage, to attract promising candidates, and to compensate for weak local organizations,² the DPJ started to employ nationwide open recruitment—known as *kōbo*, literally meaning public advertisement of a position—and which was copied by other newly found parties like the Japan Restoration Party

(JRP) or Your Party (YP). *Kōbo* is designed as a competitive recruitment scheme to attract potential candidates from the public irrespective of party membership or political experience. The DPJ invested around 50 to 100 million JPY on ads in newspapers for each round of *kōbo* recruitment, usually held before elections (Yu, Yu, and Shoji 2014). Basically, aspirants need to fulfill merely the conditions spelled out in the Public Offices Election Law, that is, holding the Japanese citizenship and being at least 25 years.

In the first step, applications are sent directly to the national headquarter, where a first screening takes place. Applicants, then, undergo interviews with senior party members before entering negotiations about potential districts to run in. The final step involves the headquarter mediating between local party chapters and finalists designated to a vacant district to ensure the former's support. Technically, *kōbo* recruitment differed from traditional recruitment only in the first step, while all prospective candidates had to undergo steps two and three as well (Shoji 2013). Hence, *kōbo* and non-*kōbo* candidates barely differ in their selectorate background.

Pushed into the defensive, the ever-dominant LDP, too, adopted *kōbo* recruitment to fill vacant districts, lest being branded as a rather backwards and closed party in comparison. Compared to the DPJ, the LDP's open recruitment is handled at the district level, and the actual implementation of *kōbo* recruitment varies between districts. Some of these are more open in terms of CEC than others. Among the more strict districts, applicants have to be members of the party and/or collect signatures (Smith, Pekkanen, and Krauss 2013; Yu, Yu, and Shoji 2014). However, in the LDP, too, the selectorate dimension barely differs between the two types of candidates. In general, the overall majority of *kōbo* recruitment is highly open and encourages applications from a broader range of would-be candidates. Party-fixed effects in the analysis accounts for the differences in *kōbo* implementation.

In the five elections between 2000 and 2012, while also fielding candidates selected through traditional channels, the two biggest parties, the DPJ and the LDP, ran a total of 189 *kōbo* recruited candidates, out of which 133 were eventually elected to the House of Representatives (HOR) which holds 480 seats in total (see the Appendix of Yu, Yu, and Shoji 2014). Thus, a significant number of candidates and MPs during this time were in fact selected through highly open CEC. Underscoring my earlier assumption, Smith and Tsutsumi (2016) show that *kōbo*-selected candidates, indeed, have less political experience (measured by local office and

service in the House of Councillors). While this is true for the large majority of *kōbo*, there are a few instances, mostly in the LDP, in which hereditary politicians or previous staffers to MPs were selected through *kōbo* recruitment, though.

Japan's Electoral System

The mixed-member electoral system of Japan, moreover, makes running in contested districts not completely unattractive for (inexperienced) candidates. As part of the mixed system, most parties usually place all candidates that compete in the nominal tier on the party list, too—on the same slot! While those candidates that win their districts are ticked off the list, the remaining district loser is reordered in accordance to their loss margin (their voteshare divided by the district winner's voteshare). Contingent on the number of PR seats won by the party, these reranked “best losers” are elected too through the party list. This “safety net” provision implies that candidates running in insecure districts do not have to win the district *per se* to get elected but only to mobilize enough votes to be among a certain top number of best losers within their own party. The nomination patterns of *kōbo* slightly supports this, as they tend to be placed in districts with more complex party competition (Table S17 in the online supporting information).

This further implies, however, that both pure district candidates and dual-listed candidates have equal incentives in terms of maximizing their supporters' turnout. Pure list candidates face different electoral incentives and are ignored in the following analyses, as they drop out automatically when controlling for vote margins.³

The Japanese case, thus, presents an ideal case to test my theoretical expectations concerning the effects of more inclusive candidacy requirements. As both types of candidates were running at the same time for the same parties within the same electoral system, possible cultural, periodical, or systemic confounders, typical pitfalls in cross-country studies, as well as the selectorate dimension in candidate selection are controlled for by design. In the next section. I will present the data sources that I use to empirically assess my hypotheses.

Data

I make use of two main data sources; a candidate survey administered jointly by the University of Tokyo and the *Asahi*

Shimbun (henceforth UTAS survey)⁴ and data on legislative activity, available on the HOR website.⁵ From the UTAS survey, I will use the 2012 wave, as only for the 2012 election were incumbent candidates asked how often they have been returning to their district in the previous legislative term. This question is used to examine my first hypothesis treating the frequency of returning as an observable implication of a greater personal responsiveness to the district. This wave, targeting all candidates competing, has an average response rate of 93.4%. Data on legislative activity consists of the introduction and cosponsoring of Private Member Bills (PMB) and parliamentary questions (PQs) in the HOR by individual MPs for the electoral periods between 2003 and 2014. Members of the HOR may submit bills to parliament, irrespective of the government's policy agenda. MPs intending to submit PMB need the support of at least 20 other legislators. Apart from initiating one's own PMBs, MPs can also endorse and cosponsor other MPs' PMBs to broaden support. PMBs and PQs are legislative activities the least controlled by party leadership⁶ or the plenary agenda when compared to speeches or legislative voting. These kind of activities thus are *proactive* and measure MPs legislative activity and capability more accurately (Burden 2007).

The samples for my analyses thus vary according to the hypotheses tested (Table S1 in the online supporting information provides descriptive statistics). Whereas the first hypothesis on district responsiveness is tested using the sample of incumbent candidates in the 2012 election, my hypotheses on legislative activity are assessed by a sample of all MPs in the four legislative terms between 2003 and 2014, as the number of elected *kōbo* candidates reached significant numbers in these periods. The shares of *kōbo* among all MPs for each period are 4.34%, 8.68%, 14.38%, and 26.46%, respectively.

In the following analyses, *kōbo* MPs are coded 1 if they were selected through open recruitment, that is candidates that applied and were selected following public calls for nominations, and 0 otherwise. The majority of control variables are binary in nature, too. I suspect that *kōbo* will be negatively associated with either *Party Office*, *Parliamentary Office* or *Executive Office*. However, since parliamentary activity, too, is likely to be correlated with these types of office, I control for each using a binary indicator. Specifically, *Party Office* is coded 1 if MPs fulfill one of the following functions within the party: leader, vice leader, secretary general, or chairman of one of the party's internal councils, such as

the Policy Research Council (in case of the LDP) or the Election Strategy Council. *Parliamentary Office* is coded 1 for all MPs that chair or are directors of any committee in the HOR and 0 otherwise. *Executive Office* is coded 1 for all cabinet members. Given the frequent cabinet reshuffles and common fluctuation in committee chairmanship, 1s are assigned to these two variables if a MP held such a position at some point during the legislative term. *Government status*, too, is assumed to correlate with certain activities in parliament and with the number of *kōbo* MPs. Similarly, *Seniority* is assumed to be associated with legislative activity and the freshmen status of many *kōbo* MPs. It is measured as the number of times elected to the HOR. *Margin* indicates electoral margin and shall account for electoral permissiveness of legislative activity. Additionally, since most candidates take advantage of the dual-candidacy opportunity in the Japanese mixed-member system, district losers may still be elected to parliament through the party list (so-called *fukkatsu*, revival). For these MPs, the margin is calculated as the distance to the district winner's voteshare and is therefore negative.

Analysis

Returning to the District

In this section, I address my first hypothesis on candidates' responsiveness to their district. Given the limitation of available data to test the interaction of candidates with their local party chapter and their constituents directly, I rely on an observable implication of my hypothesis: the frequency of incumbents to return to their district. As frequent visits signal interest in local matters we should expect MPs with weak standing in the local party to return more often in order to strengthen their position in both the electorate and the party. Although all candidates' respective MPs competing in geographic electoral districts are thought to be policy responsive to their district, *kōbo* candidates and MPs are in addition more heavily induced to be personally responsive on account of their presumable outsider status.

The UTAS survey, targeting all candidates, was conducted shortly before the 2012 general election. With a response rate of 84% among incumbents and after dropping $n=55$ MPs that solely

competed through the party list in 2009 and removing parties without open recruitment,⁷ I am left with $n = 333$ observations for analysis (i.e., 78.4% of incumbents competing in districts in 2009). The survey provided an ordinal answer scheme with six categories to the question of how often MPs return to their district: *never*, *once a month*, *two to three times a month*, *once a week*, *every other day*, and *everyday*. As the skewed distribution of the ordinal variable, peaking at *once a week* with $n = 220$, renders an ordinal logistic regression brittle, I collapse *never* ($n = 9$), *once a month* ($n = 7$), and *two to three times a month* ($n = 32$) into the new category *less than once a week*. The two categories of *every other day* ($n = 70$) and *everyday* ($n = 65$) were grouped together to form the category *more than once a week*.

Concerns about misreporting of how often incumbents have returned to their districts are warranted—especially for those electorally weak. However, I expect that visits to the districts are aimed not solely to win over voters but moreover to appease potentially suspicious party members on the ground. Misreporting the frequency of returns can in the eyes of local party members, who have greater knowledge of how often their incumbent actually has returned, paint the misreporting incumbent in an unfavorable light. Moreover, controlling for vote margin might partially account for the incentive to misreport. However, I cannot rule out misreporting completely, and findings should thus be consumed with caution.

Table 1 presents estimation results based on multinomial logistic models.⁸ I control for the distance from the HOR, which is based in Tokyo's 1st district,⁹ party and executive office as well as seniority, the previous vote margin, and party fixed-effects. Moreover, to account for possible systematic variation in the nomination of *kōbo* across districts, I control for the party's district vote share in the 2005 election as the incumbents of the 2012 wave of the UTAS survey were nominated for and elected in the 2009 election. In this way, I control for the past electoral performance in the districts—which might have prompted open recruitment in the first place—and minimize spill-over effects on the selection background.

The effect of the selection background is significant in all four model specifications. In the first two models, *kōbo*-selection background is coded as 1 only for those *kōbo*-selected MPs in their first legislative term—those *kōbo*-selected MPs in higher terms are coded 0 (Operationalization A). Models (3) and (4) code all

TABLE I
Returning to District

	Operationalization A			Operationalization B			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(3)	(4)	(4)	
	Less than once a week	Less than once a week	More than once a week	Less than once a week	More than once a week	More than once a week	
<i>kābo</i>	0.180 (1.123)	0.867 (1.160)	1.699*** (0.564)	0.507 (0.767)	1.049** (0.476)	-0.090 (1.327)	1.638*** (0.557)
<i>kābo</i> × Seniority						0.055 (0.550)	-0.971* (0.502)
Distance from diet, in km (log)	-0.466** (0.215)	-0.445** (0.221)	-1.891*** (0.211)	-0.413* (0.219)	-1.863*** (0.208)	-0.427* (0.227)	-1.905*** (0.214)
Party office	2.940** (1.151)	2.239* (1.160)	3.773** (1.852)	2.254* (1.159)	4.038** (1.882)	2.272* (1.160)	3.465* (1.883)
Executive office	1.441** (0.598)	0.572 (0.658)	-0.404 (1.035)	0.561 (0.657)	-0.507 (1.038)	0.546 (0.657)	-0.125 (1.087)
Born in prefecture	-1.251*** (0.444)	-1.196*** (0.463)	-0.798* (0.436)	-1.166** (0.465)	-0.725* (0.430)	-1.193** (0.467)	-0.793* (0.439)
Margin	0.053*** (0.018)	0.063*** (0.020)	0.032* (0.017)	0.062*** (0.020)	0.025 (0.017)	0.061*** (0.020)	0.033* (0.017)
Previous party vote share in district	-0.004 (0.022)	-0.028 (0.024)	-0.047** (0.024)	-0.027 (0.024)	-0.047* (0.024)	-0.029 (0.024)	-0.045* (0.024)
Seniority		0.347*** (0.115)	-0.447** (0.175)	0.342*** (0.115)	-0.495*** (0.176)	0.334*** (0.115)	-0.445** (0.177)

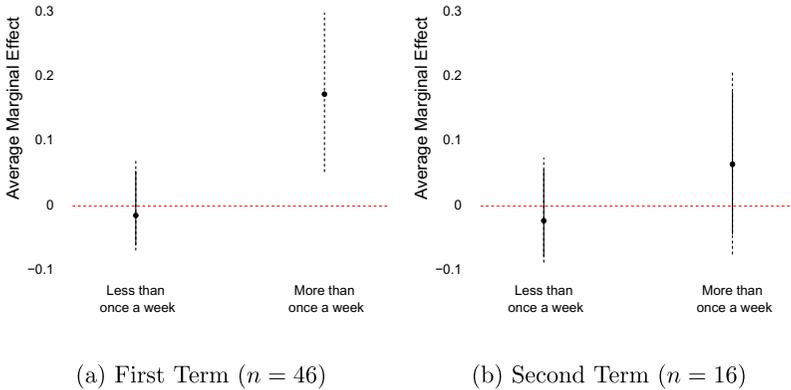
(Continues)

TABLE 1
(Continued)

	Operationalization A		Operationalization B	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	Less than once a week			
	More than once a week			
Constant	0.490 (1.578)	0.457 (1.588)	0.261 (1.588)	0.528 (1.629)
Observations	333	333	333	333
Akaike Inf. Crit.	389.877	372.176	376.822	375.314
Controls				
Party				
fixed-effects		Yes		Yes

Notes. Multinomial Logit Estimation.
Reference category: "once a week".
* $p < 0.1$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$.

FIGURE 1
Average Marginal Effects of being *kōbo* MP on returning to district
[Colour figure can be viewed at wileyonlinelibrary.com]



Note: Graph shows average marginal effects with 95 % intervals of falling into respective category conditional on *kōbo*-selection background. Reference category is *once a week*. Quantities obtained from model (4) in Table 1.

kōbo-selected MPs as 1 irrespective of the term they are serving (Operationalization B). By this operationalizational separation, version A picks up pure *kōbo*-selected MPs without any legislative experience and “traditional” reselection through other channels than open recruitment later on. Operationalization B, in contrast, allows for the estimation of interaction effects between *kōbo* recruitment and seniority. As expected, *kōbo* incumbents tend to return more often. This tendency, however, becomes less likely with increasing seniority. Figure 1 shows average marginal predictions of *kōbo* MPs compared to non-*kōbo* MPs in their first (panel a) and second term (panel b).

Controlling for the party’s previous voteshare in the district as well as the incumbents’ vote margins disentangles the effect of selection background first from structural characteristics that might have prompted open recruitment in the first place and secondly from other electoral incentives. To sum up and assuming no misreporting, these results suggest that *kōbo*-selected incumbents tend to return to their district more often, which is strongest in their first legislative term. With increasing seniority *kōbo*-selected incumbents tend to converge in their behavior with their colleagues selected through more traditional channels.

Legislative Activity

Next, I turn to observational data on legislative activity, specifically three different types of legislative activity: the number of PQs and the number of PMBs initiated and cosponsored by MPs in a given legislative cycle. The initiation of PMBs and tabling of PQs are *proactive* activities that reflect MPs' initiative and their prowess in the legislative arena better than, say, *reactive* behavior such as roll-call votes (Burden 2007). Additionally, the cosponsoring of PMBs though not actually *proactive*, indicates how well MPs are connected and respected within their party.

To isolate the impact of the selection background and to control for confounders, I run multivariate analyses and present robustness checks. Given the clear count nature of my data, I employ negative binomial models with period and party fixed effects and standard errors clustered by MPs.¹⁰ All models are estimated on a subset containing only parties with *kōbo* selection (i.e., DPJ, LDP, JRP, and YP), to exploit the within-party variation in selection background. As before, two variants of *kōbo* operationalization are employed, and for each legislative activity there are three model specifications. The first is pitching *kōbo*-selected MPs against those selected through traditional channels. The second specification includes an interaction term with seniority to explore potential learning and socialization effects. The third specification introduces an interaction effect with government status, as some types of legislative activities are more relevant to the opposition (e.g., PQs) and others more relevant to government MPs (e.g., PMBs).

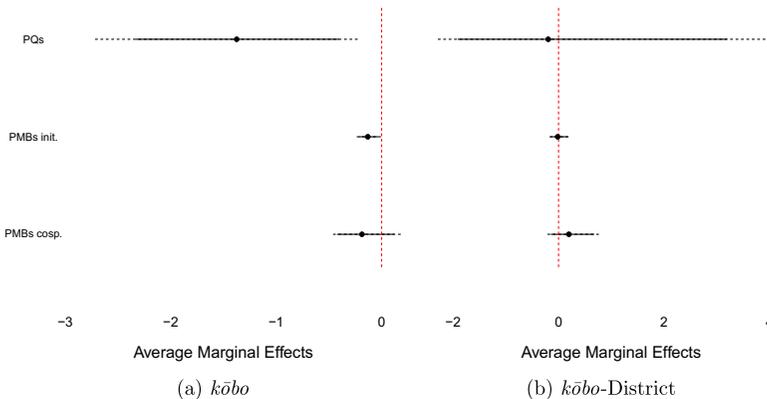
To minimize endogeneity issues and rule out alternative explanations that see the district, its characteristics and preferences for parliamentary behavior as the driver of behavioral differences, I run robustness checks. In these, I run the same models on all activities using a binary variable (*kōbo* District) indicating those districts of a party that either saw or will see a *kōbo* selected candidate in my sample. These models exclude actual *kōbo* MPs and thus compares traditional MPs which ran in districts with a *kōbo* history/future with those that ran in never-*kōbo* districts. In this way, I disentangle the effects emanating from the selection background from those of the district and its characteristics. That is, if the district and not the selection background is driving the results, we should see significant effects in the expected direction. In addition, a variable capturing the electoral margin is furthermore

accounting for difficult districts and thus district-induced behavioral incentives for legislative activity.

Figure 2(a) presents average marginal effects of *kōbo* status shown as the difference in predicted counts for each legislative activity (all models as well as robustness tests with additional controls variables and zero-inflated negative binomial robustness tests are presented in Tables S2 to S16 in the online supporting information). “*kōbo* MPs are significantly less likely to engage in proactive legislative activities. They table one PQ less on average than non-*kōbo* MPs.” Similarly, *kōbo* MPs are less likely to initiate PMBs. Running these models again with an indicator for MPs of districts with a *kōbo* selection of the same party at some point—presented in Figure 2(b)—we do not observe significant findings. Overall, it appears that behavioral differences accrue from the selection background and not district characteristics, which should affect the behavior of traditionally selected MPs too.

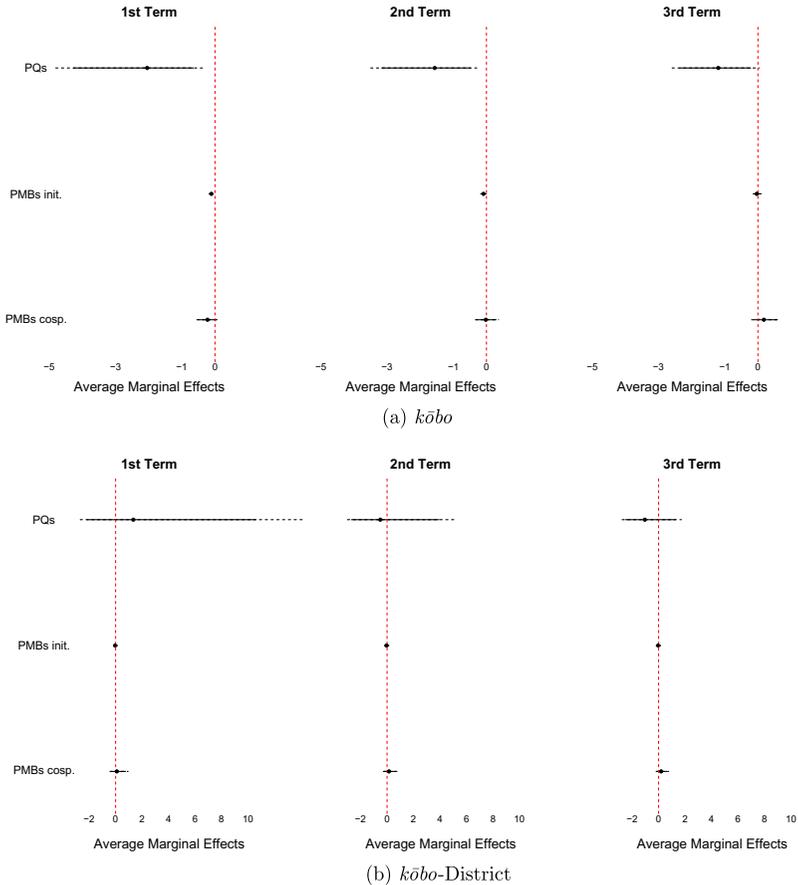
The second model specification attempts to capture learning and socialization effects by introducing an interaction term between selection background and seniority, measured by the times MPs have been elected to parliament. Figure 3(a) and 3(b) present again average marginal effects of *kōbo* status shown as differences in predicted counts and robustness tests, respectively. The upper panel shows that the *kōbo* newcomer is significantly less likely to

FIGURE 2
Average Marginal Effects. Differences in Predicted Counts
[Colour figure can be viewed at wileyonlinelibrary.com]



Note: Average marginal effects obtained through simulations of 1000 random draws from variance-covariance matrix. Solid lines indicate 90% intervals, dashed ones 95%.

FIGURE 3
Average Marginal Effects. Differences in Predicted Counts by Seniority
[Colour figure can be viewed at wileyonlinelibrary.com]



Note: Average marginal effects obtained through simulations of 1,000 random draws from variance-covariance matrix. Solid lines indicate 90% intervals, dashed ones 95%. The sample contains 165 first-term, 40 second-term, and 20 third-term *kōbo* MPs.

engage in tabling PQs and initiating PMBs in their first two terms when compared to the non-*kōbo* newcomer. Over time, however, these systematic differences become smaller and tend to disappear. No systematic difference can be reported when replacing *kōbo* selection background with the *kōbo*-District variable.

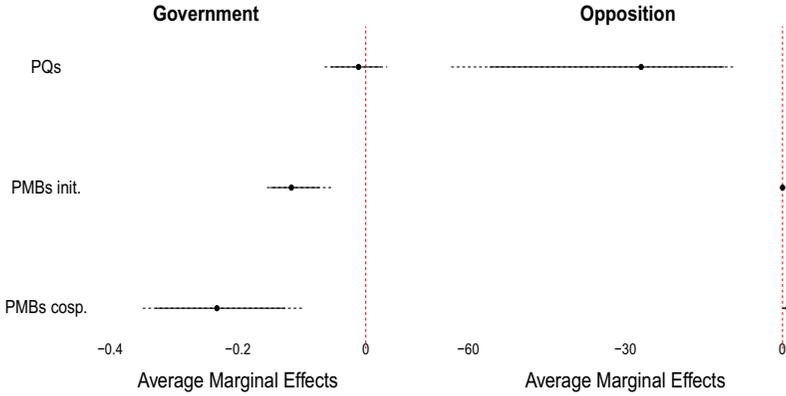
An alternative explanation for this pattern could be that more active *kōbo* MPs are renominated and reelected more

frequently, while inactive ones are not. However, while reelection figures between active and inactive MPs can easily be calculated, establishing why MPs do not compete any longer is observationally very difficult. Especially when we consider that inactive *kōbo* MPs—overwhelmed by legislative work and perhaps disappointed too—may tend to resign from politics and return to their former profession. When regressing *kōbo*'s likelihood of competing in the next election on my indicators of legislative activity, I find some support that greater activity is in fact negatively associated with seeking another mandate. As parties have no apparent incentive to forgo nominations of active MPs, this suggests that *kōbo* MPs indeed tend to resign voluntarily and that changes over time seem to be driven by learning effects (Table S18 in the online supporting information).

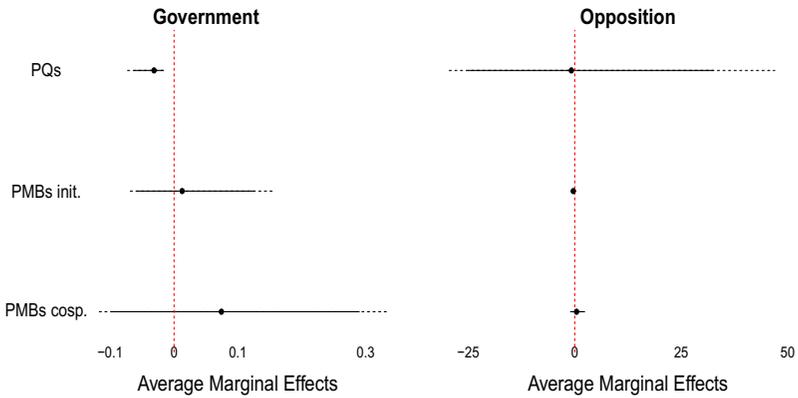
Finally, as not all legislative activities are equally relevant for all parliamentary actors, I furthermore introduce an interaction effect between *kōbo* and government status in the final specification. PQs, for example, are usually seen as the opposition's mean to hold government accountable, while PMBs not introduced by government MPs have higher chances of success. Therefore, we would expect active opposition MPs to table more PQs and government MPs to attempt introducing their or their supporting a colleague's legislative pet project through PMBs.

Figure 4(a) presents results for the final model specification. When in government, *kōbo* MPs engage less with the initiation or the cosponsoring of PMBs. This implies that *kōbo* MPs lack the ability to draft the connections to be asked to cosponsor PMBs. What does this reclusive behavior imply for the passage of PMBs? Since many PMBs are submitted by oppositional MPs, the overall share of PMBs that pass is rather low, roughly 8%. However, the average PMB that passes has 6.7 cosponsors; the average non-passing PMB 4.9. More important, however, are cosponsors from across the aisle; passing bills, on average, have support from two government MPs if initiated by the opposition and vice versa. In contrast, bills that do not pass have on average 0.15 supporters from the other block. Among PMBs initiated by *kōbo*, not a single one elicited support from across the aisle. Copartisan support, too, is lower for *kōbo*-initiated PMBs with 3.7 cosponsors on average. It appears the inactivity of *kōbo* is not in any sense rectified by greater legislative efficiency and that they are sidelined by their traditional colleagues.

FIGURE 4
 Average Marginal Effects. Differences in Predicted Counts
 by Government Status
 [Colour figure can be viewed at wileyonlinelibrary.com]



(a) *kōbo*



(b) *kōbo*-District

Note: Average marginal effects obtained through simulations of 1,000 random draws from variance-covariance matrix. Solid lines indicate 90% intervals, dashed ones 95%.

In opposition, *kōbo* MPs are also systematically less likely to hold government accountable by asking questions—to a large substantive degree. On average *kōbo* MPs table roughly 25 PQs less than non-*kōbo* in opposition. No similar pattern in these activities can be seen for non-*kōbo* MPs from *kōbo*-Districts as shown in Figure 4(b).

Now, can we expect that *kōbo* MPs, in line with the results from Table 1, concentrate their legislative activity on constituency-related matters? This seems not to be the case (Table S20 and S21 in the online supporting information). Controlling for potential confounders, *kōbo* status is not negatively associated with tabling PQs that relate to infrastructure or agriculture—a most-likely case to find constituency-orientation—even when conditioning on these policy fields' relevance for their district.¹¹ Moreover, if we look at the 20 most frequent words in these PQs separated by selection background (Table S22 in the online supporting information), we do not see a significant difference. Both types of MPs direct most of their attention to the parliamentary arena, using words pertaining to government (e.g., *government, cabinet, minister, budget*), parliament (e.g., *committee, investigation*), or policy (e.g., *medical, insurance, implementation*).

How does the constituency focus play out in PMBs? Constituency-oriented PMBs imply PMBs pertaining to policy areas with the greatest pork potential. Such PMBs are expected to be referred to the committees on Agriculture, Construction, or Commerce (see Grimmer 2013; Ono 2015). In total, *kōbo* have initiated 16 PMBs in the sample. Out of these, only two fall under the jurisdiction of these pork- and hence constituency-related committees. Most *kōbo* PMBs fall under the jurisdiction of the Health ($n = 6$), the Cabinet ($n = 5$), and the Internal Affairs committees ($n=4$).¹² A similarly low rate of merely 10% of all *kōbo*-cosponsored PMBs fall into these three committees' jurisdiction. Again, the largest shares go to the Health ($n = 44$), the Cabinet ($n = 42$), and the Internal Affairs committees ($n = 25$).

In summary, *kōbo*-selected MPs fail where it matters. In government, they are less likely or even able to grapple with legislation, and in opposition, they are less likely to hold government accountable. Their little activity is, moreover, not rectified by a stronger focus on pork-barrel relevant to their constituencies, as measured by PMBs' committee referrals and PQs mentioning the home prefecture. These findings corroborate my theoretical expectations. Although PMBs are not as consequential as legislation forwarded by the cabinet, it indicates how well MPs have mastered the craftsmanship of the legislative process, ranging from the formulation of complex issues to eliciting support from colleagues.

Given the political inexperience and electoral uncertainty of *kōbo*, it appears rational to allocate the limited resources of time and attention not on legislative but rather on activities that improve

the chance of re-(s)election, such as constituency work. In the next section, I discuss the normative implications that arise from the consequences of employing more open-candidacy recruitment.

Conclusion

An increasing number of parties in established democracies have started to experiment with expanding their supply of candidates. Examples range from Austria to France that have all followed, though in different flavors naturally, Japanese parties which have pioneered in the nomination of candidates using public calls for applications. However, academic attention did not keep pace with this trend, and its repercussions for legislative behavior are underresearched.

In this article, I have argued that CSM affect the behavior of candidates and MPs not only through the selectorate, but also through the candidacy dimension—the broadening of the supply side of candidates. I have provided empirical evidence that the type of personnel selected by parties using the same selectorate has crucial implications for legislative behavior. Specifically, the usage of open recruitment and the selection of rather inexperienced candidates has implications on at least two dimensions of behavior: first, the personal responsiveness of candidates to their districts, including constituents and local party activists, and second, legislative activity.

The first behavioral consequence is could speak to the weak standing of candidates and MPs selected under open recruitment in the party. The tendency to return more often to the district might be induced by the insecurity of the MP over the local party's support. Anecdotal evidence obtained through interviews with party officials by Shoji (2013) support the notion of suspicious party branches. This could also explain the low support for legislation introduced by MPs selected under open recruitment in parliament, as more traditional MPs might hold grievances against them.

In the legislative arena, MPs selected under open recruitment are less active. Often times lacking prior political experience in local and party politics, these MPs are ill-equipped to quickly master the craftsmanship of drawing their own legislation or holding the government accountable. While government MPs selected under open recruitment are less likely to advance own their legislative initiatives, their oppositional pendants are dramatically less likely to hold the government accountable by tabling PQs. Moreover, their low activity does not appear to be focused on their constituency. However,

my findings offer hope that *kōbo*-selected MPs tend to converge over time in their legislative behavior toward MPs selected through traditional channels—whether this is in fact due to learning processes and not survival warrants further investigation.

In analogy to a growing number of studies showing that the seeming democratization of parties' internal conducts do not necessarily result in outcomes normatively valued—for example, competitive leadership races (Kenig 2009), higher legislative turnover (Put, Gouglas, and Maddens 2015), or more balanced gender or minority representation (Rahat, Hazan, and Katz 2008),—parties employing open-candidate recruitment, too, might feel torn. Open recruitment is primarily born out of electoral concerns, and candidates thus recruited fall short in fulfilling their legislative roles.

On a larger scale, my findings resonate with those by de Lange and Art (2011). Nominating too many inexperienced candidates can contribute in undermining a party's ability to perform. The tendency to employ open recruitment could harbor further implications when a growing number of MPs lack the ability to craft legislation or to hold government accountable.

Cross-nationally, this trend to nominate politically inexperienced outsiders that oftentimes lack party membership, as has been happening in Japan but also more recently in France and Germany, underlines the relevance to study its behavioral consequences. Do candidates and MPs selected under open recruitment compensate their lack of legislative prowess by greater loyalty to the party, and do they mobilize segments of the electorate hitherto abstaining from voting? Are voters more satisfied with democracy if they can vote for candidates that appear untainted by establishment politics? As the trend of candidate recruitment in established democracies moves into this general direction, these questions are becoming more relevant.

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NOTES

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1. One could also argue that parties are not actively targeting certain districts but that they react to shortages of quality candidates in weak districts by using open recruitment. This argumentative difference does not alter the conjunction of contested districts and the nomination of independent candidates on the one hand and nomination of *loyalist* candidates in safe districts on the other.

2. In the DPJ, *kōbo* nomination across districts is thus not random but oftentimes rather an answer to whether high-quality candidates exist in the district already. I address potential issues of confounding of selection background with district characteristics in my analyses.

3. Replacing the margin with an indicator for a “best loser” mandate allows one to include pure list candidates and still, though more imprecise, control for marginality of district candidates. These specifications produce the same statistical and substantive results for *kōbo*-selection background.

4. See <http://www.masaki.j.u-tokyo.ac.jp/utas/utasindex.html>.

5. See <http://www.shugiin.go.jp/internet/index.nsf/html/index.htm>.

6. Historically, the LDP leadership tried to reign into PMBs introduced by backbenchers by channeling all bills through the Policy Affairs Research Council, or PARC. After the electoral reform in 1996, however, the vetting powers of the PARC became unsustainable (Krauss and Pekkanen 2011).

7. This, in combination with party fixed-effects allows for a comparison of different candidate-selection backgrounds within parties.

8. Robustness checks using ordered logit models and multinomial models with additional control variables yield the same results. Tables S23 and S24 are in the online supporting information.

9. Using a shapefile of all districts, I calculate the distance between any district and Tokyo’s 1st by taking the distance between the district-polygon’s centroids. To avoid distortions emanating from small islets off the Eastern coast belonging to Tokyo’s 10th district, I manually assigned a value 10 km based on a calculation using Google Maps.

10. To ensure a common length of exposure time as assumed by count models, I have excluded MPs that either dropped out or entered during the term. Moreover, I have excluded the two speakers of the HOR, given their special role detached from legislation.

11. Table A19 in the online supporting information lists the tokens for these policy fields.

12. Referrals to multiple committees are common.

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Supporting Information

Additional supporting information may be found in the online version of this article at the publisher's web site:

Table S1: Descriptive Statistics by Hypotheses

Table S2: Number of Parliamentary Questions. Negative Binomial Estimation

Table S3: Number of Parliamentary Questions. Negative Binomial Estimation, Operationalization A

Table S4: Number of PMBs Cosponsored. Negative Binomial Estimation

Table S5: Number of PMBs Cosponsored. Negative Binomial Estimation, Operationalization A

Table S6: Number of PMBs Initiated. Negative Binomial Estimation

Table S7: Number of PMBs Initiated. Negative Binomial Estimation, Operationalization A

Table S8: Number of Parliamentary Questions. Zero-inflated Negative Binomial Estimation

Table S9: Number of PMBs Cosponsored. Zero-inflated Negative Binomial Estimation

Table S10: Number of PMBs Initiated. Zero-inflated Negative Binomial Estimation

Table S11: Number of Parliamentary Questions. Negative Binomial Estimation, with Pure SMD Candidates

Table S12: Number of PMBs Initiated. Negative Binomial Estimation, with Pure SMD Candidates

Table S13: Number of PMBs Cosponsored. Negative Binomial Estimation, with Pure SMD Candidates

Table S14: Number of Parliamentary Questions. Negative Binomial Estimation, Margin replaced by fukkatsu-MP

Table S15: Number of PMBs Initiated. Negative Binomial Estimation, Margin replaced by fukkatsu-MP

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