

**The London School of Economics and Political Science**

***Does Experience matter? The effect of pre-parliamentary careers on  
MPs' behaviour***

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## **Abstract**

The Career background of politicians is an issue that could potentially have profound implications for the functioning of democracy, yet it has only received sporadic and lukewarm attention from political scientists. Based on the hypothesis that the experience and skills an MP acquires throughout his or her career is going to affect the MP's performance in the future, this dissertation seeks to explore if the career background of MPs, both professional and political, influences their parliamentary career trajectory and behaviour when they enter parliament. By utilizing a new dataset compiled from the biographical information of all new MPs elected in the 2010 British general election, this dissertation shows that the amount and nature of MPs' pre-parliamentary careers has a profound impact on the allocation of seats among MPs as applicants, their prospects of frontbench promotion, their voting behaviour, as well as their participation in parliamentary debates. These results show that the pre-parliamentary careers of MPs do affect the way they conduct their duties as representatives. These results also suggest that the background of MPs shapes the composition of parliament in terms of the occupation and political experience, which has an important influence on how representative democracy works.

# Contents

<b>Abstract.....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Contents.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>List of figures .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>List of Tables .....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Acknowledgements .....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>12</b>
Quality of Representatives.....	14
Professionalization of Politics .....	18
Representational consequences.....	21
Plan for the thesis .....	24
<b>Chapter One – Conceptualizing MPs’ pre-parliamentary careers and theorizing its’ effect .....</b>	<b>30</b>
1.1 Introduction .....	30
1.2 How are political leaders selected? .....	31
1.2.1 Social bias in political recruitment .....	33
1.3 Professionalization of Politics .....	36
1.3.1 Changing Political Careers in the UK.....	38
1.3.2 What is ‘Political Professional’?.....	41
1.4 Pre-parliamentary careers and quality of representatives .....	44
1.4.1 Roles of British MPs .....	46
1.4.2 Skills and knowledge of MPs.....	48
1.4.3 How MPs acquire skills and knowledge .....	51
1.4.4 Experience and performance.....	53
1.4.5 Political experience and legislative performance .....	56
1.4.6 Non-political experience and legislative performance .....	58
1.4.7 Pre-parliamentary experience and patterns in legislative behavior .....	61
1.5 Building on existing literature .....	65
1.5.1 The ‘How’ .....	65
1.5.2 The ‘Who’ .....	67
1.5.3 Need for a holistic conception of pre-office careers.....	70
1.6 Duality of pre-office career .....	73
1.6.1 Conceptually distinct.....	73

1.6.2 Empirically correlated .....	78
1.7 Hypotheses .....	80
1.8 Conclusion .....	84
<b>Chapter Two – Method: Introducing the MPs’ pre-parliamentary careers database .....</b>	<b>85</b>
2.1 Introduction .....	85
2.2 Cohort study .....	86
2.2.1 Justification and limitation .....	86
2.2.2 Why only study new MPs? .....	88
2.2.3 The 2010 cohort and 2010-15 parliament .....	91
2.3 Data Collection strategy: Toward a holistic database of MPs’ pre-parliamentary Careers .....	95
2.3.1 Sources of information and data collection strategy .....	96
2.3.2 Compiling pre-parliamentary career timelines of MPs .....	104
2.4 Coding strategy .....	106
2.4.1 Challenges in operationalization .....	106
2.4.2 The coding scheme: SOC2000 .....	108
2.4.3 Coding MPs’ pre-parliamentary political careers .....	114
2.5 Presentational strategy .....	119
2.6 Conclusion .....	121
<b>Chapter Three – Who were they? Descriptive analysis of MPs’ pre-parliamentary careers .....</b>	<b>124</b>
3.1 Introduction .....	124
3.2 Professional background of the 2010 cohort .....	125
3.3 Changing professional composition of parliament .....	128
3.4 Connection between professional and political experiences .....	130
3.4.1 Overall political experience .....	130
3.4.2 Experience in local or national politics .....	134
3.5 Problems with OLS model and justification for categorical representation of political career .....	137
3.6 Introduction to Latent Class Analysis (LCA) .....	140
3.6.1 Construction of LCA model .....	142
3.6.2 Descriptive analysis of the political career types .....	146
3.6.3 Professional career and political career types .....	150
3.7 Methodological concerns and inferences .....	155
3.8 Discussion .....	159

3.9 Conclusion .....	160
Appendix, Chapter Three .....	162
<b>Chapter Four – Pre-parliamentary career and electoral security .....</b>	<b>164</b>
4.1 Introduction .....	164
4.2 Pre-parliamentary career and electoral security.....	165
4.2.1 Recruitment and candidate selection in the UK .....	166
4.3 Electoral security hypotheses .....	172
4.4 Data and methodology.....	174
4.5 Results .....	176
4.5.1 2005 majority models .....	176
4.5.2 Average electoral security scale models .....	181
4.6 Discussion.....	185
4.7 Conclusion.....	188
Appendix, Chapter Four.....	191
<b>Chapter Five – Pre-parliamentary career and frontbench promotion .....</b>	<b>195</b>
5.1 Introduction .....	195
5.1.1 Principles of cabinet government .....	196
5.1.2 Responsibilities of ministers and the skills involved.....	198
5.2 Pre-parliamentary career and frontbench prospects .....	200
5.2.1 Professional experience .....	200
5.2.2 Political experience .....	203
5.2.3 Opposition versus government .....	206
5.2.4 Rebellion, party unity and frontbench appointment .....	208
5.3 Data and methodology.....	209
5.4 Results .....	214
5.4.1 All frontbench positions .....	214
5.4.2 Senior frontbench appointment .....	225
5.4.3 Predicted frontbench prospect .....	232
5.5 Discussion.....	234
5.6 Conclusion .....	238
Appendix, Chapter Five .....	242
<b>Chapter Six – Pre-parliamentary career and MPs’ voting patterns .....</b>	<b>246</b>
6.1 Introduction .....	246
6.2 Why do MPs rebel? .....	247

6.2.1 Tools to maintain party cohesion .....	250
6.3 Hypotheses .....	253
6.3.1 Professionalization, ministerial ambition and rebellion .....	253
6.3.2 Party political experience and rebellion.....	255
6.4 Data and methodology .....	256
6.5 Results .....	259
6.5.1 Full models .....	259
6.5.2 Party models .....	268
6.6 Pre-parliamentary careers and the formation of special preferences .....	271
6.6.1 Euroscepticism among the Conservative .....	272
6.7 Conclusion .....	281
Appendix, Chapter Six .....	283
<b>Chapter Seven – Pre-parliamentary career and parliamentary speeches .....</b>	<b>285</b>
7.1 Introduction .....	285
7.2 Why do legislators speak? .....	285
7.3 Pre-parliamentary career and speech making.....	288
7.4 Data and methodology .....	293
7.5 Results .....	296
7.5.1 Full models .....	296
7.5.2 Party models .....	301
7.5.3 Predicted number of speeches .....	304
7.6 Discussion .....	306
7.7 Conclusion .....	311
Appendix, Chapter Seven .....	314
<b>Conclusion .....</b>	<b>316</b>
Quality of representatives.....	316
Professionalization of politics.....	320
Other novel findings.....	322
The way forward.....	323
<b>Bibliography .....</b>	<b>327</b>

## List of figures

Figure 1.1 Duality of pre-parliamentary career .....	79
Figure 2.1 Photo Sample of MP profile on Dods Parliamentary Companion (2015) .....	98
Figure 2.2 Screen Capture of sample of MP profile on Whos' who (retrieved 31 AUG 2016) .....	100
Figure 3.1. Impact of professional experience (dummy), demographic and party affiliation on MPs' amount of total political experiences .....	131
Figure 3.2 Impact of the amount of professional experiences on MPs' total amount of political experiences .....	133
Figure 3.3 Effect of professional experiences (dummy) on MPs' amount of experience in national party politics .....	136
Figure 3.4 Effect of professional experiences (dummy) on the MPs' amount of experience in elected positions in local government .....	137
Figure 3.5 Conditional Probabilities of a specific decile, given latent class membership .....	147
Figure 3.6 New MPs' age at election and probability of political career type .....	151
Figure 3.7. Effect of experience in professional occupations groups on the probability of being in a political career group .....	154
Figure 5.1 Probability of becoming government minister or shadow cabinet member over the # of years of political experiences .....	232
Figure 6.1 Amount of Experience in Selected Occupational Groups and Estimated number of Rebellions .....	267
Figure 7.1 Amount of experience in Legal profession and media and the predicted number of speeches .....	305



## List of tables

Table 2.1 Party Strength in the 2010-2015 House of Commons and among the 2010 cohort .....	92
Table 2.2 Occupational Groups and their corresponding SOC2000 unit group(s) .....	112
Table 2.3 MPs pre-parliamentary political experience coding scheme .....	119
Table 3.1. Professional Background of new MPs elected in 2010 (% in parentheses) .....	126
Table 3.2. Prior political participation of new MPs elected in 2010 (% in parentheses) .....	127
Table 3.3. Labour MPs in politics-facilitating occupations 1945-2010(%) .....	128
Table 3.4 Conservative MPs in politics-facilitating occupations 1945-2010 (%) .....	129
Table 3.5 LCA Model fit statistics of Latent class number 1 through 5 .....	145
Table 3.6 Mean Amount of Political Experience among MPs belonging to the political career Groups .....	148
Table 3.7 Party Affiliation and Demographic of the political career types .....	149
Table 3.8. Frequency Table, Pre-Parliamentary Professional and Political Career Type .....	152
Table 3.9 Result of OLS regression of the amount of political experience on professional experience and demographic information .....	162
Table 3.10 Marginal change in probability of MPs' political career type dependent on professional occupations after multinomial logistic regression .....	163
Table 4.1. Cut off average majority across three general election between constituency types on electoral security scale .....	176
Table 4.2. OLS models for MPs' constituency majority in the last (2005) general election .....	179
Table 4.3. Ordinal Logistic models for average electoral security scale (incident rate ratios) .....	182
Table 4.4 OLS models of MPs' constituency majority in the last (2005 general election) (Conservative only) .....	191
Table 4.5 OLS models of MPs' constituency majority in the last (2005) general election (Labour only) .....	192
Table 4.6 Ordinal logistic models of average electoral security scale (Conservative only) (incident rate ratios) .....	193
Table 4.7 Ordinal logistic models of average electoral security scale (Labour only) (incident rate ratios) .....	194
Table 5.1 Random effect panel logistic models for all frontbench post (odd ratios) .....	216
Table 5.2 Random effect panel logistic models for all frontbench post (odd ratios)(Party Models) .....	221
Table 5.3 Logistic models for senior frontbench post (odd ratios) .....	229
Table 5.4 Random effect panel logistic models for all frontbench post (odd ratios) (coalition only) .....	242
Table 5.5 Random effect panel logistic models for all frontbench post (odd ratios) (Conservative only) .....	243
Table 5.6 Random effect panel logistic models for all frontbench post (odd ratios) (Labour only) ..	244
Table 5.7 Logistic models for senior frontbench post (odd ratios) (Conservative only) .....	245

Table 6.1. Negative Binomial models for the number of rebellion (incident rate ratios) .....	260
Table 6.2. Negative Binomial models for the number of rebellion (Incident rate ratios) (party models) .....	269
Table 6.3 How Conservatives MP voted in selected divisions on Europe .....	275
Table 6.4. Conservative MPs' pre-parliamentary career and selected indicator of Euroscepticism..	276
Table 6.5 Negative Binomial models for the number of rebellion (incident rate ratios) (Conservative only) .....	283
Table 6.6 Negative Binomial models for the number of rebellion (incident rate ratios) (Labour only) .....	284
Table 7.1 Negative binomial models for the number of speeches MPs made (incident rate ratios)	297
Table 7.2 Negative binomial models for the number of speeches MPs made (incident rate ratios) (Party Models) .....	303
Table 7.3 Negative binomial models for the number of speeches MPs made (incident rate ratios) (Conservative only) .....	314
Table 7.4 Negative binomial models for the number of speeches MPs made (incident rate ratios) (Labour only) .....	315

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## Introduction

*When she entered this House just 13 short months ago, she rapidly used her deep knowledge to champion the dispossessed.*

*- Andrew Mitchell MP, paying tribute to Jo Cox in parliament*

In the wake of Jo Cox's assassination, among the numerous tributes paid to the late MP, there were two unmistakable themes. First, before she was elected, Cox had been an aid and humanitarian worker in Oxfam. Not only did her professional background influence her dedicating her office to the cause of humanitarian aid to refugees and third world countries, but it also brought her the expertise and knowledge that contributed enormously to the parliamentary deliberation and public debate on the subject. Secondly, she was a dedicated local MP, born and raised within her constituency and genuinely admired by her constituents. The fact that her tragic death happened when she was holding her weekly constituency surgery only served to highlight her commitment to the community that she called home.

A knowledgeable 'policy expert' and a true 'local hero', Cox seems to have embodied our ideal representative. Her professional background informed her work in Westminster and her local roots committed her service to constituents. If there was a silver lining to her untimely demise, it may be how her story has, at least temporarily, vanquished the rampant contempt and disillusionment over politics, the political class and Parliament that have plagued our society since the expense scandal. The #ThankyourMP on Twitter, inspired by Cox, has turned peoples' attention to the works and contributions of their MP. Overcoming

the cynical stereotype of politicians being self-serving, power-hungry, unqualified careerist that have never had a 'real job', people began to realize that many of them were in fact accomplished individuals who had decided to dedicate their life to service of their community.

However, does MPs' experience truly matter? How does MPs experience prior to their election affect their political career and behaviour once elected? Do skills and knowledge acquired in professional and political pre-parliamentary career facilitate MPs performing their tasks and responsibility? Do different professional or political experiences bring forward different behavioural patterns among MPs? And in the end, is Cox's inspiring story of utilizing her professional, political and personal background in becoming an effective representative, both in Westminster and her constituency, the norm or exception among MPs? These are some of the questions that I intend to explore through this thesis. The answer to these questions will serve to further our understanding on the skills and quality required for effective representatives as well as the growing trend of 'professionalization' of politics in the UK and around developed democracies, both of which are issues that have a profound impact on the functioning and representativeness of democratic government.

## Quality of Representatives

*They have no idea that the true navigator must study the seasons of the year, the sky, the stars, the winds and all the other subjects appropriate to his profession if he is to be really fit to control a ship*

- Plato, *The Republic*.

Leadership matters, but what makes a good political leader? This has been a fundamental question asked by scholars of politics for millennia. From Plato to Weber and beyond, the temperament and skills that constitute effective leadership, and how to bring individuals with these qualities into position of power, has been the cornerstone in the study of politics. Regardless of the form of polity, the competence and aptitude of political leaders will have profound implication on the functioning of government, the delivery of public services and people's wellbeing. The importance of studying the skills, knowledge and experience that make an effective political leader is self-evident. Yet, the issue of quality among political leaders appears to be in the state of dereliction as it has largely failed to capture the attention of contemporary political scientists. The reason for this neglect, I believe, stemmed from the two fundamental questions with regard to this issue and the difficulty in conceptualizing and studying them.

First and foremost, what do we mean when we talk about quality and effectiveness among political leaders and representatives? The underlining difficulty in answering this question lies in the fact that the proper function(s) of an elected representative is multifaceted and often ill defined. Elected representatives are often faced with a wide variety of tasks they are expected to perform and multiple, sometimes conflicting, principles to whom they are

responsible to. Political scientists have long noticed the diverse responsibility of legislators. The multiple purposes of legislators within the assembly and in politics and society in general have led to diverging patterns legislative behaviour in terms of how legislators focus their attention on the various tasks and responsibilities they are expected to perform (For example Barber 1965, Dietrich et al 2012, Payne 1980, Rush 2001, Searing 1994, Wahlke et al 1962).

Given the multiple responsibilities of representatives and the variety of ways that they engage with these responsibilities, it would perhaps be a crude generalization to speak of performance of MP as a unidimensional concept. Unless we are to adopt a prior normative judgement on a singular proper role of legislators in representational democracy, it would be impossible to say if a legislator who focuses on drafting and making of legislation is in anyway more, or less, effective or having better, or worse, performance than their colleagues who pay attention to providing constituency services, promoting a particular policy or party positions on mass media or scrutinizing conduct of the government in committee room. In the end, quality and effectiveness of political leaders and representatives is perhaps best conceptualized as a multi-dimensional notion that encompass their capacity and performance in the variety of tasks and responsibilities that they need to fulfil. An effective MP need not to be an all round jack-of-all-trade that excels in each and every one of these dimensions. Instead, the collegial nature of parliament, parliamentary parties and government means that the division of labour among representatives with different expertise and skills is not only possible, but desirable.



Secondly, how and from whom do representatives learn their trade? The most obvious and straight forward way of doing so is on-the-job training through socialization and adaptation, once MPs are elected to Westminster. The issue of legislative socialization has been thoroughly studied in a number of assemblies across the world and the impact of seniority and tenure on politicians' effective and performance has long be noted in the literature (Miquel and Snyder 2006, Rush and Giddings 2011, Schiller 1995). There has also been an expanding body of research with regards to the practice and outcome of formal program of training and induction that is being offered to new parliamentarian across different countries (Coghill et al 2012, Donohue and Holland 2012, Fox and Korris 2012, Simpanba 2012). However, the effects of MPs' pre-parliamentary careers and experiences on aptitude and performance have received considerably less attention from scholars of legislative studies.

The lack of understanding of pre-office career of political leaders and its consequences is perhaps due to the difficulty in studying and conceptualizing politicians' prior career. As a profession, politics is unique in the sense there is neither a clear and concise career path nor aptitudinal criteria for a person to progress within the profession. In most professions, one would usually begin at a junior position, learning the ropes of how to perform and excel in various tasks, acquiring the necessary skills, knowledge and professional credentials, proving ones' ability before earning a promotion to a higher office. However, the same thing cannot be said with regard to politics as a profession. While there are more usual and travelled paths than others, the fact remains that representatives do hail from all walks of life, and there are good reasons for this. If we look at the background of the cohort of MPs first

elected in the 2010 general election, there were some usual suspects - lawyers, teachers, bankers, publicists etc. However, there was also a bricklayer, a pastor and a GP receptionist. While this certainly complicates how we conceptualize MPs' pre-parliamentary careers, the variety of experiences and professional background of MPs also means that they bring with them a wide range of skills, knowledge and expertise to parliament. The consequence of these diverse backgrounds on their behaviour is indeed intriguing.

Given these the multitude of MPs' responsibilities, and the variety of their previous careers, while we are presented with a considerable methodological challenge in understanding them, a better approach in conceptualizing the effect of pre-parliamentary experiences on quality and competence of legislators might be to think of different strands of pre-parliamentary experiences are facilitating legislators in the formation of legislative roles and adopting different patterns of legislative behaviours. Hence, it is not that MPs with certain pre-parliamentary backgrounds are of better quality or more effective as an MP *per se*, but rather their pre-parliamentary experiences provide them with certain skill sets or knowledge which either allows them to outperform their colleagues in particular aspects of their responsibilities, or to make certain aspects of their tasks and responsibilities a more attractive course of action, which in turn diverts their efforts to the area where they can make the most contribution or impact. The result of these would be observable, distinct patterns of behaviour among MPs with different sets of pre-parliamentary experiences, dependent on their ability in performing the various tasks and responsibilities of an MP.

## Professionalization of Politics

*Being an MP is a vast subsidized ego-trip. It's a job that needs no qualifications, it has no compulsory hours of work, no performance standards, and provides a warm room, a telephone and subsidized meals to a bunch of self-important windbags and busybodies who suddenly find people taking them seriously because they've got the letters 'MP' after their name.*

- *Sir Humphrey Appleby, Yes Prime Minister*

In exploring the consequences of MPs' pre-parliamentary career, not only will that enable us to further our understanding of how quality among representatives ought to be defined and nurtured, but it also allows us to explore the implication of the general trend in the changing landscape of politics that is professionalization.

In recent decades, there has been an observable trend of MPs being drawn from an ever restricting pool of talents who, in the words of Max Weber, not only live 'for' politics, but also live 'off' politics (Weber 1994). At the expense of people of working class or other professional backgrounds, parliamentary seats are increasingly occupied by 'professional' politicians and political operatives who worked extensively, if not exclusively, in one of the professions that was deemed as 'politically related', such as law, journalism, trade unionism etc. (Cairney 2007, King 1981, Norris and Lovenduski 1995, Riddell 1993). The narrowing of MPs' societal and economical background was greeted with certain degree of animosity among the general populace and became the focal point of populist fury. In such a narrative, professional MPs have been accused of being ambitious careerists who care only about attaining political power, have never held a job outside of politics, permanently stuck within the 'Westminster Bubble' - not only were these themselves 'unrepresentative', but

they also lacked the experience and understanding of 'real world' problems and issues that people are faced with every day. As a result, they are oblivious of peoples' genuine and legitimate concerns. The results offered by this research shall serve to further refine our understanding of the professionalization of politics.

Firstly, to what extent has professionalization changed the composition of parliament in terms MPs' pre-parliamentary careers and experience, and consequently the skills, knowledge and expertise they bring to Westminster? I would argue that the way pre-parliamentary careers and the notions of 'political professional' are found in the existing literature have some fundamental shortcomings that hamper a comprehensive understanding on MPs' pre-parliamentary careers and the professionalization of politics. More specifically, the lack of distinction between professional and political aspect of MPs' pre-parliamentary careers has masked the true picture of MPs' professional and political credentials at the time of their election.

Secondly, what are the consequences of professionalization in terms of MPs performance and behaviour? In other words, do MPs with extensive experience in one of the 'politically related' profession behave differently from those who do not? As noted by Rush (2001), professionalization is a response to political changes which makes the office of MP ever more demanding to an individual. The increasing role of MPs in scrutinizing government conduct, deliberation on policies and participate in public debate through mass and social media all required special knowledge and skills set to perform. If that is the case, we ought

to expect a 'professional' MP, equipped with more relevant experience, to outperform their more amateurish colleagues.

On the other hand, some of the skills and knowledge necessary for effective representative are by no means exclusive to 'politically related' professions and can be earned in non-political professions as well. Experience and expertise from non-political professions may prove useful, if not essential to the functioning of parliament. Sector specific knowledge and perspectives provided by former practitioners elected as MPs may be vital and beneficial to the formation of government policies. Could non-political occupations provide similar benefits in terms of skills and knowledge to 'amateur' politicians and give rise to similar patterns of behaviour? Could experience from different professions be responsible for a distinct set of behaviour? Moreover, 'professional politicians' is by no means a clear and concise concept, as many MPs were involved in politics in a part-time capacity while having a successful non-political career parallel to their participation in politics. So, how does MPs' pre-parliamentary professional and political experience interact with each other and what are their consequences on MPs' behaviour when we take both dimensions of their prior career into account?

## Representational consequences

*Now I know that virtually none of you have ever done a proper job in your life, or worked in business, or worked in trade, or indeed ever created a job.*

- *Nigel Farage MEP, speaking at the European Parliament after the Brexit Referendum*

Answers to the above questions are, I believe, not only of great importance in itself, but will also shed light on the impact of the professionalization of politics and changing occupational composition of the parliament on the representativeness of our democracy as well. It has been suggested that the identity of representatives and composition of parliament is an important factor in its representativeness. This particular line of argument usually begins with the idea that all social groups ought to be represented by politicians who belongs to such groups in the parliament and the composition of parliament ought to mirror the society it is supposed to represent. The normative case for such 'descriptive representation' is both symbolic and substantial; it signifies the inclusive nature of our democracy and acceptance of various groups by the society. Representatives who actually belong to certain social groups might be more effective in relaying the grievances and addressing concerns of the groups, because they can better relate to the everyday life problems and difficulties encountered by ordinary members of the group, hence becoming better advocates for their respective group in the parliament.

While most literature on the normative case for more descriptive representation focuses on the representation, or the lack thereof, for women and ethnic minorities (Ashe et al 2010, Cutts et al 2008, Hill 2013, McIlveen 2009, Shaw 2001), some research has suggested that

similar line of argument could be extended to other social groups. More descriptive representation based on socio-economic conditions has long been argued for since the 19th century. The Labour Representation Committee, the forerunner of currently Labour Party, was founded in 1900 with the distinct purpose to secure and increase representation of industrial workers within parliament. The idea of representation based on occupational and functional groups have also been found in pluralist and corporatist model democracy. The case for descriptive representation along geographical and locational divide has also been put forward. Indeed, electoral arrangements of most contemporary democracies have some sort of geographical element in the sense that some, if not all, representatives are elected to represent certain geographical area such as ridings, constituencies or states. Childs and Cowley (2011) have suggested that locale ought to be considered as a social group that merits descriptive representation. Particularly, for areas of a country which have been traditionally disadvantaged from the rest, they would have a particularly strong case for demanding representatives coming from their communities. It has also been found that there are widespread public support and demand for representatives who reside or have deep roots within their community.

Professionalization of politics and the changing pre-parliamentary background of MPs would affect the representativeness and nature of representation of the parliament in two different ways. The most obvious of which is how these changes affect the composition, and hence the degree of descriptive representation, of the parliament. As political professionals from 'political related' occupations increasingly dominate the Commons, representation from other occupations, in particular working class labour, continued to dwindle. People no

longer felt that their MPs could represent them and speak for them in parliament because their life experience was so drastically different from the rest of the populace. Moreover, while it appears that professionalization is providing an alternative pathway of recruitment from the traditional route that has been discriminating against women and minorities. However, women and minority candidates that have gone through this professional path into parliament are also distinctively different from the wider group that they are supposed to represent, which puts their claim for descriptive representative of their respective social group into jeopardy. Durose et al (2012) have argued that ethnic minority candidates selected as candidates are mostly 'acceptably different' to the selectors. Other than being non-white, these 'acceptable different' candidates mostly conform to the 'archetype' candidate - middle class, university educated and professional.

Moreover, and with more relevance to the study of MPs' pre-parliamentary career is the question of how the difference in skills and knowledge among MPs with diverging occupational background affect their performance and effectiveness in Westminster, hence giving rise to the issue of substantiveness of descriptive representation. If certain professional credential or political experience does indeed affect MPs performance and behaviour, making them more formidable in parliamentary debate, more able to convey their idea through mass media or more likely to catch the eyes of party leaders at times of cabinet reshuffle, then, even if the composition the parliament does reflect that of the country, the discussion within parliament and policy formulation process will nevertheless still be dominated by some MPs by virtue of their superior skills and knowledge. In other words, if professional politicians do enjoy an edge over their amateur colleague in terms of



their effectiveness and performance due to their pre-parliamentary career, the ideal of descriptive representation would not be reached even if we were to increase the number of non-professional MPs in parliament. Instead, the real solution may lie in not merely increasing their numbers, but either enhancing their capacity as effective legislators, or devising changes to parliamentary procedure to better accommodate and utilize the other skills and expertise that non-professional MPs bring to Westminster.

### **Plan for the thesis**

This dissertation is divided into two parts. Chapters One and Two deal with the theoretical background as well as introducing the research design. Chapters Three through Seven then present the analyses of MPs' pre-parliamentary professional and political careers as well as provide the empirical evidence of how diverging prior experiences of MPs affect both their career trajectory in parliament and their behaviour in Westminster.

Chapter One lays out the theoretical foundations for the entire dissertation. I follow up with the brief discussion on the main issue mentioned in this introductory section. Specifically, a detailed review on existing literature with regard to professionalization and impact of MPs' prior experience is given. The focus is on how pre-parliamentary careers are conceptualized in the literature and how it may affect MPs' behaviour once elected. I argue that there is a gap in existing literature, namely the lack of dialogue between the study of MPs' pre-parliamentary careers and research on MPs' behaviour. Moreover, the way scholars have conceptualized and measured MPs' prior experience have certain fundamental

shortcomings that hampered research in this area by masking the true nature of their pre-parliamentary careers. Toward the end of this chapter, I summarize the lessons we could draw from existing literature by presenting my own take on the way MPs' pre-parliamentary careers ought to be conceptualized, as well as several hypotheses with regards to how MPs' pre-parliamentary careers may affect their behaviour as well as political fortune in parliament. I argue that the professional and political dimensions of pre-parliamentary experience ought to be treated separately when we conceptualize MPs' prior careers, and it is the nature as well as the amount of MPs' pre-parliamentary experiences that would affect their political trajectory and behaviour in parliament.

Chapter Two is devoted to presenting the research design of this thesis. Following with what we have learnt from the existing literature and my own take on the subject, I demonstrate how the research design address the methodological shortcoming of existing literature as well as how it embodied the direction I have presented in Chapter One. Since existing data was not able to address some of the methodological concerns, I have constructed my own database of MPs' pre parliamentary career for the purpose of this research. The database is compiled from biographical information of all MPs first elected to the House of Commons in the 2010 general election found in *Who's Who* and *Dods Parliamentary Companion*. It contains the length and nature of every position that MPs have held during their professional and political pre-parliamentary career. The data on MPs' professional background is then operationalized and coded in accordance to the SOC2000 occupational classification devised by the ONS while their political experience is coded with a scheme I have devised myself. I also provide further justification to as well as the limitations of the

research designs, in particular the utilization of cohort study, the sources of information and the practice of coding the database in this chapter.

Chapter Three is devoted to descriptive analysis of the data collected and found in the database. This chapter serves three purposes. Firstly, it presents some of the descriptive results of the 2010 cohort with regards to their pre-parliamentary careers. Not only do I present the occupational composition of the cohort, but I also compare this with results from previous studies on MPs' occupational background and analyze both how this cohort differs from previous parliaments as well as how the utilization of new method in conceptualizing MPs pre-parliamentary career affected the results when compared to existing research. Secondly, I further explore the relationship between professional and political dimension of MPs' pre-parliamentary career. I test some of the arguments found in professionalization literatures with regards to how these two dimensions relate to each other as well as some of my own hypothesis on the subject. Lastly, I present how I construct a four categories schematic of MPs' pre-parliamentary political routes into parliament. Utilizing the information collected in the database, I use the clustering method of Latent Class Analysis (LCA) to discover four political routes MPs have followed before entering parliament - 'Career Changer', 'Local Hero', 'Carpetbagger' and 'Party Animal'. These political career groups are to be used in our analysis in the latter part of this thesis.

Chapter Four explores how MPs pre-parliamentary careers relate to the electoral security of the constituency that they will eventually represent. Using electoral result of the previous

general election (2005), I have discovered how diverging pre-parliamentary career affect their chances of being selected to contest in safe or marginal constituency when these MPs were still candidate applicant. This analysis will further our understanding of how party recruiters and gate keepers perceive applicants with different professional and political credential at the time of candidate selection. The results also allow us to contemplate how recent changes and reforms in the main parties' recruitment process, which tends to emphasize centralization of candidate selection with the stated purpose of improving quality of candidates and increase ethnic and gender representation, may affect the professional and political credential of candidates and MPs selected by the process. In the end, analysis in this chapter has found that increasing prior professional experience in financial services, the military and as full-time governmental officials is associated with representing safer constituencies while MPs with in-constituency local government experience are more likely to represent marginal seats.

Chapter Five looks at how MPs' pre-parliamentary careers affect their chances of becoming frontbench member of their party. I first explore how MPs' experiences affect the probability for them earning a promotion onto any frontbench position, after which we will focus particularly on how their prior career may facilitate or hinder their chances of becoming either a government minister or shadow cabinet member. Results from these analysis serves to further our understanding the criteria and considerations when Prime Minister or party leaders making frontbench appointment. It also tests some of the existing arguments in the literature with regards to the importance of political experience and connection in the process or if MPs' aptitude and ability may have also played a role in their

appointment as frontbencher and minister. The results show that while there is indeed a divide in frontbench promotion prospect between MPs who followed the local government route and national politics route into parliament, professional experience in finance and mass media appears to be conducive to MPs ministerial ambition even when their prior political experiences are taken into account.

Chapter Six explores how MPs' pre-parliamentary careers affect their voting behaviour in parliament. I focus on two issues with regards to the way MPs vote in parliament. Firstly, how often does an individual MP vote in accordance with or rebel against the position of their own party, and to what extent is that affected by their pre-parliamentary career? Particular attention is paid on how diverging prospect for frontbench appointment, as discovered in Chapter Five, may play a role in MPs' decision to vote for or against their party's position during divisions. Secondly, I look at how MPs' previous experience and occupation may lead to special positions or priorities with regard to a specific policy issue. Using Euroscepticism among Conservatives and a string of divisions on the issue of Europe as a case, I demonstrate that Conservative MPs' pre-parliamentary profession do seem to have an impact on their tendency to rebel against their party on the issue of Europe. It is found that professional experience that is associated with higher prospects of frontbench appointment, such as financial service and mass media, is also explaining increase rebelliousness when these MPs were on the backbench. Moreover, prior experience in the military is also associated with increased rebelliousness. However, this latter observation could be partially explained by increased Euroscepticism among ex-military officers as they

are found to be more rebellious in division with regards to the issue of UK-EU relations, while former workers in financial services among Conservative MPs are more Europhilic.

Chapter Seven looks at how MPs' prior experience affects their tendency to speak during parliamentary debate. The ability in effective communication and public speaking have been an alleged skill important to a parliamentary career, this analysis will enable us to see if MPs with prior experience in occupations that emphasize communication and public speaking skills do indeed speak more often in parliament. Using data from parliamentary records and calculating the number of occasions each of them have spoken in parliamentary debate for the duration of the entire parliament, the analytical results enable us to know how varying pre-parliamentary career may affect MPs' participation in parliamentary debate and possibility the broader public political discourse. The results have shown that MPs' pre-parliamentary experience in the legal profession is associated with increasing speech counts during debates, while those who worked in mass media speak less. Since participating and speaking in parliamentary debate is merely one aspect of the array of tasks and responsibilities of being an MP, they would have to prioritize these different responsibilities. Diverging pattern of debate participation in accordance to their pre-parliamentary career may also indicate the latter's effect on how MPs prioritize various legislative tasks in accordance with their skills and knowledge earned prior to entering parliament.

## **Chapter One – Conceptualizing MPs’ pre-parliamentary careers and theorizing its’ effect**

### **1.1 Introduction**

In the introductory section, I have laid out the main research question of this dissertation: How do MPs’ pre-parliamentary careers affect their behaviour and career trajectory within parliament? This chapter will follow up on those discussions by focusing on what we can learn from the literature and what is the gap in the literature?

This literature review focuses on two sets of literature. Firstly, how have political scientists conceptualized and understood politicians’ careers before they attain their office? Special attention is to be placed on literature that discusses the general trend of professionalization of politics across developed democracies. Secondly, how pre-parliamentary experiences may affect legislators’ behaviours? I argue that the lack of understanding of the consequences of MPs’ pre-parliamentary careers lies in the lack of dialogue between the two sets of literatures. Borrowing ideas from occupational psychology and organizational studies, I argue that the bridge between literatures on politicians’ prior careers on one hand, and their behaviour on the other, lies in the skills, knowledge and experience they earn from their pre-parliamentary careers, which ought to play an important role in determining their behaviour once elected. Moreover, the way scholars have conceptualized and measured MPs’ pre-parliamentary career has certain limitations that have hampered research on the subject. Towards the end of the chapter, I am going to present my take on how MPs’ pre-parliamentary careers ought to be understood and several hypotheses with

regard to MPs' pre-parliamentary careers and its potential impacts on their behaviour once elected.

## **1.2 How are political leaders selected?**

The issue of how political leaders emerge or are selected from society has intrigued social and political scientists for generations. The literature on politician's prior careers and political recruitment are essentially tackling two interrelated questions: How do political leaders arrive at their positions? And who, from among society, would emerge from the process? For Joseph Schlesinger (1966) the former question was an easy one - by individual choice. More specifically, it is by the circumstances in which individuals have found themselves and the extent that it is favourable for them to seek leadership positions and political offices. Schlesinger denoted this system of diverging opportunity and prospects for political promotion faced by occupants of lower positions in the political hierarchy the structure of political opportunity. The main argument here is rational choice by nature; all politicians are assumed to be rational beings that seek to maximize their payoff, in this case the pursuit of higher office along the political ladder. If one's present position favours one to seek certain office on the political hierarchy, then one would be more inclined to throw one's hat into the ring and pursue for promotion to said office, whilst those who are in a position that limits their prospects for successful promotion would be discouraged from seeking higher office and more inclined to stay put. It is through individual career decisions that the structure of opportunity determines who among the lower echelon of the political hierarchy would be promoted and to which position they would be promoted to.



This notion that political promotion is determined by structure of opportunity and the rational choice of the individual has been highly influential and has served as the intellectual genesis of an array of research that seeks to explore the variables that determine the opportunity structure of various political offices. Studies that follow this tradition have largely found that factors such as the level of overlapping of electorates between different political offices (Squire 1993, Hibbing 1993), opportunity costs for giving up their current office for seeking a higher one (Hibbing 1993), remuneration of offices (Best and Gaxie 2000), the age of politicians (Squire 1993, Hibbing 1993, Lascher 1993), the apparent vulnerability of the incumbent of the desired office (Hibbing 1993), and even politician's level of satisfaction derived from their current position (Lascher 1993) were related to a politician's ambition and career decision.

Nevertheless, despite the appeal of Schlesinger's ambition theory due to its simplicity and compelling evidence, there remain several issues where ambition theory is unable to provide satisfactory answers. Firstly there is the assumption that the aim of all politicians is that of 'Office Maximizer' and that the seeking of higher offices is the sole motivation behind their behaviour and career decisions. Despite the popular stigmatization of politicians as being power hungry, there are diverging motivations behind politicians' behaviours. Barber's (1964) study on state legislators in Connecticut has, for example, discovered several patterns of behaviour among them and has suggested the underlying cause behind them is not the differing prospect for promotion, but rooted in their personalities and psychological predispositions. Moreover, although most legislators in the same state legislature face arguably similar prospects for promotion to higher offices, there

are nevertheless clear diverging patterns of ambition and aspiration for promotions, which Barber contributes to the different sense of self between types of legislators. This casts doubt on the notion that all politicians are 'Office Maximizers'. Secondly, while ambition theory appears to be able to explain some of the movement, or the lack thereof, it is unable to provide an explanation as to why someone would become politically active in the first place and enter the realm of politics while others did not. Prewitt's (1970) study on Councilmen in California suggested two major factors that determined people's initiation into the politically active realm - social bias and socialization. The latter is referring to early life experience such as familial influence and participation in student and youth politics that leads some to become politically active while the former refers to the inherited bias on social status such as education, class or gender in the process of choosing political leaders.

### ***1.2.1 Social bias in political recruitment***

The fact that political leaders' social backgrounds are distinct from the people they rule over has long been established. Putnam (1976) hypothesized a fundamentally different perspective from ambition theory for understanding political recruitment. He suggested that, instead of being a process of self-selection driven by the rational choice of 'Office Maximizer' and the differing circumstances of office holders, as ambition theory had suggested, political recruitment is a process of social stratification, that is, a small number of people among the general population are being selected to enter the rank of the political elites. Under this process, those who aspire to become political leaders would have to first go through certain channels of recruitment, such as political parties or local government. Afterward, a set of gatekeepers from the existing political elite would determine who among the candidates in

these recruitment channels shall be initiated into the ranks of the political elite. Because the decisions of initiation are made by gatekeepers, they would have the power to shape the composition of successful applicants based on their own prejudices on the kind of social background, qualities and experiences that are deemed desirable. In other words, the gatekeepers' power of selection allows existing bias for or against certain type of person becoming part of the political elite to perpetuate.

Putnam's idea of political recruitment as a process of selection from gatekeeper appears to be more applicable in capturing the political reality in European democracies than ambition theory. With the relatively weak party structure and prevalence of primary election as the method of choosing candidates for general elections, participation in the electoral process in the United States is practically self-nominating. Hence, American politicians can be conceptualized as political entrepreneurs whose only concern is to accumulate resources relevant for career advancement such as support networks and campaign contributions. In contrast, the relatively well structured and organized parties in European democracies have maintained their role in determining the nomination of candidates and access to the electoral process. By doing so, European political parties have retained their role as the gatekeeper in the political recruitment process. The existence of party as gatekeeper in European countries introduces aspiring politicians on this side of the Atlantic to a different set of variables that complicates the cost and benefits of their career decisions. If ambition theory is to be used under these contexts, it has to take into account the different reality, especially the existence of gatekeepers and their attitude and prejudices in selecting

candidates for election and appointment for executive positions (Norris and Lovenduski 1995).

In order to reconcile ambition theory and the presence of gatekeepers and so introduce the factor of bias for, and prejudice against, certain types of person in the pursuit of nomination, Norris and Lovenduski (1995) introduce an element of anticipation of social bias from the gatekeeper into the cost and benefit calculus of prospective candidates. They conceptualize the recruitment process of candidates as determined by supply and demand for certain types of personnel. Under this understanding of political recruitment, the gatekeepers represent the demand side while individuals aspiring for political offices represent the supply side. Gatekeepers would demand certain types or qualities of candidates that they want to field in elections while aspiring politicians control the supply of personnel by their decision of whether to throw their hat into the ring or not. The demand and supply side of recruitment, instead of operating independent of each other, would interact with the opposite side since decisions made by either side would affect the attitude and outcome on the other side. The anticipated bias and prejudice of the gatekeeper against certain types of individual could discourage people with such qualities from pursuing nomination in the first place and keep them from putting their name forward for consideration, hence reducing the supply of candidates with such qualities. On the other hand, besides anticipated prejudice for or against certain types of candidates, the circumstances that facilitate or hinder potential a political career or candidacy, such as financial resources amount of free time, also influence an individual's decisions of whether to seek nomination for offices. Moreover, changes in supply of candidates with these 'undesirable' or 'political career hindering'

qualities could in turn further limit the choice of gatekeepers and reinforce their existing prejudice against certain types of candidate, hence intensifying existing bias.

### **1.3 Professionalization of Politics**

Given the power to introduce selection bias by recruiter and gatekeepers during the candidate recruitment process, it is perhaps not surprising that political elites and politicians appear to have more resemblance with one another than with the general populace. Numerous research has been carried out on the social bias in the composition of political elites (Norris and Lovenduski 1995, Putnam 1976). Nevertheless, the social bias in recruitment and selection has always been dynamic. Some kinds of credentials fall out of favour, while societal changes and rise of new groups lead to new prejudices and preferences among gatekeepers. In recent years, there has been a general trend of professionalization that has been observed by political scientists across most developed democracies.

Professionalization of politics as a trend has long been suggested and thoroughly explored among the literature of political science. In general, among the literature that explores the issue of the professionalization of politics, there are two different conceptions of professionalization. On one hand, the professionalization of politics could be understood in a post-election sense as the holding of political offices being increasingly seen as incompatible with having a non-political career simultaneously. Due to reasons such as the expansion of the functions of both the government and representative assemblies, the

responsibilities that fall on the shoulders of a political office holder have drastically increased. This means that the holding of political offices is becoming much more demanding on politicians, both in terms of the skills and knowledge required, as well as the time and effort needed to fulfil the responsibilities that come with offices. Increasingly, the holding of political offices is seen as a proper profession in its' own right, instead of something that people pursue on the side of, or complimentary to, a fully-fledged career in the non-political sector. Instead of being merely a part of many aspects of one's professional life, holding offices should be something that occupies the undivided attention of individuals. Since the political office, and the responsibilities and powers that come with it, become the entirety of one's professional live (Rush 2001).

Alternatively, the professionalization of politics could also mean the increased distinction between politics as a career track vis-a-vis other professions and the resulting compartmentalization of politics as a profession from the society as whole. Under this conception of professionalization, politics as a profession is understood in the pre-parliamentary sense. Instead of being a viable choice of career change for people who have had a long and non-political career prior to entering politics, there is a decrease of mobility between politics as a profession and the wider professional world. In the pre-parliamentary phrase, the institutionalization of standards and values prevalent within the political realm, and its increasing role as criteria for recruitment and promotion, means that those who seek a successful career in politics would have to begin at a relatively young age and pass through several pre-defined channels of promotion in order to have a realistic chance of attaining certain political offices. Similarly, the increasing sense of politics as a distinct career track

also means that politicians are more likely to stay in offices for longer period of time, since the holding of political offices is no longer seen as merely a phrase in an otherwise non-political career nor a stepping stone for success outside of politics. The extension of politicians' tenure in office also allows for the development and cultivation of relevant skills and expertise among office holders, further enhancing the professional credential of those in office.

Although conceptually distinct, the two conceptions of professionalization of politics could have some causal relation. Most notably, political developments that made political offices increasingly demanding on politicians could lead to professionalization in both senses. The increased workload that comes with political offices requires politicians' undivided dedication in the duration of their term, while the increased sophistication of the responsibilities means that politically relevant skills and knowledge shall be increasingly important criteria for candidate recruitment and voter choice of representatives. Hence, the two conceptions of the professionalization of politics could be spuriously related.

### ***1.3.1 Changing Political Careers in the UK***

The changes of political careers in the UK, in particular the professionalization of it, in both conceptions of the word, have long been observed among scholars (Cairney 2007, Cowley 2012, King 1981, Mellors 1978, Rush 2001, Rush 2005). Rush (2001) adopted a historical approach in understanding the causes behind professionalization of MPs. Focusing on the changing roles of British MPs during the previous century, he argued that the change of

roles and subsequent professionalization of MPs is largely a response to two fundamental developments in British politics: the institutionalization of parliamentary government and the growth of government functions. As the modern British government is dependent on the confidence and supply from the House of Commons, the need to command a majority among MPs translates into the construction of centralized and disciplined political parties to support or oppose the sitting government, depending on the result of elections. This imposes, among other responsibilities, a partisan role upon MPs, which requires MPs to 'support the party under whose label he or she was elected'. After the notion of parliamentary government was well established in the late 19th century, ideological shift and socio-economic changes during the 20th century have greatly expanded the functionality of government. As government is taking over responsibilities and tasks that were either non-existent or fulfilled by non-governmental organizations, the burden of work that falls on the shoulder of government ministers and the parliament as a whole have drastically increased. The most striking evidence of this is the expansion of ministerial rank to handle these tasks, the increasing amount of legislation being passed by the parliament and the institutional changes, such as increasing number of parliamentary staff and the expansion of the committee system to facilitate the passing of legislations and other government businesses. Both the need to support their respective party and the ever increasing workload mean that being an MP is increasingly seen as a full-time job instead of a part-time responsibility. As increasing hours are needed for MPs to handle both parliamentary and constituency matters, it is no longer possible for MPs to have a parallel professional career. The increasingly full-time nature of being an MP is also exemplified by the increase in salary and allowances paid to MPs. This is to substitute the loss of income from lack of a parallel career outside of parliament. MPs salaries have risen from £400 a



year in 1912 to almost £50000 a year in 2000 (Rush 2001, 123). This has also led to changing careers patterns of MPs within parliament, as contemporary MPs tend to serve longer than their historical counterparts (Mellors 1978, Rush 2001, Rush 2005).

Concurrent to the post-election professionalization of MPs, the pre-parliamentary professionalization of politics has also transformed the socio-economic composition of the House of Commons. Since the early 19th century, both the institution of recruiting candidates for MP as well as the criteria used in the selection of candidates has undergone drastic changes which result in changing patterns of socio-economic and pre-parliamentary professional backgrounds of MPs. In the early 19th century, the House of Commons was dominated by landed interest. Societal changes caused by the industrial revolution gradually increased the representation of industrial, commercial and professional interest at the expense of the landed elite. The demise of landed interest in parliament is particularly salient among Liberal MPs (Rush 2001). With the rise of the Labour party, which was committed to both representing the rapidly expanding and newly enfranchised working-class, as well as getting workingmen elected to parliament, there was a sudden increase in the number of MPs with working-class and manual labour backgrounds in the House of Commons. During the interwar period, between 1922 and 1935, a majority of Labour MPs were of working-class background (Rush 2001, 104). Yet the composition of parliamentary Labour party (PLP) has gradually changed since the end of the war. Industrial workers were gradually displaced by professionals such as lawyers, lecturers and school teachers. In 1945, working class MPs still made up a quarter of the PLP, by the mid-70s, this had halved, with just 12% of Labour MPs being from a working class background (Mellors 1978).

The demise of working class representation is an exemplar of the larger trend of pre-parliamentary professionalization of politics, not just within the PLP, but the entire House of Commons and the British political elite as a whole. King (1981) noticed the continual increase in the proportion of MPs who have past occupations that facilitate subsequent political careers, such as lawyer, journalists and teachers. These 'politics-facilitating' occupations typically have flexible schedules and long holidays which made involvement in politics compatible with their professional life. Moreover, typical 'politics-facilitating' occupations usually involve the use of, and opportunity to practice, politically-relevant skills such as writing and public speaking. Not only are these 'professional' politicians, who have previously worked in 'politics-facilitating' occupations, occupying more seats in parliament, MPs with 'professional' background are also more likely than their 'non-professional' colleagues to receive frontbench and ministerial appointment (Allen 2013, 2014).

### ***1.3.2 What is 'Political Professional'?***

In order to refine King's notion of 'politics-facilitating' occupations, Cairney (2007) argued that there are two possible explanations for occupations to be beneficial to pursuing a political career. First of all is the 'brokerage' explanation – certain occupations, such as legal professions and education, provide opportunity for individuals to develop relevant skills, provide flexibility in working hours and possible political contact that facilitates pursuing a political career. On the other hand, there are occupations that are valuable for the politically ambitious due to their instrumental value, by providing a clear link to politics and could be seen as a stepping stone toward electoral offices. 'Instrumental' occupations include journalist, public relations, trade union and NGOs officials, full-time local councilors, party

workers, MPs and ministerial assistant and think tank researchers. He further argued that the benefit which these 'politics-facilitating' occupations provide is not uniform across the two subtypes, as the post-war professionalization of British politics has been mostly the expansion of MPs with background in 'instrumental' occupations at the expense of MPs with other occupations, including those with 'brokerage' occupational experiences.

Despite the interest from scholars on the professionalization of politics, both in Britain and other developed democracies, the concept of 'professional politician' or 'political class' remains ill-defined, used casually to capture a variety of problems associated with representativeness of our democracies and the apparent distance between the public and their representatives (Allen and Cairney 2015). The cohort of MPs that can be vaguely described as 'professional' is in reality a very diverse group of individuals in terms of their pre-parliamentary experience. Studies conducted by Cairney (2007), King (1981), Norris and Lovenduski (1995) and Riddell (1993) have each identified no less than half a dozen individual occupational categories, some of them overlapping across studies, that were described as 'political professional' or 'politics-facilitating'. Each of these individual occupational categories might impact the future political career of their occupant in different ways. Numerous researches have shown diverging patterns of behaviour and political fortune among politicians that can be broadly described as 'politics professionals'. Allen (2013) has shown that among MPs with pre-parliamentary political experience, the political fortune between MPs whose political experience lies exclusively at local government and those who have worked in 'instrumental' occupations is drastically different as the latter is much more likely to receive frontbench or ministerial positions

earlier and are likely to attain higher offices at pinnacle of their parliamentary careers. Because different occupations under the broad umbrella of 'politics professional' would bestow upon future politicians with diverging skillsets and opportunity to cultivate political relationship and networking, politicians who have followed different career paths under the broad definition of 'politics professional' could exhibit different behaviours and promotional patterns after their election to parliament. The diverse nature of the broadly defined 'politics professional' ought to be appreciated in any study of the impact and implication of the professionalization of politics.

Complicating the definition of 'political professional' further is the fact that its boundary is as blurred as it is internally diverse. While some occupations, such as full time local councillor, trade union officials and party workers are more unambiguously political, there are a lot of 'political professional' positions that falls into the grey zone between the political and non-political realm. Responsibilities in jobs such as researchers in non-partisan think tanks or officials in non-governmental organizations, while having a political overtone, could hardly be described as 'political' in the strictest sense of the word. Moreover, the alleged benefits of 'politics professional' occupations - the training in politically relevant skills and the opportunity to nurture political network, are not exclusively found in occupations that have been deemed 'politics professional'. The need for effective communication is found in a wide range of careers, both in the political realm and private sector. It is also common for people working in the private sector to have to contact and develop relationships with political figures when dealing with government or policy lobbying. In other words, the alleged benefit of 'politics-facilitating' occupations are rarely found

exclusively in those professions and it remains possible that professions beyond those considered 'politics-facilitating' may provide individuals with similar benefit with respect to their future political pursuits.

Despite the difficulty in defining and identifying 'politics professionals', the trend of professionalization and changes in the occupational background of MPs is indisputable, the question remaining is its implication on the functioning of British politics and parliament. Primarily the relation between experience and the performance of MPs. The opportunities to acquire and develop political relevant skills and knowledge have been regarded as an important aspect of 'politics-facilitating' occupations (Cairney 2007, King 1981). If the professionalization of politics and the changing occupational patterns of MPs are indeed the response to the changing role of MPs and the increasing workload in parliament and government, then we should be able to observe 'professional' MPs, however defined, outperforming the 'non-professional'.

#### **1.4 Pre-parliamentary careers and quality of representatives**

Any discussion on the quality and competence of MPs would have to begin with defining clearly the functions and responsibilities of MPs. However, political scientists have been struggling to come up with a clear and comprehensive job description of MPs, since it is notoriously difficult to establish what exactly an MP does. This is because of the multifaceted nature of the responsibilities of an MP, the ever-changing nature of MPs and

its place in parliamentary government and the relative degree of freedom afforded to MPs that enable them to from a combination of these different and sometimes conflicting roles.

Earlier research on the roles of legislators has focused on the attitudinal origin of the patterns of legislator behaviours. Wahlke et al (1962) in their comparative study of several state legislatures in US identified five purposive roles of legislators which are based on legislator's self-characterization of their job as legislators. These purposive roles include Tribunes, who seek to find out and represent the interests and concerns of the people; the Inventors, who focus on finding policies to solve problems; the Brokers, who focus on balancing conflicting interests and negotiating a resolution acceptable to different stakeholders; the Ritualists, who focus on the non-law-making functions of legislators, such as checking on the executive and investigative power of the assembly, and lastly, the Opportunists, who perform a mixture of the aforementioned purposes. Barber (1965), who was more interested in the psychological reason behind diverging patterns of legislators behaviour, has conceptualized the their behavioural patterns into four types of legislators; the Spectator and Reluctant, who are largely inactive in the assembly, but for different reasons; the Advertisers, who focus on promoting themselves because of their ambition for a successful political career beyond the state legislature, and the Lawmakers who are much more active in the actual making of laws and policies.

### ***1.4.1 Roles of British MPs***

In the British context, when reviewing the pay and allowances of MPs, the Review Body of Senior Salaries has identified no less than seven different principle accountabilities that can be roughly divided into three scopes. Within the Parliament, both in the main chamber and committee rooms, MPs are expected to ‘monitor, stimulate and challenge the Executive’ to influence and change the conduct of government and to ‘initiate, seek to amend and review legislation’. On behalf of their constituency, MPs ought to “establish and maintain a range of contacts throughout the constituency, and proper knowledge of its characteristic, so as to identify and understand issues affecting it” and advance its interests where possible while “Provide appropriate assistance to individual constituent” through their knowledge and contact of local and national government to resolve their problem. And, toward their party, not only are MPs supposed to “help furnish and maintain Government and Opposition” in the parliament, they are also expected to “contribute to the formulation of party policy” and “promote public understanding of party policies” (Review Body of Senior Salary 1996).

Although the extensiveness and complexity of the responsibilities faced by MPs are indeed enormous, they are also afforded a relatively high degree of freedom and discretion to prioritize between these various tasks. Former Leader of the House of Commons John Biffen MP once said, “There is no such thing as an average Member of Parliament. That is an abstract concept. We have ... 650 people who adopt completely different approaches to work.” (Radice et al, 1990) There are numerous sources of these different patterns of dedication to these various responsibilities. On one hand it is depended upon MPs personal preferences to focus their time and energy on tasks which they deemed would better

advance their own ambition or political goals. There are also circumstantial factors, such as the size, majority and distance of one's constituency from London, whether one's party is in government or opposition, could force MPs to focus on certain aspect of their responsibilities at the expense of others. Lastly, and that which is most closely related to the central argument of this research and shall be further elaborated in the latter part of this chapter, is the amount of resource, which includes the level of skills and knowledge of MPs, at their disposal.

Given the variety of patterns of how MPs balance and dedicate their attention and energy to their various tasks and responsibilities, scholarly effort has been made to conceptualize these patterns of MPs' behaviour in a framework of various roles of MPs. Donald Searing (1994) framed the role of backbenchers into four distinct roles: Policy Advocates, who check on the executive; Ministerial Aspirants, who provide a pool of talent for executive appointment; Constituency Member, who redress constituents' grievances and provide constituency services; and Parliamentary Man, who are responsible for maintaining the institutional structure and tradition of parliament. On top of these backbencher roles are the leadership roles, which Searing called 'positional roles' which are more closely related to the duty and responsibility that comes with executive offices and party leadership, in contrast with the preferential origin of the backbencher roles. The typology of MPs' roles proposed by Searing is largely underpinned by the various institutional tasks that each role seeks to fulfil.



Rush (2001) argued that MPs rarely perform just one of the various roles, and that by fitting all MPs into a number of ideal types, the approach of Searing had failed to take into account the multiplicity of roles. Instead of conforming to one of the ideal types, most MPs in fact perform a combination of these various roles. The divergence of MPs' behaviour, both across individual and through time, would be better conceptualized as a varying emphasis of these different roles. Instead of focusing on the tasks MPs perform, Rush's categorization of MP roles emphasized the multiple, sometimes conflicting, responsibility of MPs. Traditionally, the parliament is responsible for holding the government to account, which requires MPs to scrutinize the action and behaviour of the executive. Yet, because of the principle of parliamentary government and the fact that an overwhelming majority of MPs are elected mostly on the basis of their party affiliation, MPs are simultaneously expected to provide the support for their party's manifesto and policies within the parliament. Moreover, since British MPs are elected by single member constituency, they are expected to be responsive to the grievances of their constituent, be the representative of local interest in Westminster and provide constituency services. The multiple responsibilities of MPs give rise to the three Roles of MPs as proposed by Rush - Scrutiny, Partisan and Constituency Role. These three roles are by no means mutually exclusive, and are occasionally complimentary to each other.

### ***1.4.2 Skills and knowledge of MPs***

The extensive list of tasks and responsibilities and the variety of roles that they could take on, both within and away from the parliament, means that the skill set required of MPs are equally difficult to determine. Each of the tasks and responsibilities of the loosely defined

job description of MPs require very different skills and knowledge for MPs to perform well. Coghill et al (2012) outlined several important skills required of parliamentarians in terms of the various roles or functions of parliament. For one to be an effective representative of their constituency, not only would one need to be familiar with the formal and informal rules of parliamentary proceeding, but also the ability to represent the community through both traditional mass media as well as, due to recent technology development, social media. The role of representing the community also involves listening skills – the ability to pay attention and understand the concerns of constituents. On the other hand, to fulfil the scrutiny role of parliament requires the parliamentarian to have a certain level of research skills, allowing them to obtain relevant information about the actions and performance of the executive. Some knowledge of the system of law, ideally formal training on the profession, is also desirable when parliamentarians take up the role of legislators.

King and Allen (2010), in their analysis of appointment and dismissal of British cabinet ministers, outlined several criteria Prime Ministers considered when they decided on the appointment of cabinet members. Although these criteria are most relevant in the context of executive appointment, they nevertheless have some relevance in the discussion of the skills and knowledge required of MPs. First and foremost, under the system of parliamentary government, virtually all the members of the executive are drawn from the rank of parliamentarian. With the diminishing presence of members of the House of Lords in government, the ranks of MPs have become the most important pool of talent from which ministers are drawn. Given the importance of prospective executive appointment on MPs' role formation (Searing, 1994) and the inevitable connection between MPs' competence as

ministers and their prospect for ministerial appointment, skills and knowledge relevant to being a member of government would inevitably affect MPs' behaviour in parliament. Secondly, there is a certain overlap between the competences required for ministers and MPs. This is particularly the case for opposition MPs since the skills and knowledge required to be an effective minister would also enable MPs to be a vigorous critic and informed scrutinizer of the conduct of government ministers when they sit on the opposition benches.

The most important of all criteria for ministerial appointment is governmental competence, that is if one has the capacity to handle a ministerial portfolio and run a government department. This involves the ability to master a brief, deal with Whitehall officials and to contribute to departmental and cabinet discussion. A potential minister would also require certain level of presentation skills, this involve the ability to effectively represent the government in both the parliament and in the media. Ministers are required to explain government policies and decisions to MPs and the general public, as well as defending them against scrutiny from the opposition and journalists. Lastly, the political skills of a potential minister, that is his or her ability to forge alliances and rally support for government policy within parliament and construct and cultivate one's standing among the general public and bring this political constituency in support of the government are a factor in the appointment of a minister (King and Allen, 2010).

One of the less studied aspect of the skills required of MPs are those involving campaigning, especially at the constituency level. This may include knowledge of local specific issues,

fostering networking with local groups and organizations, establishing a presence and rapport in the constituency, as well as building a personal connection with voters. While some of these are similar with the aforementioned competences required in parliament and in government, in particular communication skills, it is likely that the skills involved to be an effective communicator in parliamentary debate and mass media events are very different from the skills needed when MPs communicate with individual voters. The oratory skills required for making legislative speeches in parliament might not endear a candidate with voters; the ability to canvass effectively during election might not be helpful when MP's scrutinize government conduct or legislative bills in committee. This indicates a possible mismatch between the skills MPs requires to be an effective representative and campaigner at the national and local level.

#### ***1.4.3 How MPs acquire skills and knowledge***

The importance of quality and effectiveness of MPs and how their skills and knowledge are involved in enhancing their performance naturally leads to the question of how MPs acquire the skills and knowledge required to effectively perform their tasks. Schiller (1995) has found that tenure of US senators affects their effectiveness in legislative activities as the number of bills they sponsored increased with the number of terms they had served. The effect of on-the-job training also makes a difference in the broader sense of legislative effectiveness beyond law making; Miquel and Snyder (2006) used expert ranking of legislator's overall effectiveness and found that tenure of state legislators had a positive effect on said ranking. In the case of the House of Commons, for most of its history, this informal training has been the most important, if not the only, way for the majority of

British MPs to become familiar with the life of a parliamentarian. Through observing the behaviour, and imitation of their fellow more experienced members, newly elected MPs gradually learn the rules and procedures of the legislature, adopt to its norms and their role as a member of the assembly and so begin to converge with the larger body of the legislator in terms of their behaviour both in and out of Westminster (Rush and Giddings, 2011).

Although informal training through socialization remains one of the major ways for British MPs to learn the ropes of being a parliamentarian, there has been increasing effort in recent years, on the part of the Parliament, political parties and other groups, to provide formal and more structured orientation and training regimes for new MPs. Various research has touched upon the issue and argued for formal training for parliamentarians to enhance their skills and efficiency in discharging their functions as legislators and representatives (Coghill et al 2012, Donohue and Holland 2012, Fox and Korris 2012, Simpanba 2012). The trend of increasing technical support for new MPs is largely a response to the apparent ineffectiveness of the existing informal approach of training. MPs have reported that the previous informal approach of orientation for new MPs was less than satisfactory, and their attendance is rather low, which hinders their performance in parliament, especially in their early days in Westminster (Fox and Korris 2012, Steinack 2012). In general, most MPs have a positive response to the principle of increasing the emphasis on formal orientation and training provided to new members, which is particularly helpful in terms of informing MPs of the procedures and practices of the house, as well as the logistics involved in establishing and staffing their operation both in Westminster and their constituency.

Alternatively, besides acquiring the necessary skills and knowledge after their election, MPs might also acquire them during their pre-parliamentary careers. It is rare for individuals to receive party nomination and win a seat in parliament immediately after completion of their education (with the notable exception of Mhairi Black, who, aged 20 when elected, had not even graduated from university before entering parliament after winning her seat in the 2015 general election). The foremost hypothesis of this thesis is that during the long pre-parliamentary careers of MPs, the experiences MPs gained could have an impact on their behaviour and the decisions they make once elected to Westminster.

#### ***1.4.4 Experience and performance***

Studies in management, organizations and employment have long established that the experiences one gains throughout their career have an impact on the employability, performance and behaviour in their subsequent employment. Experience is here defined in the widest sense of the word as possible, which includes the more tangible and measurable elements, such as skills and knowledge acquired during work, as well as the relationships and networks with other people or organizations one develops in various positions.

It is no surprise that experience enhances employees' performance, as it allows workers to acquire skill, techniques, method and familiarity with their duties thus allowing them to work more efficiently. (Schmidt et al, 1986 citation) However, as the contemporary employment market moved from the traditional model, where employees stayed in a single firm for a prolonged period and career advancement meant promotion within the company,

toward one where employees follow diverse careers where they change not only the firm they work for, but the sector or industry they work in as well, there has been an increasing body of research dedicated to how career change affects employees behaviour, in particular, how the previous experience of employees in other firms affects their behaviour and performance after career change. In other words, if, and to what extent, are experiences between different firms or different industries interchangeable or adaptable after a change in career trajectory. One of the major ways that employees adapt after career change is that they seek to draw on previous experience that is similar or relevant to their new role to help them adjust to the environment and responsibilities of their new position (Beyer and Hannah 2002, Dokko et al 2009).

DeFillipe and Arthur (1994) suggested that prior experience facilitates employees' performance by informing them on three aspects: the know why, know how and know whom. The first aspect of know why is concerned with the 'sense of purpose, motivation and identification' which developed in their earlier career and which affects their sense of achievement and forms the psychological determinant of their behaviour in the latter career. The know how encompasses 'relevant skills and job related-knowledge' that facilitates adaptation and enhances performance when an employee moves to a new position. The know whom aspect concerns the 'career relevant networks' and 'how people contribute to inter-firm communication', which means the interpersonal relationships the employee built through their experiences, as well as the ability to communicate and form these relationships with others once they move into a new position.

However, previous experience may have both positive and negative impact on employees' performance. Dokko et al (2009) have conceptually disentangled prior experiences into two components - task-relevant knowledge and habits and routines from prior experiences. Empirical results have shown that the former do indeed have a positive impact on workers' performance. However, the positive result became much more questionable after controlling for the effect of prior habits and routine, which hinders the worker's adaptation to their new position. All in all, it could be concluded that prior experiences are indeed relevant to workers' performances; people do draw from their prior experience when they find themselves in new positions and the impact of prior experience on performance depends on the relevance and interchangeability of that experience between positions.

Moreover, the effects of prior experience on current performance, be they positive or negative, appear to have a relationship with the amount of the experience, or the length of time spent in the previous positions. As experiences, in particular skills and knowledge, are accumulated through time, the longer the time one spent in a certain position, the more skills and knowledge relevant to the said position one would have acquired, and this in turn would increase the impact of this prior experience on present performance (Dokko et al 2009, Schmidt et al 1986). Moreover the relationship between length of employment and acquisition of knowledge is not necessary linear. As the amount of time one person spends in a position increases, the amount of skills and knowledge acquired will accumulate to the point of saturation, where there is nothing further to be learnt from performing the same task (Schmidt et al 1986). Hence, not only is the presence of experience on one's resume a determinant on performance, but so is the amount of time spent in each position.



#### ***1.4.5 Political experience and legislative performance***

If we are to accept that, just like any jobs or position found in other sectors, experience also plays a role in determining the performance and effectiveness of legislators, then it should be no surprise that the amount of pre-parliamentary experience would be one determinant of legislators' behaviour once elected. As MPs are elected and get settled into the unfamiliar environment and are faced with new responsibilities, they will most certainly draw on their pre-parliamentary experiences to inform their decisions in office. The impact of personal experiences on legislators' behaviour has been well documented (Burden 2007, Geys and Mause 2014, Goodwin 2015, Ono 2014). As the literature in career and organizational study suggested, the relation between legislator's pre-parliamentary careers and their behaviour in office is determined by both the compatibility between their prior experience and the responsibility of being a legislator, as well as the amount of experience the legislator have acquired before entering the assembly. However, this poses another methodological challenge as there is no position out of parliament that is perfectly analogous with that of being an MP.

The most straightforward starting place in searching for pre-parliamentary experience that may contribute to MPs work in parliament would be in elected positions in sub-national assemblies or government. Junior positions on the political ladder have long been seen as the breeding ground that prepares an individual for higher offices. Prewitt (1970) has suggested that junior political positions could be seen as an apprenticeship for higher offices. Individuals who aspire to one day occupy higher political offices can familiarize themselves with the norms and practices of politics, which prepares them for the responsibility once

they are promoted to more important positions. It also provides them the opportunity to exhibit their abilities to legitimize their candidacy for higher offices. Empirical evidence has supported the notion that political experience at lower level has an impact on legislator's effectiveness and behaviour. Little and Moore's (1996) study on the effect of state legislative experience on congressional members' behaviour found that such former members of state legislatures are not particularly more active in terms of introducing bills and making speeches, and only marginally more successful in terms of promoting their legislative agenda. A similar study conducted by Francis (2014) also showed similar results; that while members of congress with state legislative experience do not introduce or cosponsor more legislation than their colleagues. However, their legislative contributions are likely to be more substantive, in comparison to their colleagues without such experience, who are more likely to introduce symbolic legislations. Little and Moore (1996) suggested that this might be due to their experiences in state legislature, which have provided training in areas such as networking and coalition building, which are non-quantifiable. Outside of the US, Ono (2014) found that when members of the Japanese Diet have local political ties, which encompasses both legislative and executive experience, this increases the number of locally related private member bills that they introduce. Although he contributed his findings to members with local ties trying to build on and maintain their reputation as champions of regional interest by providing pork to their constituents, it nevertheless shows that political experience at lower level of government does facilitate certain types of behaviour in higher office.

Moreover, not all experience of lower levels of government provides similar experiences and training to those serve in them. Berkman (1993) made the distinction between the different levels of professionalization of state legislature, determined by salary paid to state legislator, length of session, use of committee and influence over budget. He found that Members of Congress with experience in professional state legislatures are more likely to serve in policy or other prestigious committees and maintain their committee membership throughout their tenure. He suggested that this is because experience in professional state legislature, being more similar to the Congress than their less-professionalized counterparts, provides a member of congress with 'Institutional Mastery', which involves familiarity with the procedure and norms of the legislature and the skills to be a successful legislator, and 'Policy Mastery', which is the development of specialized knowledge and intense interest in a certain policy area. The similarity between their experience in state legislature and their responsibilities in Congress allows them to extrapolate these two 'masterys' and apply them in their work as a member of Congress. This provides further support to the idea that similarity between pre-parliamentary experiences and the work of an MP would affect the degree to which the former affects the effectiveness of the latter.

### ***1.4.6 Non-political experience and legislative performance***

While an increasing number of MPs have entered the parliament with a substantial amount of political experience (Cairney 2007, King 1981), there remains a significant portion of MPs who have no formal political involvement prior to their election. Also, even among those enter the parliament as seasoned politico, a prolonged career outside of the political realm is not uncommon. Some MPs who are deemed professional politicians have nevertheless

have enjoyed successful non-political careers either before their involvement in politics or maintain a professional day-job while participating in politics in a part-time capacity. If the relationship between pre-parliamentary experience and legislative behaviour lies in the compatibility and relevance between the two, then it is conceivable that careers and jobs out of the proper political realm could provide aspiring politicians with skills that are relevant to becoming an MP, such as organization and communication skills, which in turn determine their effectiveness and behaviour once elected. Indeed, studies of post-parliamentary careers of MPs has found that experience as MP has a direct effect on the post-parliamentary salary of these individual even when they serve in private companies (Mattozzi and Merlo 2008). This indicates a certain level of overlapping between the skill set or experiences, such as industry or sector specific knowledge or personal relationships and networking, which is required both in the private sector and parliament.

Empirical evidence has suggested that experiences in occupations that are commonly considered non-political could have a positive impact on the effectiveness or performance of holders of political offices, particularly in the responsibility or capacity that is most similar or relevant to their non-political prior careers. Experience as lawyer has been most prominently featured in existing literature. The legal profession has long been seen as fertile ground for political recruitment and a major route to a successful political career. Historically a substantial portion of seats in the House of Commons were occupied by MPs who have once been lawyers (Kings 1981, Norris and Lovenduski 1995, Rush 2001). Similar patterns have also been observed in other legislature, most notably the US congress. One of the most intuitive advantages of a background in the legal profession and its training

provided to legislators is their substantial understanding of the language and practice of the law. Since one of the major responsibilities legislators is making and amending laws, experience in legal profession ought to prepare them well in this aspect of life in the legislature. Indeed, it has been found that members of the Japanese Diet with experience in the legal profession have been more active in proposing private member bills and participation in committee meetings. Moreover, the private member bills that they submitted and committees that they in mostly concern public interest, as opposed to those that are pork related (Ono 2014). Moreover, some lawyers often argue their case in court before the judge and jury, such experience ought to provide them with the oratory skills and confidence for making public or parliamentary speeches should they pursue a career in politics. Similarly, professions which could foster skills in relation to public speaking and communication, such as education and journalism, have been seen as another suitable starting point of successful political career (Cairney 2007). Given the increase of the importance of media in contemporary politics, the benefit of having background in journalism or public relation is also notable. Studies have shown that politicians with professional communication staff have enjoyed increased press coverage and exposure (Van Aelst et al 2010). It is therefore plausible that MPs who themselves have extensive professional experience in media or public relations might enjoy a similar advantage in terms of attention from media. Even professions that are seemingly apolitical, such as military officers, have been shown to have a positive effect on politicians' performance in crisis management and public persuasion (Simon and Uscinski 2012).

#### ***1.4.7 Pre-parliamentary experience and patterns in legislative behaviour***

Nevertheless, as we have discussed earlier, when dealing with concepts such as 'quality' and 'performance' among representatives, given the multifaceted nature of their responsibilities, it is perhaps more suitable to conceptualize them in a multidimensional fashion; that there were no 'better' MPs per se, but instead MPs who are more effective in certain aspects of their responsibilities, which manifests as patterns of observable behaviours.

The underlying roots of diverging patterns of legislative behaviours and the representational role have been an important aspect of legislative study. One of the major explanations is that these patterns of legislative behaviours are caused by different psychological profiles or personality traits among individual legislators. Barber (1965) suggested that legislators' behaviours, just like any other people, are largely driven by the need for self-approval. Hence their sense of self and the standards by which they judge themselves are the key to understanding the way in which they adopt to behave in the legislature. He argued that the four types of legislators or what he called 'patterns of adoption' are the result of differences in legislators' sense of self. Those who have an impoverished ego and are full of self-doubt will become the Spectators in the legislative process. The Advertisers are those who are full of ambition for higher offices because they judge themselves by status and power. The Reluctants are more community minded and largely driven by a sense of duty and service toward one's community. The Lawmakers largely judge themselves by their practical achievements and derive most enjoyment from problem solving.

Payne (1980), in his study of patterns of behaviours among US Congressmen, noted the difference between 'Show Horses' and 'Work Horses' within the House of Representatives. Given the finding shows that electoral incentives clearly favour the publicity hungry 'Show Horses', the mere presence of 'Work Horses' is a puzzle that needed to be solved. His hypothesis to reconcile this is the difference in incentive structures, rooted in their goal orientation and values: 'Show Horses' enjoy publicity and get little satisfaction from the detailed examination and participation involved in the process of policy and law making, while the reverse is true for the 'Work Horses'. Similarly, Dietrich et al (2012) looked at how personality effects the satisfaction legislators get from various kind of legislative tasks. By using the five-factor model to measure the personality trait of legislators from three US state legislature, they noticed that a legislator's personality is a determinant on how much they enjoy a particular legislative activity: Extrovert and emotionally stable legislators are more likely to harbour progressive ambition while legislators who are open to new experiences derive more enjoyment from participating in committee hearings and work on legislation. They concluded that personality of legislators is indicative of their legislative behaviour.

Besides psychological factors, pre-parliamentary experiences, in particular political experience, has been found to have a significant impact on the formation of behavioural patterns among legislators. There are several explanations for the relationship between prior experiences and patterns of legislative behaviours. Firstly, pre-parliamentary experience could cause an attitudinal shift on legislators' conception of their own role within the assembly. Wahlke et al (1962) suggested that the more people are involved in

governing, the higher their appreciation of the complexity involved in the affairs of government and policies, hence, the longer one served in different levels of government, the more likely that they see their representational role in the legislature as a trustee who must use their own judgement in pursuing the common good, rather than a delegate who simply relays the opinion of their constituents. Hence, legislators with experience of government, in particular legislative experience in local or lower level of government, are more likely to play a trustee instead of delegate role in the legislature. Bell and Price (1969) have, based on findings by Wahlke et al, found that the increased identification with the trustee role of legislator is not confined to prior-legislative experience, but shared with other forms of political activities such as activities in in political campaign or being members of political organizations.

Secondly, the different skills and knowledge legislators acquire in their pre-parliamentary careers would also impact on their choice of participation in various legislative activities and patterns of behaviours. The variety of legislative activities legislators can participate in gives them a choice in the tools and channels used to pursue their own personal or political ends. However, they are also faced with some constraints on their choice of activities to engage with, in particular the time and effort which they can invest. Hence legislators are faced with the strategic choice of how much time and effort do they invest in using each of the various activities open to them in order to achieve the most benefit (Judge 1981, Strøm 1997). One key variable in the cost-benefit calculation of what activity to engage in is the skill set and knowledge of the legislator from their pre-parliamentary experience. If a legislator has more experience similar to certain legislative activity, and is hence more skilful at that aspect of



being a legislator, they will need less investment of time and effort to use that as a tool to pursue their own goals. For example, a seasoned journalist-turned-legislator may find that their understanding of editorial decision making and their network among other journalists from their earlier career might enable them to use the mass media to communicate their message to the public without significant investment in the skills and relationships necessary. Hence, conveying their view through mass media might be a more cost effective, and thus more attractive, channel for them to pursue their goals than other alternatives such as organizing their constituents or asking questions in parliament or committee room. In other words, differences in pre-parliamentary experience would change the cost- benefit analysis of various legislative activities in the eyes of individual legislators. Given the obvious constrain of limited time and effort they can invest into these activities, they would choose to focus their attention on the activities from which they could reap the most benefit with the least investment, which would then result in diverging pattern of legislative behaviour among legislators in accordance to their pre-parliamentary experience.

In conclusion, existing research has given us enough evidence to believe that legislators' pre-parliamentary careers, whether they are political or non-political, ought to have an impact on the formation of legislative roles as well as their choice of actions in parliament. Moreover, given the diverging patterns of MPs' pre-parliamentary careers and the variety of legislative activities that they could engage in, we should expect that different sorts of pre-parliamentary career would contribute to different kinds of legislative behaviour. Furthermore, based on our knowledge of organizational studies and occupational psychology, the relationship between pre-parliamentary career and patterns of legislative

behaviour would be determined by both the amount of experience an MP has in certain kinds of occupation as well as the similarity and applicability between the skills and knowledge acquired during their pre-parliamentary career and those needed to perform certain legislative activities. The more experience an MP has acquired in their pre-parliamentary career and the more relevant it is to certain legislative responsibilities, the more likely that the MP will devote more of their time and energy on that responsibility. These findings from previous work on this topic shall be used to construct the hypothesis in the following section.

## **1.5 Building on existing literature**

Given the state of the current literature, as I have reviewed above, I would argue that there is a gap in the literature due to the mismatch and lack of dialogue between research on political recruitment, professionalization and pre-parliamentary careers on one hand and literature on legislative behaviour on the other. I believe this can be attributed to two features of the current literature; the over-emphasis on the 'How' in studying political recruitment and the fragmented approach in defining 'Who' are selected by the process.

### **1.5.1 The 'How'**

While existing literature on politicians' pre-office careers has thoroughly explored the 'How', that is the mechanism through which political office holders have emerged or been selected from the general public, the literature remains rather silent and timid in tackling the equally important question: So what? What does this all mean to the functioning of our political

system? What kind of outcomes do the various regimes of political recruitment and patterns of recruits from the process produce? There appears to be a lack of dialogue between research on political career and recruitment on one hand and studies on the behaviour of political leaders on the other. The reason for these particular foci, I suspect, is that most prior studies on the subject of political recruitment, for all intents and purposes, were aimed at shedding light on the issues of representation. Their research question has been if, and how, the process of political recruitment favours or discriminates against certain parts of society. The research has aimed to discover the mechanisms through which political elites are created, the bias for or against social groupings that is embedded in this process, and the implication of all these factors on the power relationships within society as well as within representativeness of democracy. Hence, for the scholars behind this research, the outcome that they are interested in is the demographic composition of the elites that emerge through the process.

It should be made abundantly clear that the purpose of this thesis is not to belittle prior work on political recruitment. The findings from the aforementioned research on political careers are significant since the importance of the representativeness of our democracy is both immense and self-evident, however it is my belief that there is much more to be said about the impact and implication of politicians' pre-office careers, in particular how this shapes their behaviour once in office. The effect of political leaders' backgrounds and experience on their aptitude and performance, which could, in turn, affect policy output and the functioning of the political institution as whole, is of equal importance to the demographic composition of political elites. The lack of evidence that shows politicians'

background does affect their behaviour also casts doubt on the importance of representativeness. If changing the demographic composition of political elites does not produce any substantial and tangible changes, then why are they a legitimate concern and meaningful object for scholarly intrigue? Why should we bother to understand the mechanism of recruitment and its outcome (Patzelt 1999)? It is undeniable that experience and skills gained through politicians' pre-office careers ought to have a significant impact on their quality and competence in performing their various responsibilities. There is also a noticeable and growing body of research that seeks to establish the link between political leaders' backgrounds and their behaviour in office (Burden 2007, Geys and Mause 2014, Goodwin 2015, Ma 2016, Ono 2014). The intent of this thesis is therefore to use the experience and skills gained through their pre-office careers as a conceptual tool that seeks to bridge the presently missing link between studies of political recruitment and the behaviour of political leaders.

### **1.5.2 The 'Who'**

Besides the issue of 'How', the issue of who is selected as political leaders is equally important in the study of political recruitment. While it is obvious from the study of 'How' that there indeed exists preferences for or biases against people due to their socio-economic and other descriptive qualities in the process of political recruitment, the question of how do we conceptualize these differences remains a contentious subject among studies of political recruitment. More specifically, the following section seeks to address how previous studies on the subject articulate the patterns of political leaders' prior careers.

The majority of research that has applied the rational choice paradigm to the study of political recruitment has focused exclusively on the political careers of leaders at the lower tier of government or inside the political party machine (Schlesinger 1966). This choice of only looking at the political side of political leaders' prior political careers is understandable given the interest and major research questions of these studies because they mostly focus on the trajectory of politicians' within the realm of politics and the variables that affect that trajectory. On the other hand, studies that focus on the social bias in the process of recruitment appear to be more interested in the professional, non-political aspects of political elites' prior careers. For most of the time, the professional aspect of politician's prior careers is treated as a proxy for their socio-economic status. Difference among the prior professions of politicians with the general public and thorough time are treated as testament of bias for or against certain socio-economic groupings and how these biases in recruitment process change through time (Mellors 1978, Norris and Lovenduski 1995, Rush 2001).

The literature on the professionalization of politics has taken a very different approach in articulating the meaning of politicians' prior careers. Although much of the literature is also mostly looking at the professional aspect of politicians' prior careers, instead of looking at their previous profession through the prism of socio-economic class, they instead focus on the political implications of this and the utility for pursuing political office of these professions. Instead of seeing the patterns of politicians' prior profession as the result of bias against certain socio-economic class, these studies instead argued it is the possibility for developing certain relevant skills or the cultivation of necessary connections and networks

that explains the prevalence of politicians' with certain types of professional background (Cairney 2007, King 1981). It has also been suggested that the apparent socio-economic bias can be explained by the privileged position of certain middle-class professions in terms of skills and political connections, that make them a natural and attractive starting point of a political career (Norris and Lovenduski 1995).

Given the importance of political experience and connections in explaining the prevalence of political leaders with experience in professions that have been deemed 'political professional', Allen (2014) suggested that the focus in study of politician's prior careers ought to be on its political aspects. He argued that previous literature on professionalization of politics has treated political experience as an offshoot of a politicians' prior occupation. Instead of using politicians' professional careers as a proxy for measuring the nature of their prior political involvement, political experience of politicians' ought to be treated as a stand-alone factor in the study of professionalization and recruitment. By distinguishing political experience that is earned from local and national levels, Allen has found that the British MPs who earn their political experience on the national level are more likely to receive executive appointment once they are elected, compared to their colleagues who earn their political experience at the local level, whom are more likely to remain on the backbench throughout their parliamentary careers.

### ***1.5.3 Need for a holistic conception of pre-office careers***

These previous studies on politicians' prior careers and the schematics they utilized in conceptualizing and measuring their professional careers and experience have certain shortcomings which make them unsuitable for the purpose of this thesis as they are not able to answer the main research question, namely the impact of skills and experience of political leaders on their behaviour in office.

First and foremost, the way through which different professions and occupations are categorized is not reflective on the nature of skills and experience that people acquire through them. Studies that focus on socio-economic stratification in political recruitment have put occupations with similar socio-economic standing, yet involving drastically different in skill sets and experience, into a single group. These broad grouping such as 'Business', 'Professional' or 'Worker', while useful in illustrating the social standing of politicians, have little utility for the research question at the heart of this thesis. The concepts such as 'Political Facilitating', 'Instrumental' and 'Brokerage' occupations used in various literature on the professionalization of politics, which may appear to be at least partially capable of capturing the nature of political involvement and experience of politicians, have similar difficulties, as they are broad categories that comprise of a huge variety of occupations that are not necessary comparable in terms of the skill and experience gained by working in them.

At the other extreme, some research has achieved homogeneity by adopting an “isolated occupation” approach, by focusing on specific and narrowly defined categories of pre-office occupation. For example, Ono (2014) looks exclusively at the impact of having local government and legal professional background on the behaviour of Japanese legislators. Goodwin (2015) looks particularly at how training and experience in science affect British MPs’ voting behaviour when voting on issues that concern ethical questions in scientific research. These studies, while certainly able to show how a particular sort of prior experience affects the behaviour of political leaders, are nevertheless too narrow in scope to provide a broader picture of the general impact of pre-office careers and how different experiences affect various aspect of politicians’ responsibilities.

On this particular issue, the occupational schematic used by Best and Cotta (2000) and Mellors (1978) appears to be better able to achieve intra-category homogeneity in terms of the skills and experience involved. Best and Cotta’s (2000) study identified thirteen categories of occupation that are prevalently represented in various European parliaments of the period and indicative of representatives’ social backgrounds, such as lawyers, teachers, journalist and writers, public sector employees and military. While this was mainly used to describe and explain the changing social background of parliamentary representatives in Europe from the late 19<sup>th</sup> to the end of 20<sup>th</sup> century, the way they categorize representatives occupational background has nevertheless maintained a certain degree of homogeneity in the skills and experience involved. However, the categories used by Best and Costa are neither mutually exclusive nor are they exhaustive among the wide variety of pre-office professions occupied by politicians. Also, given the time period they



examined stretched long into history, some categories, such as nobility, lose much significance and meaning when studying contemporary politics. Mellors (1978) devised a schematic on British MPs' occupations that included no less than 35 categories of occupations. The richness of information as well as intra-category homogeneity is unmatched by any other research on the subject. It is unfortunate that he did not detail the coding method used in arriving at the data. Also, similar to Best and Costa, given that Mellors's study is conducted in the 1970's and was focused on the social background of MPs in the post-war period, the methodology used would surely need to be refined for capturing the reality of a 21<sup>st</sup> century job market.

The second problem with the way the existing literature measures politicians' prior careers is that they usually look only at occupations and experience that was deemed by the researcher to be politically related. This tendency of paying attention only to politically related experience is prevalent among research on the professionalization of politics as well as research that adopted the 'isolated occupation' approach. While professions that are politically related is of particular relevance to the study of politicians' prior career, this approach will capture only a fraction of MP's prior experiences. In fact, for those who have had long career in politically 'irrelevant' occupation, their apparently 'irrelevant' experience is arguably more influential on their behaviour, since they would have little experience in the political realm and would have to rely on these 'irrelevant' experiences and skills to help and inform their course of action, at least at the very beginning of their political career, and it would be interesting to see how these amateur politicians would utilize these apparently 'irrelevant' resources to facilitate their adoption to live in politics.

Finally, at present, virtually all of the research on politicians' prior careers has treated their occupations as a categorical variable. They only measure whether an individual has worked in certain occupation or not. This approach is only able to capture a cross-session of an otherwise long and diverse prior career. Usually a researcher would choose certain timeframe in one's career, such as the formative or penultimate occupation, which they would argue is most indicative of the politicians' socio-economic background or experience. It is doubtful if such cross-session data is representative of an individual's entire career. Cairney (2007) was well aware of this problem, and he sought to expand the scope of his data by coding the first, second and third occupation of British MPs. However, a more fundamental problem, that is of much more relevance to this thesis, is that by seeing occupations as categorical, it is unable to capture of the amount of skills and experience acquired over time of working in certain profession, which is the most crucial issue that this thesis seeks to understand.

### **1.6 Duality of pre-office career**

#### ***1.6.1 Conceptually distinct***

Besides the way which prior careers are categorized and measured, another important feature to a holistic conception of pre-office careers, I would argue, is to note and appreciate what I shall call the duality of politicians' former careers. Allen (2014) has rightly pointed out the inadequacy of looking only at politicians' prior professional careers, and laid out some compelling arguments on their political involvement being a distinct dimension in their careers and suggested how the political dimension of pre-office careers affects MPs

future political prospects, such as securing constituency nomination and executive appointment. However, while the political aspect of politicians' prior careers should be appreciated, as I have argued in the previous section, the effect of the professional aspect of politicians' previous careers on their skills and knowledge, and hence their behaviour and performance, should also be taken into account in order to produce a complete portrayal of the impact of politicians' prior careers.

The duality of politicians' pre-office careers refers to the two distinct dimensions of their previous occupations and experiences. On the one hand, as suggested by Allen, is the political dimension, which refers their prior participation and engagement in the political realm, which would have provided them with contacts and allowed them to network with other political actors. This includes, but is not limited to, the building of connection and publicity among the electorate and general public, as well as the cultivation of a rapport and reputation among political elites. The opposing aspect is the professional dimension, which encompass the skills and knowledge that one acquires through working in their respective occupation, which could potentially inform or affect the course of action, as well as the political goals of politicians.

I would argue that only when we take both the professional and political dimension of politicians' pre-office careers into consideration can we truly appreciate the impact of prior careers on politicians' behaviour. There are two reasons that make appreciating the duality of pre-office careers necessary. Firstly, both political and professional dimensions

occasionally coexist in a single occupation. This is particularly applicable for jobs and positions that are arguably situated in the political realm, such as local council members, trade union representatives and party workers etc.

For example, Priti Patel, Conservative MP for Witham, first elected in 2010 and who went on to become Secretary to the Treasury and Minister of State for Employment, had been William Hague's deputy press secretary from 1997 to 2000, while the latter was serving as leader of the Conservative Party. Her experience as Hague's deputy press secretary could conceptually situate on both professional and political dimension of pre-office careers. On one hand, professionally, as deputy press secretary, she would have gained plenty of experience in responding to questioning or demands for quotes from media, drafting press releases and liaising with members of the press. These experiences in public relations could have made her a more articulate and effective communicator, particularly when facing scrutiny from the press. This role could also have provided her with the opportunity to cultivate a network and rapport among members of the press which could be useful for being an MP or minister. On the other hand, being on the press team for the then party leader would provide her the political connection and capital upon which a successful political and parliamentary career could be built. By working in such proximity with the party leadership, she would have the opportunity to establish her reputation as a capable individual and loyal member of the party among the leaders. She could also use such an opportunity to develop her network within the party, which could inform her of opening opportunities and provide her with necessary resources to secure nomination from local parties. Such a case is analytically challenging if its duality is not taken into account. If we

are merely looking at the professional dimension, Ms. Patel would have been recognized together with MPs who have experience in public relation and communication in both public and private sector. Yet her experience on the party leader's press team does have some fundamental differences, when compared with those worked as public relation manager in private corporations, in terms of the political nature of her job, which in this case would not be captured. On the other hand, should we only focus on the political dimension, the impact of her experience in public and press relation would have been omitted. It is only through appreciating both the political and professional dimensions of this experience can we fully explore its impact on Ms. Patel's future political career.

Secondly, it is very common for people to have both a professional occupation while participating in politics in some part-time manner. It is conceivable that one can maintain a full-time professional position during the weekday working hour while involved in a political party, local council, trade union or pressure groups in their free time. Labour MP for Streatham and Former Shadow Business secretary Chuka Umunna is one such example of an individual who had extensive professional and political career prior to entering parliament. On the professional dimension, he was a lawyer by training and had worked for various law firms as solicitor since 2004. During the same period, he was also exceptionally active in Labour politics. He had been a management committee member of Compass, a pressure group with connection to the Labour party, since 2003. He was the vice-chairperson of his constituency party between 2004 and 2008. He was also member of the trade union Unite and of the Fabian Society. Similar to the case of Ms. Patel, these two aspects of Mr.

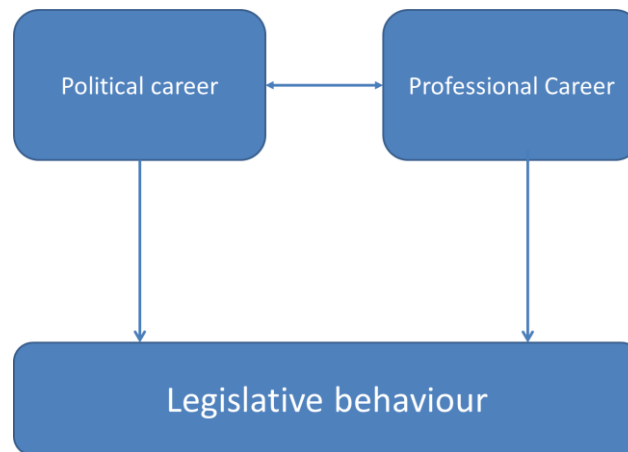
Umunna's former career ought to provide the necessary resources and skills that affect and inform his work as an MP, but in separate and distinct ways.

Since both the professional and political dimension of their prior careers ought to have distinct impacts on their future behaviour, a complete portrayal of their pre-office careers ought to take both of these components into account. Yet this duality of politicians' former careers has rarely been explored and fully appreciated in existing studies on the subject. Most of the literature on the professionalization of politics has morphed the two dimensions under banners such as 'political facilitating' or 'instrumental occupation'. They are treated either as conceptually the same, or assumed to be so interrelated to each other to the point where they could not, or should not, be disentangled. Although the existence of these two dimensions has been, at least implicitly, acknowledged in some of the research in this area, most notably in the thesis by Allen (2014), their impact on politicians' behaviour, independent of each other, has never been fully understood. While focusing on the impact of the political dimension, Allen did not take into account the effect of diverging professional experience on MPs prospect of executive appointment. These intertwined concepts could only be discerned and their respective effect on politicians' behaviour can only be fully understood if we are able to conceptually separate the political and professional dimensions of politician's prior careers.

### ***1.6.2 Empirically correlated***

I would further argue that, not only should the duality of pre-office careers be recognized, but the two dimensions should also be analyzed besides one another, instead of separately. This is necessary, not only because we ought to be interested in their relative impact on politicians' behaviour, but also due to the fact that the two dimension are empirically correlated with each other, a fact which puts the methodological validity of standalone studies of either dimension into question.

Although the two dimensions of pre-office careers are conceptually distinct, it is undeniable that there is indeed a certain degree of interconnectedness between the two dimensions. While the distinction between the two dimensions has been masked by conceptually morphing them, literature on the professionalization of politics did provide a compelling case that experience in certain professions does indeed relate to certain experience on the political dimension. The idea of a 'brokerage' occupation; that certain professions, such as lawyer and teacher, are particularly conducive to political participation in a part-time capacity due to their flexible schedule, financial security and relevant skill set (Cairney 2007), provides a possible explanation for the connection between the two dimensions. An alternative explanation to the empirical link between the two dimensions is that for certain professions, such as policy research and public relations, a significant portion, if not the majority, of employment opportunities are found in the political realm.



**Figure 1.1 Duality of pre-office careers**

Because of the empirical link between the two dimensions, there are two possible causal paths between professional careers on the one hand and the behavioural patterns of politicians on the other. Figure 1.1 provides a pictorial description of the two causal paths. On one hand, one's professional career would affect the skill set and experience acquired throughout one's career, which by itself has a direct impact on their legislative behaviour should they gain access to the Parliament. On the other hand, the relationship between professional careers and legislative behaviour could also be indirect, as one's professional career also affects the amount and nature of one's political experience, which would also give rise to certain pattern legislative behaviour when they become MPs. The existence of complex and multiple causal paths presents a unique methodological challenge that research focused on only either of the dimensions could not solve. For example, should we observe certain distinct behavioural patterns among MPs with experience in the legal profession, without knowing their prior political engagement, we could wrongly conclude that the behavioural pattern is caused by the skills and experience they earned as solicitors or barristers while the real cause is the political experience that they have, which is made possible because they are in the legal profession.



In short conclusion, the holistic conception of politicians' pre-office careers would have to achieve several aims. It would have to encompass the widest possible array of occupations while keeping the grouping of professions analytically meaningful. It would have to capture the entire career of politicians instead of providing a snapshot at certain timeframe. Most importantly, in order to fully appreciate the duality of politician's prior careers, it would have to capture both the professional and political dimensions of their former occupations.

### **1.7 Hypotheses**

Based on the literature review and theoretical discussion up to this point, it is now possible for me to layout the key hypotheses of this dissertation which informs the methodological choice as well as analytical strategy of the coming chapters.

- 1. The professional and political dimensions of pre-parliamentary careers are conceptually distinct, each exerting discrete effects on MPs' behaviour, yet are empirically connected, and shall be considered simultaneously.*

This first hypothesis deals with how the pre-parliamentary career is conceptualized in this dissertation. This serves to inform how MPs pre-parliamentary career is to be operationalized and codified in the data collection strategy, which I elaborate on in the next chapter. This will then be applied in the latter chapters that will analyze the empirical finding since the interconnectedness of the two dimensions meant both professional and political experience ought to be taken into account together in the models. More specifically, I am going to argue the two dimensions of pre-parliamentary careers have a distinct effect

on MPs' behaviour. For professional experiences, it is dependent on the skills and knowledge that it provides to individuals; for political experiences, it is more a result of the kind of political connection, or the lack thereof, which it may afford to individuals.

2. *Pre-parliamentary careers affect both the roles given to MPs by their party, as well as their choice of actions in parliament.*

In other words, the second hypothesis means that a pre-parliamentary career affects both how their party gives different assignment to MPs, i.e. in accordance to their pre-parliamentary career, as well as the how individual MPs prioritize among the various tasks and responsibilities of an MP. Pre-parliamentary careers determine the resources they have, such as skills, knowledge, networks and connections. Parties may give different assignments to MPs in accordance to their credentials and abilities in performing their assigned roles. Difference in the amount and kind of resources in MPs' possession would constrain and affect their choice of action as MPs tend to choose the actions that they are most familiar with or most skillful at based on their pre-parliamentary career.

3. *Diverging pre-parliamentary careers among MPs give rise to distinct patterns of behaviour based on:*
  - a. *The amount of pre-parliamentary experience an MP has acquired; and*
  - b. *The similarity and applicability between the kind of pre-parliamentary experience and the type of legislative behaviour.*

Given the diverse career background of MPs and the various roles and legislative activities that MPs could choose to perform, different kinds of pre-parliamentary experience would give rise to different patterns of legislative behaviour. How MPs' pre-parliamentary experience is translated into patterns legislative behaviour is determined by two factors, which are mostly informed by literature from organizational studies and occupational psychology. Firstly, the strength of the effect from pre-parliamentary career on legislative behaviour is determined by the amount of experience MPs have acquired. As it has been shown that skills and knowledge from work are acquired through time, in other words, it means that the magnitude of the effect from pre-parliamentary careers ought to be in relation to the amount of time MPs have spent in certain type of positions. Should a certain profession or experience contribute to certain kind of legislative behaviour, the more time an MP spent of their pre-parliamentary career in that profession, the stronger the effect on their behaviour in parliament.

Secondly, whether certain profession or experience has an impact on legislative behaviour and to what kind of legislative behaviour it may affect is determined by the similarity and applicability between the said kind of pre-parliamentary experience and the type of legislative behaviour. As reviewed in this chapter, the literature has consistently found that an employee's experience is determinant of their performance, and that the relevance between experience and task is a key determinant on whether this effect is positive or negative. In the context of legislative study, given the variety of roles that legislator could adopt to and activities that they could engage in, instead of a unidimensional conception of performance, it would be more appropriate to adopt a multifaceted approach. When in

parliament, MPs are faced with the decision on how they approach their various responsibilities and set their priorities among them. Their choice is determined by the similarity and applicability of their prior experience. If an MP's pre-parliamentary career has provided them with skills and knowledge similar or applicable to certain type of legislative activity, then the said type of activity would be a more attractive course of action for the MP as it would be less costly for them to utilize their existing skills and knowledge rather than investing time and effort to develop the skills and knowledge necessary for other aspect of their responsibility as an MP. Hence, an MP would tend to focus their effort on aspects of their work that is most similar to their pre-parliamentary career, where their prior skills and experiences are most applicable.

It should also be noted that because of the lack of existing literature on pre-parliamentary career and legislative behaviour, in particular among non-political professions, the minor hypothesis that stems from hypothesis 3b and to be tested in the following chapter could be inductive and intuitive. In certain cases, such as the effect of legal profession and prior political experience on legislative behaviour, which is relatively well documented, the hypothesis and inference would be more deductive. Yet when dealing with other aspects of MPs' pre-parliamentary career, the hypothesis would inevitably be more inductive. Moreover, the inference from an empirical result could be bi-directional in the sense that while a significant result could indicate that a certain type of pre-parliamentary career has an impact on patterns of legislative behaviour, it could also inform us of a previously unnoticed similarity between certain types of legislative activity and the experience from certain professions.

## **1.8 Conclusion**

In this chapter I have briefly reviewed the literature on politicians' prior careers. I have shown that insufficient attention has been paid to how pre-parliamentary careers affect political leaders' performance and behaviour once in office. The approach that existing research has used to conceptualize politicians' pre-office career has tend to ignore the duality of pre-office career and, because of that, I have proposed my own theorization of how to understand politicians' prior careers, or what I shall call the holistic conception of pre-office careers. Lastly, I have stated the three main hypotheses, which are used to inform the methodology and empirical analysis in this thesis.

In the next chapter, utilizing my notion of a duality of MPs' pre-parliamentary career, I discuss the methodology and data collection strategy used in this thesis. Particular attention will be paid to how the hypotheses inform the data collection strategy.

## **Chapter Two – Method: Introducing the MPs’ pre-parliamentary careers database**

### **2.1 Introduction**

In the prior chapters, I have discussed the motivations and the main research questions of this thesis. I have also reviewed in detail the existing literature and laid out the theoretical framework of this thesis and its hypotheses. To tackle the question of if, and how, legislator’s prior experience, both professional or political, affects their behaviour in office, I have compiled a database of the entire professional and political career of all 226 MPs who were newly elected to Westminster in the 2010 general election by coding their pre-parliamentary occupations and political engagement as recorded on their biographies from multiple sources. The variables in the database are the independent variables in the analysis of this thesis. In this chapter, I discuss the methodology of the empirical analysis of this thesis. In particular, I explain in detail some of the strategies used in compiling and coding the database.

Although political scientists have long been interested in the descriptive background of political leaders and numerous studies have been conducted on the subject, as discussed in the prior chapters, how this translates into the behaviour of political actors and political outcomes has yet to receive much attention among scholars. The methodology used to conceptualize, operationalize and record political leaders’ biographical information suffers from several shortcomings and is not suitable for analysis in this thesis. In recent years, there has been an increasing interest in quantitative analysis of political leaders’ biographical data, most of which looked at the biographical information of national leaders

or officials in the executive branch (For example Besley et al 2011, Besley and Querol 2011). This research seeks to follow recent work on similar subjects by Francis (2014) and Allen (2014), to expand the analysis of biographical information of political leaders into the realm of legislative studies.

## **2.2 Cohort study**

### ***2.2.1 Justification and limitation***

This research has adopted the method of a cohort study, which focuses on a subset of legislators, selected due to their common background and bounded by a period of time. In this case, the common factor across all the cases in the database is the fact that the MPs were first elected to the House of Commons in a particular general election and the time period of study is their first term in office as an MP, from May 2010 to March 2015.

Studies of legislators in a particular term(s) of parliament have been rather common (for example Searing 1994). The subject of this study is arguably even narrower, as not only was it confined to legislators in a particular term of the parliament, but also to those who are elected at a particular time, in other words, a 'cohort' of MPs. The method of a cohort study has previously been used to study the career trajectory of legislators in both the US and the UK (Allen 2014, Francis 2014). There are certainly several drawbacks when research is confined to such a subset of cases, the most apparent of which is the limited external validity of the inference from empirical analysis. It would be difficult and imprudent to casually extrapolate the result of the analysis on cases beyond those out of the confinement

of the research setting and reaching generalizable arguments without qualification. Hibbing (1991) has argued, for example, that a cohort study is but a 'shortcut' in legislative career as it is not possible to 'sort out generational, life cycle or period effect'.

However, I would argue that some of the drawbacks of cohort studies could also be considered as advantageous. While Hibbing was correct in arguing that cohort studies are unable to distinguish between generational and period effect, the opposite side of this argument would be that cohort studies create more consistent set of data that controls for factors that are circumstantial and changing through time. Despite the popular notion that MPs are confined by the 'Westminster Bubble', they nevertheless operate within a political environment that is ever changing. The contentious political subject of the day and balance of power within the parliament is constantly changing. The roles of MPs have also been evolving throughout history (Rush 2001). MPs in different parliaments would have been exposed to very different sets of conditions which, arguably, make direct comparison problematic. Cohort studies, by confining the study to a particular period of time, mitigate this problem by eliminating circumstantial and time varying variables as all cases present would have been exposed to the same political environment throughout the entire period of study. Moreover, I would argue that the use of cohort study is appropriate for this research because the aim and research question requires our attention be confined among the class of newly elected MPs.



### ***2.2.2 Why only study new MPs?***

The focus on new MPs could enable us to overcome several methodological challenges unique to this research. To better illustrate the need to narrow our attention to new MPs, let us for a moment consider veteran Conservative MP Kenneth Clarke and Labour MP Chuka Umunna, who was first elected to parliament in the 2010 general election, hence present in the dataset used in this research. On paper, the pre-parliamentary careers of both Mr Clarke and Mr Umunna share a few similarities: Mr Clarke was called to the Bar in 1963 and was a member of the Bow Group before elected as an MP in 1970; Mr Umunna became a solicitor in 2004, was a member of the Fabian society before elected as an MP in 2010. Both have had several years of experience in the legal profession as well as membership in affiliated think-tanks of their respective party before entering the parliament. However, given that the pre-parliamentary experience of Mr Clarke was dated more than forty years ago while that of Mr Umunna was earned immediately prior to being elected, the salience of their pre-parliament experience as reflected in their behaviour ought to be very different.

First and foremost, experiences from pre-parliamentary careers could have a diminishing effect on MPs' behaviour as time passes. Skills and knowledge earned through jobs could be forgotten, connections and networks gained could be lost through time, and hence, pre-parliamentary careers of MPs would be most influential toward their legislative behaviour in their formative terms as legislators since the memories from their pre-parliamentary days would still be fresh in their mind.

More importantly, one of the major hypotheses of this thesis is that legislators would acquire skills and knowledge during their pre-parliamentary career that will facilitate and effect their behaviour once elected. If the accumulation of skills and knowledge do take place during legislators' pre-parliamentary career, it is conceivable that a similar effect would also be present during the post-election parliamentary career. In the case of Mr Clarke, as of 2010, he had been an MP for forty consecutive years, with more than a decade of those years serving as cabinet minister and Chancellor of the Exchequer, while Mr Ummuna in contrast had no proper experience in Westminster at this point. We ought to expect the parliamentary and government experience to be reflected in Mr Clarke's behaviour as a MP when compared to Mr Ummuna because MPs would accumulate the relevant skills and knowledge while they are performing their various duties and functions as MPs, which would in turn enhance their ability and efficiency in performing those tasks in the future. As noted from the prior chapter, the legislative socialization and relationship between legislators' tenure and their performance and effectiveness has been well documented in the existing literature (Miquel and Snyder 2006, Rush and Gidding 2011, Schiller 1995). Hence, should the skill accumulation hypothesis be correct, MPs tenure in the house would be a significant intervening variable in the models that predict their behaviour should the entire population of MPs be present in the database.

Moreover, the impact of tenure on MPs' behaviour could possibly be neither linear nor monotonic. Since the hypotheses predict that MPs with different sets of pre-parliamentary experience would adopt to their role as MPs differently and exhibit different patterns of behaviour, it is not known if the impact of socialization and on-the-job training will diminish

or consolidate these diverging patterns of behaviour. It is possible that as socialization and on the job training increase with tenure, the behaviour of experienced MPs would converge as they gain more parliamentary experience and the importance of diverging pre-parliamentary experience diminishes in their behavioural calculus. However, it is equally conceivable that diverging patterns of behaviour in the early terms of new MPs that stem from different pre-parliamentary careers, could lead to new MPs acquiring different sets of parliamentary experience that would further strengthen their diverging behaviours. These two possible and conflicting models of parliamentary socialization, while beyond the scope of this thesis, certainly show that the impact of tenure on MPs' behaviour could be much more complex than existing literature once thought. By adopting the method of cohort study and confining the cases among MPs that are newly elected to the parliament and in their first term of office, the complexity of the issue of MPs' tenure can be avoided, because behavioural variation that stems from on-the-job training and socialization would be eliminated from the dataset as all cases across the entire database would have an equal and negligible amount of parliamentary experience, which allows attention be paid to pre-parliamentary experience.

To briefly conclude, the use of a cohort study overcomes some issues unique to this research: the intervening effect and possibility of a complex relationship between the parliamentary tenure of an MP and their behavioural patterns requires us to focus on a particular cohort or class of MPs in one election. The use of a cohort study also provides the extra benefit of restricting variance in unobserved variables that are circumstantial and time varying. This choice, while limiting the externality of the analysis and inference derived from

this research, would greatly enhance the internal validity of the results. Moreover, the data collection and coding strategy used in compiling the dataset is designed in the anticipation of, and allowing for, future expansion to encompass the entire current parliament, historical parliaments as well as other legislature in the world, which could provide both longitudinal and cross-country comparison and greatly improve the external validity of the result.

### ***2.2.3 The 2010 cohort and 2010-15 parliament***

Due to the circumstances and uniqueness of the cohort and the period being studied, it is perhaps necessary to spare a few words to discuss the political backdrop of the parliament and cohort.

The 2010 general election was a watershed moment in British political history that saw a major realignment in party strength in parliament. After thirteen years in government since their landslide victory in 1997, the Labour party, under the leadership of Prime Minister Gordon Brown, which was blamed for the onset of 2008 financial crisis and subsequent economic recession, was comprehensively rejected by the British electorate. But the voters were not sure who should be given a mandate to govern. Although the opposition Conservative Party saw a substantial gain, both in terms of votes and seats, they were not able to command a majority in the House of Commons alone. The Liberal Democrats also saw a significant increase in votes, but their support was too widely spread across the country to translate into seats under first-past-the-post system. As a result, the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats, with some reluctance, joined forces and formed the

first peace time coalition government in Britain since the Second World War. The fact that we had a coalition government during the study period means that we have to take into account the unique power dynamic and relation between not only the two governing parties but also their respective frontbench and backbenchers.

The substantial swing from Labour towards the opposition parties meant that the 2010 general election also saw a considerable turnover of MPs. With 232 new MPs<sup>1</sup>, it was the largest turnover of members since Second World War (Fox and Korris 2012), surpassing the previous record set in 1997. Table 2.1 indicates the strength of the three major parties in the entire parliament and within the 2010 cohort. As we can see, the Conservatives are slightly overrepresented in the 2010 cohort when compared with the overall balance of power in the House of Commons. This is hardly surprising since the Conservatives made the most electoral gains in terms of seats in the 2010 election.

**Table 2.1 Party Strength in the 2010-2015 House of Commons and among the 2010 cohort**

	House of Common	2010 cohort <sup>a</sup>
Conservative	306 (47.08%)	146 (64.6%)
Labour	258 (39.69%)	63(27.88%)
Liberal Democrat	57 (8.77%)	10 (4.42%)
Minor Parties <sup>c</sup>	29 (4.46%)	7(3.1%)
Total	650	226

<sup>a</sup> Exclude those who have previously served as MP and regaining seats in 2010

<sup>c</sup> Include Speaker

As the country was still struggling to recover from the most severe economic crisis and recession since the great depression, the handling of the economic recovery and public

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<sup>1</sup> Including former MPs who lost their seat in previous elections but subsequently regained their seat in 2010, who are not included in this study.

finances were the major tasks of the coalition government and this parliament. The bailout of financial institutions immediately after the 2008 financial crisis, the ongoing Eurozone sovereign debt crisis, the subsequent economic downturn and a recovery that was stubbornly slow plunged the state of public finances deep into deficit. As a result, the first order of the parliament was to address the shortfall in the government budget. The Chancellor of the Exchequer George Osborne promised to eliminate the structural deficit within the lifetime of this parliament. To do so, the government had to introduce ruthless austerity measures and spending cuts that sought to bring the government's books back into balance. Welfare cuts, reforms in the NHS and the defence spending review thus became prominent issues in the early stages of this parliament (Seldon 2015).

Also lurking on the horizon was the issue of Europe and the struggle between Eurosceptic and pro-European elements in the governing Conservatives. The uneasy truce between the two wings of the Conservatives during their years in the wilderness disintegrated almost immediately after David Cameron arrived in Downing Street. As their coalition partner was determinately pro-Europe, it left little room for the Conservative leadership to manoeuvre. As a result, the government witnessed numerous threats of open rebellions and even suffered a humiliating defeat with regard to European budget in the House. The promise of including an in-out referendum in the coming Conservative manifesto only partially appeased the Eurosceptic element in the Conservatives and the party saw two high-profile defections to UKIP towards the end of the parliament (Seldon 2015). Moreover, the deteriorating diplomatic and security situation - which included involvement in Libyan civil war, Russian invasion and partial annexation of Ukraine, the rise of Isis in Syria and

subsequent heightened terrorist threat - meant issues of international relations and national security increasingly become a feature on the parliamentary agenda. Defeat in the vote for the authorization of the use of force in Syria was a particularly damaging episode to the authority of the government.

Given the unique dynamic caused by the first peacetime coalition government in half a century and the distinctive challenges, both foreign and domestic, that were faced by this particular government and parliament, the generalizability of the results obtained from studying this time period may be limited, as we may not be able discern the effect of having a coalition government on the behaviour of MPs. The fact that Conservative MPs are overrepresented in the sample may also introduce bias, as the resultant observation may be driven by Conservative members and not applicable to MPs representing other parties. However, as I have argued, where it lacks external validity, the study of a particular cohort within a restricted time period strengthens the internal validity of the result since the entire sample is exposed to the same political circumstances. Additionally, the fact that each parliament has its own priorities given the changing circumstances also opens the possibility of other inquiries. The prevalence of certain issues means that we may have a large enough sample to probe into the possibility of issue voting in accordance with MPs' pre-parliamentary experiences. We may also observe if MPs, equipped with expertise and knowledge in addressing priorities of the time, are more active in parliament or more likely to be recruited as ministers.

### **2.3 Data Collection strategy: toward a holistic database of MPs' pre-parliamentary careers**

As explained in the previous chapter, this research seeks to capture and reflect a holistic conceptualization of MPs' pre-parliamentary careers. In order for this research and the database to achieve this, the strategy used in capturing, recording and constructing the database needs to achieve several goals. Firstly, the database needs to capture the entirety of an MP's career prior to their election, in particular, it would have to encompass both their professional career as well as their political engagement. Secondly, the method used in coding needs to be comprehensive in terms of encompassing as wide an array of professions and positions as possible, while preserving a certain degree of internal consistency within each profession category. Thirdly, in order to appreciate the duality of pre-parliamentary careers, MPs' pre-parliamentary professional and political careers need to be coded separately, thus reflecting the notion that they are conceptually distinct, while enabling further analysis on their empirical correlation. Lastly, since one of the main purposes of this research, and hence the database, is to test the training hypothesis, the coding method used in categorizing MPs' professional and political careers ought to reflect the sort of skills and knowledge that MPs earn from their positions. The database also needs to record not only the presence of certain types of experience, but also the amount of that experience as well. Hence, it is of the utmost importance that the length of time MPs have spent in each of their previous jobs is recorded. Given these requirements, the construction of a database faced several challenges.

Because of the absence of prior scholarly interest in the subject, as well as the unprecedented level of detailed information that is required, no existing database could



fulfil the aforementioned requirement. As a result, it was necessary for me to construct the database of MPs' pre-parliamentary careers on my own. One of the most challenging obstacles in constructing this database was that information concerning MPs' pre-parliamentary careers is difficult to obtain because there is not a single reliable source of UK MPs' profiles that provides all the information required for the database.

### ***2.3.1 Sources of information and data collection strategy***

Unlike the US Congress, where there exists a comprehensive and independent effort at collecting and researching biographical information of members of Congress, such as the *Almanac of American Politics*, published by the *National Journal* and used by Francis (2014) in a similar research on pre-legislative career of American members of Congress, there is no similar collection of biographical information on British MPs. Although there are several sources of MPs' biographies and CV, all of these proved inadequate for this research.

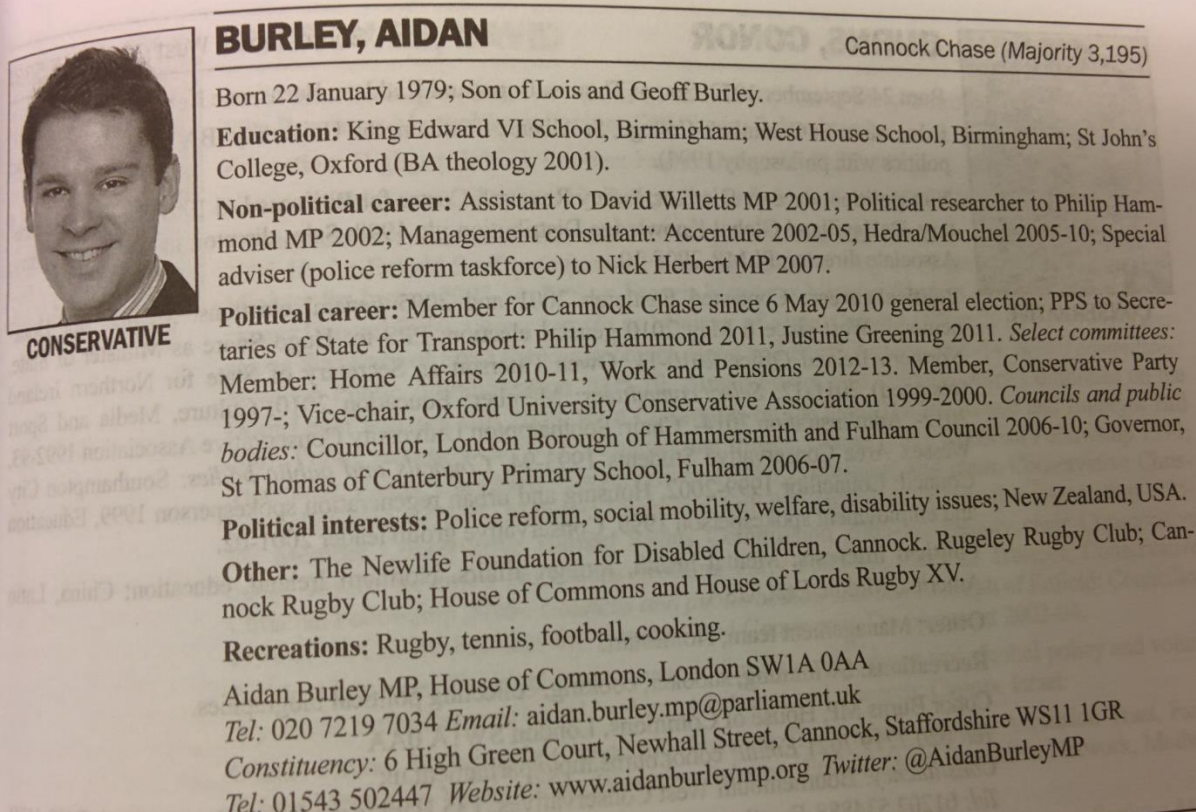
When looking for a source of MPs' biographical information that is both comprehensive and reliable, the most natural starting point are MPs' profiles published by the parliament. Unfortunately, the profiles of MPs published on the parliament's website are rather brief. They were mainly concerned with the MPs' work within the parliament with virtually no mention of their experience prior to their election. Alternatively, biographies that are provided by the MPs themselves could be another source of information on their pre-parliamentary career. Nowadays, many of the MPs have setup and maintain their own personal website for the purpose of campaigning and communicating with their

constituents. One of the common features across the majority of MPs' personal websites is that they include a short profile that briefly describes MPs' previous career and experiences. These self-reported biographies should have a certain degree of reliability in the sense that they are provided by the MPs themselves. However, there are flaws with these self-reporting biographies that made them unsuitable to be used to construct the database. Primarily, they are not standardized, both in terms of the level of detail, as well as the format they used to report their prior experiences. Some of these profiles provided a reasonably detailed account of an MP's pre-parliamentary career that included their profession and number of years worked within it, while some are very brief and vague about their profession, such as saying that MP has been "involved in several business prior entering parliament".

Secondly, because the purpose of these websites and biographies is to represent the MPs themselves to the electorate, they have the incentive to be strategic in choosing how they represent themselves and what information they would like to share with the general public. It is likely that they would over-report experiences that are deemed as favourable among the electorate, such as experiences in local government and charities, while experience that is deemed unfavourable, such as professional involvement in politics, would be omitted. Although media oversight ought to prevent MPs from seriously and deliberately misrepresenting themselves and misleading the public on their prior experience and careers, as journalists could always expose such attempts which would be hugely embarrassing and damaging, there is simply no guarantee that these self-reported profiles represent the 'whole truth' of an MPs' pre-parliamentary career. Lastly, although the

internet has become a major tool of communication between MPs and the general public, there remain a few individual MPs who have a limited online presence, which makes obtaining their self-reported biography even more difficult. MPs' profiles and biographies given by their respective parties through party websites, most of which are fairly similar if not identical to their personal websites, suffer from similar problems. Given these issues, the database for this research could not primarily rely on the self-reported biographical information found from MPs' individual or party websites.

**Figure 2.1 Photo Sample of MP profile on Dods Parliamentary Companion (2015)**



**BURLEY, AIDAN** Cannock Chase (Majority 3,195)

Born 22 January 1979; Son of Lois and Geoff Burley.

**Education:** King Edward VI School, Birmingham; West House School, Birmingham; St John's College, Oxford (BA theology 2001).

**Non-political career:** Assistant to David Willetts MP 2001; Political researcher to Philip Hammond MP 2002; Management consultant: Accenture 2002-05, Hedra/Mouchel 2005-10; Special adviser (police reform taskforce) to Nick Herbert MP 2007.

**Political career:** Member for Cannock Chase since 6 May 2010 general election; PPS to Secretaries of State for Transport: Philip Hammond 2011, Justine Greening 2011. *Select committees:* Member: Home Affairs 2010-11, Work and Pensions 2012-13. Member, Conservative Party 1997-; Vice-chair, Oxford University Conservative Association 1999-2000. *Councils and public bodies:* Councillor, London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham Council 2006-10; Governor, St Thomas of Canterbury Primary School, Fulham 2006-07.

**Political interests:** Police reform, social mobility, welfare, disability issues; New Zealand, USA.

**Other:** The Newlife Foundation for Disabled Children, Cannock. Rugeley Rugby Club; Cannock Rugby Club; House of Commons and House of Lords Rugby XV.

**Recreations:** Rugby, tennis, football, cooking.

Aidan Burley MP, House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA  
 Tel: 020 7219 7034 Email: aidan.burley.mp@parliament.uk  
 Constituency: 6 High Green Court, Newhall Street, Cannock, Staffordshire WS11 1GR  
 Tel: 01543 502447 Website: www.aidanburleymp.org Twitter: @AidanBurleyMP

Besides the parliament, parties and MPs themselves, there are also a number relatively independent organizations and groups that compile and maintain a collection of MPs' profiles and biographies. First is the *Who's Who* series, which has, since 1849, been collecting and publishing biographies of influential individuals. The vast collection of

biographies collected by *Who's Who* became available online in 2005<sup>2</sup>. Besides *Who's Who*, the *Dods Parliamentary Companion* series also collects and publishes biographies of MPs. Continually published annually since 1832, *Dods Parliamentary Companion* has been a reliable source of information on politicians and civil servants. Figures 2.1 and 2.2 show samples of the MP profiles found from these two sources. One of the major advantages of *Who's Who* and *Dods* over other sources is that the level of detail and uniformity found across profiles of individuals is second to none. In the majority of cases, MPs' profiles on both *Who's Who* and *Dods* include a detailed account of their careers before and after their election to Westminster, which, in most cases, includes information like the title of their positions, the name of the companies and organizations that they worked for, as well as the years which they occupied those positions. Such rich, detailed information enables the database to capture the progression of MPs' pre-parliamentary careers as well as the sort of experience they accumulated through that period. Furthermore, MPs' profiles found on *Who's Who* and *Dods* have included both MPs' professional careers as well as political experience. In this aspect, *Dods* has gone further than *Who's Who*, in the sense that they have given a separate account of political and non-political career, while *Who's Who* listed both aspect of MPs' pre-parliamentary experiences as careers. The presence of both aspects of MPs' pre-parliamentary careers in their collection made both *Who's Who* and *Dods* ideal sources since disentangling the effect of both aspects on MPs behaviour is a central purpose of this research. Because of the complete coverage of the entire target population for this research, and the level of detail of the biographies compiled, both *Who's Who* and *Dods* will serve as the primary source of information used in constructing the database used for this research.

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<sup>2</sup><http://global.oup.com/whoswho/about/> retrieved 20/1/2016

**Figure 2.2 Screen Capture of sample of MP profile on Who's Who (retrieved 31 AUG 2016)**

The screenshot shows the profile of Aidan Burley on the 'Who's Who 2016 & Who Was Who' website. The header is red with the site's logo and a search bar. Below the header is a navigation bar with links like Home, Search, and Browse. The profile itself is divided into two columns. The left column contains links for 'Other people', 'Contemporaries in', and 'More search options'. The right column contains the main profile information, including birth date, education, career, and recreations. At the bottom, there is a footer with the Oxford University Press logo and a note about access being brought by LSE Library Services.

Home | About Who's Who | What's New | Subscriber Services | Contact Us | Help | Logout

**WHO'S WHO 2016 & WHO WAS WHO**

Home Search Browse Include Who Was Who

PRINT EMAIL CITE Previous List all Look it up ? Next

**Burley, Aidan**  
(born 22 Jan. 1979)

**BURLEY, Aidan**  
Born Auckland, NZ, 22 Jan. 1979; s of Geoff Burley and Lois Burley; m 2014, Jodie Jones

**EDUCATION**  
King Edward's Sch., Edgbaston; St John's Coll., Oxford

**CAREER**  
Researcher for Philip Hammond, MP; Mgt Consultant, Mouchel. Mem. (C) Hammersmith and Fulham LBC, 2006–10. MP (C) Cannock Chase, 2010–15

**RECREATIONS**  
Rugby, tennis, cooking

Other people  
who share this birthday (296)  
born in the same year (41)

Contemporaries in  
Politics and government (130)

More search options  
Abbreviations list

First appeared in Who's Who 2011  
Previous year's entry

'BURLEY, Aidan', *Who's Who 2016*, A & C Black, an imprint of Bloomsbury Publishing plc, 2016; online edn, Oxford University Press, 2015; online edn, Nov 2015  
[http://www.ukwhoswho.com/view/article/oupww/whoswho/U251329, accessed 31 Aug 2016]

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Nevertheless, the use of *Who's Who* and *Dods* as sources of information for the purpose of constructing the database is not without methodological problems. Since both *Who's Who* and *Dods* are compilations of autobiographies of individuals, the profile of individuals published in both sources are all prepared by the individuals themselves, instead of compiled by independent researchers who are impartial. Hence, the problem of an individual attempting to manipulate their public perception by misrepresenting, omitting or deliberately emphasizing certain kinds of prior experience over other, which is the major problem with the use of MPs' own profile on their websites and party website, remains a concern with respect to *Who's Who* and *Dods*.

Despite the potential problems from self-reported information from MPs, the profiles on *Who's Who* and *Dods* remain far more reliable than the biographies found in individual and party websites. A crude comparison between MPs' profiles on the two sources and their own account on individual websites would show that the former contains a much higher level of detail and information that the latter have omitted. This shows that at least MPs are more open and willing to share their personal information to *Who's Who* and *Dods* than over the internet. This is probably due to their expectation that the general public is very unlikely to consult and rely on information from *Who's Who* or *Dods* when forming their opinion on their MPs or deciding to whom they would vote for. Although the possibility of MPs seeking to omit prior experiences that are particularly embarrassing and damaging remains, (such as Nick Clegg's alleged membership of Young Conservative while studying in Cambridge University), the incentives for them to do so on their profile on *Who's Who* and *Dods* is significantly smaller when compared to the alternatives. Moreover, we shall not expect that the underreporting of missing data would be systematically skewed towards certain types of occupation or political experience. Finally, even if there were systematic bias in the rate of report for certain occupations or political experiences, it would certainly create a downward bias which leads against statistical analysis from reaching a significant result. In the end, although the two aforementioned sources are not without their limitations and methodological problems, in the absence of better and more reliable sources of MPs biographical information, *Who's Who* and *Dods* remain the superior sources of information when compared with the alternatives.

As these profiles are self-reported instead of centrally compiled there is a degree of discrepancy in the level of detail included across individual profiles. While the overwhelming majority of profiles listed contain the same set of information on MPs' prior positions and occupations: title, name of employer and time period of employment. However, in a small yet significant minority of profiles, one or more of these pieces of information has been missing, with the most extreme cases simply stating the MPs' prior non-political career as 'run own business'. There are also cases, particularly among older MPs, who decided to omit the earlier part of their pre-parliamentary career, probably because they deemed them as irrelevant, which result in missing data. Fortunately, because we have two profiles of each MP from the both *Who's Who* and *Dods*, the information from the two sources have, to a limited extent, complemented each other quite well. On several occasions, when certain detail, such as their job title, is missing on one of their profiles, the necessary information is found on the other profile. The fact that there are duplicate profiles for all the cases also serves as a robustness check on the reliability of the information.

As for the cases where certain information is missing on MPs' profiles from both sources, MPs' self-reported biographies from their websites or other internet based information are to be used as a supplement to those found from *Who's Who* and *Dods*. This most often applied to cases where the nature of the company or organization that MPs worked for is required in the coding process, (the importance of which shall be discussed in the coming section), yet cannot be determined by the plain reading of their profile, since the name of the company/organization did not make clear of its nature. Under these circumstances, company/organization self-description on their website as well as MPs' own accounts of

their business involvement as stated on their personal website would be used. For MPs for whom some information on their pre-parliamentary career remained missing, despite exhausting all the aforementioned methods of data collection, I have contacted them through email and requested the provision of the necessary information from themselves or their office as a last resort.<sup>3</sup>

In short conclusion, the information on MPs' pre-parliamentary careers is mostly drawn from their profiles published by *Who's Who* and *Dods*. The use of both as the main source of information is not without methodological problems and limitations. Particular attention has to be paid to the fact that the information provided to the two sources are autobiographical and self-reported by the subjects themselves, which makes it susceptible to intentional, or unintentional, distortion and misrepresentation of their own past. Yet despite all these concerns, *Who's who* and *Dods* remain, by far, the best source of MPs' biographical information in terms of their level of detail and complete coverage of all the cases within the population of interest in this research. I have also shown that every effort has been made to retrieve the necessary information to the fullest extent as well as to ensure the reliability and uniformity of the data across all the cases in the database. The end product of this data collection process is a set of biographical profiles that includes all 226 new MPs in the 2010-2015 House of Commons, which highlights their pre-parliamentary professional and political career and contains details such as their position or title, the name of company or organization they worked for, as well as the time period they occupied those

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<sup>3</sup> Among the dozens of email sent to MPs with missing data on their profiles, I have only received a handful of replies, most of which suggested that I should consult the MPs' Wikipedia page and only one of them have agreed to supply the information that is missing. I shall like to take this opportunity to express my sincere gratitude to the said MP, who has graciously agreed to facilitate this research by providing the necessary information to complete the database and shall remain unnamed.



positions throughout their entire pre-parliamentary career, since the age of 18 or end of tertiary education.

### ***2.3.2 Compiling pre-parliamentary career timelines of MPs***

Following the collection of MPs' biographical information from the aforementioned sources, a timeline of each MP's pre-parliamentary careers is then compiled. As I have argued in the previous chapter, MPs' pre-parliamentary professional career ought to be treated as separate and distinct from their pre-parliamentary political engagement. Hence, in order for the database to reflect and capture these separate aspects of MPs' pre-parliamentary experience, two separate timelines of MPs shall be compiled from the collected information, one describing the MPs' progression in their professional career, while the other denotes their previous experiences within the political realm.

As stated in the previous section, the two main sources of data, *Who's Who* and *Dods*, have treated these two aspects differently: the former has not made the distinction between the two and put all information under the section of 'career' while the latter has given a separate account of political and non-political career. While *Dods*'s approach facilitates the compilation of two separate timelines for MPs' pre-parliamentary careers, it is not without issue. For some individuals, in particular those who worked in professions that are considered political facilitating or instrumental by previous literature, such as party workers, researchers and advisors, their positions are simultaneously professional and political which

should then be present on both timelines but coded separately, one on its occupational characteristic, the other on its political characteristic.

The effort to separate the two timelines is complicated by the existence of multiple occupations or positions for the same period of time. For a significant number of MPs, there exist certain points in their pre-parliamentary career where their profile has shown that they have occupied multiple occupations simultaneously. There are two main reasons for the existence of multiple occupations. Firstly, a lot of MPs have maintained a part-time political engagement alongside their full time professional occupation. The inclusion of part-time occupations into the database would be problematic because we ought to expect the accumulation of skills and experience in part-time employment or volunteering positions to be different from full time occupation. It would also be useful if we are able to separate political involvement that is full time and explore if that provides distinct benefit to politics professionals.

Hence the following assumption is made in determining the full-time occupation of an MP if multiple positions exist for the same period of time. Non-political occupations shall always be considered as the full time and main occupation of individuals in a given period, should they have held a political position simultaneously. In this case, the non-political occupation will appear on the professional career timeline while the political position will only appear on the political career timeline. It is only when an individual has no other simultaneous occupation, except their political position, that the latter would be considered as their full

time occupation and appear in the professional timeline. For example, Green MP Caroline Lucas has been a member of the Oxfordshire county council between 1993 and 1997, however, she was also working as the policy advisor for trade and environment for Oxfam during the same period, her position in Oxfam is then treated as her main occupation and recorded on her professional career timeline while her experience in local government only appears on the political career timeline. But since Ms. Lucas' election as MEP in 1999, it became her sole occupation, hence, her experience as an MEP appears both on her professional and political career timeline.

### **2.4 Coding strategy**

#### ***2.4.1 Challenges in operationalization***

After collecting MPs' biographical profiles and compiling the information into separate timelines that represent their professional and political pre-parliamentary careers, the next step is to operationalize the myriad of positions and titles present in MPs' profiles into meaningful groups of professions and political experiences, which will then be used to create a coding practice that categorizes all these professional and political positions MPs held previously in accordance with the kind of skills, knowledge and experience that they earned through these positions. We shall discuss the coding strategy for professional and political careers separately.

There are several obstacles that challenged the operationalization and coding process when dealing with MPs' pre-parliamentary professional careers. The most straightforward of

these challenges is the sheer amount and diversity of the professions that are present in the data. While the process of recruitment and professionalization has certainly narrowed it down, the pre-parliamentary professions of MPs remain very diverse. To name a few examples, besides the usual suspects such as lawyers, teachers, union representatives and business owners, among the new MPs included in the database, there is an actor, a bartender, a bricklayer, a GP receptionist and a pastor. While it is tempting to group these rare and certainly unorthodox pre-parliamentary professions as miscellaneous, this would lead to the fallacy found in many earlier studies of politicians' prior careers; that is focusing only on professions that are traditionally thought as politically relevant while overlooking the role played by professions that are deemed non-political. Although these professions have only a minor presence in the current database, and are hence unlikely to yield any statistically significant and meaningful result given the small number of observations, there remains the possibility for them to be grouped with professions that provide people with similar experiences and skills into larger categories that can yield significant results. The possibility of aggregating these minor professions into meaningful categories would be lost if the coding practice failed to appreciate these professions. Lastly, a coding practice that takes these minor professions into account would allow the possibility for the number of observations for these minor categories to grow and become statistically meaningful as the coding practice is applied to other parliaments, both longitudinally and internationally, and to expand the database. Devising a coding practice that is able to appreciate the diversity of professions found among MPs to the fullest extent would keep alive these possibilities for future research.

Besides the diversity of MPs' pre-parliamentary professions, another challenge in operationalizing and coding MPs' biographies is the inherent ambiguity of their job and position titles. There are certain professions where the nature of their positions is easily identifiable by the plain reading of their job titles; there is little ambiguity in a person's profession if their profile reads 'Solicitor' 'English Teacher' or 'Nurse'. However, more often than not, a person's job title does neither immediately and accurately reveal the true nature of their position, let alone the skills and experiences it provides, nor how comparable it is to positions with other titles. It is possible that jobs with different titles are in fact of similar natures and merely named differently by various firms or because of different context. A press officer and a public relations manager, while having different titles, are actually doing a very similar job that would provide workers with comparable experiences. On the contrary, positions with similar titles can have very different nature given the context, such as the nature of the firm. For example, an account manager in an advertising agency and an account manager in a financial institution, while sharing the same job title, are indeed working in drastically different areas, which would provide workers with very different sets of skills and knowledge. This is the reason why determining the nature and business of the company or organization that MPs previously worked for are of such importance during the data collection process, as stated in a prior section of this chapter.

### ***2.4.2 The coding scheme: SOC2000***

Since 1990, the Office of National Statistics (ONS) has compiled and maintained a single occupational classification for the UK. Since its conception, the Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) has been updated on two occasions, in 2000 and 2010 in order to keep

up with changes that have occur in the employment market. Because the cases of interest to this research are the MPs elected in the 2010 general election, their pre-parliamentary careers would have predated the latest revision of SOC, hence, the SOC2000 classification shall be used in coding positions MPs have occupied in their pre-parliamentary careers.

SOC2000 has a hierarchical structure in classifying individual unit groups into minor groups, sub-major groups and major groups. There are nine major groups, 25 sub-major groups, 81 minor groups and 353 unit groups present in SOC2000. Each unit group has a four digit code that indicates which major, sub-major and minor it belongs to. The SOC2000 manual also has a coding index that contains up to 26000 unique entries that match individual job titles or occupational descriptions to SOC2000 unit groups. There is also a detailed instruction on coding should there be any ambiguous job title that is not found in the coding index. The existence of such a detailed coding manual means that the coding practice used to create the database for this research would be subjective, easily replicable as well as comprehensive in the sense that it would be able to classify all positions presence on MPs profiles into occupational groups.

According the manual for SOC2000, published by the ONS, the purpose of SOC was “for the production of occupationally classified information or processing of occupation data” (Office of National Statistic 2000), which could be used to inform operations such as job matching by employment agencies or provision of career information by educational institutions. Given these functions, jobs in SOC2000 are classified in accordance to skills level and

content, which is defined as “the nature and duration of the qualification, training and experience required to become competent to perform the associated task in a particular job” (Office of National Statistics 2000). Although the criteria used in classifying occupations in SOC2000 appears to be the training and skills required for the employee before entering those positions instead of the kind of skills and experience one acquires on-the-job, which is the central issue this research seeks to study, it is a reasonable assumption that pre-occupational training required ought to be highly correlated with the kind of experience one acquires on-the-job. Given the central role that skills played in the classification, this made SOC2000 a very appropriate tool in constructing the database for this research as it makes occupational categories in the database internally consistent in terms of the skills involved in the occupations. The fact that SOC2000 is designed specifically for the British employment market, and that it is reviewed every decade, also made it an ideal tool to operationalize MPs’ pre-parliamentary occupations, since this could limit error from ambiguity or variance in the meaning of job titles that change through time and context. Although classification in SOC2000 is mostly guided by the variation in skills involved, this has the consequence that the major groups in SOC2000 largely correspond to the employment status because variation in skills is also roughly differentiated in occupations along the line of managerial, professional, associate, skilled and unskilled labour. While social class and employment status is not of central importance to this particular research, this allows possibility of the database to be used for future research along a different dimension of analysis.

Despite these advantages, SOC2000 as a coding scheme also has several problems with regard to the purpose, as well as the case of interest, in this research. First of all, given all the cases present in the database are MPs, this is an extremely skewed sample of the general population of the UK, for which the SOC2000 was originally designed. The result is that certain kind of experience, such as political operatives, party workers, special advisors and lobbyists, which have a heavy presence in the database and are also of central importance to this research, nevertheless falls into the residual group of miscellaneous occupations, since its presence among the general public is insignificant. Hence, despite the advantages of SOC2000, I have made several minor changes in the coding practice in order for this to be fit for purpose of this research.

Besides the need for new separated category to capture the professional career of MPs, some occupation categories in SOC2000 also need to be aggregated into bigger groups in order to produce occupational groups which are statistically significant and meaningful. With the 226 individual presences on the dataset and 353 unit groups in SOC2000 coding scheme, it is inevitable that many of the groups will have a small and insignificant presence in the dataset, which would hamper any statistical analysis to reach significance. Even though new MPs are a skewed sample compared to the general population, as many of them have somewhat similar career background, which narrows down the number of unit groups that is currently presence in the dataset, it still contained more than a hundred unit groups, many of which contained less than a handful of cases. Hence, unit groups with similar and comparable skill and knowledge requirement are then aggregated into bigger groups that contained more cases. The actual occupational groups that shall be used in the



empirical analysis in the coming chapters and their corresponded SOC2000 unit group are listed in Table 2.2. It should be noted that the aggregation of unit groups in this dataset is different from the hierarchical grouping of SOC2000. The reason for this is because the major groups in SOC2000 seek to capture variance in level of skills and training needed to perform the tasks, while the purpose of this dataset seeks to capture the nature of the skills involved. Hence, public relations managers and public relations officers are placed in separate major groups in SOC2000 while they are aggregated into one category in this dataset because the nature of skills involved is similar.

**Table 2.2 Occupational Groups and their corresponding SOC2000 unit group(s)**

Occupation Groups	Corresponding SOC2000 unit group(s) (or how they are otherwise defined)
Lawyer	2411 Solicitors and lawyers, judges and coroners (Further divided into Barristers and Solicitors depends on job title)
Teacher	2311 Higher education teaching professionals 2312 Further education teaching professionals 2314 Secondary education teaching professionals 2319 Teaching professionals n.e.c.
Communication	Aggregate of <i>Media</i> and <i>Public Relation</i> category
<i>Media</i>	3431 Journalists, newspaper and periodical editors 3432 Broadcasting associate professionals
<i>Public Relation</i>	1134 Advertising and public relations managers 3433 Public relations officers
Social Science Researcher	2322 Social science researchers
Political Worker	Generic positions working for political parties or politicians with non-descript/un-categorized responsibilities (e.g. Constituency agent, parliamentary liason)
Full time governmental Experiences	1111 Senior officials in national government 1113 Senior officials in local government 4112 Civil Service administrative officers and assistants 4113 Local government clerical officers and assistants
Ministerial/MPs advisors	Title given as '(Special) Advisor' for Ministers and MPs
Business Owner	Positions with titles such as 'Founder' 'Owner' 'Proprietor' or 'Director' for small, for-profit firms and companies (Addendum to the timeline)
Military Officer	1171 Officers in armed forces
Agriculture	1211 Farm managers 5111 Farmers

(Table 2.2 continued)

Science and Technology	1136 Information and communication technology managers 1137 Research and development managers 2112 Biological scientists and biochemists  2131 IT strategy and planning professionals 2132 Software professionals 2321 Scientific researchers 3111 Laboratory technicians
Marketing and Sales	1132 Marketing and sales managers 3542 Sales representatives 3543 Marketing associate professionals
Financial Sector	1131 Financial managers and chartered secretaries 1151 Financial institution managers 3532 Brokers  3534 Finance and investment analysts/advisers 3537 Financial and accounting technicians
NGOs	1114 Senior officials of special interest organisations 4114 Officers of non-governmental organisations <i>(exclude Trade Unions)</i>
Trade Unions officials	1114 Senior officials of special interest organisations 4114 Officers of non-governmental organisations <i>(Trade Unions only)</i>
Social Service	1184 Social services managers 2442 Social workers 3231 Youth and community workers 3232 Housing and welfare officers

The featuring of an occupational group on the list is based on several considerations. Predominant is the relevance of these occupations to MPs behaviour in parliament. Occupations with an undeniable political overtone, such as political workers, ministerial/MPs advisors and full-time governmental positions are hence included in the analysis. Social science researcher is also featured as, under the context of this study, most positions that are coded as such are related to policy research for the government, political parties and think-tanks. Occupations that are frequently thought of as politics facilitating, or have been subject to previous studies in political leaders' behaviour, such as lawyers, communication, teachers, agriculture and military are also present on the list. Alternatively, several groups are included in the analysis because of their heavy presence in the dataset.

Occupational groups that are included because of this consideration include finance, business owner and marketing and sales. While these occupations are arguably less politically related, and we lack prior studies and research to inform us of how to hypothesize their effect on legislators' behaviour, they are nevertheless considered because of the high number of MPs who have worked in these professions at some point of their professional career. The inclusion of these 'non-political' occupational groups in the analysis could also test whether MPs behaviours are only affected by politically related experience or if experiences in non-political sectors can be extrapolated and facilitate MPs work within the context of Westminster.

### ***2.4.3 Coding MPs' pre-parliamentary political careers***

We now turn our attention from MPs' pre-parliamentary professional careers to their prior political experience. As noted in the first chapter, there have been numerous studies on the subject of prior political careers of legislators. What is lacking from the existing literature however is a comprehensive schematic that could classify various political positions into groups that reflect the nature of political experience that they gained through the process. In order to classify MPs pre-parliamentary political experience for further analysis, I have designed a coding scheme to operationalize their previous political engagement. A table that denotes the various categories on the scheme could be found in Appendix One. The overarching concern here is to capture the various kinds of political experience in terms of the skills and experience that they could provide to the future MP. The categories of political experience in this schematic are divided along several dimensions.

The political career coding scheme is designed to capture MPs' position on the political hierarchy with the pinnacle being national party politics. The most important distinction along this dimension is experiences that are earned at local level versus experience at the national level. Although experience at both national and local level would provide individuals with experience in how politics is conducted and plays out, we ought to expect some differences between the two kinds of experience in terms of how it affects MPs behaviour. According to the skill hypothesis, the relationship between experiences and performance is dependent on the similarity and applicability of the skills and knowledge involved. Hence, being in closer proximity to the national political scene and Westminster, we ought to expect that MPs experience at a national level ought to have a much stronger positive impact on their performance as MPs. Also, because of the proximity to the centre of political power at the national level, experience in national party politics could provide opportunity for individuals to build a rapport with national party figures, to demonstrate their loyalty to the party and competences, which improves their parliamentary career prospects once they are elected MP. (Allen 2013, Allen 2014). Contrastingly, while experiences in local politics could be relatively more different than the setting in Westminster, it could nevertheless provide some unique benefits that facilitate work as an MP. Partly because of the first-past-the-post electoral system of the UK, while there are some variations between parties and through time, local party organization has always played an important role in candidate selection (Norris and Lovenduski 1995). Experience in local politics could be beneficial in the candidate selection process by providing individuals with the contact and network at local party level that enables them to obtain nomination.

Involvement in local politics could also provide MPs with experiences in communication with electorates, nurturing of grass root networks and support, as well as knowledge of local issues which could be of use when they move on to Westminster. Experience as member of the European Parliament, as well as in devolved assemblies and executives are put into an intermediate category in between local and national level because their mandates are regional and the responsibilities required and the opportunity for network cultivation that they represent are expected to situate in between local and national politics.

Secondly, the coding scheme distinguishes between political experiences that are electoral from those that are not. This distinction is partially, but not entirely, captured by the local-national distinction. While there are no analogous pre-parliamentary elected positions at the national level, this distinction does exist at the local level. MPs' local political experience could either be earned as an elected member of the local council, a prior parliamentary candidacy, or instead be acquired as an official in constituency parties. Although all of these provide individuals with experience in the conducting of local politics, being an elected representative or an electoral candidate provides some unique experiences such as campaigning, or in the case of councillor, of being a member of an elected assembly. This would provide an individual with first-hand experience of what being a representative of the people is like. Such experience could equip MPs with skills such as canvassing, speech making, deliberation and negotiation with fellow representatives in policy making which serving in local constituency would not. Moreover, a distinction is also being made between senior and ordinary members of local councils, in order to account for the difference in responsibility and hence skills and experience earned. MPs who have served in capacities

such as chairperson or deputy chairperson, committee chairperson, council executive portfolio holder of local mayor are considered as senior local elected officials while others are considered as ordinary members.

Lastly, the locality from which MPs' pre-parliamentary political experience is earned is also coded. Specifically, local political experience earned within the current constituency of an MP is separated from experience earned out of their current constituency. While a significant portion of MPs do have some experience in local politics, not all of them have earned such experience within the parliamentary constituency that they currently represent. A lot of MPs have participated in local politics in one area of the country before pursuing a Westminster seat in another region. This distinction between experiences earned within MPs' current constituency versus experience earned elsewhere is important because the benefit from local politics could either be generally applicable or locally specific. While certain experiences of conducting politics are general, such as communicating with electorate or negotiation with fellow councillors, and could be universally applicable across different locality and hence should not make much of a difference should MPs moved away from the locality that they earn such experience, there are however some components of local political experience where the benefits are locally specific. Connection and network which made in one locale might not be of much use should an MP is running for or representing a constituency away from that locale. There could also be knowledge, such as understanding of local issues, or in industry, that is of particular importance to an area, and the benefit of which is locally specific. By separating political experience earned from within or outside an MPs' constituency, we could determine if the benefit of local political

experience is stemmed from their exposure within the locality or their experience in general. It also enables us to analyse if these two components of local political experience lead to distinctive parliamentary careers and behavioural patterns of MPs.

However, determining the locale of MPs' pre-parliamentary political experiences and whether it is within their current constituency is rather challenging. In most cases, MPs' profiles on *Who's who* and *Dods* only show which local authority they served in, not the exact ward they represented. With the lack of information in the two sources and elsewhere it is difficult to determine if the ward they represent locate within their current constituency. Also, in most cases, demarcation between local authorities does not perfectly align with parliamentary constituency boundary. Hence political experience of an MP is coded as 'local' if the body they served has some overlapping with their current constituency. I believe this is a reasonable definition and determinant on the locale of MPs local political experience because even if the ward that an MPs previously represented is not within their current constituency, their experience within a local authority that at least partially overlaps with their current seat ought to provide the benefit of within constituency political experience such as networking and knowledge of local issues.

Similar to the MPs' pre-parliamentary professional career, MPs' political experiences are organized into a timeline that describes an MP's movement along the political hierarchy throughout their pre-parliamentary career. Each year would be coded separately with the more senior position taking precedent should the MP have held multiple positions at the

same time. Hence, for an MP who has been both a local councillor and ministerial advisor simultaneously, only the latter would appear in the timeline and be considered. The timeline is then coded in accordance to the coding scheme as shown in Table 2.3.

**Table 2.3 MPs pre-parliamentary political experience coding scheme**

Seniority/Elected or not	Elected	Not elected
Local Politics	Ordinary Local Councilor	Officials in constituency parties
Senior Local Politics	Senior positions in Councils e.g Party Group Leader, Committee Chairperson, Local executive portfolio holder, Mayoralty etc.	
(Further division between within and out-of constituency experience at local level)		
Regional Parties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Member of devolved assembly and government (Includes the GLA)</li><li>MEPs</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Regional officers in parties and trade unions.</li><li>Officers in regional/European parties</li></ul>
National Parties	MP candidates (Recorded as number of candidacy instead of years as nominee, also divided between within and out-of constituency candidacy)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Officials in national parties or affiliated organizations</li><li>Staff for MPs and Ministers</li></ul>

## 2.5 Presentational strategy

Before we turn our attention to empirical analysis using the data collected and coded with the aforementioned methods, it is perhaps necessary to spare a few words here to discuss the presentational strategy I will be using in the coming chapters.

For the majority of the time, coefficient tables with multiple models using different specifications shall be used in presenting the results from statistical analysis. However, whenever comparison between results of different specifications is not necessary for the



inference, coefficient figures are used instead, with the coefficient table it represents in the appendix for the reader's reference. In many cases during the subsequent analysis, where there are intra-party models, the full set of specifications not shown in the main result table, yet the remaining models omitted can also be found in the appendix of the respective chapter.

Whenever it is applicable, graphical representation of how selected professional or political experiences affect the dependent variable as the amount of experience increases will be shown. Given the structure of the database, most of the results are stated with respect to the baseline of lacking all the pre-parliamentary experience being studied. For example, if we are to discover that each year of experience as a lawyer is associated with an increase in speech count, this relation is in comparison with the hypothetical of a similar MP with no legal nor any other pre-parliamentary experiences included in the analysis. While this result is meaningful on its own, we are also interested in comparing between different kinds of pre-parliamentary experiences. In other words, how would an individual MP behave differently if, instead of spending ten years in legal profession, they had instead been a military officer, a media personnel or a think tank researcher? This comparison will be made possible on the political dimension of the pre-parliamentary career by the construction of political career types, which I shall discuss in length in the next chapter. As for MPs' professional careers, this will be achieved by the aforementioned graphical representation of how increasing amounts of experience relate with changes in the dependent variable. Furthermore, since the purpose of these graphs is to explore difference between occupations that is hidden by the coefficient in the statistical analysis, the selected kinds of

experience shown in the graphs may not necessary be statistically significant in the coefficient table shown, which nevertheless differ between each other significantly, once the amount of experience surpasses a certain number of years.

## 2.6 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have discussed the choices behind the selection of cases and the collection and coding of the dataset. I have also explained the methodological reasons behind these choices. The object of the research is the 226 MPs first elected in the 2010 general election and their behaviour in the first term of parliament. Confining this study to this cohort of MP strengthens the internal validity of the result by controlling for the parliamentary tenure of MPs. Biographical information on the MPs was collected from both *Who's Who* and *Dods Parliamentary Companion*, supplemented with web-based and self-reported information when necessary. Information on MPs' pre-parliamentary professional and political careers was then used to construct separate timelines on both aspects of their careers. This was then coded by using the SOC2000 occupational classification created by the ONS as well as the political careers coding scheme that I have devised. The coded timeline was then used to calculate the number of years an MP has spent in each group. At the end of this exercise, the product was a database that contains the number of years MPs have spent in each of the occupational and political experience groups during their entire pre-parliamentary careers.

Even though I believe I have, to the best of my ability, presented and justified the logic behind the data collection and coding practice, I would nevertheless recognize that there is inevitably a degree of arbitrariness in the operationalization of the data. Why did I aggregate the occupational groups in the way I did? Are there other dimensions that define MPs' pre-parliamentary political careers? Minor changes on these issues may result in changes in the analytical result. The observation of political career groups in the next chapter could be largely driven by the fact that I included the locale of MPs' political experience into consideration. However, I hope I have offered the clearest and most thorough justification to the way I have coded the data and shown that this is, given the constraints from the raw data, the most reasonable one to study and understand MPs' pre-parliamentary careers.

After describing and justifying the methodology used in compiling the MPs' pre-parliamentary careers database, this thesis shall move on to discuss the empirical findings derived from analysing the dataset. The next chapter is focused on analysing the dataset descriptively. I shall first describe the composition of the 2010 cohort in terms of their pre-parliamentary professional occupation and political experiences with focus on comparing the diverging patterns of pre-parliamentary careers among MPs of the three major parties. I shall also compare the descriptive findings with previous empirical evidence of the changing career background and professionalization of MPs to test both the comparability, and hence the validity, of my methodology with prior studies in this area, as well as to see whether the patterns of MPs' pre-parliamentary experiences noted by prior studies have been sustained in the cohort of the 2010 election result. Furthermore, the next chapter will also explore the

relationship between MPs' pre-parliamentary professional careers and their political experience. By employing techniques such as latent class analysis (LCA), I shall discover patterns of MPs prior political experience and test if these patterns of prior-political experiences are correlated with their professional career, thus testing the empirical connectedness between the two dimensions of MPs' pre-parliamentary careers, as stated in the hypotheses.

## **Chapter Three – Who were they? Descriptive analysis of MPs' pre-parliamentary careers**

### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter has two aims. Firstly, to analyze MPs' pre-parliamentary careers descriptively. I will describe briefly the patterns of MPs' pre-parliamentary careers in terms of the proportion of MPs who have worked in one of the selected professions, or engaged in certain political experiences at some point before their election to Westminster. I shall then turn the attention to how these different kinds of experiences are distributed among the three major parties. I am also comparing the data of the 2010 cohort with the professional composition of previous parliaments found among existing literature. Given the attention is only on the newly elected MPs in the 2010 general election and that the methodology and operationalization method of this research is unique and differs from prior studies, it would be imprudent to reach a definitive conclusion on the changing background of MPs by comparing results from the database and prior studies. Nevertheless, such comparison can provide a sense of how the methodology used to code and identify MPs' pre-parliamentary existence in this research differs from that found in existing literature and, if it is an improvement from methods that have been used to study MPs' careers.

Secondly, given that one of the main hypotheses of this research is that the professional and political aspect of MPs' pre-parliament careers are conceptually distinct yet empirically correlated, I establish their empirical connection by analyzing the relationship between MPs professional background and political experiences. Employing several statistical and clustering techniques, I determine the typical political routes into parliament and discover

how MPs' professional careers affect their choice among these routes. The results of these analyses indicate that there are four main routes toward Westminster: Party Animals, Carpetbaggers, Local Heroes and Career Changers. Last but not least, the relationship between MPs' professional career and choice of political route to Westminster will be compared to prior literature on the subject of how professions affect political participation and the prospect of individuals.

### **3.2 Professional background of the 2010 cohort**

Table 3.1 shows the number of MPs by professional background among three major parties as well as the proportion that they made up of the party cohort. MPs who have spent one or more years of their pre-parliamentary professional career in a certain professional group will be considered as such. In terms of the entire cohort of the 2010 intake, the most prominently featured professional experience is that of being a business owner, closely followed by communication - both of which account for over 20% of the 2010 cohort. They are closely followed by experiences in the financial sector, social science research and fulltime governmental positions, which account for around 15% of the cohort. Lawyers and teachers, which are traditionally seen as professions that are conducive to political participation and favoured starting point of a political career (King 1981, Cairney 2007), only account for 14% and 7% of the cohort respectively. There are also some interesting variations in the distribution of professional careers within the three major parties. It is apparent that MPs with experiences in professions that were deemed as instrumental by Cairney (2007) have made up a considerably larger proportion of the Labour cohort when compared to the other two parties. On the other hand, former business owners and financial workers have

constituted a much larger portion of the Conservative cohort in comparison to Labour. It is also noteworthy that some professional experiences are found exclusively in one of the main parties. All former trade unionists are found in Labour, as are all but one who had worked in social services; while MPs with military or agriculture experience are found exclusively among the Conservatives. These lopsided results are hardly surprising given the ideological persuasion and social class of their support base.

**Table 3.1. Career Background of new MPs elected in 2010 (% in parentheses)**

	Conservative	Labour	Lib Dem	Total
Lawyer	22(15.07)	8(12.70)	1(10)	31(14.16)
Teacher***	7(4.79)	6(9.52)	3(30)	16(7.31)
Communication	30(20.55)	12(19.05)	2(20)	44(20.09)
<i>Media</i>	11(7.53)	4(6.35)	0	15(6.85)
<i>Public Relation</i>	20(13.7)	11(17.46)	2(20)	33(15.07)
Social Science Researcher**	20(13.7)	16(25.4)	0	36(16.44)
Political Worker*	12(8.22)	12(19.05)	1(10)	25(11.42)
Full time governmental Experience**	18(12.33)	15(23.81)	0	33(15.07)
Ministerial/MPs advisors	13(8.9)	9(14.29)	1(10)	23(10.5)
Business Owner**	38(26.03)	6(9.52)	2(20)	46(21)
Military Officer	8(5.48)	0	0	8(3.65)
Agriculture	6(4.11)	0	0	6(2.74)
Science and Technology	7(4.79)	3(4.76)	2(20)	12(5.48)
Marketing and Sales	21(14.38)	3(4.76)	1(10)	25(11.42)
Financial Sector	27(18.49)	5(7.94)	2(20)	24(15.53)
NGOs**	12(8.22)	13(20.63)	2(20)	27(12.33)
Trade Union***	0	7(11.11)	0	7(3.2)
Social Service***	0	7(11.1)	1(10)	8(3.65)
Total Number of MPs	146	63	10	219

Note: Result of Pearson Chi-Squared test: \*  $p < .1$ , \*\*  $p < .05$ , \*\*\*  $p < .01$

Our attention now turns towards the political involvement of the new MPs prior to their election. Table 3.2 shows the distribution of various kinds of political experiences among the three major parties. In total, 11% of the cohort have experience as local party officials, 46% have been elected to local councils at some point in their pre-parliamentary political career. A similar amount of new MPs in the 2010 cohort have run for MP either in a general or by-election before winning their seat in 2010, and 35% of them have been involved in national

party politics at some point prior to their election to Westminster. Among the sub-categories of local governmental experiences, around 26% of the cohort have some local council experiences within their current constituency while 22% of the new MPs have out-of-constituency local government experiences. Also, around 20% of the new MPs have occupied senior positions in local government, such as council chairperson, committee chairperson or council executive positions. There are also interesting observations in the variation of distribution of political experience across the parties. The Labour cohort have a significantly larger proportion of new MPs that are involved in national party politics, while the Conservative cohort has a higher proportion of MPs with out-of-constituency local government experiences. New MPs of the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats are also much more likely to have previously run for MPs, either within or out of their current constituencies. These trends could be explained by the fact that Labour had been in government for thirteen years prior to the election of this cohort. This provided them with more resources and employment opportunities at national level such as ministerial advisors, while the considerable swing of votes toward Conservatives and Liberal Democrats propelled more previously unsuccessful candidates into Parliament.

**Table 3.2. Prior political participation of new MPs elected in 2010 (% in parentheses)**

	Conservative	Labour	Lib Dem	Total
Total Local Party	17(11.64)	5(7.94)	2(20)	24(10.96)
Local Government (Same Const)	36(24.66)	17(26.98)	4(40)	57(26.03)
Local Government (Different Const)**	40(27.4)	8(12.70)	1(10)	49(22.37)
Junior Local Government	67(45.89)	23(36.51)	4(40)	94(42.92)
Senior Local Government	28(19.18)	12(19.05)	3(30)	43(19.63)
Total Local Government	71(48.63)	25(39.68)	4(40)	100(45.66)
Previous MP candidacy(Same Const)***	32(21.92)	1(1.59)	6(60)	39(17.81)
Previous MP candidacy(Diff Const)***	61(41.78)	8(12.70)	5(50)	74(33.79)
Total Previous MP candidacy***	83(56.85)	9(14.29)	8(80)	100(45.66)
National Party Politics**	42(28.77)	31(49.21)	2(20)	76(34.7)
Devolved Assemblies/ MEP	7(4.79)	2(3.17)	0	9(4.11)
Total	146	63	10	219

Note: Result of Pearson Chi-Squared test: \*  $p < .1$ , \*\*  $p < .05$ , \*\*\*  $p < .01$



### 3.3 Changing professional composition of parliament

As iterated in earlier chapters, the changing landscape of MPs' prior experience and career has been one of the central themes of contemporary research on the House of Commons. Numerous research projects have been conducted on the phenomena that is professionalization of politics in the UK (Cairney 2007, Cowley 2012, King 1981, Mellors 1978, Rush 2001, Rush 2005). Has this trend continued among the cohort elected in 2010? Table 3.3 and 3.4 compares the professional composition of the two major parties' 2010 cohort as recorded in the MP pre-parliamentary dataset with those of previous parliaments observed by Cairney (2007).

**Tabel 3.3. Labour MPs in politics-facilitating occupations 1945-2010(%)<sup>1</sup>**

	1945	1974 OCT	2005	2010 cohort
Barrister	8.5	8.8	3.9	4.76
Solicitor	3.0	3.1	4.5	7.94
Civil service/local government <sup>2</sup>	0.8	1.6	4.5	23.81
Lecturer/research <sup>3</sup>	5.0	16.3	11.3	25.4
Teacher <sup>4</sup>	6.8	11.6	7.3	9.52
Social worker <sup>5</sup>	0	0.9	5.6	11.1
Political worker	0.8	2.5	14.9	19.05
Journalist/Author <sup>6</sup>	9.5	7.8	5.9	6.35
PR/communication	0.5	0.9	0.8	17.46
Political instrumental	23.3	21.0	31.5	63.49

These results confirmed some of Cairney's (2007) findings, such as the continual demise of legal profession as an important pre-parliamentary profession among the Conservatives while the other brokerage profession, which is teaching, appears to have experienced a slight

<sup>1</sup> Source: data from earlier parliaments are from Cairney (2007)

<sup>2</sup> Full time governmental experience for 2010

<sup>3</sup> Social science research for 2010

<sup>4</sup> Include lecturer for 2010

<sup>5</sup> Include other social service worker for 2010

<sup>6</sup> Media for 2010

increase in importance. However, the most dramatic changes to the professional composition of the Commons is undoubtedly the continual increase in the number of MPs who have previously worked in political instrumental professions and the dramatic change between 2005 and 2010. There are substantial increases in the proportion of MPs with experiences as political workers, Journalists, media and public relations in both major parties. This indicates the trends of professionalization, in particular the rise of politicians with experience in politically instrumental professions at the expense of those with experience in brokerage professions is apparently still valid.

**Table 3.4 Conservative MPs in politics-facilitating occupations 1945-2010 (%)**

	1945	1974 OCT	2005	2010 cohort
Barrister	17.4	17.0	11.9	6.85
Solicitor	1.9	3.2	7.2	8.9
Civil service/local government	1.4	0.4	1.0	12.33
Lecturer/research	2.3	1.1	2.1	13.7
Teacher	0.5	2.2	1.5	4.79
Social worker	0.5	0.0	1.0	0
Political worker	0.5	1.8	4.1	8.22
Journalist/Author	2.3	6.1	5.7	7.53
PR/communication	0	1.8	3.1	13.7
Political instrumental	2.8	9.7	12.9	50

Nevertheless, despite these results appearing to be in agreement with existing literature and confirmed the professionalization of politics narrative, the drastic difference between the results in 2005 and 2010 require careful interpretation of the data. There are two reasons to explain this dramatic difference in the latest period of study. Firstly, the data of 2010 only includes MPs newly elected in a general election, while information on previous parliaments encompass the entire chamber. As a cohort of new MPs which is significantly different from the chamber as a whole gradually replaces retiring veteran MPs, the result would be a continual but gradual change on the composition of the chamber as a whole. Hence, if we are

to look at the 2010 result from the perspective of the entire chamber, the changes would be much less drastic. This could be interpreted as a steady but much more gradual change on the professional composition of the entire chamber. Secondly, as stated in the prior chapter, this research has operationalized MPs' pre-parliamentary careers in ways that are different from studies of prior parliaments, the most significant distinction being instead of looking at an MP's last profession before they enter parliament, I have taken into account the entirety of their pre-parliamentary career. Hence, an alternative explanation to the drastic difference in the proportion of MPs with experience in instrumental occupations could be that these experiences are usually found at an earlier stage of an MPs' pre-parliamentary careers, as a stepping stone to other positions, which would then lead to success in the realm of politics. Because of their formative nature to a successful political and parliamentary career, these experiences have been overlooked by previous studies on the matter, which focused on MPs' occupations immediately prior to their election to Westminster.

### **3.4 Connection between professional and political experiences**

#### ***3.4.1 Overall political experience***

After establishing the descriptive composition of the 2010 cohort of new MPs, we shall now turn our attention to analyzing the empirical links between pre-parliamentary professional and political career. How do MPs' pre-parliamentary professional careers affect their political participation? What should we expect from the following analysis between the two dimensions of MPs' pre-parliamentary careers? As argued in numerous literature on the professionalization of politics, people who have previously worked in certain professions

appear to be particularly prevalent and overly represented among the political elites. One of the reasons for such a phenomena was that these professions are ‘politically facilitating’ and conducive to a parallel involvement in politics (King 1981). Cairney (2007) has refined the concept of ‘political facilitating’ further into two sets of professions: ‘brokerage professions’ such as lawyers and teachers which provide individuals with a stable income and flexible timing that facilitates part-time involvement in politics parallel to their full-time job, and; ‘instrumental professions’ such as journalists and public relations which provide a clear link to politics. Hence, we shall expect that MPs’ experiences in these broadly speaking ‘politically facilitated’ professions relate to MPs who have more extensive pre-parliamentary political experience.

**Figure 3.1. Impact of professional experience (dummy), demographic and party affiliation on MPs’ amount of total political experiences**

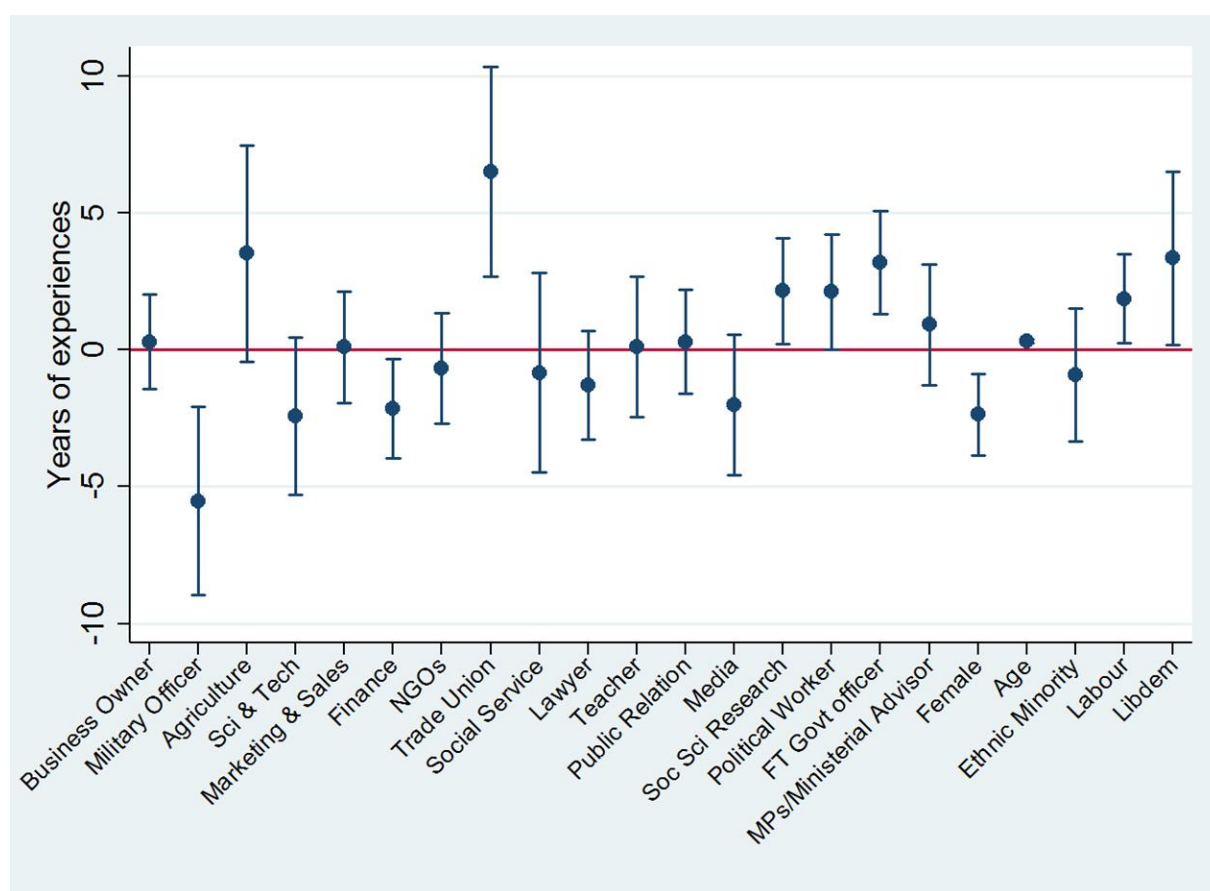
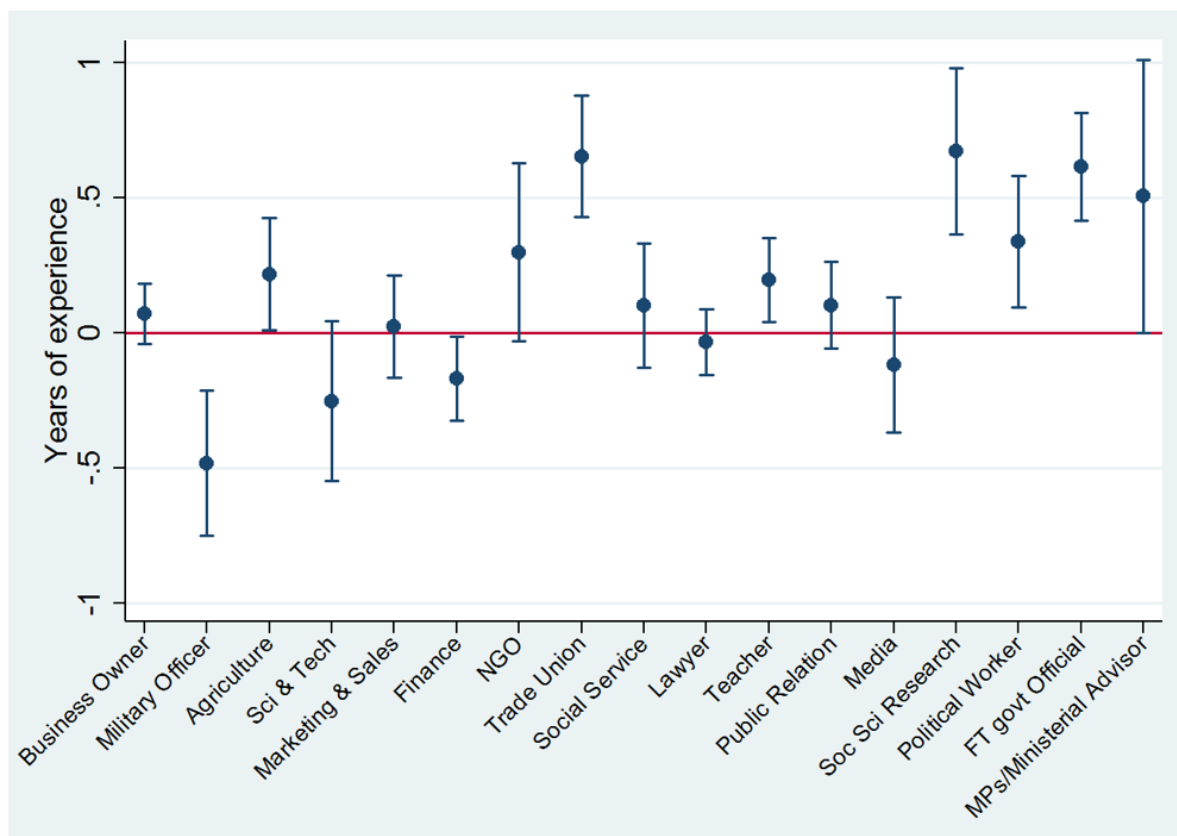


Figure 3.1 is a coefficient graph after regressing the total amount of political experiences of all new MPs from the three major parties, regardless of nature of those experiences, against the dummy variable denoting any prior experience in professional occupational groups. The model also includes control for gender, age, ethnicity and party fixed effect. The confidence interval indicated in the graph is at 90% (coefficient table can be found in Table 3.9 of the appendix). The result as indicated shows that having experience as a trade union official, social science researcher, political worker and full-time governmental official has a positive effect on the total amount of political experience that one accumulates at the beginning of one's parliamentary career. On the other hand, having experience in the military or the financial industry appears to have the opposite effect of depressing new MPs' prior political experiences. In terms of the demographic and party affiliation, new female MPs appear to have significantly less pre-parliamentary political experience than their male colleagues, while new MPs of Labour and Liberal Democrats have more prior political experience than new Conservative MPs. It is also not surprising that age has a positive effect on the amount of MPs' pre-parliamentary political experience, given that they would have had more time to accumulate it than their younger colleagues. On the other hand, contrary to the expectation, coefficient for public relations, media and both 'brokerage' occupations, legal and education, are all insignificant. The coefficient for media and legal profession is also negative, again inconsistent with the hypothesis.

Alternatively, political benefit that derives from professional occupations could be dependent not on the presence, but the amount of the experience. Given the advantage of brokerage occupations are that they enable political involvement parallel to a full time day job, the

**Figure 3.2 Impact of the amount of professional experiences on MPs' total amount of political experiences**

relationship between political experience and brokerage occupation could be dependent on the amount of experience in the latter that one has. The more time one spends in a brokerage occupation, the more opportunities one would have to participate in politics. Figure 3.2 indicates the relationship between the amounts of political experience with the amount of professional experiences. It is a coefficient graph which shows the result of OLS regression with essentially the same model used in Figure 3.2, but substitutes the dummy variables with continuous variables that indicate the number of years one spent in a certain professional occupation group. The coefficient of demographic variables and party affiliation is included in the analysis but their coefficients are not shown because their magnitude is significantly larger than those for the continuous variables which would have rendered the graph unreadable. The effect of demographic variables is roughly similar to those found in the Figure 3.2 (For the results from demographic variables in this model, please refer to Table 3.9 in the

Appendix). The result for the continuous variables is roughly the same as those in Figure 3.1 with the notable exception that the coefficient for the amount of experience as a teacher is positive and becomes significant. The impact from being an MP or ministerial advisor is also positive and borderlining significant ( $p = .101$ ) This indicates that the benefit on political participation from these two occupations are indeed more dependent on the amount of professional experience than the mere presence of such experience on one's resume. However, coefficients for lawyers, media and public relations remain insignificant.

### ***3.4.2 Experience in local or national politics***

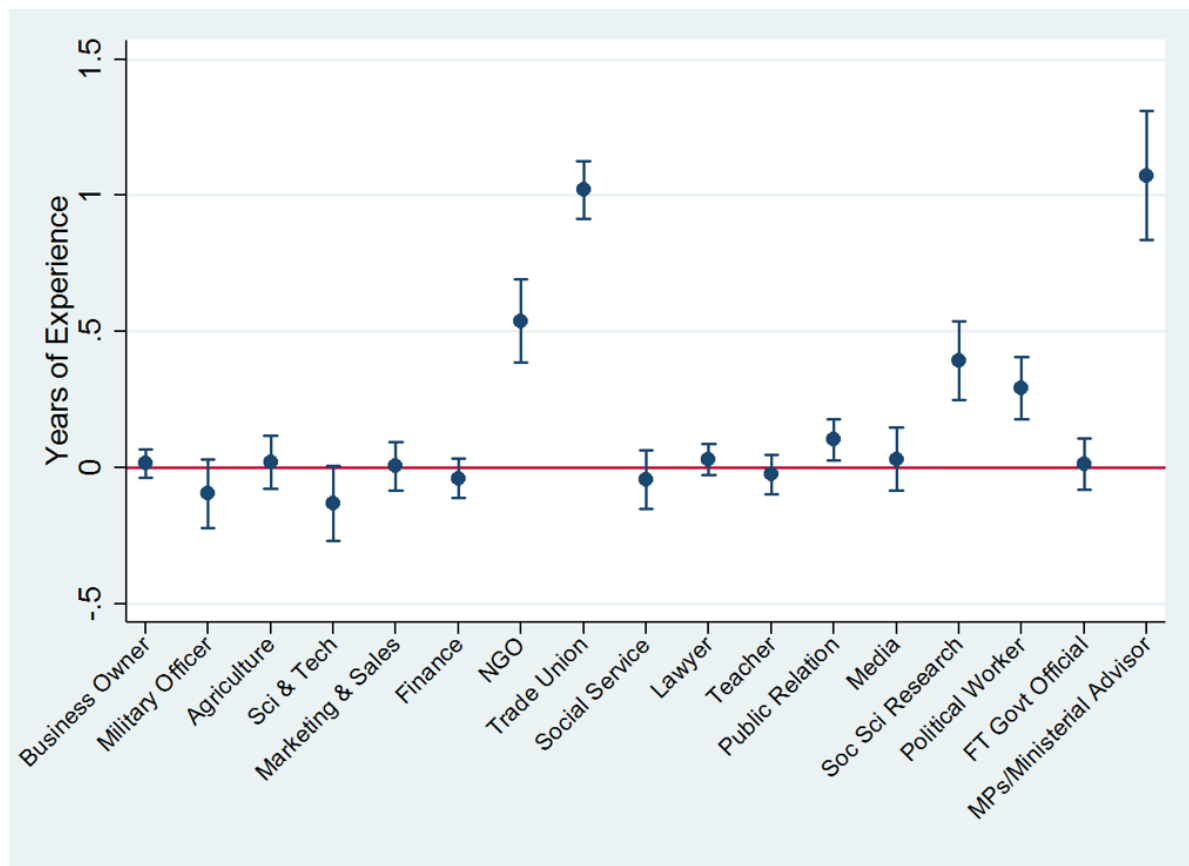
Besides the total amount of political experience, how do pre-parliamentary professional occupations affect the nature of prior political experiences of MPs? To further explore the impact of the professional careers on MPs' prior political participation, we shall also look at how the former affect MPs' experiences in two different political realms - local government and national party.

While the professionalization literature has paid much attention on how pre-parliamentary professional occupation affects MPs' overall political participation prior to entering parliament, the nature of those participations and how professional occupation affects the various kind of political participation separately has received considerably less attention. However, given the nature of relation between various political facilitating professions and politics as stated in the professionalization literature, we might still be able to generate some meaningful hypothesis on how professional experiences affect the nature of MPs' pre-

parliamentary careers. More specifically, given the link between politics and instrumental occupations such as media, policy research etc., is more likely to occur at the national level, previous experience in politically instrumental occupations ought to have a positive effect on the amount of prior political experience in national party politics. Moreover, since the political benefit of instrumental occupation is its direct relation with national politics, those who have worked in these occupations could enter the higher level of the political hierarchy laterally, while those who do not have comparable professional experience might need to begin their political involvement at the local level and use it as a stepping stone to enter the national political scene. Hence, experience in instrumental occupation should also decrease MPs' prior experience in local government. In terms of brokerage occupations, since it merely provides individuals with the flexibility to participate in politics but did not specify the level from which they would enter the political arena, we should not expect them to have a significant effect on any specific kinds of political experience.

Figure 3.3 and 3.4 shows the result of OLS regression of the amount of pre-parliamentary political experience a new MP has acquired in either national party politics or elected local government posts, both within or out of their current constituency, against the amount of experience in professional occupation groups. (Detailed coefficients are denoted in table 3.9 in the appendix at the end of the chapter) Similar to the former section, the model includes only MPs from the three major parties and controlled for MPs' demographic and party affiliation. The confidence interval is at 90%.

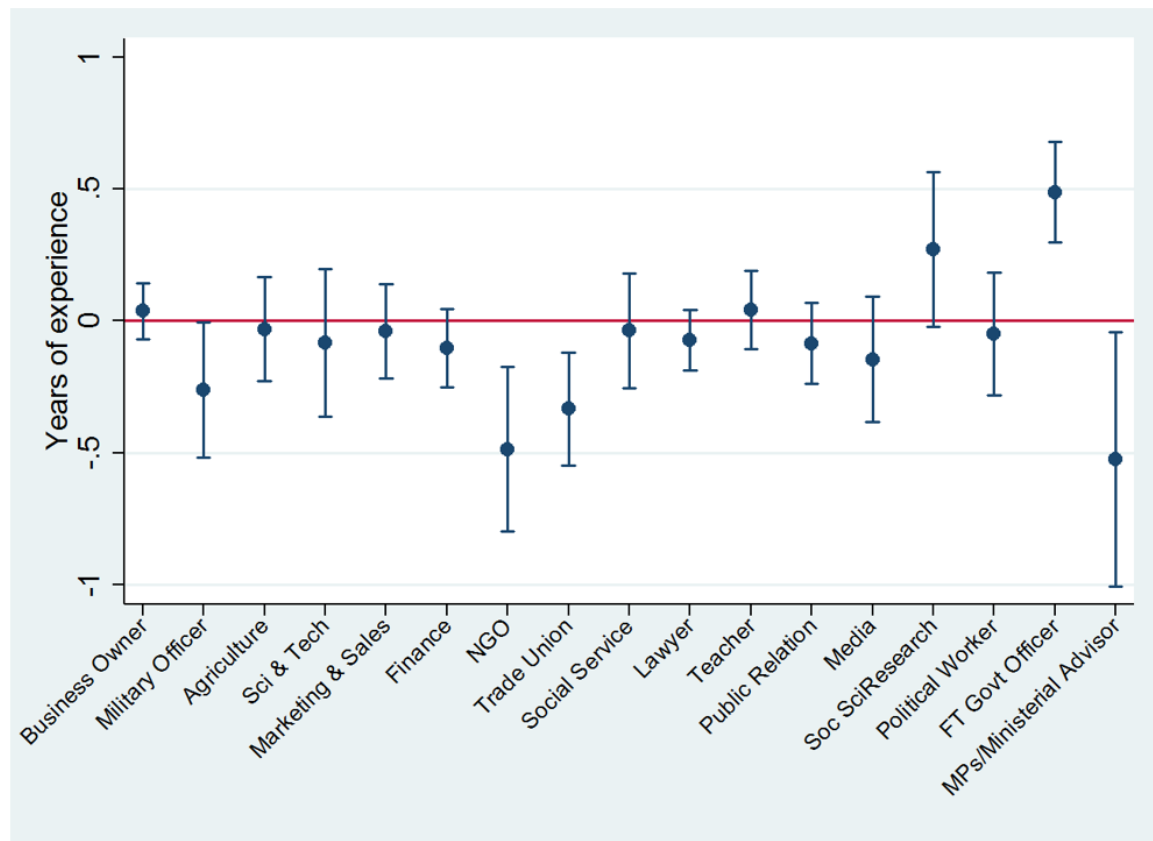


**Figure 3.3 Effect of professional experiences (dummy) on MPs' amount of experience in national party politics**

As expected, it is apparent that many of the politically instrumental occupations, including trade union officials, NGOs, social science research, public relations, political workers and ministerial/MP advisors all have positive and statistically significant effects on the amount of experience in national party politics. Experience in media and the two brokerage occupations have negligible effect on experience in national party. In terms of experience in local government, similar to my hypothesis, the amount of experience in some instrumental occupations, including NGOs, trade union and ministerial/MP advisors have negative and significant on the estimated amount of local government experience, while full-time governmental officials have a significant and positive effect on the amount of experience as elected local councillors. The latter, although contrary to the instrumental occupation hypothesis, is nevertheless expected given that a significant portion of full-time governmental

experience of MPs are contributed from those who have served in local council with no other occupation simultaneously, thus serving in a full-time capacity.

**Figure 3.4 Effect of professional experiences (dummy) on the MPs' amount of experience in elected positions in local government**



### 3.5 Problems with OLS model and justification for categorical representation of political career

While the results from the OLS model that uses MPs' pre-parliamentary professional careers to predict their prior political experience do show that some correlation exists between MPs' professional occupations and political engagement prior to their election to Westminster, in particular the relationship between MPs' prior experience in brokerage and instrumental occupations and the amount and nature of pre-parliamentary political experience, there are nevertheless several shortcomings to using OLS model to predict political experiences as continuous variables. Most important of them all is the difficulty in drawing convincing causal

inference from the OLS models. While the models clearly show descriptive correlation between the two aspects of MPs' pre-parliamentary careers, the causal inference that can be drawn is awkward and unusual. It is rather odd for one to conclude that a year spent in a certain profession increases one's participation in local government for a certain number of years. Alternatively, we could express MPs' prior political experiences into several routes into parliament and types of political career. Not only would it be more convenient for us to arrive at a convincing causal inference, but I would also argue that this approach is also in line with the existing literature, intuitive and conceptually suitable to the data.

Among the literature of legislative studies, there has been a long tradition of differentiating various legislators by conceptualizing and categorizing them into several ideal types (Barber 1962, Wahlke et al 1962, Searing 1994). Such classifications have provided us with a simplified yet powerful framework to understand the otherwise complex patterns of legislative behaviours. Although many of these typology distinguish legislators types based on their behaviours in parliament (Searing 1994) and motivations (Barber 1965, Searing 1994), some have traced the origin of these types back to legislators' prior political career (Barber 1965). Among the studies of political recruitment and political leaders' prior career, the grouping of individuals and similar experiences into types has also been a common practice (Allen 2013, Allen 2014, Cairney 2007, King 1981). While I have argued in prior chapters that such a practice has overly simplified our understanding of MPs' prior careers and masked the true impact of pre-parliamentary careers on MPs' behaviour, a typology of MPs' political engagement does have some utilities in terms of providing a clear and concise framework in understanding the pattern of MPs' prior political careers.

Moreover, the construction of political career types would enable us to directly compare the effect of different political experience on MPs career progression and behaviour in the coming analysis. By using individual variables that denote the amount of experience in various types of pre-parliamentary professional and political experience in statistical analysis, the resultant outcomes are in practice a comparison to the baseline of an individual who lacks any of the pre-parliamentary experience as defined by our coding scheme. While this comparison is by no mean meaningless and we may still generate significant inference from these results, a direct comparison between different kinds of experiences might be more relevant under some circumstances. By constructing a typology of MPs' political trajectory into parliament and expressing their pre-parliamentary political experience in a single variable would enable the coming analysis to directly compare the effect of different kinds of prior political engagement. Instead of only comparing with the baseline of a complete political amateur, we may able to discover how MPs who follow a national route into the parliament behave differently from those who follow the local government route by direct comparison.

One natural critique to this approach would be to ask why confine the typology to political and not encompass the MPs' pre-parliamentary professional career as well? I would argue that there are two distinctions between professional and political careers which justifies applying this approach of constructing ideal types to the latter but not the former. Firstly, political career, at least in terms of how this thesis has conceptualized and defined it, is much less diverse than the professional career of MPs. While there are only eleven individual variables that describe various kinds of political experiences in this study, there are, despite efforts to aggregate unit groups in SOC2000 into larger occupational categories, up to

seventeen different professional career types. The diversity in professional career would only increase as the size of the database expands in the future, which would make more occupation unit groups in SOC to become significant in their own right. That leads to possible disaggregation of the current occupational categories or the featuring of other occupation in future researches. On the other hand, many of the individual political experience variables can be aggregated along the dimensions that the typology is constructed, for example, the four kinds of local council experiences can be aggregated along the seniority or locality dimension. Moreover, there is an element of career progression and path dependency within the political realm. It is possible to speak of how experience in one kind of political experience could lead to another - being an ordinary council member could earn promotion towards a leadership position in the council; working in the national party might lead to the opportunity to be an MP candidate. However, such progression and interconnectedness among professional careers simply do not exist. Although career progression is common within certain professions, it is not possible to speak of if and how being a lawyer could lead to an alternative career in marketing and sales. This last point is also supported by the fact that when I try to apply some of the methodology used to determine MPs political career types on their professional career, which I shall mention in the latter section, it did not yield any result of significance.

### **3.6 Introduction to Latent Class Analysis (LCA)**

In order to establish the existence of types of MPs' pre-parliamentary political careers and categorize MPs accordingly, the technique of Latent Class Analysis (LCA) will be used to test the existence of these types, the appropriate number of types to describe MPs' prior political

experiences and assign MPs into the types. The idea of LCA was first proposed by Lazarsfeld (1950) and Lazarsfeld and Henry (1968) as a method of clustering multi-variate and discrete data. LCA as a technique to identify types within dataset has been applied to a variety of research in political sciences, in particular determining types of individuals from their responses in survey data (For example, Breen 2000, Zheng and Pan 2016, Zamfir et al 2014).

The basic model of LCA assumes that an unobserved, or in other words, latent, nominal categorical variable that influences a set of observed, manifest variables which are independent of each other and only connected through the latent categorical variable. Hence any systematic differences among the set of manifest variables explained by the latent classes (Dean and Raftery 2010, Hargenaars and Halman 1989, Linzer and Lewis 2001, Nylund et al 2007). The manifest variables in an LCA model could be continuous or categorical, ordinal or nominal (Nylund et al 2007), although most existing studies and statistical package tends to focus on applying LCA on categorical manifest variables. The relationship between latent class and manifest variables are not deterministic, but probabilistic. Belonging to a certain class in the latent variable would affect the possibility of having certain value in the case of categorical manifest variable, or the means and variance in the case of continuous manifest variable (Hargenaars and Halman 1989, Nylund et al 2007). The resulting estimate in an LCA model is expressed as the set of probabilities that individual cases within the dataset belong to a certain class in the latent variable in accordance to the values of the set of observed, manifest variables.

A major drawback of LCA in the context of establishing a typology of MPs' pre-parliamentary political careers is that the majority of statistical packages require the manifest variables to be categorical while the political career variables in my dataset are continuous. In such circumstances, the using of factor analysis appears to be more appropriate. However, results from factor analysis do not yield any ideal types, but instead estimate individuals' scores along several continuous factors. This makes interpreting any results from factor analysis as a typology problematic. Moreover, when data of MPs' pre-parliamentary political careers is put under factor analysis, the overall patterns of the result, in terms of the number of types and the main manifest variables that are distinguishing the types, are roughly similar to the results in LCA. The similarity between the results from factor analysis and LCA reinforce the robustness of each other. Since the resultant categorical outcome from the LCA analysis provides more convenient and appropriate inferences, I present the LCA results here.

### ***3.6.1 Construction of LCA model***

To transform the continuous career variables into categorical variables, the most straightforward way is simply to turn these into dummy variables and to conduct LCA with the dichotomous variables. This approach is not used because of the amount of information that will be lost in the process. It is also reasonable to expect that besides the presence of certain kinds of political experience on one's CV, the amount of time spent in the said kinds also ought to be an important factor in determining an MP's political career type. Hence, instead of using the dichotomous dummy in the LCA, a set of ordinal categorical variables roughly denoting the amount of time MPs spent in different kinds of political positions is generated by transforming them into deciles. Because of the high amount of zero entries in many of these

variables, the resulting ordinal categories for each of these variables are less than ten with the maximum number of categories in any of the variables being five (including the category for zero entry) while a number of political career variables have become de facto dummy variables after transformation into deciles.

Furthermore, all of the MPs with no political experience at all are excluded from the LCA and instead form their own category of 'Career Changers'. The reason for their exclusion from the LCA is because they are a conceptually distinctive and easily identifiable group of MPs within the dataset. When the Career Changers are included in the LCA, it is inevitable that either they are being classified into certain type of political career type en masse or, when the number of latent classes increases in the model, form their own type with a number of MPs who have some political experiences. Both of these make interpreting the meaning of the career types and generation of inferences from the resultant typology problematic. Career Changers are also clearly and easily identifiable within the dataset with concise and unambiguous selection criteria, which makes identification of Career Changers with statistical processes unnecessary. Moreover, as a robustness test for the decision to omit Career Changers from LCA, an alternative dataset including Career Changers are also analyzed by LCA, this result in little deviation from the general patterns and structure of the types of political career generated from LCA excluding Career Changers. Hence, in order to achieve a clean and distinct group of Career Changers in the typology of MPss prior political career, it was decided that Career Changers would be omitted in the final LCA.



With the dataset to be analyzed by LCA determined, attention shall now be put to determine the correct number of latent classes in the model. The usual practice is to begin with LCA with only one class, and then gradually increase the number of classes in the model until the concern of overfitting outweigh the benefit in goodness of fit by further increasing the number of classes. Among the literature on LCA, there are several parameters that are used in determining the most appropriate number of classes in LCA. These includes L Ration Tests (LRT; Linzer and Lewis 2011), Akaike's Information Criterion (AIC; Akaike 1987) Bayesian Information Criterion (BIC; Schwartz 1978) and adjusted BIC (Sclove, 1987). Among the literature, there does not appear to be a general consensus among scholars and statisticians as to which of these parameters should be used to determine the goodness of fit of a model. Various researchers that have utilized LCA in their work have relied on different parameters or combination of parameters to determine the appropriate number of classes in the LCA. Nylund et al (2007) have tested the accuracy of these parameters on simulation generated data and suggested that Bootstrap LRT has the best performance in determining the correct number of latent classes in the simulated data, followed by BIC and adjusted BIC. Moreover, besides these statistical parameters and the model's goodness of fit, there is also substantive concern in selecting to number of classes; whether the number classes are compatible with the hypothesis and if the content of resultant classes are empirically and theoretically meaningful (Zheng and Pan 2016).

Table 3.5 shows the measure of fit of the LCA models with the number of latent classes of one through five using the Stata LCA plugin (Lanza et al 2015). The general rule in determining the best model in LCA model selection is to minimize the value of Log Likelihood, AIC and BIC

while maximizing the entropy R-square. The parameters given in Table 3.5 have shown that the BIC increased while Log Likelihood decreased monotonically when the number of latent classes increased from one through five. However, the value of AIC and Adjusted both score the minimum value when the number of latent class is set at three. The three class model also has the highest Entropy R-square. These parameters indicate that the model with three latent classes appears to be the most appropriate one in describing the clusters within the data.

**Table 3.5 LCA Model fit statistics of, Latent class number 1 through 5**

No of classes	AIC	BIC	Adjusted BIC	Entropy R-sq	Log likelihood
1	480.44013	<b>535.90586</b>	482.05421	1	-1007.7775
2	435.46747	549.66162	438.79057	.84530478	-967.29116
3	<b>400.2459</b>	573.16848	<b>405.27802</b>	<b>.89040489</b>	-931.68037
4	407.56689	639.2179	414.30804	.88001556	-917.34087
5	426.2334	716.61282	434.68357	.8249129	<b>-908.67412</b>

Note: LCA conducted in Stata using the Stata LCA plugin<sup>7</sup>

Figure 3.5 shows the conditional probabilities of an MP that situated on a certain decile of a political career variable to belong to each of the three latent classes. The first class contains about 22% of the MPs subjected to LCA (excluding career changers). The figure shows that MPs belong to this group score highly in the variable *ctilelocgovn* (decile of experience in local government in same constituency) and *ctilempcann* (decile of previous MP candidacies in the same constituency). These show that MPs allocated to class 1 are mostly those who have extensive local political experience in the constituency that they currently represent in Westminster prior to their election. Class 2 contains about 46% of the population. Graph 3.5 shows MPs who belong to class 2 score highly in *ctilelocgovf* (decile of experience in local

<sup>7</sup> LCA Stata Plugin (Version 1.2) [Software]. (2015). University Park: The Methodology Center, Penn State. Retrieved from [methodology.psu.edu](http://methodology.psu.edu)

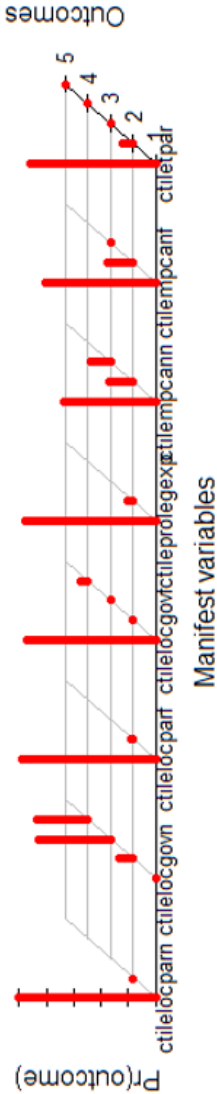
government, out of constituency) and *ctilempcanf* (decile of previous MPs candidacies in another constituency) as well as scoring moderately in *ctiletpar* (decile of experience in national party politics) and *ctilempcann*. This indicates that most MPs in class 2 would also have extensive experiences in local politics, but in this case, these experiences are earned in another part of the country; in some cases, this is supplemented with a moderate level of experience in national party politics and previous attempt in fighting their current seat. Class 3 contains about 33% of the population. They score very highly in *ctiletpar* while only having modest scores in most other political experience variables except *ctilempcanf*. This indicates that most MPs who belong to this class have had an extensive pre-parliamentary political career in the national party political scene, which on certain occasions, is complemented by experiences in other levels of government.

### **3.6.2 Descriptive analysis of the political career types**

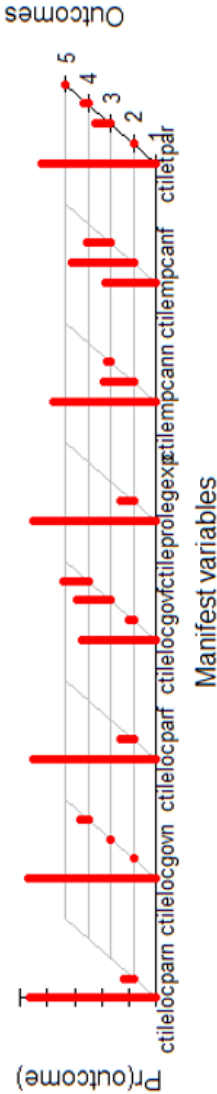
Given the nature of these three latent classes indicated by Figure 3.5, I shall call them Local Hero, Carpetbagger and Party Animal respectively. As a robustness check for the allocation of political career groups, and to further explore the distinction between the groups, Table 3.5 shows the mean amount of political experience among MPs who belong to a political career groups.

Figure 3.5 Conditional Probabilities of a specific decile, given latent class membership<sup>8</sup>

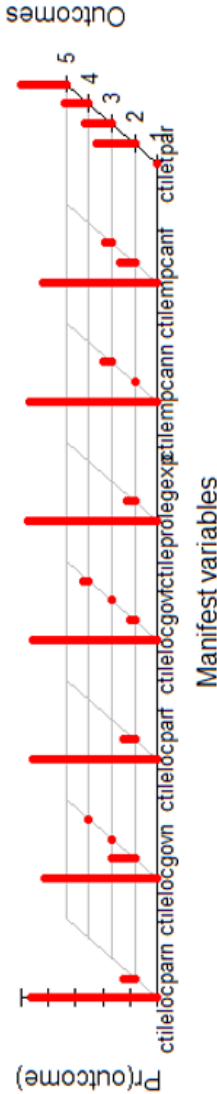
Class 1: population share = 0.218



Class 2: population share = 0.457



Class 3: population share = 0.325



<sup>8</sup> Estimated using polCA R package,

**Table 3.6 Mean Amount of Political Experience among MPs belonging to the political career groups**

Mean amount of experience (in no. of year, unless specified)	Career Changer	Local Hero	Carpetbagger	Party Animal	Overall
Local Government (same const)	-	10.55814 (1.077)	.5 (.246)	.453 (.135)	2.348 (.352)
Local Government (diff const)	-	.256 (.179)	2.744 (.433)	.344 (.468)	1.2 (.194)
Number of prior MP candidacies (same const)	-	.512 (.135)	.267 (.0534)	.125 (.061)	.237 (.0386)
Number of prior MP candidacies (diff const)	-	.186 (.06)	.895 (.0891)	.203 (.0711)	.438 (.048)
Devolved Assembly/ European Parliament	-	.465 (.332)	.767 (.271)	.343 (.22)	.482 (.137)
National Party Experience	-	.093 (.0558)	.581 (.154)	6.66 (.769)	2.14 (.297)
Number of MPs	31	43	86	64	224
Percentage	13.84	19.2	38.39	28.57	100

Note: SE in parentheses

The results are largely as expected. Party Animals have the most experience in the national party political scene. They have on average spent a little under seven years in national party politics, while having the least experience in local government and prior parliamentary candidacy except for the Career Changers. For the local heroes, experience in local government of the same constituency is the most prominent kind of political experience, the mean amount of time local heroes spent in local government in the same locale is a little over ten years. In comparison, Carpetbaggers prior political experiences are mostly earned from local government out of their current constituency. It is also remarkable that besides the locale of which these experiences are earned, there are significant differences in the amount of local government experience between Local Heroes and Carpetbaggers. On average, Carpetbaggers have less than three years of experience in local government out of their

current constituency, while Local Heroes have on average ten years of in-constituency experiences. Not only does it show that carpet baggers have much less local government experiences prior to their election, it also indicates that the Local Heroes' route toward Westminster is much longer and potentially more torturous compared with the other groups. It is apparent that these individuals have spent a comparatively much longer time in the lower echelons of government and politics before eventually earning promotion to Westminster.

**Table 3.7 Party Affiliation and Demographic of the political career types**

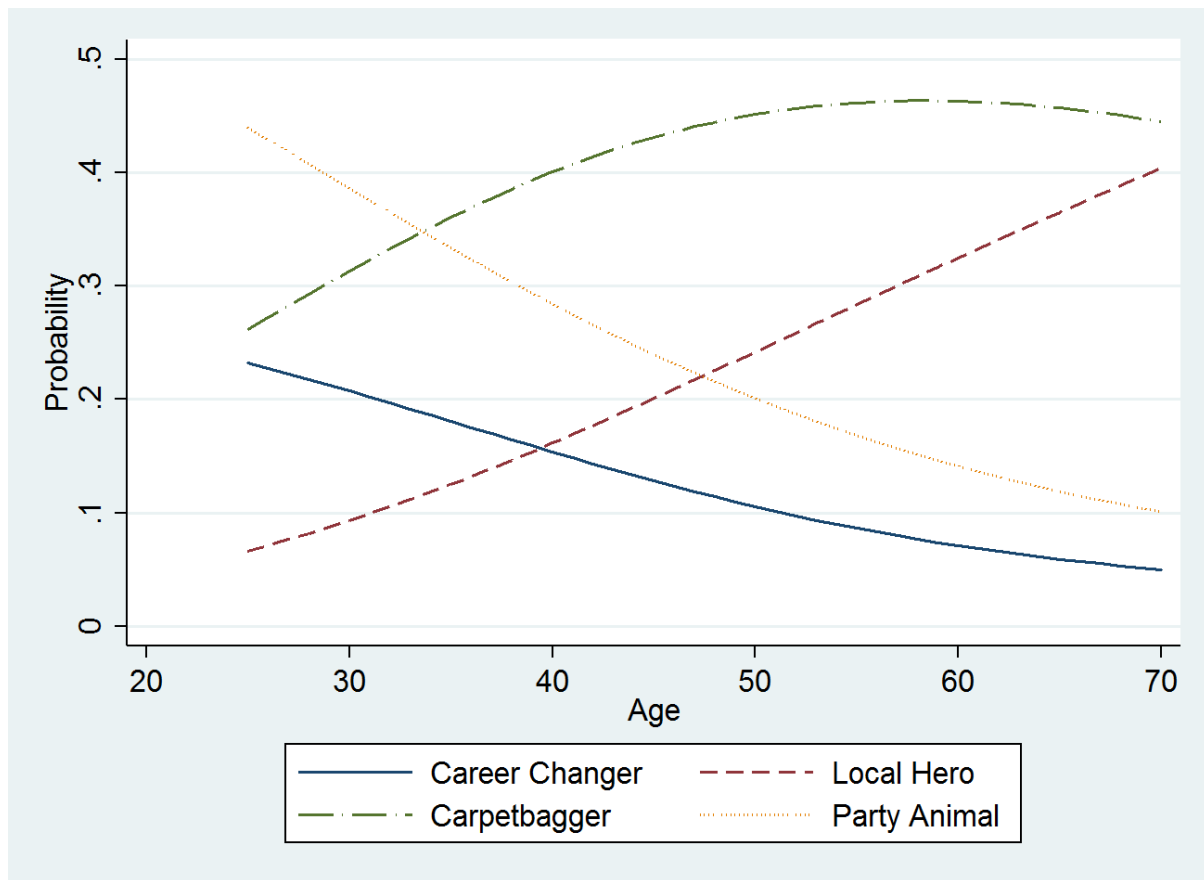
	Career Changer	Local Hero	Carpetbagger	Party Animal	Overall
Conservative	20 (13.89%)	27 (18.75%)	66 (45.83%)	31 (21.53%)	144 (100%)
Labour	10 (15.87%)	12 (19.05%)	14 (22.22%)	27 (42.86%)	63 (100%)
Lib Dem	0	3 (30%)	5 (50%)	2 (20%)	10 (100%)
Mean Age	41.258 (1.464)	47.651 (1.42)	44.791 (.995)	38.797 (.998)	43.138 (.622)
% Female	35.48	18.6	32.56	37.5	31.7
% Ethnic Minority	9.68	2.33	8.14	7.81	7.14
Number of MPs	31	43	86	64	224
Percentage	13.84	19.2	38.39	28.57	100

Table 3.7 indicates the party affiliation and demographic among MPs belonging to the four political career types. The distribution of the different types of prior political career appears to be fairly even among the three major parties with the notable exception of Labour. In terms of the proportion within the party cohort, there appears to be many more Party Animals at the expense of Carpetbaggers for Labour. The result is consistent with the descriptive analysis at the beginning of this chapter. This could potentially suggest that the nomination process of Labour is comparatively more favourable to party insiders than that of the other parties. Alternatively, this could also be explained by the fact that there was a huge swing against Labour towards the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats in the 2010 general election, which

makes party insiders who are able to obtain nomination to safer seats more likely to secure a victory. The relationship between MPs prior career and the safeness of their seats shall be subject to further analysis in the coming chapter. In terms of the demographic of the four types, the most dramatic difference is between Local Heroes and the three other groups. Local Heroes have a statistically significantly higher mean age compared with Career Changers and Party Animals, which is not surprising given the fact that they have spent such a long time in the local council. Figure 3.6 shows the relationship between the age of the new MP and the probability of him/her belonging to one of the political career types. It is apparent that as the age of a new MP increases, the probability of them being a Party Animal or Career Changer decreases while that of being a Carpet Bagger and Local Hero increases. There also appears to be fewer female and minority MPs among local heroes. In other words, Local Hero appears to be have the most resemblance to the stereotypical politician - middle aged white man. However, it should be noted that the latter two distinctions are not statistically significant.

### ***3.6.3 Professional career and political career types***

After establishing the typography and validity of the political career types, we can again turn our attention to the relationship between MPs' pre-parliamentary professional careers and political engagement. Table 3.8 shows the number of new MPs in each of the political career groups that have worked in certain professions at some point during their pre-parliamentary professional career. The percentage indicated in the table represent how new MPs with certain kinds of professional experience are distributed among MPs that have entered parliament through one of the four routes. Some of the distributional patterns that are emerging here is similar to our finding in the OLS models and hence expected. MPs with inst-

**Figure 3.6 New MPs' age at election and probability of political career type<sup>8</sup>**

rumental occupation experiences such as social science research, political worker, ministerial/MP advisor, NGOs and trade unionist, who have been found to have more experience in national party politics, are also more likely to be categorized as Party Animals. Other notable findings include Business Owner appear to be more opportunistic and less committed to either their local area nor to the national party as more than half of them are categorized a carpetbagger while 75% of military officers do not have any recorded prior political engagement and hence fall into the category of Career Changer. The remaining military personnel follow the national party route into parliament and none of them have passed through the other two routes to Westminster, both of which are driven by some form

<sup>8</sup> Results obtained from Multinomial Logistic Regression model that controlled for new MPs' professional career, party affiliation, gender and ethnicity. Coefficient table can be found in Appendix



of participation in local politics. It would appear that military credentials might have the political benefit of allowing these individuals to bypass local politics and, similar to those who have worked in instrumental occupations, allow them to enter politics at the national level, or even parliamentary level, laterally.

**Table 3.8. Frequency Table, Pre-Parliamentary Professional and Political Career Type**

Occupation Categories\Political career type	Career Changer	Local Hero	Carpetbagger	Party Animal	Total
Lawyer	6(19.35)	4(9.09)	14(16.09)	7(10.94)	31(13.72)
Teacher	2(6.45)	3(6.82)	7(8.05)	5(7.81)	17(7.52)
Communication*	9(29.03)	3(6.82)	19(21.84)	15(23.44)	46(20.35)
<i>Media</i>	5(16.13)	1(2.27)	7(8.05)	3(4.69)	16(7.08)
<i>Public Relation</i>	5(16.13)	3(6.82)	15(17.24)	12(18.75)	35(15.49)
Social Science Researcher***	2(6.45)	1(2.27)	12(13.79)	23(35.94)	38(16.81)
Political Worker***	4(12.9)	3(6.82)	4(4.6)	14(21.88)	25(11.06)
Full time governmental Experiences*	1(3.23)	11(25)	16(18.39)	9(14.06)	37(16.37)
Ministerial/MPs advisors***	0(0)	0(0)	3(3.45)	22(34.38)	25(11.06)
Business Owner**	4(12.9)	10(22.73)	25(28.74)	7(10.94)	46(20.35)
Military Officer***	6(19.35)	0(0)	0(0)	2(3.13)	8(3.54)
Agriculture	0(0)	2(4.55)	3(3.45)	1(1.56)	6(2.65)
Science and Technology*	4(12.9)	4(9.09)	2(2.3)	2(3.13)	12(5.31)
Marketing and Sales					
Finance	3(9.68)	7(15.91)	17(19.54)	7(10.94)	34(15.04)
NGOs**	5(16.13)	2(4.55)	7(8.05)	13(20.31)	27(11.95)
Trade Unions officials***	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	7(10.94)	7(3.1)
Social Service	1(3.23)	2(4.55)	3(3.45)	3(4.69)	9(3.98)
Number of MPs	31	44	87	64	226

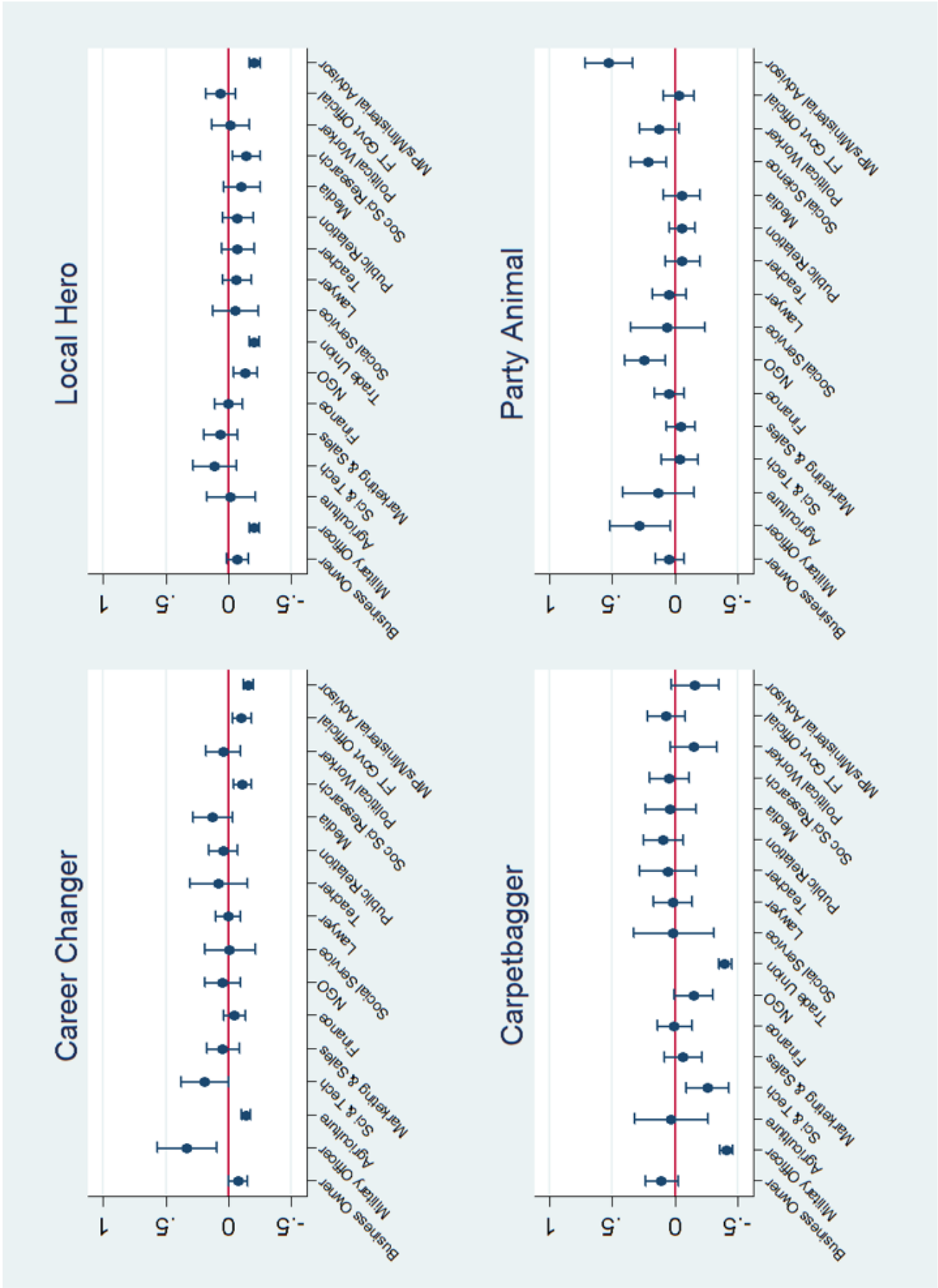
Note: Results of Pearson Chi-squared test \*p<0.1, \*\*p<0.05, \*\*\*p<0.01 , percentages in parentheses

The distribution of professional experience among MPs of the four types, while useful, is nevertheless not sufficient in determining the precise relation between MPs' professional careers and the political route through which they enter parliament. Most importantly, it did

not take into account the possibility of MPs having multiple professional experiences and how they interact with each other. In order to take the entire professional career into account, Figure 3.7 shows the changes in predicted probability of an MP having followed one of the political routes into parliament, given they have any experience in one of the professional occupation group, regardless of the length or amount of experience. The probability is predicted by using multinomial logistic model to regress MPs' political career type against dummy variables of professional occupational groups. The model includes controls for MPs' gender, age, ethnicity and party affiliation, the marginal impact of which is not shown in the graph but can be found in Table 3.10 as shown in the appendix at the end of this chapter. The coefficient for Trade Union experience is also omitted from two of the graphs because its highly correlated nature with political career types prevent statistical packages from calculating the confidence interval on these two occasions. The confidence level has been set at 90%.

Findings from the multinomial logistic model are mostly similar to the observations from previous identification and modelling methods. Some of the instrumental occupations, such as ministerial advisors and social science researchers have a significant positive impact on the probability of an MP being classified as Party Animal, while decreasing the probability of being a Career Changer or Local Hero. This is with the notable exception of experience in media and public relations, which have no significant effect on the probability of belonging to any of the

Figure 3.7. Effect of experience in professional occupations groups on the probability of being in a political career group



political career types. Experience in the military increases the probability of being a Career Changer or Party Animal, which is hardly surprising given the observation in Table 3.8. Having been an owner of business makes an MP less likely to be a Career Changer. Lastly, it is again notable that experience in the two brokerage occupations, lawyer and teacher, have no significant impact on the probability of MPs' political career type. In particular, they do not have a negative impact on the probability of being a Career Changer. This is further indication that although brokerage occupation theoretically increases the feasibility of having a career in politics alongside a proper full-time day job, those who are successful in earning a seat in parliament while having these professional backgrounds are not necessarily more politically seasoned among the cohort. A substantial amount of MPs with experience in brokerage occupations do not have any formal and recorded participation in party politics, either in local or national level, prior to their election.

### **3.7 Methodological concerns and inferences**

This last finding also raises some concerns when we try to interpret these results and infer generalizable relations between professional career and political participation. Given this research is a cohort study that is confined to MPs newly elected in a single general election, all the cases included in the analysis are those who are successful in the pursuit of a thriving political career and a seat in the parliament. It is therefore a skewed sample of all aspiring politicians. Hence all inferences, especially those that involved the relationship between pre-parliamentary professional career and political engagement, must take the biased nature of the data and the methodological implication into account. Results from the above analysis only indicate the distributional pattern of professional and political experience among those

who are successful in both the nomination and electoral process. What these results have shown is therefore the combinations of professional and political careers that are most common among those who are successful, instead of the general relationship between the two aspects of pre-parliamentary careers. Although this limitation prevents any inference on the correlation between professional and political careers among politicians who are not successful in obtaining nomination or winning election, it does provide us with a glimpse of what a successful pre-parliamentary career looks like.

In light of these methodological limitations and concerns, there are two possible ways of interpreting the results. First of all, what the results show is how certain professional occupations are structurally linked with the political realm and therefore provide more politically experienced individuals. This is similar to the instrumental hypothesis advanced by Cairney, but to a certain extent more stringent. Positions in occupational groups such as social science research, trade unionist, political worker, ministerial advisors, and to a lesser public relations, are correlated with political experience in general and experience in the national party in particular, not merely because they provide a link to politics as suggested by Cairney, but more so because many of the positions in these professional groups are most commonly, if not exclusively, found within the realm of national party politics. In other words, experiences among these professions are embedded within the political realm. This relation would have been particularly true among those who successfully obtain nomination and winning at election. But given the limitation of the dataset, it is not known whether this relation holds true to those who lose their election, failed to get nominated or did not pursue a parliamentary career all together.

Secondly, an alternative way of interpreting the results is that they indicate how, for a successful candidate, pre-parliamentary professional and political experience complement each other. Since the results have indicated what a typical successful pre-parliamentary looks like, we could therefore see these patterns as the kinds of combination of both aspects of pre-parliamentary career that are likely to lead to successfully obtaining nominations and winning an election. Under this line of inference, a positive relationship between certain professional occupation and political experience could be an indication that those who work in the said profession might need some prior experience in politics in order to legitimize their own bid for parliamentary seats and winning the support of their party gatekeepers during the nomination process or their constituent during election. On the other hand, for some professions, the professional credential alone could be attractive enough for individuals to win support from party gatekeepers and the electorate. Such professions would be shown in the result as having a negative correlation with political experience as the latter is less of a necessity for these individuals to enter parliament.

The latter interpretation which sees the patterns emerge in the results as how professional and political careers complement each other among successful candidates, also enables us to reconcile some of the unmet expectations from the results as well as explaining those that are unexpected. With the exception of one model, which shows the amount of experience as a teacher appears to have a positive correlation with the total amount of political experience, among the 2010 cohort of new MPs, there is in general no substantial positive relationship between experience in brokerage occupations and prior political participation. In fact, a small but substantial portion of successful candidates with brokerage occupations experience had

no prior political experience whatsoever. This indicates that successful candidates who have worked in brokerage occupations are not necessarily more politically experienced than their colleagues as prior literature would have predicted. If we are to take the brokerage hypothesis and the second interpretation together. On the one hand, brokerage occupations do provide more opportunity for pre-parliamentary political involvement that lead to a positive correlation with political experience. On the other hand, however, the fact that brokerage occupations are traditionally seen as political stepping stones and have played such an important role in parliament both prior and present, means that when compared to those who worked in other professions, people with experience in brokerage occupations are more likely to be seen as legitimate candidates for nomination and election by party gatekeepers and the electorate even if they have little or no prior political experience, which depresses the correlation between experience in brokerage occupation with prior political engagement. Taking these two opposing forces together might produce a neutral result which is observed from the data. Besides the puzzle of the lack of any significant results from brokerage occupation, the second interpretation also explains why experience in the military is estimated to have a negative effect on MPs' prior political involvement. Not only is that because military personnel are prohibited to participate in party politics during their time in the service, it could also be because military credentials are likely to be very well received by both party gatekeepers and the electorate that would have allowed them to secure nomination and voter support despite their lack of formal political experience.

### 3.8 Discussion

The purpose of this chapter was to analyze MPs' pre-parliamentary careers descriptively as well as to discover any relationship between the professional and political dimensions of MPs' pre-parliamentary careers. I have shown that the two dimensions of MPs' pre-parliamentary careers do have, as expected by some of the literature and hypothesized in prior chapters, correlation between them. As suggested by the professionalization literature, pre-parliamentary professional experiences in some of the political facilitating occupations, in particular among the instrumental occupations according to Cairney (2007) do have a significant positive effect on the amount of overall pre-parliamentary political experience among MPs. On the other hand, experience in the military, and to a lesser extent the finance industry, appears to have a negative relation with pre-parliamentary political participation among MPs and depresses the amount of their prior political experiences.

In terms of how professional occupation affects the kinds of political experience that MPs have had prior to their election, I have employed two analytical strategies : OLS regression on the amount of experiences in the two dimension of pre-parliamentary career; and multinomial logistic regression on the types of political career, which is obtained using latent class analysis (LCA). Results from the LCA indicate that MPs' pre-parliamentary political careers can generally be classified into four different types: Career Changers, Carpetbaggers, Local Heroes, and Party Animals. Results from both the OLS and multinomial logistic regression after LCA are largely in agreement with each other. The amount of experience in most instrumental occupations is estimated to have a positive relation with the amount of experience in national party politics, while having experience in these occupations are also



more likely to be classified as a Party Animal in the LCA. Instrumental experiences also have the reverse effect on the total amount of experience in local government as well as the probability of being a local hero. Having experience in the military and science and technology increases the chance of an MP being classified as Career Changer. Contrary to expectations, experience in brokerage occupations does not have any significant effect on the amount or the nature of MPs' prior political career, although as suggested in the previous section, this could be due to the fact that the dataset is a skewed sample of all aspiring politicians that only includes successful individuals. Moreover, results from the LCA and the resultant four political career types also reveal how demographic and party affiliation varies among MPs with different political careers. Local Heroes are much older, ethnically homogenous, have fewer females, and in total spend more time in pre-parliamentary political careers than MPs of the other types, while Party Animals are significantly younger than MPs from all the other groups except Career Changers. Labour also has many more Party Animals at the expense of Carpetbaggers proportionally when compared to the other two major parties.

### **3.9 Conclusion**

The relationship and correlation between the professional and political dimensions of MPs' pre-parliamentary careers explored in this chapter lays the foundation for the analysis of MPs' legislative behaviour and their choice of roles in the coming chapters. As noted in previous chapters, the amount and nature of the political experiences of MPs affects not only their skills and knowledge in performing their responsibilities and tasks as an MP, but also the networks and connections that they possess, which in turn affects their political futures and hence behaviour. The correlation between the two dimensions of pre-parliamentary careers

means that in order to discover the independent effect of individual professional and political pre-parliamentary careers on legislative behaviour, a comprehensive approach that encompasses both dimensions is necessary to discern the effect from the two dimensions of pre-parliamentary career from each other. Otherwise, we will not be able to tell which dimension is actually responsible for the results.

After analyzing MPs' pre-parliamentary careers descriptively and exploring the correlation between the two dimensions of pre-parliamentary career, the following chapters focus on how MPs' pre-parliamentary professional and political careers together and independently affect the career trajectory and behaviour of MPs during their first term in parliament.

## Appendix, Chapter Three

**Table 3.9. Result of OLS regression of the amount of political experience on professional experience and demographic information**

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Business Owner	.069(.067)	.286(1.043)	.015(.031)	.037(.034)
Military Officers	-.483(.163)***	-5.529(2.076)***	-.096(.076)	-.261(.155)*
Agriculture	.217(.126)*	3.518(2.386)	.02(.059)	-.031(.119)
Science & Tech	-.253(.179)	-2.435(1.738)	-.131(.083)	-.083(.16=7)
Marketing & Sales	.023(.114)	.104(1.232)	.005(.053)	-.04(.109)
Finance	-.17(.094)*	-2.151(1.101)*	-.04(.044)	-.104(.09)
NGOs	.298(.199)	-.674(1.222)	.539(.093)***	-.486(.189)**
Trade Unions	.652(.137)***	6.512(2.316)***	1.021(.034)***	-.334(.13)**
Social Services	.1(.139)	-.839(2.208)	-.043(.065)	-.037(.132)
Lawyer	-.035(.073)	-1.287(1.204)	.029(.034)	-.072(.069)
Teacher	.196(.094)**	.097(1.547)	-.025(.044)	.042(.089)
Public Relation	.102(.097)	.29(1.146)	.103(.046)**	-.085(.093)
Media	-.119(.151)	-2.023(1.547)	.031(.071)	-.146(.144)
Soc-Sci Research	.671(.187)	2.146(1.164)*	.394(.087)***	.272(.178)
Political Worker	.336(.147)**	2.114(1.269)*	.293(.069)***	-.05(.14)
FT Governmental	.645(.121)***	3.173(1.142)***	.013(.057)	.488(.115)***
Ministerial/MPs Advisor	.504(.306)	.914(1.331)	1.074(.143)***	-.523(.291)*
Female	-1.856(.817)**	-2.364(.9)***	-.082(.382)	-2.243(.777)***
Age	.244(.047)***	.319(.046)***	-.034(.022)	.262(.045)***
Ethnic Minority	-1.202(1.338)	-.928(1.472)	.031(.625)	-.435(1.273)
Labour <sup>c</sup>	.732(.903)	1.86(.987)*	.558(.422)	1.244(.859)
Lib Dem <sup>c</sup>	3.161(1.702)**	3.34(1.915)*	-.266(.795)	2.684(1.619)*
R-sq	.515	.416	.719	.384
N	219	219	219	219

Note: \* p<.1, \*\*p<.05, \*\*\* p<.01, <sup>c</sup>Baseline is Conservative, SE in parentheses

**Table 3.10. Marginal change in probability of MPs' political career type dependent on professional occupations after multinomial logistic regression**

	(1) Career Changers	(2) Local Heroes	(3) Carpetbaggers	(4) Party Animals
Business Owner	-.076(.046)*	-.071(.054)	.105(.08)	.042(.071)
Military Officers	.334(.145)**	-.204(.025)***	-.41(.031)***	.279(.145)*
Agriculture	-.14(.2)***	-.019(.118)	.03(.178)	.129(.173)
Science & Tech	.188(.116)	.11(.107)	-.259(.103)**	-.038(.087)
Marketing & Sales	.045(.078)	.064(.081)	-.062(.091)	-.047(.071)
Finance	-.047(.054)	-.002(.066)	.002(.084)	.046(.072)
NGOs	.048(.087)	-.138(.058)**	-.15(.093)	.24(.1)**
Trade Unions		-.204(.025)***	-.4(.03)***	
Social Services	-.011(.121)	-.056(.112)	.01(.196)	.057(.182)
Lawyer	.004(.06)	-.065(.069)	.015(.093)	.046(.081)
Teacher	.078(.139)	-.074(.08)	.056(.136)	-.059(.084)
Public Relation	.041(.07)	-.073(.075)	.092(.096)	-.059(.064)
Media	.126(.097)	-.106(.091)	.034(.124)	-.055(.089)
Soc-Sci Research	-.113(.043)***	-.143(.067)**	.044(.096)	.212(.087)**
Political Worker	.041(.085)	-.014(.093)	-.149(.111)	.122(.096)
FT Governmental	-.105(.047)	.065(.072)	.071(.091)	-.03(.075)
Ministerial/MPs Advisor	-.157(.023)***	-.209(.026)***	-.161(.116)	.527(.114)***
Female	.043(.049)	-.093(.056)*	.059(.072)	-.009(.055)
Age	-.005(.003)*	.008(.003)**	.005(.004)	-.008(.003)**
Ethnic Minority	-.009(.072)	-.125(.077)	.064(.115)	.07(.098)
Labour <sup>c</sup>	.041(.055)	.091(.07)	-.174(.076)**	.043(.063)
Lib Dem <sup>c</sup>	-.147(.022)***	.02(.116)	.069(.149)	.058(.118)

Note: \* p<.1, \*\*p<.05, \*\*\* p<.01, n= 219, <sup>c</sup>Baseline is Conservative, SE in parentheses

## **Chapter Four – Pre-parliamentary career and electoral security**

### **4.1 Introduction**

In the previous chapter I have shown how MPs' pre-parliamentary professional careers can affect the political trajectory through which they enter parliament. The coming chapters are devoted to exploring how the professional and political dimensions of pre-parliamentary careers affect MPs' subsequent political careers and their behaviour in parliament. This chapter focuses on how MPs' pre-parliamentary experiences affect the choice of party selectors in the process of candidate recruitment and hence the kind of constituency that they eventually represent.

There are two reasons why this is noteworthy. Firstly, analyzing the impact of the pre-parliamentary career on the process of candidate recruitment and the majority, or in other words their electoral security, could provide some insight on if, and how, the party recruitment process is biased or prejudicial towards applicants with certain types of pre-parliamentary experiences. Secondly, electoral circumstances and majority has been found to be a factor in much of the literature to be an important determinant of MPs behaviour once they are elected. Understanding how pre-parliamentary careers can affect the kind of constituency that MPs will eventually represent shall provide a solid foundation for further analysis between MPs' pre-parliamentary careers and their behaviour in parliament once elected.

## **4.2 Pre-parliamentary career and electoral security**

The electoral security of MPs is a natural starting point in any discussion of individual parliamentary behaviour, because it is of such fundamental importance to the consideration of any elected politician. In any democratic assembly, parliamentary careers live or die at the mercy of the electorate. Scholars of legislative studies have long been using electoral security and the parliamentarians' urge to secure their own political future, by ensuring their survival in elections, as a major motivation and determinant in their behaviour in the legislature (Mayhew 1974). However, to establish the relationship between pre-parliamentary careers and MPs' behaviour, instead of treating electoral security merely as an intervening factor that needs to be controlled for, we should also consider the possibility that the electoral security of MPs is endogenous to MPs' pre-parliamentary careers. The inherent advantage of people with experience in professions that are considered 'political facilitating' in the process of candidate selection has been well established in the literature around the professionalization of politics (Norris and Lovenduski 1995). It is possible that their advantage in the process of recruitment not only translates into a higher possibility of being selected to represent their party in parliamentary elections, but also results in them being selected to run for seats that have inherently larger majorities for their respective parties, which are hence safer and ensure a long tenure for the individual, as well as freeing them from electoral pressure and insecurity, which could be reflected in their behaviour in parliament. In order to explore the relationship between pre-parliamentary careers of MPs and their electoral security, we need to first understand the process that decides which constituency a prospective candidate is going to run in? Who is involved in this process? And what are their considerations in determining who is going to run in which constituencies?

Before I further the discussion on how MPs's pre-parliamentary experience might affect their allocation among constituencies and hence their electoral security, it is perhaps necessary to reiterate a methodological point made in the prior chapter; that is, the dataset used in this research is confined to those who succeed in securing a nomination and winning seats in parliament, it would be susceptible to attrition bias if I were to generalize my findings in the following section and extend inference on the process of candidate recruitment as a whole. Therefore, the purpose of this discussion on electoral security is to descriptively analyse how pre-parliamentary careers associate with the pattern of electoral security among MPs, which, given the central role of electoral security in determining legislative behaviour in general, is an essential step that paves the way for further analysis on the relation between pre-parliamentary careers and MPs' behaviour in parliament. I also offer several plausible hypotheses on how pre-parliamentary careers may affect the process of candidate recruitment and seat allocation in particular, which, while not definitively supported by the results given here, may serve as a starting point for future research on the process of political recruitment in Britain.

#### ***4.2.1 Recruitment and candidate selection in the UK***

The conventional wisdom concerning the process of candidate selection is that it is dominated by the local constituency parties, instead of being dictated by party leadership or central organization. Under most circumstances, the role of the national party was to compile a list of prospective candidates that met minimal criteria of quality, party loyalty or political desirability that would serve as a pool of officially sanctioned individuals from which constituency parties could consider nominating individuals as their prospective parliamentary

candidates (PPC) (Allen 2014, Norris and Lovenduski 1995, Rush 1994). Yet both major parties have, in recent years, adopted reforms that could be characterized as a centralization of the candidate selection process, exerting more control over who is ultimately adopted, for the stated purpose of ensuring the 'quality' of candidates, as well as the gender and ethnic representativeness of the parliamentary party (Ashe et al 2010, Cutts et al 2008, Hill 2013, McIlveen 2009, Shaw 2001).

For the Conservatives, on top of their existing mechanism, which allows individuals on the approved list to apply for any vacant seats, a 'priority list', that contained candidates of exceptional quality, half of which have to be women, is compiled. Constituencies which have retiring Conservative MPs, as well as targeted seats, would have to pick their candidate from this 'priority list'. The rationale behind the implementation of the 'priority list' is to ensure that these exceptional individuals, women in particular, are selected in seats where they would have a reasonable chance of being elected in the election, thus ensuring their entrance into parliament, and the quality and representativeness of the resulting parliamentary cohort (Allen 2014, Hill 2013, McIlveen 2009).

For the Labour party, centralization of the recruitment process mainly comes from the implementation of a national parliamentary panel of candidates, which is maintained and vetted by the National Executive Committee (NEC). Candidates recommended by affiliated organizations would also be automatically included in the panel, yet this is subject to any prior agreement between the said organization and the NEC (Labour Party, 2013, p24). The national panel replaced the previous system of A, B, C and W list of candidates which was separately



maintained by trade unions, constituency parties and the Cooperative party (Allen 2014, Norris and Lovenduski 1995). To promote female representation and achieve the long term goal of having half the parliamentary Labour Party (PLP) consisting of women MPs, the NEC has also promoted, and in certain cases imposed, an all women shortlist (AWS) upon constituency parties, particularly in seats with retiring incumbent Labour MPs (Ashe et al 2010, Cutts et al 2008).

Despite these centralization reforms, there are two similarities between the candidate selection processes of the two major parties that ought to be highlighted. Firstly, despite reforms with centralization tendencies, the ultimate decision of nomination remains in the hand of the constituency parties. Although the 'priority list' of the Conservative party and the national panel and imposition of AWS in Labour has significantly narrowed the pool of candidates from which constituency parties, especially among safe and target seats, could choose from, the decision of whom from the shortlisted candidates could represent the party in these constituencies remains that of the constituency parties. This means that concerns of both the national and constituency party would be reflected in the final selection of the candidates. Secondly, one element of the candidate selection process that has survived these reforms is that approved candidates would have to actively seek nomination from particular constituency parties and vice versa. After individuals have been placed on the 'priority list', approved list or national panel of candidates, they have to proactively apply for nomination from constituency parties, while constituency parties would, at the same time, contact approved individuals to apply for nomination (Norris and Lovenduski 1995). During this process, seats that are dominated by a party and consistently result in a wide winning margin

in elections for the said party, or in other words a safe seat, are considered especially valuable among applicants. Receiving the nomination in a safe seat would virtually guarantee their seat in parliament for life and provide MPs with a stepping stone to higher office (Allen 2014). Hence, safe seats are eagerly pursued by most applicants and the nomination for which is considered highly competitive. The constituency party of a safe seat could receive as many as 200-400 applications from approved individuals, while a difficult seat, where the opposing party has a large majority, could have merely ten applicants (Norris and Lovenduski 1995). The fact that the slate of applicants approved by the national party organization has a certain degree of freedom in deciding which seats they would like to put their name forward for consideration in means that the framework of supply and demand for certain types of candidates could be applied not only to the overall distribution of candidacy among aspiring MPs, but also to the allocation of safe seats and hence the patterns of constituency electoral security among MPs (Norris and Lovenduski 1995).

On the demand side of candidates from the party, Norris and Lovenduski (1995) have found evidence from surveys of party members present in candidate selection meetings, showing that their main concerns with regard to the choosing of candidates includes; likeliness in attracting votes, ability in public speaking, enthusiasm, ideological similarity and political experience (ibid p139). However, I would argue that in the case of allocation for safe seats among candidates, the demand for candidates from the party is arguably more complex. This is largely due to the fact that in the case of allocating individual applicants to different seats, given the latest reform of centralization of candidate selection in both major parties, the distinctive, and sometimes conflicting, interests and concern between the national and

constituency parties would be more salient compared to the observation by Norris and Lovenduski almost 20 years ago. Indeed, conflict between the national and constituency parties in the choice of candidate in recent years has been well documented in the literature (Ashe et al 2010, Child and Cowley 2011, Cutts et al 2008, Hill 2013). For the national party, they have two slightly conflicting goals concerning the allocation of candidates among different seats; the aim of recent reform of both parties in the candidate selection process was to enhance the quality and representativeness of the parliamentary party, in order to achieve this, national parties would prefer to place 'quality' female and minority candidates in safer seats to ensure their chance of entering the parliament, and staying in parliament, for years to come, however the ultimate aim of a party is, after all, to capture as many seats as possible in a general election to enable the formation of a stable government. Therefore, in the interest of winning seats, the national party might also prefer to allocate certain 'quality' candidates, especially those who have the ability to attract votes, in marginal constituencies in order to secure as many seats as possible. As for the constituency parties, although there is an obvious overlapping of certain concerns with their respective national party, most notably being securing electoral victory as well as choosing the 'best', there is also a tendency of preference for 'favourite son' or 'local men' with roots in the constituency in opposition to outsiders that are being imposed by the national party through the use of 'priority list' or AWS (Childs and Cowley 2011, Hill 2013).

On the supply side of candidates, one of the major concerns of applicants, when deciding which seats they are going to apply for nomination, is that of the cost and benefit involved in the pursuit of nomination from that particular constituency. An obvious factor that affects

applicants' calculations of cost and benefit is that of financial impact, in particular the cost of career displacement of candidacy and of becoming an MP. The impact of financial consideration and job security on politicians' decisions in pursuing promotion has been well documented among the literature of political recruitment (Best and Gaxie 2000, Hibbing 1993). As noted by Norris and Lovenduski (1995), a switch from a professional into a parliamentary career may present a considerable opportunity cost and financial risk to individuals: the remuneration and allowance for MPs can be less than generous when compared to their previous professions, MPs' also face much less certain career prospects, in particular those who find themselves representing marginal constituencies. Hence, applicants who have better extra-parliamentary career prospects might adopt the strategy of only applying for, or accepting, nomination from safe seats, which provide them a level of electoral, and hence career security, since the prospect of an insecure parliamentary career that is probably confined to the backbenches is simply not attractive enough to induce a career switch into politics. Furthermore, the motivation of applicants might also affect their strategy in seats application. There are a considerable proportion of listed applicants who adopt a local or regional strategy in applying for seats, either, because they already have contact with people in the constituency party, they already reside in the constituency, or because they simply wish to represent their home town or region and have no interest in being a carpetbagger. These considerations may limit the choice of constituency that they could run in and result in nomination in less favourable seats or even non-selection.

### 4.3 Electoral security hypotheses

Given these considerations on both the supply and demand sides of the allocation of applicants into seats, from both the national and local party as well as the applicants themselves, we can come up with the following hypotheses concerning how the pre-parliamentary careers of MPs might affect the electoral security of the seat that they represent:

*Hypothesis 4.1: MPs with experience that enhance their performance in parliament as well as the representativeness of their respective party will be elected in 'safer' seats (with larger electoral majorities).*

Hypothesis 4.1 reflects the concern of the national party with regard to the quality and representativeness of their parliamentary cohort. This consideration was the motivation behind some of the recent reforms in their candidate selection process, and this ought to be reflected, not only in the composition of the resultant slate of candidates and parliamentary party, but also in the kind of constituencies that they are chosen to contest and represent. Since it is in the interest of the party to ensure that these candidates will be elected, the national party might (not so subtly) encourage constituency parties of safe seats to adopt these individuals as their nominee. Indeed, this is exactly the rationale behind Conservative's 'priority list', to ensure these 'quality' individuals, favoured by the national party, are selected in targeted and safe seats, thus ensuring the quality and representativeness of the parliamentary Conservative party. Given that Labour did not have such an arrangement, at least officially, of a preferred or elite slate of candidates, on top of their national panel of

candidates with the exception of the imposition of AWS in certain constituency parties, we should expect this phenomenon to be more salient among Conservative MPs.

*Hypothesis 4.2: MPs with experience associated with campaigning and attracting electoral support will be elected in 'less safe' seats (with smaller majorities).*

Hypothesis 4.2 reflects another consideration in candidate allocation, that is to improve the electoral prospect of the party by fielding strong candidates in marginal constituencies who could win votes and secure the seat for their party. Given the importance of winning marginal seats in the formation of government, it is in the interest of both the national and constituency parties to put such electoral considerations on a higher priority in marginal seats. Hence, MPs with pre-parliament experience that could contribute to campaigning locally and attracting support ought to be associated with smaller majorities and less electoral security. This is to a certain extent in conflict with Hypothesis 4.1 given that there are likely to be a certain overlap in the skills and experience that contributes to both parliamentary work and campaigning. An obvious example is that of public speaking, which is an ability that could enable MPs to better represent their constituency and party in Westminster, while also a useful skill in campaigning and canvassing. These conflicting concerns might lead to insignificant observations as they cancel each other out.

*Hypothesis 4.3: MPs with professional experience that provides better extra-parliamentary career prospects will be elected in 'safer' seats (with larger majorities).*

This last hypothesis is to reflect the applicant's concern of career displacement cost from the supply side. Applicants with pre-parliamentary experiences that provide them with comparatively better extra-parliamentary career prospects might adopt the strategy of only applying for seats with a substantial majority for their respective party, while refrained from applying for, or accepting, nomination to contest in constituencies that have a smaller majority or are currently occupied by the opposing party. Hence, we should expect MPs' with pre-parliamentary careers that would provide substantial financial advantages to be representing constituencies with higher majorities.

#### **4.4 Data and methodology**

We shall be relying on two dependent variables in the following analysis of the association between MPs' pre-parliamentary career and electoral security. Firstly the majority of new MPs' constituency in the last general election (2005). The majority is defined as difference in percentage of vote share between the new MP's party and the first runner up in the 2005 general election. The reason that we are looking at the majority from the previous election, and not the majority won by our cohort in 2010, is that since we are looking at the allocation of MPs into seats with different level of electoral security, majority in 2005 is the information that is available to the selector in national and constituency party as well as the applicants themselves in the process of nomination prior to the 2010 election. Hence, majority from the 2005 election would better reflect the circumstances during the nomination process. The data

used here comes from the 2010 British General Election Constituency Results dataset, compiled by Pippa Norris<sup>1</sup>. Because there are some minor constituency boundary changes between the 2005 and 2010 election, the information used here are the notional results in 2010 boundary calculated from vote count at ward level.

The second dependent variable is a four point scale of electoral security calculated from the average majority of MP's constituencies across three general elections (2005, 2010, 2015). This scale corresponds to the quartile of the average majority of each constituency among new MPs of the same party. MPs whose constituency's average majority across three elections is situated below the lower quartile among new MPs in the same party would be put in the first group, while those above the upper quartile will be placed in the forth. Constituency level election results of 2010 general election come from the same source as that of 2005 election, while the 2015 majority is retrieved from election results reported by the BBC<sup>2</sup>. The cut-off point between the four categories for the three major parties can be found in Table 4.1. This scale of average electoral security across elections is to mitigate several problems of looking at the real majority in one particular election. To begin with the average majority across several elections is, arguably, a more reliable measure of the level of electoral competitiveness among different parties in each constituency as results from individual elections are susceptible to bias due to external and circumstantial shocks. Additionally, the relation between pre-parliamentary careers and electoral security may not be linear. Finally, the real size of majority among MPs representing different political parties

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<sup>1</sup><https://sites.google.com/site/pippanorris3/research/data#TOC-May-6th-2010-British-General-Election-Constituency-Results-Release-5.0>

<sup>2</sup><http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/election/2015/results>



might not be comparable. This is particularly true given the circumstances surrounding the nomination and election of the cohort of MP that is being studied. During the run up to 2010 general election, there was a general anticipation across the aisle that, given the overwhelming unpopularity of the incumbent Labour government, there was going to be a substantial swing of votes from Labour to other parties, the Conservatives in particular, which turns out to have been correct. Under such circumstances, the same majority would have drastically different meaning between selectors and applicants of the two parties. For Conservatives, a seat with a 5% majority in 2005 could be considered very safe, while a Labour seat with the same majority could be seen as marginal, or even a lost cause. Hence, in order to normalize electoral security across different parties, separate quartiles are calculated for individual parties in the construction of this electoral security scale.

**Table 4.1. Cut off average majority across three general election between constituency types on electoral security scale**

Conservative	Labour	Liberal Democrat
Category 1		
1.863	11.243	-10.147
Category 2		
8.073	19.51	-2.927
Category 3		
21.063	29.037	1.26
Category 4		

## 4.5 Results

### 4.5.1 2005 majority models

Table 4.2 shows the results of the real size of majorities in 2005 election using OLS regression. All pre-parliamentary career variables indicated here are continuous and denote the number of years the MP has spent in a particular profession or political position with the exception of previous MP candidacies, which is measured as the length of time they ran, as well as the variables denoting MPs' political career types, which are dummies. Models 1 through 6 include all new MPs from the three major parties elected for the first time in 2010 general

election. Model 1 is a baseline model which contains only demographic controls and party fixed effect. The only variable that is of significance is the dummy for Labour MPs, which indicates that in the previous election in 2005, the majority of seats to be occupied by new Labour MPs was about 25 percentage points larger than those elected new Conservative MPs in 2010, which is not surprising since the huge swing against Labour in 2010 would mean seats retained by Labour in 2010 must have had a substantial majority in 2005. On the other hand, none of the coefficient of the demographic variables are statistically significant at the 0.1 level, which indicates that despite effort from both major parties to diversify their parliamentary party by reforming the recruitment and nomination process to make it more favourable to female and minority candidates, this has not translated into significantly higher electoral security for female and ethnic minority MPs since they are not necessarily representing safer constituencies.

Models 2, 3 and 4 take into account the professional and political aspects of pre-parliamentary careers separately. Model 2 adds all the professional career variables into the specification, the R-square of model 2 is .07 larger than that of baseline Model 1, which indicates that the addition of professional career variables to the model is capturing a modest yet significant amount of variation in the dependent variable. Professional occupations variables that are significant at the 0.1 level are those that denote amount of experience in the military, science and technology, financial services and full-time governmental officials. It is estimated that each year an MP spent in their pre-parliamentary professional career in each of these occupational groups is associated with a 1.4, 0.8, 0.8 and 0.9 percentage point increase in the majority of their seat in the previous election respectively. Model 3 adds the

amount of political experience to the equation. Coefficient for both variables denoting the number of previous runs for Westminster seats by the MP, both within and out of their current constituency, are statistically significant at 0.1 level, however, the sign of the two significant coefficient are different. The model estimates that each time an MP ran for a parliamentary seat out of their current constituency is associated with 2.7 percentage point increase of the majority of their current seat in 2005 election. On the other hand, each time they ran for parliament in their current seat indicates a 3.3 percentage drop of majority in 2005. The latter finding is not surprising since if the MP has previously run for the same seat, it almost certainly means that the seat is taken from an opposing party in 2010 election, which in turn indicates a negative majority in 2005. Model 4 also looks at how pre-parliamentary political experience affects the majority of an MPs' seat, but, instead of measuring the amount of experience that they have acquired, we are using the political career types constructed using LCA in the previous chapter. The baseline category used in comparison is Local Heroes. It is found that, when compared with Local Heroes, the coefficient for all three remaining political career types are significant and positive, which indicates that these groups of MPs are representing seats that are significantly safer than those represented by Local Heroes. It is estimated that, on average, constituencies represented by Career Changers, Carpetbagger and Party Animals have, in 2005, a majority that is 6.7, 9 and 8.3 percentage points larger than those represented by Local Heroes. The value of R square for both Model 3 and 4 are only 0.03 larger than the baseline, which indicates that on its own, MPs' pre-parliamentary political experience is not capturing a lot of the variation in their electoral security.

Table 4.2. OLS models of MPs' constituency majority in the last (2005) general election

	(1) Baseline	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7) Conservative	(8) Labour
Business Owner		.053(.179)			.125(.178)	.012(.176)		
Military Officers		1.374(.434)***			1.336(.436)***	1.367(.441)***	.038(.18)	-.749(.799)
Agriculture		-.177(.335)			-.154(.356)	-.215(.328)	1.171(.456)**	
Science & Tech		.808(.476)*			.612(.478)	.977(.472)**	-.257(.331)	-2.203(2.394)
Marketing & Sales		.398(.304)			.222(.303)	.368(.298)	.388(.558)	10.045(7.361)
Finance		.76(.251)***			.638(.251)**	.643(.251)**	.317(.265)	-.536(.825)
NGOs		-.068(.53)			.034(.57)	-.301(.533)	.744(1.05)	-.226(.817)
Trade Unions		.195(.365)			.283(.543)	.01(.374)		-.127(.495)
Social Services		.023(.371)			.037(.369)	-.009(.374)		.124(.444)
Lawyer		.134(.194)			.105(.193)	.062(.191)	.096(.212)	-.27(.469)
Teacher		.002(.25)			.063(.254)	-.056(.245)	-.448(.443)	-.094(.395)
Public Relation		.429(.26)			.466(.262)*	.328(.258)	.164(.272)	-2.203(1.989)
Media		-.012(.402)			-.016(.399)	-.067(.399)	-.276(.457)	-.315(.969)
Soc-Sci Research		.335(.498)			.784(.536)	.201(.5)	.443(.595)	.042(.984)
Political Worker		.339(.393)			.554(.407)	.285(.391)	-.595(.568)	1.962(.888)**
FT Governmental		.909(.323)***			1.049(.36)***	.971(.319)***	.617(.441)	.99(.596)
Ministerial/MPs Advisor		1.203(.817)			1.415(.911)	.789(.872)	-.304(1.147)	2.064(1.507)
Local Government (Same Const)			-.214(.212)		-.282(.227)			
Local Government (Diff Const)			-.026(.335)		-.02(.342)			
National Party			.048(.242)		-.228(.408)			
MP Candidate (Same Const)			-3.256(1.792)*		-3.066(1.87)			
MP Candidate (Diff Const)			2.697(1.35)**		3.161(1.385)**			
Devolved Assembly/MEP			.36(.542)		.15(.634)			
Career Change*				6.69(3.294)*		5.426(3.499)	6.097(4.095)	1.64(8.436)
Carpetbagger*				8.912(2.473)***		8.811(2.583)***	9.185(2.964)**	11.682(6.755)
Party Animal*				8.334(2.886)***		8.06(3.269)**	11.546(3.837)***	.967(8.1)
Female	.798(2.098)	1.569(2.18)	.317(2.13)	-.208(2.071)	1.276(2.202)	.689(2.16)	1.181(2.568)	1.367(4.668)
Age	-.066(.101)	-.182(.127)	.007(.114)	.009(.105)	-.1(.136)	-.091(.132)	.068(.174)	-.154(.261)
Ethnic Minority	5.403(3.517)	6.268(3.568)*	4.992(3.492)	4.452(3.454)	5.64(3.531)	5.301(3.503)	11.512(4.471)**	-2.423(6.771)
Labour*	25.226(2.162)***	25.172(2.408)***	25.724(2.433)***	25.837(2.18)***	25.838(2.514)***	26.156(2.383)***		
Lib Dem*	-2.203(4.519)	-.343(4.54)	.779(4.639)	-1.976(4.43)	2.906(4.685)	-.708(4.464)		
R-sq	.437	.511	.469	.469	.544	.54	.281	.304
N	219	219	219	219	219	219	146	63

Note: \* p&lt;.1, \*\* p&lt;.05, \*\*\* p&lt;.01, SE in parentheses, \*Baseline is Local Heroes, \*Baseline is Conservative

Models 5 and 6 consider both aspects of pre-parliamentary careers together in the same equation, but with different identification strategies for political experience. Model 5 uses the continuous variables for amount of political experiences while Model 6 uses the LCA political career type. Both models have a 0.1 increase in their value of R square when compared to the baseline model, which indicates that together, both aspects of MPs' pre-parliamentary career are together explaining about 10% of the variation of electoral security across the entire cohort. The size, sign and significance of most of the coefficient for pre-parliamentary career variables are roughly similar to those found in Models 2, 3, 4, with the exception that the amount of experience in science and technology loses significance in Model 5, while the dummy variable for career changers loses its' significance in Model 6. These similar results show, on the subject of electoral security, there is not much interaction going on between the professional and political aspects of MP's pre-parliamentary career, and that findings from these models are robust as they are not changed by taking both aspects of MPs' pre-parliamentary careers into consideration.

To explore the party specific pattern in electoral security among MPs, Models 7 and 8 includes only new MPs of the Conservative and Labour parties respectively. The result of Model 7 is largely similar with those found in earlier models, with the notable difference that the coefficient of the dummy variable for ethnic minority MPs is positive and statistically significant at 0.01 level, which indicates that among the cohort of new Conservative MPs, minority MPs are indeed representing seats that have larger conservative majority in 2005. It is estimated that on average, in the 2005 election, those constituencies that are now represented by new minority Conservative MPs have had a Conservative majority that is 11.5

percentage point higher than other seats that have elected new Conservative MPs in 2010. On the other hand, prior experience as government officials loses its significance among the Conservative cohort. As for the Labour model (Model 8), given the substantially smaller Labour cohort, it is perhaps not surprising that statistic significance is not achieved by most of the variables. The only coefficients that are significant in Model 8 are those that denote the amount of experience as political worker and the dummy variable for Carpetbagger.

#### ***4.5.2 Average electoral security scale models***

Table 4.3 shows the odd ratios after ordinal logistic regression using the normalized four point electoral security scale as the dependent variable. The models are largely similar to those found in Table 4.2, except for the omission of party fixed effect. Given the scale denotes the intra-party quartile of the size of majority, each parties would have exactly one fourth of their MPs in each categories, party fixed effect is expected to be redundant and hence omitted. Because the electoral security scale is calculated from the average size of majority across three general elections, including the 2015 election in which Labour and Liberal Democrat have suffered historic losses in Scotland, due the extremely large, post independence referendum swing from them to the SNP. In order to take this into account, a regional dummy for all MPs representing Scottish seats is added to capture this shock.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Since the model only include MPs from the three major parties, new SNP MPs elected in 2010 are not included in these models, the Scottish dummy is therefore only capturing the losses of Labour and the Liberal Democrat in Scotland.

Table 4.3. Ordinal Logistic models of average electoral security scale (incident rate ratios)

	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)
Baseline								
Business Owner		1.016(.024)			1.022(.024)	1.011(.024)	1.015(.026)	1.072(.12)
Military Officers		1.168(.09)**			1.169(.095)*	1.175(.094)**	1.176(.123)	
Agriculture		.984(.047)			.991(.055)	.974(.049)	.967(.05)	
Science & Tech		1.105(.089)			1.088(.084)	1.127(.087)	1.014(.089)	.572(.206)
Marketing & Sales		1.067(.04)*			1.049(.041)	1.063(.04)	1.059(.041)	2.838(3.27)
Finance		1.08(.035)**			1.064(.036)*	1.064(.036)*	1.061(.04)	1.024(.12)
NGOs		.978(.073)			1.01(.082)	.963(.073)	1.182(.185)	.92(.137)
Trade Unions		1.011(.042)			1.069(.077)	.998(.044)		1(.066)
Social Services		.95(.055)			.96(.055)	.946(.055)		.931(.065)
Lawyer		.976(.026)			.967(.027)	.964(.027)	.968(.031)	.851(.076)*
Teacher		.988(.031)			.995(.036)	.981(.032)	.887(.077)	1.028(.054)
Public Relation		.982(.035)			.984(.036)	.967(.036)	.943(.039)	.951(.322)
Media		1.007(.053)			1.018(.056)	1.001(.055)	.987(.068)	.853(.103)
Soc-Sci Research		1.031(.068)			1.087(.078)	1.024(.07)	1.042(.091)	.906(.129)
Political Worker		1.026(.058)			1.069(.062)	1.028(.058)	.922(.081)	1.491(.264)**
FT Governmental		1.122(.053)**			1.164(.065)***	1.129(.054)**	1.114(.075)	1.234(.12)**
Ministerial/MPs Advisor		1.156(.13)			1.267(.168)*	1.126(.14)	.961(.173)	1.59(.368)**
Local Government (Same Const)			.982(.028)		.968(.031)			
Local Government (Diff Const)			1.045(.049)		1.039(.053)			
National Party			.991(.028)		.881(.211)			
MP Candidate (Same Const)			.82(.184)		1.507(.294)**			
MP Candidate (Diff Const)			1.321(.232)		.918(.091)			
Devolved Assembly/MEP			.987(.076)		1.778(.525)*			
Career Changer				1.898(.856)		1.51(.752)	1.276(.759)	2.342(3.032)
Carpetbagger				2.276(.79)**		2.54(.93)**	2.694(1.16)**	3.049(2.969)
Party Animal				1.964(.776)*		2.013(.946)	3.786(2.181)**	.647(.804)
Female	1.404(.368)	1.669(.477)*	1.442(.391)	1.32(.355)	1.778(.525)*	1.633(.482)*	1.315(.495)	7.309(5.466)***
Age	.978(.013)	.973(.017)	.984(.015)	.984(.014)	.979(.019)	.981(.018)	.993(.025)	.951(.038)
Ethnic Minority	1.853(.831)	2.708(1.317)**	1.755(.796)	1.757(.796)	2.859(1.424)**	2.689(1.334)**	2.694(1.901)	12.754(15.799)**
Scotland	.28(.146)**	.272(.149)**	.326(.178)**	.293(.154)**	.332(.185)**	.275(.151)**		.122(.091)***
Pseudo R-sq	.019	.059	.03	.029	.075	.07	.075	.204
N	218	218	218	218	218	218	145	63

Note: \* p&lt;.1, \*\* p&lt;.05, \*\*\* p&lt;.01, SE in parenthesis, \*Baseline is Local Heroes

Model 9 is the baseline model with only demographic control variables and the dummy for Scotland. The latter is the only variable that is statistically significant. It is estimated that being a Scottish MP reduces the odd of moving up the scale by about 72%. Model 10 adds the professional career variable into consideration. Each year of experience in the military, marketing and sales, finance and full-time governmental office is estimated to increase the odds of moving up the electoral security scale by 16.8%, 7%, 8% and 12.2% respectively. Dummy variables for female and ethnic minority MPs also became significant at 0.1 level, after the inclusion of professional career variable into the model. It is estimated that the odds of being in a safer group of constituencies on the electoral security scale is 67% and 171% for women and ethnic minority MPs respectively. Models 11 and 12 consider the impact of pre-parliamentary political experience on MPs standing on the electoral security scale. None of the variables denoting the amount of various kinds of political experience are statistically significant in Model 11, while Model 12 found that both Career Changer and Carpetbagger as a group are significantly safer than the base line group Local Heroes on the electoral security scale. It is estimated that, compared to Local Heroes, the odds for Carpetbagger to be in a safer group on the electoral security scale is 117% higher. Models 13 and 14 include variables for both professional and political careers into the model. Results from these two models are very similar when compared between themselves and with the earlier models on the table. Notable differences between these and earlier models is that the amount of experience as ministerial or MP advisor, member of devolved assemblies or European Parliament as well as the number of times they ran for MP outside of their current constituency becomes statistically significant in Model 13. Each year of experience as a ministerial or MP advisor would increase the odd of being safer on the electoral security scale by 27%, each year as a member of the devolved assemblies or European Parliament increases the odds of being in a



safer category of seat by 77.8%, while each time an MP ran for parliamentary election out of their current constituency increases the odds of being safer on the scale by 50.7%.

Models 15 and 16 analyze new MPs from the Conservative and Labour parties separately. For the Conservative model, none of the pre-parliamentary professional careers have a significant effect on MPs place on the electoral security scale. However, political career type appears to be have quite substantial impact toward electoral security among Conservative MPs. It is estimated that when compared to Local Heroes, Carpetbaggers among the Conservatives are 169% more likely to be safer while Conservative Party Animals are 279% more likely to be placed in a safer group along the electoral security scale. As for Labour, the situation appears to be somewhat the opposite of that found in the Conservative party. Political career types of Labour MP do not appear to have any significant impact on their electoral security. On the contrary, it is found that professional experience as full-time governmental officers, political workers and ministerial or MP advisors significantly increases the possibility for Labour MPs to be representing a constituency that is safer. It is estimated that each year of experience in these professions increases the odds of being found in a safer group by 49%, 23% and 59% respectively. In contrast, prior experience in the legal profession is found to be associated with representing less safe seats, reducing the odds of occupying a safer category of seats by 15%

## 4.6 Discussion

There are several observable trends across all specifications that predict both measures of electoral security. Firstly, in the professional aspects of pre-parliamentary careers, the amount of experience in military, finance and full-time governmental service appears to be enhancing the electoral security of MPs. Secondly, the number of previous runs for MP in another seat is found to be associated with higher electoral security once they are elected. Thirdly, with the exception of Model 16, being a Local Hero in the political career type appears to be associated with representing more marginal and less secure seats when compared with the other three types of MPs. On the other hand, although it appears that electoral security is higher for Carpetbaggers, the difference in majority between the other three types is not statistically significant. All of these results are consistent across multiple models, with both dependent variables, where coefficients for these variables are of the same sign, similar magnitude and statistically significant in a majority of models.

Could these findings be reconciled with the hypotheses concerning pre-parliamentary careers and electoral security? For Hypothesis 4.1, there is limited evidence to support it. Almost none of the variables for political facilitating professions, which allegedly relate to skills and experience related to be an effective MP, most notably those for the amount of experience in the legal profession, media, public relations, political work or ministerial/MP advisors, are statistically insignificant. Political experience as an MEP or member of the devolved assemblies is also found to have little impact on MPs' electoral security except in one model. The only finding that appears to show experience contributing to performance as MP affecting electoral security is that of full-time experience in governmental services, including

full-time experience as a local councillor, MEP, devolved assembly member or civil servant, which appears to contribute to a higher electoral security when these individuals apply for nomination in constituencies.

As for the impact of demographic on electoral security, we do observe some signs that gender and ethnicity are affecting the allocation of safe seats, as female and minority MPs appear more likely to be elected from safer constituencies. While the coefficient for gender and ethnicity is not significant in most models that use the real majority in 2005, and both variables are also insignificant in the baseline model for both measures of electoral security, they are nevertheless a significant determinant of an MPs' place on the electoral security scale, especially when an MPs pre-parliamentary professional experiences are taken into account. These suggest that the efforts and recent reforms from both parties that seek to diversify their parliamentary cohort, in particular the 'priority list' established by the Conservatives, not only increase in the proportion of female and minority MPs in the House of Commons in recent elections, but also results in comparatively higher electoral security for female and minority MPs who did get through the recruitment process and won seats in elections. Furthermore, our models might have captured an unintended consequence of Conservative 'priority list', which is that it is enhancing the electoral security of MPs who were party insiders, since, when we compare between the Conservative and Labour models, we can observe that Party Animals among the Conservatives are having much higher electoral security, while the same effect is not observed among new Labour MPs.

Previous experience of contesting (and losing) an election in another constituency is also found have a positive impact on MPs' electoral security. However, this has perhaps little to do with the expectation that prior campaign for parliament is going to improve one's performance as an MP, but is more likely a result of the long tradition in British politics that parliamentary aspirants are expected to carry the banner for their party in a hopeless seat as a form of service or proof of loyalty to the party before being 'rewarded' with a safe seat in the future. Similarly, the positive relation between prior military service and representing safer constituencies as MPs could also be contributed to traditional prejudice among selectors in parties, where military service is seen as sign for patriotism or commitment to public services, and little to do with how this could potentially contribute to their performance in parliament.

In comparison, the above findings appear to have lent much more credence to Hypothesis 4.2. One notable variable that is associated with lower electoral security for MPs is that of being classified as a Local Hero. Nominating a Local Hero or 'favourite son' candidate could have multiple electoral benefits. Local Heroes have served in the local government of their community for a substantial amount of time, they would have developed name recognition in the community, as well as network and personal relationships with the electorate. Their experience also provides them with knowledge of their community, which allows them to better identify issues and problems that resonate with their constituents. Lastly, Local Heroes could also cite the achievements they have delivered for their community through years of service during the campaign. All these mean that nominating Local Heroes to contest in marginal seats makes perfect electoral sense to both constituency and national parties and

this effect is exactly what is being observed in the statistical models that predict electoral security of MPs.

Finally, the positive relation between the amount of experience in the financial industry and higher electoral security could be explained by Hypothesis 4.3. Among the various pre-parliamentary professional careers that are being studied, the financial services are arguably the one that is most financially lucrative. Hence, as expected, MPs' amount of pre-parliamentary experience in financial services is related to their electoral security. This is most likely due to the reasoning of these individuals that unless they are being nominated for a safe seat, which would virtually guarantee a long spell in parliament and good prospects for promotion, it is not worth the risk and cost associated with a career change into politics, when the opportunity cost of staying in the financial service is considered. Alternatively, this could also indicate a possible preference for applicants with experience in financial service given the tradition among selectors in Conservatives that they prefer to nominate individuals with 'business credentials' and who 'have proven themselves outside of politics.' This latter hypothesis is made even more plausible once we take the findings from next chapter, which shows experience in financial services is associate with higher chance for frontbench promotion, into account.

#### **4.7 Conclusion**

To briefly conclude the results on majority and electoral security, it has been found that both professional and political pre-parliamentary careers of MPs do affect the kind of seats that

they represent in terms of electoral security of the constituency. However, it is difficult to contribute this pattern of MPs with military, financial and governmental experience occupying safer seats to meritocratic consideration that should favour applicants with experiences which facilitate parliamentary work. Rather, these observations could be better explained as manifestations of traditional prejudice, which favour applicants with these backgrounds, or as a result of cost and benefit calculus of applicants that limits the supply of candidates with certain professional backgrounds to safer seats. The results also show a modest effect on electoral security from being a female or ethnic minority MP, which indicates that measures adopted by the two main parties to enhance representativeness, especially along the lines of gender and ethnicity, appear to have had some effect in putting female and minority candidates into safer seats. The results also indicate that, given the clear electoral benefit, parties appear to have intentionally nominated candidates with local roots in constituencies that are more marginal, so as to improve their electoral prospects in these areas and maximize their number of seats in parliament.

Given how electoral security varies among MPs with different pre-parliamentary careers, it is intriguing how this may impact their behaviour in parliament. Occupying a safe constituency may ease MPs from electoral pressure to a certain extent, allowing them to pay more attention to activities that are not necessary for the purpose of securing votes among their constituents. The higher majorities among ex-military officers and financial workers might allow these individuals to focus on either using their expertise to contribute to the legislative process, or pursuing their sectorial interest. Conversely, might the reduced majority and the resultant electoral pressure confine Local Heroes to spend more of their time nursing their

own constituency, and thus unable to do as much in Westminster as they otherwise may be? Also, besides the impact on their role and focus among their various areas of responsibility, patterns of majority may also affect their career trajectories and voting record, especially their tendency to rebel against their own party, once they enter the parliament. MPs who found themselves having to defend a slim majority might find it necessary to defy their party on more occasions, so as to cultivate a personal following within their constituency that is independent of their party. The party may also refrain from appointing MPs with less electoral security to executive positions in order to avoid the embarrassment of a senior party member losing their seat in an election. In the following chapters we are going to see how MPs' pre-parliamentary careers affect these issues, and if electoral security does indeed play a role in determining the trajectory of an MPs' parliamentary career, as well as their behaviour in parliament.

## Appendix, Chapter Four

Table 4.4. OLS models of MPs' constituency majority in the last (2005) general election (Conservative Only)

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Baseline						
Business Owner		.087(.185)			.175(.185)	.038(.18)
Military Officers		1.2(.454)***			1.185(.458)**	1.171(.456)**
Agriculture		-.23(.341)			-.115(.376)	-.257(.331)
Science & Tech		.166(.57)			.151(.567)	.388(.558)
Marketing & Sales		.355(.304)			.172(.305)	.317(.265)
Finance		.833(.268)***			.712(.267)***	.671(.264)**
NGOs		.973(1.066)			.801(1.081)	.744(1.05)
Trade Unions						
Social Services						
Lawyer		.209(.217)			.173(.217)	.096(.212)
Teacher		-.237(.454)			-.24(.513)	-.448(.443)
Public Relation		.326(.276)			.266(.293)	.164(.272)
Media		-.136(.461)			-.229(.466)	-.276(.457)
Soc-Sci Research		.674(.6)			1.092(.642)*	.443(.595)
Political Worker		-.632(.582)			-.132(.666)	-.595(.568)
FT Governmental		.626(.453)			.734(.555)	.617(.441)
Ministerial/MPs Advisor		.652(1.075)			.264(1.265)	-.304(1.147)
Local Government (Same Const)			-.779(.311)**		-.511(.346)	
Local Government (Diff Const)			-.22(.365)		-.11(.413)	
National Party			.126(.428)		.146(.582)	
MP Candidate (Same Const)			-2.169(1.989)		-3.078(2.181)	
MP Candidate (Diff Const)			2.579(1.48)*		2.873(1.609)*	
Devolved Assembly/MEP			-.067(.653)		-.002(.898)	
Career Change*				9.261(3.772)**		6.097(4.095)
Carpetbagger*				10.486(2.899)***		9.185(2.964)**
Party Animal*				12.294(3.476)***		11.546(3.837)***
Female	2.391(2.599)	1.555(2.648)	1.44(2.576)	1.675(2.495)	1.773(2.642)	1.181(2.568)
Age	.041(.143)	-.044(.172)	.205(.156)	.135(.144)	.042(.184)	.068(.174)
Ethnic Minority	12.288(4.61)***	12.12(4.62)**	12.08(4.526)***	11.402(4.42)**	11.385(4.681)**	11.512(4.471)**
R-sq	.053	.211	.147	.151	.277	.281
N	146	146	146	146	146	146

Note: \* p&lt;.1, \*\*p&lt;.05, \*\*\* p&lt;.01, SE in parentheses, \*Baseline is Local Heroes



Table 4.5. OLS models of MPs' constituency majority in the last (2005) general election (Labour Only)

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Business Owner		-.574(.771)			-1.304(.934)	-.749(.799)
Military Officers						
Agriculture						
Science & Tech		-1.511(2.295)			-1.454(2.535)	-2.203(2.394)
Marketing & Sales		5.752(7.178)			8.683(8.2)	10.045(7.361)
Finance		.024(.72)			.05(.813)	-.536(.825)
NGOs		-.304(.712)			-.632(1.038)	-.226(.817)
Trade Unions		-.113(.458)			-.296(.911)	-.127(.495)
Social Services		-.085(.44)			-.199(.461)	.124(.444)
Lawyer		-.136(.466)			-.077(.49)	-.27(.469)
Teacher		.097(.38)			.055(.41)	-.094(.395)
Public Relation		-1.055(1.938)			-1.527(1.986)	-2.203(1.989)
Media		.036(.944)			.056(.96)	-.315(.969)
Soc-Sci Research		.191(.977)			.37(1.152)	.042(.984)
Political Worker		1.723(.881)*			1.692(.932)*	1.962(.888)**
FT Governmental		1.03(.542)*			1.396(.99)	.99(.596)
Ministerial/MPs Advisor		1.861(1.39)			1.48(1.561)	2.064(1.507)
Local Government (Same Const)			.221(.352)		-.4(.713)	
Local Government (Diff Const)			.56(.851)		1.543(1.092)	
National Party			.148(.324)		.141(.822)	
MP Candidate (Same Const)			22.953(18.298)		2.264(24.543)	
MP Candidate (Diff Const)			3.004(3.517)		2.591(3.874)	
Devolved Assembly/MEP			.323(1.222)		.974(1.417)	
Career Change*				3.016(6.559)		1.64(8.436)
Carpetbagger*				7.455(5.894)		11.682(6.755)
Party Animal*				3.174(5.473)		.967(8.1)
Female	-.697(3.543)	2.265(4.613)	-1.385(3.838)	-1.437(3.712)	-.933(5.047)	1.367(4.668)
Age	-.076(.153)	-.186(.253)	-.164(.182)	-.043(.171)	-.17(.268)	-.154(.261)
Ethnic Minority	-2.398(5.355)	.084(6.758)	-1.529(5.542)	-3.485(5.499)	-2.156(6.942)	-2.423(6.771)
R-sq	.008	.227	.078	.038	.323	.304
N	63	63	63	63	63	63

Note: \* p&lt;.1, \*\*p&lt;.05, \*\*\* p&lt;.01, SE in parentheses, \*Baseline is Local Heroes

**Table 4.6. Ordinal Logistic models of average electoral security scale (Conservative Only) (incident rate ratios)**

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Baseline						
Business Owner		1.02(.025)			1.028(.026)	1.015(.026)
Military Officers		1.15(.107)			1.158(.114)	1.176(.123)
Agriculture		.979(.048)			.985(.06)	.967(.05)
Science & Tech		.976(.086)			.989(.086)	1.014(.089)
Marketing & Sales		1.06(.041)			1.04(.042)	1.059(.041)
Finance		1.084(.04)**			1.072(.04)*	1.061(.04)
NGOs		1.176(.182)			1.12(.189)	1.182(.185)
Trade Unions						
Social Services						
Lawyer		.986(.031)			.976(.031)	.968(.031)
Teacher		.919(.075)			.887(.087)	.887(.077)
Public Relation		.966(.039)			.958(.041)	.943(.039)
Media		1.003(.066)			1.014(.071)	.987(.068)
Soc-Sci Research		1.069(.089)			1.105(.101)	1.042(.091)
Political Worker		.927(.077)			.992(.101)	.922(.081)
FT Governmental		1.109(.072)			1.153(.102)	1.114(.075)
Ministerial/MPs Advisor						
Local Government (Same Const)		1.11(.178)	.939(.041)		1.14(.232)	.961(.173)
Local Government (Diff Const)			1.031(.056)		.944(.047)	
National Party			.994(.061)		.99(.087)	
MP Candidate (Same Const)			.952(.259)		.914(.28)	
MP Candidate (Diff Const)			1.312(.276)		1.436(.351)	
Devolved Assembly/MEP			.971(.089)		.914(.124)	
Career Changer <sup>a</sup>				1.999(.1057)		1.276(.759)
Carpetbagger <sup>a</sup>				2.561(1.035)**		2.694(1.16)**
Party Animal <sup>a</sup>				3.279(1.627)**		3.786(2.181)**
Female	1.302(.446)	1.316(.484)	1.288(.459)	1.222(.426)	1.465(.558)	1.315(.495)
Age	.983(.019)	.98(.024)	.993(.021)	.994(.02)	.984(.026)	.993(.025)
Ethnic Minority	1.674(1.043)	2.532(1.736)	1.646(1.03)	1.614(1.022)	2.65(1.913)	2.694(1.901)
Scotland						
Pseudo R-sq	.005	.054	.021	.023	.073	.075
N	145	145	145	145	145	145

Note: \* p<.1, \*\* p<.05, \*\*\* p<.01, SE in parentheses, Coefficient reported as odd ration, <sup>a</sup>Baseline is Local Heroes

**Table 4.7. Ordinal Logistic models of average electoral security scale (Labour Only) (incident rate ratios)**

	(1) Baseline	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Business Owner		1.108(.118)			.973(.151)	1.072(.12)
Military Officers						
Agriculture		.699(.225)			.689(.255)	.572(.206)
Science & Tech		1.768(1.909)			2.73(3.458)	2.838(3.27)
Marketing & Sales		1.103(.106)			1.095(.121)	1.024(.12)
Finance		.881(.1145)			.862(.134)	.92(.137)
NGOs		.986(.059)			.981(.12)	1(.066)
Trade Unions		.929(.062)			.936(.064)	.931(.065)
Social Services		.893(.066)			.897(.071)	.851(.076)*
Lawyer		1.049(.051)			1.052(.057)	1.028(.054)
Teacher		1.045(.333)			1.011(.336)	.951(.322)
Public Relation		.935(.104)			.935(.108)	.853(.103)
Media		.886(.117)			.911(.146)	.906(.129)
Soc-Sci Research		1.424(.231)**			1.437(.258)**	1.491(.264)**
Political Worker		1.252(.119)**			1.358(.218)*	1.234(.12)**
FT Governmental		1.479(.311)*			1.4(.31)	1.59(.368)**
Ministerial/MPs Advisor			1.019(.05)		.921(.094)	
Local Government (Same Const)			1.089(.11)		1.202(.202)	
Local Government ( Diff Const)			.998(.04)		.996(.117)	
National Party						
MP Candidate (Same Const)						
MP Candidate (Diff Const)			1.124(.453)		.937(.443)	
Devolved Assembly/MEP			.316(.34.16)		.357(.46.53)	
Career Changer <sup>†</sup>				1.572(1.468)		2.342(3.032)
Carpetbagger <sup>†</sup>				1.827(1.465)		3.049(2.969)
Party Animal <sup>†</sup>				.952(.739)		.647(.804)
Female	1.626(.772)	7.615(5.483)***	1.683(.865)	1.647(.811)	6.017(4.893)**	7.309(5.466)***
Age	.98(.02)	.952(.037)	.973(.024)	.978(.023)	.954(.039)	.951(.038)
Ethnic Minority	1.986(1.334)	11.104(11.785)**	2.082(1.448)	1.701(1.174)	7.826(8.499)*	12.754(15.799)**
Scotland	.181(.11)***	.143(.102)***	.16(.108)***	.187(.114)***	.142(.111)**	.122(.091)***
Pseudo R-sq	.069	.181	.092	.078	.2	.204
N	63	63	63	63	63	63

\* p&lt;.1, \*\*p&lt;.05, \*\*\* p&lt;.01, SE in parentheses, \*Baseline is Local Heroes

## **Chapter Five – Pre-parliamentary career and frontbench promotion**

### **5.1 Introduction**

While the importance of recruitment of parliamentary candidates and allocation of constituencies among applicants towards representativeness, and to functioning of our democracy as well as the behaviour of MPs once elected is self-evident, this is by no means the only juncture where the party, or its leadership, could determine MPs' political fortunes. Another tool at the disposal of party leaders in determining the trajectory of individual MPs' parliamentary careers, and hence moulding their behaviour, is through the distribution of ministerial and frontbench appointments.

Although the British Parliament is nominally sovereign, it is the government that holds much of executive and legislative power. Under most circumstances, it is government ministers and the frontbench team who oversee the running of various departments and provision of public services, control public finances, develop and implement new policies, communicate and explain government actions towards the public, and initiate most of the legislative proposals that are presented for parliament's consideration. The importance of ministers' and frontbench members' capacity to discharge these functions is self-evident. In this chapter, we look at the promotion of MPs as ministers and frontbench members in the House of Commons. More specifically, we focus on how MPs' pre-parliamentary careers, both professional as well as political, affect their chances of receiving promotion to the frontbench, or even the (shadow) cabinet. These provide vital information to the sort of knowledge and skills we could expect to find within the government as well as the

opposition frontbench and (shadow) cabinet, and allow us to contemplate what kind of impact it would have on the governance of the UK. What made this exercise even more intriguing is the fact that we are observing MPs who are newly elected to the House of Commons and serving their first term in Westminster. Numerous research have found that these nascent moments in a parliamentary career is a significant determinant of their political future. It is found that those who receive promotion during their first term are also more likely to be promoted in latter terms and eventually attaining higher offices than their contemporaries (Allen 2013, 2014, Kam 2009, Kam et al 2010). MPs being studied in this research and received promotion to the frontbench are likely to stay on the frontbench and ministerial positions for years or even decades to come. Hence, the patterns we observe here are not only of importance to the present, but are likely to leave a legacy to the governance of the UK for years to come.

### ***5.1.1 Principles of cabinet government***

In the British context, the idea of the 'frontbench' is used to distinguish them from ordinary MPs who have no position in the government or opposition leadership. In its broadest sense, 'frontbencher' encompasses a variety of positions that differ in responsibilities and ranking in the hierarchy of cabinet government or party leadership. At the top among frontbenchers are cabinet ministers, who usually carry the title of Secretary of State and are given the responsibility of overseeing certain policy portfolios and the functioning of corresponding government department. Those who serve in sinecure posts, such as Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, are also usually considered to be of the same rank as cabinet ministers without a portfolio. Serving under cabinet ministers are junior ministers

who are answerable to the head of their department, which includes both ministers of state as well as parliamentary undersecretaries. Junior ministers are usually given responsibility for a specific policy area under the umbrella of the broad portfolio of a government department. Under most circumstances, junior ministers only attend cabinet meetings when the issue being discussed relate to their brief, although in recent years, some junior ministers have been invited to attend cabinet meetings regularly. Cabinet and junior ministers are together vested with executive power and comprise the government proper. Besides the aforementioned executive positions, the frontbench also consists of two categories of posts that are non-executive and out of government proper - Parliamentary Private Secretary (PPS) and party whips. The responsibility of PPS is to serve as the liaison between individual minister and the parliament, while whips are responsible to ensure that the parliamentary party toe the party line during divisions and vote in accordance to the will of the leadership. The frontbench of the opposition is for most part organized according to principles similar the government frontbench, with shadow cabinet ministers, supported by junior shadow ministers, in charge of the opposition's response to corresponding government cabinet minister and departmental affairs, while opposition whips are in charge of maintaining party cohesion during division. One notable difference between government and opposition frontbench is the lack of PPS for opposition ministers except for the leader of the opposition.

The extent of and constraints upon the Prime Ministers' power in appointing and dismissing members of cabinet as well as other lesser member of their government has been subject to scholarly scrutiny in recent years (Berlinski et al 2007, Berlinski et al 2012, King and Allen

2010). While the appointment of ministers is ultimately the responsibility and prerogative of the prime minister, they could consult fellow cabinet members when appointing junior ministers answerable to them. For the non-executive positions, the appointment of PPS and junior whips are the responsibility of, or at the very least strongly influenced by, the corresponding minister and the chief whip (Berlinski et al 2012). Therefore, the frontbench appointment, in particular among more junior and non-executive position, is more of a collegial decision, while the Prime Minister can exert more influence in the appointment of more senior frontbench members. Moreover, although there are no *de jure* constraints on whom the Prime Minister can appoint as minister, given the principle of accountability to parliament and the fact that one of their major responsibilities is to represent the government in response to parliamentary scrutiny, British ministers have to be, by convention, member of the parliament. Because of the declining importance and status of the House of Lords, ministers and frontbenchers have been, for the last several decades, drawn overwhelmingly among the ranks of MPs sitting in the House of Commons.

### ***5.1.2 Responsibilities of ministers and the skills involved***

There are several different and occasionally conflicting considerations when Prime Ministers or party leaders choose from among their parliamentary party who is to be promoted to the frontbench. Most important of which is the ability of individual MPs in shouldering the responsibilities of becoming a minister or frontbench member. After all, implementation of party leaders' agenda and electoral prospect of the party are at least partially dependent on the ability of frontbenchers to deliver the desired policy change and effective provision of

public goods when the party is in government, or the vigorous scrutiny of government conduct and formation of alternative policy proposals when they are in opposition.

Similar to our discussion on the various roles of parliamentarian there are multiple roles that frontbenchers are expected to play. Headey (1974) suggested seven roles that ministers are expected to perform - to initiate policy of their own or impose policy formulated by their party, to choose between policies as proposed by civil servant or other advisors, to manage their performance of their government department, to be an active member of cabinet member and simultaneously contribute to the broader discussion and coordination among various government department while strive for resources for their own departmental programs; to strengthen cohesion of their party and facilitate future electoral success, to promote the policies of their department or the government as a whole to interest groups as well as the general public through good management in public relation, and lastly to be a representative of their respective regional, religious, ethnic or social class in government by being a member of these groups and provide a voice of their concern in government. Bakema and Secker (1988) conceptualized these roles along two dimensions of responsibilities - technical and political. These dimensions correspond to the dual identities of a government minister, who on one hand is the manager of governmental department overseeing the delivery of policy changes and public goods provision, while simultaneously representing their party in the collective cabinet government.



## **5.2 Pre-parliamentary and frontbench prospects**

### ***5.2.1 Professional experience***

These multiple roles of ministers demand a variety of skills and quality for them to be effective. King and Allen (2010) suggested four criteria Prime Ministers use in choosing their ministers. Firstly, potential ministers ought to have governmental competence. This relates to the technical aspect of being a minister as suggested by Bakema and Secker (1988). Effective ministers ought to be able to swiftly master the policy brief that they are assigned, as well as being able to deal with civil servants and other governmental officials in order to effectively manage the running of their department. The issue of ministers' governmental competence has also given rise to the discussion on the required level of specialized knowledge of certain policy areas for individuals to be qualified as ministers. On the one hand, the traditional view of British ministers was that their roles were that of a generalist, intelligent layman who brings with them extensive experience on a variety of issues but no intensive knowledge in a particular area (Berlinsky et al 2012, Headey 1974). On the other hand, it has been suggested that ministers ought to have some technical knowledge on the specific policy brief that they have been given. The appointment of technical 'specialists' has been found to be the common practice in the Netherlands (Bakema and Secker 1988) and to a lesser extent in Sweden (Beckman 2006). 'Specialist' is usually defined as ministers who have an extensive education or pre-ministerial careers in occupations or positions that have some relevance to their policy brief (For example, Justice Minister with a law degree or who has been working as a lawyer prior to appointment). However, Beckman argued that certain political experience, such as membership of relevant legislative committee or previous ministerial experience could also bestow individuals with

technical knowledge of the brief and the definition of 'specialist' ought to be extended to include these political experience as well. Such 'specialist' ministers are arguably more able to deliver innovative and radical policy change as oppose to the generalist (Headey 1974). In contrast, the notion of ministers as generalists associates the role of ministers not as policy initiators but instead sees them as selector policies as well as manager of their government department. The dilemma between appointing generalist or policy expert to certain ministerial brief is perhaps dependent on the agenda of a particular government or Prime Minister. In some policy areas, the Prime Minister might want a policy expert who has the knowledge and expertise to develop and deliver bold and new policy ideas to deliver the desired changes, while some other policy area might call for a more prudent approach which requires a generalist who is best at running the department with a safe and steady pair of hands (Berlinski et al 2012, Page 2001).

Given that the latter analysis is looking at the distribution of all frontbench appointment among the cohort of new MPs disregarding the specific brief that they have been assigned to, it is perhaps necessary to spare a few moments to discuss how policy expertise is defined in the following analysis. Given the limitation of the research design (a cohort study of new MPs with a relatively small-N), it is not possible to match frontbench appointment of a specific policy brief with the relevant pre-parliamentary experience since the number of frontbench position for each brief would have been too small to reach any statistically significant findings. Instead, what I am looking at are three kinds of pre-parliamentary occupations that might give individual MPs advantage in policy expertise and management of government department across a wide range of policy brief.

First and foremost, I expect occupations that provide individuals with experience in policy formulation in general or management of large organization to have an edge in the competition for frontbench appointment, in particular for positions with executive responsibilities. Specifically, this refers to pre-parliamentary experience in policy/social science research as well as ministerial/MPs advisors. These experiences ought to bestow an individual with knowledge of the processes of formulating as well as implementing policy change and facilitate their role as manager of government department, overseeing policy changes should they be promoted to the frontbench. Secondly, a major responsibility of minister in the process of policymaking is to overseeing the smooth passage of legislative bills through the parliament. Expertise in the matter of law could therefore be useful across a wide range of policy briefs as it may facilitate the drafting of legislations as well as responding to scrutiny in committee. Hence, MPs with extensive experience in the legal profession could potentially be an effective minister and be an attractive choice for the Prime Minister or Party Leader in the processes of appointing frontbench members. Thirdly, besides the importance of governance in the role of ministers, individuals' presentational capacity is also an important concern when Prime Ministers put together their frontbench team (King and Allen 2010). After all, ministers are the most visible members of the government who are expected to serve as the chief spokesperson of their department and, particularly on their assigned policy brief, of their party. It is essential that ministers are competent in communication and public relations in order to effectively explain, promote and defend policy decisions and actions of the government, both toward the parliament as well as the general public. Headey (1974) noted the unusual emphasis in British politics on ministerial performance at the despatch box. Increased scrutiny from mass media in recent

decades has further strengthened demand for ministerial presentation capacity as they are required to present the government's position via media and stand up to questioning by presenters and audiences during radio and television interviews. Hence, we could arrive with the following hypotheses:

*Hypothesis 5.1: MPs with more pre-parliamentary experience in policy research or as ministerial/MPs' advisors are more likely to be appointed to the frontbench, especially to the senior, executive positions.*

*Hypothesis 5.2: MPs with more pre-parliamentary experience in the legal profession are more likely to be appointed to the frontbench*

*Hypothesis 5.3: MPs with more pre-parliamentary experience that strengthen their skills in communication, in particular in public relations and in mass media, are more likely to be appointed to the frontbench*

### **5.2.2 Political experience**

Besides MPs' professional pre-parliamentary careers, their prior political experiences could also provide them with the skills and expertise to be effective member of the government frontbench. We should expect MPs who have occupied political offices that provide them with executive experience or experience in dealing with the bureaucracy to be more likely to receive promotion to the frontbench. This refers to MPs who have held senior executive experience in the local level. Traditionally, local councils in the UK have a committee system where council committees are responsible for the management of certain policy briefs. The Local Government Act of 2000 forced local councils to move to an executive based system where, similar to the system in Westminster, councils are to either appoint an executive

cabinet or manager to exercise executive power on behalf of the council, or opt for having an elected mayor as the local chief executive (Moran 2005). The roles of portfolio holder, elected mayor and committee chair prior to the reform are therefore comparable to that of a minister despite at a much smaller scale. Such experience at senior level of local government could therefore be theoretically useful when these individuals are promoted to the national level of government in areas such as managing government departments, as well as dealing with civil servants and relevant stakeholders. With the advance of devolution and establishment of the Scottish and Welsh Government in the 2000s, there has been further increase in the opportunity for prospective MPs to gain pre-parliamentary executive experience. However, there were but a handful of cases among the cohort being studied that have experience as member of these devolved assemblies and only two of them, Cathy Jamieson and Margaret Curran, have held executive position in the Scottish Government. Given the relatively short history of these institutions, especially with respect to our cohort (the two devolved executives have only a little over ten years of history when our cohort enter the parliament) it remains to be seen if the devolved assemblies and executives are to become an important recruitment channel and breeding ground for Westminster parliamentarians and ministers, or instead, to become an alternative foci of political ambition that would provide an independent route for political career progression in the constituent countries of the UK, hence retaining these talents at a regional level (Borchert 2011). Given the small number of MPs who have gained executive experiences through devolved assemblies and executives, prior experience in devolved assemblies ought not to have a significant impact on MPs' frontbench prospects.

However, the acquisition of skills and expertise is not the only channel through which pre-parliamentary political experience affects MPs' frontbench and ministerial prospects. Although experience in local government could equip future MPs with executive experience that would facilitate their duty should they become ministers, it has also been found that MPs with local government background appear to be at a disadvantage when it comes to frontbench promotion. Mellors (1978) noted that local activists, whilst a major channel for recruitment of parliamentary candidates, 'rarely achieve leading positions in their parliamentary party (p 98). Similarly, an empirical study by Allen (2014) of the cohort of MPs first elected in 1997 found that for MPs with only local government experience but lacking any prior involvement in national politics tend to begin their ministerial career at a more junior level, which in turn limits their prospects of further promotion and the highest office they could attain for the duration of their tenure in parliament. On the contrary, prior political experience at the national level appears to have the opposite effect: MPs who have pre-parliamentary experience in national politics began their frontbench career in higher offices, which in turn leads them to attain even higher office at the pinnacle of their parliamentary career (Allen 2013, 2014). Cowley (2012) suggested that this is a symptom of further professionalization of politics in the UK, which:

*Creates the potential for a two-track career path, with accelerated promotion for those with significant pre-Westminster experience and perhaps a slower route for those without. (Cowley 2012, p 36)*

These observations further complicate the effect of pre-parliamentary political experience on MPs' frontbench prospects. On one hand, executive position in local government would

have made future MP better equip to be an effective minister. However, given the importance of political capital, contact and networking in determining promotion within parliament (Allen 2014, p 84), previous political engagement at the national level could also improve MPs prospect for frontbench appointment at the expense of those who only have local government experience. Therefore, we could arrive at the following hypotheses:

*Hypothesis 5.4: MPs with more pre-parliamentary experience in national party politics are more likely to be appointed to the frontbench.*

*Hypothesis 5.5: MPs with more experience in local government are less likely to be appointed to the frontbench.*

*Hypothesis 5.5.1: When compared to MPs' experience as ordinary members of local government, the negative effect of experience as senior officials in local government on MPs' frontbench prospects is smaller.*

### **5.2.3 Opposition versus government**

Until now, we have only considered the concern of the governing party in appointing their frontbench, but could the same hypothesis be applied to the opposition frontbench? There are two possible reasons for us to expect that composition of the opposition frontbench would be different from that of the government, notwithstanding the fact that they are from the opposing party. Firstly, the method of selecting frontbench members could be slightly different when a party is in opposition. For the Conservatives, the rule in selecting frontbench member in opposition is similar to those used when they are in government. The party leader, when in opposition, is able to dictate who among the parliamentary party shall be named ministers, with minimal consultation and input from other figures within the

party. However, for the Labour Party, although their leader is afforded the freedom to appoint cabinet ministers as they saw fit when they are in government. However, prior to changes in party rules in 2011, when they are in opposition, membership of the Labour shadow cabinet is, as stipulated by the party rulebook, selected by an annual ballot among the PLP. Since Labour was in the opposition throughout the timeframe of this research, it would be intriguing to see if such an arrangement of allowing the parliamentary party select members of the shadow cabinet would produce a set of frontbenchers with different pre-parliamentary backgrounds.

Secondly, the skill set that is required of the shadow cabinet could be different from that of the government. There have been relatively few systematic enquiries into the roles and corresponding skill set for the opposition frontbench. Yet, given the similarity in the organization of the frontbench as well as their common responsibility as the spokesman for their party we ought to expect a high degree of overlap in the skills required to be an effective government minister and member of opposition frontbench team. Frontbenchers on both sides of the aisle are required to be at least reasonably competent in their assigned policy portfolio, whether it is as an intelligent layperson or policy expert. Presentational capacity is also an important criteria on frontbench selection for both government and opposition parties. The most notable difference in role and required skills between frontbenchers of the two sides of the aisle is perhaps the lack of demand for managerial competence for opposition frontbenchers, since they are not responsible for the day-to-day functioning of a government department. However, given the fact that the opposition frontbench is seen by most as the 'government in waiting', its members are expected to be



potential government ministers should their party win the coming election. The competence of opposition frontbencher as government ministers is therefore a crucial consideration for the electorate when deciding to which party they will lend their support. Hence, despite the difference in responsibility, individual competence as government minister ought to be an important consideration when opposition leaders choose their frontbench team.

#### ***5.2.4 Rebellion, party unity and frontbench appointment***

Notwithstanding their expertise and competence, the ideological compatibility and political utility in appointing certain individuals to the frontbench are also a significant concern when Prime Ministers are choosing their ministers (King and Allen 2010). These two considerations are perhaps in conflict with each other. Given ministers are the agents who facilitate their principle – the Prime Minister, to govern (Berlinski et al 2012). For the sake of ensuring that their political agenda is to be pursued faithfully by their ministers, the Prime Minister should, other things being equal, prefer a set of ministers who are ideologically close to their position. Also, since the British government and cabinet operate under the principle of collective responsibility, an ideologically diverse team of ministers might complicate discussion in cabinet, which could lead to indecision and gridlock in the executive. These concerns might lead one to expect that MPs who are ideologically closer to the party leaders and less rebellious are more likely to receive promotions. However, Prime Ministers are often constrained by the internal dynamic of their party to appoint individuals whom they personally dislike, distrust or disagree with in order to maintain party unity and to bring various factions and interests within the party into the fold. Individuals who represent certain interests or ideological persuasions, who have substantial following in the

party, the parliament or among the public, who were described as *the big beasts in the jungle*, have rarely been left on the backbench or sacked from the frontbench (King and Allen 2010). Since this research includes only new MPs, the inclusion of *big beast* is perhaps less of a concern. Yet, the carrot of frontbench appointment remains an important tool for Prime Ministers and party leaders to maintain party unity by attracting the support of MPs who might otherwise rebel against the party during division (Benedetto and Hix 2007). These two contradictory concerns complicate our expectations on MPs' voting record, in particular their instance of rebellion, affect their frontbench prospect.

### **5.3 Data and methodology**

The dependent variables analyzed here are dummy variables that denote if an MP was occupying a frontbench position in a given year. The information used to compile this variable comes from Dods Parliamentary companion from 2010 to 2014. At the end of each year, Dods publish a list of all government and opposition office holders, including assistant whips and government PPS. In order to further distinguish between different ranks on the frontbench, all offices are divided between senior and junior frontbench positions. The definition of seniority is slightly different between government and opposition MPs. For those in government, which correspond to all Conservative and Liberal Democratic MPs, senior positions are those that are formally on the government payroll, binding them to the ministerial code and involving the exercise of executive power. In other words, this includes Parliamentary Undersecretaries, Minister of States and Secretary of States. For the opposition Labour MPs, because there is no formal designation of PPS to shadow ministers, the line between junior and senior on opposition frontbench is drawn by involvement in

shadow cabinet. Any opposition MPs who are appointed as a member of the shadow cabinet or is shown as 'regularly attending shadow cabinet' on Dods annual account of the composition of shadow cabinet will be considered as senior frontbencher while all other shadow ministers are recorded as junior frontbenchers. Moreover, assistant whips of both major parties also count as junior frontbenchers. Although this only provides a cross-sectional observation of MPs' parliamentary careers at the end of each year, this roughly captures the moment which they receive these appointments, their tenure in those positions and their career trajectory.

The analysis is divided into two parts. The first part encompasses all frontbench positions, both senior and junior. A panel structure is used through which the probability of each MP to be on the frontbench at a given year is estimated using a random-effects model, applying the data of their pre-parliamentary career as well as a set of control as the independent variables. The primary reason I have opted for a panel structure for this analysis is because what we are interested here is not only whether an MPs has occupied any frontbench positions throughout their first term, but also for how long they stayed on the frontbench. An alternative approach of achieving that without using a panel structure is to simply use the aggregated number of years an individual MP have stayed on the frontbench as the dependent variable. However, this approach presents another problem because one of the important control variable – MPs' rate of rebellion.

It has been found, not surprisingly, that MPs who are less willing to dissent from their party are also more likely to receive ministerial and frontbench appointments (Kam 2009).

However, MPs' rate of rebellion is also highly endogenous of their status on the frontbench. Given the principle of collective responsibility, MPs who are also members of the government are bound by their status and prevented from voting against the government on a wide range of matters. This means that MPs' status as a frontbencher is going to suppress their rate of rebellion for the duration of them staying in office. Hence, a panel structure is used and the rebel rate from the year prior ( $t-1$ ) is instead used to predict the frontbench status of individual MPs at time  $t$ . It should also be acknowledged that there is the possibility of an 'anticipation effect' among backbenchers - MPs who are confident of receiving appointment to the frontbench in the immediate future might not want to jeopardize their ministerial ambition and toe the party line during divisions which they might otherwise have rebel against their party (Kam 2009). The approach used here is unable to take the 'anticipation effect' on rebellion rate into account.

Another critical issue that needed to be address in using a panel structure to analyze MPs frontbench status in a given year is that observations of an individual MP across different year is not independent of each other. In a ministerial career, there is a certain degree of inertia involved - MPs who are on the frontbench in a given year are also more likely to be still on the frontbench the year afterward when compared to a backbench colleague. This required the models to also include MPs frontbench status from the previous year as a control for this inertia. Moreover, because frontbench status in the previous year is going to affect MPs' rebel rate for that particular year as well, we are therefore required to add an interaction term between the two so as to discern the effect of rebel rate on future frontbench prospect among backbenchers and frontbenchers. Lastly, given that all MPs in

the dataset are newly elected, there were no frontbench status and rebellion rate for the year prior to their first year in Westminster. For the former variable, this issue is easily addressed since we could simply give all MPs a backbench status in the year prior to their entrance of parliament. For the latter, I have used the average rebel rate of the entire cohort during their first year in parliament as the substitute for their hypothetical rebel rate in the previous year. Whilst this may not be the most accurate approximation of their genuine tendency to rebel, and did not take into account the difference among members, nonetheless I would argue that this better reflects the circumstances that are faced by the Prime Minister and party leaders at this juncture. Given that these individuals are elected for the first time and have no voting record to rely on, there is a degree of uncertainty on how they would actually vote in parliament. Hence, the application of the mean rebel rate on the entire cohort as their hypothetical rebel rate for the year prior is a reflection of this uncertainty faced by those responsible for making the appointment at the beginning of the parliament.

Besides rebellion and prior frontbench status, important variables that needed to be controlled include the age and majority of the MP. Various studies have found MPs who are younger at the time of election and have a larger majority are more likely to be appointed to the frontbench as well as attaining higher offices (Allen 2014, Berlinski et al 2012). One obvious explanation is that both youth and majority prolong a parliamentary career, which naturally translates into higher possibility of receiving an appointment at some point. There are also incentives for parties to appoint younger and electorally safer individuals to the frontbench, as younger ministers are more likely to have a longer spell in that position,

providing stability and accumulation of experience to the position as well as providing the novelty effect to the government while electorally safer MPs prevent the party from the humiliation of unexpected electoral defeat of a prominent frontbench member (Allen 2014). Other demographic information, including the gender and ethnicity of MP, as well as party and year fixed effect shall also be used as control. Lastly, the standard error will be clustered at individual MP level.

For the analysis on senior level appointment, instead of a panel structure, a simple logistic regression is used to estimate the possibility of MPs reaching senior frontbench posts during their first term in Westminster. The main reason for not using a panel structure for senior post appointment is that none of the MPs in our database who have reached senior positions has ever been demoted within the time frame of this research. This means that when I try to replicate the models for the entire frontbench to analyze senior frontbench appointment, the dummy variable denoting senior status in the previous year causes all the MP-year after one they first achieve senior frontbencher level to be dropped from the sample due to collinearity. The fact that none of those who have entered the executive position or shadow cabinet has been demoted and they are all promoted in the last few years of the previous parliament meant it is less meaningful in analyzing the length of their stay at their present office. Hence a normal, non-panel, approach is used to study senior level appointment. One obvious drawback, of such an approach is that it prevents the inclusion of MPs' rebel rate as a control variable since the issue of endogeneity cannot be addressed without using a panel structure. However, this is a trade-off that has to be made. Other than rebel rate and frontbench status of the previous year prior, the other

aforementioned control variables are included in the analysis. Finally, all models include only new MPs from the three major parties and exclude those representing minor parties.

## 5.4 Results

### 5.4.1 *All frontbench positions*

Table 5.1 shows the estimated odds ratios of being a frontbench member in a given year derived from unit change in each of the independent variables. Model 1 is the baseline model that includes only control variables with none of the pre-parliamentary career variables. The sign of the coefficient and direction of effect it indicate is mostly as expected. Young age is found to have a positive impact on MPs' frontbench prospects, as it is estimated that every year older at the point of first election reduces the odds of being on the frontbench in a given year by 3%. New Labour MPs are also more likely to be found on the frontbench than their counterpart on the opposite side of the aisle, with an 80% increase in the odds of being on the frontbench in any year compared to the Conservatives. But most importantly, frontbench status in the previous year is found to have a significant impact on MPs frontbench prospect in the following year. The odds of an MP who has been a backbencher in the previous year, to be promoted to the frontbench is merely 4% of the odds of a comparable colleague who has already been on the frontbench to stay in office. As for the rebel rate, the tendency of backbenchers to vote against their own party during division is found to not have a significant impact on their prospect for promotion. While the sign of coefficient is consistent with the expectation that rebellion from the backbench is damaging MPs' frontbench prospect, the effect is not statistically significant. Moreover, in contrary to previous studies, the majority of MPs do not appear to have an impact on the

frontbench prospect as its effect on the odds of being a frontbencher is not significant, and the sign of the coefficient indicates that increased majority actually has the effect of reducing the chance for frontbench appointment, opposite to what is expected.

Model 2 introduces the set of variables denoting the number of years in employment of one of the professional career occupational groups. The only variable that has any significant effect on MPs frontbench appointment is the amount of experience working in mass media. The model estimates that every year of pre-parliamentary mass media experience is going to increase the odd of being a frontbencher in a particularly year by around 10%. This lends credence to hypothesis 5.3 which predicts that MPs' previous experience in communication is a valuable trait in frontbench position and those with such experience are hence more likely to be selected to the frontbench. However, it would appear this effect is only confined to mass media experience as a pre-parliamentary career in public relations does not appear to have a significant impact on MPs' probability of being appointed to the frontbench. Also notable is the effect of pre-parliamentary experience as ministerial or MP advisors. The coefficient for experience in this occupational group is quite substantial and borderline statistic significant ( $p=.107$ ). It is estimated that a year of working as a ministers' or MPs' special advisor would translate into a 15% increase in the likelihood of being a frontbench member in any given year. This is consistent with our expectation from Hypothesis 5.1 which suggests that pre-parliamentary experience in policy formulation and governing would increase one's chance of being selected as a frontbencher. Lastly, contrary to our expectation from Hypothesis 5.2, experience in the legal profession does not appear to affect MPs' frontbench prospect as the coefficient is very small and statistically insignificant.



Table 5.1 Random effect panel logistic models for all frontbench post (odd ratios)

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Business Owner	Baseline	1.008(.016)				1.011(.016)	1.012(.016)	1.009(.046)
Agriculture		1.028(.023)				1.028(.027)	1.023(.027)	1.031(.024)
Science & Tech		.992(.045)				.99(.045)	.99(.045)	.985(.045)
Marketing & Sales		1.039(.026)				1.038(.024)	1.039(.024)	1.037(.025)
Finance		1.028(.021)				1.023(.021)	1.023(.021)	1.027(.021)
NGOs		.99(.052)				.982(.055)	.979(.055)	1.002(.053)
Trade Unions		1.08(.064)				1.089(.078)	1.091(.078)	1.096(.066)
Social Services		1.026(.025)				1.026(.023)	1.026(.022)	1.034(.026)
Lawyer		1(.022)				.998(.022)	.997(.022)	.999(.022)
Teacher		1.018(.022)				1.018(.026)	1.014(.026)	1.018(.023)
Public Relation		.984(.028)				.985(.026)	.985(.026)	.986(.028)
Media		1.103(.053)**				1.1(.05)**	1.103(.05)**	1.1(.05)**
Soc-Sci Research		.995(.041)				1.016(.04)	1.016(.04)	1.007(.044)
Political Worker		.99(.037)				.991(.041)	.99(.051)	.997(.39)
FT Governmental		.982(.031)				1.005(.036)	1.001(.037)	.984(.031)
Ministerial/MPs Advisor		1.16(.106)				1.163(.118)	1.164(.118)	1.226(.12)**
Total Local Government			.965(.017)**	.958(.021)**	1.148(.374)	.956(.02)**	.944(.022)**	1.369(.483)
Junior Local Government				.975(.037)	1.308(.309)		.984(.046)	1.188(.28)
Senior Local Government				1.021(.028)			.975(.039)	.811(.282)
National Party				1.064(.103)			1.045(.109)	.993(.01)
MP Candidacies				1.022(.053)			1.005(.058)	1.182(.209)
Devolved Assembly/MEP								.048(.014)***
Career Change*					1.148(.374)			.761(.137)
Carpetbagger*					1.308(.309)			1.192(.257)
Party Animal*					1.186(.34)			.96(.018)**
Majority(2010)	.991(.009)	.994(.01)	.99(.009)	.989(.009)	.99(.009)	.993(.009)	.993(.009)	1.356(.472)
Rebel Rate(t-1)	1.164(.203)	1.178(.216)	1.19(.217)	1.192(.218)	1.161(.202)	1.186(.221)	1.186(.221)	1.602(.429)*
Backbencher(t-1)	.04(.012)***	.048(.014)***	.042(.013)***	.042(.013)***	.041(.012)***	.048(.014)***	.047(.014)***	
RebRate*BB(t-1)	.756(.136)	.758(.142)	.744(.139)	.743(.139)	.761(.136)	.76(.145)	.76(.145)	
Female	1.223(.248)	1.182(.272)	1.125(.227)	1.116(.226)	1.194(.24)	1.068(.236)	1.053(.235)	
Age	.97(.012)**	.963(.016)**	.976(.012)*	.976(.012)*	.971(.012)**	.971(.017)*	.971(.017)*	
Ethnic Minority	1.149(.369)	1.369(.479)	1.188(.379)	1.19(.381)	1.114(.367)	1.357(.464)	1.363(.467)	
Labour†	1.731(.455)**	1.577(.427)*	1.784(.486)**	1.789(.491)**	1.795(.483)**	1.74(.482)**	1.761(.489)**	
Lib Dem†	1.163(.427)	1.315(.519)	1.199(.43)	1.209(.434)	1.147(.409)	1.345(.521)	1.361(.531)	
Log-pseudolikelihood	-437.707	-424.849	-464.617	-434.34	-437.128	-422.542	-422.062	-423.344
N	1094	1054	1094	1094	1094	1054	1054	1054

Note\* p<.1, \*\*p<.05, \*\*\* p<.01, SE in parentheses, clustered at individual level. Year fixed effect included in all models but coefficient are not shown. No ex-military officer on Frontbench, cases omitted,\*

Baseline is Local Hero †Baseline Conservative

Model 3 and 4 explore how the amount of pre-parliamentary political experience affects MPs' frontbench prospects. Just as Hypothesis 5.5 predicted, experience in local government is found to have a negative effect on the MPs' possibility of becoming a frontbencher. It is estimated that, regardless of the difference in localities and responsibilities that they might have, for every year of experience in local government in general, the odds of an MP being appointed to the frontbench in a given year is reduced by around 3%. In order to test the difference between ordinary and senior membership of local government as suggested by Hypothesis 5.5.1, Model 4 further distinguish the amount of local government experience between the two tiers of local political positions. The estimation from Model 4 is largely as Hypothesis 5.5.1 have expected; the coefficient for the amount of experience as an ordinary member of local government remains negative and significant while the coefficient denoting the effect of senior membership of local government shows its effect is slightly less negative in comparison to being an ordinary member, and this effect is not statistically significant. These shows that while in general, prior experience in local government appears to hamper MP's frontbench ambitions, with the accompanying experience in governance and executive position, being a senior official in local government appears to at least partially mitigate the negative effect of following a local route into parliament. On the contrary, the effect of national party experience on MPs' frontbench prospects appears to be inconclusive. In both Models 3 and 4, as Hypothesis 5.4 expected, the coefficient for national party experience is positive, yet the magnitude is rather small and it is not statistically significant. Model 5 expresses MPs' pre-parliamentary political experience in terms of their political career type. The baseline category used as comparison is 'Local Hero'. None of the coefficient for the other three career types are significant, and this is partially surprising. Since local government experience in general, and

experience as an ordinary council member in particular, is distributed among both 'Local Heroes' and 'Carpetbaggers', they ought not to have significant impact on MPs' frontbench prospect. However, as found in Models 3 and 4, experience in the national party, as denoted in Model 5 by the category 'Party Animal' is also not significantly related to possibility of an MP being on the frontbench, although the direction of their effect are as expected in Hypothesis 5.4.

Models 6, 7 and 8 estimate MPs' frontbench prospects by taking their pre-parliamentary professional and political experience into account. Results from Models 6 and 7 largely confirm the findings from previous models. The coefficient for the amount of pre-parliamentary experience in media is of the same sign, with similar magnitude and remains significant across all models, including Model 8. The coefficient on total amount of experience in local government in Model 6 is also of the same sign and significance; its magnitude also increases in comparison to Model 3 and is hence statistically more significant as a result. This shows that the negative effect of being a local council member over MPs' possibility to serve in the frontbench is even more apparent after taking MPs' pre-parliamentary professional career into account. Furthermore, the discrepancy between the coefficient for junior and senior position in local council in Model 7 is also much more apparent and the coefficient for experience as ordinary local council member is more negative and therefore statistically more significant compared to Model 4. This shows that the difference between junior and senior position in local government is also made more salient when we consider both professional and political pre-parliamentary career. These

findings further increase the robustness of my findings from the earlier models and hence of Hypotheses 6.3, 6.5 and 6.5.1.

On the contrary, Model 8 presents a surprising result - after taking professional experiences into account, the effect of being a Party Animal on receiving possibility of frontbench appointment becomes negative in comparison to the baseline, although this result remain insignificant. Similar result is also observed in Models 6 and 7, where the coefficient denoting how the amount of experience in national party affects MPs' frontbench prospects becomes negative with the addition of professional experience into the model. Concurrently, we can observe substantial changes in the magnitude and sign of coefficients which represent the effect of several professional occupations that are found to be related to national partisan experience. The coefficient for experience in social science research and trade union changes from being negative in Model 2 to positive across Models 6, 7 and 8. There are also less substantial change in the coefficient for political worker and full-time governmental official, which becomes much less negative and even slightly positive when a political career is considered in the model. But most strikingly, the coefficient for prior experience as ministerial/MPs advisor increase substantially in Model 8 and become statistically significant. The model estimates that every year of pre-parliamentary experience as ministerial/MPs advisors would increase a MPs' odds of being on the frontbench in a given year by over 23%. This lends us more confidence on the validity of Hypothesis 5.1 with regard to the positive effect of being a Ministerial advisor. These results appear to indicate that the slightly positive yet insignificant result for national party experiences we have observed in Models 3, 4 and 5 is in fact largely driven by the positive

impact of experience as Ministerial/MPs advisors and, to a lesser extent, by other 'instrumental' occupations. Once these are taken into account, the impact of previous participation in national partisan politics on MPs' frontbench prospect is actually negative.

Table 5.2 shows the results of applying Model 7 to new members representing the coalition as well as the two main parties. Model 9 includes both Conservative and Liberal Democrat new MPs with a party fixed effect for Liberal MPs. The main difference between Model 9 and previously discussed models is that prior employment in education is found to have a significant and positive impact on the possibility of becoming a frontbench member. It is estimated that among coalition MPs, every year of experience as a teacher increases the odds of being a frontbencher in any year by around 6%. Also found to have a significant and positive impact on coalition MPs frontbench prospects is pre-parliamentary experience in marketing and sales, which is estimated to increase the odds of being on the frontbench in any year by 5%. Similar to the complete cohort models, experience as ordinary member of local government is found to have a significant and negative effect on MPs frontbench prospect while experience in senior local government position among coalition MPs is found to have a slightly positive yet insignificant effect. However, coefficient for experience in media and ministerial/MP advisors lost its significance and the sign of ministerial/MPs advisor is actually negative, suggesting that among coalition MP, prior experience as ministerial advisor actually decreases the chance for one to become a frontbencher, which is opposite to the expected observation from Hypothesis 5.1. It should however be noted that the size of the coefficient for mass media experience is still quite substantial and borderline significant ( $p=.104$ ). Lastly, it should be noted that although experience in social

service is also found to have significant and positive effect on frontbench possibility, it should be noted that there is only one sample among new coalition MPs who have any pre-parliamentary experience in social services, which diminish the validity of this result.

Table 5.2 . Random effect panel logistic models for all frontbench post (odd ratios)(Party Models)

	(9) Coalition	(10) Conservative	(11) Labour
Business Owner	1.013(.018)	1.01(.019)	.877(.318)
Agriculture	1.038(.03)	1.04(.031)	
Science & Tech	.976(.05)	1.018(.056)	1.441(1.203)
Marketing & Sales	1.045(.028)*	1.05(.03)*	.65(1.023)
Finance	1.033(.022)	1.035(.023)	.966(.08)
NGOs	.957(.112)	.967(.126)	.96(.2)
Trade Unions			1.065(.278)
Social Services	1.797(.53)**		.966(.07)
Lawyer	1.034(.023)	1.034(.023)	.826(.294)
Teacher	1.062(.033)*	1.076(.035)**	.964(.045)
Public Relation	.997(.03)	.999(.032)	.862(.168)
Media	1.093(.059)	1.094(.064)	1.239(.401)
Soc-Sci Research	1.027(.048)	1.034(.048)	.935(.316)
Political Worker	1.022(.067)	.987(.072)	.861(.366)
FT Governmental	1.029(.049)	1.03(.051)	.956(.13)
Ministerial/MPs Advisor	.907(.133)	.9(.139)	1.688(1.858)
Junior Local Government	.945(.027)**	.931(.032)**	.963(.079)
Senior Local Government	1.023(.064)	1.03(.068)	.989(.125)
National Party	1.018(.058)	1.02(.062)	.96(.077)
MP Candidacies	.948(.112)	.953(.126)	1.492(.825)
Devolved Assembly/MEP	.954(.07)	.948(.073)	1.087(.376)
Majority(2010)	1.016(.012)	1.018(.013)	.945(.056)
Rebel Rate(t-1)	1.401(.353)	2.294(.788)**	.436(.437)
Backbencher(t-1)	.098(.036)***	.119(.048)***	.014(.056)
RebRate*BB(t-1)	.581(.157)**	.363(.129)***	3.377(3.633)
Female	.933(.265)	.898(.269)	1.129(.566)
Age	.969(.017)*	.974(.019)	.984(.053)
Ethnic Minority	1.147(.327)	1.173(.341)	2.091(4.993)
Lib Dem *	1.659(.682)		
Log-pseudolikelihood	-286.535	-257.222	-103.215
N	739	689	315

Note: \* p<.1, \*\*p<.05, \*\*\* p<.01, SE in parentheses, Year fixed effect not shown, No military officer on Front Bench, variable included, cases omitted, \* Baseline Conservative

Another interesting finding from both Models 9 and 10 is that the coefficient for the rebel rate among backbenchers became statistically significant and the sign is Negative. This suggests that while backbenchers' rebel rate does not have any significant effect on the frontbench prospect among the entire cohort of new MPs, it does have an impact on the probability of becoming a frontbencher among government MPs. The models estimate that every percentage point increase in rebel rate in a given year among government frontbenchers would translate into a 19% to 17% decrease in the odds of becoming a frontbencher in the coming year. On the other hand, the coefficient of backbench rebel rate

among new Labour MPs is insignificant and of the opposite sign. This indicates that while backbench rate of rebellion does not appear to have an overall effect on frontbench promotion across new MPs from three major parties, it seems to be much more of a concern among governing party(ies). There are two explanations for this discrepancy in the effect of rebel rate on frontbench appointment between governing and opposition parties. Firstly, being in governing and dependent on a disciplined backbench to vote to secure passage of legislation and motions through parliament, utilizing promotion as the carrot to maintain party cohesion is likely to be more of a concern for party(ies) in government. Secondly, since Labour has the policy of electing shadow cabinet member through a ballot among PLP members, the party leadership is unable to dictate the appointment of a substantial portion of the frontbench dependent on individuals' loyalty, which makes rebel rate an insignificant determinant of frontbench promotion among new Labour MPs.

Moreover, the coefficient for frontbench rebel rate is positive and significant in Model 10. This suggest that among new Conservative MPs who are already on the frontbench, the more you vote against the majority of your own party, the more likely you are to retain your position. The model estimate that every percentage point increase in a frontbench member rebel rate is going to increase the odd of him/her retaining that position in the coming year by 129%. This may appear to be particularly counter intuitive, but there are actually both theoretical and circumstantial reasons to make sense of this. Firstly, there are theoretical incentives for the Prime Minister or party leader to tolerate a certain degree of rebelliousness among frontbenchers. One of the purposes of frontbench appointment is to act as both an incentives for individual to vote with the party as well as bounding these

individual to vote with the party in important division through collective responsibility. A certain degree of rebelliousness would indicate that these individual might require the nudge that is frontbench appointment to vote for the party. Frontbench rebellious also signal that should these individuals be sacked from their current post, they may cause much more trouble for the party from the backbench. In terms of circumstantial reason, we should bear in mind that for the duration of this study, the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats are engaged in a coalition government, which involved both party compromising on some of their position in order to form a government together. This is likely to create displeasure and unrest within the two parliamentary parties, especially among those who feel more passionate on the cause of their respective party or those who situate in the more extreme wing of the party. These are also the two groups of MPs who are most likely to be appointed to the frontbench given their loyalty to the party and the need to placate the extreme wing in order to secure their support for the coalition. Hence, we have observed this counterintuitive result where rebellious frontbenchers are more likely to retain their post.

Model 11 shows the result of the Labour model. It should be stated in advance of further discussion that given the relatively small size of the Labour cohort ( $N=63$ ), it is much more difficult to achieve statistical significance here. Although none of the variables are statistically significant, it is worth noting that the coefficient denoting experience as Ministerial/MPs advisors is positive and the magnitude is very substantial. It is estimate that each year of experience as ministerial advisor increases the odd of being a frontbencher in any year by 69%. It should also be pointed out that all of the new Labour MPs who worked



as ministerial or MPs' advisors have all served on the Labour frontbench at some point during the last parliament. This further indicates that experience as ministerial advisor could be an important determinant of Labour MPs' frontbench ambitions. However, unlike previous models, we do not observe any negative effect on possibility of frontbench appointment from neither local government experience in general nor being an ordinary member of local government in particular. This indicates that the negative effect of local government experience on MPs' prospects for promotion is largely confined among the Conservative in the last parliament.

To briefly conclude, the models have confirmed some of the existing understanding on frontbench appointment found in the literature - those who are younger are more likely to be selected to serve as frontbencher. Although not having an effect on the cohort as a whole, backbench rebellion is found to be a hindrance of government MPs' ministerial ambitions. A rather unexpected finding is that frontbencher on the government bench are more likely to retain their position if they vote against the majority of their party. However, this is likely due to the compromise involved in forming the Conservative-Liberal Democrat coalition government compel those who are ideologically consistent with their own party to vote against some of the coalition policies and the government hesitant to return these individuals to the backbench to prevent even more serious cases of descent. In terms of the impact of pre-parliamentary career on an MPs' frontbench prospects, the model has consistently shown that amount of experience in mass media are more likely to become frontbenchers while membership of local government in general have a negative impact on the probability of an MP serving as a frontbencher. Further investigation have shown

discrepancy between the effect of being a senior member of local government and ordinary member as the negative impact of the former on frontbench prospect is found to be substantially smaller and less significant than the latter. These finding is consistent across almost all specification, suggesting they are robust. These have confirmed our expectation from hypothesis 5.3, 5.5 and 5.5.1. Experience as special advisors to ministers and MPs have also been found to have a substantial positive influence on MPs chance of becoming a frontbencher although this result is less robust as the coefficient is only significant or borderline significant in some of the models. This lend some credence to Hypothesis 5.1 with regard to ministerial or MP advisors.

#### ***5.4.2 Senior frontbench appointment***

Our attention shall now be turned toward the appointment of senior positions of the frontbench. Given that all of these positions involve the drafting and implementation of policies as well as management of government department, at present or when the party is voted in government, we ought to expect MPs ability in policy formulation and executive experience to be a much more relevant and hence important consideration during the selection of senior members of the frontbench when compared to the recruitment of frontbench positions in general. Hence, the effect of Hypotheses 6.1 and 6.5.1 shall be much more prominent when we only consider the appointment of cabinet level positions.

Table 5.3 shows the results of simple logistic regression predicting the probability of a new MP being promoted to senior frontbench positions at some point during their first term in

Westminster. The dependent variable used here is a dummy denoting if they have ever served in executive positions or shadow cabinet during the study period. As previously explained, given that none of those who have reached senior positions have been demoted, we are unable to use a panel structure to study cabinet appointment. And given the endogeneity issue with regard to rebel rate, a non-panel structure model could not accurately estimate that effect of rebellion on cabinet appointment, hence the factor of MP dissent is omitted from the model. Also notable is the fact that none of the new Liberal Democrat MPs have joined the executive by the end of the study period, hence all models contain only new MPs from the two main parties, except for the Conservative only Model 9.

Model 1 serves as the baseline for subsequent specifications. None of the control variables have a significant impact on MPs' probability of being appointed to senior frontbench positions with the exception of the gender of individual. The model estimates a moderately significant effect of being a female MP on the probability of becoming a member of the executive or shadow cabinet. It is found that female MPs among the 2010 cohort are twice as likely to be appointed to senior frontbench posts as their male colleagues. On the other hand, it is slightly intriguing that the model found no relation between electoral security and being a senior frontbencher, which is counterintuitive as well as going against some of the existing literature on frontbench and executive appointment.

Model 2 introduces professional pre-parliamentary variables into the specification. As predicted by Hypothesis 5.1, prior experience as advisors to ministers and MPs is found to have a positive and statistically significant impact on MPs' prospects of becoming a senior

frontbencher. It is estimated that every year of experience as a ministerial advisor increase the odds of receiving a senior level appointment in the first term by about 52%. Similar to our finding with regards to the entire frontbench team, it is found that pre-parliamentary experience in mass media is also a contributing factor to MPs being appointed to executive posts or shadow cabinet. The model estimates that every year of experience in the media would translate into a 32% increase in the odds of being appointed to senior frontbench positions. Unlike our previous finding, and somewhat unexpectedly, previous employment in the financial service sector is also found to have a significant and positive effect on senior frontbench appointment. It is predicted that every year of experience in the financial industry would increase a MPs' odds of reaching senior frontbench offices by about 14%.

Models 3, 4 and 5 explore the impact of pre-parliamentary political careers on executive or shadow cabinet appointment. Model 3 combines all local government experience into a single variable. The model indicates that local government experience appears to hamper MPs' ministerial ambition. The result shows that every year of experience as local councillor, regardless of locality and seniority, reduce the odds of becoming a member of government or shadow cabinet by about 12%. Model 4 further distinct the effect of being an ordinary or senior member of local government. This estimation shows the negative effect of local government as observed in Model 3 can largely be contributed to being an ordinary member while the negative effect that stem from being a senior member of local government is much smaller and also statistically insignificant. The model predict that every year an MP serve as an ordinary member of local council is going to reduce their odd of receiving executive or shadow cabinet appointment by over 17%. Instead of distinguishing

local government experience through seniority, Model 5 distinguishes local experience by locality. The reason for including this model is that during the fitting of models it is found that none of the new MPs who have been classified as local hero has become a senior frontbencher during the last parliament. This prevent us from using the types of political career as a variable in our analysis here, but it does indicate that local heroes might be discriminated against in the selection for government executive offices or shadow cabinet member, which is confirmed by the result of Model 5. This specification estimate that every year of local government experience within an MPs own constituency reduce the odd of them becoming a senior frontbench member by about 19%.

Models 6, 7 and 8 took both professional and political pre-parliamentary careers into consideration. When compared to earlier models, the coefficient representing the effect of prior experience in financial services and mass media is of the same sign, with similar magnitude and level of statistically significance. This suggests the positive impact of these experience on MPs executive or shadow cabinet prospect is not altered with the inclusion of political career into the equation. However, we can observe a substantial reduction and loss of significance with regard to the coefficient for Ministerial/MPs advisor and combined experience in local government. Concurrently, the coefficient with regards to pre-parliamentary involvement in national partisan politics substantially increases in magnitude and becomes statistically significant. This model estimates that every year of involvement in national politics prior to becoming an MP increases one's odd of being promoted to executive position or shadow cabinet by around 23%. Also notable is that some of the sign

Table 5.3 Logistic regression for senior frontbench post (odd ratios)

	(1) Baseline	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9) Conservative
Business Owner		.955(.058)				.96(.06)	.965(.062)	.962(.061)	.964(.07)
Agriculture		.998(.149)				.979(.158)	.974(.151)	.963(.169)	1.001(.204)
Science & Tech		1.017(.157)				1.077(.163)	1.092(.168)	1.086(.167)	1.167(.188)
Marketing & Sales		1.047(.07)				1.018(.072)	1.03(.074)	1.013(.072)	1.084(.083)
Finance		1.142(.056)***				1.137(.058)**	1.145(.059)***	1.135(.058)**	1.208(.081)***
NGOs		1.047(.13)				.929(.12)	.922(.119)	.921(.119)	1.54(.379)*
Trade Unions									
Social Services		1.061(.139)				1.072(.192)	1.095(.198)	1.105(.211)	1
Lawyer		1.067(.046)				1.045(.047)	1.046(.047)	1.044(.047)	1.107(.063)*
Teacher		1.092(.064)				1.108(.069)*	1.092(.07)	1.1(.072)	1.21(.141)
Public Relation		1.017(.071)				.979(.079)	.984(.079)	.98(.079)	.954(.103)
Media		1.318(.113)***				1.31(.118)**	1.314(.12)***	1.313(.12)***	1.269(.146)**
Soc-Sci Research		1.005(.112)				.925(.131)	.918(.132)	.93(.133)	.988(.148)
Political Worker		1.039(.111)				.926(.146)	.915(.15)	.93(.143)	1.051(.237)
FT Governmental		1.029(.091)				1.002(.122)	.998(.117)	1.022(.132)	1.021(.174)
Ministerial/MPs Advisor		1.523(.223)***				1.224(.213)	1.227(.213)	1.22(.212)	.768(.261)
Total Local Government			.882(.062)*			.925(.069)			
Junior Local Government				.83(.084)*			.872(.094)		.885(.112)
Senior Local Government				.991(.124)			1.053(.149)		1.117(.205)
Local Government (Same Const)					.815(.097)*			.867(.103)	
Local Government (Diff Const)					.937(.078)			.976(.09)	
National Party									
MP Candidacies			1.066(.049)	1.062(.049)	1.066(.049)	1.23(.118)**	1.229(.118)**	1.231(.117)**	1.25(.169)*
Devolved Assembly/MEP			1.39(.315)	1.384(.318)	1.354(.305)	1.576(.446)	1.566(.456)	1.546(.45)	1.439(.503)
Majority(2010)	1.024(.018)	1.038(.023)*	1.083(.106)	1.078(.105)	1.079(.105)	1.066(.163)	1.073(.166)	1.034(.168)	1.048(.218)
Female	2.058(.833)*	1.883(.885)	1.021(.019)	1.021(.019)	1.02(.019)	1.036(.034)	1.035(.024)	1.036(.024)	1.077(.033)**
Age	.968(.021)	.95(.03)	1.867(.787)	1.817(.766)	1.821(.77)	1.726(.863)	1.694(.851)	1.67(.841)	2.567(.1606)
Ethnic Minority	1.393(.877)	1.984(.1425)	.973(.024)	.971(.024)	.973(.024)	.964(.033)	.96(.033)	.65(.033)	.923(.049)
Labour *	.472(.225)	.343(.198)*	1.683(.1104)	1.677(.1104)	1.65(.108)	2.073(.1601)	2.043(.1585)	2.066(.1593)	3.445(.395)
Pseudo R-sq	.044	.183	.097	.1011	.103	.237	.242	.241	.305
N	209	194	209	209	209	194	194	194	138

Note: \* p&lt;.1, \*\*p&lt;.05, \*\*\* p&lt;.01, SE in parentheses, No ex-military officer or Liberal Democrat appointed to ministerial posts, cases omitted, \* Baseline Conservative

of coefficient that represents prior experience in instrumental occupations, such as political workers, public relations and social science research, has changed their sign, which indicate a change in the direction of the effect on MPs senior frontbench prospect from positive to negative. Similar changes can also be observed in Models 7 and 8, as the coefficient for junior membership as well as in-constituency experience in local government lose their significance while the coefficient for national partisan activities become significant.

Taking these findings together, a possible interpretation to these changes in the result would be that findings from prior models is actually better explained by MPs pre-parliamentary involvement in national partisan activities. As suggested in Hypothesis 5.4, prior involvement in the national party familiarizes these individuals with the leadership and other important figures within the party as well as showing loyalty and commitment to the party. These two factors should increase the possibility of them being chosen as frontbencher and cabinet members should they find themselves in parliament. The reason that many of the variables denoting instrumental occupations are positive, although most, except for ministerial advisors, by themselves do not achieve statistical significance, is that they are highly related to prior involvement in national party as shown in Chapter 3. Similarly, the negative result for three local government related variable in Models 3, 4 and 5 could also be explained by the lack of partisan experience among individuals who have followed the local route into parliament. Hence, when taking both political and professional experience into consideration, the pattern of involvement in national politics becomes a better explanatory variable on who among the new members are appointed to government executive positions or shadow cabinet.

Model 9 shows results that only include new Conservative MPs, the result is fairly similar to those observed in Model 8. The coefficient for pre-parliamentary experience in finance, media and national party have all remain statistically significant with similar magnitude, suggest these findings are robust among the Conservative sample. Several other variables do become significant when only Conservative MPs is concerned, they are those that denote pre-parliamentary experience in NGOs and legal profession. The Model estimates that for every year of pre-parliamentary experience in NGO or legal profession, the odds of an MP joining the government is increased by around 54% and 11% respectively, the latter is consistent with Hypothesis 5.2, which expects MPs with legal experience ought to be more likely to receive promotion due to their potential contribution to drafting of legislation. On the other hand, prior experience and ministerial or MP advisors is not a significant determinant of ministerial appointment among Conservatives; the sign is also opposite to what we have observed in previous models, this suggest the positive effect we have previously found with regard to experience as special advisors must have originated from Labour MPs. As a matter of fact, all 9 ex-advisors among the new Labour cohort have served in a frontbench capacity at some point during the parliament, and five out of nine have become member of the shadow cabinet. These indicate being a ministerial advisor do play a major role in the promotion of Labour MPs on to the frontbench. Lastly, this model also found Conservative MPs who are electorally more secure are also more likely to be appointed to executive positions. It predicts every percentage point increase in one's majority increase the odds of joining the government by around 8%. This is consistent with expectation from existing literature on ministerial appointment. The fact that MPs electoral security is only significant in the Conservative only model and not among the general



models suggest that the Conservative leadership is likely to be more concerned with the electoral survivability of its minister than Labour on its shadow cabinet member.

### 5.4.3 Predicted frontbench prospect

**Figure 5.1 Probability of becoming government minister or shadow cabinet member over the number of years of political experiences**

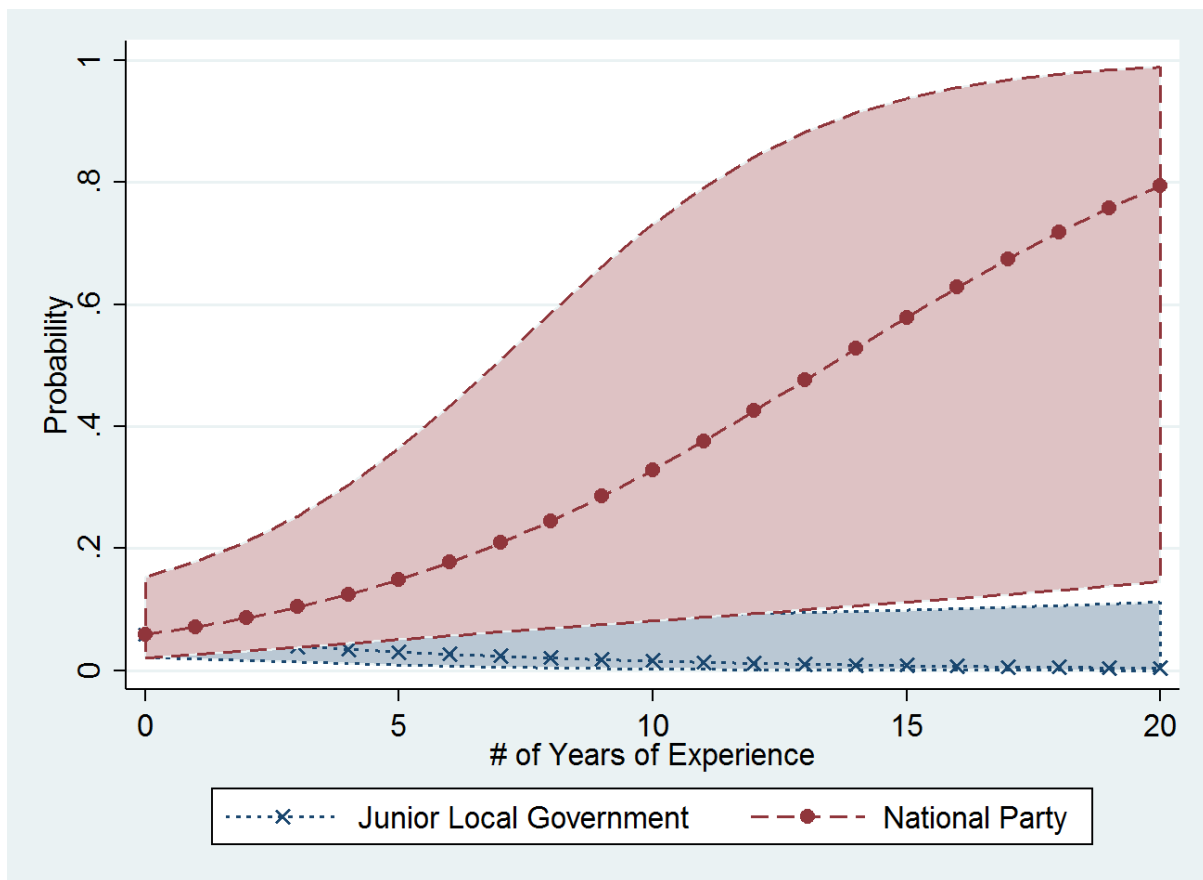


Figure 5.1 shows the predicted probability for an individual MP to become either a government minister or shadow cabinet member at some point during the entirety of the parliament. The predicted probability is estimated by Model 8 shown in Table 5.3. The baseline, which is shown on the graph at year 0, is set to be a white male Conservative MP who has the average age of the cohort, elected to the parliament with the average majority among the cohort, having never served in devolved assemblies nor the European

Parliament, nor having previously ran for parliament and having none of the professional experience being studied during his pre-parliamentary career.

At year 0, or in other word if the MP have none of the two kinds of political experience, it is estimated that the probability for the individual to receive a ministerial appointment during his first term is only 5.9%. However, as predicted by the model, should the hypothetical MP joint the national party, as the amount of national political experience of our hypothetical MP increases, so does his chance for becoming a government minister while if he chooses to follow the local route into parliament and becomes a junior member of local council, the probability of him becoming a minister decreases.

The probability of ministerial appointment begins to diverge significantly the at 90% confidence level when the amount of experience reach around twelve years. In the end, if the hypothetical MP have 20 years of experience in national politics on his CV, the estimated probability of him becoming a minister is at a more than respectable 79%. On the other hand, if he stayed as an ordinary member of a local council, his chance of becoming a government minister is at a very low level of 0.4% - in other words, virtually impossible.

## **5.5 Discussion**

Looking at the results on both tiers of frontbench positions across the two tables, we see that there is evidence to validate most of the hypotheses concerning how MPs' pre-parliamentary career affects their prospect of receiving promotion to become a frontbench

member. On MPs' professional pre-parliamentary careers, pre-parliamentary experience in mass media is a positive and significant factor that contributes to the frontbench prospect of MPs. This is a strong vindication of Hypothesis 5.3, although it would appear that only those who worked within mass media are favoured during the allocation of frontbench positions as MPs with public relations backgrounds do not appear to have a higher tendency of serving on the frontbenches. This indicates the skills in communicating with the general public and the ability to confront and engage with the mass media play a vital role in the selection of frontbenchers and ministers across all parties. The results from the party specific models also show a slight bias towards MPs with legal backgrounds when it comes to cabinet level appointments among the governing Conservatives. This suggests that concern with regard to legal expertise or competence in drafting of legislation is likely to be more apparent among the governing party with regards to executive positions, since it is the role of government ministers to draft and propose new legislation and overseeing their safe passage through parliament. On the other hand, for the opposition party, the point of contention with government over proposed legislation likely lies in select or public bill committees. Hence, the opposition Labour might have less need for having legal expertise on their frontbench.

The results also strongly support all the hypotheses with regard to the effect of pre-parliamentary political experiences. Repeatedly, the analysis has shown that MPs with more experience in local politics, especially those who served as ordinary members in local councils, are being overlooked during the frontbench recruitment process, as expected by Hypothesis 5.5. The evidence also supports Hypothesis 5.5.1, which suggests that there are

discrepancies in the frontbench prospects between ordinary local councillors and senior members of local governments, as the negative impact of the latter is much less severe. This indicates that occupying positions with more responsibility at the local level could to certain extent mitigate the stigma of being a local councillor during frontbench selection process. Results with regard to senior frontbench positions have also shown pre-parliamentary involvement in national party politics is an important indicator of a successful ministerial career, as it shows that the amount of experience in national party politics significantly boost the possibility of one serving as a minister or in the shadow cabinet in their first term as an MP. This confirms the expectation of Hypothesis 5.4. However, it would appear that experience in the national party is only a determining factor when choosing members of government and shadow cabinet while it does not significantly distinguish frontbenchers in general from backbenchers. What this indicates is that while prior involvement in national party politics does not appear to be a necessary condition for one to become a frontbench member, it is of crucial importance in the selection for senior positions on the frontbench. There could be a whole range of reasons why the Prime Minister or party leaders are willing to put someone on the frontbench, such as prevention of rebellion, cultivation of potential ministers, regional or ideological balances etc. However, previous involvement in national party politics appears to be a key determinant when it comes to ministerial posts, as party insiders are much more likely to be getting them in their first term.

However, unlike the others, the evidence is not consistent with expectation from Hypothesis 5.1. In none of the specifications across both dependent variables was social science research a significant determinant. Although it is found in several models that

amount of experience as ministerial or MP advisors do have some positive influence on MPs' frontbench prospects. Nevertheless, one of the twist with regard to the impact of pre-parliamentary experience as ministerial advisor is that contrary to what is expected from the hypothesis, this is actually a more prominent, positive factor on frontbench prospect among Labour MPs than the governing Conservative and Liberal Democrat. This is somewhat counter intuitive given that executive and governing experience is arguable more valuable to the governing party frontbench than opposition shadow cabinet. A possible explanation to reconcile this finding is that the utility of being a ministerial advisors during pre-parliamentary career does not actually stem from executive experience, but rather the connection within party leadership and bigwigs that it provides. As shown in the senior frontbench models, the positive effect of being a ministerial advisor is largely washed away by the inclusion of national party experience in the model. Moreover, the observation that it is only a contributing factor to frontbench promotion among Labour MPs while almost hindering the ambition of Conservative MP could be explained by the fact that the Conservative has been, at the beginning of the last parliament, out of government for the last thirteen years. Some of those who have served as ministerial advisors might have done so during the Major or even Thatcher administration, which means they would have to be in their late middle age in 2010. Not only could their age hamper their frontbench ambition, but the ministers they have served, or the connection and network that they have made during their tenure as ministerial advisors might either have lost their seats in the 1997 Labour landslide or retired due to old age, hence losing their influence in the party, thus negating the benefit of experience as ministerial advisor among these individuals. On the other hand, ex-ministerial-advisor among Labour have most likely served during the Blair-Brown years, ministers and MPs they have served under are most probably still fairly active

in the present PLP, which means they could exert their influence in propelling their protégé into the opposition frontbench. All in all, the results suggest that even if being a ministerial advisor improves one's frontbench prospects, the likely utility of it lies not in the expertise and skills in governance that it provides, but the opportunity to cultivate the networks and relationships with party leadership that it offer.

The significant effect of experience in financial services on ministerial prospects, in particular among Conservative MPs, is also worth some further discussion. Such a bias towards MPs with experience in the financial sector is largely unexpected. It is even more intriguing if we take this finding together with some of the observations we have made in the previous chapter, that pre-parliamentary experience in financial services also relate to MPs representing safer constituency among Conservatives. Together, what these findings might suggest is a latent preference or bias toward ex-financial workers during the entire process of political recruitment within the Conservative party, from the allocation of seats among applicants of parliamentary candidacy to selection of ministers among the parliamentary party after election. Alternatively, this tendency of appointing ex-financial workers as ministers could be related to Hypothesis 5.1, that previous employment in the financial sector equips these individuals with skills and expertise that is valuable in governance or management of government department. One of the major executive responsibility of ministers is monitoring public finance, overseeing departmental spending and compiling of departmental budget. Skills and knowledge ex-financial workers earned in the industry might be useful in these aspects of the ministerial brief. Moreover, this benefit expertise is not specific to a particular policy brief, but useful across multiple government

department. This could also explain why we only observe significant impact from prior experience in financial services on appointment of government ministers and not on frontbencher in general since financial expertise is only useful in an executive context, which is less of an issue when appointing PPS or assistant whips. Lastly, this preference for ministers with financial expertise could be merely circumstantial. As I have noted, the parliament that is being studied is elected and inaugurated in the wake of a severe financial crisis, this made public finance as well as reform and regulation of the financial industry a major priority for the newly elected Conservative-Liberal Democrat coalition government. Hence it is natural for the government to appoint expertise in these areas into the team of ministers so they could utilise their skills and knowledge with regard to these area as well as connection within the industry to develop new policies that tackle these issues and secure the support for potential policy change within the financial sector.

## **5.6 Conclusion**

All in all, the findings in this chapter are largely consistent with the trend of professionalization of politics in Britain that has been observed by numerous scholars (Allen 2013, 2014, Cairney 2007, Cowley 2012, King 1981). Those who could roughly be described as party insiders enjoy better ministerial prospects than their colleagues. MPs who had more involvement in national party politics prior to their arrival in Westminster are also more likely to be appointed to senior positions on the frontbench of both main parties, while those who followed the local route into parliament tend to be overlooked in the promotion process. However, the observation we have made here do help further refining our understanding of professionalization of politics as we have discovered some nuance

with regard to the impact of pre-parliamentary career on frontbench and ministerial appointment.

First and foremost, not all party insiders are created equal, and some insiders are more favoured than others. My findings have shown that among occupations that can broadly be described as 'political facilitating', some of them are substantially more influential in frontbench and ministerial appointment than others. The models have shown that the amount of experience in mass media, as ministerial or MP advisor among Labour, and legal expertise among Conservative are all related to increase odd of becoming a minister during their first term in Westminster. The likely explanation for the prevalence of mass media and legal expertise in ministerial ranks is the functional utility that these experiences provide to ministers. Experience in mass media and the legal profession facilitate ministers' roles as communicator and champion of party policies as well as drafters of legislation.

Secondly, being a party insider is good, but local politicians are not necessarily all bad. Specifically, we ought to distinguish between being an ordinary member of a local council and being a senior official in local government. While we have indeed found experiences in local government hindering the frontbench prospects of MPs, there is a stark difference between these two tiers of local political experience in terms of their effect on individuals' future frontbench prospects. Having been an ordinary member of local councils is clearly preventing some MPs from serving on the frontbench, yet the negative effect of serving as a senior officials in local government or council, either as council chair, elected mayor or cabinet portfolio holder, is much less severe and less significant when compared to being



merely an ordinary councillor. What this suggests is, although reaching parliament through a local political route remain a disadvantage for individual MPs in the frontbench selection process, the executive and governance experience associated with senior offices in local government means MPs who have occupied these positions have something more to offer the party on the frontbench when compared to ordinary local councillors and hence these experiences partially mitigate the disadvantage of being a local politician.

However, in terms of pre-parliamentary careers and ministerial appointments, what remains intriguing is if these experiences actually affect the performance of ministers? Our hypotheses rely on the assumption that increases in knowledge and experience in a certain area would result in better performance in corresponding aspects of their role as ministers. This is a reasonable expectation from the vantage point of the Prime Minister and party leadership when they make appointments. However, is that really the case? Are frontbenchers with mass media experience better presenters and spokespersons for their parties? Do they perform better on *Newsnight* or *Question Time*? Are ministers with legal expertise producing more legislation or ensuring a smoother passage of legislation through the House? Moreover, this thesis has not touched upon the matching between pre-parliamentary career and corresponding policy briefs: Are MPs with agriculture experience more likely to be the agriculture minister? Are the Chancellorship and treasury ministers usually occupied by financial experts? Answering these questions would require a substantial expansion of the existing database, but the potential findings could further advance our understanding of the ministerial selection process. In the end, these are some

interesting questions with regard to MPs and ministerial expertise and governance that are worth answering but beyond the scope of this thesis.

In conclusion, the findings we have observed in this chapter confirm one of the central hypotheses of this thesis, that the accumulation of skills and knowledge of MPs throughout their pre-parliamentary career could affect the trajectory of their career in parliament and their behaviour. In the following chapters, we shall discover if diverging pre-parliamentary careers of MPs do give rise to different patterns of actual behaviour in parliament.

## Appendix, Chapter Five

Table 5.4. Random effect panel logistic models for all frontbench post (odds ratios) (coalition only)

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Baseline								
Business Owner		1.007(.017)				1.009(.018)	1.013(.018)	1.009(.017)
Agriculture		1.034(.022)				1.046(.029)	1.038(.03)	1.039(.023)*
Science & Tech		.974(.048)				.975(.049)	.976(.05)	.97(.047)
Marketing & Sales		1.044(.026)*				1.043(.028)	1.045(.028)*	1.044(.026)*
Finance		1.035(.022)				1.031(.022)	1.033(.022)	1.038(.023)*
NGOs		1(.117)				.968(.114)	.957(.112)	.993(.123)
Social Services		1.985(.522)***				1.783(.515)**	1.797(.53)**	1.906(.528)**
Lawyer		1.035(.022)				1.034(.022)	1.034(.023)	1.036(.023)
Teacher		1.044(.027)*				1.063(.032)**	1.062(.033)*	1.05(.027)*
Public Relation		1.002(.028)				.997(.03)	.997(.03)	1.005(.029)
Media		1.104(.055)**				1.09(.059)	1.093(.059)	1.111(.057)**
Soc-Sci Research		1.02(.049)				1.028(.05)	1.027(.048)	1.034(.055)
Political Worker		1.039(.056)				1.025(.066)	1.022(.067)	1.056(.056)
FT Governmental		1.009(.03)				1.035(.049)	1.029(.049)	1.005(.032)
Ministerial/MPs Advisor		.947(.11)				.905(.132)	.907(.133)	1.019(.131)
Total Local Government			.981(.02)	.963(.023)		0855(.025)	.945(.027)**	
Junior Local Government				.1023(.052)			1.023(.064)	
Senior Local Government				1.009(.037)		1.021(.058)	1.018(.058)	
National Party			1.013(.038)	1.019(.115)		.958(.113)	.948(.112)	
MP Candidacies			1.029(.113)	1.016(.042)		.952(.071)	.954(.07)	
Devolved Assembly/MEP			1.024(.043)					
Career Change <sup>a</sup>					.828(.315)			1.095(.484)
Carpetbagger <sup>a</sup>					1.212(.301)			1.045(.246)
Party Animal <sup>a</sup>					.79(.261)			.669(.264)
Majority(2010)	1.009(.011)	1.009(.03)	1.008(.011)	1.007(.011)	1.008(.011)	1.018(.012)	1.016(.012)	1.015(.012)
Rebel Rate(t-1)	1.397(.341)	1.415(.349)	1.41(.352)	1.412(.352)	1.407(.345)	1.405(.355)	1.401(.353)	1.41(.334)
Backbencher(t-1)	.085(.03)***	.096(.035)***	.086(.03)***	.087(.03)***	.087(.03)***	.097(.035)***	.098(.036)***	.097(.035)***
RebRate*BB(t-1)	.565(.15)**	.570(.152)**	.564(.152)***	.561(.151)**	.563(.149)**	.583(.158)**	.581(.157)**	.573(.148)**
Female	1.229(.298)	1.005(.277)	1.19(.287)	1.157(.283)	1.2(.282)	.966(.569)	.933(.265)	1.019(.271)
Age	.978(.012)*	.962(.016)**	.981(.013)	.981(.013)	.972(.012)**	.97(.017)*	.969(.017)*	.996(.016)***
Ethnic Minority	1.199(.362)	1.132(.348)	1.252(.364)	1.287(.361)	1.162(.383)	1.108(.324)	1.147(.327)	1.134(.387)
Lib Dem <sup>a</sup>	1.548(.587)	1.481(.579)	1.569(.608)	1.594(.623)	1.5(.595)	1.636(.662)	1.659(.682)	1.558(.641)
Log-pseudolikelihood	-299.332	-288.281	-298.851	-298.393	-297.968	-287.194	-286.535	-287.374
N	779	739	779	779	779	739	739	739

Note: \* p<.1, \*\*p<.05, \*\*\* p<.01, SE in parentheses, clustered at individual level, Year fixed effect included in all models but effects are not shown, No ex-military officer or trade unionist on Frontbench, cases omitted;<sup>a</sup> Baseline is Local Hero<sup>a</sup> Baseline Conservative

Table 5.5. Random effect panel logistic models for all frontbench post (odd ratios) (Conservative only)

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Business Owner	Baseline	1.003(.02)				1.006(.019)	1.01(.019)	1.005(.018)
Agriculture		1.034(.391)				1.049(.104)	1.04(.031)	1.039(.024)*
Science & Tech		1.004(.211)				1.012(.07)	1.018(.056)	1.001(.054)
Marketing & Sales		1.046(.42)				1.045(.081)	1.05(.03)*	1.047(.028)
Finance		1.036(.257)				1.032(.039)	1.035(.023)	1.04(.024)*
NGOs		1.025(.478)				.981(.128)	.967(.126)	1.027(.14)
Lawyer		1.034(.185)				.1033(.033)	1.034(.023)	1.036(.025)
Teacher		1.056(.775)				1.074(.175)	1.076(.035)**	1.064(.024)***
Public Relation		1.004(.03)				.999(.032)	.999(.032)	1.009(.03)
Media		1.105(.1.081)				1.091(.169)	1.094(.064)	1.118(.062)**
Soc-Sci Research		1.026(.09)				1.035(.054)	1.034(.048)	1.041(.058)
Political Worker		1.007(.436)				.992(.097)	.987(.072)	1.021(.056)
FT Governmental		1.006(.068)				1.036(.074)	1.03(.051)	1.001(.033)
Ministerial/MPs Advisor		.953(.193)				.901(.142)	.9(.139)	1.041(.138)
Total Local Government			.986(.024)	.962(.028)		.96(.08)	.931(.032)**	
Junior Local Government				1.036(.054)			1.03(.068)	
Senior Local Government				1.003(.039)		1.024(.063)	1.02(.062)	
National Party			1.009(.04)	1.007(.124)		.963(.125)	.953(.126)	
MP Candidacies			1.018(.122)					
Devolved Assembly/MEP			1.024(.045)	1.014(.043)		.947(.14)	.948(.073)	
Career Change*					.719(.282)			.944(.436)
Carpetbagger*					1.094(.280)			.952(.264)
Party Animal*					.663(.229)			.567(.234)
Majority(2010)	1.011(.011)	1.018(.138)	1.01(.011)	1.009(.011)	1.012(.011)	1.02(.031)	1.018(.013)	1.018(.013)
Rebel Rate(t-1)	2.219(.756)**	2.269(4.571)	2.247(.774)**	2.254(.771)**	2.268(.79)**	2.285(1.111)*	2.294(.788)**	2.258(.778)**
Backbencher(t-1)	.096(.037)***	.112(1.512)	.098(.038)***	.1(.039)***	.098(.038)***	.116(.272)	.119(.048)***	.112(.044)***
RebRate*BB(t-1)	.366(.13)***	.367(.842)	.362(.129)***	.359(.128)***	.358(.13)***	.367(.193)	.363(.129)***	.369(.133)***
Female	1.149(.293)	.98(1.12)	1.128(.286)	1.088(.281)	1.128(.279)	.939(.329)	.898(.269)	.993(.275)
Age	.981(.013)	.968(.236)	.983(.015)	.983(.015)	.974(.013)*	.976(.027)	.974(.019)	.959(.018)**
Ethnic Minority	1.185(.363)	1.14(5.368)	1.225(.363)	1.267(.354)	1.138(.386)	1.116(.717)	1.173(.341)	1.137(.412)
Log-pseudolikelihood	-269.301	-259.255	-269.053	-268.51	-267.656	-258.16	-257.222	-258.086
N	729	689	729	729	729	689	689	689

Note: \* p<.1, \*\*p<.05, \*\*\* p<.01, SE in parentheses, clustered at individual level, Year fixed effect included in all models but effects are not shown, No ex-military officer, trade unionist or social service personnel on Frontbench, cases omitted, \* Baseline is Local Hero

Table 5.6. Random effect panel logistic models for all frontbench post (odd ratios) (Labour only)

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Baseline								
Business Owner		.866(.081)				.869(.199)	.877(.318)	.863(.102)
Science & Tech		1.494(.403)				1.46(.837)	1.441(1.203)	1.356(.456)
Marketing & Sales		.555(.395)				.626(.3722)	.65(1.023)	.773(.661)
Finance		.978(.066)				.0854(.073)	.966(.08)	.945(.075)
NGOs		.972(.076)				.963(.162)	.96(.2)	1.007(.085)
Trade Unions		1.043(.092)				1.063(.211)	1.065(.278)	1.05(.116)
Social Services		.978(.032)				.966(.052)	.966(.07)	.98(.033)
Lawyer		.837(.088)*				.828(.212)	.826(.294)	.831(.083)*
Teacher		.98(.04)				.967(.04)	.964(.045)	.972(.038)
Public Relation		.924(.14)				.865(.149)	.862(.168)	.85(.154)
Media		1.216(.143)*				1.234(.309)	1.239(.401)	1.172(.158)
Soc-Sci Research		.894(.103)				.935(.229)	.935(.316)	.899(.117)
Political Worker		.86(.105)				.859(.252)	.861(.366)	.888(.131)
FT Governmental		.946(.074)				.956(.115)	.956(.13)	.936(.089)
Ministerial/MPs Advisor		1.652(.488)*				1.682(1.316)	1.688(1.858)	1.749(.675)
Total Local Government			.935(.038)			.975(.059)		
Junior Local Government				.935(.051)			.963(.079)	
Senior Local Government				.945(.059)			.989(.125)	
National Party			1.012(.047)			.963(.077)	.96(.077)	
MP Candidacies			1.016(.263)			1.497(.627)	1.492(.825)	
Devolved Assembly/MEP			1.029(.134)			1.087(.281)	1.087(.376)	
Career Change <sup>e</sup>					2.066(4.497)			.94(.91)
Carpetbagger <sup>f</sup>					1.166(.872)			1.166(.878)
Party Animal <sup>f</sup>					1.858(3.335)			.636(.608)
Majority(2010)	.971(.054)	.956(.011)**	.969(.02)	.969(.021)	.969(.064)	.949(.04)	.945(.056)	.953(.022)**
Rebel Rate(t-1)	.463(.74)	.439(.479)	.54(.599)	.54(.597)	.511(.786)	.433(.431)	.436(.437)	.42(.455)
Backbencher(t-1)	.009(.03)	.015(.016)**	.01(.01)**	.01(.01)**	.009(.032)	.014(.039)	.014(.056)	.014(.019)**
RebRate*BB(t-1)	2.182(3.641)	3.033(3.398)	1.978(2.309)	1.978(2.322)	2.109(3.451)	3.353(3.449)	3.377(3.633)	3.139(3.506)
Female	1.198(.592)	1.358(.726)	1.022(.371)	1.022(.37)	1.081(.432)	1.119(.551)	1.129(.566)	1.415(.743)
Age	.966(.11)	.977(.027)	.974(.026)	.974(.027)	.972(.074)	.984(.04)	.984(.053)	.974(.034)
Ethnic Minority	.921(.501)	1.997(1.956)	.903(.488)	.903(.486)	.954(.526)	2.072(3.704)	2.091(4.993)	1.979(1.845)
Log-pseudolikelihood	-118.206	-104.688	-115.889	-115.889	-117.016	-103.233	-103.215	-104.273
N	315	315	315	315	315	315	315	315

Note: \* p<.1, \*\*p<.05, \*\*\* p<.01, SE in parentheses, clustered at individual level, Year fixed effect included in all models but effects are not shown, No ex-military officer on Frontbench, cases omitted,<sup>e</sup> Baseline is Local Hero

Table 5.7 Logistic models for senior frontbench post (odd ratios) [Conservative only]

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Business Owner	Baseline	.937(.065)				.955(.069)	.964(.07)	.953(.07)
Agriculture		1.033(.184)				1.005(.216)	1.001(.204)	.981(.231)
Science & Tech		1.11(.175)				1.145(.181)	1.167(.188)	1.153(.186)
Marketing & Sales		1.094(.077)				1.065(.08)	1.084(.083)	1.058(.081)
Finance		1.212(.079)***				1.197(.079)***	1.208(.081)***	1.195(.079)***
NGOs		1.64(.348)**				1.573(.379)*	1.54(.379)*	1.575(.383)*
Lawyer		1.12(.062)**				1.104(.063)*	1.107(.063)*	1.101(.063)*
Teacher		1.152(.116)				1.196(.134)	1.21(.141)	1.168(.145)
Public Relation		1.018(.092)				.942(.103)	.954(.103)	.94(.103)
Media		1.294(.147)**				1.259(.143)**	1.269(.146)**	1.259(.143)**
Soc-Sci Research		1.057(.127)				1.012(.144)	.988(.148)	1.016(.145)
Political Worker		1.213(.177)				1.072(.23)	1.051(.237)	1.077(.236)
FT Governmental		1.046(.137)				1.056(.178)	1.021(.174)	1.071(.19)
Ministerial/MPs Advisor		1.033(.26)				.765(.26)	.768(.261)	.764(.26)
Total Local Government			.923(.066)			.945(.088)		
Junior Local Government				.883(.088)			.885(.112)	
Senior Local Government				1.014(.138)			1.117(.205)	
Local Government (Same Const)					.864(.1)			.91(.122)
Local Government (Diff Const)					.974(.086)			.979(.119)
National Party					1.134(.086)*	1.249(.166)*	1.25(.169)*	1.252(.168)*
MP Candidacies			1.131(.085)	1.124(.085)	1.374(.369)	1.451(.497)	1.439(.503)	1.450(.498)
Devolved Assembly/MEP			1.4(.38)	1.382(.381)	1.012(.136)	1.019(.209)	1.048(.218)	1.008(.211)
Majority(2010)			1.019(.138)	1.017(.136)	1.055(.025)**	1.079(.033)**	1.077(.033)**	1.077(.033)**
Female	1.058(.024)**	1.082(.032)***	1.058(.025)**	1.057(.025)**	3.17(1.604)**	2.721(1.689)	2.567(1.606)	2.713(1.686)
Age	3.328(1.612)**	2.788(1.66)*	3.269(1.643)**	3.203(1.609)**	.981(.035)	.932(.05)	.923(.049)	.933(.05)
Ethnic Minority	.97(.03)	.928(.045)	.981(.035)	.977(.035)	2.692(2.363)	3.561(3.973)	3.445(3.95)	3.666(4.052)
	2.137(1.75)	2.908(2.94)	2.74(2.419)	2.802(2.499)	.153	.298	.305	.299
Pseudo R-sq	.106	.262	.147	.151				
N	146	138	146	146	146	138	138	138

Note: \* p<.1, \*\*p<.05, \*\*\* p<.01, SE in parentheses, No ex-military officer to ministerial posts, cases omitted, \*Baseline Conservative

## **Chapter Six – Pre-parliamentary career and MPs' voting patterns**

### **6.1 Introduction**

In the two previous chapters we have explored how MPs' pre-parliamentary careers affected their trajectory towards and within parliament. It has been shown that in both candidate recruitment and seat allocation processes, as well as in the appointment of frontbench members, the selectors do rely on MPs' pre-parliamentary background to inform them of their potential quality and effectiveness as an MP or frontbencher and make decisions in accordance to their prior experience. However, so far we have only focused on how parties determine the tasks and positions of MPs based on their pre-parliamentary experience and the skills and expertise they bring to the table. Thus far, MPs have been treated as passive entities whereby their roles have been assigned to them in accordance to their respective experiences. What about the MPs themselves? Do diverging patterns of professional and political pre-parliamentary careers affect their choice of actions as a parliamentarian? In the remaining chapters, I focus on how MPs' pre-parliamentary careers affect their behaviour in parliament.

In this chapter, I look at how MPs' pre-parliamentary careers affect their patterns of voting when they walk into division lobbies. Voting in divisions is a central, if not the most important, responsibility of an MP. Although power of the cabinet is seen as paramount in the Westminster system. Yet ultimately, it is through the votes of MPs that motions are carried, laws are made, policies are determined and the course of a nation is decided.

The overarching argument of this chapter is that diverging patterns of MPs' pre-parliamentary career are going to affect both MPs' policy preference as well as the effectiveness of party's cohesion maintaining tools upon individual MPs, which would then translate into distinct patterns in voting and rebellion depended on MPs' prior experiences. The following analysis of MPs' pre-parliamentary careers and their voting patterns will look at two separate yet related issues. Firstly, I explore if MPs' prior experiences affect the tendency to which they rebel and vote against their own party in divisions. Secondly, I also examine if pre-parliamentary careers affect MPs' positions on specific policy and lead to distinct voting pattern in division related to the particular issue. For this purpose, I use euroscepticism among Conservative MPs as a case and investigate if Conservative MPs' career backgrounds predict their votes in divisions with regard to the issue of Europe.

### **6.2 Why do MPs rebel?**

The general consensus with regard to politics in the Westminster system is that political parties are a monolithic entity whereby individual MPs under the whip of their respective party are loyal foot soldiers in divisions and always vote in accordance to the party line. Indeed, the increasing party cohesion in the House of Commons in the late nineteenth century to the early twentieth century has been well documented (Eggers and Spirling 2014a, Rush 2001). However, there has been a remarkable increase in the rebelliousness of British MPs since the 70s (Franklin et al 1986, Norton 1987). No longer bounded by the principle of 'parliamentary rule', whereby the government is expected to resign and take their case to the country should they lose in any division (Schwart 1980), MPs are becoming increasingly willing



to exhibit their discontent and disagreement to the party line by defying the party whip, walking across the aisle into the division lobby of the party opposite.

What makes individual MPs vote against their own party? The first and most straightforward answer would be because they disagree with the party line. Kam (2009) called this the 'preference-driven approach to parliamentary behaviour' whereby individual legislators are considered as policy maximizers, each with their unique policy preferences (Krehbiel 1993, 1999). In divisions, each MP would simply vote for the option that is closer to their ideal policy position. Hence, the further an MP's policy preference is away from the median of their party or that of the party leadership, the more likely that they may disagree with the party line on a particular legislative proposal and rebel against the party. Cowley (2002) found that Labour MPs who are self-identified as more ideologically left wing were also more likely to be rebellious against the Blair administration during the 1997-2001 parliament. Similarly, Kam's (2009) analysis has shown that the self-reported ideological position on the left-right ideological spectrum and devolution has significant influence on dissent of British MPs. However, Kam (2009) also noted that the explanatory power of his model is rather limited, which suggests that MPs' individual policy preferences are, while significant, an imperfect predictor of their voting pattern in the House of Commons and other factors are clearly affecting their decisions in the division lobbies.

Another factor that compels MPs to vote against their party is the pressure of securing re-election through winning support from their constituents. An obvious objective of all politicians is to win votes in order to stay in office. The electoral pressure has been an

important explanatory factor to a wide range of political and legislative behaviour (Mayhew 1974). Hence, more often than not, MPs' voting decisions are not only dependent on their personal policy preference, but also that of their constituents. Should the policy preference of the party is at odd with one's constituents, the MP would have an incentive to deviate from the party line and rebel. Moreover, MPs representing marginal constituencies, thus vulnerable to electoral defeat, would also have a higher incentive to develop a personal following among constituents by rebelling in divisions. Nevertheless, most literature has argued that British MPs' effort in cultivating personal votes are mainly focused on providing constituency services. Indeed, Norton and Wood (1993) have argued that since any particular national policy decided in Westminster would only be of interest to a miniscule portion of one's constituent, rebellion is an awfully ineffective way of nurturing personal vote in the constituency. This leads to the compartmentalization of MPs between the Westminster and constituency aspect of their job whereby MPs rely on constituency service instead of parliamentary vote to create personal brand among their constituent. Cowley (2002) has found no relation between Labour MPs' marginality and their rebelliousness. On the other hand, Pattie et al (1994) did find a modest yet significant positive effect of seat marginality and MPs tendency to rebel. Lynch and Whitaker (2013, p329) suggested that constituent pressure was the reason for some of the Conservative MP rebelling over the issue of Europe while Gaines and Garrett (1993) have similarly found that Labour MPs whose constituency party is more radical are also more likely to dissent in parliamentary votes, which indicate that rebellion could be a response not to the preference of the general constituent, but to that of the constituency party which control the process of reselection.

Although empirical evidence does suggest that difference in policy preference and ideological position between the party as a whole or its leader on the one hand and individual MPs themselves or their constituents on the other do contribute to MPs decision to rebel, it is nevertheless an imperfect and relatively weak explanatory variable to the overall pattern of rebellion in the House of Commons. It is an undeniable fact that despite the diversity in MPs and constituent policy preference, British parties remain remarkably cohesive in parliamentary votes. It is hence apparent that there are other considerations, in particular certain tools at the disposal of the party and its' leaders in managing intra party differences and dissent, that is affecting MPs voting behaviour and maintaining party cohesion.

### ***6.2.1 Tools to maintain party cohesion***

There are plenty of tools in the arsenal of party leadership to maintain the loyalty of their troops and party cohesion during division, including carrots that reward those who displayed loyalty, and sticks to punish those who have gone astray from the herd. The biggest carrot of them all would be the appointment (or the promise of future appointment) of various patronage offices at the leadership's disposal. It is of no secret that, even though most would deny it when asked, a substantial portion of MPs do harbour ambitions for frontbench and ministerial jobs at some point during their parliamentary career. Moreover, the principle of collective responsibility means that those who are in government are obliged to vote in favour of the government's position or otherwise resign from their post. Party leaders can therefore maintain the party line by appointing rebellious members who might otherwise dissent into the government and bind them with the principle of collective responsibility.

The use of ministerial appointment as a tool to maintain party cohesion in Westminster has been well established in the existing literature. Cowley (2002) has found that of all the newly elected Labour MPs in 1997-2001 parliament who are promoted in their first term in Westminster, only one of them have voted against the government. He also found that among those who confess their ministerial ambitions, only 13% of them ever rebel while the percentage of those who do not is 66%. However, self-reported ministerial ambitions became an insignificant factor in multivariate analysis. Similar results were also been found by Kam (2009) where dissent hinders MPs' ministerial prospects in the future. However, the expectation of prospective promotion does not always enhance MPs' loyalty and for ministerial aspirant, a certain limited degree of rebelliousness might actually be beneficial since it gives party leaders more incentives to bring one into the fold by ministerial promotion (Searing 1994, p106). Furthermore, when MPs' ambitions is not realized it can become the reason for restlessness in the backbench. Benedetto and Hix (2007) have demonstrated that MPs who have either been sacked from the government or have yet to receive promotion despite an extended period of time on the backbench, or in other words, those that are least likely to be tempted to toe the party line in exchange for future promotion, are also most likely to rebel during parliamentary vote. This suggests that while the promise of future promotion might be a useful tool for party leaders to manage intra party dissent, ambitions harboured by individual MPs might increase their tendency to rebel, especially when they are still on the backbench.

Besides the dangling of the carrot that is future promotion in front of MPs, party leaders could also deploy the stick that is party whips to discipline rebellious MPs. In its most aggressive

form, a party whip could impose party discipline by “*making life less pleasant for the troublesome*” through practices such as “*deny places on (...) select committee, deny time away from the House, deny time for overseas trip, deny promotion, deny better office space*” or even physical bullying (Cowley 2002). However, more usual than not, the strategy of party whip is, instead of punishing dissenting MPs, to communicate between the frontbench and backbench and to persuade the latter to toe the party line by appealing to their better senses. Cowley (2002) has documented the importance of party whips and other channels of communication between frontbench and backbench, such as parliamentary party committee, backbench groupings and access to minsters in maintaining party discipline, and crediting them for the remarkable degree of cohesion exhibit by the Labour government between 1997-2001. It is through these channels that before mass rebellion materialize on the Commons floor, the government could either adopt or compromise on their position or simply withhold contentious issue from being tabled. The feeling of being involved and consulted also contributes to MPs’ decision to toe the party line despite their disagreement on the issues. Lastly, even if all else failed and individual MPs remain concerned with a particular issue, party whips could always arrange or persuade the dissident to strategically absent from a particular vote in order to stifle any potential contagious rebellions (Cowley 2002, p178).

Last but not least, party cohesion is also maintained by socialization to install a sense of loyalty and obligation to support the party despite ideological differences. Crowe (1986) argued that party cohesion is mostly maintained, not by the carrots and sticks at the disposal of party leaders, but the loyalty among MPs, which is defined as a sense of duty and obligation to support the party and its leader in division lobby. Moreover, loyalty is internalized through

constant socialisation within the parliament which internalize conformity among MPs. Cowley (2002) credited the desire for unity among the PLP in the 1997-2001 parliament as the key reason for the relatively lack of intra party dissent despite their large majority and a large contingent of unexpected and un-vetted victors in the landslide election. There is a determination to learn the lesson of disunity from the 1980s which condemned the party to the wilderness for nineteen years, and compelled otherwise dissenting MPs to nevertheless vote for the government for the sake of party unity. Similarly, Kam's (2009) analysis of rebellion among Westminster MPs has also shown individual sense of loyalty to the party to be a significant factor that discourages MPs from dissenting in parliamentary votes.

### **6.3 Hypotheses**

#### ***6.3.1 Professionalization, ministerial ambition and rebellion***

MPs' pre-parliamentary career is going to affect the effectiveness of a party's cohesion maintaining tools in several ways. First and foremost, it is how MPs' prior careers affect their ministerial ambitions and hence the effectiveness of the promise of promotion as a tool to make individual MPs toe the party line. Professionalization of politics has brought an ever increasing number of 'professional' politicians who harbour much more ministerial ambitions than any previous cohort of parliamentarians. Former Prime Minister John Major once expressed his amazement as well as criticism to this trend of increasing career-mindedness among newly elected MPs:

*Most of the newcomers wanted, and in some cases expected, to become ministers within months of arriving at Westminster. Four of the 1992 intake met with the Chief Whip in 1993 to ask when they would be made ministers - unthinkable behaviour in previous generations (Major 1999, p347).*

However, the effect of increased ministerial ambition on rebellion remains ambiguous. On one hand, increase ministerial ambition could arguably lead to less rebellion among MPs since those who seek higher office ought to be more hesitant to bite the hand that feeds them, hence decreasing their tendency to rebel and have their disagreement with the powers that be publicized. Kam (2009) showed that MPs voting behaviour is endogenous to their likelihood of promotion; those who are expecting a ministerial appointment in the immediate future are less likely to rebel in parliamentary vote. My analysis from the prior chapter also shows that toeing the party line appears to be an important factor that contributes to frontbench promotion among the governing Conservative MPs. On the other hand, higher expectations for office could also mean increased restlessness in the backbench as well as more intense backlash should the expectations not be met. King (1981) attributed the decrease of party cohesion in the 70s to the rise of career politicians who were '*ambitious for office*'. Benedetto and Hix (2007) have shown Labour MPs who have been overlooked in ministerial promotion are more likely to rebel, while Franklin et al (1986) demonstrated that Conservative MPs who have been salaried professionals, hence having more 'professionalist' outlook to their parliamentary career, are similarly more rebellious. All in all, it remains to be seen which of the following factors are more prominent in determining the voting behaviour of career politicians - the increased desire for promotion that pacifies backbench rebellion, or the bitter resentment when ambition for office is not met. Moreover, we should also note if there are any differences in the relevance of these two opposing forces over specific politically relevant occupation and experiences. Hence we could arrive at the following competing hypothesis which shall be tested in the coming analysis:

*Hypothesis 6.1 ('Pacifying hypothesis'): Pre-parliamentary experience in political facilitating occupations decreases MPs dissent on the backbench due to increase ambition for higher office*

*Hypothesis 6.2 ('Backlash hypothesis'): Pre-parliamentary experience in political facilitating occupations increases MPs dissent on the backbench due to unmet ambition for higher office*

### **6.3.2 Party political experience and rebellion**

Secondly, besides the impact on MPs' ministerial ambitions, pre-parliamentary careers, in particular prior political engagement occurring within the party, ought to affect both party loyalty and communication between front and backbenchers, which leads to a lower tendency of dissent. While most literature on parliamentary socialization has focused on post-election socialization that occurs in Westminster and how it has led to increased loyalty to the party (Kam 2009, Crowe 1986), it is nevertheless possible that loyalty could have extra-parliamentary origins (Asher 1973). Indeed, Kam (2009) hypothesized that an extended period of membership in extra-parliamentary party ought to teach and instil party and parliamentary norms among individuals before they enter parliament. Some MPs have also expressed the view that prior experience as member of party group in the local council facilitates the learning 'habit of group discipline' (Cowley 2002, p118).

Although there ought to be an overall positive effect on party loyalty, we should also expect political experience earned at different levels of the party to have diverging results on MPs' dissent. For party political experience that occurs at the national level, since it allows the possibility for individuals to develop personal relationships with the party leadership and other party bigwigs, this would provide them with better access to ministers when they are elected as MPs, which would hence decrease their propensity to rebel in a parliamentary



vote. However, as noted by Cowley (2002) despite the hypothetical effect on learning about party loyalty, prior experience as local councillor appears to be a significant contributing factor to increased rebelliousness among Labour MPs. Bale (1997) suggested that this might be because former councillors are more used to 'having a say in the running of things' instead of doing other peoples bidding once they become a backbencher in Westminster.

*Hypothesis 6.3: Party political experience at the national level decreases dissent among MPs*

*Hypothesis 6.4: Experience as a local councillor increases dissent among MPs*

#### **6.4 Data and methodology**

There are two unique challenges with regard to the study of rebellion in the House of Commons - to determine the existence of the party line and where the party line stands in a particular vote. By definition, for an MP to rebel, there would have to firstly be a party line issued by the whips' office and the said MP would have to vote against the party line in the particular division. Yet on a wide range of issues, mostly concerning issue of conscience, parties occasionally allow its MPs a free vote, unbounded from any official party whip, to allow MPs to vote according to their personal judgement. Further complicating the definition of rebellion is the fact that even if MPs are given a free vote, the party leadership may nevertheless signal their preference for the vote, such as the vote on same sex marriage and the air strike on Syria. Ultimately, the lack of transparency from party whips to disclose the party line means it is difficult to determine if a particular vote is indeed a rebellion or not. Hence, in the following analysis, a rebellion shall be defined as a vote where an MP adopts a position different from the majority of his/her party.

The data used to calculate the number and rate of MP dissent in parliamentary division comes from [theyworkforyou.org.uk](http://theyworkforyou.org.uk)<sup>1</sup>, which covers how each MP voted in all divisions during the 2010-2015 parliament. This information is first used to determine how the majority of MPs in each of the main party voted in every division, which is then used to determine if an MP voted with the majority of their parliamentary party in a particular division. Should an MP be on the minority of their party in a particular division, they will be deemed as rebelling, regardless of any voting instruction from the leadership or party whips. The number of rebellions for each MP is then aggregated. In order to account for strategic absence of MPs and determine if the number of rebellions relates to MPs' division attendance, I have also recorded if an MP has attended a particular division by voting in one of the lobby and calculated their attendance rate. (It should be noted that those who abstain by staying in the chamber without walking into either division lobby will also be deemed as 'absent' since there is no record of their votes). MPs' attendance rate is used as an intervening control variable in the coming analysis on MPs' voting behaviour as well as to calculate the rate of rebellion, defined as number of dissensions divided by the number of attended divisions, elsewhere in this thesis.

The dependent variable used in the following analysis will be the total number of rebellion each MP has participated in the 2010-2015 parliament. Since the total number of rebellions for individual MPs is a count data, negative binomial regression model will be used to analyze how MPs' pre-parliamentary careers impact on their propensity to rebel against their party during division. The analysis could be divided into two parts. Firstly, all newly-elected MPs

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<sup>1</sup><http://www.publicwhip.org.uk/data/votematrix-2010.dat> (Retrieved 27th October 2015)

from the three major parties will be considered together and explore how MPs' prior experience affects their rebelliousness in general. Secondly, separate analysis for new MPs representing the two main parties will be conducted to discover trends specific to each of them.

A few words should perhaps be spared to explain why I have opted to analyze the aggregated number of rebellion throughout the entire parliament but not that of each particular year, especially since the data is available and called for, given the importance of controlling for the period which individual MPs have spent on the frontbench. The reason that a panel structure is not used in analyzing MPs' rebellion is the fact that for individual MPs, in a lot of years, 31% among newly elected MPs to be precise, there were no rebellions, which would render the dependent variable heavily zero-inflated. Moreover, the explanation for an MP to not rebel at all in a particular year, most notably being appointed to frontbench or government position, which made them bound by the principle of collective responsibility, is likely to be different from those that separately occasional and frequent rebel. On the other hand, the aggregate number of rebellions do not suffer from the problem of zero inflation as over 90% of all new MPs have voted against the majority of their party at some point during the course of their first term. The issue of frontbench MP not able to rebel can be taken into account by adding the number of years they spent on frontbench as a control variable.

## 6.5 Results

### 6.5.1 Full models

Table 6.1 shows the result that encompass all newly elected MPs from the three major parties. All models include demographic control variables and party fixed effect while MPs' division attendance rates throughout the entire parliament and the number of years they spent in the two tier of frontbench positions are added as an intervening variable in some of the models.

Model 1 consists of demographic controls; the party fixed effect as well as the set continuous variables that denote the number of years an MP spent in each of the pre-parliamentary professional career occupational groups. It shows that old age among MPs increases the number of occasions when they rebel, by 1.3% per year, while being an ethnic minority and representing the opposition Labour party decreases the number of rebellions they are involved in. For the professional career variables, the only professional experience that has a significant effect on MPs' rebellion is that of being a lawyer or worked in social services. The sign of the coefficient for both variables are positive, which suggests that experience in the legal profession and in social services increases the number of dissenting votes an MP would cast during divisions. The model estimates that each year of pre-parliamentary experience in the legal profession would increase their number of rebellions throughout the entire parliament by 2.9%, while each year spent in the social services sector increases the number of rebellions by 4.4%.

Table 6.1. Negative binomial models for the number of rebellion (incident rate ratios)

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Business Owner	1(.01)			1.001(.01)	1.003(.01)	1.006(.01)	1(.01)	1.004(.01)
Military Officers	1.04(.027)			1.05(.028)*	1.05(.029)*	1.05(.028)*	1.035(.025)	1.036(.025)
Agriculture	.98(.018)			.992(.02)	.98(.018)	.979(.018)	.99(.017)	.985(.017)
Science & Tech	1.005(.03)			1.016(.031)	1.012(.031)	1.008(.03)	1.004(.028)	.999(.027)
Marketing & Sales	.987(.017)			.987(.017)	.989(.016)	.979(.016)	.997(.016)	.987(.015)
Finance	1.016(.014)			1.018(.014)	1.017(.014)	1.023(.014)*	1.021(.014)	1.027(.014)**
NGOs	.99(.03)			.979(.034)	.99(.03)	.998(.03)	.986(.029)	.993(.029)
Trade Unions	.957(.029)			.942(.037)	.952(.029)	.95(.029)*	.956(.029)	.954(.029)
Social Services	1.044(.024)*			1.041(.024)*	1.037(.023)	1.029(.023)	1.037(.022)*	1.029(.022)
Lawyer	1.029(.011)***			1.031(.012)***	1.031(.011)***	1.021(.012)*	1.026(.011)**	1.017(.011)
Teacher	1(.015)			1.001(.015)	.999(.015)	.998(.015)	1.002(.014)	1.001(.014)
Public Relation	.981(.015)			.981(.015)	.981(.015)	.983(.015)	.979(.014)	.982(.014)
Media	1.032(.023)			1.034(.023)	1.037(.024)	1.05(.024)**	1.043(.023)*	1.054(.023)**
Soc-Sci Research	1.04(.033)			1.025(.034)	1.03(.033)	1.061(.033)	1.022(.032)	1.024(.031)
Political Worker	1.018(.022)			1.01(.022)	1.019(.022)	1.012(.022)	1.011(.021)	1.003(.02)
FT Governmental	1.004(.02)			1.001(.022)	1(.02)	.998(.019)	.993(.018)	.991(.018)
Ministerial/MPs Advisor	.92(.048)			.907(.054)*	.902(.051)*	.908(.051)*	.929(.051)	.935(.051)
Local Government(same		1.015(.012)		1.026(.014)*				
Local Government(diff const)		.98(.019)		1.001(.019)				
National Party		.98(.017)		1.024(.027)				
MP Candidacies		1.054(.065)		1.058(.068)				
Devolved Assembly/MEP		.941(.033)*		.96(.038)				
Local Hero *			1.254(.257)		1.532(.333)**	1.442(.308)*	1.45(.298)*	1.36(.275)
Carpetbagger *			.99(.179)		1.166(.234)	1.185(.232)	1.191(.225)	1.196(.22)
Party Animal *			1.136(.22)		1.43(.311)*	1.421(.302)*	1.427(.296)*	1.407(.284)*
Majority(2010)			1.002(.005)	1.004(.006)	1.003(.006)	1.003(.005)	1.004(.005)	1.004(.005)
Female		.862(.112)	.851(.11)	.869(.112)	.84(.109)	.894(.115)	.882(.108)	.944(.116)
Age		1.016(.007)**	1.019(.007)***	1.007(.008)	1.013(.008)*	1.014(.007)*	1.009(.008)	1.01(.007)
Ethnic Minority		.495(.117)***	.506(.121)***	.47(.109)***	.477(.109)***	.51(.117)***	.552(.123)***	.586(.129)***
Attendance Rate						1.03(.011)***		1.03(.001)***
Junior Frontbench (# of years)						.858(.034)***		.85(.033)***
Senior Frontbench (# of						.787(.053)***		.803(.054)***
Labour <sup>f</sup>	.192(.03)***	.19(.03)***	.181(.027)***	.184(.03)***	.189(.03)***	.248(.045)***	.214(.034)***	.284(.052)***
Lib Dem <sup>f</sup>	1.062(.283)	.769(.205)	.866(.227)	.899(.243)	.996(.263)	1.351(.382)	1.019(.252)	1.386(.366)
Pseudo R-sq	.097	.085	.08	.102	.101	.106	.116	.121
N	218	218	218	218	218	218	218	218

Note: \* p<.1, \*\*p<.05, \*\*\* p<.01, SE in parentheses, \*Career Changer as baseline category, \*Conservative as baseline category, \*Reported as Log Pseudolikelihood

Models 2 and 3 consider the impact of MPs' pre-parliamentary political experiences by using two sets of variables. Model 2 considered MPs' pre-parliamentary political involvement as continuous variables that measures the amount of experience they have in various type of party political positions. It is found that prior experience as elected member of devolved assemblies or European Parliament have a significant effect on discouraging MPs' dissent. The model estimates that each year an MP has spent in a devolved assembly or European Parliament reduces the number of rebellion by 5.9%. Model 3 used the pre-parliamentary political career type constructed in Chapter Four to measure new MPs' political experiences. It found none of the career types are a significant explanatory factor on parliamentary rebellions. Sign, magnitude and significance of coefficient for all demographic control variables and party fixed effects in both Models 2 and 3 are roughly similar to those found in Model 1.

Models 4 and 5 take into account both professional and political aspect of MPs' pre-parliamentary career by including variables from both dimensions within the same specification. Model 4 used the continuous measure of the amount of pre-parliamentary political experience. It was found that, besides the positive effect of legal and social service experience on rebellion, prior experience in the military also contributes to MPs' decisions to vote against the majority of their own party. It is estimated that each year of experience as a military officer increases the number of rebellion from an MP by 5%. On the other hand, prior experience as a ministerial or MP advisor significantly reduces the number of occasions an MP rebel against their party by an estimate of 9.3%. In terms of their political experiences, Model 4 found that the coefficient for previous experience in devolved assemblies and

European Parliament loses its significance, while experience as elected local councillor within their current constituency became significant. The model estimate each year of local council experience within an MP's current constituency increases their number of rebellions by 2.6%. A similar effect on rebellion is not observed with regard to local council experience out of an MP's current constituency. It should also be noted that the coefficient for an MP's age has significantly reduced magnitude, which rendered it statistically insignificant. Model 5 used MPs' political career type to denote their prior political experience; it was found that after taking professional experience into account, political career type becomes a significant factor that predicts MPs' rebellious tendency. It is found that both Local Heroes and Party Animals are significantly more likely to rebel when compared to Career Changers, it is estimated that belonging to the two former categories increases MPs' dissent by 53.2% and 43% respectively when compared to those who have no prior political experience. This is similar to what we have found in Model 4, that in-constituency local government experience contribute to increase rebelliousness. The coefficient for professional experience in Model 5 remains roughly similar to those found in earlier models, except for Social Services which loses its significance.

Models 6 through 8 are based on Model 5 but added MPs' division attendance rates and the length of their stint on the frontbench as intervening control variables. Model 6 included MPs' division attendance rate into the specification. Not surprisingly, it is found that higher rate of attendance in divisions also leads to increased number of rebellions as it is estimated that every percentage point increase in an MP's rate of attendance increases their number of rebellious votes by 2.9%. There are also some remarkable changes to the coefficients of pre-

parliamentary experience when division attendance rate is taken into consideration. Most notably the magnitude of the coefficient responsible for prior experience in mass media has increased substantially and has become statistically significant. The sign of this coefficient is positive, which suggests that previous experience in mass media increases rebelliousness among MPs. It is estimated that each year of experience in mass media increases the number of rebellions of an MP by 5%. On the other hand, the inclusion of division attendance has the opposite effect on the coefficient for prior experience in the legal profession as the magnitude and hence statistical significance are substantially reduced. The effect of MPs' political career type remain largely similar to those found in Model 5, although there is a slight reduction to the magnitude and significance of the coefficient for Local Heroes.

Model 7 includes the length of time an individual has spent on the frontbench to account for the fact that they are bound by the principle of collective responsibility and are unable to cast their vote against the government, despite any disagreement or other consideration. As expected the coefficient for the length of time one spent in both tiers of the frontbench is negative and highly significant. The model estimates that every year in junior frontbench positions reduces the overall number of rebellious votes by an individual MP by 14.4% while a year as a senior frontbench member would reduce the occasion of rebellions by 21.3%. A notable difference after the inclusion of MPs' stint on the frontbench into the model is that the coefficient for prior experience as military office and ministerial advisors has lost its significance. This suggests that the significant effect of these two professions on MP rebelliousness as observed in some of the other models are likely driven by the inclusion of, or exclusion from, the frontbench. As shown in Chapter Six, pre-parliamentary experience as



a ministerial advisor was a moderately significant contributing factor to frontbench appointment. Hence, the slight negative effect of previous experience as ministerial advisor on MP rebelliousness could be partially explained by the higher probability for them being a frontbench member, as found in the last chapter. Similarly, the fact that none of the new MPs with military experience have been promoted for the duration of the entire parliament is a better explanation for the apparently higher level of rebelliousness among them.

Model 8 is a complete model that includes variables from both dimensions of pre-parliamentary career as well as all the control variables. It is estimated that only two pre-parliamentary professional experiences are significant predictor of the number of rebellious votes cast by an MP - mass media and financial services. The model estimates that each year of experience in finance and mass media is going to increase the number rebellious vote cast by the MP by 2.7% and 5.4% respectively. As for prior political experience, it is found that being a Local Hero has lost its significance while Party Animals remain significantly more rebellious when compared to Career Changers. The magnitude and significance of all control variables are similar to what have been observed in the previous models, with the exception of age, which again loses its significance as a contributing factor to rebellion among MPs.

To briefly conclude the results we have uncovered so far, there are several pre-parliamentary experiences that have been shown to have a significant impact on individual MPs' level of rebelliousness - military, legal profession and in-constituency local government experiences have been found to encourage MPs to vote against the majority of their own party, while prior experience as ministerial advisors appears to enhance loyalty during division. While this

appears to have lend credence to Hypothesis 7.4, which predicted that local government experience increases dissent from individual MPs. However, all of these effects are washed away once MPs' division attendance rates and the length of time they spent on the frontbench is included in the specification. This suggests that party leadership preference for certain pre-parliamentary experience in frontbench appointments might be a better explanation for these trends. As for the apparent positive effect on rebellion from legal experience, since we have observed a substantial decrease in its significance after the inclusion of division attendance rate in Model 6, a more plausible explanation to the observed effect is that ex-lawyers are simply more diligent MPs in terms of showing up during divisions.

On the other hand, MPs' amount of prior experience in finance and mass media is shown to encourage rebellious votes among MPs after attendance rate and frontbench status has been taken into account. This shows that MPs who worked in these two sectors prior to entering parliament tend to be more rebellious when they are on the backbench. These results are similar to what the 'backlash' hypothesis anticipated, that MPs with higher expectations for frontbench promotion are likely to be more restless and rebellious on the backbench. We have, in the previous chapter, established that MPs' experience in both finance and mass media are important predictors for earning promotion, in particular to ministerial rank. Chapter 4 have also established that MPs with experience in finance are more likely to be representing safe constituencies, a plausible explanation of which is that they are more ambitious and career- minded that they intentionally choose to apply for candidacy in safe seats in anticipation of a long and successful spell in Westminster. It is perhaps not surprising

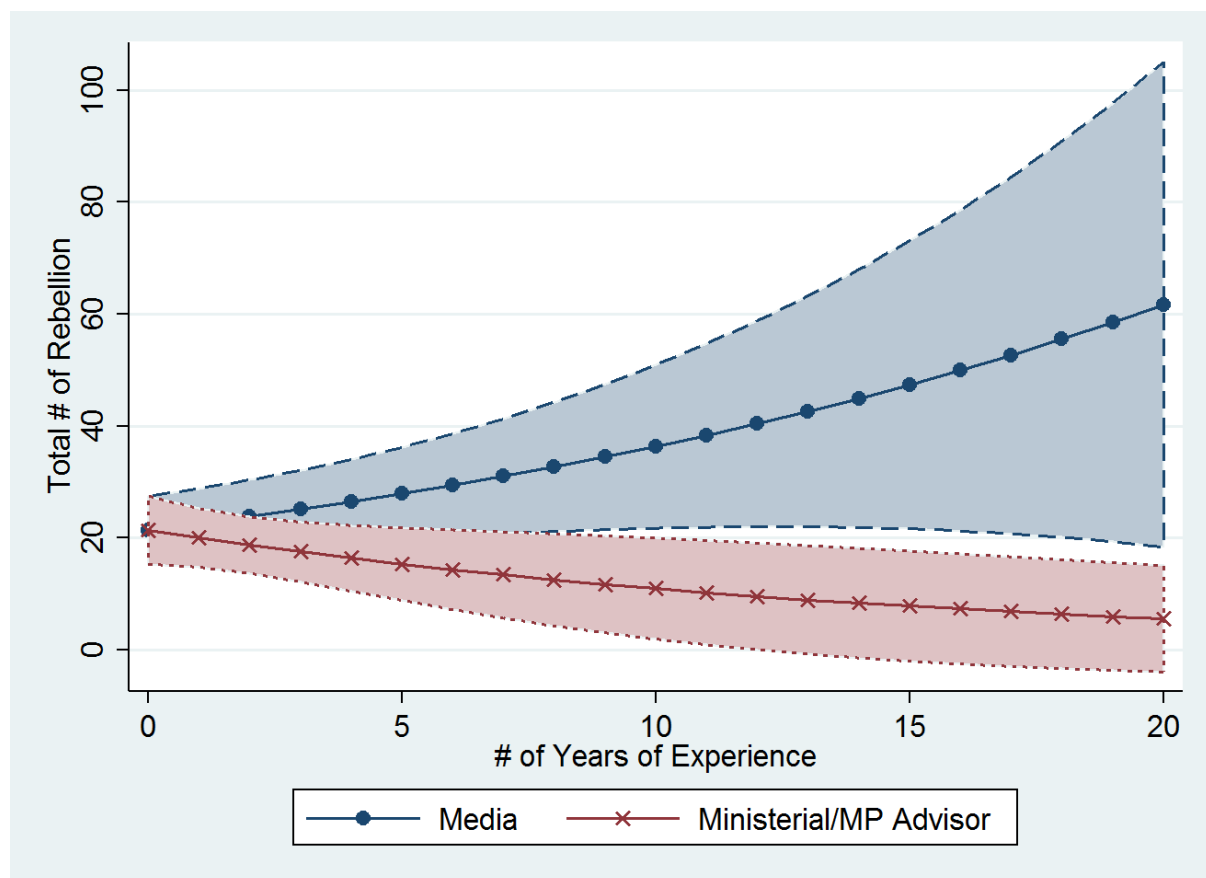
that when their expectations of a ministerial career were not immediately met, they make their disappointment and frustration be known by voting against the party line.

All in all, there are several major findings from these models. Firstly, frontbench appointment is a powerful tool in managing intra party dissent. The models have shown significant and substantial decrease in the number of dissensions that could be attributed to the amount of time individual spent on the frontbench. However, it also shows that using frontbench appointment as the carrot to encourage loyalty and cohesion among backbenchers does have its limits. MPs who are equipped with experience that made them, rightly or wrongly, more ambitious are also more likely to be frustrated by the unmet expectation of rapid promotion and are not hesitant to express their disappointment by rebelling in divisions. Lastly, it is also found that taking everything into account, being a Party Animal is a significant factor that encourages rebelliousness among MPs. This is a somewhat surprising finding given that Hypothesis 7.3 has predicted that prior involvement in the national party does not inspire loyalty and conformity among new MPs alone, which is a puzzle that we will explore further in the coming sections.

Figure 6.1 is a graphical representation of the amount of experience in one of the selected occupational groups and the estimated number of total number of rebellion for the entirety of the parliament given the stated number of experience to a baseline case. The estimation was made using Model 8 shown in Table 6.1. The baseline of calculation is a male, white Conservative MP at the mean age, elected on the mean majority and having the mean attendance rate among the cohort who has never become a frontbench member throughout

the parliament, and has none of the professional experience being studied. Because we have included experience as ministerial or MP advisor in this analysis, which is highly related to being classified as a Party Animal, we therefore assume the baseline case to be a Party Animal as well.

**Figure 6.1 Amount of Experience in Selected Occupational Groups and Estimated # of Rebellion**



The point to the left of the graph represents the estimated number of rebellion vote the baseline MP is expected to cast throughout the five years of the parliament. It is estimated that at the baseline, without any professional experience being studied, that the said MP is going to vote against his party 21.4 times through his first term. As shown in the coefficient table, amount of experience in media is associated with increased rebelliousness, while that as a ministerial or MP advisor is associated with increased party loyalty. Hence, we could

observe that the line that represents prior experience in media has a positive slope and trend upward. On the other hand, the line representing experience as ministerial or MP advisor has a negative slope and trend downward. The estimate number of rebellions between the three professional experiences began to diverge significantly at 90% confidence level when the amount of experience in respective occupations increased beyond ten years. At the end of the estimation, after our hypothetical baseline MP has spent twenty years in either mass media or as ministerial advisor, the expected number of rebellions is 61.7 and 5.6 respectively.

### **6.5.2 Party models**

After exploring the general models that encompassed new MPs from all three major parties, we shall now turn our attention to party specific models. Table 6.2 shows the result of party specific models, applying the same specifications found in Models 5 through 8. Models 9 to 12 include only new Conservative MPs, and it is shown that the coefficient is not much different from those observed in Table 6.1, with a few notable exceptions. Firstly, the amount of experience as teachers and in public relations is shown to have a slightly significant and negative effect on MPs' tendency to rebel, although this effect disappears after taking attendance rate and frontbench status into account. Secondly, it further confirms my earlier finding that the positive effect of legal experience on rebelliousness is largely driven by their higher attendance rate since it is only a significant factor in specifications that exclude attendance rate as a control variable. Thirdly, in contrast to the results from the general model, age is consistently a significant and positive predictor for MP rebellion across all specification. Fourthly, being a Party Animal loses its significance in the final model. Lastly,

the

269

Table 6.2. Negative binomial models for the number of rebellion (incident rate ratios) (party models)

	Conservative					Labour				
	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)		
Business Owner	1.002(.01)	1.006(.01)	1.001(.01)	1.006(.01)	1.017(.05)	1.017(.05)	.991(.049)	.993(.049)		
Military Officers	1.057(.027)**	1.056(.026)**	1.038(.025)	1.04(.024)*						
Agriculture	.975(.018)	.975(.018)	.984(.018)	.984(.017)						
Science & Tech	.977(.032)	.970(.031)	.973(.03)	.967(.029)	.776(.191)	.798(.196)	.804(.193)	.814(.197)		
Marketing & Sales	.985(.016)	.972(.015)*	.997(.016)	.983(.015)	6.228(6.518)*	5.205(5.451)	5.803(6.011)*	5.289(5.538)		
Finance	1.011(.015)	1.023(.015)	1.016(.014)	1.028(.014)**	.974(.052)	.963(.052)	.969(.05)	.962(.05)		
NGOs	.923(.055)	.932(.054)	.94(.054)	.945(.053)	1.06(.049)	1.058(.049)	1.042(.047)	1.042(.047)		
Trade Unions					.992(.037)	.988(.037)	.981(.035)	.98(.036)		
Social Services					1.063(.028)**	1.054(.03)*	1.057(.027)**	1.052(.028)*		
Lawyer	1.024(.012)**	1.009(.012)	1.024(.011)**	1.01(.011)	1.044(.039)	1.048(.04)	1.02(.036)	1.022(.037)		
Teacher	.959(.024)*	.954(.023)*	.98(.024)	.974(.023)	1.008(.024)	1.004(.024)	1.002(.024)	.999(.024)		
Public Relation	.969(.015)*	.976(.015)	.973(.015)*	.979(.015)	.86(.132)	.884(.138)	.827(.13)	.869(.134)		
Media	1.036(.026)	1.057(.026)**	1.041(.025)*	1.06(.024)**	.535(.193)	.555(.198)*	.536(.192)*	.546(.195)*		
Soc-Sci Research	1.023(.036)	1.028(.036)	1.024(.035)	1.028(.035)	1.05(.072)	1.04(.072)	1.014(.069)	1.01(.069)		
Political Worker	1.008(.031)	1.002(.03)	1.004(.029)	1(.028)	1.144(.087)*	1.121(.087)	1.127(.083)	1.114(.85)		
FT Governmental	.999(.024)	.991(.023)	.992(.023)	.985(.021)	1.002(.038)	1.005(.039)	.997(.039)	.998(.039)		
Ministerial/MPs Advisor	.891(.06)*	.89(.058)*	.894(.056)*	.895(.053)*	.959(.101)	.961(.102)	1.103(.131)	1.099(.131)		
Local Hero *	1.248(.3)	1.111(.258)	1.244(.282)	1.102(.241)	2.576(1.416)*	2.421(1.344)	2.743(1.458)*	2.648(1.422)*		
Carpetbagger *	1.162(.255)	1.167(.244)	1.171(.243)	1.17(.231)	1.474(.81)	1.608(.895)	1.622(.856)	1.699(.908)		
Party Animal *	1.563(.388)*	1.492(.352)*	1.505(.354)*	1.43(.32)	.983(.49)	1.086(.553)	1.159(.568)	1.216(.606)		
Majority(2010)	.994(.007)	.994(.006)	1.001(.007)	1(.006)	1.005(.01)	1.006(.01)	.997(.1)	.998(.01)		
Female	.964(.152)	1.051(.15)	1.026(.144)	1.132(.155)	.661(.213)	.661(.213)	.643(.203)	.639(.203)		
Age	1.021(.01)**	1.021(.009)**	1.016(.009)*	1.016(.009)*	.985(.018)	.986(.018)	.983(.017)	.984(.017)		
Ethnic Minority	.465(.125)***	.471(.122)***	.534(.139)**	.538(.134)**	.547(.293)	.582(.315)	.73(.377)	.758(.396)		
Attendance Rate		1.043(.011)***		1.043(.011)***		1.032(.031)		1.019(.03)		
Junior Frontbench (# of years)		.824(.041)***		.822(.039)***			.883(.073)	.882(.073)		
Senior Frontbench (# of years)		.832(.065)**		.846(.063)**			.627(.135)**	.641(.14)**		
Log-likelihood	.044	.055	.059	.072	.01	.105	.122	.124		
N	145	145	145	145	63	63	63	63		

Note: \* p&lt;.1, \*\*p&lt;.05, \*\*\*p&lt;.01, SE in parentheses, \*Career Changer as baseline category, \*Conservative as baseline category

coefficients for military experience and ministerial advisors become significant in the final model that includes all control variables. It appears that, even if their frontbench status, or the lack thereof, are taken into account, experience as military officers and ministerial advisors does affect individual Conservative MPs' decision on rebellion. Conservative MPs with military experience do indeed more frequently vote against the majority of their colleagues, while those who have been ministerial advisors are more likely to toe the party line.

Our attention now turns to how pre-parliamentary careers affect Labour MPs' tendency to dissent. Models 13 to 16 indicate the result of the models on new Labour MPs. There are several stark contrasts between the results of the two main parties. None of the factors that significantly affect the number of rebellions among new Conservative MPs, including experience as military offices, ministerial advisors, financial services and being a Party Animal, are significant when the same model are applied to new Labour MPs. Nor do MPs' age and minority status affect their decision to rebel. While past experience in mass media remains a significant factor, the sign of the coefficient is negative, which suggests that in contrast to what we have observed among the Conservatives, media experience among new Labour MPs actually discourages parliamentary dissents. On the other hand, experience in social services encourages rebelliousness among new Labour MPs. Lastly, while Party Animal appears to be the most rebellious group of MPs among the Conservatives, it is the Local Heroes who proved to be more restless among new Labour MPs. This suggests that, while among Conservative MPs it is prior involvement in the national party and being a party insider that is inspiring dissent, it is in-constituency local political experience and a personal roots among ones'

constituents that encourages new Labour MPs to defect from the party line. A possible explanation for this would be the fact that for the duration of this study, the Conservatives were involved in a coalition government with the Liberal Democrats. It is inevitable that there had to be compromises on policy for such an arrangement to work. It is no secret that with regard to a wide range of policies, from the issue of Europe, Civil Liberty to political reform, there was significant unrest on the backbench of both parties. King (1981) argued that it is the career politicians, those that have long involvement in politics, who are more ideological and have stronger commitment to a political cause. Hence, an alternative explanation on what we have witnessed with regards to the rebelling Party Animal among the Conservative might be a sign of rebellion against what is perceived as a betrayal of the true values of the party and an indication of loyalty to the principle of Conservatism, untainted by compromise with any external actors.

## **6.6 Pre-parliamentary careers and the formation of special preferences**

After exploring how pre-parliamentary careers affect MPs' general tendency to rebel in divisions, we now turn our attention to how it contributes to the formation of special preference or interest in a particular policy, which could turn into distinct voting patterns in selected groups of parliamentary votes.

Burden (2007) argued that while institutional and structural factors such as constituency preference, ideology and partisanship are indeed important factors that are driving the aggregate pattern of voting in the US congress, they are nevertheless less useful in explaining



the voting pattern in a specific vote or issue which, he believed, is more dependent on personal characteristics and has found, for example, that congress members who smoke are also more likely to vote against regulating the tobacco industry. In the context of Britain, individual MPs have also been credited with bringing in their expertise from their pre-parliamentary career which has substantially shaped the debate and policies. For example, Dr Sarah Wollaston, a former GP, has been a vocal critic of her parties' policy with regard to health and social care (*The Guardian*, 14<sup>th</sup> June 2014)<sup>2</sup>. In the tribute following her assassination, Jo Cox's colleagues frequently cited how she brought her expertise and perspective from her former career in international aid and development into parliament and contribute to the ongoing debate about the Syrian refugee crisis (*The Guardian*, 16<sup>th</sup> June 2016)<sup>3</sup>. However, research on how MPs' personal experiences affect issue voting in the House of Commons has been rather limited. Goodwin (2015) studied the impact of MPs' scientific training and education, or the lack thereof, on their votes during the passing of the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Act 2008 and found that MPs' prior experience in scientific research did not have any significant impact on how they voted with regard to the particular bill being considered. But nevertheless, it remains possible that MPs' pre-parliamentary career might play a role in shaping their preference on a specific issue.

### **6.6.1 Euroscepticism among the Conservatives**

To further investigate if pre-parliamentary experiences do affect MPs' position and voting record in a particular issue, we shall use Euroscepticism among new Conservative MPs to

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<sup>2</sup><https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2014/jun/14/tory-critics-cameron-battle-health-select-committee>

<sup>3</sup><http://www.theguardian.com/politics/2016/jun/16/jo-cox-global-aid-worker-to-labour-adviser>

demonstrate if their pre-parliamentary careers do contribute to the formation of special position with regard to Britain's relationship with the European Union.

The issue of Europe has long plagued party cohesion among the Conservatives ever since Ted Heath first brought Britain into the European Economic Community (EEC) in 1973, which split the party into those who wanted Britain to fully participate in the European project and those who opposed British involvement in Europe. It was the issue of British ascension to the European Exchange Rate Mechanism (ERM) that accelerated the downfall of Margaret Thatcher. It was also the signing of the Maastricht treaty and the resultant series of high profile rebellions that tarnished the reputation of John Major's administration as well as that of the Conservative party, which led to their landslide defeat by Labour in 1997. The move to opposition did not cease the animosity between two factions of the party and managing intra-party dissent on Europe has been a priority on the agenda of several Conservative leaders. Despite their efforts, Europe remains a contentious issue among the Conservatives after their return to power. Following the 2010 election, the Conservatives joined the considerably more pro-Europe Liberal Democrats in a coalition government; the Conservative leadership is therefore bound by the coalition agreement and principle of collective responsibility, which brings their position further away from the Eurosceptic wing of the party, who by now not only oppose further transfer of power to Brussels, but advocate the repatriation of power and even Britain's complete withdrawal from the EU. Hence, throughout the parliament, there have been several high-profile mass rebellions whereby Eurosceptic Conservative backbenchers are pitted against a relatively pro-Europe frontbench. The salience of this particular issue and the fact that it is being reflected in the voting behaviour of MPs in

parliament makes Euroscepticism among Conservative MPs an ideal case to be utilized for the purpose of examining if pre-parliamentary careers lead to the formation of special preferences and voting behaviour.

In the following analysis, I shall use three different dependent variables to measure Eurosceptic rebelliousness among Conservative MPs. Firstly, I have selected two divisions in the 2010-2015 parliament where there were high profile mass defection from the Conservative backbenches. The two divisions are:

1. The division on 24 Oct 2011, on a motion tabled by David Nutall MP, urging the government to hold an in/out referendum with regards to Britain's membership of the European Union.
2. The division on 31 Oct 2012, on an amendment to a motion, Proposed by Mark Reckless MP, which urged the government to seek reduction of British contribution to the EU budget in real term.

On both of these occasions, the official position of the government was against the motion and amendment tabled by Eurosceptic Conservative backbenchers and the Conservative party whip issued instructions to backbenchers to vote against them in the division. (*The Guardian*, 25<sup>th</sup> October 2011<sup>4</sup>, 31<sup>st</sup> October 2012<sup>5</sup>) Yet, despite that, a considerable number of Conservative backbenchers defied the party line and voted for the motion and amendment. In fact, the division on EU budget cut was one of the rare occasions where the government was defeated when the Eurosceptic rebels were joined by a united PLP which voted for the

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<sup>4</sup><http://www.theguardian.com/politics/2011/oct/24/david-cameron-tory-rebellion-europe>

<sup>5</sup><http://www.theguardian.com/politics/2012/oct/31/cameron-commons-defeat-eu-budget>

amendment and overcame the government's majority. Table 6.3 indicates how Conservative MPs voted in both divisions. In the EU referendum motion, over 26% of the parliamentary Conservative party voted in favour of the motion, while the new cohort of Conservative MPs voted for the motion in a slightly higher percentage, around 34%. As for the EU budget cut amendment, around 17% of both the new cohort and the parliamentary Conservative party as a whole supported the amendment. These numbers demonstrated that generally speaking, the voting pattern of new Conservative MPs on both occasions was roughly similar to the Parliamentary Conservative party as a whole.

**Table 6.3 How Conservatives MP voted in selected divisions on Europe**

	Overall Conservative				New Conservative MPs only			
	Aye	No	Abstain	Absent	Aye	No	Abstain	Absent
EU referendum	81 (26.47%)	210 (68.63%)	2 (.65%)	13 (4.25%)	49 (33.56%)	89 (60.96%)	2 (1.37%)	6 (4.11%)
EU budget cut	53 (17.38%)	237 (77.7%)	0	15 (4.92%)	26 (17.81%)	113 (77.4%)	0	7 (4.79%)

Note: % of vote in respective grouping in parentheses

Besides individual Conservative MPs' votes on these two divisions, I will also use the number of times they rebelled on European integration issue from May 2010 to May 2012. This information was compiled by Lynch and Whitaker (2013), based on data found in [publicwhip.org.uk](http://publicwhip.org.uk), who identified 29 votes on European integration in the first session of the last parliament where there was rebellion on the Conservative backbenches. The addition of the total number of Eurosceptic rebellions of each MP has involved as a dependent variable can provides us with a clearer picture on their general tendency to rebel on the issue of Europe in addition to their voting decision on the two high-profile divisions.

Table 6.4 presents how MPs pre-parliamentary careers influence their voting behaviour in the two aforementioned divisions, and on the issue of European integration in general. Models 1 through 4 are results from logistic regression whereby the dependent variable is a dummy

which indicates whether individual Conservative MPs have rebelled against the party line in the two divisions. MPs are coded as 1 if they voted for the motion or amendment on these occasions. The coefficients are presented as odds ratios. A variety of control variable is also included in the specifications, including their frontbench status. Since MPs' frontbench status are recoded at the end of each year, the entry closest to the date of the vote is taken as the proxy, which may be different from their status on the exact day of the vote.

Table 6.4. Conservative MPs' Pre-parliamentary career and selected indicators of Euroscepticism

	EU referendum (1)	EU referendum (2)	EU budget cut (3)	EU budget cut (4)	No. Eurosceptic rebel (5)	No. Eurosceptic rebel (6)
Business Owner	.982(.036)	.997(.034)	1.015(.041)	1.012(.04)	-.002(.023)	-.004(.023)
Military Officers	1.506(.37)*	1.789(.593)*	1.225(.146)*	1.141(.129)	.112(.059)*	.066(.062)
Agriculture	.951(.133)	.974(.103)	(omitted)	(omitted)	.001(.084)	-.01(.084)
Science & Tech	1.178(.171)	1.348(.22)*	.905(.128)	.901(.13)	.04(.075)	-.05(.058)
Marketing & Sales	.989(.071)	.976(.073)	.98(.103)	.972(.101)	-.043(.056)	.049(.058)
Finance	1(.05)	.963(.049)	.951(.083)	.955(.078)	-.068(.038)*	-.087(.038)**
NGOs	.927(.255)	.905(.302)	.899(.283)	.852(.243)	-.179(.181)	-.172(.176)
Trade Unions	(omitted)	(omitted)	(omitted)	(omitted)	(omitted)	(omitted)
Social Services	(omitted)	(omitted)	(omitted)	(omitted)	(omitted)	(omitted)
Lawyer	1.027(.044)	1.011(.042)	1.005(.053)	.992(.053)	-.046(.034)	-.072(.037)*
Teacher	.519(.558)	.51(.755)	(omitted)	(omitted)	-.303(.31)	-.293(.301)
Public Relation	1.095(.063)	1.035(.054)	1.068(.07)	1.04(.063)	.049(.036)	.029(.035)
Media	1.127(.137)	1.172(.154)	1.16(.153)	1.11(.14)	.019(.056)	.004(.064)
Soc-Sci Research	.999(.129)	1.012(.145)	.924(.14)	.97(.141)	-.032(.087)	.012(.088)
Political Worker	1.15(.206)	1.104(.127)	1.06(.148)	1.114(.117)	-.069(.071)	.018(.061)
FT Governmental	1.006(.116)	1.111(.104)	1.01(.15)	1.057(.118)	-.065(.071)	-.024(.063)
Ministerial/MPs Advisor	.848(.366)	.798(.305)	.993(.37)	.892(.299)	-.262(.191)	-.295(.185)
Local Government (same)	1.231(.097)***		1.143(.091)*		.12(.047)**	
Local Government (diff const)	1.154(.101)		.996(.107)		.097(.048)**	
National Party	.874(.126)		.982(.154)		.132(.072)*	
MP candidacy	.859(.236)		1.124(.408)		.148(.191)	
Devolved Assemblies/MEP	1.291(.025)		1.012(.187)		.048(.115)	
Local Hero*		17.382(18.571)***		.715(.738)		.49(.628)
Carpetbagger*		6.837(7.012)*		.479(.483)		.496(.631)
Party Animals*		1.462(2.698)		.587(.645)		.894(.677)
Majority(2010)	.979(.025)	.992(.024)	1.015(.032)	1.021(.031)	.028(.019)	.028(.018)
Junior Frontbench	(omitted)	(omitted)	(omitted)	(omitted)	-15.636(791.763)	-17.36(1665.93)
Senior Frontbench	(omitted)	(omitted)	(omitted)	(omitted)	(omitted)	(omitted)
Aggregated Rebel Rate					.381(.074)***	.376(.078)***
Female	4.118(2.273)**	4.231(2.371)**	.967(.653)	.738(.487)	.227(.378)	.055(.391)
Age	.978(.378)	1.001(.038)	.929(.044)	.967(.04)	-.046(.025)*	-.004(.023)
Ethnic Minority	.147(.179)	.171(.2)	(omitted)	(omitted)	-1.44(.894)	-1.368(.894)
Pseudo R-sq	.252	.24	.127	.1	.224	.202
N	124	124	90	90	146	146

Note: \* p<.1, \*\*p<.05, \*\*\* p<.01, SE in parentheses\* Baseline category is Career Changer

Models 1 and 2 look at new Conservative MPs' vote on the EU referendum motion. The coefficients shown are odds ratios. There are two types of pre-parliamentary experiences that appear to be significantly encouraging MPs voting in favour of holding an in/out referendum

on Britain's membership to the EU - experience in the military and local government. Both models estimate that prior experience as military officer dramatically increase MPs' odds to vote for the motion, and each year of experience would increase the probability of rebellion by 50% to 80%. Local government experience, especially those earned within their current constituency, is also contributing to MPs' decisions to support the motion. Model 1 estimates that each year of in-constituency local government experience is going to increase the odds of them voting in favour of holding an EU referendum by 23%. Model 2 further indicates that both being a Local Hero or Carpetbagger significantly increases the probability of one supporting the motion by seventeen times and seven times respectively. Models 3 and 4 estimate MPs' rebellion on the EU budget cut amendment. Since the size of the rebellion is smaller compared to the one on the EU referendum, a few variables were dropped from the estimation due to collinearity, which in turn reduced the size of N of these models. The results of Models 3 and 4 are fairly similar to what we have observed in the EU referendum vote. MPs' amount of prior experience in the military and local government within their current constituency is significant predictors for rebelling against the government on the EU budget cut amendment. Moreover, it should be noted that across these four models, the variables for frontbench status are dropped from the specification, again due to collinearity, which indicates that none of the Conservative MPs sitting on the frontbench at the time of the vote has rebel in these two votes, further illustrating frontbench appointment as a powerful tool in maintaining party cohesion.

Models 5 and 6 estimate the number of times each new Conservative MP have rebelled against the party leadership on the issue of Europe in the first session of the parliament. As

the dependent variable is a count data, negative binomial regression is used in these two models and the coefficient shown are incident rates ratios. On top of the specification used in the previous models, a variable denoting each MPs aggregated rebel rate for the duration of the entire parliament is added to the model as a control for their overall rate of rebelliousness in order to distinguish MPs who are particularly concerned over the issue of Europe but nevertheless loyal to the party on other issues from those who are simply more rebellious across a wide range of issues. Again, pre-parliamentary experience in the military was a significant factor for overall rebelliousness on Europe among new Conservative MPs. Model 5 predicts that each year of experience in the military would increase their number of rebellious vote on Europe by 11.6%. However, the magnitude of the coefficient for military experience is considerably reduced and loses its significance in Model 6. It is also found that amount of party political experience at almost all level are significant factor in encouraging Eurosceptic rebellions among new Conservative MPs. It is estimated that the amount of experience in local government, in or out of their current constituency, and in the national party, are going to significantly increase individual MPs' the number of rebellions on Europe by 12.8%, 10.2% and 14.1% respectively. MPs' pre-parliamentary political career type does not however appear to be a significant factor in determining their overall Euroscepticism in parliamentary votes. Moreover, these models also found that, despite its insignificance in predicting Eurosceptic rebellion in individual votes, prior experience in financial services is a significant factor in encouraging loyalty to the party in parliamentary votes on Europe. The models estimate each year of experience in the financial sector is going to decrease the number of Eurosceptic rebellions among new Conservative MPs by approximately 8.3% to 6.6%.

There are several things to take away from these findings. First and foremost, prior political experience among new Conservative MPs is a significant factor influencing their decision in rebelling against their party on Europe. Local government experience, in particular those earned within their constituency, is a significant factor encouraging Eurosceptic rebellion in general as well as in the two high profile rebellions we have studied. This could be interpreted as an indication that Euroscepticism are deeply rooted in the grassroots and local party of the Conservative and those who followed a local roots into the parliament is not hesitate to express that in parliamentary vote. On the other hand, although prior political experience in the national party did not encourage new MPs to rebel in the two high profile mass Eurosceptic rebellions, Model 5 nevertheless shows that the amount of time new Conservative MPs spent in the national party do increase their tendency to rebel on the issue of Europe in general. This is more evidence to support the notion that extended experience in the Conservative politics is a significant predictor to ideological adherence to the party and Euroscepticism in this particular case. Furthermore, the fact that it is only significant to the overall level of Eurosceptic rebellions but failed to predict MPs' decisions in the high profile votes suggests that while extended political experience in the national party among Conservative is an indicator of increased Euroscepticism, it might however discourage them to participate in high profile mass rebellions, most probably for the purpose of protecting the reputation of the party, and instead rebel on occasions which attracts less attention to themselves as well as the party.

Secondly, similar to experience in the national party, although prior experience in finance did not affect MPs' vote in the two high profile Eurosceptic rebellions, it does however discourage



MPs from participating in Eurosceptic rebellions in general. It is likely that, as shown previously on numerous occasion, MPs who worked in finance are, and have reasons to be, more ambitious than their colleagues; their hesitation to participate in a Eurosceptic rebellion could be for the purpose of not being seen as a nuisance in the eyes of the leadership in such a divisive issue, so as to protect their future political career. Alternatively, the reluctance of ex-financiers to participate in Eurosceptic rebellion could also be explained by their professional links to the sector and material benefit of the industry. Since the success of Britain's financial service sector is highly dependent on access to the European single market, it is no surprise that many in the industry do now wish to see Britain withdrawn from the EU or to disengage with European institution in some other way. Hence, it is possible that professional life in the financial service industry has highlighted the economic benefit of Britain's membership of the EU, which in turn has shaped their political beliefs into one that is relatively less Eurosceptic among the Conservatives.

Lastly, a pre-parliamentary career in the military has been also found to be a significant factor that encourages Eurosceptic rebellion, in general as well as in both high profile rebellions among new Conservative MPs. The amount of experience as a military officer has consistently been found to be a significant and positive factor across multiple models. Not only does it suggest that ex-military service personnel are more Eurosceptic, it could also be used to explain higher overall rebelliousness among them as observed in the previous section. Similarly to a pre-parliamentary career in finance, increase Euroscepticism among those who have served in the military could stem from their professional experience. It is possible that prior experience in the military may induce one with a world view that is more national-

centric, turn one's attention to loyalty to one's country and patriotism, while being more dubious to the idea of shared sovereignty under the framework of a supranational organization, which leads them to be comparatively more Eurosceptic.

## **6.7 Conclusion**

This chapter has clearly illustrated that MPs' pre-parliamentary careers do indeed have a significant impact on their voting decisions in the division lobbies. Diverging patterns of prior experience affect MPs' tendency to vote against their own party, both in general and on particular issues, such as Britain's relationship with the European Union. The analysis suggests that the major reason for previous experience having an influence on MPs' general tendency to rebel is that it affects their anticipation of ministerial promotion, which in turn reduces the effectiveness of promises of future promotion as a tool to maintain party cohesion on the backbenches. MPs with the credential that are associated with swift promotion to the frontbench have increased anticipation and hence are more likely to express their frustration when those anticipations are not met by walking across the aisle into the opposition lobby. Contrary to the hypotheses, prior political experience, in particular that earned at the national party level, has been found to have an association with an increased tendency to rebel, in particular among the Conservative party. This is likely due to the fact that they were involved in a coalition government with the Liberal Democrats, which led to policy compromise that frustrated those who were more attached to the political principle and ideology of the party and resented the policy compromise in the coalition negotiation. Analysis on Euroscepticism among new Conservative MPs has provided further evidence to this particular argument. Moreover, it has also been revealed that professional experience does facilitate the formation

of special preferences on particular issues. It has been found that prior experience in the military is associated with higher level of Euroscepticism as expressed through parliamentary rebellion, while previous employment in the financial sector has the opposite effect. The most plausible explanation to these observations is that MPs' previous professional life helps inform and shape their political beliefs which is manifest into diverging voting pattern with respect to certain issues. In the end, evidence presented in this chapter has confirmed that MPs' pre-parliamentary careers do affect their policy preferences as well as the effectiveness of party's tools in maintaining cohesion, which gives rise to distinct patterns of rebellion and voting in divisions, as their prior experience varies.

## Appendix, Chapter Six

Table 6.5. Negative Binomial models for the number of rebellion (incident rate ratios) (Conservative only)

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9) Panel
Business Owner	1(.011)			1.001(.01)	1.002(.01)	1.006(.01)	1.001(.01)	1.006(.01)	1(.012)
Military Officers	1.054(.026)**			1.065(.027)**	1.057(.027)**	1.056(.026)**	1.038(.025)	1.04(.024)*	1.062(.019)***
Agriculture	.978(.018)			.975(.021)	.975(.018)	.975(.018)	.984(.018)	.984(.017)	.979(.01)**
Science & Tech	.974(.031)			.977(.032)	.977(.032)	.970(.031)	.973(.03)	.967(.029)	.983(.026)
Marketing & Sales	.983(.016)			.984(.016)	.985(.016)	.972(.015)*	.997(.016)	.983(.015)	.986(.014)
Finance	1.013(.015)			1.016(.015)	1.011(.015)	1.023(.015)	1.016(.014)	1.028(.014)**	1.018(.025)
NGOs	.907(.053)*			.911(.054)	.923(.055)	.932(.054)	.94(.054)	.945(.053)	.949(.038)
Trade Unions									
Social Services									
Lawyer	1.027(.012)**			1.029(.012)**	1.024(.012)**	1.009(.012)	1.024(.011)**	1.01(.011)	1.019(.022)
Teacher	.96(.024)*			.967(.027)	.959(.024)*	.954(.023)*	.98(.024)	.974(.023)	.973(.016)
Public Relation	.973(.015)*			.972(.016)*	.969(.015)*	.976(.015)	.973(.015)*	.979(.015)	.965(.013)**
Media	1.035(.025)			1.037(.026)	1.036(.026)	1.057(.026)**	1.041(.025)*	1.06(.024)**	1.044(.031)
Soc-Sci Research	1.041(.037)			1.029(.038)	1.023(.036)	1.028(.036)	1.024(.035)	1.028(.035)	1.025(.034)
Political Worker	1.013(.031)			.99(.034)	1.008(.031)	1.002(.03)	1.004(.029)	1(.028)	1.011(.025)
FT Governmental	.996(.024)			.986(.027)	.999(.024)	.991(.023)	.992(.023)	.985(.021)	.996(.019)
Ministerial/MPs Advisor	.932(.059)			.908(.067)	.891(.06)*	.89(.058)*	.894(.056)*	.895(.053)*	.858(.059)
Local Government (same const)		.999(.016)		1.024(.02)					
Local Government (diff const)		.972(.02)		1.001(.022)					
National Party		.991(.028)		1.033(.034)					
MP candidacy		1.065(.071)		1.059(.075)					
Devolved Assemblies/MEP		.966(.038)		1.023(.05)					
Local Hero *			.989(.228)		1.248(.3)	1.111(.258)	1.244(.282)	1.102(.241)	1.436(.353)
Carpetbagger *			.962(.191)		1.162(.255)	1.167(.244)	1.171(.243)	1.17(.231)	1.391(.329)
Party Animal *			1.331(.303)		1.563(.388)*	1.492(.352)*	1.505(.354)*	1.43(.32)	1.975(.606)**
Majority(2010)		.997(.007)	.994(.007)	.995(.007)	.994(.007)	.994(.006)	1.001(.007)	1(.006)	.991(.008)
Female		.94(.146)	.916(.139)	1.019(.153)	.964(.152)	1.051(.15)	1.026(.144)	1.132(.155)	1.093(.187)
Age	1.017(.01)*	1.021(.01)**	1.025(.009)***	1.011(.01)	1.021(.01)**	1.021(.009)**	1.016(.009)*	1.016(.009)*	1.022(.011)**
Ethnic Minority	.462(.125)***	.457(.129)***	.434(.121)***	.482(.135)***	.465(.125)***	.471(.122)***	.534(.139)**	.538(.134)**	.421(.086)***
Attendance Rate						1.043(.011)***	.824(.041)***	1.043(.011)***	1.013(.007)*
Junior Frontbench (# of years)							.822(.039)***		
Senior Frontbench (# of years)							.832(.065)**		
Pseudo R-sq	.04	.015	.015	.042	.044	.055	.059	.072	-1214.254 *
N	145	145	145	145	145	145	145	145	545

Note: \* p&lt;.1, \*\*p&lt;.05, \*\*\* p&lt;.01, SE in parentheses, Coefficient reported as incident rate ratio, \* Career Changer as baseline category, \* Reported as Log Pseudolikelihood

Table 6.6. Negative Binomial models for the number of rebellion (incident rate ratios) (Labour only)

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9) Panel
Business Owner	1.033(.051)			1.048(.059)	1.017(.05)	1.017(.05)	.991(.049)	.993(.049)	1.118(.117)
Military Officers									
Agriculture									
Science & Tech	.769(.189)			.727(.182)	.776(.191)	.798(.196)	.804(.193)	.814(.197)	1.302(.382)
Marketing & Sales	5.917(6.367)*			7.512(8.395)*	6.228(6.518)*	5.205(5.451)	5.803(6.011)*	5.289(5.538)	7.925(4.092)***
Finance	1.005(.048)			1.008(.051)	.974(.052)	.963(.052)	.969(.05)	.962(.05)	1.019(.039)
NGOs	1.014(.041)			1.035(.063)	1.06(.049)	1.058(.049)	1.042(.047)	1.042(.047)	1.087(.137)
Trade Unions	.974(.034)			.983(.062)	.992(.037)	.988(.037)	.981(.035)	.98(.036)	1.059(.098)
Social Services	1.071(.03)**			1.078(.03)***	1.063(.028)**	1.054(.03)*	1.057(.027)**	1.052(.028)*	1.075(.062)
Lawyer	1.048(.039)			1.06(.042)	1.044(.039)	1.048(.04)	1.02(.036)	1.022(.037)	1.007(.039)
Teacher	1.015(.024)			1.024(.024)	1.008(.024)	1.004(.024)	1.002(.024)	.999(.024)	1.05(.058)
Public Relation	.875(.137)			.883(.136)	.86(.132)	.884(.138)	.827(.13)	.869(.134)	1.115(.174)
Media	.558(.203)			.489(.198)*	.535(.193)	.555(.198)*	.536(.192)*	.546(.195)*	.359(.077)***
Soc-Sci Research	1.034(.072)			1.032(.081)	1.05(.072)	1.04(.072)	1.014(.069)	1.01(.069)	.969(.107)
Political Worker	1.124(.086)			1.143(.089)*	1.144(.087)*	1.121(.087)	1.127(.083)	1.114(.85)	1.008(.116)
FT Governmental	1.031(.04)			1.03(.06)	1.002(.038)	1.005(.039)	.997(.039)	.998(.039)	1.075(.044)*
Ministerial/MPs Advisor	.914(.092)			.921(.099)	.959(.101)	.961(.102)	1.103(.131)	1.099(.131)	.608(.209)
Local Government (same const)	1.03(.028)			1.005(.045)					
Local Government (diff const)	.981(.058)			.986(.067)					
National Party	.98(.025)			.991(.053)					
MP candidacy	.912(.29)			.724(.251)					
Devolved Assemblies/MEP	.828(.097)			.803(.093)*					
Local Hero*			2.342(1.098)*		2.576(1.416)*	2.421(1.344)	2.743(1.458)*	2.648(1.422)*	1.099(.623)
Carpetbagger*			1.282(.572)		1.474(.81)	1.608(.895)	1.622(.856)	1.699(.908)	.813(.618)
Party Animal *			1.012(.411)		.983(.49)	1.086(.553)	1.159(.568)	1.216(.606)	.626(.866)
Majority(2010)			1.009(.01)	1.009(.01)	1.005(.01)	1.006(.01)	.997(.1)	.998(.01)	1.005(.012)
Female			.731(.2)	.679(.221)	.661(.213)	.661(.213)	.643(.203)	.639(.203)	1.668(1.777)
Age			1.004(.014)	.991(.017)	.985(.018)	.986(.018)	.983(.017)	.984(.017)	.971(.026)
Ethnic Minority			.783(.346)	.991(.017)	.547(.293)	.582(.315)	.73(.377)	.758(.396)	2.775(2.616)
Attendance Rate						1.032(.031)		1.019(.03)	1.025(.031)
Junior Frontbench (# of years)							.883(.073)	.882(.073)	
Senior Frontbench (# of years)							.627(.135)**	.641(.14)**	
Pseudo R-sq	.087	.044	.037	.113	.01	.105	.122	.124	-201.759*
N	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	168

Note: \* p&lt;.1, \*\*p&lt;.05, \*\*\* p&lt;.01, SE in parentheses, Coefficient reported as incident rate ratio, \*Career Changer as baseline category, \*Reported as Log Pseudolikelihood

## **Chapter Seven – Pre-parliamentary career and parliamentary speeches**

### **7.1 Introduction**

In the last chapter I explored how MPs' pre-parliamentary careers affect their voting behaviour, both in general and on specific policies. However, while the significance of understanding the way MPs vote is self-evident, their participation and performance in other responsibilities and activities is also of vital importance to the functioning of the parliament and representative democracy. In this chapter, I turn my attention to one of the MPs' most publicized activities - parliamentary speeches. I demonstrate that diverging patterns of MPs' pre-parliamentary careers, and the skills and knowledge they bring to the table, is a key determinant of how much time and effort they devote into parliamentary debates and speech-making. The results will further confirm the main hypothesis of this dissertation, that MPs' pre-parliamentary career does affect their roles and performance in parliament because of the difference in skills and knowledge they have acquired prior to entering parliament.

### **7.2 Why do legislators speak?**

Existing literature on legislative debates has given several motivations behind speechmaking among legislators. First and foremost is 'persuasion' - legislators engage in parliamentary debates because it is a way for them to persuade their colleagues or government ministers on policy changes by arguing for its merits. Yet speechmaking as a tool for persuasion and bringing forward policy changes is largely seen as ineffective (Proksch and Slapin 2012, 2015). It is only under exceptional conditions that legislative speeches decisively affect the position of government officials or a substantial portion of fellow legislators to induce any meaningful changes to policies.

Alternatively, instead of a means to persuade their colleagues, legislative speeches could be seen as a tool for legislators to fulfill their electoral needs. The need to secure voters' support and reelection has been a powerful explanatory factor in the study of politicians' behaviour. Legislative speeches can fulfill this need by providing the opportunity for legislators to cultivate their personal brand and reputation through practices such as 'advertising' and 'credit-claiming', which can attract constituent support during reelection (Mayhew 1974, Maltzmann and Sigelman 1996). The pressure to secure electoral support for reelection would be mostly felt by those who are electorally less secure. Numerous studies have found that legislators who are elected on smaller margins are also likely to devote more of their effort developing personal votes through focusing on their constituencies (Benedetto and Hix 2007, Heishusen et al. 2005). However, although legislative speeches could be an important tool for the cultivation of personal votes for individual legislators, studies on how electoral circumstances affect participation in parliamentary debate have yielded mixed results. While it has been found that among British MPs during the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century, those who were elected by a smaller margin are delivering more speeches in parliamentary debates (Eggers and Spirling 2014b), results from studies on contemporary legislators in the US House of Representatives have shown no significant relationship between electoral security of congressmen and the number of lines that they spoke in unconstrained floor speeches (Maltzmann and Sigelman 1996).

The last motivation for legislators to speak in parliamentary debates is that of position-taking. While speeches are under most circumstances ineffective in bringing forward any immediate and substantial policy changes through persuasion, it nevertheless remains a valuable

opportunity for individual legislators to voice their concerns. According to this conception of legislative speeches, the purpose of speaking in parliamentary debate is to communicate the policy position of individual legislator with a mass audience. The position-taking motivation for speechmaking is by no mean independent of the electoral or policy consideration. While those who deliver position-taking speeches do not expect to bring forward immediate policy change by persuasion, they might hope to induce changes in public sentiment and hence policy change in the long term by making a stand during parliamentary debate. Kam (2009) suggested that position-taking in parliament is a way for legislators to cultivate personal support for electoral purposes. But nevertheless, the implication on the patterns of debate participation and allocation of floor time to individual legislators would be rather different if legislative speeches were indeed delivered to signal the personal positions of legislators instead of being purely electorally motivated.

Proksch and Slapin (2012, 2015) analyzed German and British MPs participation in parliamentary debates under the context of partisan competition by looking at legislative speeches as position-taking motivated. Whilst political parties, in order to compete with each other for voters' support in election, would prefer to present a coherent message to the electorate, individual MPs may want to signal dissent from party position when the opinion of themselves or their constituent deviates from that of the party. Party leaders are therefore put in a dilemma; that while the party would arguably benefit from presenting a united and coherent message for the purpose of reelection and governing, but on the other hand, allowing certain level of dissent during parliamentary debate might serve the purpose of managing rebellion among backbenchers or allowing electorally vulnerable MPs from districts that are ideologically at odds with the party to cultivate a personal following among



constituents. Their data have shown that among British MPs, self-reported ideological distance from party leaders appears to have a positive effect on the number of speeches that they delivered during parliamentary debate. Similarly, Maltzmann and Sigelman (1996) have also found that members of US House of Representatives who are more ideologically extreme speak more during unconstrained floor time.

### **7.3 Pre-parliamentary career and speech making**

As discussed in Chapter One, one of the central hypotheses of this thesis is that MPs' pre-parliamentary careers would affect the skills and knowledge that they bring to Westminster, which would in turn affect the relative effectiveness and attractiveness of various legislative activities that would give rise to diverging patterns of behaviour. Therefore, in order to determine the kind of pre-parliamentary career and profession that would encourage or discourage the making of speeches, we would have to first determine what are the skills and experiences that affect the incentives for individual MPs to participate and speak in parliamentary debates? What sorts of experience would (dis)incentivize speech making?

The most natural starting point would be prior legislative experience. Previous experience as a legislator in other legislative bodies would provide experiences that are most comparable to those in Westminster. MPs who have served in similar bodies would have participated in legislative debates and delivered speeches in them. They would be familiar with the procedure and setting of parliamentary debates and understand the pressure of public speaking and technique in getting their idea across to their colleagues in the chamber or a wider audience following the debate. In the context of the UK, prior membership of devolved assemblies (including the Scottish Parliament, the National Assembly of Wales, the Northern Ireland

Assembly and the London Assembly) as well as the European Parliament could be considered the bodies that are most similar to the setting of the House of Commons, hence:

*Hypothesis 7.1: MPs with more experience as members of devolved assemblies or the European Parliament deliver more speeches.*

Besides legislative experience, prior experiences in occupations that involve public speaking, or those that could provide MPs with skills in communication are also likely to make individual MPs better in delivering speeches in parliament. Occupations that fall under these categories include, but are not limited to, lawyers, teachers, mass media and public relations. These professions have been seen by many as a natural starting point of a career in politics and have indeed been heavily represented in previous parliaments (Cairney 2007, King 1981, Mellors 1978). It has been suggested that one of the reasons why these professions are conducive to future political pursue is that they equip individuals with the ability to communicate with voters and deliver speeches both during electoral campaigns and in parliamentary debates. Moreover, these are also occupations that emphasize the use of words to communicate complex ideas to an audience. Experience in these professions ought to make individual more capable and confident in making speeches. Former speaker of US House of Representatives Newt Gingrich once said, "As a former college teacher, I find [unconstrained floor time] a very helpful time to explain complicated ideas and outline research on multifaceted topics" (Congressional Record, 4 November 1983, 30952).

*Hypothesis 7.2: MPs with more experience in occupations that improve their skills in public speaking and communication, such as lawyers, teachers, media and public relation, speak more often during parliamentary debates*

Besides the experience and skills in delivering speeches, MPs would also need to have something to say in order to speak in parliamentary debates. Unless one is filibustering and reading from the Bible, MPs would need to fill their speeches with substantial contents. This would require certain understanding of the policy being discussed as well as relevant facts and figures. MPs who have more expertise on certain policies ought to speak more during parliamentary debates since it would require comparatively less time and effort in preparing for the speeches, their thorough understanding of the policy would make their argument more compelling and their status as expert would also make their speeches potentially more persuasive. Proksch and Slapin (2012) found that the number of committee assignment is a significant and positive explanatory factor on the number of speeches that German MPs deliver because committee work allows them to develop policy expertise, which makes them a more attractive spokesperson for their party during debate.

However, measuring the level of policy expertise that has developed during pre-parliamentary times is much more difficult because it could be developed in an extensive variety of occupations. People who have worked in certain industry or economic sector could be thought of as experts in the said area. Since our attention is on MPs' overall participation in parliamentary debate that cover a wide variety of policy subject matter, expertise in particular policy area ought to have a negligible effect on the total number of speeches delivered across all the debates.

On the other hand, experience in policy formulation and research are going to equip MPs with the analytical skills as well as an understanding of the process of policy formulation that makes them more capable of discussing a wide variety of policies during parliamentary debates.

Hence, experience in policy research as well as ministerial or MPs' advisors during MPs' pre-parliamentary career ought to provide them with the means to speak on a wide variety of subjects with a certain degree of expertise, therefore increasing their overall participation across all the debates in parliament.

*Hypothesis 7.3: MPs with more experience in occupations that facilitate the development of policy proficiency and expertise, such as policy research and ministerial/MPs advisors, speak more often during parliamentary debates.*

So far, we have focused on pre-parliamentary occupations that facilitate speechmaking during debates. However, attention should also be paid to experiences that would reduce MPs participation in debates. While there are unlikely to be occupations that hinder MPs' abilities to deliver speeches, some pre-parliamentary experiences may nevertheless divert their focus from parliamentary debates onto other aspects of their responsibilities. If the kind of skills and knowledge that MPs have acquired make alternative legislative tools a more attractive course of action, then they are more likely to engage in those alternatives, hence decreasing their participation in parliamentary debates.

One such possibility is that an alternative platform for communication is made available to MPs through their pre-parliamentary experiences. As discussed earlier, two of the main purposes of legislative speeches are to persuade others to change their position or simply signal the position of individual legislator to colleagues, party leaders or the general public. If MPs have access to channels other than parliamentary debates to communicate their message and make their position known to others, then they are more likely to utilize those channels rather than speaking in parliament. One such alternative platform would be mass

media. Van Aelst et al (2010) showed that legislators who employ professional communication staff also receive more media attention and coverage. It is therefore possible that MPs who have been professional media and communication workers would enjoy a similar degree of media attention. MPs with prior experiences in media or public relations might have better connections and contacts among journalist that could translate into more press coverage. This would make parliamentary debate a comparatively less attractive platform for them to get their message and position across, hence reducing the number of speeches that they made. They might also be more skilful in tuning their message to attract attention from the media, which means the amount of press coverage generated from a single speech might be higher among these individuals, further reducing the incentives for them to be a frequent speaker since they can substitute quantity with quality.

*Hypothesis 7.4: MPs with more experience in occupations that provide them with alternative platforms for communication and position taking, such as experience in media and public relations, speak less frequently during parliamentary debates.*

Besides mass media, the persuasion and position-taking purpose of legislative speeches could also be substituted by directly lobbying government ministers or party leaders. If MPs' pre-parliamentary careers provide them with extra access to these powerful individuals, they may attach a lower priority to attending parliamentary debates and making of speeches. Allen (2014) argued that prior experience in party politics, especially at the national level, would provide individuals with the opportunity to engage with powerful figures within the party and to cultivate a personal rapport with the leadership, which in turn could facilitate a future political career. Hence, MPs pre-parliamentary experience in national party politics ought to have a negative effect on their participation in debate and making of speeches. Moreover,

since government ministry and policy making are controlled by the governing party, we should expect the negative effect of national party experience on speeches to be comparatively more pronounced and salient among parties in government.

*Hypothesis 7.5: MPs with more experience in national party politics, in particular government MPs, speak less frequently during parliamentary debates.*

#### **7.4 Data and methodology**

Besides prior experiences of MPs, there are several determinants of their participation in parliamentary debates that need to be accounted for in the models. First and foremost is the tendency that they rebel against their party. As previously discussed, one motivation for MPs to speak in parliamentary debates is that of position taking, to communicate with either the party or the general public of their grievances with regards to the official position of their respective party and signal their ideological or policy differences. Besides highlighting individuals' disagreement with their party, parliamentary speeches may also serve to qualify or explain the context for their rebellious votes, hence managing and limiting the potential backlash from the rebellion for themselves or the party. Hence, the rebelliousness of individual MPs ought to contribute to the number of occasions they speak during parliamentary debates. As discussed in the last chapter, MPs' rebelliousness appears to be associated with the nature of their pre-parliamentary career. It is therefore necessary to discern the effect of rebelliousness on the making of parliamentary speeches in order to discover how pre-parliamentary experiences by itself affect MPs' tendency to speak during debates. Hence, individual rate of rebellion during divisions will be treated as an intervening variable that is added to the final models in the subsequent analysis.

Another factor that contributes to the number of speeches that MPs deliver during debates is how ministerial and frontbench offices are distributed among MPs. A key function of ministers and party frontbench members is to represent their respective party in parliamentary debates, and make statements that iterate the official position of the party as well as responding to scrutiny and questioning from the bench opposite. It is therefore only natural that (shadow) ministers and frontbench members are more frequently featured in parliamentary debates than backbenchers. Similarly to MPs' rebelliousness, it has been found in Chapter Five that promotion to the frontbench is at the very least partially related to the nature pre-parliamentary career. It is hence necessary in the analysis to take MPs' frontbench status into account. There are several ways of achieving this. The most straightforward and ideal approach would be to exclude all speeches made by MPs in their capacity as frontbench members or members of the government. However, the dataset used does not allow such surgical removal of frontbencher contributions from the overall data. Instead, the following analysis uses two different strategies to isolate and control for the effect of MPs frontbench status. Firstly, two control variables that denote the number of years an MP has served as either a junior or senior frontbench member, which have also been used as control variables in the last chapter, will be introduced into the final models that estimate the total number of speeches MPs have made for the entirety of the last parliament. Secondly, to provide further robustness for the analysis, an alternative strategy will be used. Because the dataset of MPs speeches measures the number of speech each MPs made during each calendar year, it is therefore possible to construct a panel model that estimate the number of speeches an MP made in each year, which we can then use the frontbench status data to isolate the period each MP sat on the backbench and only looks at their participation in parliamentary debate as a backbencher.

The dependent variable is the total number of speeches each MP made during the 2010-2015 parliament. The data were collected via the TheyWorkForYou.com API, which provides an accessible digitized version of the complete Hansard. Each speech recorded on the Hansard is matched with the identity of the speaker, which is then used to calculate the number of speeches each new MP has delivered in parliament in each calendar year. These are then used to calculate the aggregate number of speeches each MP has made for the entirety of the last parliament.<sup>1</sup> Because the distribution of the data is non-normal and highly skewed, most of the models will be analyzed using negative binomial regression. For the panel models, since it is necessary to cluster the standard deviation around individual MPs to avoid bias in measuring significance, the random-effect Poisson model will be used to estimate the number of speeches MPs made in each calendar year.

The results are presented in two sections. Firstly, to explore the effect of pre-parliamentary career on MPs' speech count among the entire cohort of new MPs, results of a set of full models that encompasses all new MPs across three major parties will be presented. Following that, a set of party models that only include new MPs representing either one of the two main parties will be used to understand how pre-parliamentary career affects MPs' behaviour with respect to parliamentary speeches among the party cohort. Numerous research projects have shown that the status of the party within the chamber is an important determinant when legislators decide whether they would speak in parliamentary debates. (Killerman and Proksch 2013, Maltzman and Sigelman 1996, Proksch and Salpin 2012, 2015) Moreover, Hypothesis

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<sup>1</sup>I would like to express my gratitude to Jack Blumenau(LSE), who have collected the dataset of MPs speeches and graciously agreed to share his data.



Five suggests that its effect would be more salient among government MPs. Hence, analysis of within-party variation would further refine our understanding of how pre-parliamentary careers affect speech making as well as legislative behaviour in general.

## **7.5 Results**

### **7.5.1 Full models**

Table 7.1 shows the results of models that include new MPs from all three major parties. All the coefficients are reported as incident-rate ratios, which indicates the estimated rate of change on the number of incidents occurring, in this case parliamentary speeches, from a unit change of the dependent variable. Model 1 is a baseline model without any pre-parliamentary career or intervening control variables. None of these variables are statistically significant. Model 2 introduces professional pre-parliamentary career variables into the specification. The only variable that is statistically significant is that of the legal profession. This model estimates that each year of an MPs' pre-parliamentary experience as a solicitor or barrister would increase the total number of speeches they make during the entire parliament by 2.8%. This estimate is statistically significant at 0.01 level. This finding is as predicted from Hypothesis 7.2, that occupations that promote MPs' communication skills increase their participation in parliamentary speeches. However, it appears that lawyer is the only professional occupation that has the said effect among the number of occupations that have been thought to promote MPs' communication skills, hence their tendency to speak in debates.

Models 3 and 4 considered only MPs pre-parliamentary political experiences. Model 3 used the continuous variables that denote the amount of the type of political experience as denoted on individual MP's profiles. It estimates that the amount of in-constituency

Table 7.1 Negative binomial models for the number of speeches MPs made (incident rate ratios)

	(1) Baseline	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9) Panel *
Business Owner		1(.008)			1.001(.007)	1(.007)	1.003(.007)	1.003(.007)	1.006(.008)
Military Officers		1.025(.018)			1.028(.018)	1.027(.019)	1.033(.018)*	1.027(.018)	1.028(.012)**
Agriculture		1.01(.015)			1.003(.015)	1.01(.015)	1.002(.015)	1.004(.015)	1.004(.009)
Science & Tech		1.009(.022)			1.013(.022)	1.01(.022)	1.015(.021)	1.014(.021)	1.012(.023)
Marketing & Sales		.994(.012)			.988(.013)	.992(.012)	.986(.012)	.988(.012)	.975(.011)**
Finance		1.013(.010)			1.009(.01)	1.01(.01)	1.008(.01)	1.004(.01)	1.014(.015)
NGOs		1.004(.024)			1.007(.025)	1.011(.024)	1.008(.025)	1.011(.01)	.992(.021)
Trade Unions		1.014(.016)			1.03(.024)	1.023(.017)	1.041(.024)*	1.041(.024)*	1.044(.033)
Social Services		1.01(.015)			1.009(.015)	1.016(.016)	1.008(.015)	1.006(.015)	1(.009)
Lawyer		1.028(.008)***			1.025(.008)***	1.027(.008)***	1.024(.008)***	1.022(.008)***	1.021(.011)**
Teacher		1.006(.011)			1.006(.011)	1.006(.011)	1.003(.01)	1.003(.01)	1.004(.008)
Public Relation		1.002(.011)			1.001(.011)	1.001(.011)	1.003(.011)	1.007(.01)	.999(.01)
Media		.991(.018)			.993(.018)	.989(.017)	.98(.017)	.981(.018)	.988(.012)
Soc-Sci Research		1.01(.021)			1.014(.022)	1.018(.022)	1.026(.022)	1.025(.022)	1.04(.024)*
Political Worker		1.002(.016)			1.007(.017)	1.008(.016)	1.011(.017)	1.012(.017)	1.008(.013)
FT Governmental		1.001(.014)			1.006(.016)	1.001(.014)	1.007(.015)	1.008(.015)	1.006(.01)
Ministerial/MPs Advisor		.997(.035)			1.021(.041)	1.028(.039)	1.009(.041)	1.013(.041)	1.063(.054)
Local Government(same const)			.984(.009)*		.987(.009)		.988(.009)	.988(.009)	.984(.008)**
Local Government(diff const)			1.001(.014)		1.003(.014)		1(.013)	1.002(.013)	.99(.012)
National Party			.993(.01)		.982(.017)		.973(.017)	.972(.017)*	.979(.02)
MP Candidacies			1.111(.052)**		1.105(.055)**		1.1(.053)*	1.075(.53)	1.078(.058)
Devolved Assembly/MEP			1.002(.023)		1.013(.026)		1.017(.026)	1.018(.026)	1.034(.014)**
Career Changers *				1.126(.15)		1.238(.19)			
Local Heroes *				1.001(.125)		1.119(.166)			
Carpetbaggers *				1.242(.131)**		1.344(.166)**			
Majority(2010)		.999(.004)	.999(.004)	.999(.004)	.998(.004)	.998(.004)	.996(.004)	.997(.004)	1(.004)
Female		.939(.085)	.915(.084)	.926(.084)	.895(.085)	.907(.086)	.877(.081)	.896(.083)	.852(.1)
Age		1.002(.004)	1.004(.005)	1.001(.005)	.997(.006)	.994(.006)	.999(.006)	1(.006)	1.002(.007)
Ethnic Minority		.946(.143)	.953(.142)	.946(.141)	.906(.139)	.885(.134)	.856(.128)	.867(.128)	.938(.178)
Rebel Rate								1.053(.024)**	1.001(.012)
Junior Frontbench (# of years)							1(.027)	1.014(.028)	
Senior Frontbench (# of years)							1.171(.055)***	1.194(.057)***	
Labour <sup>†</sup>	1.129(.107)	1.128(.116)	1.293(.136)**	1.206(.117)*	1.256(.135)**	1.171(.121)	1.308(.146)**	1.368(.153)***	1.409(.187)**
Lib Dem <sup>†</sup>	.936(.181)	.966(.189)	.931(.183)	.957(.185)	.941(.189)	.974(.189)	.98(.193)	.976(.189)	1.028(.23)
Pseudo R-sq	.001	.007	.004	.003	.01	.009	.014	.015	.4737.06*
N	219	219	219	219	219	219	219	219	747

Note: \* p<.1, \*\*p<.05, \*\*\* p<.01, SE in parentheses, <sup>†</sup>Party Animals as baseline category, <sup>\*</sup>Conservative as baseline category, <sup>†</sup>Reported as log likelihood, <sup>\*</sup>include year fixed effect, coefficient not shown

experience appears to discourage MPs' participation in parliamentary debates while previous candidacy for parliamentary seats encourage speech making among MPs. It is estimated that each year of in-constituency local government experience would reduce the number of speeches MPs made during the entire parliament by 1.6%. On the other hand, prior parliamentary candidacy appears to have the opposite effect as this model estimate each prior failed attempt to gain a Westminster seat is associated with an 11.1% increase in the overall number of speeches delivered. Neither of these results were anticipated from the hypotheses. On the other hand, Model 3 found no evidence to support Hypothesis 7.1 as the coefficient for prior experience as member of devolved assemblies and European Parliament is not significant. Model 4 considers MPs' prior political experience as political career type, estimated in Chapter Three. The baseline category used is Party Animals. Result from Model 4 estimates that all the other types of MPs are more frequent speakers in parliamentary debates when compared with Party Animals, although only Carpetbaggers statistically deviate from the baseline. It is estimated that the number of speeches made by a Carpetbagger is 24.2% more than a comparable Party Animal. These results lend some credence to Hypothesis 7.5, which anticipates that those more involved in national party politics prior to entering parliament are also less likely to speak. Moreover, Models 3 and 4 indicate that after MPs' political experience is taken into account, new Labour MPs appear to be more frequent contributors to parliamentary debate as the coefficient for Labour dummy being positive and becomes significant in both models. This result is consistent with the findings of Proksch and Salpin (2012), who found that opposition MPs speak more frequently during parliamentary debates.

Models 5 and 6 take both MPs' professional and political pre-parliamentary career into

consideration. The signs, magnitude and significance of the coefficient are fairly similar to what we have observed in Models 3 and 4 with two exceptions. Firstly, there is a notable increase magnitude of the coefficient for all three political career types in Model 6, which indicates that the negative effect of being a Party Animal on speech making is more pronounced after an MP's professional career is taken into consideration. Secondly, the coefficient for in-constituency local government experience loses significance, which suggests after taking their professional experience into account, in-constituency local government experience is no longer a significant factor in discouraging speech-making among new MPs.

Models 7 and 8 introduce the two intervening controls - MPs' frontbench status and rebel rate, into the specification. Model 7 added the two variables that denoted the number of years MPs occupied the two tiers of frontbench positions. It showed that only senior frontbench positions are a significant in increasing the amount of speeches an individual delivers during the last parliament. It is estimated that each year an MP spends as government minister or member of shadow cabinet would increase their number of speeches made by 17%. On the other hand, junior frontbench positions do not appear to have an effect on MPs' participation in parliamentary debate. This distinction between the two tiers of frontbench positions is expected since junior frontbench positions, such as PPS, and assistant whips, do not impose the responsibility of speaking on behalf of the government or their party during parliamentary debate, hence having no effect on the number of occasion that they speak.

Compared to Model 5, the most notable difference in Model 7 is that the magnitude of the coefficient for prior experience in the military and trade union increases and hence became statistically significant. The model estimated that each year of pre-parliamentary experience

in these two sectors would increase the overall number of speeches made during the last parliament by 3.3% and 4.1% respectively. As we discovered in Chapter Five, no MPs with these two kinds of pre-parliamentary experiences have ever been promoted to ministerial or shadow cabinet positions. Hence, without taking MPs' frontbench status into account, previous models have underestimated the positive effect of these two occupations on the making of speeches.

Model 8 added MPs' division rebel rate into the specification used in Model 7. As expected, MPs' rebelliousness is a significant contributing factor to speech-making. The model estimated that each percentage point increase in rebel rate increases the number of speeches made by the MP during the entire parliament by 5.33%. In comparison to Model 7, the coefficient for prior service in the military and failed candidacy for MPs decreases in magnitude and loses significance. This indicates that some of the positive effects on speech-making of these two types of pre-parliamentary experience could be attributed to MPs' tendency to rebel against their own party. As found in the last chapter, military experience is associated with an increased amount of rebellion. It was also found that ex-military officers are significantly more Eurosceptic compared to their fellow new Conservative MPs. It is therefore plausible to attribute the positive effect of military experience on speech-making found in Model 7 to their increased rebelliousness and Euroscepticism which led them to become more frequent contributors to parliamentary debates. On the other hand, the amount of prior experience in national party politics becomes statistically significant. It is estimated that each year of prior experience in national party politics is associated with 2.8% reduction in the overall number of speeches made by an individual MP. This is as anticipated by Hypothesis 7.5 which expects that MPs with experience in national party politics would

speak less due to increased access to party leaders or government ministers.

Model 9 is a panel model that estimates the number of speeches individual MPs made during each calendar year using random-effect Poisson model with standard deviation clustered at individual MP level. Only the years that an MP has spent on the backbench were included in the analysis in order to isolate the effect of being a backbencher on their participation in parliamentary debate. There are noticeable differences between the results of Models 8 and 9. Prior experience in national party politics and trade union lose their significance. On the other hand, there are several kinds of pre-parliamentary experience that have become significant with the use of a panel model and considering only the period where an MP was a backbencher, these include marketing and sales, social science research and membership of devolved assemblies or the European Parliament. The panel model estimates that prior experience in marketing and sales discourages new backbench MPs from making speeches, reducing the number of speeches they deliver on each year by 2.5%. On the other hand, just as Hypotheses 7.1 and 7.3 have anticipated, prior experience as a member of devolved assemblies or European Parliament as well as social science research is related to more frequent contribution to parliamentary debates, increasing the number of speeches new backbenchers made in each year by 3.4% and 4% respectively.

### **7.5.2 Party models**

Table 7.2 shows the results after applying the specifications found in Table 7.1 on new MPs from the two main parties separately.<sup>2</sup> Models 10 through 13 include only new Conservative

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<sup>2</sup>Only results applying Model 5,7,8 and 9 on MPs from the two parties are shown, results from the remaining models can be found in Appendix

MPs in the analysis. While the results of Conservative models are generally similar to what we have previously observed in the full models, there are also several notable differences. First, while the amount of experience in the legal profession has been shown to be a significant and positive predictor of MPs' speech count across all the models in Table 7.2, it loses significance in the Conservative Models 12 and 13 after MPs' frontbench status and tendency to rebel is taken into account. We have shown in previous chapters that experience in the legal profession is associated with an increased possibility of becoming government ministers, and a tendency to rebel among new Conservative MPs. These results suggest that the effect of legal experience on promotion prospects and rebelliousness are a better explanation for the higher speech count among new Conservative MPs with legal experience. Secondly, while contrary to the expectations from Hypotheses 7.2 and 7.4, prior experience in mass media has no observable significant effect on MPs' speech count in the full models, Models 12 and 13 have shown that among the new Conservative cohort, experience in mass media is a significant factor that discourages MPs from making speeches during parliamentary debates. The two models estimated that each year of pre-parliamentary experience in mass media would reduce MPs' speech count by 3.5% and 2.7%. Lastly, while in-constituency local government experience and number of previous failed contests for Westminster seats have been shown to have no significance among full models, when professional experience and other intervening variables are introduced to the specifications, they have been shown to be a consistently significant factor that affects MPs' speech count across all the Conservative Models.

We now turn our attention to the Labour models. As usual, given the small size of the new Labour cohort ( $n=63$ ), all the results should be interpreted with a pinch of salt. It should first

Table 7.2 Negative binomial models for the number of speeches MPs made (incident rate ratios)(party models)

	Conservative				Labour			
	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13) Panel*	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17) Panel*
Business Owner	1.004(.008)	1.006(.008)	1.006(.008)	1.008(.008)	1.019(.031)	1.028(.03)	1.025(.03)	1.03(.031)
Military Officers	1.025(.021)	1.042(.021)**	1.036(.021)*	1.025(.013)**				
Agriculture	1.006(.016)	1.001(.015)	1.004(.015)	1.008(.008)				
Science & Tech	1.006(.024)	1.008(.023)	1.01(.023)	1.01(.02)	1.09(.09)	1.065(.083)	1.062(.082)	.955(.165)
Marketing & Sales	.983(.013)	.978(.012)*	.979(.012)*	.968(.012)***	.792(.216)	.887(.232)	.879(.226)	4.39(1.534)***
Finance	1.008(.011)	1.007(.011)	1.002(.011)	1.009(.015)	.965(.027)	.957(.025)*	.958(.025)	.987(.048)
NGOs	1.001(.051)	.972(.047)	.979(.047)	.968(.031)	1.081(.035)**	1.116(.038)***	1.114(.038)***	1.101(.058)*
Trade Unions					1.074(.031)**	1.109(.034)***	1.107(.033)***	1.121(.058)**
Social Services					1.004(.015)	1.007(.014)	1.002(.015)	.994(.011)
Lawyer	1.019(.01)**	1.016(.009)*	1.014(.009)	1.01(.012)	1.034(.016)**	1.04(.016)**	1.04(.016)**	1.048(.016)***
Teacher	1.025(.025)	1.015(.022)	1.013(.022)	1.011(.012)	.999(.013)	1(.012)	.999(.012)	1.002(.013)
Public Relation	.987(.012)	.988(.012)	.991(.012)	.987(.011)	1.099(.074)	1.088(.069)	1.082(.068)	1.017(.053)
Media	.992(.021)	.974(.02)	.965(.02)*	.973(.012)**	.953(.031)	.924(.032)**	.928(.032)**	.457(.072)***
Soc-Sci Research	1.012(.027)	1.024(.026)	1.022(.025)	1.043(.024)*	.993(.034)	1.025(.036)	1.023(.036)	1.01(.072)
Political Worker	1.015(.03)	1.017(.029)	1.018(.029)	1.028(.029)	1.003(.03)	1.012(.029)	1.01(.029)	1.05(.05)
FT Governmental	1.023(.025)	1.022(.023)	1.025(.023)	1.021(.018)	.976(.026)	.974(.025)	.971(.025)	.981(.029)
Ministerial/MPs Advisor	1.044(.059)	1.035(.057)	1.042(.023)	1.034(.055)	1.012(.054)	.976(.056)	.973(.055)	1.047(.101)
Local Government(same const)	.965(.015)**	.965(.014)**	.965(.014)**	.955(.014)***	1.016(.021)	1.016(.02)	1.016(.02)	1.015(.023)
Local Government(diff const)	.992(.017)	.988(.017)	.992(.017)	.986(.023)	.99(.033)	.991(.032)	.993(.032)	.984(.03)
National Party	.993(.037)	.956(.024)	.985(.024)	.986(.023)	.948(.024)**	.922(.025)***	.923(.025)***	.93(.047)
MP Candidacies	1.157(.067)**	1.16(.065)***	.114(.064)**	1.11(.059)**	1.049(.143)	.942(.124)	.931(.121)	.556(.067)***
Devolved Assembly/MEP	.998(.037)	1.012(.036)	1.012(.036)	1.011(.022)	.994(.035)	.966(.035)	.974(.036)	1.005(.032)
Majority(2010)	1.001(.006)	.995(.006)	.996(.005)	1.002(.005)	.989(.005)**	.993(.005)	.993(.005)	.989(.005)**
Female	.894(.107)	.843(.097)	.868(.099)	.837(.116)	.954(.154)	.941(.147)	.962(.151)	1.04(.29)
Age	1.002(.008)	1.005(.008)	1.004(.008)	1.007(.009)	.991(.009)	.992(.009)	.993(.008)	.991(.009)
Ethnic Minority	1.005(.216)	.974(.2)	1.002(.202)	.953(.194)	.912(.196)	.776(.166)	.781(.164)	1.283(.454)
Rebel Rate			1.053(.025)**	1.014(.015)			1.171(.184)	.986(.029)
Junior Frontbench (# of years)		1.018(.039)	1.042(.041)			1.019(.039)	1.023(.039)	
Senior Frontbench (# of years)		1.251(.073)***	1.276(.074)***			1.256(.113)**	1.271(.115)***	
Pseudo R-sq	.014	.022	.025	-3410.63*	.029	.036	.37	-1039.214*
N	146	146	146	545	63	63	63	168

Note: \* p&lt;.1, \*\*p&lt;.05, \*\*\* p&lt;.01, SE in parentheses, \*Reported as log likelihood, \*include year fixed effect, coefficient not shown

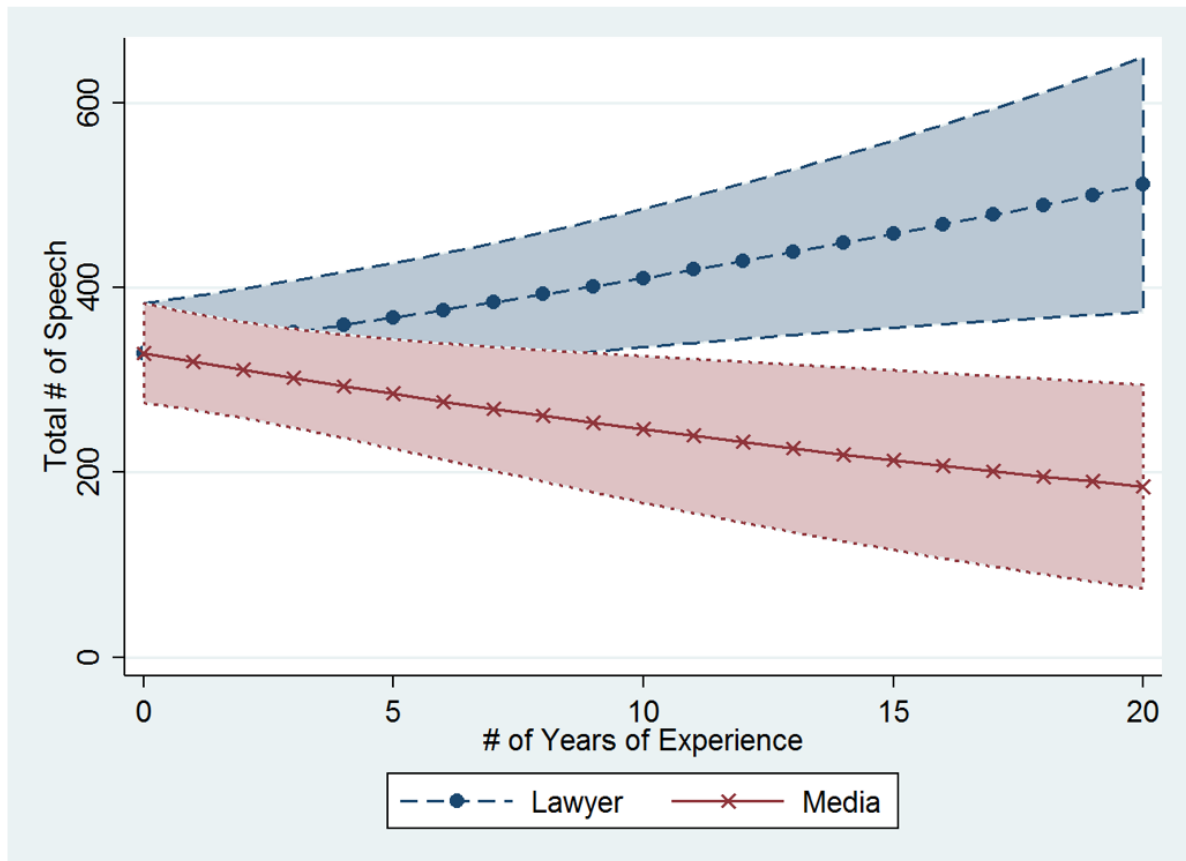


be noted that there are several similarities between the Labour models and the full and Conservative models. Again, experience in the legal profession is found to be a significant and positive predictor on MPs' speech count. The positive effect of legal experience is also more consistently significant with Labour MPs when compared to the Conservatives', as the coefficient remains significant after the introduction of MPs' frontbench status and rebel rate into the model. Also similar to the Conservative Models, prior experience in mass media is found to be a significant factor that leads to MPs making fewer speeches during parliamentary debate, as the coefficient for the profession is consistently significant and negative after the issues of frontbench promotion and rebelliousness are controlled for. As found in the full models, prior experience as a trade unionist appears to encourage Labour MPs to be more active speakers during parliamentary debates. Moreover, resembling the result found in the full models but unlike those observed among the Conservative, pre-parliamentary national party political experience is found to be a significant factor that is associated with lower speech count among new Labour MPs. Despite these similarities there are also stark differences between the Labour models and the others. Former career as NGO worker was found to be associated with higher speech count, which was not observed in any of the previous models, while the negative effect of in-constituency local government experience on participation in parliamentary debate does not appear to be present among Labour MPs.

### ***7.5.3 Predicted number of speeches***

With all these findings, how does diverging pre-parliamentary career among MPs affect the real number of speeches that MPs delivered during the last parliament? Figure 7.1 shows how the predicted number of speeches an MP would deliver throughout their first term varies with the number of years of experience as lawyers and media. The numbers shown in this figure

Figure 7.1 Amount of experience in Legal profession and media and the predicted number of speeches



are predicted from Model 8. The baseline used in the prediction is a white, male Conservative MP at the mean age of the cohort, elected on a majority at mean, who rebels at a mean rate, has never served on the frontbench and has no other pre-parliamentary experience, professional or political, except for the one indicated. At year 0, or in other words the baseline of study, it is predicted that an MP would make 329 speeches during their entire first term in Westminster. However, as the number of years of pre-parliamentary experience as lawyer or in media increase, the speech count begins to diverge. It is estimated that every year of experience as lawyer would increase the total speech count by 2.2% while each year of experience in media would decrease the total speech count by 2.9%. The divergence in speech count among MPs working in these two sectors becomes significant at 90% confidence when the amount of experience reaches ten years. After twenty years pre-parliamentary career in these two professions, the model estimates that those who have been a lawyer would deliver

511 speeches during their first term while those who worked in media would only speak 185 times during parliamentary debates.

## **7.6 Discussion**

Taking the results from all models into consideration, the evidence partially supports all five hypotheses on how various kinds of pre-parliamentary careers affect MPs' tendency to speak during parliamentary debates. The most notable result is that pre-parliamentary experience in the legal profession is consistently shown to be a significant factor that contributes to increased speech count among new MPs across multiple specifications. This indicates that the relationship between MPs' prior experience as lawyer and frequent contribution during parliamentary debates is robust. The models estimate that the percentage effect of experience in the legal profession on MPs' total speech count is between 2.8% to 2.2% per year of experience, depending on the specification of the model. Further investigation from party models suggests that this positive effect of legal experience on speech-making is more apparent among the Labour cohort, while increased rebelliousness and the prospect of promotion to ministerial rank appears to be a better explanation for this phenomena within the Conservative cohort. These results are consistent with the expectation from Hypothesis 7.2

However, as previously stated, the legal profession is the only occupation among those hypothesized as enhancing individuals' communication skills to have a significant and positive effect on MPs' speech count. Coefficients for prior experience in education, public relation and mass media have no significant positive impact on the number of speeches MPs delivered. In fact, the party models from both main parties have shown that previous careers in media

inhibit MPs participation in debates. This indicates that while legal experience undoubtedly encourages MPs to be active speakers during parliamentary debates and increases the number of speeches they made, it is plausible that this phenomena is not caused by better communication skills among ex-lawyers, but by other features of legal profession as an occupation. For example, their thorough knowledge of the law makes it easier to speak about specific detail of legislative bills and amendment. Hence, while it is safe to say that pre-parliamentary experience in the legal profession does indeed encourage more frequent speaking in debates, the real cause behind this tendency merits further investigation.

Similarly, as expected by Hypothesis 7.5, prior experience in national party politics has also been shown as a contributing factor to a decrease in speech count across multiple models. Results of the full models suggest that prior experience in national politics do have an overall discouraging effect on speech-making among new MPs from all major parties. Although the amount of prior experience in national party politics is only significant once both intervening variable is included in the specification in Model 8, and only moderately significant in that case (significant at 0.1 level), Models 4 and 6 have shown Party Animals among the cohort of new MPs are delivering significantly less speeches during parliamentary debates. Judging from these results, it is safe to say that while the amount of experience in national party is, at the very best, a moderately significant factor that kept MPs from speaking during parliamentary debates, results from Models 4 and 6 show that those who gain entrance to parliament through the national politics route are less involved in parliamentary debates as shown from their low speech count, which is consistent with the expectation from Hypothesis 7.5. However, party models from Table 7.2 shows that, contrary to what Hypothesis 7.5 have

expected, the amount of prior experience in national politics is a significant inhibitor of speech-making only among Labour MPs, but not among Conservatives, although the coefficients in the latter models are of the expected sign. It would appear that the negative effect of prior national political experience on speech making is more apparent among Labour MPs even though signaling individual position or dissent ought to be more of a concern among the governing Conservatives.

In comparison, empirical support for Hypotheses 7.1 and 7.3 is more questionable. Among the full models, none of the coefficients corresponding to the respective variables for the two hypotheses achieve statistical significance in any of the models that use aggregated speech count of the entire parliament as the dependent variable, although they are generally with the same sign as predicted. It is only in the panel model when we measure MPs speech count by year and only taking their time on the backbench into consideration that MPs' pre-parliamentary legislative and social science research experience becomes a significant factor that is associated with increased number of speeches made. Party Models in Table 7.2 shows a similar story, that prior experience in social science research is only significant among the governing Conservative in the panel model and former membership of devolved assemblies or European Parliament does not affect MPs speech count among the new cohort of either main parties. These results indicate that while Hypotheses 7.1 and 7.3 are plausible and show some promise, that prior experience as parliamentarian or policy researcher might indeed facilitate MPs' participation in parliamentary debates and delivery of speeches, more evidence would be needed in order to reach a definitive conclusion on the validity of these hypotheses.

Lastly, the analysis does provide some results that are consistent with Hypothesis 7.4. Although in none of the full models shown in Table 7.1 was mass media experience a significant factor that affected MPs' speech count in parliamentary debates, the sign of the coefficient was consistently negative, which is exactly what Hypothesis 7.4 have expected. The p-value in some of the model is also small and borderlining significance ( $p = .0109$  in Model 8). Furthermore, as shown in Table 7.2, pre-parliamentary experience in mass media do have significant and negative impact on intra-party difference in MPs speech count within both Conservative and Labour cohort, especially when MPs frontbench status is taken into account. These results suggest that prior experience in media is a plausible factor that diverts MPs' attention away from making speeches in debates, especially when MPs are serving on the backbench.

There are also some significant results that were not expected by any of the hypotheses. Most notably, in-constituency local government experience was found to be a significant variable that decreases MPs' speech count among new MPs across three major parties. Further investigation on party models in Table 7.2 indicated that in-constituency local government experience is only significant among new Conservative MPs' speech count, while new Labour MPs' participation in parliamentary debate do not appear to be affected by their in-constituency local experience at all. This last finding is particularly intriguing since the coefficient for out-of-constituency local government experience has no effect on speech count whatsoever. This indicates it is constituency specific experience that is making Conservative MPs speak less during parliamentary debates. One explanation as to why constituency specific experience discourages MPs' debate participation and why this effect is confined to Conservative MPs could be the difference on the focus of speeches among MPs from different

parties. Killermann and Proksch (2013) have found that speeches from government MPs are more focused on constituency specific issues while opposition MPs' speeches emphasize party competition. They suggested that this discrepancy in the focus of speeches is due to governing parties' ability to control the legislative agenda in a parliamentary system, which allows government backbenchers to pay more attention to the concerns of their district during parliamentary debates. When an MP have prior experience in local government within their current constituency, it is likely that they are better connected with their community and electorate, which makes the need for cultivation of personal votes through constituency service comparatively lower, which in turn decreases their incentives to speak during parliamentary debates.

Beside local experience, prior career in the military, NGOs and trade union have also been found to enhance MPs' participation in parliamentary debates, especially in the party models. A plausible explanation of this phenomenon could be the particular focus on issues and policy that is related to interest in these sector. Defense and welfare spending cuts have been some of the most contentious policy foci of the last parliament. These are subjects that highly relate to the interest and experience of people working in the aforementioned sectors. Moreover, the issue of UK's relationship with Europe has also become a priority once the Conservatives were back in government. As shown in the last chapter, ex-military personnel among new Conservative MPs are especially Eurosceptic in parliamentary divisions. Hence, a likely explanation for the increased speech count among MPs who worked as military, NGOs or trade union officers is the agenda and set of policies that have been dealt with by this particular parliament that has led to MPs with related expertise contributing more during debates.

## 7.7 Conclusion

The aim of this chapter has been to observe if diverging patterns of MPs' pre-parliamentary careers have any impact on their role and performance as a parliamentarian. The overarching hypothesis of this chapter, and indeed the entire dissertation, was that MPs with diverging pre-parliamentary careers would bring with them different sets of skills, knowledge and experience, which would in turn affect the costs and benefits of various legislative roles and activities which then lead to diverging patterns of legislative behaviour in accordance with their prior career. Using MPs' participation in parliamentary debates and speech-making as an example, the results clearly show that MPs' professional and political experiences prior to their entering parliament do play a significant role in determining the effort they devote to debates and speech-making. The effect of a particular kind of professional and political experience on MPs' speeches is also mostly as expected and consistent with the hypotheses. Prior experience in the legal profession was found to be a significant factor associated with more speeches by MPs. Similarly a positive effect on speech-making has also been found with regards to previous experience as military officers, trade unionists and social science researchers, although these later results are less robust. On the other hand, a pre-parliamentary career in the mass media and national party politics appears to discourage MPs from speaking during parliamentary debates.

Despite these results that confirm the importance of pre-parliamentary career and MPs' participation in parliamentary debate, there are several issues that merit further investigation. While the effect of some occupations are consistent with the hypotheses, more effort is required to understand the precise causal mechanisms that connect experience from a specific career and MPs' decisions to concentrate on or refrain from making speeches. For



example - what is it about professional legal expertise that encourages MPs to speak more often? Is it really superior communication skills as suggested by some of the literature? Are there some other features of the legal profession that makes MPs with this background more frequent participants in parliamentary debates?

Also, we have thus far only considered the quantity of MPs' participation during debates, yet the quality of their contribution might arguably be more of a concern toward the effectiveness and representativeness of individual MPs as well as the parliament as a whole. A single well-delivered speech from a seasoned orator could arguably have more impact on policy outcomes or public opinion than a series of speeches by an amateur speaker. The quality of MPs' contributions during parliamentary debates might arguably be an even more appropriate measure of their communication skills or knowledge on policies than the number of speeches that they made. Recent development in text analysis to Parliamentary records might yield results that could further our understanding on how MPs' pre-parliamentary affect not only the quantity, but also the quality of their contribution during parliamentary debates.

Lastly, this chapter has only touched upon a single aspect of MPs' activities. While parliamentary debates and speech-making is arguably of vital importance to the parliament and our political process and is one of the most iconic and well-known functions of MPs, it is nevertheless only one aspect of their responsibilities. A survey conducted by the Hansard Society among sitting MPs has found that over half of the respondent estimate that they spend less than five hours in the chamber every week (Hansard Society 2001). If we are to broaden our attention to the entirety of an MPs' duties, It is intriguing how varying attention paid to speech-making among MPs with different pre-parliamentary experience translate into

different level of dedication and effort spent on other areas of their responsibilities. Indeed, how do MPs divide their time between various legislative activities in general - does the higher speech count among ex-lawyers reduce the presence of their expertise in bills committee? Are Local Heroes less involved in debates because they spend more time in their constituency? Moreover, if skills and knowledge earned during pre-parliamentary career affect their ability to deliver speeches and hence the number of speeches that they made, other expertise that they earn could also have an impact on different areas of a parliamentarian's life - do MPs who have worked in mass media appear more frequently on television or newspaper? Do MPs who have worked as policy researchers spend more time on a select committee? The implications of my findings here are therefore potentially enormous as they mean not only do pre-parliamentary careers affect MPs' dedication to the making of speeches, but they may also translates into distinct patterns of behaviour that pay different levels of attention to the various tasks of being an MP. In the end, the occupational composition of the House as a whole could arguably affect the functioning and efficiency of the parliament as an institution.

## 314

31

Table 7.4 Negative binomial models for the number of speeches MPs made (incident rate ratios) (Labour only)

	(1) Baseline	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9) Panel *
Business Owner		1.013(.026)			1.019(.031)	1.014(.027)	1.028(.03)	1.025(.03)	1.03(.031)
Military Officers									
Agriculture									
Science & Tech		1.102(.087)			1.09(.09)	1.095(.091)	1.065(.083)	1.062(.082)	.955(.165)
Marketing & Sales		.847(.212)			.792(.216)	.824(.225)	.887(.232)	.879(.226)	4.39(1.534)***
Finance		.987(.025)			.965(.027)	.985(.3)	.957(.025)*	.958(.025)	.987(.048)
NGOs		1.038(.031)			1.081(.035)**	1.049(.035)	1.116(.038)***	1.114(.038)***	1.101(.058)*
Trade Unions		1.016(.016)			1.074(.031)**	1.022(.017)	1.109(.034)***	1.107(.033)***	1.121(.058)**
Social Services		1.007(.015)			1.004(.015)	1.009(.015)	1.007(.014)	1.002(.015)	.994(.011)
Lawyer		1.036(.016)**			1.034(.016)**	1.035(.016)**	1.04(.016)**	1.04(.016)**	1.048(.016)***
Teacher		1.003(.013)			.999(.013)	1.004(.014)	1(.012)	.999(.012)	1.002(.013)
Public Relation		1.098(.074)			1.099(.074)	1.108(.081)	1.088(.069)	1.082(.068)	1.017(.053)
Media		.959(.032)			.953(.031)	.957(.034)	.924(.032)**	.928(.032)**	.457(.072)***
Soc-Sci Research		.97(.031)			.993(.034)	.974(.032)	1.025(.036)	1.023(.036)	1.01(.072)
Political Worker		.996(.029)			1.003(.03)	.998(.03)	1.012(.029)	1.01(.029)	1.05(.05)
FT Governmental		.992(.0018)			.976(.026)	.99(.2)	.974(.025)	.971(.025)	.981(.029)
Ministerial/MPs Advisor		.962(.049)			1.012(.054)	.979(.054)	.976(.056)	.973(.055)	1.047(.101)
Local Government(same const)			.997(.013)		1.016(.021)		1.016(.02)	1.016(.02)	1.015(.023)
Local Government(diff const)			.991(.028)		.99(.033)		.991(.032)	.993(.032)	.984(.03)
National Party			.991(.012)		.948(.024)**		.922(.025)***	.923(.025)***	.93(.047)
MP Candidacies			.973(.134)		1.049(.143)		.942(.124)	.931(.121)	.556(.067)***
Devolved Assembly/MEP			.998(.035)		.994(.035)		.966(.035)	.974(.036)	1.005(.032)
Career Changers*				1.139(.22)		1.166(.273)			
Local Heroes*				1.031(.213)		1.219(.345)			
Carpet Baggers*				.986(.169)		1.056(.543)			
Majority(2010)	.991(.005)*	.99(.005)*	.99(.005)**	.99(.005)**	.989(.005)**	.99(.005)*	.993(.005)	.993(.005)	.989(.005)**
Female	1.008(.132)	.98(.156)	1.004(.136)	1.007(.137)	.954(.154)	1.006(.164)	.941(.147)	.962(.151)	1.04(.29)
Age	1.006(.006)	.995(.009)	1.007(.007)	1.006(.007)	.991(.009)	.992(.01)	.992(.009)	.993(.008)	.991(.009)
Ethnic Minority	1.013(.201)	.832(.177)	1.005(.2)	1.012(.201)	.912(.196)	.867(.191)	.776(.166)	.781(.164)	1.283(.454)
Rebel Rate								1.171(.184)	.986(.029)
Junior Frontbench (# of years)							1.019(.039)	1.023(.039)	
Senior Frontbench (# of years)							1.256(.113)**	1.271(.115)***	
Pseudo R-sq	.005	.022	.006	.006	.029	.023	.036	.37	-1039.214 *
N	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	168

Notes: \* p&lt;.1, \*\*p&lt;.05, \*\*\* p&lt;.01, SE in parentheses \*Party Animals as baseline category, \*Reported as log likelihood, \*include year fixed effect, coefficient not shown

## **Conclusion**

Throughout this thesis I have tried to demonstrate two things. First, I have aimed to demonstrate that MPs' pre-parliamentary careers matter. Their careers matter in the political route MPs followed into parliament. Their careers matter in the allocation of safe seats to prospective MPs. Their careers matter in the appointment of frontbenchers and ministers. Their careers matter in the voting behaviour of MPs in divisions. Finally, their careers matter in their tendency to speak during parliamentary debates. These findings further our understanding of what 'quality' and 'performance' of representatives mean, as well as the definition, process and implication of professionalization in politics. I hope this thesis shows my own take on how MPs' pre-parliamentary careers can and ought to be conceptualized, operationalized and studied. I have identified two dimension of MPs' pre-parliamentary careers - professional and political. I have further shown that these two dimensions of pre-parliamentary career exert independent and distinct effects on MPs political trajectory and behaviour in parliament. By highlighting the shortcomings of existing research and by presenting a new approach I hope to have indicated and enabled a new direction for future research on the prior experience of political leaders and how this affects political career and performance.

### **Quality of representatives**

As predicted by my hypotheses, diverging pre-parliamentary careers among MPs do relate to their different political fortunes and behavioural patterns in parliament. Chapter Five showed that MPs' professional credentials that may enhance individuals' ability to discharge their

functions as frontbenchers, government ministers or shadow cabinet members, such as former media personnel, are more likely to be appointed to such positions. Chapter Six demonstrated how new MPs with different professional and political backgrounds differ in their voting behaviour during divisions. MPs' prior experience does have empirical relation to their general tendency of rebellion toward their own party, as well as the level of Euroscepticism among new Conservative MPs. In Chapter Seven, I demonstrated that MPs' prior experience is associated with the number of times that they speak during parliamentary debates. Moreover, I have shown that these relationships between pre-parliamentary careers and speech counts could be explained by MPs' amount of experience in occupations that facilitate skills, knowledge and connections that either make parliamentary speech a more attractive or less necessary course of action for the individual, such as experiences in legal profession and mass media.

Nevertheless, whether these findings signify that MPs' who have certain professional or political backgrounds perform better or are of better quality than those who do not is subject to interpretation. I recognize that the dependent variables used in the empirical analysis of this thesis – electoral security, probability of frontbench promotion, division rebelliousness both in general as well as on a particular subject, and tendency to speak - are not equivalent to what we understand as 'performance' and 'quality' of representatives *per se*. Those promoted to the frontbench are not necessary better ministers than backbenchers. It is impossible to determine the quality and performance of an MP's decision making via their voting pattern. It is not clear if an MP who speaks more often in debate is a better speaker or has made a larger contribution to the discussion, or is simply more talkative or longwinded.

As I have suggested at the beginning of this thesis, one of the key obstacles in understanding performance and quality of representatives lies in the multidimensional nature of these concepts when applied to the context of elected legislators. Furthermore, to definitively determine if an MP genuinely performs better or is of better quality, we cannot merely rely on quantitative measures of their behaviour, but also the qualitative side of their work. For example, to what extent can individual ministers deliver public goods and policy changes and at what cost and timeframe? How do MPs arrive at their voting decision and to what extent is that informed by their pre-parliamentary experiences? To what extent does an MP's speech contribute to the public debate or affect government policies? These might be more relevant measures of the genuine performance and quality of elected representatives.

However, I believe that while findings from this analysis fall somewhere short of determining MPs' performance and quality in accordance to their pre-parliamentary careers, they do provide some clues and signals for future research. First of all, how pre-parliamentary careers relate to MPs' probability of earning nomination and promotion, their voting behaviour and their participation in debates are all meaningful findings. Secondly, the results from Chapters Four and Five indicate at the very least how 'quality' of parliamentary candidates and frontbenchers is conceptualized among recruiters and selectors of the respective positions. They are of course not infallible, and their conception of 'quality' and 'performance' may be very different from what we mean with those words, but we should bear in mind that these are people that are familiar with the demands and requirements of those positions and it is unlikely that they would appoint people who are utterly incapable in those capacities. Moreover, as some of the existing literature and I have repeatedly argued in this thesis, MPs

## Conclusion

themselves might be in a better position to judge on their own capability and comparative advantages. These judgements ought to be reflected in how they choose their own role and priority among various aspects of their responsibilities in parliament. It would be rather extraordinary for an individual with the tendency of stage fright to spend a lot of time in the chamber making speeches, they may instead prefer a more low-key approach of politics and their time might be better spent in committee rooms or the corridors of the Palace of Westminster. The fact is that MPs' pre-parliamentary occupations may affect their voting pattern on particular issues. While this may not be definitive proof, nevertheless it is a signal that MPs' pre-parliamentary experience may serve to shape and inform their voting decision in divisions.

All in all, barring further studies in the conceptualization and measurement of MPs' quality and performance, it is difficult to determine definitively if MPs' pre-parliamentary career determine their quality and performance as an elected representative. However, findings from this thesis are exploratory, it provide both the tools to answer those questions in the form of the theory and method in conceptualizing MPs' pre-parliamentary careers; it shows that MPs' patterns of behaviour do vary depending on their pre-parliamentary career, and it provides some clues and indications to the kinds of questions scholars ought to look at in future research with regards to the quality of representatives.



### **Professionalization of politics**

As I have suggested in the first chapter, existing research falls short in terms of understanding the definitions, causes and implications of professionalization of politics. Results given in this thesis have shed further light on these issues and further our understanding on professionalization of politics. Chapters Three, Four and Five have confirmed some of the argument found in existing literature with regards to professionalization. Chapter Three has reconciled literatures that defined professionalization in terms either professional or political aspect of MPs' pre-parliamentary careers. Confirming my notion that professional and political dimension of MPs' pre-parliamentary careers are conceptually distinct yet empirically related; the results have shown that experience in certain professional occupations are indeed associated with the amount and nature of MPs' pre-parliamentary political engagement.

Chapters Four and Five have indicated how MPs' pre-parliamentary careers, both professional and political, have affected their career trajectory into and within parliament. Chapter Four further confirms the notion that applicants for parliamentary candidacy with political experience, especially at the national level, are favoured by either the institution or the selectors, resulting in them representing safer constituencies. Chapter Five shows that MPs with the political connection at the national level are indeed privileged in the process of frontbench and ministerial appointment. However, it also indicates that not all 'political insiders' are equally privileged, since those with professional experience that might promote performance and competence in ministerial office are more likely to be promoted even after their political experience is taken into consideration. Together with findings from Chapters

## Conclusion

Six and Seven with regards to how MPs' pre-parliamentary career affect their behaviour, especially among some of the occupations that have been described by some of the literature as 'political related', they further strengthen the argument that the increasing number of 'professional politicians' being selected to run and elected to parliament could be explained by the fact that these are more capable individuals in terms of holding executive offices or participating in parliamentary deliberations. Professionalization is not necessary a process where the incestuous tendency among the political elite leads to bias against outsiders. Instead, it might be because those possessing the knowhow and ability to perform effectively as executive member of government or representatives are usually found among the ranks that have been deemed as 'political professional'.

These findings lead to some interesting implications. Firstly, is professionalization necessary a concern that needed to be addressed? In other words, is it really desirable to introduce more 'amateurs' into parliament? If those who worked in 'politically related' occupations are indeed more effective ministers, more participatory in parliamentary deliberation and utilizing their knowledge and expertise in deciding their votes in divisions when compared with 'amateurs', then would increasing representation of the latter in fact hamper the effectiveness of the parliament as an institution? Alternatively, as shown by the results, the dominance of 'politics professional' in the executive and parliamentary deliberation is at least partially due to their superior capability in performing those functions given their extensive experience in related positions. Then, instead of increasing the numerical representation of 'amateurs', an alternative is to boost their capability and readiness by enhancing training and induction programs given to prospective applicants and candidates by a party, as well as those

offered to newly elected to Westminster. By bridging the gap of skills and knowledge between 'professionals' and 'amateurs', these measures may, to some extent, level the playing field between the two and enhance the substantive representation by the latter.

### **Other novel findings**

Besides the effect of MPs pre-parliamentary careers on the performance of MPs and further focus on the issue of professionalization of politics, there are nevertheless some findings in this thesis that while not entirely relevant to the main research questions are nevertheless worth reiterating.

In Chapter Four, I have noted that there are signs indicating female and ethnic minority MPs are representing constituencies with higher electoral security. The lack of longitudinal comparison means however that it is impossible to contribute that to recent changes and reform in the nomination process of the major parties. These results at the very least indicate that the present system does seem to favour female and minority MPs in the sense that they are getting the nomination from safer seats, which may boost the longevity of their parliamentary careers.

In Chapter Five, we have found that backbench rebel rate is a significant explanatory variable on MPs probability of being promoted to the frontbench. While this is by no means a new findings and there have been numerous research papers on the subject, I have noticed that this effect appears to be confined to new Conservative MPs as backbench rebel rate is only a

## Conclusion

significant independent variable in Conservative models, not the full models nor Labour models. Given the limitations of cohort study, I am unable to deduce if this is a government effect or a Conservative effect. However, a plausible explanation to this phenomenon would be that since Labour in opposition use ballots among MPs to select members of shadow cabinet during part of the period, this means that loyalty to the leadership is less of a concern in the choosing of shadow cabinet members while the process of appointing frontbench members is largely dictated by the party leadership for the governing Conservative, which ought to take loyalty to the party in division lobbies a major factor when considering promotion, resulting in the pattern observed.

## The way forward

In the end, I believe that my conceptual and methodological frameworks could lay a solid foundation for further research on the impact of political leaders' pre-office careers, as well as the causes of changing occupational composition of parliament not only in Britain, but across countries. As I have noted previously, while there are benefits in strengthening the internal validity of the findings, the use of a cohort study hampers the external validity of the results, as we have no way of discerning any specificity that is confined to this parliament or this cohort of MP. Hence, the most straightforward way to proceed with this research is to expand the scope of the database to encompass firstly all MPs of the 2010-2015 parliament, and then to other parliaments in the past. Not only would the external validity be tested and strengthened, but also this could open the door for longitudinal study on the causes of changing occupational composition of parliament and its consequences on the functioning of parliament as a whole. For example, when exactly did ex-media personnel became an

increasing cabal within the parliament? Did that precede to the increased media scrutiny of parliament and mediation of politics? Or, was the former a response to the latter?

Alternatively, besides expanding the database, the information already collected could be used to analyse aspect of MPs' tasks and responsibilities that have not been studied. As noted in the first section of this concluding chapter, one of the pitfalls of the findings is that they only dealt with the quantitative measures of their career prospects and performance. More qualitative measures of their participation and contribution could improve the inference with regards to the quality of MPs. Applying the database to more substantive measure on the quality of their speeches or performance as ministers may provide further insight on the subject. Moreover, when I was planning for this thesis I envisioned expanding the study to several areas of MPs' responsibilities beyond those explored here, which sadly have to be abandoned due to the problem of length. How often do individual MPs appear in newspapers and media? And to what extent was that a function of their experience in media or expertise in communication? How much effort do they spend in constituency work? Are local heroes more active in their constituencies because of their local roots? Or would they spend less time with their constituents because they are already well established locally and have nothing further to gain? How does prior experience affect their participation in select and bills committees? These are some of the other area of MPs' responsibility that merit further enquiries.

Besides testing new dependent variables, there are also more complex causal relations that were considered during the course of researching for this thesis, but abandoned due to

practical considerations. For example, most of the statistical models used in this thesis assume that the benefits from pre-parliamentary experiences are linear. However, it has been noted in the literature review that the relationship between accumulation of experience and effect on performance may be non-linear. As the amount of experience increase, the marginal benefit from further accumulation of experience may decrease. It is possible that beyond a certain point, one may have learnt everything one may learn on the job and further experience does not bring any tangible benefit. This research has also refrained from exploring how professional and political pre-parliamentary careers interact with each other in terms of their effect on MPs behaviour. While the statistic models have successfully discerned the effect between the two dimensions of pre-parliamentary careers, I have not tried to establish how they interact with each other. Lastly, in the first and second chapters, I have touched upon the issue of parliamentary socialization and how MPs may learn the ropes of being an MP as their tenure increase. I have suggested two hypotheses regarding how parliamentary socialization may affect the impact of MPs' pre-parliamentary careers. On one hand, socialization may cause MPs' behaviour to converge as parliamentary experience increases. However, it is also possible that diverging patterns of behaviour due to different pre-parliamentary experiences in the formative years of MPs' parliamentary tenure may lead to accumulation of different experiences in parliament, further entrenching any initial behavioural differences. These issues all merit further investigation, yet given the limitation of the dataset and time, these are some of the paths that have appeared on the horizon but not travelled during the research for this thesis.

## Conclusion

In the end, I envision this thesis as an exploratory research that may lead to a new type of research on the prior careers of political office holders and how these affect politicians' competence and aptitude. With the conceptual and methodological framework I have proposed in this thesis, I believe I have laid a solid foundation for future research on the subject, both for the UK and other democratic parliaments.

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