

Citation: Shadmanfar, M. H., Tavallaei, R., & Rezaei, A. (2026). Knowledge Management Support Policies and Practices for Policymaking in the Islamic Consultative Assembly. *Digital Transformation and Administration Innovation*, 4(6), 1-18.

Received date: 2026-03-25

Revised date: 2026-07-03

Accepted date: 2026-07-10

Initial published date: 2026-07-15

Final published date: 2026-11-01



Knowledge Management Support Policies and Practices for Policymaking in the Islamic Consultative Assembly

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Abstract

In parliamentary settings, the quality of policymaking depends on the extent to which accumulated knowledge, evidence, and experience are accessible and effectively utilized. Despite the importance of this issue, there is no comprehensive understanding of the knowledge management support policies and practices employed in the policymaking process of the Islamic Consultative Assembly of Iran. Accordingly, the present study aimed to identify the policies and practices through which knowledge management supports policymaking in the Islamic Consultative Assembly of Iran. This applied study adopted a qualitative approach and was conducted using Glaserian grounded theory. Data were collected through 27 semi-structured interviews with current and former members of parliament, experts from the Islamic Parliament Research Center, parliamentary committee experts, parliamentary staff, and university faculty members. The data were analyzed through constant comparison, open coding, and theoretical coding. The findings indicated that knowledge management support for policymaking requires the establishment of policies and practices in the areas of knowledge governance, policy memory, enhancement of knowledge trustworthiness, knowledge translation and packaging, expert networking, integration of knowledge resources, and institutional learning. The results suggest that the principal challenge facing the parliament is not a shortage of information, but rather the absence of institutional mechanisms for transforming fragmented knowledge into knowledge that can be used in decision-making.

Keywords: knowledge management, policymaking, Islamic Consultative Assembly, knowledge governance, policy memory, grounded theory

1. Introduction

Parliamentary policymaking is a knowledge-intensive process in which legislators must interpret complex public problems, assess competing policy alternatives, anticipate distributive and institutional consequences, and make binding decisions under conditions of uncertainty, political contestation, and severe time constraints. Unlike routine administrative decisions, parliamentary decisions often concern multidimensional issues whose causes, affected populations, implementation requirements, and long-term consequences cannot be fully understood through a single source of information. The quality of legislation therefore depends not merely on the availability of data, but on the capacity of the parliamentary system to acquire, organize, evaluate, integrate, communicate, retain, and apply heterogeneous forms of knowledge throughout the policymaking cycle. Evidence-informed policymaking scholarship has repeatedly emphasized that the mere production of research evidence



does not ensure its use because policymaking is shaped by institutions, interests, values, political incentives, problem framing, and the timing of policy opportunities (Cairney & Jones, 2016; Head, 2016; Parkhurst, 2016). Consequently, understanding parliamentary knowledge support requires attention to both the technical management of information and the institutional arrangements through which knowledge becomes credible, accessible, relevant, and actionable.

Knowledge management provides a conceptual foundation for examining these requirements. Knowledge management encompasses the systematic processes through which organizations create or acquire knowledge, organize and store it, facilitate its transfer and sharing, and apply it to organizational action and decision-making. Foundational research has conceptualized knowledge management systems as organizational and technological arrangements that support knowledge creation, storage and retrieval, transfer, and application (Alavi & Leidner, 2001). From this perspective, knowledge is not equivalent to raw data or isolated information; rather, it acquires organizational value when it is interpreted in context, connected to experience, and made usable for action. Contemporary knowledge management frameworks similarly emphasize an integrated cycle comprising knowledge capture, assessment, contextualization, dissemination, application, and continuous learning (Dalkir, 2023). The development of the discipline has also demonstrated a transition from narrow technology-centered perspectives toward broader approaches incorporating organizational culture, social interaction, intellectual capital, learning, governance, and strategic decision-making (Serenko, 2021). Thus, effective knowledge management in a parliament cannot be reduced to the installation of databases or document-management systems; it must include the institutional, relational, and interpretive mechanisms through which knowledge informs legislative judgment.

A central distinction in knowledge management concerns explicit and tacit knowledge. Explicit knowledge can be codified in reports, databases, legal documents, statistics, research outputs, and procedural guidelines, whereas tacit knowledge is embedded in the experiences, judgments, skills, intuitions, and relationships of individuals. The organizational knowledge-creation perspective demonstrates that innovation and learning depend on continuous interaction between tacit and explicit forms of knowledge, including the articulation of personal experience, the combination of codified resources, and the internalization of shared knowledge through practice (Nonaka & Takeuchi, 2007). This distinction is particularly important in parliamentary institutions, where a substantial proportion of relevant knowledge is embedded in the accumulated experience of representatives, committee experts, legislative advisers, researchers, and administrative staff. Recent scholarship has further argued that intuitive knowledge constitutes an important dimension of managerial and organizational knowing that cannot always be captured through conventional dichotomies of explicit and tacit knowledge (Tavallaei et al., 2025). When experienced actors leave parliamentary committees or when legislative terms change without structured knowledge-transfer mechanisms, significant portions of practical, relational, and intuitive knowledge may be lost.

The importance of knowledge management becomes even more pronounced in the public sector because public organizations operate under conditions that differ substantially from those of private firms. Public-sector organizations must reconcile efficiency with legality, transparency, accountability, equity, public participation, and political responsiveness. They also function within fragmented administrative systems in which knowledge is distributed among ministries, parliamentary bodies, research institutions, universities, civil society organizations, professional communities, and citizens. Early analyses of public-sector knowledge management identified bureaucratic structures, limited incentives for knowledge sharing, organizational silos, cultural resistance, and difficulties in measuring knowledge outcomes as persistent barriers (Cong & Pandya, 2003). Subsequent reviews have shown that public-sector knowledge management research increasingly addresses organizational learning, interorganizational collaboration, knowledge sharing, intellectual capital, and the institutional conditions required to preserve and apply public knowledge (Massaro et al., 2015). Scientometric research has likewise documented the expansion of knowledge acquisition studies and the growing recognition that organizations require systematic mechanisms for identifying, evaluating, and absorbing knowledge from both internal and external sources (Ahmadi et al., 2021).

Nevertheless, the relationship between evidence and policy remains complex. Evidence use is not a linear process in which researchers produce findings and policymakers subsequently adopt them. Policymakers frequently face extensive volumes of information, conflicting studies, uncertain causal claims, competing expert interpretations, and evidence produced according to different methodological standards. They must also weigh empirical findings against political feasibility, legal constraints,



public preferences, ethical considerations, fiscal limitations, and stakeholder interests. Research on barriers to evidence use has identified limited access, poor communication, lack of timeliness, insufficient relevance, low trust, incompatible professional languages, and weak interaction between researchers and policymakers as recurring challenges (Oliver et al., 2014). Broader evidence-use scholarship has therefore emphasized that effective utilization depends on organizational capacity, sustained relationships, contextual interpretation, and the adaptation of knowledge to the practical requirements of decision-makers (Nutley et al., 2007). Evidence-based policymaking should accordingly be understood not as the automatic supremacy of research evidence, but as a structured effort to improve how credible knowledge is considered within politically legitimate decision processes.

This distinction is especially relevant because policymaking differs fundamentally from clinical or technical decision-making. Attempts to transfer evidence-based models directly from medicine to policymaking may underestimate the role of ambiguity, political conflict, institutional rules, and contested public values. Bridging the evidence-policy divide therefore requires realistic attention to how policymakers interpret evidence, how policy problems are framed, and how knowledge competes with other forms of authority and persuasion (Cairney & Oliver, 2017). Pragmatic approaches to complexity similarly argue that policymakers must act within systems characterized by interdependence, uncertainty, adaptation, and incomplete knowledge; consequently, the objective should not be to eliminate complexity but to develop institutions capable of learning and responding intelligently to it (Ansell & Geyer, 2017). The policy-cycle perspective further suggests that knowledge needs vary across agenda setting, policy formulation, decision-making, implementation, evaluation, and policy revision (Howlett et al., 2015). Information that is useful for identifying a policy problem may not be adequate for comparing alternatives, monitoring implementation, or assessing policy outcomes.

Timeliness is therefore a defining attribute of decision-support knowledge. Evidence that arrives after a legislative opportunity has passed may retain scientific value but lose its practical policy utility. Researchers and knowledge-brokering institutions must accordingly align the format, depth, and timing of knowledge products with the decision context. Reflection tools developed to improve research utilization have emphasized the need for researchers to identify policy users, clarify intended contributions, anticipate communication requirements, and engage with relevant actors throughout the research process (Hegger et al., 2016). Knowledge-management tools identified in evidence-informed decision-making systems include evidence briefs, rapid-response services, knowledge repositories, communities of practice, stakeholder dialogues, decision-support platforms, and mechanisms for translating complex findings into concise and usable products (El-Jardali et al., 2023). During crises, multi-stage and accelerated consultation methods may also facilitate timely decisions while retaining structured expert judgment and methodological transparency (Velarde Crézé et al., 2024). These developments indicate that effective parliamentary knowledge support requires both enduring institutional infrastructure and flexible mechanisms responsive to urgent policy needs.

Expert knowledge occupies a particularly important but potentially contested position in policymaking. Legislators rely on economists, legal scholars, scientists, sectoral specialists, policy analysts, and administrative experts to understand technical issues that exceed the knowledge of any individual decision-maker. However, expertise is institutionally situated and may be shaped by professional paradigms, organizational mandates, political access, and advisory traditions. Research on expert knowledge has therefore called for a multidisciplinary agenda examining who is recognized as an expert, how expert authority is constructed, how expertise enters policymaking, and how different forms of knowledge are weighed against one another (Christensen, 2021). Comparative analyses of policy advisory systems demonstrate that government advice is produced through complex configurations of public servants, ministerial advisers, external consultants, think tanks, academics, and stakeholder organizations (Craft & Halligan, 2020). The effectiveness of such systems depends not only on the quality of individual reports but also on the coordination, independence, diversity, and institutional accessibility of advisory resources.

Knowledge co-creation and stakeholder participation offer mechanisms for expanding the informational and experiential foundations of policymaking. Public problems frequently affect groups whose practical experiences are not captured by formal administrative data or academic research. Participation can therefore contribute contextual knowledge, reveal implementation barriers, identify unintended consequences, and improve the legitimacy of policy decisions. Comparative research on participation in legislation has shown that institutionalized mechanisms are necessary to ensure that stakeholder engagement is



systematic rather than selective or symbolic (Behbahani et al., 2020). Deliberative processes may also produce reasoned collective judgments, but their broader influence depends on how those judgments are communicated to policymakers and the public. Evidence from deliberative mini-publics indicates that official statements and media channels can serve as transmitters of citizens' considered judgments, although the effects depend on communication design and institutional reception (Leino et al., 2025). For parliamentary knowledge management, participation should therefore be understood as a source of knowledge co-creation that must be documented, assessed, integrated with other evidence, and protected from disproportionate influence by powerful interests.

The credibility of parliamentary knowledge is inseparable from transparency, traceability, and impartiality. Decision-makers must be able to determine who produced a report, which data and methods were used, what assumptions shaped the analysis, which interests may be involved, and whether alternative interpretations were considered. Transparency in legislatures is therefore not limited to public access to parliamentary proceedings; it also encompasses the visibility of informational sources, decision rationales, stakeholder influences, and evidentiary foundations (Khalili & Simbar, 2022). Behavioral factors within legislative processes can shape how representatives seek information, evaluate expert advice, respond to political pressures, and prioritize immediate considerations over long-term policy consequences (Rafiei Lak et al., 2024). Accordingly, knowledge trustworthiness requires mechanisms for source identification, evidence validation, standardized reporting, conflict-of-interest disclosure, representation of competing perspectives, and differentiation between expert analysis and political advocacy.

These concerns are especially significant in the Iranian policy and legislative context. Iran's policymaking system involves multiple formal and informal institutions operating across different levels, with overlapping mandates and complex relationships among regulatory, executive, advisory, and oversight actors. Institutional analysis of policymaking in emerging policy domains has demonstrated that fragmented authority and multilevel governance arrangements can complicate coordination, knowledge integration, and policy coherence (Namdarian & Khedmatgozar, 2024). Research on the Iranian policy advisory system has similarly described the coexistence of politicization and a developing tendency toward technicization, indicating that expert analysis is increasingly important but remains embedded within political and institutional constraints (Emamian & Bagheripour, 2024). From a governance perspective, improving the policymaking cycle requires transparency, accountability, participation, effectiveness, responsiveness, and stronger mechanisms for evidence use and policy evaluation (Azadiyan & Vosoogh Moghadam, 2023). At the normative level, the General Policies of the Legislative System emphasize the quality, transparency, coherence, implementation capacity, and systematic evaluation of legislation, thereby reinforcing the need for institutional knowledge-support arrangements within the legislative system ("General Policies of the Legislative System," 2019).

The Islamic Consultative Assembly has access to substantial knowledge resources, including the Islamic Parliament Research Center, specialized committees, administrative and monitoring units, executive-agency reports, academic research, expert consultations, stakeholder submissions, legislative records, and the experiences of current and former representatives. However, the existence of these resources does not necessarily produce an integrated parliamentary knowledge system. Knowledge may remain dispersed across organizational units and information systems; reports may differ in format, quality, methodological transparency, and timeliness; expert recommendations may not be translated into concise decision-support products; and legislative experiences may remain undocumented in the minds of individuals. The discontinuity between parliamentary terms may further weaken organizational memory, as new representatives and committee members may lack access to the rationales, negotiations, implementation experiences, and lessons underlying previous decisions. These conditions transform the central challenge from one of information scarcity into one of institutional capacity for knowledge integration, validation, retention, translation, and reuse.

The emerging literature on knowledge management support for public policymaking confirms that the field is expanding but remains theoretically and empirically fragmented. Bibliometric analysis has identified growing scholarly interest in the intersection of knowledge management and public policymaking while also revealing conceptual gaps, limited cumulative frameworks, and insufficient attention to context-specific institutional mechanisms (Shadmanfar et al., 2026). Existing studies often examine selected dimensions such as evidence use, knowledge translation, advisory systems, stakeholder participation, organizational learning, or information technology in isolation. However, parliamentary policymaking requires a



comprehensive perspective capable of explaining how these dimensions interact across the full knowledge cycle. Such a perspective must address how knowledge is co-created, how fragmented resources are integrated, how tacit experience becomes organizational capital, how policy memory is institutionalized, how evidence is made trustworthy and protected from bias, how specialized knowledge is translated into decision-support products, and how feedback from implementation is converted into institutional learning.

The conceptual and empirical complexity of these processes also indicates the need for an inductive approach grounded in the experiences of parliamentary actors. Classical grounded theory is particularly appropriate when existing theories do not adequately explain a phenomenon within a specific institutional setting and when the objective is to derive theoretically meaningful categories and relationships through constant comparison (Holton & Walsh, 2016). The credibility of such inquiry depends on transparent coding, systematic comparison, conceptual documentation, and procedures that make analytical decisions traceable. Research on coding-data portability has highlighted the importance of preserving explicit links between source materials, coding structures, and analytical interpretations (Díaz et al., 2019). Qualitative trustworthiness can also be strengthened through carefully designed member-checking procedures that examine whether interpretations meaningfully represent participants' accounts (Birt et al., 2016), while intercoder assessment may enhance coding consistency when it is applied with awareness of the epistemological and practical debates surrounding qualitative reliability (O'Connor & Joffe, 2020). These methodological principles are essential for developing a context-sensitive model that reflects the actual knowledge practices, institutional constraints, and decision-support needs of the Islamic Consultative Assembly.

Accordingly, the present study aimed to identify and explain the policies and practices required for knowledge management to support policymaking in the Islamic Consultative Assembly of Iran.

2. Methods and Materials

The present study was applied in terms of its purpose and qualitative in terms of its methodological approach. It was conducted using classical Glaserian grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1998). The selection of Glaserian grounded theory was based on the exploratory logic of the study. Because the purpose of the research was to identify and explain the policies and practices required to realize knowledge management support for parliamentary policymaking, and because no comprehensive theoretical framework existed for explaining this phenomenon within the context of the Islamic Consultative Assembly of Iran, the Glaserian approach was employed to derive categories and theoretical relationships directly from field data. Accordingly, concepts, categories, and a conceptual model concerning the policies and practices that enable knowledge management support for policymaking in the Islamic Consultative Assembly of Iran were extracted and explained through the analysis of field data.

As shown in Table 1, the study participants were selected from experts and actors involved in the policymaking and decision-support processes of the Islamic Consultative Assembly of Iran. The participants included parliamentary staff, current and former members of parliament, experts from the Islamic Parliament Research Center, experts from specialized parliamentary committees, and university faculty members with direct experience in legislation, policy analysis, information management, documentation, decision support, and knowledge governance.

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of the Participants

Participant group	Master's degree	Doctoral degree	Men	Women	10–20 years of relevant experience	21–30 years of relevant experience
Current members of parliament	4	1	5	0	0	5
Former members of parliament	2	3	5	0	0	5
Islamic Parliament Research Center experts	0	5	4	1	2	3
Parliamentary committee experts	4	0	2	2	4	0
Parliamentary staff	4	1	3	2	5	0
University faculty members	3	0	2	1	0	3
Total	17	10	21	6	11	16
Total number of participants	27					

In this study, sampling began purposively and subsequently continued through snowball sampling until theoretical saturation was achieved. Theoretical saturation was considered to have occurred when additional interviews no longer generated new



concepts or categories and the relationships among the categories had become sufficiently stable. The primary criterion for selecting participants was their possession of specialized experience and direct involvement in legislative processes, policymaking, policy analysis, knowledge production, and parliamentary decision support.

Data were collected through face-to-face, semi-structured interviews conducted from autumn 2025 to spring 2026. The average duration of each interview was approximately 45 minutes. To enhance the accuracy of data recording, the interviews were audio-recorded with the participants' consent, while field notes were also taken concurrently. The interview questions focused on the policies and practices required to support parliamentary policymaking through knowledge management.

Following transcription, data analysis was conducted in MAXQDA version 26.2.1 concurrently with data collection and in accordance with the constant comparative method of Glaserian grounded theory. In the first stage, open coding was conducted to identify initial concepts and assign labels to events, actions, and meanings contained in the data. As recurring patterns emerged and the researcher's theoretical sensitivity increased, higher-level coding continued around categories that demonstrated the greatest explanatory power and the strongest relationships with other concepts. In the final stage, theoretical coding was used to explain relationships among the categories and formulate the theoretical model of the study. Throughout the analysis, theoretical memo writing was employed to document analytical ideas, conceptual questions, comparisons, and the process through which the core category emerged (Holton & Walsh, 2016).

Several strategies were used to enhance the credibility and trustworthiness of the study. Member checking was conducted to ensure the accuracy of the researcher's interpretations and understanding of the participants' statements (Birt et al., 2016). The findings and coding process were also reviewed by selected subject-matter experts and academic peers (Diaz et al., 2019). In addition, coder agreement was examined for a portion of the data to strengthen the coherence and conceptual stability of the codes (O'Connor & Joffe, 2020).

The ethical principles of research were observed throughout the study. Before the interviews were conducted, informed consent was obtained from all participants, who were assured that the information they provided would be used exclusively for the scientific purposes of the research. To preserve confidentiality, the participants' identifying information remained confidential throughout the processes of data analysis and reporting.

3. Findings and Results

The research findings were presented at five levels of analysis. First, initial patterns were extracted from the data and subsequently organized into conceptual clusters. The core phenomenon was then identified, theoretical relationships among the categories were explained, and the final model of the study was ultimately developed.

At this stage, the interview transcripts were read repeatedly and segmented into meaning units. Initial codes were then extracted for each meaning unit and classified according to conceptual similarities. This process continued concurrently with the analysis of each new interview. Overall, 453 initial codes were identified. Following the elimination of duplicate items and the consolidation of similar codes, these were reduced to 160 final open codes. Examples of interview excerpts and their corresponding extracted codes are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Examples of Interview Excerpts and Identified Codes

Interview excerpt	Open code
"The complexity of the specialized and technical language used in some reports is another problem. Some expert reports are written in such a highly specialized manner that using them for decision-making becomes difficult. The purpose of these reports should be to facilitate decision-making, not to make it more complicated" (PE, Pos. 8).	Complexity of the language used in expert reports
"Alongside these issues, there are also challenges that prevent this relationship from being properly established. One of the most important challenges is the difference in language. Experts usually speak and write reports in specialized language, whereas a representative needs simpler and more practical language. This difference prevents part of the knowledge from being properly transferred" (PJ, Pos. 11).	Language gap between experts and representatives
"Another issue is that a considerable portion of knowledge is dependent on individuals. In other words, when an expert or representative leaves a committee, part of the experience and knowledge held in that person's mind is also lost" (PX, Pos. 12).	Loss of individuals' experience
"A learning cycle should be established across different parliamentary terms. The experiences of each term should be carefully recorded, reviewed, and classified, and then made available to the representatives of the next term in a usable form" (PF, Pos. 10).	Knowledge discontinuity across parliamentary terms
"How to interact with executive agencies, or even how to manage discussions during committee meetings, is not something written in procedural regulations; it is largely derived from experience. The problem is that such experience usually remains in people's minds, and when their term ends, a substantial part of it is lost" (PF, Pos. 3).	Knowledge remains in individuals' minds



“The absence of a specific method for recording information is also problematic. It is unclear what should be recorded, who is responsible for recording it, and how it should be done. Consequently, even when efforts are made to record information, they are generally fragmented and unstructured” (PA, Pos. 12).	Standardization of expert reports
“The reality is that the parliament has various sources from which it obtains information. These range from official reports and statistics provided by executive agencies to expert opinions, media analyses, and even information communicated to representatives by stakeholders. The problem is that these sources are not always consistent. Sometimes several reports on the same issue present different findings” (PG, Pos. 3).	Documentation of conflicting viewpoints
“Many decisions involve different groups; some may benefit from a decision, whereas others may be adversely affected. When this is identified in advance, representatives can make better decisions and anticipate the consequences” (PI, Pos. 9).	Disclosure of stakeholder interests
“Representatives encounter new issues throughout their term and need opportunities to consult experienced individuals. There should be an ongoing relationship with experts and experienced individuals. Such interaction can resolve many uncertainties. In my view, one existing weakness is that attention is generally focused primarily on formal knowledge” (PF, Pos. 6).	Establishment of an expert network
“Knowledge management in the parliament should operate as a cycle. Information and experience should be collected, reviewed, and made trustworthy, stored systematically, provided to relevant individuals at the appropriate time, and, after use, the resulting outcomes should be reintegrated into the cycle. This process enables the parliament to learn from its own experience and make better decisions” (PA, Pos. 14).	Documentation of lessons learned

At this stage, the open codes were organized according to conceptual, semantic, and functional similarities to move beyond data description and identify the policies and practices that support knowledge management. Consequently, the 160 open codes were classified into 32 conceptual clusters and eight main categories. The conceptual clusters represent the operational dimensions of the data, whereas the main categories reflect the theoretical logic governing the relationships among them. The results of this stage are presented in Table 3. In the final interpretation, the main categories were formulated as knowledge management support policies for policymaking in the Islamic Consultative Assembly of Iran, while the supportive practices were conceptualized as implementation mechanisms through which these policies could be realized. Accordingly, the relationship between the main categories and supportive practices can be understood as a relationship between “policy and implementation mechanism,” whereby each policy is operationalized through a set of complementary practices.

Table 3. Conceptual Organization of the Data and Formation of Supportive Practices

Main category (policy)	Conceptual clusters (supportive practices)	Related open codes
Reducing the gap between knowledge and decision-making	Translating specialized knowledge into decision-support knowledge	Complexity of the language used in expert reports; language gap between experts and representatives; difficulty understanding specialized analyses; need to interpret knowledge for decision-makers; reduced usability of information because of complex presentation
	Providing time-sensitive knowledge packages	Limited time for decision-making; need for information at the appropriate time; dependence of knowledge value on timely access; delays in providing analyses; loss of opportunities to use knowledge
	Prioritizing information according to the policymaking stage	Differences in knowledge requirements across stages; need for data to identify the problem; need for policy options during decision-making; need for monitoring indicators during evaluation; irrelevance of some information to the current decision stage
	Preparing policy briefs	Nonuse of lengthy reports; need to summarize key points; preference for condensed information; increased use of knowledge when presented in summary form; reduction of decision-makers' information burden
Institutionalizing policy memory	Recording decision rationales	Reasons for adopting laws are forgotten; rationale behind previous decisions is unclear; previous arguments are inaccessible; past debates are repeated; need to document why decisions were made
	Documenting legislative experiences	Loss of individuals' experience; learning through trial and error; failure to document successful experiences; failure to document previous mistakes; dependence of knowledge on individuals
	Transferring knowledge across parliamentary terms	Knowledge discontinuity across parliamentary terms; restarting processes in each term; absence of an experience-transfer program; difficulty training new representatives; loss of the parliament's knowledge capital
	Creating knowledge dossiers for policy issues	Fragmentation of decision records; absence of a complete history of issues; difficulty retrieving previous experiences; lack of thematic memory; need to trace the development of an issue
Enhancing knowledge trustworthiness	Providing information provenance profiles	Unclear sources of information; doubts about data credibility; importance of source transparency; need for information traceability; increased trust through source identification
	Recording the origins of data and reports	Lack of awareness of who produced the information; difficulty assessing report credibility; variation in source quality; need for transparency in knowledge production; ability to trace information

	Validating evidence	Existence of contradictory information; variation in report findings; need for data quality control; necessity of evaluating research methods; assessment of evidence credibility
	Standardizing expert reports	Inconsistency among reports; difficulty comparing analyses; variation in documentation quality; absence of a uniform format for presenting information; need for reporting standards
Protecting knowledge from interests and biases	Documenting conflicting viewpoints	Different interpretations of the same issue; dominance of a single narrative; neglect of opposing views; need to reflect different perspectives; importance of viewpoint diversity
	Disclosing stakeholder interests	Influence of group interests on information; hidden stakeholders; need for transparency regarding interests; role of lobbying in decisions; importance of revealing interests
	Separating expert analysis from political positions	Politicization of reports; influence of political orientations on analysis; difficulty distinguishing analysis from political positioning; need for expert independence; preservation of knowledge neutrality
	Evaluating information impartiality	Possibility of bias in reports; selective presentation of information; overemphasis on selected evidence; need for balanced information; dependence of trust on impartiality
Integrating fragmented knowledge	Consolidating databases	Fragmentation of information across different systems; multiplicity of information repositories; time wasted searching; absence of integrated access; duplication of information storage
	Creating a shared knowledge repository	Knowledge retained in separate units; difficulty sharing documents; duplication of knowledge-related activities; lack of access to knowledge held by other units; siloed information
	Linking legislative, research, and oversight data	Disconnection among parliamentary data sources; absence of a comprehensive view of the issue; separation of related information; difficulty conducting integrated analysis; need for data integration
	Developing decision-support dashboards	Need to view indicators quickly; limited decision-making time; need for visual presentation of information; need for concise and immediate information; indicator-based decision-making
Transforming individual interactions into organizational knowledge capital	Establishing knowledge communities	Need to exchange experience; learning from colleagues; collective problem-solving; development of specialized networks; sharing of tacit knowledge
	Establishing an expert network	Limited access to specialists; dependence on personal relationships; need for an expert database; facilitation of specialized consultation; use of external knowledge
	Documenting specialized discussions	Loss of meeting outcomes; inadequate documentation of discussions; agreements are forgotten; failure to transfer the results of discussions; need to record interactions
	Converting tacit knowledge into explicit knowledge	Knowledge remains in individuals' minds; difficulty transferring experience; organizational dependence on individuals; loss of knowledge when employees leave; need to document tacit knowledge
Co-creating knowledge in the policymaking process	Continuous interaction between the Islamic Parliament Research Center and parliamentary committees	Distance between experts and decision-makers; weak ongoing communication; failure to communicate actual needs; need for reciprocal interaction; gap between analysis and decision-making
	Utilizing networks of universities and think tanks	Limited internal knowledge resources; need for external specialized knowledge; use of university capacities; application of current research; development of scientific collaboration
	Obtaining stakeholder perspectives	Neglect of field-based experiences; need for stakeholder participation; importance of understanding actual consequences; consideration of diverse viewpoints; participation in decision support
	Establishing joint working groups	Complexity of policy issues; need for diverse expertise; necessity of interdisciplinary analysis; collective production of solutions; coordination among actors
Institutional learning and knowledge feedback	Evaluating the influence of knowledge on decisions	Unclear influence of reports; failure to assess the extent of knowledge use; absence of effectiveness indicators; difficulty evaluating the role of information; need to monitor knowledge application
	Monitoring the implementation of laws	Distance between the parliament and implementation outcomes; absence of feedback information; difficulty assessing consequences; need to monitor law implementation; need for performance information
	Documenting lessons learned	Experiences are forgotten; failure to learn from unsuccessful outcomes; inadequate documentation of results; need to record implementation experiences; reuse of acquired learning
	Revising decisions based on new evidence	Changes in environmental conditions; emergence of new information; need to revise policies; flexibility of decisions; updating decision-related knowledge



The findings showed that one of the most significant tensions in parliamentary policymaking is the contradiction between the abundance of information and the scarcity of usable knowledge. Although the parliament and its supporting institutions have access to extensive reports, statistics, and expert analyses, this accumulation of information does not necessarily lead to informed decision-making. Participants repeatedly emphasized that the principal problem was not the absence of knowledge, but the difficulty of converting specialized knowledge into a form that is available at the appropriate time, expressed in understandable language, and aligned with decision-makers' needs. From this perspective, practices such as translating specialized knowledge into decision-support knowledge, preparing policy briefs, providing time-sensitive knowledge packages, and prioritizing information according to different stages of policymaking constitute responses to the gap between "knowing" and "deciding." This category therefore concerns increasing the usability of knowledge in an environment in which time constraints and the complexity of issues make the value of knowledge highly dependent on its practical applicability.

The data revealed a persistent tension between the accumulation of experience within individuals and the absence of institutional memory within the organization. A considerable portion of parliamentary policy knowledge is developed through the personal experiences of representatives, experts, and managers. However, this knowledge frequently remains in individuals' minds and becomes inaccessible to the organization when they are transferred or leave their positions. Consequently, many previous experiences, rationales, and lessons are not transferred to subsequent generations, and institutional learning is disrupted. Practices such as recording decision rationales, documenting legislative experiences, transferring knowledge across parliamentary terms, and creating knowledge dossiers for policy issues are intended to resolve this contradiction and convert individual memory into organizational memory. This category therefore focuses on ensuring the continuity of learning and preventing the loss of the parliament's knowledge capital.

The analysis showed that parliamentary decision-makers face a tension between access to information and confidence in the credibility of that information. Participants indicated that the existence of multiple reports, contradictory data, and unidentified sources means that even large quantities of information may not provide a reliable basis for decision-making. Under such conditions, the main problem is not a shortage of information but uncertainty regarding its quality and reliability. Practices such as providing provenance profiles for information, recording the origins of data, validating evidence, and standardizing expert reports were identified as mechanisms for reducing this uncertainty. Enhancing knowledge trustworthiness is therefore a process through which information is elevated from the level of "available data" to the level of "reliable evidence."

The findings demonstrated that even credible knowledge may be influenced by political, organizational, or group interests. The principal tension in this category therefore lies between the use of knowledge in decision-making and the influence of interests on the production and interpretation of knowledge. Participants believed that part of the distrust directed toward reports did not originate from scientific weaknesses, but from concerns regarding possible orientations and biases. In response to this challenge, practices such as documenting conflicting viewpoints, disclosing stakeholder interests, separating expert analysis from political positions, and evaluating the impartiality of information were identified. This category complements the enhancement of knowledge trustworthiness and emphasizes the preservation of the independence and integrity of knowledge.

The central tension in this category is the contradiction between the abundance of knowledge resources and their fragmented accessibility. Participants stated that a substantial portion of decision-makers' time is spent locating information dispersed across different systems, organizational units, and repositories. Consequently, despite its potential value, existing knowledge cannot provide a comprehensive understanding of a policy issue. Practices such as consolidating databases, creating a shared knowledge repository, linking legislative, research, and oversight data, and developing decision-support dashboards constitute responses to this informational fragmentation. The primary function of this category is to transform dispersed knowledge into coherent and retrievable knowledge.

The data analysis indicated that an important portion of the knowledge used in the parliament is generated through informal interactions, specialized discussions, and communication networks. However, the principal tension is that knowledge generated through individual interactions does not necessarily become an organizational knowledge asset. Consequently, many valuable lessons and experiences disappear after the interactions conclude. Practices such as establishing knowledge communities, creating expert networks, documenting specialized discussions, and converting tacit knowledge into explicit knowledge were identified as mechanisms for addressing this gap. This category emphasizes the transfer of knowledge from the individual level to the institutional level.

The findings showed that the knowledge required for policymaking is not produced by a single actor. The principal tension in this category exists between the complexity of public issues and the limited knowledge of each individual actor. Representatives, experts, academics, think tanks, executive agencies, and stakeholders each possess only part of the reality surrounding a given issue, and none can independently produce comprehensive knowledge. Therefore, practices such as continuous interaction between the Islamic Parliament Research Center and parliamentary committees, utilization of the capacities of universities and think tanks, incorporation of stakeholder perspectives, and establishment of joint working groups were identified as mechanisms for knowledge co-creation. This category constitutes the starting point of the knowledge-support cycle for policymaking.

The final category was formed around the tension between decision-making and learning from the consequences of decisions. Participants believed that many laws and policies are not systematically evaluated after implementation, resulting in the loss of opportunities to learn from successes and failures. This situation leads to the repetition of errors and weakens the adaptability of the policy system. Practices such as evaluating the influence of knowledge on decisions, monitoring the implementation of laws, documenting lessons learned, and revising decisions based on new evidence constitute mechanisms for transforming implementation experience into new knowledge. From this perspective, institutional learning completes the knowledge management cycle in the parliament and enables the continuous improvement of policymaking quality.

At the next level of analysis, the eight main categories converged into a single core category. The data analysis demonstrated that these categories extend beyond a collection of managerial tools and actions and address the fundamental challenge of transforming fragmented, heterogeneous, person-dependent, and occasionally conflicting knowledge into reliable knowledge for parliamentary decision-making. Challenges such as the difficulty of understanding specialized reports, the distance between knowledge producers and users, the loss of legislative experience, the fragmentation of information resources, limited trust in information, biases, and the absence of institutional learning mechanisms further supported this central issue.

Constant comparison among the open codes and identified practices showed that all the extracted policies, despite their apparent differences, addressed a common issue: creating an environment in which the knowledge required for policymaking can be made available to decision-makers in a credible, reliable, integrated, accessible, usable, and sustainable form. In other words, policies such as reducing the gap between knowledge and decision-making, enhancing knowledge trustworthiness, protecting knowledge from interests and biases, integrating fragmented knowledge, co-creating knowledge, institutionalizing policy memory, and promoting institutional learning each represent a dimension of a more fundamental phenomenon.

Accordingly, comparison and integration of the main categories showed that the logic governing all categories could be explained through the core category of “creating an enabling environment for credible, integrated, and institutionalized decision-support knowledge within the parliamentary policymaking cycle.” This category possesses the capacity to explain and connect all the main categories identified in the study.

Therefore, the core phenomenon of the present study is “creating an enabling environment for credible, integrated, and institutionalized decision-support knowledge within the parliamentary policymaking cycle.” This phenomenon refers to the collection of policies, practices, and mechanisms that enable dispersed data, information, evidence, experiences, and perspectives to be transformed into credible, reliable, integrated, timely, and usable knowledge for legislative decision-making.

The findings indicated that the principal challenge facing the Islamic Consultative Assembly in using knowledge is not merely a shortage of information or inadequate technological infrastructure. Rather, it is the absence of institutional mechanisms for organizing, validating, integrating, transferring, sharing, retaining, and reproducing knowledge. Under such conditions, the effectiveness of knowledge in the policymaking process depends less on the volume of information than on the quality of the environment that enables existing knowledge to be transformed into decision-support knowledge.

From this perspective, knowledge management in the parliament should not be regarded merely as an information system. Instead, it functions as a set of institutional, interactive, and learning-oriented arrangements intended to provide credible, integrated, and institutionalized knowledge in support of parliamentary decision-making.

As shown in Table 4, the comparative analysis of the data demonstrated that the main categories have interactive, complementary, and cyclical relationships. None of the categories can independently provide effective support for parliamentary policymaking.



Table 4. Theoretical Relationships Among the Main Categories

Main category	Central issue	Theoretical function	Principal output	Connection to the subsequent category
Co-creating knowledge in the policymaking process	The knowledge required for policymaking is distributed among multiple and dispersed actors	Aggregating and producing knowledge through interactions among representatives, experts, universities, think tanks, and stakeholders	Initial, diverse, and multisource knowledge	The knowledge generated must be organized and made coherent for effective use; it therefore leads to the integration of fragmented knowledge
Integrating fragmented knowledge	Data, documents, and analyses are dispersed across different units and systems	Organizing and connecting knowledge resources and creating integrated access	Organized and retrievable knowledge	Integrated knowledge may still remain dependent on individuals and must therefore be transformed into sustainable organizational knowledge capital
Transforming individual interactions into organizational knowledge capital	Knowledge depends on individuals and is lost when personnel are transferred or leave	Transforming tacit knowledge and individual experiences into shared organizational knowledge assets	Documented and transferable knowledge	Organizational knowledge must be embedded in institutional memory to ensure its long-term continuity
Institutionalizing policy memory	Previous experiences, rationales, and decisions are forgotten	Preserving, accumulating, and transferring legislative knowledge over time	Organizational memory and policy memory	Accumulated knowledge must be considered trustworthy in terms of its quality and credibility
Enhancing knowledge trustworthiness	The credibility of sources, data, and reports is uncertain	Increasing the reliability, transparency, and traceability of knowledge	Credible and reliable knowledge	Credible knowledge loses its functionality when influenced by interests and biases
Protecting knowledge from interests and biases	Knowledge may be subject to political, organizational, or group bias	Preserving the independence, impartiality, and integrity of knowledge	Impartial and acceptable knowledge	Credible and impartial knowledge must be provided to decision-makers in a usable form
Reducing the gap between knowledge and decision-making	Specialized knowledge is difficult to use in decision-making processes	Translating, simplifying, and ensuring the timely provision of knowledge to decision-makers	Usable decision-support knowledge	The use of knowledge in decisions must be evaluated to enable learning
Institutional learning and knowledge feedback	Mechanisms for learning from decision outcomes and law implementation are absent	Extracting lessons learned and reproducing knowledge from previous experiences	Revised and experience-based knowledge	The output is reintegrated into the knowledge co-creation process, thereby completing the knowledge cycle

The analysis of relationships among the categories showed that the theoretical structure of the study is cyclical and dynamic. The cycle begins with knowledge co-creation. The knowledge generated is then organized, stabilized, and preserved through the integration of fragmented knowledge, the transformation of individual interactions into organizational knowledge capital, and the institutionalization of policy memory. Subsequently, enhancing knowledge trustworthiness and protecting knowledge from interests and biases ensure the quality and impartiality of knowledge. The gap between knowledge and decision-making is then reduced, thereby transforming knowledge into decision-support knowledge that can be used in the legislative process. Finally, institutional learning and knowledge feedback generate new knowledge through the evaluation of outcomes, documentation of lessons learned, and revision of decisions. This newly generated knowledge is subsequently reintegrated into the knowledge co-creation process.

Accordingly, the core phenomenon of the study is “creating an enabling environment for credible, integrated, and institutionalized decision-support knowledge within the parliamentary policymaking cycle.” The findings demonstrate that strengthening knowledge co-creation capacities, integrating knowledge resources, enhancing the trustworthiness of knowledge, protecting knowledge from bias, institutionalizing policy memory, transforming knowledge into decision-support resources, and promoting institutional learning provide the conditions for the development of credible, coherent, and sustainable knowledge and ultimately improve the quality and effectiveness of parliamentary policymaking.

The final data analysis showed that knowledge support for parliamentary policymaking cannot be reduced to a single technology, information system, or set of isolated actions. The findings indicate that the formation of effective knowledge for parliamentary decision-making requires a set of interconnected policies and practices covering the entire process, from knowledge production to learning and knowledge reproduction.

Based on the research findings, the final model of knowledge management support for policymaking in the Islamic Consultative Assembly of Iran consists of eight main components: co-creating knowledge in the policymaking process, enhancing knowledge trustworthiness, protecting knowledge from interests and biases, integrating fragmented knowledge, reducing the gap between knowledge and decision-making, transforming individual interactions into organizational knowledge capital, institutionalizing policy memory, and promoting institutional learning and knowledge feedback.

Within this model, the knowledge-support process begins with knowledge co-creation. Knowledge generated through interactions among representatives, the Islamic Parliament Research Center, universities, experts, and stakeholders acquires credibility and legitimacy through trustworthiness-enhancing and bias-control mechanisms. The credible knowledge produced is subsequently organized and consolidated through knowledge-integration policies to facilitate its accessibility and retrieval. At the next stage, integrated knowledge is transformed into decision-support knowledge through the translation of specialized knowledge, preparation of policy briefs, and provision of time-sensitive knowledge packages and is then made available to decision-makers.

In parallel with the use of knowledge in decision-making, the experiences, rationales, interactions, and outcomes arising from decisions are documented and retained as components of policy memory and organizational knowledge capital. Finally, new knowledge is produced through the evaluation of legislative consequences, monitoring of policy implementation, documentation of lessons learned, and evidence-based revision. This knowledge is subsequently reintegrated into the policymaking cycle. The process therefore establishes a continuous cycle of learning and improvement.

As presented in Figure 1, the final model indicates that realizing knowledge management support for policymaking in the Islamic Consultative Assembly requires the establishment of a knowledge environment characterized by four fundamental attributes: credibility, integration, usability, and institutionalization. Weakness in any of these dimensions can adversely affect the effectiveness of the entire knowledge-support system. Accordingly, the core phenomenon of “creating an enabling environment for credible, integrated, and institutionalized decision-support knowledge within the parliamentary policymaking cycle” was identified as the central component of the study’s theoretical model.

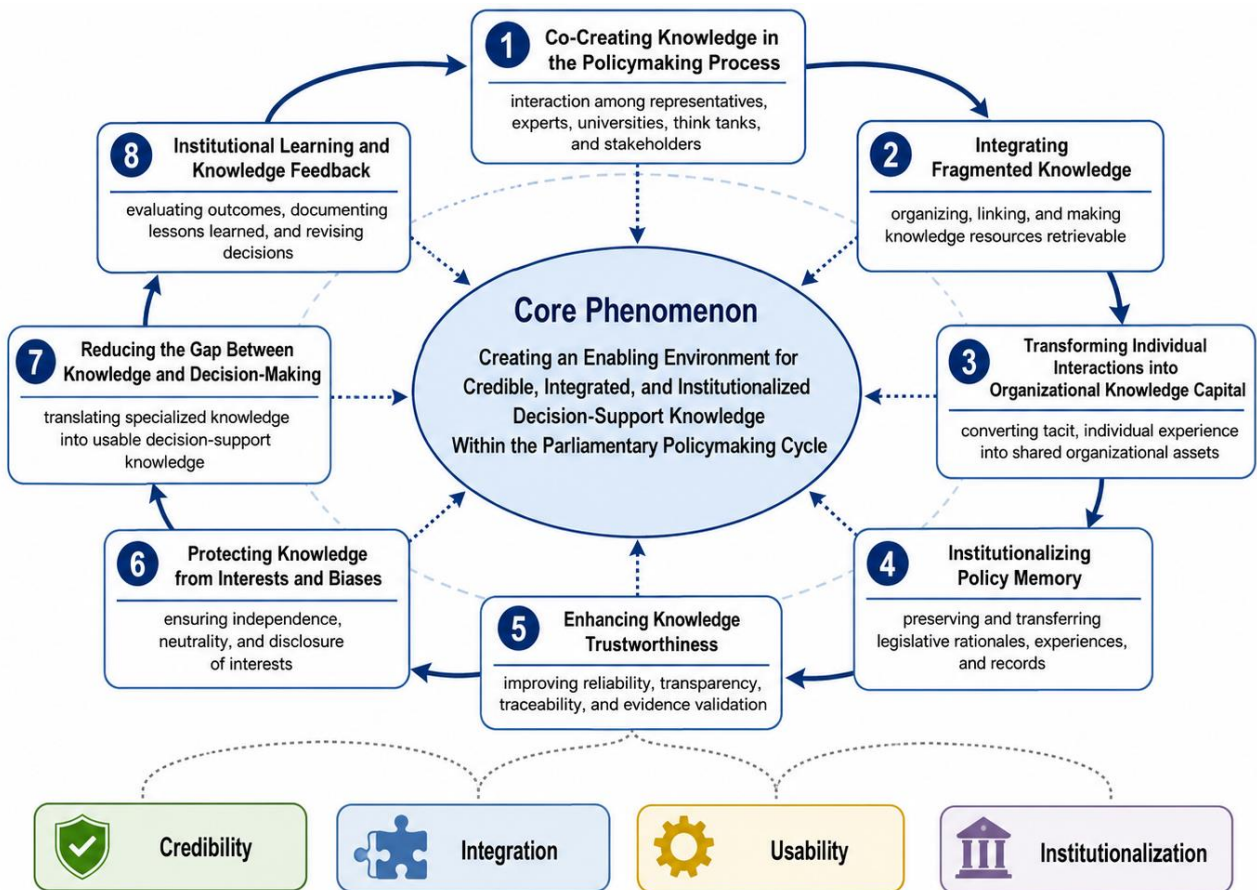


Figure 1. Conceptual model of knowledge management support policies and practices for policymaking in the Islamic Consultative Assembly.

4. Discussion and Conclusion

The present study sought to identify and explain the policies and practices through which knowledge management can support policymaking in the Islamic Consultative Assembly of Iran. The findings resulted in eight interrelated policy categories: co-creating knowledge in the policymaking process, integrating fragmented knowledge, transforming individual interactions into organizational knowledge capital, institutionalizing policy memory, enhancing knowledge trustworthiness, protecting knowledge from interests and biases, reducing the gap between knowledge and decision-making, and promoting institutional learning and knowledge feedback. These categories converged around the core phenomenon of creating an enabling environment for credible, integrated, and institutionalized decision-support knowledge within the parliamentary policymaking cycle. The findings therefore indicate that the central challenge facing parliamentary policymaking is not simply the scarcity of data or research evidence, but the absence of institutional mechanisms through which dispersed, heterogeneous, person-dependent, and occasionally conflicting knowledge can be transformed into reliable and actionable knowledge. This interpretation is consistent with knowledge management theory, which regards organizational value as dependent on the processes through which knowledge is created, stored, transferred, and applied rather than on the mere possession of information (Alavi & Leidner, 2001; Dalkir, 2023). It is also consistent with public-sector knowledge management research, which has shown that fragmentation, weak knowledge-sharing cultures, bureaucratic separation, and limited institutional learning frequently prevent available knowledge from influencing public decisions (Cong & Pandya, 2003; Massaro et al., 2015).

The first major finding concerned the necessity of knowledge co-creation in the policymaking process. Participants emphasized that the knowledge required for legislative decisions is distributed among representatives, parliamentary researchers, committee experts, universities, think tanks, executive agencies, and stakeholders. No single actor possesses a complete understanding of complex policy problems; therefore, knowledge must be generated through sustained interaction among actors who hold different forms of scientific, administrative, experiential, and contextual knowledge. This result supports the argument that public policymaking is not a linear process of transferring research from producers to users, but a relational process in which knowledge is interpreted, negotiated, and reconstructed through interaction (Cairney & Oliver, 2017; Nutley et al., 2007). It also aligns with studies of expert knowledge and policy advisory systems, which indicate that policy advice emerges from networks of internal and external advisers whose contributions must be coordinated if decision-makers are to obtain a sufficiently comprehensive understanding of public problems (Christensen, 2021; Craft & Halligan, 2020). The identification of stakeholder consultation and joint working groups as supportive practices further indicates that parliamentary knowledge should include not only formal research evidence but also implementation experience, affected groups' perspectives, and field-based knowledge. This finding is consistent with comparative research showing that institutionalized participation can improve the informational foundations and legitimacy of legislation when participation is systematic, inclusive, and connected to formal decision processes (Behbahani et al., 2020). Deliberative research likewise suggests that citizens' considered judgments can contribute to policy debates, provided that effective mechanisms exist for transmitting and incorporating these judgments into institutional settings (Leino et al., 2025).

The second finding concerned the integration of fragmented knowledge. Participants described a parliamentary environment in which data, reports, legislative records, oversight findings, expert analyses, and stakeholder information are stored across separate systems and organizational units. This fragmentation increases search costs, encourages duplication, restricts access, and prevents decision-makers from obtaining a comprehensive view of a policy issue. The proposed practices of consolidating databases, creating shared knowledge repositories, connecting legislative, research, and oversight data, and developing decision-support dashboards directly address this institutional fragmentation. These results are compatible with the view that knowledge management systems must support not only storage but also retrieval, integration, and application across organizational boundaries (Alavi & Leidner, 2001). They also correspond with evidence-informed decision-making research identifying repositories, evidence portals, rapid-response mechanisms, and integrated knowledge platforms as important tools for connecting decision-makers with usable evidence (El-Jardali et al., 2023). In the Iranian context, the importance of integration is intensified by the multilevel and institutionally dispersed structure of policymaking, in which overlapping

responsibilities and fragmented authority may inhibit coordination and policy coherence (Namdarian & Khedmatgozar, 2024). Accordingly, the current findings suggest that technological integration should be accompanied by institutional agreements concerning ownership, access, metadata, updating responsibilities, and standards for interoperability.

The third category, transforming individual interactions into organizational knowledge capital, reflects the finding that a substantial portion of parliamentary knowledge remains tacit and dependent on individuals. Participants explained that expertise regarding committee negotiations, interaction with executive agencies, legislative procedures, political feasibility, and the interpretation of informal signals is often acquired through experience and remains in the minds of representatives and experts. When these individuals change positions or leave parliament, much of this knowledge is lost. The practices identified in this study, including knowledge communities, expert networks, documentation of specialized discussions, and conversion of tacit knowledge into explicit knowledge, are consistent with organizational knowledge-creation theory. Nonaka and Takeuchi argued that organizational learning depends on interaction between tacit and explicit knowledge and on processes that allow individual experience to become shared organizational knowledge (Nonaka & Takeuchi, 2007). The finding also resonates with recent arguments that intuitive knowledge represents a distinct and influential form of organizational knowing that may not be fully captured by formal documents or conventional knowledge classifications (Tavallaei et al., 2025). Thus, parliamentary knowledge management should not attempt merely to codify every experience, but should combine documentation with mentoring, communities of practice, structured dialogue, and intergenerational interaction through which experiential and intuitive knowledge can be transferred.

The fourth policy category was the institutionalization of policy memory. The findings showed that the discontinuity between parliamentary terms weakens cumulative learning because the rationales behind laws, the alternatives considered, the reasons for rejecting particular options, the experiences of implementation, and the lessons from previous decisions are not systematically preserved. As a result, debates may be repeated, previous errors may recur, and newly elected representatives may begin without access to the knowledge accumulated in earlier periods. The proposed practices of documenting legislative experiences, recording decision rationales, transferring knowledge across parliamentary terms, and creating policy-specific knowledge dossiers are therefore central to the development of institutional memory. This finding supports the broader knowledge management principle that knowledge retention is necessary for organizational continuity and that knowledge loses much of its strategic value when it remains dependent on temporary actors (Dalkir, 2023). Public-sector knowledge management studies have similarly highlighted the vulnerability of organizational knowledge to personnel turnover, administrative change, and weak documentation systems (Cong & Pandya, 2003; Massaro et al., 2015). In addition, the General Policies of the Legislative System emphasize coherence, quality, transparency, implementation capacity, and the evaluation of laws, all of which require access to the historical and analytical foundations of previous legislative decisions ("General Policies of the Legislative System," 2019). Policy memory should therefore be treated as an institutional infrastructure for legislative continuity rather than merely as an archive of documents.

The fifth major finding was the need to enhance knowledge trustworthiness. Participants repeatedly referred to conflicting statistics, reports of unequal quality, unidentified data sources, and uncertainty regarding the methods used to produce evidence. Under these conditions, even abundant information may fail to support decision-making because legislators cannot determine which sources are credible. The practices of recording data provenance, identifying report producers, validating evidence, and standardizing expert reports were proposed as mechanisms for converting available information into trustworthy decision-support knowledge. These findings correspond with evidence-informed policymaking research showing that policymakers' use of research is strongly affected by perceptions of credibility, methodological quality, relevance, and transparency (Head, 2016; Oliver et al., 2014). They also align with research emphasizing traceable links between source materials, coding structures, and analytical conclusions as a means of improving the transparency and portability of knowledge products (Díaz et al., 2019). From a governance perspective, trustworthiness requires not only accurate information but also visible procedures through which information can be examined, challenged, and verified. The emphasis on standardized reporting is particularly important because uniform structures can facilitate comparison among competing analyses, clarify assumptions, and allow decision-makers to distinguish between empirical findings, interpretations, and recommendations.



The sixth category concerned protecting knowledge from interests and biases. The participants indicated that scientifically credible reports may nevertheless be affected by political orientations, organizational interests, selective presentation, lobbying, or the strategic framing of evidence. The study therefore identified the documentation of conflicting viewpoints, disclosure of stakeholder interests, separation of expert analysis from political positions, and assessment of informational impartiality as essential practices. This finding supports Parkhurst's argument that improving evidence use requires attention not only to the quality of evidence but also to the governance of evidence, including the rules and institutional processes through which evidence is selected, interpreted, and presented (Parkhurst, 2016). It also accords with pragmatic accounts of policy complexity, which recognize that evidence enters environments characterized by competing values, power relations, and legitimate disagreement (Ansell & Geyer, 2017). In legislatures, transparency regarding interests is particularly important because the same evidence may be framed differently by actors seeking different distributive outcomes. Research on legislative transparency similarly emphasizes that public confidence depends on the visibility of decision rationales, informational foundations, and influential interests (Khalili & Simbar, 2022). The findings therefore suggest that knowledge integrity should be institutionalized through explicit disclosure requirements, balanced presentation of alternative interpretations, and procedures for independent review.

The seventh finding concerned reducing the gap between knowledge and decision-making. Participants reported that many expert reports are lengthy, highly technical, delivered too late, or insufficiently aligned with the specific stage of the policy process. Consequently, potentially valuable knowledge remains unused because it is not translated into a form compatible with the cognitive and temporal constraints of legislators. The identified practices of preparing policy briefs, translating specialized knowledge into decision-support language, developing time-sensitive knowledge packages, and prioritizing information according to the policymaking stage directly respond to this gap. This result strongly aligns with research showing that evidence use is hindered by poor communication, limited timeliness, differences in professional language, and weak alignment between research products and policy needs (Oliver et al., 2014). It also corresponds with research-oriented reflection frameworks that encourage researchers to identify intended users, policy contexts, communication requirements, and opportunities for engagement before producing knowledge outputs (Hegger et al., 2016). The finding that knowledge requirements differ across policymaking stages is compatible with policy-cycle models, according to which problem identification, option formulation, adoption, implementation, and evaluation each require different types of information (Howlett et al., 2015). In urgent situations, the value of rapid and structured knowledge translation becomes even greater, as demonstrated by multi-stage methods developed to provide timely policy advice during crises (Velarde Cr     et al., 2024).

The eighth category, institutional learning and knowledge feedback, completed the cyclical model developed in this study. Participants emphasized that parliamentary knowledge support should not end when a law is approved. The implementation of laws generates new evidence regarding feasibility, effectiveness, unintended consequences, stakeholder responses, and contextual change. Without mechanisms for monitoring implementation, evaluating the influence of knowledge on decisions, documenting lessons learned, and revising decisions in light of new evidence, the parliament cannot learn systematically from its own actions. This result supports the view that evidence-informed policymaking should be understood as an iterative process rather than a one-time application of research (Head, 2016). It also reflects the policy-cycle perspective, in which evaluation and feedback generate information that reshapes problem definitions and future policy formulation (Howlett et al., 2015). Good-governance research in Iran has similarly emphasized the importance of evaluation, accountability, responsiveness, and feedback for improving the quality of the policy cycle (Azadiyan & Vosough Moghadam, 2023). The present findings extend this argument by positioning feedback as a knowledge-management process through which implementation experience is converted into reusable organizational knowledge.

Taken together, the eight categories demonstrate that parliamentary knowledge management has a systemic and cyclical character. Knowledge is initially co-created by multiple actors, integrated across sources, extracted from individual interactions, embedded in institutional memory, assessed for credibility, protected against bias, translated into usable decision-support products, and subsequently revised through institutional learning. The resulting model is consistent with recent bibliometric evidence indicating that knowledge management support for public policymaking is an expanding but fragmented field in need of integrated and context-sensitive conceptual frameworks (Shadmanfar et al., 2026). It also complements research on the



Iranian policy advisory system, which has identified an emerging role for technical expertise within a context that remains influenced by political and institutional constraints (Emamian & Bagheripour, 2024). Behavioral factors affecting Iranian legislative processes may also shape the search for knowledge, the interpretation of evidence, and the responsiveness of representatives to different sources of advice (Rafiei Lak et al., 2024). The contribution of the present study lies in integrating these otherwise separate concerns within a coherent model centered on the institutional conditions required to create credible, integrated, usable, and sustainable decision-support knowledge.

The findings should be interpreted in light of several limitations. First, the study was conducted within the institutional context of the Islamic Consultative Assembly of Iran, and the categories identified may reflect specific legislative structures, political arrangements, administrative procedures, and knowledge cultures that limit direct transferability to other parliaments. Second, the data were based primarily on participants' perceptions and retrospective accounts, which may have been influenced by selective memory, organizational position, or reluctance to discuss politically sensitive issues. Third, although participants were selected from several relevant groups, some actors involved in parliamentary knowledge production and use, including civil society organizations, professional associations, media representatives, executive-agency officials, and organized stakeholder groups, were not represented to the same extent. Fourth, the study developed a conceptual model but did not quantitatively test the relationships among its components or evaluate the relative importance of individual policies and practices. Finally, the research focused on institutional requirements and did not directly assess existing information systems, organizational workflows, resource constraints, or the implementation feasibility of each proposed practice.

Future studies should test and refine the proposed model in different legislative and policy contexts. Quantitative research could develop valid measures for the eight main components and examine their direct and indirect effects on legislative quality, evidence use, institutional learning, and policy effectiveness. Comparative studies across national parliaments, local councils, and specialized policymaking institutions could determine which elements are context-specific and which are broadly applicable. Longitudinal studies could examine how knowledge-management reforms influence parliamentary decision-making across successive legislative terms. Further research should also investigate the roles of organizational culture, political trust, leadership support, technological readiness, and incentives for knowledge sharing in the implementation of the model. Action research and pilot interventions could evaluate specific practices, such as policy knowledge dossiers, expert-network platforms, standardized evidence briefs, or legislative lessons-learned systems. Greater attention should also be devoted to stakeholder knowledge, citizen participation, artificial intelligence-assisted knowledge retrieval, and the ethical risks associated with algorithmic filtering and summarization of parliamentary evidence.

The Islamic Consultative Assembly should establish an integrated knowledge-governance framework that assigns clear institutional responsibility for the production, validation, integration, translation, preservation, and evaluation of parliamentary knowledge. A shared knowledge repository should connect legislative records, research reports, oversight data, committee documents, implementation feedback, and stakeholder submissions through consistent metadata and retrieval standards. Policy briefs and time-sensitive knowledge packages should be prepared according to standardized templates that identify sources, methods, assumptions, stakeholder interests, competing interpretations, and implications for decision-making. Structured mechanisms should be created to transfer knowledge between parliamentary terms, including orientation programs, mentorship arrangements, policy-specific knowledge dossiers, and documentation of decision rationales and lessons learned. Permanent expert networks and communities of practice should connect representatives and committees with universities, think tanks, former parliamentarians, and sectoral specialists. Finally, the implementation and outcomes of laws should be systematically monitored so that feedback is documented, reviewed, and reintegrated into future legislative deliberations, thereby transforming parliamentary knowledge management into a continuous cycle of evidence use, learning, and policy improvement.

Ethical Considerations

All procedures performed in this study were under the ethical standards.

Acknowledgments

Authors thank all who helped us through this study.



Conflict of Interest

The authors report no conflict of interest.

Funding/Financial Support

Page | 17 According to the authors, this article has no financial support.

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