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Forensic Science in the Arab World: Current Status, Challenges, and Future Directions

Reda Ibrahim[1], Yasir Alnafea[2] and Norhan Shoghy*[1]

[1]Economic Entomology Department, Kafrelsheikh University, Kafrelsheikh 33516, Egypt
[2]Department of Biology, College of Science, Taibah University, Madinah, Saudi Arabia.

*Corresponding author: Norhan Shoghy, *Email Address*: Norhan_Shoghy@agr.kfs.edu.eg

Abstract

Forensic science is a fundamental component of modern criminal justice systems, providing scientifically validated evidence for legal investigations. This review synthesizes evidence from 66 studies published between 2000 and 2025 to evaluate the current status of forensic science across Arab countries. Although the field has progressed in both theoretical knowledge and technological capabilities, considerable gaps remain between scientific advancement and practical implementation. The review examines the application of major disciplines, including DNA analysis, toxicology, digital forensics, and forensic entomology, within regional institutional and legal frameworks. Key challenges identified include fragmented governance, inadequate infrastructure, limited specialized expertise, weak integration between research and practice, and the absence of standardized protocols. The review also highlights emerging opportunities driven by technological innovation, capacity building, and regional cooperation. By synthesizing current evidence, the study proposes strategic directions to improve the effectiveness, standardization, and sustainability of forensic science systems in the Arab world, thereby strengthening evidence-based justice and enhancing public trust.

Keywords: Applied forensic science; forensic entomology; research–practice integration; forensic laboratories; legal frameworks; emerging technologies; Arab world

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1. Introduction

Forensic science is a multidisciplinary field that applies scientific principles and analytical methodologies to criminal investigations and the administration of justice. It integrates diverse disciplines, including biology, chemistry, medicine, anthropology, toxicology, and digital sciences, to generate objective and scientifically validated evidence for legal purposes. Over recent decades, forensic science has undergone substantial transformation driven by technological innovation, particularly in DNA profiling, forensic imaging, analytical instrumentation, and digital evidence analysis, resulting in major improvements in the accuracy, sensitivity, and reliability of criminal investigations [1–4].

Globally, forensic science has evolved from conventional descriptive methodologies toward highly advanced, technology-driven systems. The introduction of next-generation sequencing (NGS), rapid DNA technologies, and high-throughput analytical platforms has revolutionized forensic biology and human identification by enhancing analytical precision and evidential discrimination [4–6]. In parallel, the integration of artificial intelligence (AI), machine learning, and automated analytical systems has improved the interpretation of complex forensic datasets, including pattern recognition, probabilistic evidence evaluation, and digital evidence analysis [7–9]. Despite these scientific advances, considerable disparities remain in the implementation of modern forensic technologies, particularly in developing regions where financial, technical, institutional, and regulatory limitations continue to restrict forensic capacity and operational efficiency [10,11].

In the Arab world, forensic science has gained increasing recognition as an essential component of modern criminal justice systems. Several Arab countries have invested in establishing forensic laboratories, medico-legal institutes, and specialized academic and training programs aimed at strengthening national forensic capabilities [12–14]. Regional initiatives, collaborative training programs, and partnerships with international organizations further demonstrate a growing institutional commitment to advancing forensic science throughout the Middle East and North Africa [15,16]. Nevertheless, the development of forensic science across Arab countries remains heterogeneous, with substantial differences in infrastructure, technological resources, funding availability, research capacity, and human resource development [14].

Recent studies have documented notable progress in several core forensic disciplines, particularly forensic DNA analysis, toxicology, pathology, and digital forensics, especially in Egypt and Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries [15,17–20]. However, these advancements are frequently

constrained by limited laboratory resources, inconsistent accreditation systems, lack of standardized operational protocols, and insufficient integration between academic research and practical forensic application [20,21]. Furthermore, important gaps persist in specialized disciplines such as forensic anthropology and forensic entomology, where region-specific databases, localized validation studies, and specialized expertise remain limited [21–23].

One of the major challenges facing forensic science in the Arab world is the persistent gap between theoretical advancement and practical implementation. Although academic institutions and research centers have contributed significantly to the expansion of forensic knowledge and scientific output, the translation of these advancements into effective operational forensic services remains inconsistent. This disconnect is influenced by multiple factors, including insufficient funding, shortage of specialized expertise, fragmented institutional governance, weak research–practice integration, and variability in legal and regulatory frameworks governing forensic evidence [10–12,15].

Therefore, this review critically examines the current status of forensic science in the Arab world, with particular emphasis on the relationship between theoretical foundations and practical implementation. It further explores major institutional and scientific challenges, emerging technological opportunities, and future strategic directions for strengthening forensic science systems throughout the region. By synthesizing current literature and regional developments, this review aims to provide a comprehensive framework for improving the integration of scientific innovation into forensic practice and enhancing the effectiveness, reliability, and sustainability of evidence-based justice systems in the Arab world.

2. Literature Search and Review Methodology

This review was conducted using a structured literature review approach to ensure comprehensive identification, evaluation, and synthesis of publications addressing forensic science in the Arab world. The methodological framework was informed by the principles of the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) guidelines to support transparent literature identification, screening, selection, and reporting processes [24,25]. In addition, methodological considerations from the Cochrane Handbook for Systematic Reviews were consulted to improve consistency and analytical rigor during study evaluation and synthesis [26].

2.1 Search Strategy

A comprehensive and systematic literature search was conducted across multiple electronic databases, including Scopus, Web of Science, PubMed, and Google Scholar. The search covered publications

from January 2000 to December 2025 to capture both foundational developments and recent advancements in forensic science relevant to the Arab world and the Middle East and North Africa.

Search queries were developed using Boolean operators (AND, OR) and combinations of keywords including “forensic science,” “Arab world,” “Middle East,” “forensic laboratories,” “DNA profiling,” “forensic toxicology,” “digital forensics,” “forensic entomology,” “forensic anthropology,” and “theory–practice gap.” Database-specific filters and search refinement tools were applied where appropriate to improve retrieval precision and relevance. Manual screening of reference lists from selected publications was also performed to identify additional relevant studies and institutional reports not retrieved during the primary database search.

2.2 Eligibility Criteria

Studies were selected according to predefined inclusion and exclusion criteria to ensure methodological consistency and relevance to the objectives of this review. Eligible publications included peer-reviewed journal articles, academic books, technical reports, and official institutional publications addressing forensic science disciplines, forensic systems, policies, or practical applications within the Arab world or the broader Middle East and North Africa. Only studies published in English and available in full text were considered for inclusion. Publications were excluded if they were unrelated to forensic science or criminal investigation, consisted solely of conference abstracts, editorials, or opinion-based commentaries without substantial analytical or empirical content, lacked methodological clarity, or represented duplicate records identified across multiple databases. The screening process was conducted progressively through title review, abstract evaluation, and full-text assessment to ensure scientific relevance and consistency.

2.3 Study Selection Process (PRISMA Flow)

The study selection process followed a PRISMA-guided workflow to ensure systematic identification and screening of relevant literature [24,25]. A total of 742 records were initially identified through database searching. Following the removal of 168 duplicate records, 574 publications remained for title and abstract screening. During this stage, 396 records were excluded because they did not meet the scope or relevance criteria of the review.

The remaining 178 studies underwent full-text evaluation. Of these, 112 publications were excluded due to insufficient regional relevance, limited methodological rigor, duplication of findings, or

inadequate focus on forensic science applications. Ultimately, 66 studies satisfied the inclusion criteria and were incorporated into the final qualitative synthesis.

The complete literature screening and study selection workflow based on the PRISMA framework is illustrated in Figure 1.

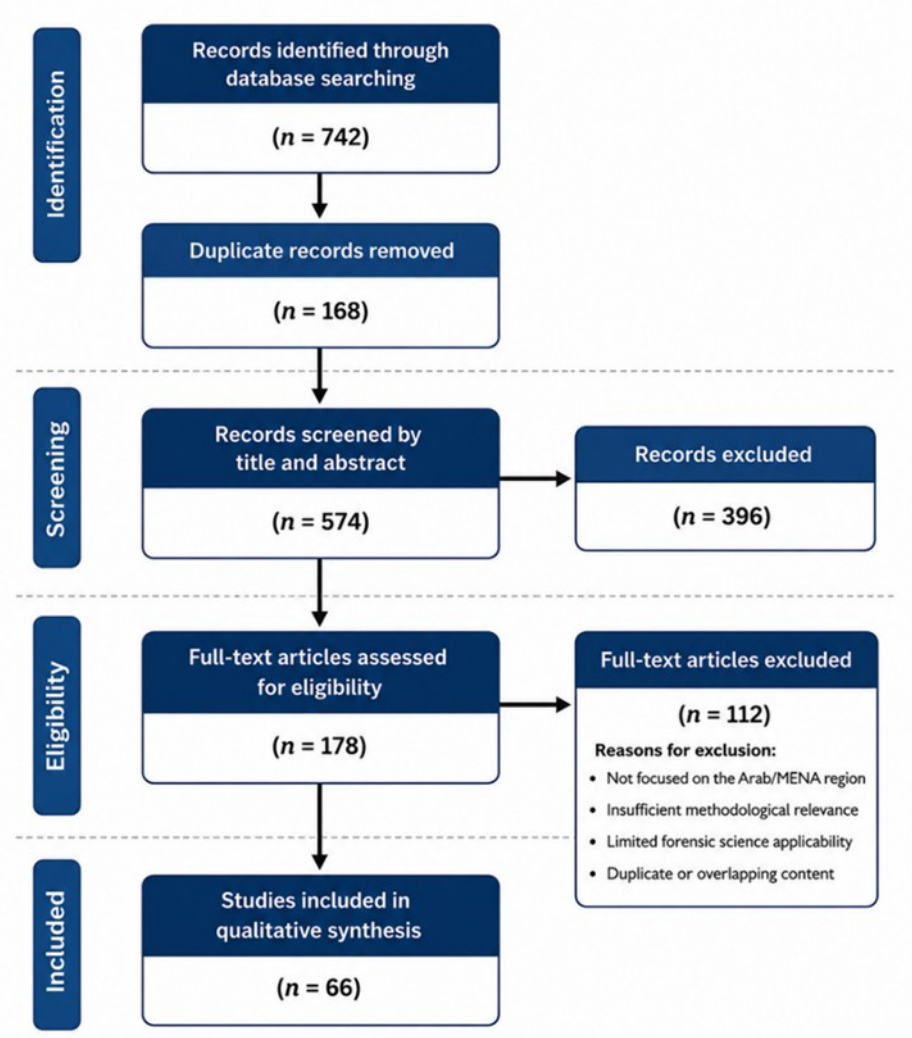


Figure 1. Flow diagram illustrating the literature identification, screening, eligibility assessment, and final study selection process used in this review.

2.4 Data Extraction

Data extraction was conducted using a standardized and structured approach to ensure consistency across all included studies. Information systematically collected from each publication included the authorship and year of publication, country or regional focus, forensic discipline addressed, study design, methodological approach, study objectives, principal findings, and identified limitations or

challenges. Particular attention was given to information related to the relationship between theoretical advancement and practical implementation in forensic science. This approach enabled a comprehensive evaluation of the theory–practice gap and facilitated comparative analysis of institutional, scientific, and operational aspects of forensic science systems within the Arab world. Representative studies covering diverse forensic disciplines, countries, and thematic areas were selected for tabular presentation (Table 1) to provide an illustrative overview of the evidence base without reproducing all included studies.

2.5 Data Synthesis and Thematic Analysis

A qualitative thematic synthesis approach was employed to analyse and interpret the extracted data. The included studies were systematically organized into major thematic categories, including scientific foundations of forensic science, practical forensic applications in the Arab world, institutional and infrastructural development, governance and legal frameworks, challenges and limitations, and future directions and strategic recommendations. This thematic analytical framework facilitated the identification of recurring patterns, regional disparities, emerging trends, and critical knowledge gaps. Particular emphasis was placed on evaluating the integration of scientific research and technological innovation into operational forensic practice and evidence-based judicial systems within the regional context.

2.6 Quality Assessment

The methodological quality of the included studies was critically evaluated using general quality indicators commonly applied in qualitative and narrative systematic reviews [26]. The assessment focused on several criteria, including clarity of research objectives, robustness of study design, transparency of methodology and data reporting, analytical depth, and overall relevance to the objectives of the review. Studies demonstrating limited methodological rigor, insufficient analytical detail, or inadequate transparency were interpreted cautiously during data synthesis to minimize potential bias and overgeneralization. This quality assessment process contributed to strengthening the reliability and scientific consistency of the review findings.

2.7 Limitations

Several limitations associated with this review should be acknowledged. First, restricting the search to English-language publications may have resulted in the exclusion of relevant studies published in Arabic or other regional languages. Second, variability in study design, methodological quality, and reporting standards across the included literature may affect direct comparability between studies.

In addition, publication bias remains a potential limitation because studies reporting significant findings are more likely to be published and indexed in major databases. Finally, the availability of region-specific forensic data remains limited in several specialized disciplines, particularly forensic entomology and forensic anthropology, which may restrict the comprehensiveness of some regional analyses.

A representative selection of key studies included in the review is presented in Table 1. These studies were chosen to illustrate the major forensic disciplines, geographical coverage, research themes, and implementation challenges identified across the 66 studies included in the qualitative synthesis.

Table 1. Representative studies included in the review, illustrating major forensic science disciplines, key findings, and identified challenges across the Arab world.

No.	Reference (Author, Year)	Country/ Region	Forensic Discipline	Study Design	Study Objective	Key Findings	Identified Limitations / Gaps
1	Al-Amad et al. (2019)	Middle East	General Forensic Science	Review	Assessment of forensic system development	Increasing institutional recognition of forensic science	Absence of unified regional standards
2	Alenezi & Almutairi (2021)	GCC Countries	Forensic Education	Cross-sectional study	Evaluation of educational and training programs	Expansion of academic and training initiatives	Limited integration with practical applications
3	Almazrouei et al. (2021)	United Arab Emirates	Forensic Services	Descriptive study	Analysis of forensic laboratory infrastructure	Establishment of advanced forensic facilities	Weak linkage between research and practice
4	El-Sayed et al. (2020)	Egypt	Forensic Medicine	Review	Evaluation of medico-legal services	Notable improvement in forensic medical services	Constraints in resources and capacity
5	El-Ashmawy et al. (2021)	Egypt	Forensic Toxicology	Experimental study	Investigation of toxicological analytical methods	Advancement in detection and analytical techniques	Lack of methodological standardization

No.	Reference (Author, Year)	Country/ Region	Forensic Discipline	Study Design	Study Objective	Key Findings	Identified Limitations / Gaps
6	Alharbi et al. (2022)	Saudi Arabia	Forensic Toxicology	Review	Assessment of toxicological practices	Expansion of forensic toxicology services	Shortage of specialized professionals
7	Al-Qahtani et al. (2019)	Saudi Arabia	DNA Analysis	Case study	Application of DNA profiling in forensic casework	Increased utilization in identification	Limited nationwide implementation
8	Blau (2016)	Middle East	Forensic Anthropology	Review	Human identification in regional contexts	Provides valuable anthropological insights	Lack of comprehensive regional databases
9	Al-Mesbah et al. (2012)	Arabian Peninsula	Forensic Entomology	Review	Review of entomological applications	Establishment of baseline regional knowledge	Scarcity of applied field studies
10	El-Azazy (2018)	Egypt	Forensic Entomology	Review	Evaluation of discipline status	Emerging recognition of forensic entomology	Limited operational integration
11	Natsheh (2025)	Arab world	Forensic Policy & Systems	Technical report	Capacity-building initiatives	Support for institutional development	Gaps in implementation and sustainability
12	Mansour et al. (2025)	Arab world	Forensic Systems	Technical report	Regional coordination efforts	Enhanced international cooperation	Fragmentation across national systems
13	Al-Shammari et al. (2020)	Gulf Region	Forensic Laboratories	Descriptive study	Infrastructure and system analysis	Expansion of laboratory capabilities	Lack of harmonized operational standards
14	Hassab El-Nabi et al. (2019)	Egypt	DNA Profiling	Experimental study	Evaluation of forensic DNA applications	Demonstrated effectiveness in identification	Limited accessibility and coverage

No.	Reference (Author, Year)	Country/ Region	Forensic Discipline	Study Design	Study Objective	Key Findings	Identified Limitations / Gaps
15	Charabidze et al. (2020)	Global (Arab world)	Forensic Entomology	Experimental study	Study of decomposition ecology	Provides important ecological insights	Limited regional-specific validation

3. Scientific Foundations and Emerging Trends in Forensic Science

Forensic science is founded on a multidisciplinary scientific framework that integrates principles from biological, chemical, medical, physical, and digital sciences to support criminal investigations and judicial processes. Its theoretical foundations are based on the systematic collection, preservation, analysis, interpretation, and presentation of physical and biological evidence using scientifically validated methodologies. Central to forensic science is the principle of scientific objectivity, which requires that conclusions be derived from reproducible, reliable, and evidence-based analytical procedures rather than subjective interpretation [1–3,6].

One of the most fundamental principles underpinning forensic science is Locard's exchange principle, which states that contact between individuals, objects, or environments results in the transfer of material evidence. This principle constitutes the scientific basis for evidence recovery, crime scene reconstruction, and trace evidence analysis, and it continues to guide the development of modern forensic methodologies across multiple forensic disciplines [1–3]. Over recent decades, forensic science has evolved considerably through the integration of advanced molecular, analytical, computational, and imaging technologies, leading to significant improvements in evidential sensitivity, analytical precision, and interpretative reliability [4–9].

3.1 Major Forensic Science Disciplines

3.1.1 Forensic Biology and DNA Technologies

Forensic biology, particularly forensic DNA analysis, represents one of the most transformative advancements in modern forensic science. The scientific basis of DNA profiling lies in the uniqueness and stability of genetic material, allowing highly accurate identification of individuals and biological relationships. Techniques such as polymerase chain reaction (PCR), short tandem repeat (STR) profiling, and mitochondrial DNA analysis have revolutionized criminal investigations by facilitating suspect identification, kinship analysis, disaster victim identification, and biological evidence comparison [4–6].

Recent technological developments, including next-generation sequencing (NGS), rapid DNA systems, and high-throughput genomic analysis, have further enhanced analytical sensitivity, discrimination power, and processing efficiency (Figure 2). These technologies have expanded the capability of forensic laboratories to analyse highly degraded or low-template DNA samples while improving the speed and reliability of forensic genetic investigations [5,6].

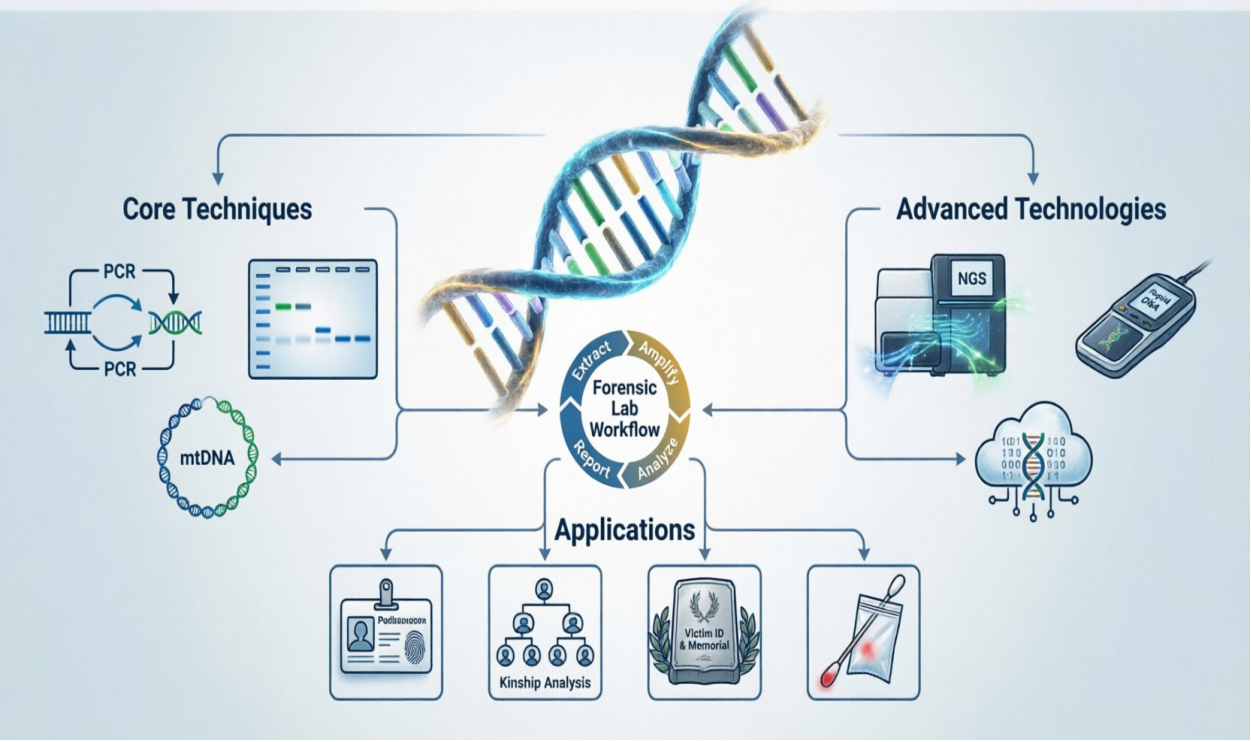


Figure 2. Overview of forensic DNA technologies illustrating the relationship between core genetic analysis techniques (PCR and STR profiling), advanced genomic technologies (next-generation sequencing and rapid DNA systems), and their major forensic applications in human identification, kinship analysis, disaster victim identification, and criminal investigations.

3.1.2 Advances in Forensic Toxicology

Forensic toxicology focuses on the detection, identification, and interpretation of drugs, poisons, alcohol, and toxic substances in biological specimens for medico-legal purposes. The discipline is theoretically grounded in pharmacokinetics and pharmacodynamics, which describe the absorption, distribution, metabolism, and excretion of chemical substances within the human body. Advances in analytical instrumentation, particularly chromatography, mass spectrometry, and immunoassay technologies, have substantially improved the sensitivity, specificity, and reliability of toxicological investigations [18,19].

Modern forensic toxicology also increasingly incorporates molecular and metabolomic approaches to improve detection capabilities and support interpretation of intoxication, poisoning, and drug-related deaths. These developments have strengthened the role of toxicological evidence in criminal investigations, forensic pathology, and public health surveillance (Figure 3).

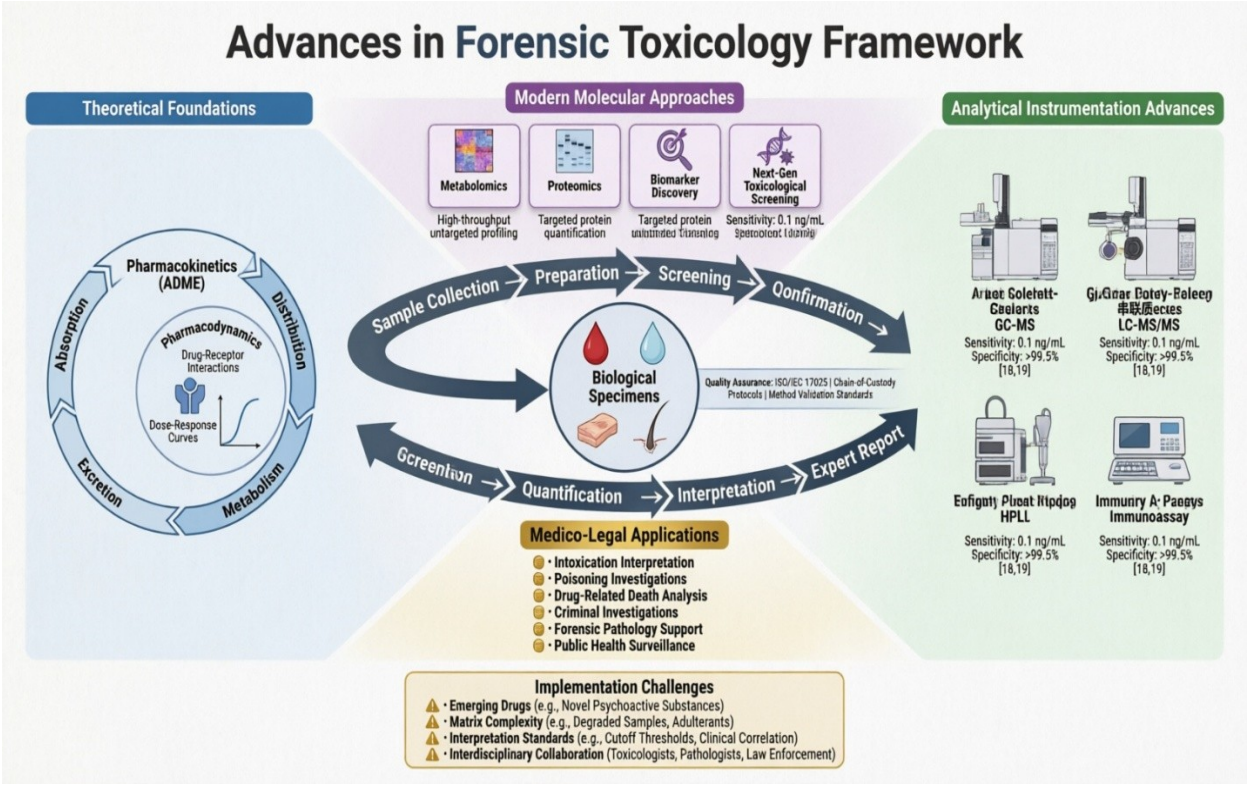


Figure 3. Conceptual framework of modern forensic toxicology showing analytical workflows, advanced instrumentation, molecular approaches, and major medico-legal applications in forensic investigations.

3.1.3 Forensic Entomology and Postmortem Investigations

Forensic entomology involves the application of insect biology and ecology to medico-legal investigations, particularly for estimating the post-mortem interval (PMI) and reconstructing environmental conditions associated with death. The discipline is theoretically based on insect developmental biology, ecological succession, and species-specific colonization patterns on decomposing remains. Necrophagous insects, especially species belonging to Diptera and Coleoptera, colonize remains in relatively predictable successional sequences that can provide valuable temporal information during forensic investigations [22,23].

Temperature-dependent developmental models and species-specific growth rates constitute essential theoretical components of forensic entomology. When integrated with environmental and climatic data, these models allow increasingly accurate estimation of PMI under diverse environmental conditions [33]. Despite its scientific robustness and growing international recognition, forensic entomology remains underutilized in many regions, including parts of the Arab world, primarily due to limited expertise, inadequate regional databases, and insufficient field validation studies adapted to local climatic conditions (Figure 4).

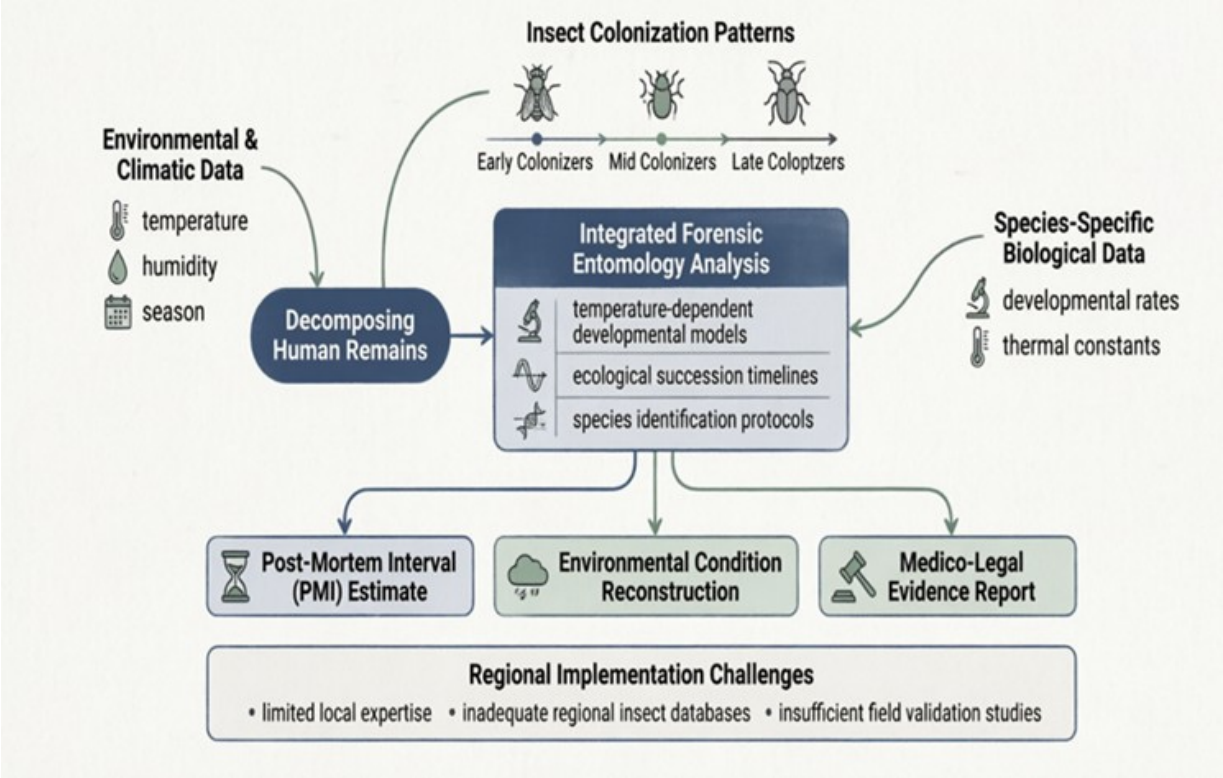


Figure 4. Conceptual framework illustrating the integration of environmental variables, insect succession patterns, and species-specific developmental data in forensic entomology for post-mortem interval (PMI) estimation and medico-legal investigations.

3.1.4 Forensic Anthropology

Forensic anthropology applies principles of human osteology and skeletal biology to the identification and analysis of human remains. Theoretical approaches within this discipline include estimation of age, sex, ancestry, stature, and trauma interpretation based on skeletal characteristics. Advances in imaging technologies, three-dimensional reconstruction, and statistical modelling have substantially improved the accuracy and reliability of skeletal identification and forensic reconstruction [16,21].

Forensic anthropology plays a particularly important role in mass disaster investigations, unidentified human remains cases, archaeological contexts, and humanitarian investigations involving conflict and migration. However, effective application of anthropological methodologies requires population-specific reference data and specialized expertise, which remain limited in several parts of the Arab world.

3.1.5 Digital and Cyber Forensics

The rapid expansion of digital technologies and cyber-dependent activities has positioned digital forensics as a critical discipline within modern forensic science. Digital and cyber forensics focus on the identification, acquisition, preservation, analysis, and interpretation of electronic data while ensuring evidential integrity and legal admissibility. The discipline encompasses computer forensics, mobile device analysis, network investigations, cloud forensics, and cybercrime investigation [7,9,15]. Advanced analytical techniques, including data recovery systems, network traffic analysis, malware analysis, and artificial intelligence-assisted digital investigations, have significantly enhanced the ability to investigate cybercrime and digital evidence. However, the rapidly evolving nature of cyber threats continues to create major technical and legal challenges for forensic practitioners worldwide (Figure 5).

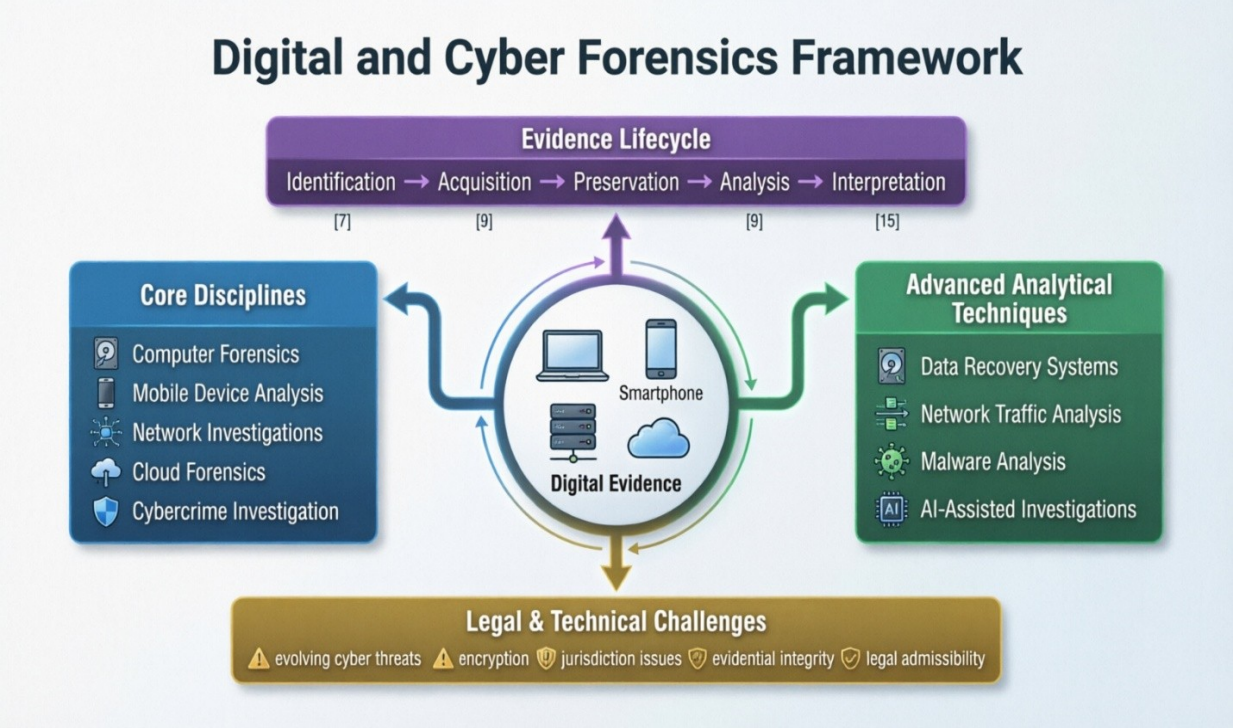


Figure 5. Framework of digital and cyber forensics illustrating the electronic evidence lifecycle, core investigative domains, advanced analytical techniques, and major legal and technical challenges.

3.2 Integration of Theoretical Advances into Practice

The advancement of forensic science is closely linked to the continuous development of scientific theories, analytical methodologies, and technological innovation. However, the practical effectiveness of forensic science depends on the successful translation of these theoretical advances into standardized operational procedures and evidence-based forensic practices. This integration requires not only advanced technological infrastructure but also qualified personnel, quality assurance systems, accreditation frameworks, and legal regulations supporting the admissibility and reliability of forensic evidence [10,11].

Recent developments increasingly emphasize the incorporation of artificial intelligence, machine learning, automated analytical systems, and data-driven approaches into forensic investigations. These technologies have improved pattern recognition, probabilistic interpretation, evidence classification, and complex data analysis, thereby enhancing forensic decision-making processes and analytical efficiency [7–9]. Such innovations demonstrate the dynamic nature of forensic science as a continuously evolving discipline responding to scientific progress, technological transformation, and emerging societal challenges.

3.3 Relevance to the Arab World Context

Although the theoretical foundations of forensic science are well established internationally, their practical implementation within the Arab world remains variable and uneven. Differences in educational systems, institutional infrastructure, research capacity, funding availability, and technological resources significantly influence the extent to which scientific advances are translated into operational forensic practice across the region [12–16].

Specialized disciplines such as forensic entomology, forensic anthropology, and digital forensics particularly require region-specific databases, localized validation studies, and advanced technical training, which are still under development in many Arab countries [15,21–23]. Consequently, understanding the scientific foundations and emerging trends of forensic science is essential for identifying gaps between theoretical advancement and practical implementation. Strengthening this connection represents a critical step toward improving the effectiveness, reliability, and sustainability of forensic science systems and enhancing their contribution to evidence-based justice throughout the Arab world.

4. Forensic Science Practice in the Arab World

The practical application of forensic science in the Arab world has undergone substantial transformation during the past two decades, reflecting increasing governmental recognition of the importance of forensic evidence in criminal investigations and judicial decision-making. Several Arab countries have established specialized forensic laboratories, medico-legal institutes, and forensic units within law enforcement agencies to improve investigative efficiency and strengthen evidence-based justice systems. Nevertheless, the degree of technological advancement, operational effectiveness, and institutional integration varies considerably across the region. While some countries have achieved notable progress in adopting modern forensic technologies and accreditation systems, others continue to face significant challenges related to infrastructure, workforce development, and quality assurance. Concerns regarding scientific reliability, procedural standardization, and consistency in forensic practice therefore remain important issues within regional forensic systems [10,11].

4.1 Institutional and Laboratory Infrastructure

Several Arab countries, particularly those within the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), have invested substantially in the development of modern forensic infrastructure. Advanced forensic laboratories equipped with contemporary analytical technologies have been established in countries such as Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and Qatar. These facilities commonly include specialized units for DNA profiling, forensic toxicology, digital forensics, and trace evidence analysis, reflecting increasing alignment with international forensic standards and accreditation frameworks [13,20]. In contrast, many countries in North Africa and other parts of the Arab region continue to experience limitations related to laboratory capacity, outdated instrumentation, insufficient maintenance systems, and restricted financial resources. In Egypt, for example, forensic services are largely centralized within governmental institutions, resulting in high case burdens and delays in evidence processing. Despite these challenges, gradual improvements have emerged through modernization initiatives, infrastructure development programs, and increasing academic participation in forensic research and training activities [17,18].

4.2 Human Capacity and Training

The effectiveness and reliability of forensic science systems depend heavily on the availability of qualified and well-trained professionals. Although several Arab universities and training institutions have introduced forensic science programs and specialized postgraduate degrees, shortages of highly trained personnel remain evident across numerous forensic disciplines. This shortage is particularly pronounced in emerging and highly specialized fields such as digital forensics, forensic genomics, forensic anthropology, and forensic entomology [13,14]. Regional and international organizations

have contributed to workforce development through workshops, certification programs, and collaborative training initiatives designed to enhance technical competency and professional standards. However, disparities in educational quality, limited access to continuous professional development, and insufficient practical laboratory training continue to hinder the establishment of uniformly qualified forensic personnel throughout the region. Strengthening competency-based education and improving practical training opportunities remain essential priorities for sustainable forensic capacity building [14,31].

4.3 Legal and Regulatory Frameworks

Legal and regulatory systems governing forensic science differ considerably among Arab countries, influencing both the quality and admissibility of forensic evidence in judicial proceedings. Some countries have implemented relatively advanced frameworks regulating evidence collection, laboratory accreditation, chain-of-custody procedures, and expert testimony. In other jurisdictions, however, forensic legislation remains fragmented or insufficiently standardized, creating inconsistencies in forensic practice and reducing confidence in scientific evidence [27,29]. Efforts to harmonize forensic procedures with internationally recognized standards, including ISO/IEC 17025 accreditation and quality assurance protocols, have expanded in recent years, particularly within GCC countries. Nevertheless, implementation remains inconsistent across the region, and many laboratories continue to operate without comprehensive accreditation or standardized validation systems [29,31]. Strengthening legal frameworks, promoting laboratory accreditation, and enhancing judicial understanding of forensic methodologies are therefore essential for improving the scientific credibility and legal reliability of forensic evidence throughout the Arab world.

4.4 Application of Forensic Disciplines in Practice

The practical application of forensic disciplines within the Arab world varies according to national priorities, economic resources, and institutional capabilities. DNA analysis and forensic toxicology are among the most widely implemented forensic disciplines, particularly in countries with advanced laboratory infrastructure and governmental support. These disciplines are routinely applied in criminal investigations, human identification, disaster victim identification, and toxicological examinations associated with drug-related offenses and suspicious deaths [17–19].

In contrast, other disciplines such as forensic anthropology and forensic entomology remain comparatively underdeveloped and underutilized in many Arab countries. The limited operational integration of forensic entomology is primarily attributed to insufficient regional entomological

databases, scarcity of field validation studies, and lack of specialized expertise [22,23]. This limitation is particularly significant given the climatic diversity of the Arab region, which strongly influences decomposition patterns and insect succession dynamics. Similarly, forensic anthropology faces challenges related to the absence of comprehensive skeletal reference collections and population-specific databases [21]. Digital forensics, however, has experienced rapid growth in response to increasing cybercrime activities and the expanding role of electronic evidence in criminal investigations. Several Arab countries have established specialized cybercrime and digital forensic units, although the rapid evolution of digital technologies continues to create ongoing challenges in training, infrastructure development, and technical adaptation [15].

4.5 Research–Practice Integration

A major challenge affecting forensic science practice in the Arab world is the limited integration between academic research and operational forensic institutions. Although universities and research centres increasingly contribute to forensic science research, the translation of scientific findings into routine forensic procedures remains relatively weak [11,31]. This disconnect is often associated with institutional fragmentation, limited communication between researchers and forensic practitioners, and insufficient funding for applied forensic research. Consequently, innovative analytical methods and region-specific scientific findings are not consistently incorporated into operational forensic workflows.

Strengthening collaboration among universities, forensic laboratories, judicial authorities, and law enforcement agencies is therefore essential for improving the practical application of forensic science. Joint research programs, collaborative training initiatives, and shared scientific databases could significantly enhance evidence-based forensic practice while promoting the development of standardized operational procedures adapted to regional conditions [27,30]. Enhancing research–practice integration would also improve the capacity of forensic institutions to respond effectively to emerging technological and investigative challenges.

4.6 Regional Disparities and Development Gaps

The Arab world is characterized by substantial disparities in forensic science development, technological integration, and institutional capacity. While some countries have achieved advanced levels of forensic modernization and accreditation, others remain in earlier stages of forensic system development due to economic limitations, political instability, and insufficient educational

infrastructure [12,31]. These disparities influence the quality, accessibility, and reliability of forensic services across the region.

Addressing these development gaps requires coordinated regional strategies focused on infrastructure investment, workforce development, scientific standardization, and knowledge exchange. Regional cooperation initiatives involving collaborative research, professional networking, shared databases, and harmonized accreditation systems could play an important role in reducing disparities and promoting sustainable forensic development throughout the Arab world [27,30]. Strengthening intergovernmental collaboration and institutional partnerships would also facilitate the dissemination of best practices and support the establishment of more consistent and scientifically reliable forensic systems across the region.

5. Gap Between Theory and Practice in Forensic Science

Despite the considerable advancement of forensic science as a multidisciplinary and technology-driven field, a substantial gap continues to exist between theoretical development and practical implementation, particularly within the Arab world. Although modern forensic research has generated highly sophisticated analytical techniques and scientifically validated methodologies, their effective application in operational forensic systems remains inconsistent across many Arab countries. This disparity limits the efficiency of forensic investigations, weakens the reliability of scientific evidence in judicial proceedings, and reduces the overall contribution of forensic science to evidence-based justice systems [10,11].

5.1 Nature of the Theory–Practice Gap

The theory–practice gap in forensic science refers to the disconnect between scientifically established forensic methodologies and their actual implementation in routine forensic casework. Theoretical forensic frameworks emphasize scientific validity, reproducibility, standardization, and evidence-based interpretation. In practice, however, the application of these principles is often constrained by institutional, economic, technical, and administrative limitations [15]. Consequently, many advanced forensic methods remain inconsistently applied or unavailable in operational settings. Within the Arab world, this gap is reflected in unequal technological adoption, inconsistent laboratory standards, and limited incorporation of research findings into forensic procedures and investigative workflows [12,31].

5.2 Technological and Infrastructure Constraints

One of the principal factors contributing to the theory–practice gap is the unequal availability of advanced forensic technologies and infrastructure. Although sophisticated forensic methodologies such as next-generation DNA sequencing, automated fingerprint identification systems, digital forensic software, and AI-assisted analytical tools are increasingly recognized as essential components of modern forensic science, their implementation requires substantial financial investment, technical maintenance, and specialized expertise [5–7]. Many forensic laboratories in developing Arab countries continue to face limitations related to outdated equipment, inadequate maintenance systems, insufficient laboratory space, and restricted technological upgrading. As a result, operational forensic practice often relies heavily on conventional analytical methods that may be less efficient, less sensitive, or less standardized than contemporary technologies [20,27].

5.3 Human Resource and Expertise Limitations

The shortage of highly specialized forensic professionals represents another major challenge limiting the translation of scientific theory into operational practice. Modern forensic science increasingly depends on interdisciplinary expertise involving molecular biology, bioinformatics, toxicology, digital technologies, entomology, and statistical interpretation. However, many Arab countries continue to experience insufficient availability of adequately trained specialists in disciplines such as forensic anthropology, forensic entomology, digital forensics, and forensic genomics [13,16]. Limited opportunities for advanced professional training, continuing education, and international scientific exchange further aggravate this problem. Consequently, even when modern forensic technologies are available, their effective application may remain restricted due to insufficient technical competency and lack of specialized expertise [14,31].

5.4 Weak Integration Between Research and Practice

A significant dimension of the theory–practice gap is the limited integration between academic forensic research and operational forensic institutions. Universities and research centers throughout the Arab world have increasingly contributed to forensic science research and scientific publication. Nevertheless, the practical translation of these scientific findings into standardized forensic procedures and routine investigative protocols remains relatively weak [11]. Institutional fragmentation, insufficient collaboration between researchers and forensic practitioners, and limited funding for applied forensic research frequently hinder the implementation of innovative methodologies within operational laboratories. Consequently, valuable scientific advances developed in academic settings are often not incorporated into routine forensic workflows or judicial applications. Strengthening

institutional collaboration and establishing formal partnerships between academic institutions and forensic laboratories are therefore essential for improving evidence-based forensic practice in the region [27,30].

5.5 Legal and Administrative Barriers

The effectiveness of forensic science is closely associated with the legal and administrative frameworks governing the collection, interpretation, and admissibility of scientific evidence. In several Arab countries, forensic legislation remains fragmented, inconsistently applied, or insufficiently developed, thereby limiting the implementation of scientifically advanced forensic methodologies [24,29]. The absence of standardized operational procedures, accreditation systems, and clear guidelines for expert testimony may reduce confidence in forensic evidence during judicial proceedings. Administrative barriers, including bureaucratic complexity, limited inter-agency coordination, and centralized decision-making structures, may further delay forensic investigations and reduce operational efficiency. In some jurisdictions, insufficient judicial understanding of scientific methodologies also affects the interpretation and utilization of forensic evidence in court [27,32]. Strengthening forensic legislation and improving judicial scientific literacy are therefore essential components of bridging the theory–practice gap.

5.6 Discipline-Specific Gaps: The Case of Forensic Entomology

The disparity between theoretical advancement and practical implementation is particularly evident in specialized forensic disciplines such as forensic entomology. Scientifically, forensic entomology is supported by well-established ecological and developmental models that enable estimation of post-mortem intervals through analysis of insect succession and developmental stages [22,33]. However, its operational application in the Arab world remains limited due to insufficient regional databases, scarcity of field validation studies, and limited integration into medico-legal investigations [23].

This challenge is especially important because climatic and environmental conditions in the Arab region differ substantially from those of temperate regions where most forensic entomological models were originally developed. Variations in temperature, humidity, seasonal patterns, and insect biodiversity significantly influence decomposition dynamics and insect colonization patterns [33]. Consequently, the absence of localized entomological datasets and region-specific developmental studies restricts the scientific reliability and judicial acceptance of entomological evidence in many Arab countries despite the strong theoretical foundation of the discipline.

5.7 Impact on Forensic Effectiveness

The persistence of the theory–practice gap has significant implications for the overall effectiveness and credibility of forensic science systems. Limitations in technological implementation, workforce expertise, and procedural standardization may result in delays in evidence processing, reduced analytical accuracy, and inconsistent interpretation of forensic findings. These deficiencies can ultimately affect the quality of criminal investigations and judicial outcomes by compromising the reliability, completeness, and scientific validity of forensic evidence [10,32]. Furthermore, insufficient integration of scientific innovation into operational forensic systems may reduce public confidence in forensic institutions and weaken the broader role of forensic science in supporting justice and public security.

5.8 Toward Bridging the Gap

Bridging the gap between theory and practice requires a comprehensive and multidisciplinary strategy involving scientific, institutional, educational, and legal reforms. Investment in modern forensic infrastructure, laboratory accreditation systems, and technological modernization is essential for improving operational capacity. Simultaneously, strengthening forensic education, postgraduate specialization, and continuous professional development programs is necessary to enhance workforce competency and sustainability [13,31].

Improved collaboration between academic researchers, forensic practitioners, judicial authorities, and law enforcement agencies is also critical for translating scientific innovation into operational practice. Joint research initiatives, applied forensic studies, and collaborative training programs could significantly enhance evidence-based forensic methodologies adapted to regional conditions [27,30]. Furthermore, harmonization of legal frameworks, adoption of standardized protocols, and expansion of regional scientific cooperation would contribute substantially to improving the consistency, reliability, and effectiveness of forensic science systems across the Arab world.

6. Challenges Specific to the Arab World

The advancement and effective implementation of forensic science in the Arab world are influenced by a complex combination of institutional, technical, legal, educational, and socio-economic challenges. Although several Arab countries have achieved notable progress in forensic infrastructure, laboratory modernization, and scientific capabilities, substantial disparities persist in governance systems, accreditation standards, research integration, workforce development, and technological

sustainability. These interconnected challenges collectively affect the efficiency, reliability, and long-term sustainability of forensic science systems throughout the region and limit their contribution to evidence-based criminal justice systems [27–31].

6.1 Fragmented Governance and Institutional Coordination

One of the most significant obstacles facing forensic science systems in the Arab world is the fragmentation of governance among multiple governmental sectors, including ministries of justice, interior, health, defence, and higher education. This institutional fragmentation frequently leads to overlapping responsibilities, inconsistent administrative procedures, and weak coordination among forensic stakeholders [27,31]. In many Arab countries, forensic laboratories, medico-legal institutes, and law enforcement forensic units operate under separate administrative authorities without integrated national governance frameworks, thereby reducing operational efficiency and limiting long-term strategic planning.

The absence of centralized or semi-independent national forensic science authorities further complicates efforts to harmonize forensic methodologies, accreditation systems, and professional standards. International forensic governance models emphasize the importance of integrated national systems capable of coordinating forensic laboratories, research institutions, training programs, and judicial implementation under unified regulatory structures [28,32]. Establishing independent national forensic commissions or centralized forensic authorities could therefore improve institutional accountability, procedural standardization, inter-agency communication, and scientific oversight across the region.

6.2 Inconsistent Accreditation and Quality Assurance Systems

Accreditation and quality assurance systems remain unevenly implemented across forensic laboratories in the Arab world. While several countries, particularly within the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), have adopted international accreditation standards such as ISO/IEC 17025, many forensic laboratories in developing Arab countries continue to function without comprehensive accreditation or fully standardized quality control procedures [29,34].

The absence of harmonized accreditation systems directly affects the reliability, reproducibility, and judicial admissibility of forensic evidence. International forensic standards emphasize that scientifically credible forensic systems require rigorous quality assurance programs incorporating validated analytical procedures, proficiency testing, standardized operating protocols, internal audits,

and regular external assessments [28,32]. Inadequate implementation of these systems may increase the risk of analytical errors, inconsistent evidence interpretation, and reduced judicial confidence in forensic findings. Consequently, policymakers throughout the Arab region should prioritize the establishment of national accreditation bodies and regional oversight mechanisms to ensure compliance with internationally recognized forensic quality standards.

6.3 Limited Investment in Research and Development (R&D)

Research and development in forensic science remain relatively underfunded across many Arab countries. Existing governmental investment is often directed primarily toward operational infrastructure, equipment acquisition, and case management systems rather than long-term scientific innovation and applied forensic research [30,34]. This imbalance restricts the development of region-specific forensic methodologies and reduces the contribution of Arab forensic institutions to global scientific advancement.

The shortage of dedicated research funding is particularly problematic in disciplines requiring environmental, climatic, and geographical adaptation, including forensic entomology, environmental forensics, decomposition ecology, and arid-climate forensic investigations. Several studies have emphasized the importance of localized validation studies and region-specific datasets to improve the scientific reliability of forensic analyses under Middle Eastern and North African environmental conditions [23,33]. Increased governmental funding, international scientific partnerships, and public–private collaborative initiatives are therefore essential to strengthen forensic research capacity and promote sustainable scientific innovation throughout the region.

6.4 Human Capital Constraints and Brain Drain

The shortage of qualified forensic professionals represents another major challenge affecting the sustainability of forensic science systems in the Arab world. Many countries continue to experience limited availability of specialized experts in disciplines such as forensic pathology, forensic anthropology, digital forensics, forensic genomics, and forensic entomology [13,31]. This shortage is further intensified by the migration of highly trained professionals to countries offering superior research opportunities, professional advancement, and financial incentives. The resulting “brain drain” weakens institutional continuity, reduces local scientific expertise, and limits the long-term development of regional forensic capabilities. Addressing this challenge requires the establishment of competitive career pathways, improved professional incentives, sustainable research opportunities, and advanced professional development programs. Integrating practical forensic training into

university curricula, expanding postgraduate specialization programs, and strengthening international academic collaboration are also essential for building sustainable forensic human capacity throughout the Arab world [14,19].

6.5 Gaps in Education and Specialized Training

Although forensic science education has expanded considerably within several Arab universities, many academic programs remain limited in scope and insufficiently aligned with international forensic education standards. In numerous institutions, practical laboratory training, interdisciplinary integration, simulated casework experience, and exposure to operational forensic environments remain inadequate, thereby reducing graduates' preparedness for professional forensic practice [13,31].

Furthermore, emerging and highly specialized disciplines such as digital forensics, forensic DNA interpretation, forensic entomology, and forensic data analytics often receive limited curricular emphasis despite their increasing importance in contemporary criminal investigations. International forensic education frameworks increasingly emphasize competency-based learning, accreditation of educational programs, interdisciplinary integration, and close collaboration between universities and forensic laboratories [25]. Establishing regional centres of excellence, standardized forensic curricula, and specialized professional certification systems could substantially improve training quality, technical competency, and workforce readiness across the Arab world.

6.6 Legal and Judicial Constraints

The effectiveness of forensic science is strongly influenced by the legal and judicial systems governing the admissibility, interpretation, and use of scientific evidence. In several Arab countries, forensic legislation remains fragmented, outdated, or inconsistently implemented, thereby creating challenges related to evidence admissibility, expert testimony, chain-of-custody procedures, and procedural standardization [18,24].

Limited judicial understanding of scientific methodologies may further reduce the effective utilization of forensic evidence during legal proceedings. International forensic policy reports have repeatedly emphasized the importance of strengthening judicial scientific literacy and establishing clear legal frameworks regulating forensic methodologies and expert witness practices [27,32]. Consequently, enhancing forensic legislation, improving procedural standardization, and providing specialized scientific training for judges, prosecutors, and legal professionals are essential for improving the reliability and judicial interpretation of forensic evidence throughout the region.

6.7 Data Scarcity and Lack of Regional Databases

Reliable forensic analysis depends heavily on the availability of region-specific reference databases, including genetic profiles, toxicological records, entomological datasets, skeletal reference collections, and environmental baseline information. In many Arab countries, such databases remain incomplete, fragmented, outdated, or entirely absent [21,33].

This challenge is particularly critical in forensic entomology, where accurate estimation of post-mortem intervals requires localized developmental data for necrophagous insect species under regional climatic conditions. Studies conducted within Middle Eastern and North African environments have demonstrated substantial variation in insect succession patterns and decomposition dynamics compared with temperate ecosystems where many forensic models were originally developed [22,23]. Similarly, population-specific genetic databases are essential for improving the accuracy and statistical reliability of DNA profiling and human identification analyses. Establishing coordinated national and regional forensic databases should therefore be considered a strategic priority for improving analytical precision, standardization, and evidence reliability throughout the Arab world.

6.8 Technological Dependence and Sustainability Issues

Many forensic laboratories in the Arab world depend heavily on imported technologies, foreign technical expertise, and externally developed analytical systems. Although this dependence has facilitated relatively rapid adoption of advanced forensic tools, it has also generated challenges related to technological sustainability, maintenance, software licensing, technical support, and operational continuity [20,25].

Long-term reliance on imported technologies may restrict local scientific innovation and increase operational costs, particularly when specialized maintenance and technical expertise are unavailable domestically. Strengthening regional technological capacity through technology transfer initiatives, local technical training, specialized engineering support, and collaborative research programs could improve sustainability and reduce dependence on external suppliers. Supporting indigenous research and development programs is also essential for producing forensic technologies adapted specifically to regional environmental, linguistic, and operational conditions.

6.9 Limited Regional Collaboration and Knowledge Exchange

Despite shared geographical, cultural, and socio-political characteristics, regional cooperation in forensic science among Arab countries remains relatively limited. Collaborative research projects,

harmonized forensic policies, shared scientific databases, regional accreditation initiatives, and professional forensic societies are still insufficiently developed [21,26].

Strengthening regional scientific networks and collaborative forensic platforms could facilitate knowledge exchange, workforce development, methodological standardization, and joint training programs. International organizations such as INTERPOL, UNODC, and the International Association of Forensic Sciences have repeatedly emphasized the importance of regional collaboration in strengthening forensic governance and supporting cross-border criminal investigations [27,30,34]. Enhanced regional cooperation would therefore contribute substantially to scientific harmonization, institutional development, and sustainable advancement of forensic science systems across the Arab world.

6.10 Policy Implications

Collectively, these challenges demonstrate the urgent need for comprehensive forensic science policies integrating scientific, institutional, legal, educational, and technological dimensions. Sustainable reform requires coordinated governmental strategies focused on governance restructuring, accreditation systems, workforce development, research investment, legal modernization, and technological sustainability.

Long-term progress will depend on the ability of Arab countries to establish integrated forensic systems supported by evidence-based policy, scientific innovation, and regional collaboration. Strategic investment in forensic infrastructure, human capital, applied research, and quality assurance systems is essential for improving the effectiveness, reliability, and international competitiveness of forensic science throughout the Arab world.

7. Future Directions and Strategic Recommendations

Advancing forensic science in the Arab world requires a comprehensive and forward-looking strategy that integrates scientific innovation, institutional reform, legal modernization, and regional collaboration. Although several Arab countries have made considerable progress in forensic infrastructure and technological adoption, sustainable advancement depends on bridging the persistent gap between theoretical development and practical implementation. Future strategies should therefore focus on strengthening governance systems, enhancing research capacity, developing human resources, and promoting evidence-based forensic practice aligned with international standards [27–30].

7.1 Establishment of National Forensic Science Authorities

One of the most important strategic priorities is the establishment of centralized or semi-autonomous national forensic science authorities responsible for governance, regulation, accreditation, and coordination of forensic activities. In many Arab countries, forensic services remain fragmented across multiple ministries and agencies, leading to inconsistent operational standards and reduced institutional efficiency [27,31].

International forensic governance models emphasize the importance of unified national systems capable of integrating forensic laboratories, academic institutions, judicial authorities, and law enforcement agencies under coordinated regulatory frameworks [28,32]. The establishment of independent forensic science commissions or national oversight bodies would improve accountability, facilitate policy harmonization, and strengthen the integration of research and operational forensic practice throughout the region.

7.2 Standardization and Accreditation of Forensic Practices

The harmonization of forensic methodologies and quality assurance systems is essential for improving the reliability and admissibility of forensic evidence. Future reform efforts should prioritize the adoption of internationally recognized accreditation standards, particularly ISO/IEC 17025, across forensic laboratories in the Arab world [29,33].

Standardized operating procedures, proficiency testing, regular audits, and inter-laboratory validation programs are fundamental components of scientifically reliable forensic systems [31,33]. Regional standardization initiatives could also facilitate cross-border cooperation, evidence sharing, and mutual recognition of forensic analyses among Arab countries. Establishing regional accreditation centres and unified forensic guidelines would significantly improve consistency and quality assurance across the region.

7.3 Investment in Research and Scientific Innovation

Sustainable development of forensic science requires long-term investment in research and innovation. Policymakers should support interdisciplinary and applied forensic research addressing region-specific challenges, including decomposition processes under arid climatic conditions, environmental forensics, forensic entomology, digital evidence analysis, and emerging cybercrime threats [30,34].

Developing locally validated forensic methodologies is particularly important because many current analytical models are based primarily on datasets generated in temperate Western environments. Several studies have demonstrated that climatic variation significantly influences decomposition dynamics, insect succession, and forensic interpretation [19,24]. Increased funding for national research programs, public–private partnerships, and international scientific collaboration would strengthen the region's contribution to global forensic science advancement.

7.4 Capacity Building and Workforce Development

Human resource development remains central to improving forensic science systems in the Arab world. Future strategies should focus on expanding specialized forensic science programs, strengthening postgraduate training, and integrating practical laboratory experience into academic curricula [14,22].

Continuous professional development programs, certification systems, and specialized training workshops are also essential for maintaining competency in rapidly evolving forensic disciplines such as forensic genomics, digital forensics, and artificial intelligence-assisted analysis. Furthermore, improving career pathways, research opportunities, and professional incentives may help reduce the migration of skilled forensic experts and mitigate the effects of regional brain drain [20,31].

7.5 Strengthening Research–Practice Integration

A major strategic objective should be the enhancement of collaboration between academic institutions, forensic laboratories, and judicial agencies. Although universities in the Arab world are increasingly contributing to forensic research, the translation of scientific findings into operational forensic procedures remains limited [15,29].

Future policies should encourage joint research initiatives, collaborative case-based training, and knowledge transfer programs linking researchers with forensic practitioners. Establishing formal partnerships between universities and operational forensic institutions would facilitate the development of evidence-based forensic protocols and improve the practical application of scientific innovation [28,32].

7.6 Legal and Judicial Reform

The effectiveness of forensic science depends heavily on the legal framework governing the collection, interpretation, and admissibility of scientific evidence. Several Arab countries still lack comprehensive forensic legislation and standardized judicial guidelines related to expert testimony and forensic procedures [18,27].

Future reforms should focus on establishing clear legal standards for forensic evidence, strengthening accreditation requirements for forensic experts, and improving judicial understanding of scientific methodologies. Specialized training programs for judges, prosecutors, and legal professionals are essential to enhance the interpretation and appropriate use of forensic evidence in court proceedings [24,32]. In some jurisdictions, the establishment of specialized forensic or cybercrime judicial units may further improve the integration of scientific evidence into legal decision-making processes.

7.7 Development of National and Regional Forensic Databases

The establishment of comprehensive forensic databases should be considered a strategic priority across the Arab world. Reliable forensic analysis often depends on access to region-specific genetic, toxicological, entomological, and environmental datasets [18,33].

This need is particularly important in forensic entomology, where accurate post-mortem interval estimation requires localized developmental data for necrophagous insect species under regional environmental conditions. Similarly, population-specific genetic databases improve the reliability of DNA profiling and human identification analyses [19,32]. Collaborative regional database initiatives could significantly improve analytical accuracy, facilitate cross-border investigations, and support scientific standardization throughout the region.

7.8 Integration of Emerging Technologies and Artificial Intelligence

The integration of emerging technologies represents one of the most promising future directions in forensic science. Artificial intelligence (AI), machine learning, digital imaging systems, automated DNA analysis, and big data analytics have the potential to improve analytical speed, evidence interpretation, and decision-making accuracy [7–9].

Digital forensics and cybercrime investigations are expected to become increasingly important as criminal activities continue to evolve in technologically advanced environments. However, the implementation of AI-assisted forensic systems must be accompanied by appropriate ethical guidelines, transparency standards, and validation procedures to ensure scientific reliability and

judicial acceptance [33]. Strategic investment in technological infrastructure and specialized technical training will therefore be essential for maintaining competitiveness and operational effectiveness.

7.9 Enhancing Regional and International Collaboration

Strengthening collaboration among Arab countries is critical for addressing shared forensic challenges and promoting scientific harmonization. Regional cooperation can facilitate data sharing, joint research projects, training programs, and standardization of forensic methodologies [21,26].

International organizations such as INTERPOL, UNODC, and the International Association of Forensic Sciences have emphasized the importance of collaborative forensic networks for improving criminal investigations and strengthening institutional capacity [27,34]. The establishment of regional forensic societies, collaborative research consortia, and cross-border training initiatives would significantly enhance knowledge exchange and scientific development throughout the Arab world.

7.10 Strategic Vision for the Future

The future advancement of forensic science in the Arab world requires an integrated long-term vision combining scientific innovation, institutional reform, human capacity development, and legal modernization. Policymakers should adopt sustainable strategies that support research-driven forensic systems capable of adapting to emerging technological and societal challenges.

Bridging the gap between theoretical advancement and practical implementation will require coordinated regional efforts, investment in infrastructure and education, and stronger integration between scientific research and operational forensic practice. By aligning forensic systems with international scientific standards while addressing region-specific needs, the Arab world can develop more reliable, efficient, and globally competitive forensic science frameworks that strengthen justice, security, and public trust.

8. Conclusion

Forensic science in the Arab world stands at a critical stage of development, characterized by significant theoretical and technological advancements alongside persistent challenges in practical implementation. This review demonstrated that, despite increasing institutional recognition and gradual modernization of forensic infrastructure, important gaps remain in governance, accreditation systems, research integration, human resource development, and legal standardization. These

limitations continue to affect the reliability, consistency, and operational effectiveness of forensic science systems across the region. Addressing these challenges requires a comprehensive and coordinated strategy that integrates scientific innovation with institutional and legal reform. Strengthening quality assurance systems, expanding specialized education and professional training, enhancing collaboration between academic institutions and forensic laboratories, and investing in region-specific forensic research are essential for sustainable progress. In particular, the development of localized databases and applied studies in disciplines such as forensic entomology, digital forensics, and forensic toxicology remains crucial for improving analytical accuracy and contextual relevance within diverse Arab environments. Ultimately, the future advancement of forensic science in the Arab world depends on the successful integration of theoretical knowledge into evidence-based forensic practice. Through sustained regional cooperation, strategic investment, and alignment with international scientific standards, Arab countries can establish more reliable, efficient, and globally competitive forensic science systems capable of strengthening justice, security, and public trust.

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