

# **Trends of Researchers in Islamic Jurisprudence in the United Arab Emirates [1987-2022]**

**By**

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## **Abstract**

This study aimed to analyze the trends of researchers in Islamic jurisprudence in the United Arab Emirates between 1987 and 2022. In order to achieve this goal, the analytical approach was applied. The analysis sample consisted of 289 university theses and 423 research papers published in peer-reviewed scientific journals. The theses were distributed over two decades from 2001 to 2021. As for the research, it was earlier, starting from 1987 to 2022. The research concluded that the forefront of the topics focused on contemporary economic issues in university theses with a share of 21.45%, then it was followed by topics of investigation of jurisprudential manuscripts with a rate of 13.49%. Then, a close follower to them were topics of study of a traditional jurisprudential personality and its impact on Islamic jurisprudence by 12.45%, as well as topics of jurisprudence rules and their contemporary applications by 11.07%. Afterwards, the topics of Islamic jurisprudence followed at closer rates. Regarding the trends of research in published works, they aligned with the theses topics as contemporary issues had the largest percentage with 23.87%, then followed by contemporary issues in family rulings with a percentage of 14.65%, then contemporary issues of transactional rulings with a percentage of 10.16%, then the topics of Islamic jurisprudence followed with closer range of percentages. In addition, the trends in theses and research have matched on a limited percentage of topics that are less pursued namely environmental provisions, animal provisions, and artificial intelligence provisions. In this regard, the author recommends to grant greater attention to these aforementioned topics whether in theses or research papers.

**Keywords:** Research Trends, Islamic Jurisprudence, University Theses, Peer-reviewed Research, United Arab Emirates.

## **1. Introduction**

The cumulative knowledge structure is a basis for practical research. As knowledge is cumulative, so there is an evident need for independent studies based on monitoring the research movement in a specific country, whether in university theses or research published in peer-reviewed scientific journals. Therefore, in order to measure the attitude of researchers towards specific topics, including topics of Islamic jurisprudence, to indicate the topics that the researchers were interested in and the ones that were not pursued in order to draw attention to these topics.

The primary challenge of the study consists in the absence of any previous analytical study of the researchers' trends on the topics of Islamic Jurisprudence in the United Arab Emirates. Thus, this study is the first on the subject matter and its importance lies in charting

a map for researchers in the field of Islamic Jurisprudence. On one hand, the goal is to delineate the most researched topics and the least addressed ones with the aim to encourage researchers to further research these topics. On the other hand, this study seeks to achieve several objectives including (i) the conduct of quantitative analysis of the distributions of Islamic jurisprudential theses by universities and by journals, as well as the (ii) quantitative analysis of the distribution of university theses and jurisprudential research by years, then the (iii) qualitative analysis of the researchers' trends in jurisprudential topics in university theses and scientific research.

## **2. Methodology and Limitations of the Study**

The study adopts the method of analyzing the content of theses and scientific research published in peer-reviewed scientific journals. The author/researcher has previously reviewed a number of related studies namely those of (Al Taher, 2020); (Bahgat & Akbar, 2018); (Rababah & Al-Zyout, 2017).

As for the limitations of the study, they were determined starting from the year 1987, which coincides with the date of publishing the first scientific research in a peer-reviewed scientific journal related to jurisprudential topics in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and ending with the year 2022.

## **3. Study Procedures**

The researcher limited the university theses that dealt with jurisprudential topics in research and study, and their number reached 289 university theses, and he also constricted the research related to jurisprudential topics published in scientific journals, and their number amounted to 423. The researcher analyzed the content based on the titles and summaries of theses and scientific research papers.

## **4. Statistical Analysis**

The study analyzed 289 university theses and 423 research papers published in peer-reviewed scientific journals.

## **5. Results and discussion**

The results of the quantitative analysis of the distribution of jurisprudential theses by universities, and the distribution of jurisprudential research by journals:

The number of dissertations and dissertations during the period under study reached 289, between master's and doctoral degrees, issued by the University of Sharjah and the University of Al Wasl, as shown in Table 1 below.

**Table 1** *Distribution of Theses to universities*

<b>University</b>	<b>Number of Theses</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Sharjah University	195	%67.5
Al Wasl University	94	%32.5
Subtotal	289	%100

The master's program was opened at Al Wasl University in 1996, and then it was established at the University of Sharjah in 1997, but the demand of students for the University of Sharjah was greater due to the fact that it is the first university in the Emirate of Sharjah. As a result, a larger number of theses was reported in comparison with the University of Al Wasl. As for the distribution of theses, they were sorted between master's and doctoral degrees, as shown in Table 2 below.

**Table 2** *Distribution of Theses by Degree Type: (Master's/PhD)*

<b>Degree Type</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
PhD	46	%15.9
Master's	243	%84.1
Subtotal	289	%100

It is noteworthy to mention that the percentage of master's theses is higher than that of doctoral ones. Given that one of the conditions for opening doctoral programs is the lapse of a certain number of years since the founding of the university. Therefore, the number of doctoral theses is less than master's theses since the requisites for administering a master's program are less cumbersome than those a doctoral program.

**Table 3** *Distribution of Research Papers to Journals*

<b>Journal</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
UAE University Journal of Legal Research	147	%34.75
University of Sharjah Journal of Sharia Sciences and Islamic Studies	141	%33.33
Al Wasl University Journal	92	%21.74
Al Miayar "Standard" Journal, Imam Malik College of Sharia and Law	24	%5.67
Journal of Legal Sciences - Ajman University	14	%3.30
Journal of Mudawana Studies, Sharjah	5	%1.18
Subtotal	423	%100

It is noteworthy to highlight that the largest percentage of research was that of the UAE University Journal of Legal Research, previously known as the Journal of Sharia and Law, followed by the University of Sharjah Journal of Sharia Sciences and Islamic Studies, then the Journal of Al Wasl University, then by a large margin, the Al Miayar "Standard" Journal, the Journal of Legal Sciences, and finally the Journal of Mudawana Studies. The researcher attributes the reasons for the difference to the fact that the UAE University Journal for Legal Research is issued by the College of Law at the UAE University, and it is the first university established in the UAE, as it was founded in 1976. It specializes in jurisprudential sciences. Therefore, the turnout was greater for the UAEU, as for the rest of the journals, they were recently established, hence their numbers were respectively fewer.

***Results of the quantitative analysis of the distribution of university theses and jurisprudence research by years:***

Percentage of distribution of university theses by years; as shown in Table 4 below:

**Table 4: Distribution of Theses by Year**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Number of Theses</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
2001	3	%1.03
2002	3	%1.03
2003	3	%1.03
2004	1	%0.34
2005	8	%2.76
2006	11	%3.80
2007	10	%3.46
2008	14	%4.8
2009	24	%8.30
2010	10	%3.46
2011	18	%6.22
2012	32	%11.07
2013	21	%7.26
2014	27	%9.34
2015	23	%7.95
2016	10	%3.46
2017	15	%5.19
2018	16	%5.53
2019	17	%5.88
2020	12	%4.15
2021	11	%3.80
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>289</b>	<b>%100</b>

The researcher notes that the beginnings were of few numbers; Due to the recent establishment of postgraduate programs at the University of Sharjah and Al Wasl University, the numbers have increased over the years.

As for the distribution of research papers in peer-reviewed scientific journals, it is shown in Table 5 below:

**Table 5 Distribution of Research by Year**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Number of Research</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
1987	3	%0.70
1988	4	%0.94
1989	4	%0.94
1990	5	%1.18
1991	7	%1.65
1992	9	%2.12
1993	9	%2.12
1994	3	%0.70
1995	6	%1.41
1996	6	%1.41
1997	3	%0.70
1998	6	%1.41
1999	2	%0.47
2000	4	%0.94
2001	11	%2.60
2002	7	%1.65

2003	9	%2.12
2004	7	%1.65
2005	6	%1.41
2006	14	%3.30
2007	12	%2.83
2008	14	%3.30
2009	5	%1.18
2010	15	%3.54
2011	9	%2.12
2012	13	%3.073
2013	14	%3.30
2014	19	%4.49
2015	12	%2.836
2016	25	%5.910
2017	16	%3.78
2018	26	%6.14
2019	39	%9.21
2020	29	%6.85
2021	23	%5.43
2022	27	%6.38
Subtotal	423	%100

It appears from the previous table that the numbers at the beginning were quite low, due to the small number of journals. Then, when the number of journals increased, research has increased congruently.

***The results of the qualitative analysis of researchers' trends in jurisprudential topics in theses and scientific research:***

The researchers' trends are reflected below in Table 6, starting with university theses, as follows:

**Table 6:** *Distribution of University Theses by Topics.*

Topics	Number	Percentage
Contemporary Economic Issues	62	%21.45
Jurisprudence Manuscript Study	39	%13.49
Study of Traditional Jurisprudential Figure and its Impact on Jurisprudence	36	%12.45
Jurisprudential Rules and their Contemporary Applications	32	%11.07
Contemporary Medical Issues	19	%6.57
Contemporary Family and Social Issues	14	%4.84
Transaction Provisions - Heritage Issues	12	%4.15
Islamic Political System	11	%3.80
Islamic Criminal Legislation - Contemporary Issues	11	%3.80
Family Provisions - Heritage Issues	11	%3.80
Rulings of Worship - traditional Issues	8	%2.76
Rulings of Worship - Contemporary Issues	8	%2.76
Family Provisions - Contemporary Issues	6	%2.07
Endowment "Awqaf" Provisions	5	%1.73
Provisions of Charitable Work	3	%1.038
Court Rulings - Contemporary Issues	3	%1.03

Islamic Criminal Legislation - Heritage Issues	2	%0.69
Women's Rulings - Traditional Issues	2	%0.69
The State's Financial System	1	%0.34
Environmental Provisions	1	%0.34
Animal Provisions	1	%0.34
Childhood Provisions	1	%0.34
Legal Ethics	1	%0.34
Subtotal	289	%100

The percentage of topics of contemporary economic issues reached approximately 21.45%, circa one-fifth, due to the large number of branches and emerging issues in the topics of Islamic economics and Islamic banks, followed by topics of study of jurisprudential manuscripts. As a result of the presence of one of the most prominent manuscript centers in the Islamic world in the United Arab Emirates, which is the Juma Al Majid Center, which makes it easier for researchers to obtain copies of manuscripts. It is followed by the percentage of the study of the heritage jurisprudential personalities that appeared and emerged in Islamic history and the impact of that personality on Islamic jurisprudence, then by the topics of jurisprudential rules such as the rule of hardship brings facilitation, and the applications of that rule in contemporary issues, and then followed by topics Islamic jurisprudence in limited proportions, due to the fact that the emerging issues in these topics are fewer, but it is noted that some topics were a very small percentage, such as the provisions of the environment, and the provisions of animals, and this is a recommendation to researchers to focus on these topics in their university theses.

**Table 7:** *Distribution of Research by Topics*

Topics	Number	Percentage
Contemporary Economic Issues	101	%23.87
Family provisions - Contemporary Issues	62	%14.65
Transaction provisions - Contemporary Issues	43	%10.16
Jurisprudential Rules and their Contemporary Applications	32	%7.56
Transaction Provisions - Heritage Issues	27	%6.38
Islamic Criminal Legislation - Contemporary Issues	25	%5.91
Endowment "Awqaf" Provisions	23	%5.43
Islamic political system	22	%5.20
Family provisions - heritage issues	22	%5.20
Contemporary medical issues	13	%3.07
Judicial Rulings	14	%3.30
Rulings of worship - Contemporary Issues	11	%2.60
Islamic criminal legislation - heritage issues	9	%2.12
Study of Traditional Jurisprudential Figure and its Impact on Jurisprudence	9	%2.12
Rulings of Worship - Traditional Issues	3	%0.70
Jurisprudence Manuscript Study	2	%0.47
Environmental Provisions	2	%0.47
Animal Provisions	2	%0.47
Provisions of Artificial Intelligence	1	%0.23
Subtotal	423	%100

The researcher notes that the trends in contemporary economic issues are agreed upon between theses and scientific research for the reasons aforementioned by the researcher. It is

more suitable for undergraduate theses than journals. Due to the fact that Journals require a certain number of words and pages, and the nature of the research in the investigation of manuscripts requires non-compliance with pages and words, and the same case regarding the study of jurisprudential personalities and their impact on jurisprudential sciences. As for the rest of the topics, the proportions are close amongst them, due to the nature of the topics which were covered extensively by existing literature. Moreover, the percentage of research in the provisions of the environment, the provisions of animals, and the provisions of artificial intelligence was very limited, and this is in agreement with the subjects of theses, which confirms the previous recommendation itself consisting in inviting researchers to address these topics in their future research.

## **Conclusion**

### ***Results***

The study concluded that most of the researcher's trends in theses was towards contemporary economic issues, then topics of investigation of jurisprudential manuscripts, followed closely by topics of study of a traditional jurisprudential personality and its impact on Islamic jurisprudence, as well as topics of jurisprudential rules and their contemporary applications. As for the trends of the researchers in the research published in peer-reviewed scientific journals, they've aligned with the figures of the theses, as the largest percentage was for contemporary economic topics, followed by contemporary issues in family rulings, then contemporary issues in transactional rulings, then Islamic jurisprudence topics followed in close ranges. On the other hand, they agreed Trends in theses and research on the limited percentage on certain topics that aren't well covered namely the provisions of the environment, the provisions of animals, and the provisions of artificial intelligence.

### ***Recommendations***

- The researcher recommends the need to give greater focus on to the topics addressing provisions of the environment, the provisions of animals, and the provisions of artificial intelligence in Islamic jurisprudence in the theses and research published in peer-reviewed scientific journals.
- Invite researchers to assess researchers' trends in the other jurisprudential sciences or streams such as the sciences of the Qur'an and the sciences of Hadith in the United Arab Emirates.

### ***Conflict of Interests***

The author has nothing to disclose and has no commercial or financial interest in the products described in this paper.

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