

**INVESTIGATION OF THESIS STATEMENT DIFFICULTIES IN TRADITIONAL, ARGUMENT ESSAYS WRITTEN BY SAUDI, UNDERGRADUATE, MALE STUDENTS: CASE STUDY OF PRINCE MOHAMMAD BIN FAHD UNIVERSITY (PMU)**

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**ABSTRACT**

This case study explored the writing difficulties PMU Saudi, undergraduate, male students encountered in writing thesis statements for traditional, argument essays they wrote for a core-writing course they took in the fall semester of 2017/2018. Using document review data collection technique, purposive sampling was utilized to collect students' traditional, argument essays. MAXQDA 2020 was utilized to help in data analysis which was accomplished using open coding. Data analysis process continued until saturation was reached as a result of the investigation of thirty thesis statements. The students' writing difficulties were identified, classified, and recorded. The findings fell into four themes of problems. The first was lack of orientation, which included failure to state essay topic, failure to state thesis statement main ideas, and gender bias. The second theme was grammatical problems, which included sentence fragments, subject-verb agreement, verb tense, nonparallel main ideas, inconsistent viewpoint, part of speech, definite article, indefinite article, and prepositions. The third was lack of precision and concision, which included word-choice and redundancy problems, successively. The fourth theme was mechanics problems, which included difficulties with capitalization, the comma, and the hyphen. The significance of this study stems from the fact that, to this researcher's best knowledge, it was the first of its kind. It was also the first of its kind to be conducted on Saudi, undergraduate, male students at Prince Mohammad Bin Fahd University (PMU). Finally, since this was a qualitative study, it is recommended that future studies of this topic be conducted using quantitative approach.

**Keywords:** Case Study, Traditional Essays, Thesis Statement, Main Ideas, and Saturation.

**INTRODUCTION**