

Student Success in Higher Education: The UWI Mona Library at the Heart of Students' Achievements

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Abstract

This study highlights some of the University of the West Indies (UWI) Mona Library's multifaceted contributions to students' success, encompassing the Library's impact on academic achievement, life-long learning, and student wellbeing. Through a mixed-methods approach that combines a quantitative analysis of library statistics, and a review of other Library records, with the rich insights from the authors' long-term professional experiences, this research provides an understanding of the library's role in student engagement and supporting students at all levels. The findings of this research highlight that, apart from the essential, yet normal, support of providing access to a wide collection, the provision of librarians' expert guidance in developing critical thinking skills, and the updating of postgraduate dissertations, the library offers other services that support students learning and development in higher education. These include providing Hall of Residence Librarian Services and a Librarian dedicated to first-year students and undergraduate success. The Library also provides employment opportunities and community service placement that allows students to gain valuable work experience and help provide needed financial support. During COVID 19, the Library led in bridging the digital divide by sourcing, circulating and managing electronic devices issued island-wide to students in need. Alongside providing access to extensive curated collections, the Library also provides spaces for unconventional library functions, including filming and fundraising events, a 24-hour/day access to safe spaces for learning and relaxation. In conclusion, we found that both traditional and non-traditional Library services and resources play a crucial role in engaging students, fostering student's academic excellence, promoting research, and supporting students' overall achievements. This nuanced illustration of the Library's contributions to student success which highlights some non-conventional services, can inform strategies to enhance library services in similar academic institutions.

Index Terms

Library Services; Student-Success; Academic Achievement