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Exploring library management support for enhancing self-directed learning: narratives from research-support librarians

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Abstract
Purpose: This qualitative study explores the issue of library management support in providing a self-directed learning environment for research-support librarians which is an under-explored feature of librarianship in Malaysian public university libraries. Design/methodology/approach: A total of nine research-support librarians purposely selected from these libraries took part in in-depth interview sessions. The responses were analysed using Miles and Huberman's technique, which involves data reduction, data display, conclusion-drawing and verification. Findings: Five emerging themes and 31 sub-themes were identified. There was a general consensus among the respondents that their library management does provide research-support librarians with a self-directed learning environment to enhance their competencies as academic librarians. Nevertheless, these librarians also highlighted some challenges, issues and barriers related to the initiative and support received. Some suggestions are advanced for improvements to support self-directed learning by research-support librarians working in public university libraries. Originality/value: Empirically, this study attempts to fill the gap in the knowledge that needs to be addressed from the perspective of Malaysian librarians, especially the research-support librarians, who serve in public universities in Malaysia, who have received little attention from local librarianship researchers. © 2021, Emerald Publishing Limited.

Author Keywords
Competencies; Library management support; Malaysian public universities; Research-support librarians; Self-directed learning

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