

INTRODUCTION

The MERS 999 call system in Malaysia is important to coordinate response in emergency situations. Nevertheless, some callers are rude and affects calltakers' emotions. We conducted a survey to determine the prevalence of such incidents.



CASE DESCRIPTION

This survey involved 131 calls at MERS 999 Call Centre. Call takers were asked to rate the callers based on their perception on a scale 1 to 5; 1 for very polite, 2 for polite, 3 for neutral (neither polite nor rude), 4 for rude (impolite or disrespectful), and 5 for very rude (insults or shouting). The proportion of the categories were then analyzed in a descriptive manner.

Based on 131 calls, 69 (52.67%) were polite, 20 callers (32.06%) were impolite, while the rest were neither. Among the 'impolite calls' 13 (65%) were males and 7(35%) were females. In terms of the category of cases with the level of politeness, it was found that there were no impolite callers for cases of stab wounds (2 cases), shortness of breath (15 cases), cardiac arrest (7 cases), and referral cases (6 cases). The 'impolite calls' were seen amongst those with headaches (3 cases), generally unwell persons (2 cases), road traffic accidents (3 cases), and fainting (3 cases).



DISCUSSION

More males were impolite compared to females. Cases of shortness of breath and cardiac arrest tend to be 'polite calls'. Impolite calls tend to be among general cases of unwell and trauma. Socio-emotional factors such as stress levels, fear, frustration, or perceptions of the 999 calls may play a role in influencing caller's behaviours.



N:131



n:69
(52.67%)



n:20
(32.06%)



CONCLUSION

In conclusion, our survey showed that a third of callers were impolite and uncooperative. More males were impolite as opposed to females. Callers tend to be polite in life-threatening situations compared to generally unwell patients. Call takers could be counselled for emotional well-being in view of high incidence of rude callers.



REFERENCES

1. Fotland SS, Midtbø V, Vik J, Zakariassen E, Johansen IH. Factors affecting communication during telephone triage in medical call centres: a mixed methods systematic review. *Syst Rev.* 2024 Jun 22;13(1):162.
2. Mohammadi F, Jeihooni AK, Sabetsarvestani P, Abadi F, Bijani M. Exploring the challenges to telephone triage in pre-hospital emergency care: a qualitative content analysis. *BMC Health Serv Res.* 2022 Sep 23;22(1):1195.
3. Holmström, I.K., Kaminsky, E., Lindberg, Y. *et al.* The perspectives of Swedish registered nurses about managing difficult calls to emergency medical dispatch centres: a qualitative descriptive study. *BMC Nurs* 20, 150 (2021).



KEYWORD

Rude Caller, MERS 999, Emergency, Online Triage

