

I Don't Want to Have to Wait: A Study Into the Origins of Rule Violations at Rail Pedestrian Level Crossings

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Abstract : Train pedestrian collisions are common and are the most likely to result in severe injuries and fatalities when compared to other types of rail crossing accidents. However, there is limited research that has focused on understanding the reasons why some pedestrians' break level crossings rules, which limits the development of effective countermeasures. As a result, this study undertook a deeper exploration into the origins of risky pedestrian behaviour through structured interviews. A total of 40 pedestrians who admitted to either intentionally breaking crossing rules or making crossing errors participated in an in-depth telephone interview. Qualitative analysis was undertaken via thematic analysis that revealed participants were more likely to report deliberately breaking rules (rather than make errors), particular after the train had passed the crossing as compared to before it arrives. Predominant reasons for such behaviours were identified to be: calculated risk taking, impatience, poor knowledge of rules and low likelihood of detection. The findings have direct implications for the development of effective countermeasures to improve crossing safety (and managing risk) such as increasing surveillance and transit officer presence, as well as installing appropriate barriers that either deter or incapacitate pedestrians from violating crossing rules. This paper will further outline the study findings in regards to the development of countermeasures as well as provide direction for future research efforts in this area.

Keywords : crossings, mistakes, risk, violations

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