

## Strict Liability as a Means of Standardising Sentencing Outcomes for Shoplifting Offences Dealt with in UK Magistrates Courts

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**Abstract :** Strict liability is frequently used in magistrate's courts for TV license and driving offences. There is existing research suggesting that the strict liability approach to criminal offences can result in 'absurd' judicial outcomes, or potentially 'injustice'. This paper will discuss the potential merits of strict liability as a method for dealing with shoplifting offences. Currently, there is disparity in sentencing outcomes in the UK, particularly in relation to shoplifting offences. This paper will question whether 'injustice' is actually in the differentiation of defendants based upon their 'perceived' circumstances, which could be resulting in arbitrary judicial decision making.

**Keywords :** arbitrary, decision making, judicial decision making, shoplifting, stereotypes, strict liability

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