
JUDICIAL DEVIANCE IN INDIA: CAUSES, CONSEQUENCES, AND CORRECTIVE MECHANISMS

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ABSTRACT

The judiciary protects constitutional values, protects individual rights, and protects democracy and the rule of law at an effective level. Judges have a huge power to rule and make decisions regarding law, adjudicate and resolve conflicts and achieve the fair and impartial application of justice. This responsibility is so high that a fair and responsible judiciary operates under such high standards of integrity, independence and professional ethics. But as with other bodies within the criminal justice system, the judiciary can be subject to deviant conduct. Cases of judicial misconduct (corruption, abuse of judicial discretion, bias, conflict of interest, and more) have sometimes arisen and have prompted questions about the accountability and credibility of the system of justice. Judicial impropriety can seriously erode the credibility of legal institutions by disrupting fairness in the adjudication and causing loss of prestige to the judicial system.

When judges' conduct goes against common standards of morality and practice, these actions carry weight on a systemic scale, even in the form of actual loss or violation of due process, if they do anything that causes an unfair outcome. It is crucial to understand the role of judicial discretion (in our case, from the perspective of criminal justice administration) in the preservation of personal liberty, punishment and fundamental rights.

This paper will critically analyse the phenomenon of deviance by judges through its conceptual framework, different ways of its manifestation and the causes of it in general within the judicial system. It does so by examining what judicial misbehaviour means for the administration of justice and in turn serves as a basis against which public trust in legal institutions might be shaken. The article also assesses the mechanisms of judicial accountability, disciplinary procedures and safeguards currently in place to deal with and prevent court disorder. It is also an effort, by bringing home the tensions between independence and accountability in judiciary, to add to the growing number of articles which address strengthening ethics standards and institutional oversight of justice institutions so that the judiciary's integrity, credibility and legitimacy may be safeguarded.

Keywords: Judicial Deviance, Judicial Misconduct, Judicial Ethics, Abuse of Judicial Power, Judicial Accountability, Corruption in Judiciary, Rule of Law, Criminal Justice Administration.

INTRODUCTION

The judiciary is one of the essential institutions of a democratic state, acting as the protector of fundamental rights, the guardian of the Constitution, and arbiter of the law. However, while the judiciary can have an independence that is expected from the executive and legislative governments in constitutional democracies like India to provide fair and impartial administration of justice. Legal profession is an enormous tool of legitimacy; since judges have powerful power and accountability, they make the decisions about rights, freedoms and obligations that define individuals and institutions. As a result, judicial office requires the highest professional standards of ethical behaviour, integrity, impartiality, and skilfulness.

In most cases, public confidence in the justice delivery system rests on the credibility of the justice system, and on the integrity of the judiciary. Just deserts and corruption were proven to be a problem. Courts abiding by established ethics and professional conduct, the rule of law is maintained and citizens' faith in the judiciary is sustained. But, if a judge acts in such a manner that violates those norms, this calls on the integrity and accountability of our judicial system seriously to be investigated. Judicial deviance is bad actions by judges who go against legal norms or ethical principles or who do what is expected of them as judges. Such deviant behaviour can occur in various forms, such as: corruption, abuse of judicial authority, bias or prejudice in decision making, conflict of interest, improper contact with parties to cases or by the accused, and/or intentional lack of procedural fairness. Judicial deviance, in such cases such may in the worst case scenario be criminal action (such as bribery, fraud and manipulation of legal proceedings).¹ These acts diminish the fair resolution of disputes and the impartiality of the criminal justice system. Judicial deviant behaviour has quite serious implications within the larger context of criminal justice administration. Judicial rulings impact the decisions in individual cases, including arrest, bail, conviction, sentencing, and the protection of fundamental rights. If judges fail to exercise impartial legal procedure, miscarriages of justice, injustices in conviction and denial of fair trial can arise.²

¹ Bangalore Principles of Judicial Conduct (2002).

² M.P. Jain, *Indian Constitutional Law* (8th ed., LexisNexis 2018).

Moreover, judicial maladministration undermines the credibility of the institutions and public confidence in the judiciary which is an essential component of democratic governance. We are therefore at the heart of legal and academic discourse on the issue of judicial accountability, hence this theme has arisen more and more. Judicial independence is needed to prevent judges from falling prey to political and external pressures but must be tempered by mechanisms to keep judges accountable, responsible and ethical for their actions. The Indian context has been influenced by these frameworks through the judicial conduct standards of judicial accountability, internal disciplinary mechanisms, and constitutional mechanisms relating to judicial removal which were passed in the Constitution that target the issue of judicial misconduct while upholding the independence of the judiciary.³

Thus, the aim of the current article was to explore the deviance among judges from a legal and criminological perspective. It explores the concept and the dynamics of deviance of judges, identifies its characteristics, what forms people exhibit it, and its causes, and its impact on administration of justice. It also addresses the structures of judicial accountability, a judicial institution and/or legal action against judicial misconduct and deviant behaviour. In pursuing such an analytical methodology, the article seeks to provide to the current dialogue on strengthening judicial integrity and preserving transparency, accountability and adherence to juridical norm.⁴

CONCEPT AND MEANING OF JUDICIAL DEVIANCE

Within the discipline of Criminology and sociology, deviance has typically been defined as behaviour that strays from the expected social rules, legality, or institutional expectations. Within the criminal justice system, deviance can also occur among ordinary citizens, as well as among those in positions of authority and power. Once committed by those public officials who were given legal powers, it is frequently regarded as official deviance. Judicial deviance is a type of official deviance that occurs within the judiciary. Judicial deviance may be defined as any conduct by a judge that deviates from the accepted standards of judicial ethics, legal duties, and professional responsibilities associated with the office.⁵

Judges hold a duty of loyalty to, and enforcement of, the Constitution, laws, and codes of

³ Brian Z. Tamanaha, *On the Rule of Law* (Cambridge University Press 2004).

⁴ Roscoe Pound, *The Causes of Popular Dissatisfaction with the Administration of Justice*, 40 *Am. L. Rev.* 729 (1906).

⁵ Edwin H. Sutherland, *White Collar Crime* (Yale University Press 1949)

conduct. Judges should not allow their behaviour to compromise impartiality, fairness, or integrity — deviant behaviour occurs and falls under the purview of the judicial system in such circumstances. Judicial deviance, legally, refers to a variety of abuses and misdeeds against the judicial system such as corruption, abuse of judicial authority, bias in decision-making, improper relationships with litigants or lawyers, and conflicts of interest. This behaviour breaks the basic principle that justice must not only be done but must also be seen to be done. Judicial deviance has implications for procedural fairness and undermines the legitimacy of the adjudicatory process.

Often, scholars analyse the deviance of the judiciary in the context of official misconduct, a definition which describes unlawful or unethical behaviour by public officials acting in an official capacity. Judges, in particular, face the great expectation of neutrality and integrity in making decisions that impact individuals' personal rights, liberties, and property. Any breach of these standards would have serious implications for justice. The deviance problem raises important ethical dimensions of the independence, accountability, and freedom the judiciary can wield on its own. Judicial independence is important so judges can make decisions free from political or external pressures. One of the most important issues to consider in the judicial system is judicial misconduct, as it often requires courts. But too little insulation from scrutiny can lead to situations when deviant actions become unchecked. So it follows that the legal system must build means to ensure that judicial autonomy is maintained with certain forms of accountability and disciplinary process. Judicial deviance frequently has to be applied to the Indian constitutional order and judicial ethics.⁶

The judiciary is supposed to conform to standard ethical behaviour — namely, impartiality, integrity, propriety, and competence. Breaches of these norms do not only tarnish individual judges' reputation, though; they also erode institutional legitimacy, as well as undermine the public's faith in the system of justice. Knowledge of judicial deviance and what it relates to is necessary in order to analyse its causes, definitions, types, and resultant effects. Establishing a clear conceptual framework clarifies the spectrum of examples of misconduct that can occur within the judiciary and gives us insight into how to develop effective mechanisms for accountability and institutional reform efforts by definition for the judiciary as such and to guide legal reform.

⁶ Donald Black, *The Behavior of Law* (Academic Press 1976).

TYPES AND FORMS OF JUDICIAL DEVIANCE

Judicial deviance can take several forms depending upon the type of misconduct and the circumstances in which it occurs. Because judges have discretion in interpreting legislation and determining the rights and obligations of people, any misuse of that power can severely affect the conduct of justice. Criminological and legal ethicists apply the following principles to classify judicial deviance, based on the nature of behaviour in question. In a view to mitigate such risk, this is vitally important to understand these forms and thus help establish viable accountability mechanisms within the judicial system.

- **Judicial Corruption**

Corruption,⁷ as a severe example of judicial deviance. Judicial corruption happens when judges accept bribes, gifts, or other benefits in return for having a say in the outcome of a case. This behaviour contravenes the very principles of fairness, impartiality, and integrity that the judicial system stands on. Corruption can happen through outright bribery, favouritism of an influential person, corrupting judicial proceedings for one's own or monetary gain. Corruption in the judicial system weakens the credibility of the legal system.

- **Bias and Partiality⁸**

This system expects judges only to decide on cases with the legal principles and evidence put before a court. Judicial deviance, however, can occur when a judge finds something (such as social standing, religious tradition, politics or religion, gender or class) that is potentially prejudicial and detrimental to the candidate. Bias might show up in discriminatory hearings, biased comments, or rulings that benefit a faction or party without due process under law. The act goes against the concept of equality before the law and undermines the perception of judicial impartiality.

- **Abuse of Judicial Discretion**

Judges must exercise discretion in how the laws are interpreted and how it should be addressed with the appropriate remedies or punishment. There is good reason for judicial discretion but some people sometimes put such leeway in the wrong ways leading to deviance. Judicial

⁷ Upendra Baxi, *The Crisis of the Indian Legal System* (1982).

⁸ Shimon Shetreet & Sophie Turenne, *Judges on Trial* (2013).

discretion can be abused when a judge consciously disregards legal principles, hands down undue punishment, or issues arbitrary orders without sufficient justification. Such authority abuse undermines the predictability and consistency of legal decisions.

- **Conflict of Interest**

Judicial deviance occurs when judges judge cases in which they have some personal, economic or professional interest. A conflict of interest can arise when the judge has relationships with litigants, attorneys or entities involved in the case. Under moral obligation a judge should recuse himself/herself to avoid any conflicts in judgments. Not doing so jeopardizes fairness and transparency in the courts, but this lack of recusal concerns fairness in judicial proceedings.

- **Improper Communication (Ex Parte Communication)**

Judicial deviance might also occur if there is improper communication with one party in a case without knowledge or notice to the other side. Ex parte communication of this type undermines procedural fairness as it lets one side manoeuvre the judge privately. Judicial ethics prohibits this behaviour because it threatens the neutrality and transparency of the adjudicatory process.

- **Political Influence and External Pressure**

It is the duty of the judiciary to operate independently from the political system. But deviance happens when judges' decisions are influenced by political considerations or from outside pressures. Political interference can take many forms — whether through pressure coming in informally, expectations of future appointments, or pressure from powerful actors. This kind of behaviour works contrary to the independence of the judiciary and weakens the separation of powers in a constitutional system.

- **Delay and Negligence in Judicial Duties**

Judicial deviance can also take a course of action in the form of consistent negligence and long-term delay of performing judicial duties. Delays in executing judgments that should not have happened, failure to properly examine evidence, breaches in procedural obligations cannot be ignored and could affect the rights of litigants. All too often though, they don't seem to be corrupt or malicious in any way but it undermines the efficacy and legitimacy of the justice system.

All of these different forms of judicial deviance in places like India do pose a problem for preserving not only judicial standards but also for the faith the public has in the integrity of the judiciary. Focusing on these challenges is the essence of establishing strong morals, institutional safeguards and good judicial accountability.

CAUSES AND CONTRIBUTING FACTORS OF JUDICIAL DEVIANCE

Understanding the causes of judicial deviance is essential for developing effective mechanisms to prevent misconduct and strengthen institutional accountability. Although judges are expected to uphold the highest standards of integrity and professionalism, various structural, institutional, and individual factors may contribute to deviant behaviour within the judiciary. Scholars in Criminology often analyse deviance through sociological and institutional frameworks that explain how power, opportunity, and lack of oversight may lead to misconduct. In the context of judicial institutions, several interrelated factors may contribute to the emergence of judicial deviance.

Lack of Effective Accountability Mechanisms

One of the most significant factors contributing to judicial deviance is the limited availability of strong accountability mechanisms. Judicial independence, while necessary to protect judges from political interference, may sometimes create institutional insulation that makes it difficult to investigate or discipline judges for misconduct. When disciplinary processes are slow, opaque, or rarely invoked, it may create an environment where deviant behaviour goes unchecked.⁹

Concentration of Judicial Power

Judges possess substantial discretionary authority in interpreting laws, determining the admissibility of evidence, granting bail, and imposing sentences. This concentration of authority can create opportunities for misuse if not balanced by effective oversight. When discretionary powers are exercised without adequate transparency or review, the risk of abuse of judicial authority increases.

⁹ V.N. Shukla, *Constitution of India* (2017).

Institutional Culture and Lack of Transparency

Judicial institutions often operate within a culture that emphasizes institutional solidarity and confidentiality. While such practices are intended to protect judicial independence, excessive secrecy may discourage reporting of misconduct or internal criticism. In some cases, colleagues within the judiciary may hesitate to raise concerns about deviant behaviour due to professional relationships or fear of institutional repercussions.¹⁰

Political Pressure and External Influence

In certain circumstances, judges may face political or external pressures that influence their conduct. Such pressures may originate from political actors, influential individuals, or powerful institutions seeking favourable outcomes in litigation. When judicial independence is compromised by such influences, it may lead to decisions that deviate from legal principles and ethical standards.¹¹

Personal Motivations and Financial Incentives

Individual motivations, such as financial gain, personal ambition, or desire for influence, may also contribute to judicial deviance. Corruption in the form of bribery or acceptance of favours may arise when judges exploit their positions for personal benefit. Although such behaviour represents a breach of professional ethics, opportunities for illicit gain may exist where regulatory oversight is weak.

Workload and Structural Challenges within the Judiciary

Heavy caseloads, administrative pressures, and inadequate institutional support may also indirectly contribute to deviant behaviour. In jurisdictions with large case backlogs, judges may experience significant pressure to dispose of cases quickly. Such circumstances may lead to negligence, superficial evaluation of evidence, or procedural irregularities that undermine the quality of judicial decision-making.

Weak Ethical Training and Professional Oversight

Another contributing factor may be the absence of continuous ethical training and professional

¹⁰ Brian Z. Tamanaha, *On the Rule of Law: History, Politics, Theory* (Cambridge Univ. Press 2004).

¹¹ Donald Black, *The Behavior of Law* (1976).

evaluation within the judiciary. Ethical standards must not only be established but also actively reinforced through education, monitoring, and disciplinary procedures. Without sustained emphasis on judicial ethics, the risk of misconduct may increase over time.

In countries such as India, these factors interact within a complex institutional environment where judicial independence must be balanced with accountability. Addressing the root causes of judicial deviance requires comprehensive reforms that strengthen transparency, ethical oversight, and disciplinary mechanisms while preserving the independence necessary for fair adjudication.

IMPACT OF JUDICIAL DEVIANCE ON THE ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE

Judicial behaviour deviance has far-reaching consequences in the dispensation of justice and for democratic governance. The judiciary has the duty of both the protection of legal rights and the interpretation of laws; so a breach of what we morally stand for as well as the law can substantially erode the legitimacy and credibility of the judiciary. The impact of judicial deviance is more than just an individual matter; it can have long lasting implications for public confidence, institutional integrity, and the rule of law in general.¹²

- **Diminished Public Trust in the Judiciary**

Judicial deviance has one of the most direct consequences and that is the decline of public trust in the judiciary. The belief is to a large extent derived from the premise that the judiciary treats its members fairly, impartially, and independently. When allegations of corruption, bias, or wrongdoing are exposed in the public eye the citizens will question the validity and credibility of judicial adjudication. The erosion of public trust will lead to a loss of respect for court decisions, and a decrease in people's acceptance and willingness to pursue a judicial remedy.

- **Miscarriage of Justice**

Judicial misconduct is also a direct cause of miscarriages of justice. When judges permit corruption, prejudice, or undue influence to interfere with decisions, innocent people might be wrongly convicted or guilty people could be shirked from responsibility. These results contradict the very purpose of the criminal justice system: bringing about fairness,

¹² Brian Z. Tamanaha, *On the Rule of Law* (2004).

accountability, and the safeguarding of individual rights.

- **Declining Rule of Law**

Principle of rule of law: everyone and all institutions, including judges, should conduct themselves within a rule of law and lawful order. Judicial deviation undermines such a principle, in that it may enable that personal interests or the influence of an external person trump legal reasoning.

- **Judicial System Harm to Institutions**

Deviance from the norms by judges can harm the image of the judiciary as a legal profession. Even a small instance of this misconduct may cause people to feel that the system is neither properly supervised, nor can it be held accountable. Legal institutions that lack proper oversight and accountability can damage these institutions, weakening both their moral authority and their capacity to enforce the letter and spirit of the law.¹³

- **Effect on Democratic Governance**

This judicial branch of government plays a very important role in democratic systems which involves balance mechanisms between the various arms of government. Judicial deviance might undermine this function by allowing political affiliation, personal interest (or both) to influence judicial judgment. The balance of power among the executive, legislature, and judiciary can be disturbed when judicial independence is undermined, thus placing democratic stability at risk.

- **Adverse Effects on Criminal Justice Administration**

Judicial deviance in criminal justice is likely to have very deep implications in the realm of the administration of criminal justice operations. Judicial decisions affect issues like bail, conviction, sentencing, and constitutional rights. This kind of behaviour in these domains can be considered as being very harmful to civil liberties in society and deviant in respect of the courts and other institutions, to the public, which can ultimately result in unfair trials, the vagaries of sentencing practices and violations of fundamental rights. Such outcomes can have

¹³ Roscoe Pound, *The Causes of Popular Dissatisfaction with the Administration of Justice*, 40 *Am. L. Rev.* 729 (1906).

an enormous impact on the legitimacy and viability of the criminal justice system.¹⁴

As stated by the International Court of Justice, in a country like India, which sees the judiciary as the bulwark of constitutional values and where judiciary is the arbiter of justice, preservation of integrity of judiciary is critical in guarantee of justice and protection of the government's organs in a democracy. It thus becomes essential to tackle judicial deviance for the preservation of public confidence and the further augmentation of the general legitimacy of the legal system.

JUDICIAL ACCOUNTABILITY AND MECHANISMS TO ADDRESS JUDICIAL DEVIANCE

Judicial independence should not be taken only if there is an expectation of it, and if there is not a framework for judges to have an ethical and professional standard, to the good of the people. "Judicial accountability" is "the processes and institutional safeguards through which judges are held responsible for misconduct, abuse of authority, or violations of judicial ethics" that occurs both within the realm of public accountability and outside judicial discretion. Judicial deviance is particularly difficult to abate through effective accountability mechanisms and public trust in the judiciary. Judicial accountability in democratic legal systems exists by constitutional, statutory and normative statutes and ethics codes, as well as through internal disciplinary procedures. These devices are designed to safeguard the independence of the judiciary, and their transparency, and also to provide an independent approach to the oversight of judges when they have acted irresponsibly.¹⁵

- **Constitutional Mechanism for Removal of Judges**

There is a formal mechanism in the Constitution in India to remove judges of higher judiciary from office on proven misbehaviour or incapacity. It is also known as impeachment. Supreme Court and High Court judges may be removed by the President of India following an address by Parliament supported by a special majority in both Houses. This is for the purpose of ensuring a fair and open parliamentary process towards the removal of judges, one in which serious cases must prevail before other justices come to face removal of their judges.¹⁶

¹⁴ Upendra Baxi, *The Crisis of the Indian Legal System* (Vikas Publishing 1982).

¹⁵ Bangalore Principles of Judicial Conduct (2002).

¹⁶ Restatement of Values of Judicial Life (1997).

- **In-House Judicial Accountability System**

Aside from constitutional mechanisms, the judiciary has also established internal mechanisms for addressing complaints of the judicial system. The internal process permits senior judges or judicial committees to look at allegations of wrongdoing and make recommendations to appropriate parties. Such measures could be warnings, advisories or, for some, requests for voluntary resignation. In order to protect institutional discipline, such procedures have a tendency to be viewed as opaque.

- **The Code of Conduct for Ethical Matters in the Legal Environment**

The Code of Ethics and the Code of Conduct of the Courts and the judiciary both encourage and protect human rights and principles that are essential in every profession to promote justice and fairness. Principles such as independence, impartiality, integrity, propriety, and avoiding conflicts of interest are emphasized in these directions. At the international stage they are a framework: standards such as Bangalore Principles of Judicial Conduct show that there are widely recognised guidelines in judicial behaviour. These principles emphasize important rules such as independence, impartiality, integrity, propriety, equality, competence and diligence in judicial conduct.¹⁷

- **Judicial Review and Appellate Oversight**

Further important means of accountability, of course, is the form of appellate review. Judges can trial higher courts in which such justices ask whether a particular case should have been tried — and whether the legal principles and rules of procedure may have applied. While appellate review does not cover abuses of legal justice and tends to only refer to lapses in justice, this safeguards against arbitrary judgments, as well as other forms related to law, to some extent.

- **Media and public scrutiny has a part to play**

Both media reports and public attention continue to shine a light on instances of judicial deviance. Reported misconduct by the judiciary through investigative journalism, civil society and academic research. While such scrutiny should not be wielded irresponsibly or undermine

¹⁷ M.P. Jain, *Indian Constitutional Law* (8th ed., LexisNexis 2018).

the independence of the judiciary, it has potential to ensure transparency and institutional reform.

- **More Institutional Reforms Are Required**

That said, while a plethora of measures are in place, scepticism about the effectiveness and transparency of judicial accountability systems persist. Others complain that disciplinary processes are slow, opaque or rarely used. This has led to numerous advocates for institutional reforms, focusing on explicit complaint pathways, independent oversight, and greater public visibility of disciplinary actions. The tension between judicial independence and accountability continues to be a multifaceted challenge for democracies pursuing legal independence. Effective accountability systems have to strike the balance with judges' internal restraints and external pressures and guard against deviant behaviour, which can subvert the judiciary credibility and justice.

JUDICIAL ETHICS AND PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

Judicial ethics serve as the normative framework that shapes a society's understanding of judges' conduct and, thereby, the judicial system itself. Ethical standards are designed to maintain impartiality, independence, and public confidence in the judiciary. It is only by following ethical principles that judges maintain their authority in legal disputes and individual rights, and consequently we can judge legally. Judicial ethics tend to revolve around the basic precepts of independence, impartiality, integrity, propriety, equality, competence, and diligence. These are the precepts by which judges make decisions professionally, as well as morally. Ethical principles also expect judges to avoid conflicts of interest and not to take part in politics which will undermine neutrality, and help them not to let anything or anyone interfere with their role in public society and to perform with the dignity of the judicial office both in the courtroom and out of the courtroom. Internationally, the Bangalore Principles of Judicial Conduct provide widely accepted standards for judicial conduct.¹⁸ They lay down guidelines to uniformity in judicial conduct across jurisdictions. They stress that judges bear their fiduciary duties without favour, bias, or prejudice; and conduct itself has to conform to a policy that would ensure trust on which the court system rests.

¹⁸Shimon Shetreet & Sophie Turenne, *Judges on Trial: The Independence and Accountability of the English Judiciary* (Cambridge Univ. Press 2013).

In Indian law, judicial conduct will be governed from the Restatement of Values of Judicial Life (1997) adopted by the higher judiciary. These principles establish ethical guidelines to avoid close association with members of the bar, to avoid public controversies, and to hold financial, as well as procedural integrity and impartiality in judicial decisions. While their constitutionality is not based upon law there, these ethics codes remain moral and professional standards by which judges operate. That said, there are still difficulties to be addressed with ethical discipline in the judiciary. Since many codes of conduct are self-regulated norms, their enforcement has typically followed internal institutional mechanisms rather than independent monitoring bodies. Greater commitment to ethical awareness, judicial training, and transparently formulated disciplinary processes can thus serve as effective mechanisms against judicial deviance.

CONCLUSION

The judiciary is of paramount importance in upholding the rule of law and the implementation of constitutional governance in democratic societies. Judges operate on a large and complex structure providing their very great jurisdiction to interpret laws, resolve disputes, and protect individual rights. Judges have such a crucial duty and they must not fail to model the utmost levels of judicial integrity, objectivity, and professionalism. However, judicial deviance serves to highlight that there are also problems in the pursuit of justice in the form of bad behaviour, abuse of power and ethical breaches.

Judicial irregularity - corruption, prejudiced practice, conflict of interest or judicial discretion abuse – presents serious threats to the integrity and credibility of the judicial system. And this sort of bad behaviour puts on the table the fairness of adjudication, it undermines popular confidence in the courts, it undermines long-term stability of democratic institutions. Judicial deviance can result from a convergence of personal motivations, institutional weaknesses, and structural pressures in the judicial system, as articulated in this article. Since deviance can occur when judges are deposed or not deposed, combating judicial deviance must balance the goal of independence with effective accountability. In countries such as India, existing mechanisms (such as procedural mechanisms including constitutional removal, internal disciplinary, or moral oversight) are in place to safeguard judicial integrity. However, doubts continue about the transparency, efficacy, and accessibility of these mechanisms.