The process of change within time and space dimension, has always lead to scrutiny of the conduct of social actors, who are either instrumental in bringing such change or on whom the process of change imposes certain codes and conducts. Conforming and non-conforming behaviours are more problematic concepts as they are viewed differently by societies in different times and contexts. For instance, where blasphemy as a conduct used to be considered as worth getting severe punishment in 18th century Europe, today it stands void. Likewise, the Penal Code of India sequences several acts of Indian citizens in relation to their severity of misconduct/crime. One wonders how much sequential ranking of crime under the IPC would stand relevant in today’s situation.

This is more so, relevant, when one focuses at youth and their behaviour. While they are considered as catalytic of change and have often shown their affinity for something new, such a behaviour is often judged as non-conform and even anomic.

In recent decades, the developmental paradigm under the garb of ‘westernization’ and ‘modernization’ has unleashed mind-boggling changes in living styles, which have virtually radicalized values, attitudes and actions of today’s youth across the globe. So much so, that what is ‘anomic’ or normative gets blurred.

The youth under the focus of present study exhibit extreme situations of deviant behaviour in the form of their entry into hardcore ‘gang’ crime or Mafia in the city of Mumbai. It emerged from more than 300 killings of gangsters by the police in ‘encounters’ in last few years. The baffling fact was that a majority of these ‘gangsters’ were the youth between the age of 20-30 years. Such disturbing trend raised the curiosity of the researcher to understand as to what went wrong that these youth put their lives at stake? The subsequent pages in the present study search an answer for such an unusual happening.