Q Discuss the fundamental postulates of Edwin Sutherland's "Differential Association Theory" with examples.

1- Introduction :

There are many school of thoughts about cause of crimes including free will, weak societal bond and other reason. However, Edwin Sutherland provides a different perspective on cause of crime that criminal behaviour is learned in different ways. His theory deems to be of immense importance in field of criminology and sociology.

2- Differential Association Theory :

Differential Association Theory was given by Edwin Sutherland in his book "Principles of Criminology" in 1939. According to this theory, criminal behaviour is learned from other people in intimate, personal groups.

Criminal Behaviour is Learned : Main Idea of Theory

According to Sutherland, all important forms of human behaviour including criminal behaviour

is learned from other human beings.

For Example:

A child learns to ride a bicycle from his friends or people whom he has interacted most. That's how he also learn to commit a crime. Different people have distinct opinions about things i.e. Some people think that it is okay to breach the law however, some do the opposite. If a child has more contact with those favouring to voilate laws, he will be more vulnerable to commit a crime.

Fundamental Principles of Differential Association Theory:

There are nine fundamental principles of Differential Association Theory, which are given below:

i- <u>Criminal Behaviour is learned.</u>

ii- <u>People learned Criminal Behaviour by Interaction With Others:</u>

People who are actively engaged with criminals will learn criminal behaviour quickly.

However, the important aspect of this learning is active contact i.e on regular basis.

For Example: A person who joins a criminal gang will learn criminal behaviour like drug trafficking, extortion or other illicit activities by observing.

iii- **Criminal Behaviour is Learned in Personal Groups:**

According to Sutherland, people donot learn so much in large groups or through media, such as by watching games and violent movies. Instead, they learn it in personal groups e.g family, friends. etc.

For Example: A child named Adnan is born in a family who is involved in illicit activities. With time, Adnan will learn to perform activities like money laundering, racketeering etc.

iv- **Learning Behaviour Includes Techniques and Motives:**

People not only learn the techniques to commit a crime rather they learn justification for their actions i.e they think whatever they are doing is right due to certain specified reason.

For Example : One who do robbery will know how to steal as well he justify his action by saying that he is fighting against an unjust system.

V- One's Perception of Legal Code Shape Their Motivation :

One's perception about legal covers and regulation also play role in shaping motivation for committing a crime. Some people consider law as favourable, reframed themselves from deviant behaviour while some cannot.
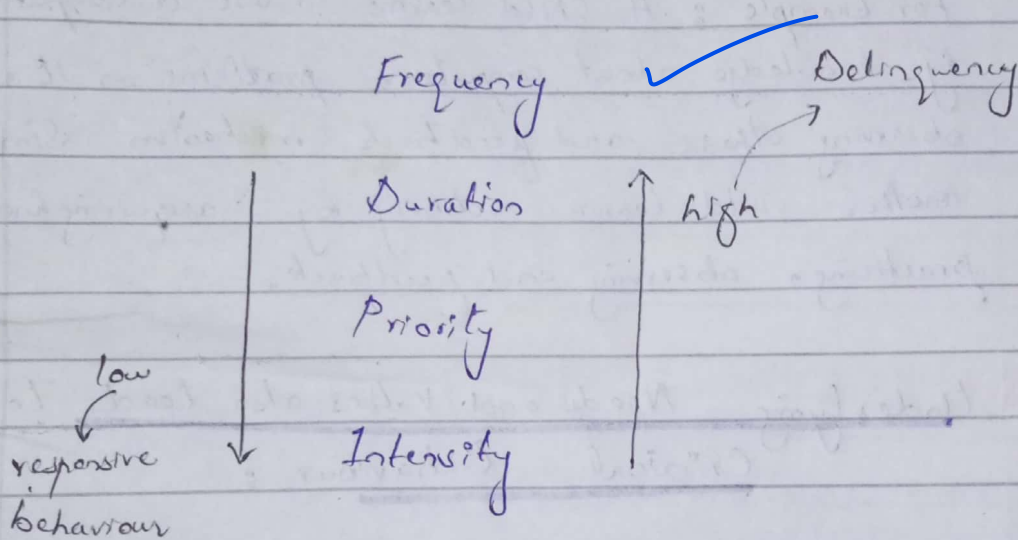
For Example : An individual who believes that taxes are unfair burden on public will more likely to engage in activities to hide his income or assets to minimize their tax liability.

vi- Shift in Balance of Influence Contributes to Delinquent Behaviour

When a person is exposed to more ideas that voilating a law is right than the ideas that breaching it, is not okay, they will become delinquent.

For Example : Social circle of Mr. John are
engaged in vandalism, theft and they recieved
admiration from other people, this could lead
to Mr John to adopt same mind set.

vii. **Other Factors Contribute to Likelihood of Crimes**

Frequency ✓ Delinquency

Duration ↑ high

Priority

low

responsive behaviour   ↓ Intensity

Individuals are influenced differently based
on the frequency, duration, priority and intensity
of their interactions with other those who are
involved in criminal behaviour.

For Example : Alex and Jordan are two friends,
but Alex gives priority to frequent and high
dose of drugs than Jordan. As a result,
there will be a difference in likelihood of conduct
of adopting or rejecting a criminal behaviour.

viii- **Learning Criminal Behaviour Shares Similarities With Other Types of Learning:**

Learning basically involves acquiring knowledge, practicing, observation and feedback and reinforcement. This seems true in case of criminal learning as well.

For Example: A child learns to use a computer by knowledge about computer, practicing on it, observing others and feedback mechanism. Similarly, another child learns robbery by acquiring knowledge, practicing, observing and feedback.

ix- **Underlying Needs and Values also Leads to Criminal Behaviour:**

Underlying needs and values of financial security and family support also leads to both criminal and non-criminal behaviour.

For Example: Sarah works hard to save money for her family and is using conventional means, whereas Tahir use unconventional means to achieve the same. Both have same needs, however, their behaviours to align those needs are totally opposite from each other.

3. Contribution of Differential Association Theory to Criminology:

This theory has been very influential in criminology as it has managed to move criminological and sociological theories away from dominant perspective at that time. For Example, the dominant perspective said that people commit crime because of neighbourhood they live in or because of their personality however, this theory argues that criminal behaviour is learned.

4. Conclusion:

Differential Association Theory is one of the most important theory of crime. It says that crime is learned from social personal groups. And in doing so, it has established itself as an important theory in criminology and sociology.

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well done ans is well composed
and according to the demand of the question
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