Answer plan

Unit 7 Sociological perspectives

Assignment 2

Tasks 1 and 2

Task 1: Produce a report explaining patterns and trends in health and illness among different social groups. You should continue this report using sociological perspective explanations for health inequalities, discussing the patterns and trends of health and illness in **two** different social groups. This provides evidence for **P3** and **M2.**

Heading: **Introduction**

Set the scene for the section by outlining what you will be including in the assignment see task 1 above e.g. “***In this assignment, I am going to explain the patterns and trends…………”***

Heading: **Patterns and trends in health and illness among different social groups**

Before you start the section you need to do another **short glossary of terms/definitions** which will help the reader understand the language and terms used in the following sections. Produce a table that gives the definitions of the following terms: **morbidity rate, mortality rate, health events, disease incidence, disease prevalence.**

In order to look into the patterns and trends in health and illness, the data must have been collected and analysed.

Heading: **Measuring health**

You need to list the ways we collect it e.g. ***“We measure patterns of health and illness by looking at a range of data collected in a variety of ways………………………………….”*** (list the ways from the book)

Sub-heading: **Difficulties in measuring health**

For this, you can summarise the info from Stretch p327, look at Walsh, P33 and use the powerpoint ‘measuring health’.

Move on to identify the main social groups that make up society and explain the patterns and trends of health and illness within each group. Take them in order: Social class, gender, ethnicity, age and locality. Start the section with something like:

***“There are a number of social groups that make up society…***(list them here***). Different patterns and trends in health and illness can be seen within each group.”***

You now need to look at patterns and trends in each of the social groups in turn. – as follows:

Heading: **Social class and patterns of health and illness**

Use the Black report and other information such as APHO and ONS to highlight the links between social class and patterns of health and illness e.g. MORTALITY, MORBIDITY, disease prevalence and incidence etc in different groups within social class – e.g. children from different social classes, males and females from different social classes etc.

Explain that the Black Report, followed by the Acheson Report provide detailed explanations for the relationship between social and environmental factors and health, illness and life expectancy.

Look at the mortality and morbidity rates, disease prevalence in the upper and lower classes and compare them.

Make a conclusion as to whether there is a link between what class you are in and the patterns of health and illness.

Make sure you use statistics.

Heading: **Gender**

Go through the same process as with social class. Look at the patterns and trends for males and females – Refer to the statistics in the Black Report and also use info on page 329 in Stretch to show the differences for males and females.

Heading: **Ethnicity and patterns of health and illness**

Same process as above – use Stretch p330 and Rasheed and Walsh and Black Report. What are the differences between different ethnic groups in mortality and morbidity rates and the incidence and prevalence of disease. You should go onto the ONS (office for national statistics website and quote some examples – the link is on the ppt – look at the info on ethnicity and health). Also use the PPT on connect.

Heading: **Age and patterns of health and illness**

Do the same as above but focus on illness (morbidity). E.g. People are living longer so will get more illnesses. Find out if mortality rates have improved over the last 50 years or got worse (They have improved – see the graph in the Black Report that we looked at in class).

You can conclude that people are living longer but more people are getting dementia because they are living longer.

Heading: **Locality**

Same as above – use the Black report and ppt to show that there are differences within the whole country and also within different parts of individual towns for mortality, morbidity and prevalence of disease. You can talk about the north south divide \_ quote some statistics. You can then look at St. Helens as an example and the different parts of the town – APHO website that we looked at in class.

You are now going to move onto looking at how sociological perspectives can be applied to two social groups to explain differences. We are going to choose **social class** and **gender.**

Now move onto **NEW PAGE:**

Heading: **Sociological perspectives applied to the patterns and trends of health and illness within social class - M2**

Here the best perspective to apply will be Marxism.

Start off by saying something similar to for e.g. ***“The Marxist perspective would explain the different patterns and trends of health and illness within the social classes in a number of ways……*”**

Refer back to what Marx said – due to the conflict between the proletariat and bourgeoisie. E.g. Higher poverty in the lower classes therefore more likely to get ill. Can’t afford good food accommodation etc..

Look at all your notes and ppts and give suggestions according to Marx for the differences. Make comparisons between the upper and lower classes in terms of mortality rates, morbidity rates. Why are there differences? Opportunity or lack of it, education and access to it – influences job and life opportunities. People in the lower classes do the unskilled jobs so get ill and die younger.

Heading: **Sociological perspectives applied to the patterns and trends of health and illness within gender**

You need to this time explain how the functionalist perspective can explain the differences. Within our society, men have taken on the role of breadwinner and carried out the more manual work. Because of the dangerous jobs they carry out, they are more at risk of dying from accidents and also work related illnesses such as asbestosis and silicosis. Have a look at some of the other functions of males and females within society and see if they can be responsible for patterns and trends in health, illness and disease.

We can also apply the feminist perspective to explain differences in patterns and trends of health. For example, mortality rates are lower for women however long term illness (morbidity) is higher. Feminists would suggest that women take on the roles of caring for the family and do over their fair share of the household chores which can leave them exhausted. Women are more likely to suffer from mental health issues and the feminists would argue that this is due to having to juggle too many responsibilities.

Also within our society, women seem to take on the larger part of childcare which can lead to them not getting the same level of job as a male. Their lack of opportunity means that they are more likely to be in lower skilled jobs which can lead to poorer lifestyle and therefore increased health problems.

Task 2: We now need to move onto looking at the different sociological explanations for patterns and trends of health and illness in social class and gender groups.

Heading: **Sociological explanations for the patterns of health and illness within social groups D1**

Sub-heading: **The 4 main sociological explanations for the patterns of health and illness within social class**

Start off with something similar ***to “There are 4 main sociological explanations for the patterns of health and illness within social class***." You need to list them: Statistical artefact, natural or social selection, cultural or behavioural explanations and material or structural explanations.

You need to work through each one:

1. The statistical artefact explanation – explain in owns words – give the pros and cons
2. Natural or social selection – explain in own words – pros and cons
3. Cultural or behavioural explanation – explain in own words – pros and cons
4. Material or structural explanation – own words, pros and cons

Sub-heading: **Social class – D1**

You need to evaluate how good each one of the explanations is for explaining the patterns and trends of health and illness within social class.

All of the explanations can be linked to social class

sub heading: **Gender – D1**

Some of these sociological explanations can also be applied to gender.

1. The statistical artefact explanation – there is evidence from statistics to show gender differences in patterns and trends of health and illness. e.g. Mortality rates for women are lower than for men but morbidity (rates of illness) are higher for women. There is strong statistical evidence to suggest that women have higher rates of long term illness however this can be unreliable since the statistics for attendance at the doctors are lower for males which could impact the real figures for illness in males. You can talk about the **clinical iceberg** her (see document on connect)

Is there sufficient evidence to suggest that there is a difference in the health and well-being of men and women? – There is the Black Report and Acheson report. Evidence from these reports can be linked to jobs and health e.g harder jobs carried out by males therefore likely to die earlier. They also have higher rates of accidents than females because of the jobs therefore more likely to die from accidents. Men have more risk factors.

1. Cultural and behavioural explanation – There is good evidence to support the differences in gender from a cultural and behavioural explanation perspective. For example, rates of mental illness and depression are higher in women. According to Popay and Bartley (1989), women spent up to 87 hours per week on housework and even if they worked full time, spent 64 hours on it. This is strong evidence that still within our culture it is the norm for women to take on more of the household duties.

However (con), other research shows that men are less likely than women to discuss mental health issues.

Men also culturally take on the more manual jobs in society so this could be an explanation for the higher overall mortality in males than females.

They have risk factors such as higher rates of risk taking such as dangerous sports and fast driving.

1. Material or structural explanation – A higher proportion of men than women are in higher ranked jobs which can lead to poverty for women. Poverty can lead to ill health – this could explain the higher rates of illness in women however it doesn’t explain the differences in mortality unlike the cultural and behavioural explanations.

Read over pages 328- three quarters into page 330 for the above.

You need to quote the figures where relevant and reference them.