

*This approach looks at how a person defines themselves as ill, it is seen that people with the same illness vary as to whether they seek medical attention or not. For example, someone with an illness may say they are extremely ill and visit a doctor, another person with the same illness may brush it off and not think anything of it.*

*Critics of the interactionist approach argue that people ignore the real causes of ill- health. 'These medical explanations include environmental issues such as pollution, stress and poverty'(3).*

*The Feminist approach has focused on male domination in the medical professions and how it has had an impact on women. This approach has looked at how pregnancy and birth have been seen as a medical issue, and how women argue that It is a natural process.*

*Feminist writers have also commented on the issue of male contraception, apart from the condom there have been no development or promotion of the male contraception pill, which also has fewer side effects than female contraception.*

*Higher numbers of women are suffering from things like mental health issues, depression and anxiety. Feminist would see this as an exploitation of their position in society.*

*valid  
P2  
points*

*The biomedical is 'an approach to health and illness that identifies health as the absence of disease and focuses on diagnosis and curing individuals with specific illness'(3). The Biomedical approach focuses mainly on the body and the physical health of people; it looks at bringing in health professionals in a time of ill-health and believes that treatment should only take place in the right environment, such as a hospital.*

*This approach has very little regard for environmental and social factors that may lead some people to become sick. This model fits in*

very well with the functionalist approach; the functionalist approach focuses on making people better so they can quickly return to their normal life. Parson a theorist for the functionalist approach believes that if people are sick our society cannot function, he believes that when people are ill they do not go to school or work and are therefore not making money to live. And should therefore seek medical advice immediately. ✓

The biomedical model focuses on abnormalities of the body and believes that an illness is a temporary state that can be changed by treatments such as medicine and surgery. They believe that the treatment can only be given from doctors and medically trained staff, and it is only them that can give diagnosis of illness and disease. ✓

valued  
all  
points

The social- medical is 'an approach to health and illness that focuses on the social and environmental factors that influence our health and well- being' (3). This approach looks at factors such as:

- Poverty
- Poor housing
- Lack of education
- Diet
- Pollution
- Lack of money
- Poor living conditions

This approach looks at how health problems such as malnutrition are associated with poverty and poor housing. This model is completely opposite to the biomedical approach as it takes into account all the environmental and social factors that may lead to ill-health. The socio- medical model focuses on how the life expectancy for people living in deprived areas with poor living conditions is less than the ruling groups. It seems to the socio- model that people who have

more money and are living in better conditions have a longer life expectancy and less ill- health.

Another thing that the socio- medical model focuses on is how life choices can influence our health, life choices such as smoking, drinking and your diet are seen as the main causes of preventable deaths. To the socio- medical approach it is seen that health depends on the way we feel about ourselves, things such as our emotions, social life and physical mobility. This approach believes that our health can be improved by making social conditions better. ✓

The Socio- medical approach focuses on the social factors that contribute to health and well- being and the biomedical approach focuses on diagnosis of illness and disease. A positive aspect of the biomedical model is that it looks for a diagnosis and then treatment to wipe out an illness or disease. This helps people to get an answer and then treatment will help them return to society quickly and carry on with their everyday role. ✓

However, unlike the socio- medical approach it doesn't look at the root cause of illness's and diseases and therefore doesn't fully solve the problems. Their problem maybe treated but because of some people's life style and choices the problem may reoccur again. Rather than solving the problem the biomedical doesn't look at people's life in the long term, whereas the social- medical focuses on the change in life style that will stop an illness or disease occurring in the first place. ✓

Because the biomedical approach looks at treatment with medicine, if the root cause of the illness was found they may not need to intervene with medicine and it could therefore be prevented. The socio- medical model actually looks at how people can prevent illness and disease by making some changes in their life, things such as

assessing  
the  
biomedical  
and socio-  
medical  
models  
of  
health.

stopping smoking or improving their social life can be seen as improving their health. However, a negative aspect of the socio-medical approach is that it ignores the professions and medically trained people that can help us get better.

Even though the socio- medical approach looks at changes rather than medicine and treatment, it can be very time consuming and if someone has a disease that is life threatening it is the drugs prescribed by the professionals that can help them. An example of this could be in a poverty country such as Africa. The rates of newborn babies being born with HIV is very high, they are given medicine as treatment to improve the quality and length of their life. This is the biomedical approach and the socio- medical approach would look at this situation as better educating people on 'safe sex' so that people are more aware. However, the issue of this is too deep rooted and people within poverty counties do not have the resources to be better educated. The biomedical approach would look at this situation as being treated with medicine so that child can live better and longer and the socio- medial approach would look at them needing better education so that the disease can be stopped altogether.

Life choices and life styles can be the problem and led to people becoming ill, this is why I agree with the socio- medical approach and agree that if people can improve the quality of the life, they can improve the quality of their health. Evidence to support the socio-medical approach is that in the early- twentieth century, improvements in sanitation was made because life expectancy began to fall. Because of the newly built houses, clean water and newly built council houses living standard improved and life expectancy rose.

valid M1  
points

However I also agree with the biomedical approach, because of this model people get be quickly diagnosed and treated. A result of this is that quality of life can be improved much quicker and people have answers to their problems. Also people have trained for years in order to help individuals and groups of people with illnesses and diseases. They are professionals and therefore know what they are talking about; they are people you can trust and people you can take advice from. However a negative aspect of this approach is that it only looks at the abnormalities of the body. ✓

The biomedical approach fits in well with the functionalist perspective, they both only look at the physical well- being of people and both believe that medical advice and treatment is the only way. Both models see illness as a temporary but dysfunctional for society and believe that the quicker people are well, the better. Both theories do not address the conflicts of control or take into consideration that out society can be the causes of some illnesses and diseases. ✓

Socio- medical fits in well with 'the Marxist approach sits more easily with the conflicts theorists than the functionalists' (1). This is because the conflicts theorist would agree that a shorter life expectancy and high rates of ill- health among the poor is because they have a disadvantage and live in certain circumstances that may lead them to become ill. I believe that the socio- medical approach fits in the best with the Marxist approach; this is because they both reflect each other in their beliefs. The socio- medical model looks at the inequalities of people and say that if someone has poor housing they are likely to be involved in ill- health. The Marxist approach looks at how Capitalists rule the proletariat people and believe that the 'ruling class have power over the other social institutions' (1). The two links in together as the Marxist approach show how the richer people of

Further  
assessment  
points

*society will have a better quality of life and the less powerful people  
maybe in danger of illness because they live in more poor conditions.*

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