

Analyse and Evaluate stigmatisation

Analyse and Evaluate AO2 and AO3

Introduction

Stigma

Goffman (1968) argued that people with physical impairments and mental health issues often face stigmatisation.

He argued there are two forms of stigma:

- discrediting stigma visible to everyone for example a person who has had their legs amputated and may use a wheelchair or prosthetic limb.
- discreditable stigma which are less visible or even invisible such as hearing loss, epilepsy or autism.

Task 1: (AO3)

Discuss how people might interact with a wheelchair user.

Task 2: (AO3)

Analyse what is meant by the question – Do they take sugar?

Task 3: (AO3)

Compare and contrast the work of the sociologists below who have also done work on stigma.

Write a short paragraph on;

- A. Scambler and Hopkins (1986)
- B. Hall (1993)
- C. Gray (2002).

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Task 4: (AO3)

Analyse and evaluate the student answer to the question below:

Explain why some sociologists argue that people with disabilities may be stigmatised [20]

The term disability is referred to as a disadvantage that people face without a choice. Unlike those with illness those with disability do not according to Parsons (1951) have to follow the two rights and two obligations rule simply because they cannot get better. Medical disability can refer to anything between mental and physical that disadvantages an individual in one shape or other. Some forms of medical disability allow day to day life to be lived without too many problems, however other forms require 24/7 assistance and care.

Goffman(1970) distinguished between a discrediting and a discreditable form of stigma. His work was mainly focused on disability and stigma and he therefore had a very clear and clever perspective on this subject. He argued that discrediting stigma meant an individual was seen as 'unusual' compared to a regular person and their symptoms whether physical or mental (in some cases both) could not be avoided or hidden. This form of stigma made life hard for the individual.

On the other hand discreditable stigma could be hidden and was not visible or noticeable. An individual with this type of disability could go on with their lives without the option of telling people about their disability.

Task 4 extension:

a. Is there a clear and relevant introduction?

All answers should start with a reference to the question and this is particularly important in the 20 mark questions where there is a limited amount of time to impress the examiner that you know what the question is asking.

Clearly this candidate has not addressed the question immediately.

Write a couple of sentences that do address the specifics of the question.

b. Has the candidate answered the question throughout the answer or have they lost focus?

The whole of the first paragraph is answering a question on medical disability. It could have been made relevant to the notion of stigma and stigmatisation but as it stands it is generalised.

Add to the paragraph in a way that will move it from being generalised to being directly related to the specifics of the question.

c. The question has asked why some sociologists in the plural thus in order to access the top mark bands the work of at least two relevant sociologists should be referred to.

Write a paragraph on a second relevant sociologist which addresses the specifics of the question.