

Using a rights-based argument, write a response paper about commonly heard myths and misconceptions around abortion. You may choose any myth from the lesson or one that you may have heard otherwise. [300-500 words]

The most prevalent myth around abortion is that only “women” access abortion. This myth is based on the biological essentialist understanding of gender where it is perceived that every person with a uterus is a woman and every person with testicles is a man. This myth completely erases the experience of trans masculine persons and creates numerous structural barriers for them to access abortion. The gender identity of trans masculine, non-binary and gender non-conforming individuals who seek abortion are often invalidated and they are subjected to humiliating experiences as well as denied proper reproductive health care i.e. they are mis-gendered, their masculinity is questioned and sometimes they are not provided with abortion because of having a legal identity as men in case of trans masculine people whereas the legal language of abortion in the institutions (hospitals, courts, abortion clinics) is very much that of a binary.

Another most common myth is that seeking abortion causes infertility. Unsafe abortions do have the risk of causing infertility. But abortions when accessed through safe methods under the supervision of trained medical professional do not lead to infertility.

The other misconception is that women accessing abortion is not suitable enough to be a mother because they lack motherly feeling and are of ill character. It stems out of the patriarchal understanding that a woman must be a nurturer and must have to uphold all the societal prescription of motherhood and womanhood. This myth also stigmatizes women’s sexuality by perpetuating the idea that women who abort are sexually promiscuous.

Similarly many people think that abortion after the 12th week of pregnancy is completely unsafe. But in the classes we have learnt that under proper medical supervision and if performed by a trained and qualified medical professional abortion can also be accessed safely post 12th week of pregnancy as well.