

Assignment 1

A common narrative in the society and especially families from marginalized areas in Assam is that only irresponsible woman seeks abortion or perhaps pregnant person of *"impure nature"* resorts to abortion. In order to avoid such judgements, the pregnant person often reaches out to higher powers such as spell casters to induce miscarriage through spells or local practitioners who advise traditional techniques of abortion. Although such measures might lead to miscarriage, these are highly unsafe and don't always guarantee success.

A major reason they resort to such unsafe practices rather than seeking advice from a medical expert is because of the stigma around abortion and their beliefs. They also believe surgical abortion might lead to infertility, death, and loss of privacy, expensive surgical abortion cost or perhaps the guilty conscience of ending *"a life"* through conventional measures rather than the advice of *"higher powers"*. While sex education can be a strong remedy towards addressing these challenges, this issue of unsafe abortion is not only severe but also ironical.

As thousands of people over time have resorted to unsafe practices of abortion for privacy and confidentiality reasons as well as due to fear from the law that they might be punished for ending a life, it is perhaps the adoption of unsafe practices which is to be reprimanded by the law. Both WHO and Medical Terminal Pregnancy (MTP) Act state that women have the right to terminate pregnancy at their own will. However, any unsafe practices adopted to terminate pregnancy without seeking the support of a medical expert which might endanger the pregnant person's life is considered unethical and illegal.