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# Story Circles and abortion stigma in Mexico: a mixed-methods evaluation of a new intervention for reducing individual level abortion stigma

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Received 26 Jun 2018, Accepted 29 Jan 2019, Published online: 01 Apr 2019

 Download citation <https://doi.org/10.1080/13691058.2019.1577493>

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## Abstract

This study presents the results of an evaluation of a Story Circles intervention to reduce individual level abortion stigma among women who have experienced abortion in Mexico. Using a mixed-methods approach, the study explored whether participation in the intervention reduced 18 women's experience of stigma one month after having participated. The study used the Individual Level Abortion Stigma Scale (ILAS Scale), qualitative interviews and focus groups to gain an understanding of women's experiences of the intervention and any changes in stigmatising feelings. Findings suggest that the Story Circles offered women a place to talk about their abortion in an affirmative and supportive environment, unlike the context of their daily lives where stigma generated silence and affected their well-being. Participants were able to build trust, share their experiences, create connections and transform their perception of their abortion from a negative experience to one that was empowering and life-affirming. This also led to other significant positive changes in their lives. The

paper offers recommendations about programme and intervention design and implementation for practitioners working to reduce individual level stigma among women who have experienced abortion.