



The Impact of PROGRESA on Food Consumption

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Country	Mexico
Organizing Theme	Health
Status	Completed
Intervention Category	Cash Transfers
Sector	Social Protection
Abstract	<p>In this article we used data from the Mexican poverty alleviation program called PROGRESA (Programa de Educación, Salud y Alimentación) to examine whether eligibility for a cash transfer provided by the program conditional on children's regular school attendance and regular visits to health centers is also associated with increased consumption of food. We used a longitudinal sample of approximately 24,000 households from 506 communities. A distinguishing characteristic of this sample was that some of the communities were randomly selected for participation in PROGRESA, while the rest were introduced into the program at later phases. Exploiting this feature in our analysis, we found that eligible households in the villages covered by PROGRESA increased caloric acquisition compared with eligible households not receiving these benefits. By November 1999, median beneficiary households in treatment localities obtained 6.4% more calories than did comparable households in control localities. Perhaps even more significant, we found that the impact was greatest on dietary quality as measured by the acquisition of calories from vegetable and animal products—a finding consistent with the view of respondents themselves that PROGRESA was enabling them to “eat better.”</p>
Gender Connection	Gender Informed Analysis
Gender Outcomes	Nutrition
IE Design	Clustered Randomized Control Trial (Clustered at state levels)
Intervention	<p>PROGRESA is a conditional cash transfer that provides poor families with children in grades 3-9 with cash every two months if the children attend school more than 85% of the time. PROGRESA also provides basic preventative health interventions and nutritional supplements for young children. The payment is distributed directly to the mother.</p>
Intervention Period	The program started in 1997 and still exists today.
Sample population	The study examines 24000 households from 506 communities located in the first 5 states receiving PROGRESA. 320 of these communities were treatment and 186 were control. Of the 12,291 eligible households in treatment localities, 3,350 did not receive benefits.
Comparison conditions	Pipeline comparison



Unit of analysis	Household level
Evaluation Period	March 1998- November 1999
Results	Beneficiary households in treatment localities obtained 6.4% more calories than comparable households in non-treatment localities. Additionally, the impact is greatest of calories acquired from vegetable and animal projects suggesting that beneficiaries "eat better".
Primary study limitations	There were some minor differences between baseline characteristics between treatment and control groups. Additionally, due to unknown reasons, many eligible households did not enroll in the program.
Funding Source	
Reference(s)	Hoddinott, J., & Skoufias, E. (2004). The impact of PROGRESA on food consumption. <i>Economic development and cultural change</i> , 53(1), 37-61.
Link to Studies	http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1086/423252
Microdata	