

Effect of Education Investment on Citizen Democratic Satisfaction and Living Conditions in Africa: A national survey for Uganda

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Abstract:

Education spending is essential for the advancement of society since it can capacitate people to participate in economic, social, and political life while propelling socioeconomic development. However, Sub-Saharan Africa continues to experience economic decline and democratic inadequacies despite large investments in education. This calls for a critical assessment of their effects on society broadly. Therefore, using a sample of 1200 respondents from the national Afrobarometer survey, this study investigates the relationship between democratic satisfaction, education investment, and living conditions in Uganda. The results show that there is a general lack of satisfaction with the investment made in education, particularly among less educated and rural communities. Higher education is inversely correlated with better living conditions and democratic satisfaction, according to bivariate and multivariate logistic regression models. These findings highlight the need for all-encompassing educational approaches that are geared to raise living standards and citizen contentment with democracy.

Key words: Education Investment, Living Conditions, and Democracy

1. Introduction

Investing in education through well-considered educational strategies not only empowers individuals to lead intellectually stimulating lives, but also equips them with the necessary knowledge and skills to make significant contributions to society. The primary objective of investing in education is to establish enduring opportunities for people to overcome their most pressing social challenges. Specifically, education investment, when well designed, leads to poverty alleviation, enhances living standards, and stimulates economic development. According to Hanushek (2013) investments in human capital profoundly shape a country's economic path. A country's achievement of educational excellence is intricately connected to its commitment to investing in education. Throughout the latter half of the 20th century, Sub-Saharan African (SSA) nations demonstrated a

profound commitment to educational advancement, yielding commendable results in terms of educational access.

Statistical data demonstrate significant progress in educational access within the region. The gross primary school enrollment ratio rose from 36% to 75% between 1960 and 1983, indicating a remarkable improvement in basic education access. Enrollment at the secondary school level also increased notably from 3% to 20% over the same period. Adult literacy rates similarly rose from 10% to 42%, reflecting a population increasingly equipped with essential literacy skills. The average number of years of education among the working-age group also increased between 1970 and 1983. Gruber and Kosack (2014) highlight that this transformation underscores the centrality of education in socioeconomic development in SSA. During the period from 1960 to 1970, Uganda's economic performance was remarkably strong within SSA. This era witnessed a commendable annual increase in GDP per capita by 3%, with a steady rise in real GDP averaging 4.8% annually (Hickey & Izama, 2020). Nevertheless, GDP is not a measure of a sense of wellbeing across the country; and it can be argued that despite increases in access to education, the kind of education proffered often did not create what Omodan and Diko (2021) call a “learning environment where everyone feels empowered, encouraged and free from the burdens of Eurocentric and Americentric imposition” (p. 95). Omodan and Diko summarize such an environment as “Ubuntu as a Decolonial Pedagogy in Africa” (p. 95). (Ubuntu is not easy to define, but it can be seen as manifesting when we practice “we-directed” styles of living and relating to others. It can be literally translated as “I am because we are” – cf. <https://www.stiftung-zukunft-bilden.org/en/portfolio-item/ubuntu-childrens-literacy-centre-uganda-teaching-tent-for-2-school-classes>.) As Omodan and Diko state, when discussing Ubuntu as an educational process, “the value of Ubuntu emphasizes a connectedness that sees the other not as one who lives separately but as one who lives with the fundamental recognition that the self depends upon others” (2021, p 97). Accordingly, it can be argued that educational investments that were governed by curricula and approaches to learning that focused on individual achievements did not by and large contribute to empowering people as citizens to participate in collective deliberation around ways of living that might contest conventional models of economic and social progress. Furthermore, due to subsequent changes in the country's political landscape, Uganda has grappled with numerous internal and external economic shocks since 1971. This precipitated a protracted period of impoverishment and deteriorating living standards (Uganda Bureau of Statistics, (2020; World Bank, 2020). Moreover, the fabric of political democracy was strained due to persistent economic strife from 1973 well into the 1980s (Izama, 2020).

Although there was a significant decrease in poverty rates between 1993 and 2016, there was a little increase from 2013 to 2016 (Owori, 2017). In 1997, Uganda launched the Universal Primary Education (UPE) initiative in response to these historical issues. Ensuring equitable access to basic education is the goal of the UPE program which aims to address historical economic and political imbalances. Using this base as a starting point, the government launched the Universal Secondary Education (USE) program in 2007 which resulted in a sharp increase in post-primary enrolment rates and a rise in UPE graduates' completion rates (Mwesigye, 2015; Mugabe & Ogina, 2021).

2. The Research Problem

The economies of the SSA countries continue to shrink despite large investments made in education (Hassan et al., 2022; World Bank, 2022). According to UNESCO and UNDP (2021) for example, the introduction of UPE initiatives in SSA regions has not significantly reduced poverty. While education is typically associated with enhancing quality of life and promoting democratic institutions, many Sub-Saharan African nations, despite substantial investment in education, continue to grapple with poor living conditions and democratic deficiencies (Hanushek, 2021). While some research suggests that education stimulates democracy (Hanushek, 2017), others contend the opposite (Ahmadov et al., 2022). Thus, this study aims to investigate why education spending in SSA with a particular focus on Uganda, does not result in higher living standards and democratic contentment. The

following specific objectives considered by the research paper: 1) To assess the level of education investment in Uganda, 2) To determine the potential impact of higher education attainment on citizen satisfaction with the democratic regime, 3) To investigate the likelihood that improved living conditions lead to higher education attainment, 4) To examine how education investment is related to citizen living standards and satisfaction with democracy, and 5) To offer some critical perspectives regarding the implementation of educational investment. Before addressing these objectives, literature review is made to highlight possible research gaps.

3. Literature Review

The literature review focuses on Uganda and other countries in Sub-Saharan Africa to analyze the complex effects of education investments on citizen welfare and democratic progress. The review fills in knowledge gaps about how education affects living conditions, economic growth, and democratic involvement in both developed and developing contexts by showcasing various viewpoints and research findings. In the context of the socioeconomic reality of the SSA countries, this study seeks to elucidate the intricate relationships that exist between welfare outcomes, democratic procedures, and education.

a) Linking Education, Welfare, and Citizen Living Conditions

The literature on the effect of education investment on citizen welfare presents a spectrum of perspectives and findings, yet several crucial debates and research gaps endure. By referring to various reports, Tilak (2023) demonstrates that education can effectively alleviate poverty by enhancing citizen welfare through heightened productivity and skills. However, these studies primarily rely on theoretical frameworks and secondary data analysis, necessitating empirical investigations to substantiate their claims with reference to various contexts. Furthermore, Tilak's discussion does not reflect upon the potential of education to be transformative in the sense of empowering people to challenge economic and social formations that render the wealth of the country vastly unevenly distributed. In this regard, Omodan by contrast refers to the transformative paradigm of research which is focused on considering (and revitalizing) "the transformative power of education in fostering equity and social justice, emphasizing the importance of creating inclusive learning environments that empower all students [to become active citizens]" (2024, p. 116) Desai (2022) and Rajani (2023), in their study, explored how education affects economic growth and well-being in the US and India. They discovered a favorable relationship between citizen wellbeing and education. However, they fail to take into account the contextual differences between rich and developing economies, which begs the question of whether their conclusions are applicable to areas like SSA. According to McArthur (2021), education promotes social cohesiveness and togetherness, however this argument ignores the possibility that it could reinforce social stratification. This is by rewarding those who achieve in classrooms that foster competitiveness rather than co-operative learning. As Omodan and Diko argue, Ubuntu-oriented pedagogy would rather promote "collective learning and collaborative effort to achieve the set objectives of the class or lecture room" (2021, p. 98). Furthermore, as stressed by Omodan and Diko, classrooms can be used as an opportunity, through dialogue, to encourage students to "recognize their own history, culture, language and personal identity beyond what has been previously taught or prescribed by mainstream values" (2021, p. 97). Tikly and Barrett (2021) propose that education might exacerbate social disparities, particularly gender inequities in welfare outcomes. However, their study has limited generalizability to third-world contexts where unique socio-economic challenges could influence the education-welfare nexus. Ogundari et al. (2015) provide a quantitative examination of education expenditure and household welfare in Nigeria, unveiling higher returns on tertiary education compared to primary and secondary levels. While informative, the applicability of these findings to Uganda remains uncertain.

The works of Hanushek and Woessmann (2024) as well as Psacharopoulos and Patrinos (2024) are also important as background to this study because they try to specifically explain the positive impact of Education on GDP/capita as one of the key indicators for citizen living conditions in a country. To begin with, Hanushek and Woessmann (2024) emphasized the quality of education and its role in economic growth. Improvements in the quality of education lead to higher levels of human capital, which in turn contribute positively to economic

development measured in terms of GDP. They use empirical evidence to show that countries with higher educational quality tend to experience higher GDP per capita over time. The study suggests that investing in better education systems not only enhances individual productivity but also contributes significantly to overall economic prosperity. But as indicated in our Introduction, such measures do not offer an indication of how wealth (and a sense of welfare) is distributed across the country. Nor do these authors offer an indication of whether citizens are likely to feel empowered through their education to participate in deliberations around the structuring of economic life. Options such as gearing education processes to encouraging deliberations around, for instance, solidarity economies do not feature in their discussion. (This notion is supported by the United Nations, as also linked to the Sustainable Development Goals <https://unsse.org/sse-and-the-sdgs/>)

Psacharopoulos and Patrinos (2024) examine returns on investments in education globally. They compile findings from various studies to demonstrate that education is a key determinant of economic growth and development. Specifically, their paper discusses how education increases human capital formation, leading to improvements in productivity and economic output per person. Moreover, it addresses the impact of education on GDP per capita adjusted for purchasing power parity (PPP), showing that education contributes to both nominal and real economic gains. However, there are several research gaps in their approach. These include a lack of thorough comparative studies across various global regions and educational systems, a lack of analysis of contextual factors influencing these relationships, and a lack of investigation into the causal pathways linking GDP per capita to the quality of education. These gaps hinder a comprehensive understanding of how education impacts economic development and citizen well-being across different settings.

In summary, the existing literature underscores the intricate interplay between education investment and welfare outcomes but falls short of extrapolating findings across diverse socio-economic settings. Therefore, in order to shed light on the observed relationship between welfare, living standards, and education, the current study gives priority to empirical investigations in Uganda, an SSA nation. In addition, studies examining the differences between genders in educational attainment and the ways in which education affects welfare outcomes are crucial for developing more focused policy responses.

b) Education and Democracy

Previous studies on education and democracy are extensive, covering various approaches from historical trends to meta-analyses, all aiming to elucidate the complex dynamics involved. However, within this academic discussion, significant gaps are evident, indicating the necessity for more research and improvement of current theoretical frameworks. Similarly, Papanikos (2022) delves into the connection between democracy, education, and virtue pedagogy, revealing that a society's attainment of ideal democracy hinges on education and the cultivation of virtue. However, the focus on developed economies leaves a gap in understanding how education influences the democratic ethos in developing contexts like Uganda.

Westheimer et al. (2022) discuss the role of education in promoting good citizenship, discovering that education builds a sense of social justice and accountability conducive to positive citizenship and democracy. However, their study predominantly focuses on the socio-political landscape of developed nations, neglecting whether similar outcomes ensue in environments grappling with systemic challenges such as pervasive corruption and moral decay, as evident in many developing countries. This necessitates research on developing nations where accountability and corruption issues are more pervasive and less controlled than in certain developed countries, albeit that in many "developed" countries the very wealthy (1%) find other ways of amassing wealth, through lobbying governments to create policies such as tax policies that support them. Although Smith and Jones (2023) demonstrate the beneficial relationship between education and democratic participation, their research is limited to British populations, making it difficult to generalize the results to the intricate sociopolitical context of Sub-Saharan Africa. Consequently, a critical gap emerges in understanding how education investment translates into democratic dividends within SSA countries like Uganda.

Hyttén (2017) highlights democracy as both a process and a way of life, drawing from the American experience, yet underexplores its applicability to the vastly divergent landscape of developing nations. Ahmadov et al. (2023)

provide contrasting perspectives on education's relationship with democracy, but both studies lack nuanced examination tailored to specific socio-political contexts. Furthermore, they mostly concentrate on broad patterns without exploring the complex contextual elements that could impact these relationships, necessitating a more in-depth analysis customized to particular socio-political situations.

Though the existing literature offers valuable insights into education and democracy, significant gaps persist, particularly in the applicability of findings across diverse socio-political contexts. Addressing these gaps through contextually grounded research endeavors is crucial to foster a nuanced understanding of education's role in shaping democratic ethos worldwide.

4. Research Methodology

Data and Sample

The study sourced its data from Uganda's Afrobarometer dataset 2023, which is renowned and internationally trusted. This dataset comprises nationally representative surveys, employing probability sampling to gather various cross-sectional data from all voting-age residents in the country. The objective is to afford every adult citizen an equal opportunity to participate in an interview. Each stage of the sampling process employs random selection techniques, with the probability linked to the population size, implying that more heavily populated areas have a proportionately higher chance of selection. For this survey, the sampling universe encompassed citizens aged 18-85.

However, individuals residing in institutionalized settings such as dormitories, hospitals, prisons, nursing homes, or areas deemed inaccessible due to ethical conflicts or insecurity were excluded from the dataset. The sample size comprised 1,200 cases, with a margin of sampling error not exceeding +/-2.8 percentage points at a confidence level of 95%. Stratification was conducted based on province or region and urban or rural location to mitigate the risk of omitting distinctive ethnic or linguistic groups from the sample. Interviewers chose a household at random and then randomly selected a respondent from each household during the sampling phase. Interviewers took turns interviewing the men and women in each home to maintain a gender balance. The adult Ugandan is the unit of analysis in the chosen dataset.

Variables and Measurement

Dependent variables. The Uganda Afrobarometer questionnaire (2023) featured an item aimed at gathering data on citizens' satisfaction with the country's democracy (dependent variable 1), with response options ranging from "country not a democracy" (0) to "very satisfied" (4). The same questionnaire included an item seeking information on citizens' present living conditions (dependent variable 2), with response categories spanning from "very bad" (1) to "very good" (5).

Independent variables. To gauge government education investment (independent variable), we utilized six constructs. Firstly, the availability of schools in the area was assessed, with response options of "No=0" and "Yes=1". Next, citizens were asked to rate how the government is addressing education needs, with response categories including "very badly" (1) to "very well" (4). Furthermore, satisfaction levels regarding the government's efforts in minimizing education disruptions were measured, with response categories ranging from "not at all satisfied" (0) to "very satisfied" (3). Similarly, citizens were prompted to evaluate the government's provision of printed home-learning materials, with responses ranging from "very badly" (0) to "very well" (3). Additionally, the government's handling of providing learning programmes was assessed using the same response scale. Finally, citizens' satisfaction with government-provided education services was gauged, with response options spanning from "very satisfied" (1) to "not satisfied at all" (4).

Analytic Procedure

We analyzed the data in three stages. First, we computed frequencies and percentages to understand the demographic distribution of the 1,200 citizens enrolled in the survey sample. Second, we conducted a Univariate analysis (frequencies and percentages) to estimate the level of government education investment. Next, we

performed a multivariate logistic analysis to identify the predictive power of education investment (Independent/predictor variable) on democratic satisfaction and citizens' present living conditions (dependent variables). We also computed the likelihood that a government that has made large investments in education will be democratically acceptable to its population. Lastly, we determined the probability that investing in high education will improve the current living standards of citizens using the same multivariate logistic technique. All statistical analyses were performed using SPSS software. In Table 1, 62% of Ugandan respondents were under the age of 37, and more than 50% of them were male. Seventy-three percent of the respondents lived in rural areas, and a majority were not employed (58%). Most respondents had either primary (45.8%) or secondary (34.8%) level education. Christianity made up 84% of the population in Uganda; this included a wide range of denominations, including Roman Catholic, Pentecostal, Orthodox, Anglican, Lutheran, Methodist, Baptist, and Seventh-day Adventist. 37% of respondents were categorized as rich at the time of the poll, while over 62% of respondents fell into the low group of the wealth index.

Univariate Results

We used Univariate analysis to assess the level of education investment in Uganda. The findings reveal that the level of education investment in Uganda appears to be generally low. A significant percentage of respondents conveyed their discontentment with the government's endeavors to attend to educational requirements, reduce disruptions to education, furnish home-based learning resources, and provide pertinent education and learning initiatives. Regarding government's efforts to address educational needs, over 53% of respondents believe the government has failed in this regard. Concerning the minimization of education disruptions, 35% express dissatisfaction with the government's efforts, while more than half (54%) feel the government has completely failed in providing adequate home-learning materials. With respect to the relevance of education and learning programmes offered in the country, 58% of participants think the government has failed to provide relevant education and learning programmes. Overall, 52% are not satisfied with the government's provision of education services.

Table 1: Demographic characteristics of citizens enrolled in the study (N=1200)

<i>Demographic Variables</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
<i>Age group</i>		
18-27	466	38.8
28-37	277	23.1
38-47	206	17.1
48-57	122	10.2
58-67	78	6.5
68-77	36	3.0
78-87	15	1.3
<i>Gender</i>		
Male	615	51.3
Female	585	48.7
<i>Place of Residence</i>		
Urban	321	26.8
Rural	879	73.2
<i>Work Status</i>		
Not working	699	58.3
Part-time Work	162	13.5
Full-time Work	339	28.2
<i>Education</i>		
No education	106	8.83
Koranic Schooling	09	0.75
Primary	549	45.8
Secondary	418	34.8

Post-secondary	72	6.0
University	46	3.82
<i>Religion</i>		
Christian	1002	83.5
Muslim	186	15.5
Other	11	0.91
Traditional	01	0.09
<i>Wealth Index</i>		
Poor	692	62.91
Rich	408	37.09

The demographic distribution of the study participants reveals majority falling within the age groups of 18-37, with the highest percentage in the 18-27 age group (38.8%). Regarding gender, slightly more males (51.3%) participated in the study compared to females (48.7%). A significant majority reside in rural areas (73.2%) compared to urban areas (26.8%). At the time of data collection, most respondents were not working (58.3%), followed by those engaged in full-time work (28.2%) and part-time work (13.5%). In terms of education levels, primary school education is the most common (45.8%), followed by secondary education (34.8%), while Christianity is the predominant religion (83.5%). On the wealth index, a higher proportion of respondents fall under the "poor" category (62.91%) compared to the "rich" category (37.09%). The findings yield several significant interpretations. In the first place, there are systemic problems with education delivery as seen by the enduring dissatisfaction with education spending across a range of demographic groupings. The fact that that 53% of the participants felt that the spending on education had failed to address educational needs and was not sufficiently relevant, points to their understanding that the way in which the educational system is designed needed to be reformulated. Moreover, those who live in rural areas and are jobless with less education are the groups most impacted. It is imperative to conduct additional research on the particular obstacles encountered by these groups in order to provide tailored interventions that will enhance education investment and outcomes in Uganda.

Bivariate logistic regression

We then conducted bivariate logistic regression to predict the exact probability of citizens with high educational attainment being more democratically satisfied than those with low educational attainment. One independent variable—level of education—was regressed against citizen democratic satisfaction as shown in Table 2. Again, the level of education was regressed against citizen living conditions as indicated in Table 3. We then computed the probabilities of individual responses based on citizens' level of education. The findings show a substantial relationship between democratic satisfaction and educational attainment (Table 2). The probability values show that individuals with high educational attainment have a low likelihood of being satisfied with the democracy of the regime. Although they had higher educational attainment giving them more opportunity to be materially satisfied in terms of living standards, they did not feel that as citizens they had the chance to participate in the democracy. Individuals with low educational attainment have a much higher probability of being satisfied with the democracy of the political regime.

Table 2. Probability Values of Education Attainment regressed on Citizen Democratic Satisfaction

<i>Predictors</i>	<i>Citizen Satisfaction with Democracy</i>			
	<i>B</i>	<i>Sig.</i>	<i>Exp(B)</i>	<i>Prob.</i>
<i>Education Attainment</i>	-0.049	0.112	0.952	
<i>Informal Schooling</i>				0.48
<i>Some Primary School</i>				0.46
<i>Primary School completed</i>				0.46
<i>High School</i>				0.45
<i>High School Completed</i>				0.44
<i>Post-Secondary/Tertiary</i>				0.42
<i>Some University</i>				0.41
<i>University Completed</i>				0.40
<i>Postgraduate</i>				0.39
<i>Constant</i>	-0.014	0.906	0.986	

We therefore, conclude that higher educational attainment is associated with lower probability values of citizen democratic satisfaction compared to lower educational attainment. This implies that people with high educational attainment tend to be more dissatisfied with the government's democratic dispensation than those with low educational attainment.

Table 3. Probability Values of Education Attainment regressed on Citizen Living conditions

<i>Predictors</i>	<i>Citizen Satisfaction with Democracy</i>			
	<i>B</i>	<i>Sig.</i>	<i>Exp(B)</i>	<i>Prob.</i>
<i>Education Attainment</i>	-0.049	0.112	0.952	
<i>Informal Schooling</i>				0.48
<i>Some Primary School</i>				0.46
<i>Primary School completed</i>				0.46
<i>High School</i>				0.45
<i>High School Completed</i>				0.44
<i>Post-Secondary/Tertiary</i>				0.42
<i>Some University</i>				0.41
<i>University Completed</i>				0.40
<i>Postgraduate</i>				0.39
<i>Constant</i>	-0.014	0.906	0.986	

In the same vein, we identified the exact probability of citizens with high educational attainment having improved living conditions compared to people with low educational attainment. There is a significant relationship between education attainment and citizens living conditions. Table 3's findings demonstrate that, on average, citizens with greater levels of education have better living conditions than those with lower levels of education, and vice versa.

Multivariate logistic regression

We further conducted multivariate logistic regression to estimate the predictive power of education investment on citizen democratic satisfaction, as shown in Table 4. The "goodness of fit" test indicates the model's good performance, demonstrated by the chi-square value of 1508.11 with 7 degrees of freedom. Pseudo R-squared statistics are 0.082 and 0.11. This means that the major education investment predictors in the model account for low variations in citizen democratic satisfaction, only 8% to 11%. The variables positively and significantly contributing to this low predictive power are the perceptions of the government's capacity to address

educational needs and minimize education disruptions. It is significant to remember that a 1% increase in government efforts to address educational needs would only result in a 20% increase in citizen democratic satisfaction, even though these two variables were significant predictors of citizen democratic satisfaction and had odds ratios greater than 1%.

Similarly, a 1% reduction in education disruptions by the government would correspond to only a 32% increase in citizen democratic satisfaction. The predictor *Government minimizing education disruptions* (0.319) has the greatest positive impact on the growth of Citizen Democratic satisfaction, i.e. when this predictor jumps by one point, Citizen Democratic satisfaction increases by 0.319. This helps explain why, despite substantial investment in education in many Sub-Saharan African countries, citizen democratic satisfaction remains low. Other education investment predictors, such as education attainment, government provision of relevant learning programmes, and provision of home-learning materials, are statistically insignificant, as indicated by high p-values. This shows that certain factors related to education spending in many Sub-Saharan African nations, such as Uganda, are unrelated to citizen democratic satisfaction and are unable to significantly alter it. Likewise, the predictor *Availability of School in the Area* has the greatest negative impact on Citizen Democratic satisfaction (-0.548). The satisfaction with Citizen Democracy falls by 0.548 when this predictor jumps by one point. Then, citizen democratic satisfaction is negatively impacted by the predictor government's provision of education services (B = -0.125). Accordingly, there is a 0.125 drop in citizen democratic satisfaction for every one-point increase in this predictor. Availability of schools is thus regarded as important, but the question of relevance for promoting active citizenship still needs attention.

Table 4: Predictive Power of education investment variables on Citizen democratic satisfaction

<i>Predictors (Education Investment)</i>	<i>Citizen Democratic satisfaction</i>		
	<i>B</i>	<i>Sig.</i>	<i>Exp B)</i>
<i>Availability of School in the Area</i>	-0.548	0.005	0.578
<i>Government addressing educational needs</i>	0.197	0.002	1.217
<i>Government minimizing education disruptions</i>	0.319	0.000	1.376
<i>Government providing "home-learning" materials</i>	0.055	0.278	1.057
<i>Government providing relevant learning programs</i>	0.009	0.862	1.010
<i>Government providing education services</i>	-0.125	0.014	0.883
<i>Education Attainment</i>	-0.024	0.279	0.976
<i>Constant</i>	-0.198	0.524	0.820
<i>-2 Log likelihood/X²</i>	1508.11		
<i>df</i>	7		
<i>Cox & Snell R Square=</i>	0.082		
<i>Nagelkerke R Square=</i>	0.110		

Further, we interrogated the predictive power of education investment on citizen living conditions, and the logistic regression results as presented in Table 5. The model also performed well, with a chi-square value of 1421.27 and 7 degrees of freedom. The pseudo-R squared statistics indicate that education investment predictors explain very low variability in citizen living conditions of only 2% to 3%. Major variables positively contributing to this low variation in the model are the government addressing educational needs, providing relevant learning programmes, and education attainment. Much as these two variables are significant education investment predictors of present living conditions with odds ratios greater than 1, a 1% increase in government addressing educational needs improves citizens living conditions by only 16 percent. Then a 1% increase in the provision of relevant education and learning programmes improves citizen living conditions by only 9.8 percent. Further interpretation of results in Table 5 show that, the predictor *Government addressing educational needs* (0.163) has the greatest positive impact on the growth of *Citizen living condition*, that is, when this predictor

jumps by 1 point, *the Living condition* increases for 0.163. The predictor *Government providing education services* (-0.099) has the greatest negative impact on *the Living condition*. When this predictor jumps by 1 point, *the Living condition* decreases by 0.099.

Table 5: Predictive Power of education investment variables on Citizen living conditions

Predictors (Education Investment)	Citizen Living conditions	
	B	Sig. Exp B)
Availability of School in the Area	-0.097	0.624 0.907
Government addressing educational needs	0.163	0.009 1.178
Government minimizing education disruptions	0.010	0.853 1.010
Government providing "home-learning" materials	0.046	0.365 1.047
Government providing relevant learning programs	0.098	0.047 1.103
Government providing education services	-0.099	0.055 0.906
Education Attainment	0.074	0.033 1.077
Constant	1.033	0.002 0.356
-2 Log likelihood/ X^2	1421.27	
df	7	
Cox & Snell R Square=	0.082	
Nagelkerke R Square=	0.110	

Moreover, a 1 percent increase in citizen education attainment will translate into only a 7.4 percent increase in their present living conditions. The effect of government provision of education services ($B = -0.099$) on citizen living conditions is negative. This means that government provision of education services does not improve citizen living conditions. The government minimizing education disruptions and providing "home-learning" materials are insignificant predictors of education investment, as indicated by high p-values.

5. Discussion of Results

The results from the univariate analysis shed light on the state of education investment in Uganda and its impact on various demographic groups. Uganda invests very little on education, and a sizable percentage of respondents do not find the government's attempts to provide education to be satisfactory in all respects. These findings align with the research on education provision and its effects on socioeconomic development conducted by Mwesigye and Matsumoto (2018). According to their research, a country's socioeconomic standing can only be raised by evaluating the distribution of its population in terms of educational attainment. If the demographic status of the citizens regarding education attainment is low, there is a high likelihood for the socioeconomic performance of that country to be generally low. This is similar to the World Bank (2022) study that highlights the challenges of education provision in most Sub-Saharan African countries, such as inadequate funding, poor infrastructure, and a shortage of teachers. The characteristics of individuals most impacted by the perceived inadequacies in education spending are best understood by looking at the demographic profile of our research participants. Those who live in rural areas, are unemployed, or have less education stand out as being especially vulnerable. These findings are still consistent with those of Mwesigye and Matsumoto (2018), who noted comparable demographic trends in Ugandan educational outcomes and access. Persistent dissatisfaction with education investment across demographic groups stresses the urgency for targeted interventions to address systemic issues in education provision. Wasonga, Christensen, and Khamasi (2017) mention interventions like improving access to quality education, particularly for rural residents and those with lower socio-economic status.

Ssekamanya et al. (2018) emphasize increasing funding for education, enhancing teacher training and support, and improving infrastructure in underserved areas to help narrow existing education inequalities. As advised by

Oketch et al. (2014), future research should explore the reasons for dissatisfaction with education investment and identify strategies to address these issues effectively. As we hinted above with reference to the work of Omodan and Diko (2021), the dissatisfaction may also have to do with the manner in which education is implemented, in terms of both content and process. Longitudinal studies tracking changes in education provision and outcomes over time may provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of policy interventions and highlight areas for improvement. The bivariate logistic regression results further show that more educated individuals are likely to be dissatisfied with Uganda's current democracy than the less educated. Even the multivariate logistic regression results show that the predictive power of education investment on citizen democratic satisfaction in Uganda is limited. This is consistent with research by Ahmadov et al. (2023), who argued that elite classes are more likely to criticize the government in power when deviations from democratic ideals occur than when citizens lack literacy. The study by Smith and Jones (2023) offers additional specific explanations for why educated individuals might not be happy with a nation's democratic trajectory. They claim that greater political awareness and scrutiny are frequently brought about by higher education, which raises expectations and, as a result, causes people to become less satisfied with what they see as democratic governance's shortcomings. According to Tikly and Barrett (2021), education can equip people with high-order critical thinking and civic engagement skills to critically evaluate their political environment.

Our study results also indicate that even the Ugandan government's continued attempt to provide better for educational needs and minimize education disruptions has only minimally increased citizens' democratic satisfaction. For example, a 1% increase in the government's efforts to address educational needs has resulted in only a 20% increase in citizen satisfaction, while a 1% reduction in education disruptions corresponds to a mere 32% increase in democratic satisfaction. This means that even if the government provides people with public services, this does not stop the very people from criticizing its political governance systems. Education enables people to look beyond mere welfare outcomes and use it as a critical lens to detect shortcomings in the democracy of a government, which contradicts McArthur's (2021) view that education is a springboard to social cohesion. As a result, policy makers ought to take into account initiatives that deal with the citizens' more general political governance problems. This is due to the fact that even when the government is fulfilling its financial duties, people will continue to look for ways to undermine its democratic process. For instance, Westheimer et al. (2022) have elaborated on various efforts that can be made to address citizens' political democracy. These efforts include political accountability, upholding constitutional rights, promoting inclusive and equitable development, and combating corruption, which is the primary obstacle to fiscal transparency in developing nations.

Bivariate logistic regression results further indicate that there is a positive association between higher educational attainment and improved living conditions. This aligns well with Tilak (2023) who asserts that education enhances individual productivity and skills, leading to better economic opportunities and living standards. There are higher probability values for those with higher education to enjoy improved living conditions than those with lower education. Ogundari et al. (2015) provide quantitative evidence that higher levels of education, particularly tertiary education, produce significant returns in terms of economic benefits. However, there are instances when the results of this study offered contradicting perspectives from those in the literature. For example, regarding the education-democratic hypothesis, results show that in Uganda higher education access does not necessarily translate into higher social harmony. This contradicts an earlier research study by McArthur (2021), who noted that education is instrumental in building more social cohesion and unity because it is meant for team-building. Again, our study results showed that although there is a positive correlation between education level and welfare improvement, the quality of education provided by the government must be impactful and relevant to society. This is why Ogundari et al. (2015) call for government educational strategies that go beyond mere investment in educational infrastructure and theoretical knowledge acquisition to those that consider the quality of education attained. Quality of education can be considered in

terms of enabling graduates to, for instance, create their own employment, be innovators, and provide social leadership as agents of change.

6. Conclusion

In conclusion, our study revealed that there are many different and intricate ways that educational investment affects Ugandan citizens' well-being and democratic satisfaction. Widespread unhappiness with education is caused by insufficient investment in it, and insufficient attention to relevance, especially among vulnerable groups including the unemployed, people living in rural areas, and people with lower levels of education. Systemic flaws include low funding, shoddy infrastructure, and a teacher shortage aggravate this unhappiness. The government has made attempts to improve educational services, yet there is still a persistent gap in satisfaction between various socioeconomic classes. The findings suggest that while educational attainment correlates with enhanced living conditions and increased political awareness, particularly among the educated classes, it is not a panacea for democratic dissatisfaction. The educated tend to scrutinize democratic governance processes more critically, which underscores the importance of addressing broader systemic issues such as political accountability and corruption. Simply increasing educational investment without concurrent political reforms may not suffice to satisfy democratic expectations, especially among those with higher educational attainment. Higher education attainment generally correlates with improved economic opportunities and living standards. But in order to reap these rewards completely, education must be made relevant and of high quality. Restructuring education to provide graduates the ability to think critically, act as entrepreneurs, and make significant contributions to society should be the main goal of reform initiatives. By addressing these challenges, education can serve as a catalyst for transformative change, enhancing both individual well-being and societal development. Once more, this study suggests that structural flaws and differences in educational investment must be addressed for context-responsive education management in Africa.

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