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## RESEARCH ARTICLE

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# Politics, institutional corruption, and their impact on sustainable development: Perspectives from university students in Peru

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This research study's principal objective is to explain the relationship between corruption and political attitudes regarding sustainable development, also from the perspective of Peruvian students. The sample consisted of 616 university students who were from the cities of Lima and Piura. They responded to two instruments: The Attitude Scale Toward Politics and the Attitude Scale Toward Corruption. Among the most representative results, it was found that institutional corruption has a highly significant and direct relationship with political attitudes from the perspective of university students (0.720. Sig.0.000). Nine out of ten dimensions of attitudes toward politics achieved highly significant correlations ( $p = 0.001$ ) with attitudes toward corruption. Among the conclusions, it is observed that attitudes toward politics and attitudes toward corruption show a systematic interdependence of modification. It is necessary implement strategies for political participation without corruption is emphasized to improve the education that sustains the future governance of the country.

## KEYWORDS

attitudes toward corruption, attitudes toward politics, sustainable development, university students

## 1 | INTRODUCTION

The promotion of peaceful societies, access to justice for all, and the construction of accountable institutions make up the fundamental elements that contribute to Objective 16 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development of a country (Naciones Unidas, n.d). It translates to the fact that the political conditions of a country are fundamental. It guarantees the economic and social development of citizens, who, as social actors, have the right to promote their growth and improve their quality of life (Alcívar et al., 2023; Perez, 2019).

However, these political conditions have been compromised due to the influence of corruption in various public institutes in different countries (Amore & Bennedsen, 2023; Chen et al., 2022). This has led to the interference of the interests of large corporations in their development over time (Amin & Motta, 2023; Méndez & Sepúlveda, 2006; Uddin et al., 2023), especially the corruption of institutions and public officials, who have distorted the important functions of politics (Jiménez et al., 2022; Levin & Satarov, 2000; Yahya et al., 2015). As a consequence, policies have been focused on safeguarding the interests of monopolies, often neglecting marginalized

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communities. In addition to this, we add the lack of transparency among officials in various institutions (Kolstad & Wiig, 2009; Pande, 2007; Silitonga et al., 2023).

Institutional corruption is defined as any violation of laws, decrees, and other governmental regulations; abuse of power, and bribery committed by officials of public institutions, through act or omission, to obtain personal or collective benefits. Despite various policies being developed in recent years to eradicate it, institutional corruption has increased in Latin America (Abdul-Baki et al., 2023; Imam et al., 2019).

The attitudes toward politics is defined as a positive or negative perception of the functioning of government institutions, which affects the level of trust placed on them. One of its consequences being the lack of youth participation in civic activities, it ultimately affects the sustainability of a country (Ibrahim et al., 2024; Kitano, 2020; Weiss, 2020).

In the international context, corruption in Latin American countries is expressed in multiple socio economic domains, ranging from misappropriation of public funds to minor corruption by street-level bureaucrats (López-Cazar et al., 2021). Based on the estimates from the United Nations Organization, corruption costs the governments an annual amount of \$2.6 billion, which is equivalent to 5% of the gross domestic product of these countries (Organización de las Naciones Unidas, 2018).

In Spain, a study on Latin American countries was completed, whose objective was to determine the relationship between people's beliefs about the quality of their institutions, measured by perceptions of corruption, and preferences for redistribution. It was found that the perceived corruption undermines trust in government, fostering a negative attitude among the population toward government proposals (Hauk et al., 2022).

In Colombia, a study was published that sought to analyze the legal perspectives and corruption related to the cessation of the armed conflict. It was found that corruption has a basis in political and economic aspects. It generates distrust between people and government institutions. Therefore, it is suggested that there be a construction of institutions with control mechanisms that allow efficient governing, administer justice, ensure the exercise of human rights, and improve the citizen perception associated with oversight policies (Transparencia Internacional, n.d.-a; Azam, 2022).

In Brazil, a study was completed whose objective was to analyze the social perceptions on political corruption. Among its most important conclusions, it is observed that 95.67% perceive corruption as a common practice in Brazil; there is a relationship between economic income and education with the greater or lesser perception of corruption. The higher the income and education level, the tendency of corruption is more prevalent (El País, n.d.).

One specific case is Peru, where the lives of politicians are of total public interest (Pérez et al., 2022), and in recent years has been the scene of corruption scandals linked to privately owned public companies (Schembera et al., 2023; Vega & Tabra, 2022) However, the current corruption has had a foundation since the year 1990. Being in the public domain, these acts of institutional corruption implicate

officials at all levels of government (Palacios et al., 2022; Quiroz, 2013; Zavaleta, 2023).

In 2021, Peru lost more than 24 billion soles as a consequence of corruption (Controlaría General de la República, 2021). The effect of corruption is so significant that it often leads people who participate in regional and local politics to become involved in acts of corruption (Dammert & Sarmiento, 2019; Huang et al., 2023). The conditions listed have influenced the population, most of whom are young, to have an attitude of rejection and inhibition toward politics. It demonstrates a disengagement from civic life and participation in these topics, which are very important for the development of a country (Farzanegan & Witthuhn, 2017).

Peru, according to the International Transparency, ranks 101 among countries worldwide with the corruption. It ranks above Argentina, Brazil and Colombia, and lower than Venezuela, Haiti and Nicaragua. This demonstrates that overall, corruption levels are very high compared to countries in Europe, Asia, and North America, which shows a certain magnitude and statistical significance of the perception of corruption (Transparencia Internacional, n.d.-a; López-Cazar et al., 2021).

The above correlates with events in Peru, in the last 6 years. It has presented various problems associated with corruption, such as economic losses, repeated changes of governments, imprisonment, trials of the last presidents of the republic and officials of these government. This led to the deadliest confrontations in the last 10 years between law enforcement agents and opposition protests of the current government, which resulted in 60 deaths and 1200 injuries as a consequence of these events (El País, n.d.; Transparencia Internacional, n.d.-b; Azam, 2022).

The data mentioned indicates that corruption has developed in various branches of the government. Therefore, evaluating the perception of university students would help develop anti-corruption educational policies, to improve public trust and allow the involvement of university students in political activities for the benefit of society. The participation of the youth in civic activities will allow the development of values like honesty, transparency, and the fight against corruption that will help reduce institutional corruption rates. It will also help the development of greater trust in the authorities who represent them (Beesley & Hawkins, 2022).

In Ireland, they developed a research study that was oriented toward exploring the strategies used to involve youth in urban areas and identifying the key associated challenges. It was identified that the strategies utilized in youth participation efforts include jobs, deliberative forums, volunteering, the arts, sports, nonformal education, technological education, and social networks. The challenges associated with the civic and political engagement of young people include the alienation in their communities and institutions, the limitations of capacity and resources, ritualistic engagement instead of genuine engagement, and the challenges of inclusion (Brady et al., 2020).

In Russia, an investigation was conducted that examined how the anti-corruption education campaigns affected Russian university students' attitudes toward corruption and academic integrity in the short term. There were approximately 2000 university students chosen in a

nonprobabilistic way for a sample. Among the most significant conclusions, we find that students who usually resort to plagiarism to pass their assessments develop stronger negative attitudes toward corruption after an anti-corruption educational campaign. Certain educational materials on corruption seem to foster more tolerant attitudes toward it (Denisova-Schmidt et al., 2021).

In a study with a quantitative approach carried out in Ghana and Nigeria, the objective was to establish the relationships between variables related to corruption and the perceived difficulties of public administration. A sample of 650 university students was utilized. Among the most relevant conclusions reached by the study, we know that a significant difference exists between the perceptions of bureaucracy, ethics, corruption, and government institutions among students starting university and advanced students (Awaah et al., 2021).

An investigation in the United States focused on reviewing recent literature about the socio-political actions of rationally marginalized youth. Among the conclusions of the study, we know that the socio-political action of the youth has both positive and negative implications for their educational outcomes and civic development; activism is positively associated with increased interest. This participation can help the youth form professional objectives, which would facilitate the attainment of higher-class jobs in the future. Additionally, socio-political participation also helps students develop in an integrated manner while imparting skills that are vital to civic development. Through socio-political action, the young can increase their critical social analysis and leadership skills (Anyiwo et al., 2020).

In South Korea, a study was conducted with the purpose of examining the influential factors of the civic voluntarism model and the theory of planned behavior on the intention to participate in fundraising for political parties. It was found that political commitment, political interest, and political consciousness are significantly associated with the intention to participate in collaborative activities with these parties. Attitude and subjective norms are significantly influencing the intention toward participation (Baber, 2020).

In Indonesia, an investigation was developed with the objective of finding the role of civic socialization and civic behavior to improve the activities of citizen participation and determining that the youth have learned civic education from school as a national theme that gives a sense of civic education to encourage young people to participate in matters of public interest. There are multiple agents of socialization, such as family, friends, educators, and local surroundings, that provide a basis and support the involvement of young people as civically responsible citizens (Saud, 2020).

In the United States, research was conducted based on the effects of corruption on long-term economic growth. An empirical analysis was performed, which included information from various different countries between the years 1960 and 2000. It was related to the annual growth of the population, real income per capita, and the annual growth of gross domestic product, among others that represent world development indicators. Among the most important conclusions we have is that the form of government significantly determines the relationship between corruption and economic growth. We can confirm that there is a relationship between

corruption and growth. Additionally, public policies that seek to eliminate corruption do not benefit economic growth if they are considered in isolation (Méndez & Sepúlveda, 2006).

Also, in the United States, an investigation was developed based on corruption and economic growth. Among the results, corruption slows down growth and reduces investment in most developing countries, particularly in countries in the process of development. However, it increases growth in the large, recently industrialized economies of East Asia (Rock & Bonnett, 2004).

In Peru, a study was developed with the objective of analyzing behavior among corruption, institutional trust, and political commitment. This document demonstrates a causal relationship between information on corruption and institutional trust. The result signals the importance of addressing corruption to improve public trust. They also emphasize significant difficulties in motivating citizen action against corruption because anti-corruption messages can diminish trust and fail to motivate even low-cost political action (Beesley & Hawkins, 2022).

The analysis of the work completed allows us to understand that, although it is true that policy issues are transversal in society, there are studies that explain the attitude or perception of young people toward the political system that have not yet been disseminated.

The review of the literature indicates that the topic of politics has been developed in various countries associated with variables related to values, age, and issues of civic and citizen participation (Letki et al., 2023; Niemi & Klingler, 2012; Xie & Jaeger, 2008); recent studies have analyzed policy on children, finding that positive orientation seems to have a greater influence on adult political behavior than negative orientations and its influence on its socioeconomic aspects and ideological positions (Greenstein, 2017; Mitrea et al., 2021).

It is important to mention that the association between the perception of institutional corruption and participation and commitment in politics among university students has not yet been extensively determined. Therefore, this research is justified, as it will help to understand the political environment in Peru, especially the institutional corruption, from the perspective of university students and explain its impact on sustainable development in Peru.

While it is true that there are studies on corruption, its relationship with politics, and its implications in the economic sphere; in the literature review no research has been identified on the perceptions that university students have regarding corruption, its relationship with political stability, and social aspects. This study constitutes a significant precedent that allows the academic community to reflect on the Peruvian reality, based on the perceptions of university students, who participated in civic activities that contribute to the country's sustainability.

In the current study, the question was raised: How is the relationship between corruption and political attitudes toward sustainable development explained from the perspective of the students?

Therefore, based on the aforementioned, the current study's principal objective is to explain the relationship between corruption and political attitudes toward sustainable development from the perspective of the students in Peru. The specific objectives were:

1. Describe the political attitudes and attitudes toward corruption in sustainable development from the perspective of university students in Peru.
2. Establishing the relationship between the variable attitudes toward corruption and the dimensions of the variable attitudes toward politics in sustainable development from the perspective of university students in Peru.
3. Establishing the relationship between the variable attitudes toward politics and the dimensions of the variable attitudes toward corruption in sustainable development from the perspective of university students in Peru.

## 2 | MATERIALS AND METHODS

### 2.1 | Design and type of investigation

This is basic, substantive, and cross-sectional research with a correlational design, as it aims to characterize the variables and then assess the degrees of association between the variables and their dimensions to determine how the perception of institutional corruption systematically modifies the political attitudes of university students in Peru.

### 2.2 | Participants

In the study, 616 Peruvian university students of both sexes from the university institutions of Lima and Piura participated. The students are enrolled in different academic programs, and their ages were between 16 and 40 at the time of the evaluation. Among the inclusion criteria, the following are considered: Peruvian university students from Lima and Piura accepted digital informed consent. The excluded criteria were: incomplete questionnaire or double marking of a response in one item or question. The sample was selected using nonprobabilistic criterion-based sampling.

### 2.3 | Instruments

The Attitude Scale Toward Politics was developed by Álvarez-Ramírez (2014) in Colombia. The instrument aims to evaluate adult attitudes toward politics in adults. The questionnaire is made up of 60 items, which are distributed into 10 different factors, which are: satisfaction with democracy, assessment of political party leaders, political efficacy, ideological political location, electoral participation, interest and comprehension of public affairs, political trust, political influence, political optimism, and lastly political involvement. The response options for each item are on a Likert scale, where 1 implies “completely agree” and 5 implies “completely disagree.” Previous studies regarding the psychometric properties of the scale have shown acceptable values. The construct validity through exploratory factorial analysis was 0.924, 10 factors were extracted with factorial loads between 0.56 and 0.80 for all items, the correlations between

the factors have been significant, all less than 0.05, the reliability at a general level and for dimensions was higher than 0.85, and test-retest reliability was 0.86.

The Attitude Scale Toward Corruption was developed by Remaycuna-Vasquez & Vela-Miranda (2023) for Peru. The instrument's objective is to evaluate the perception of institutional corruption. It is applied individually and collectively in an approximate time frame of 10 min, and its areas of application are institutional and social. It is structured in two dimensions: the first has to do with institutional corruption, and the second with the corruption of public officials. It is made up of 32 items or questions with a 5-point Likert-type response scale. The scale perception of institutional corruption, in its exploratory factorial analysis, showed a Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin statistic (KMO) of 0.94, and Bartlett's sphericity test yielded a value of (0.000). The factorial structure revealed the grouping of three factors with absolute values ranging from 0.40 to 0.77, explaining 45.51% of the variance. The reliability analysis showed a value of 0.957.

### 2.4 | Procedure

The data were collected using a Google Form, which included socio demographic data like age, sex, university of origin, career, and academic semester. Support was requested from educators and student representatives of the group to facilitate the respective distribution of the questionnaire to all their contacts. After finishing the information collection process, the database form was downloaded to MS Excel. Letter-to-number replacement was performed, and the respective summations were performed both at a general level and by dimensions. In this way, the database was created and later processed using the statistical software SPSS version 29.

### 2.5 | Data analysis

The attitude characteristics toward politics and the perception of corruption were determined considering frequency tables, estimation of the central tendency of the data, normality tests, and correlation processes between both variables and their respective dimensions.

### 2.6 | Ethical aspects

The current study was developed following the ethical principles derived from the Declaration of Human Rights, the Nuremberg Code, the Belmont Report: Principles and Ethical Guidelines for the Protection of Human Research Subjects, the Declaration of Helsinki by the World Medical Association, the standards of the World Health Organization regarding research studies and their ethical implications when working with individuals, as well as the International Ethical Guidelines for Health-related Research Involving Humans.

Intellectual property was performed according to the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (2021) in its seventh edition.

### 3 | RESULTS

Institutional corruption has a direct and highly significant relationship with political attitudes from the perspective of university students (0.720. Sig. 0.001). It was also found that in nine out of the ten dimensions, highly significant correlations were reached ( $p = 0.001$ ).

The highest correlation is between the variable attitudes toward corruption and the dimension of “evaluation of leaders, both male and female, and political parties” (0.723\*\*) of the variable “attitudes toward politics.” The dimension that presented a lower correlation was political optimism (0.245\*\*). The dimension of political involvement (0.029) did not show a correlation with the attitudes toward corruption.

The three dimensions related to the variable attitudes toward corruption reached a highly significant correlation ( $p = 0.001$ ) with the variable attitudes toward politics. The highest correlation is found between the variable attitudes toward politics and the corruption dimension of legislative institutions (0.693\*\*) and the lowest correlation occurs in the corruption dimension of public institutions (0.399\*\*).

Political attitudes have a direct and highly significant relationship with institutional corruption from the perspective of university students (0.720. Sig. 0.001).

The characteristics of political attitudes, it has been found that students have an unfavorable perception of politics. The dimension that has a better perception is the political implications ( $M = 2.7$ ). With the evaluation of leaders, both male and female, and political parties being the least favorable ( $M = 3.7$ ). Likewise, the characteristics of attitudes toward corruption, it is observed that students report an unfavorable perception of corruption, with institutional corruption being slightly more favorable ( $M = 3.5$ ), and corruption of legislative institutions being the most unfavorable ( $M = 3.9$ ).

The 51.4% of Peruvian students present a highly negative perception of politics, followed by 47.9% with an average negative perception, and only 0.6% has a low negative perception of politics.

The level of perception toward corruption among Peruvian university students, it is observed that 43.2% present a high perception of corruption in the country, followed by a 54.9% average perception, and only 1.8% have a low perception.

### 4 | DISCUSSION

Corruption is a problem that is deeply rooted in all social levels, which can help explain political attitudes and the impact it generates on the sustainability of a country's development (Alcívar et al., 2023; Chen et al., 2022; Perez, 2019), within the framework of Objective 16 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Institutional corruption is any violation of government regulations by officials of public institutions (Abdul-Baki et al., 2023; Imam et al., 2019). The attitudes toward politics refers to the negative or positive perception of the functioning government (Ibrahim et al., 2024; Kitanova, 2020; Weiss, 2020). In Latino America, a constant concern is to study these topics (Transparency Internacional, n.d.-a; El País, n.d.; Azam, 2022; Hauk et al., 2022). In Peru, participation of public officials in acts of corruption has been in the spotlight, attracting widespread media attention (Pérez et al., 2022; Schembera et al., 2023; Vega & Tabra, 2022).

This research presented its main objective as explaining the relationship between corruption and political attitudes toward sustainable development from the perspective of university students in Peru.

It was found that institutional corruption has a direct and highly significant relationship with political attitudes from the perspective of university students (0.720. Sig. 0.001), as seen in Tables 1 and 2. This means that the way justice is administered and the functions of congressmen in charge of legislating statutes and decrees for the benefit of the community (Jiménez et al., 2022; Levin & Satarov, 2000; Yahya et al., 2015) has an impact on young people's negative political attitudes toward democracy, the functioning of political parties, trust in

**TABLE 1** Correlations between attitudes toward corruption and attitudes toward politics.

	Attitudes toward politics		
	Rho de Spearman		
	Correlation coefficient	Sig. (bilateral)	N
Satisfaction with democracy	0.508**	0.001	616
Assessment of leaders and political parties	0.723**	0.001	
Political effectiveness	0.615**	0.001	
Ideological location in politics	0.484**	0.001	
Electoral participation	0.528**	0.001	
Interest and comprehension of political affairs	0.357**	0.001	
Political trust	0.600**	0.001	
Political influence	0.432**	0.001	
Political optimism	0.245**	0.001	
Political involvement	0.029**	0.472	
Total	0.720**	0.001	

\*\* $p < 0.01$ .

**TABLE 2** Correlations between attitudes toward politics and attitudes toward corruption.

			Corruption of public institutions	Corruption of judicial institutions	Corruption of legislative institutions	Total
Attitudes toward politics	Rho de Spearman	Correlation coefficient	0.399**	0.653**	0.693**	0.720**
		Sig. (bilateral)	0.001	0.001	0.001	0.001
		N	616			

\*\* $p < 0.01$ .

**TABLE 3** Average perception of the variables' attitudes toward politics and institutional corruption.

Variables	Variable/dimension	N	Average	Standard deviation
Attitudes toward politics	Satisfaction with democracy	616	3.4	0.7295
	Assessment of leaders and political parties	616	3.7	0.6492
	Political effectiveness	616	3.5	0.6986
	Ideological location in politics	616	3.4	0.6333
	Electoral participation	616	3.6	0.5061
	Interest and comprehension of political matters	616	3.3	0.4801
	Political trust	616	3.6	0.7164
	Political influence	616	3.3	0.5464
	Political optimism	616	3.0	0.7000
	Political implications	616	2.7	0.8695
	Attitudes toward politics		616	3.3
Attitudes toward corruption	Corruption of public institutions	616	3.1	0.4821
	Corruption of judicial institutions	616	3.6	0.6373
	Corruption of legislative institutions	616	3.9	0.6975
	Institutional corruption	616	3.5	0.5107

them, and especially how electoral processes are developed (Kolstad & Wiig, 2009; Pande, 2007). Therefore, the perception of corruption in state institutions can explain the favorable or unfavorable political attitudes of young people.

As the first specific objective, we aimed to describe political attitudes and attitudes toward corruption in sustainable development from the perspective of university students in Peru.

Concerning the objective mentioned in the preceding paragraph, it is observed that, with respect to the characteristics of political attitudes, it has been found that students have an unfavorable perception of politics. The dimension that has a better perception is the political implications ( $M = 2.7$ ). With the evaluation of leaders, both male and female, and political parties being the least favorable ( $M = 3.7$ ), according to what was observed in Table 3. This means that the people involved in political affairs do not have a political vision that contributes to the development of their community because many of them are involved in acts of corruption at all levels that transform them into a bad example for citizens and unreliable people, ultimately resulting in a lack of political and political interest, which makes people engage in other activities and not necessarily politics (Amore & Bennedsen, 2023; Chen et al., 2022).

Regarding the characteristics of attitudes toward corruption, it is observed that students report an unfavorable perception of

corruption, with institutional corruption being slightly more favorable ( $M = 3.5$ ), and corruption of legislative institutions being the most unfavorable ( $M = 3.9$ ), which is also seen in Table 3. This data indicates that the perception of the youth with regard to public administration corruption is negative: characterized by serious consequences in society, affecting economic growth, democracy, and equality (Falcón-Cortés et al., 2022). These consequences can be reduced if there is an effort to involve young people in socio political strategies with an emphasis on civic aspects (Anyiwo et al., 2020; Awaah et al., 2021). In this sense, it can be seen that negative attitudes toward politics, represented by public officials, are related to attitudes toward corruption, which persist due to personal interests that are detached from the common good and favor the economic groups of the moment.

The second specific objective of the research study was to establish a relationship between variable attitudes toward corruption and the dimensions of the variable attitudes toward politics in sustainable development from the perspective of university students in Peru. It was found that in nine out of the ten dimensions, highly significant correlations were reached ( $p = 0.001$ ), what will be observed in Table 1. It also implies an association between the variables and dimensions exists, which maintains the interdependence of systematic modification.



When carrying out the specific analysis, we found that the highest correlation is between the variable attitudes toward corruption and the dimension of “evaluation of leaders, both male and female, and political parties” (0.723\*\*) of the variable “attitudes toward politics”, a specification that is corroborated in the descriptive analysis conducted in the previous section. On this same basis, the dimension that presented a lower correlation was political optimism (0.245\*\*). It is important to mention that the dimension of political involvement (0.029) did not show a correlation with the attitudes toward corruption, data that can be located in Table 1. This can explain why the strategies to involve the youth are not sufficient if socio-political strategies are not involved, especially civic ones, which counteract the lack of interest in political participation (Brady et al., 2020). Considering the aforementioned, substantial improvement in the public behavior of politicians should be added, which is often related to corruption and becomes public knowledge through the media.

The third specific objective of the research study was to establish the relationship between “variable attitudes toward politics” and the dimensions of “variable attitudes toward corruption”, from the perspective of university students in Peru. It was found that the three dimensions related to the variable attitudes toward corruption reached a highly significant correlation ( $p = 0.001$ ) with the variable attitudes toward politics, from Table 1, which translates to an interdependence of systematic modification.

Regarding the specific analysis, it was observed that the highest correlation is found between the variable attitudes toward politics and the corruption dimension of legislative institutions (0.693\*\*) and the lowest correlation occurs in the corruption dimension of public institutions (0.399\*\*), also in Table 1. It confirms that in the political sphere, the youth perceive greater corruption in legislative institutions. In Peru, this negative perception dates back to the 1990s, when the state's corruption was expressed in a system of maximum institutionalization that compromised public officials at all levels of government (Palacios et al., 2022; Quiroz, 2013; Zavaleta, 2023), which continues today with total impunity. In other words, one can observe how the institutions that legislate laws and administer justice have become corrupted (Brady et al., 2020; Dammert & Sarmiento, 2019; Farzanegan & Witthuhn, 2017), which results in a decrease in institutional trust. It is necessary to develop various mechanisms to mitigate the impact of corruption (Beesley & Hawkins, 2022).

As an example, anti-corruption education campaigns in Russia had positive results (Denisova-Schmidt et al., 2021). The governments can implement budget improvement strategies that include improving per capita income, which contributes to curbing acts of corruption by public officials (Zhang et al., 2023).

When analyzing the presented studies, the reference to the consequences of corruption in everyday life and in government institutions, as well as the proposals to reverse them, is observed. Based on the evidence, we can infer that the perception of corruption has a negative impact on the political attitudes of young university students. The analysis is based on the level of perception of politics from the Peruvian university students perspective. The evidence found that 51.4% of Peruvian students present a highly negative perception of

**TABLE 4** Attitude levels toward politics.

		Frequency	Percentage
Attitudes toward politics	Low	4	0.6
	Medium	295	47.9
	High	317	51.4
	Total	616	100.0

**TABLE 5** Attitude levels toward corruption.

		Frequency	Percentage
Attitude toward politics	Low	11	1.8
	Medium	339	54.9
	High	266	43.2
	Total	616	100.0

politics, followed by 47.9% with an average negative perception, and only 0.6% have a low negative perception of politics, what is presented in Table 4.

On the other hand, in the analysis of the level of perception toward corruption among Peruvian university students, it is observed that 43.2% present a high perception of corruption in the country, followed by a 54.9% average perception, and only 1.8% have a low perception, what is observed in Table 5.

According to the analysis conducted, consistent with the results obtained and the consulted scientific publications, it can be affirmed that the attitudes toward corruption and attitudes toward politics have a negative impact on the sociopolitical participation of young Peruvian university students. This could continue in the long term. It is a substantial aspect that would limit the achievement of Objective 16 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in relation to the considerable reduction of corruption and bribery in all its forms, as well as ensuring the development of transparency and effectiveness in institutions (Naciones Unidas, n.d).

## 5 | CONCLUSIONS

A highly significant correlation exists ( $p = 0.001$ ) between the attitudes toward politics and the attitudes toward corruption, which demonstrate an interdependence of systematic modification among both. This signifies that from the perspective of university students in Peru, corruption is found deeply rooted in all levels of the Peruvian government. It causes demotivation for individuals to involve themselves in political issues of the country.

The youth presents a negative perception regarding the functioning of judicial and legislative institutions in the exercise of their functions. In the same way, they present a negative perception regarding the valuation of leaders and political parties, political efficiency, political trust, and electoral participation, which has a negative impact on the participation of young people. That is, based on the results of the research study, it can be deduced that the youth currently show

demotivation and distancing to get involved in political issues, channeling the energy of age into other activities. This demotivation and distancing can be gradually reversed if they have training opportunities in civic engagement (Anyiwo et al., 2020; Brady et al., 2020; Denisova-Schmidt et al., 2021), which helps them understand the importance of becoming actors of change in the fight against corruption. If the previously stated was not fulfilled, there would be potential limitations for the accomplishment of Objective 16 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (Ibrahim et al., 2024; Kitanova, 2020; Weiss, 2020), understood as a future orientation for what is aspired to be a solution to social problems in the world.

The study is based on an interdependence of systematic modification. However, for future research, the analysis of regression and structural equations remains pending, which would allow for a greater capacity to predict among variables. The study has not included the characterization of specific groups related to sociodemographic variables; another limitation is the lack of empirical studies. Nevertheless, this study constitutes as one of the firsts covering the perception between institutional and political corruption in Peru, with a psychological and sustainability focus, resulting in an important empirical precedent for future research.

Based on these findings, in Peru, it is recommended that future investigations delve deeper on the reflective analysis of corruption and its implications in the political aspect. As well as the need to replicate the findings using a methodology of causal regression analysis that allows for the construction of explanatory models that go beyond what has been presented.

As a final reflection, from a psychosocial point of view, the government urgently needs to take responsibility to restructure the anti-corruption policies, transparency, efficiency of the government, and implement socio-political strategies of civic action in all education levels, to sustain the governance of Peru in the long-term.

#### AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

**O.M.V-M and A.R-V:** Conceptualization. **O.M.V-M; A.R-V; D.L.T-S; N. E; and N.V-P:** Methodology. **O.M.V-M and D.L.T-S:** Software. **O.M.V-M; A. R-V; D.L.T-S; B.O-V; N. E; and N.V-P:** Validation. **O.M.V-M; A. R-V; D.L.T-S; and N.V-P:** Formal analysis. **O.M.V-M; A.R-V; D.L.T-S; B.O-V; N.E; and N.V-P:** Investigation. **O.M.V-M; D.L.T-S; and B.O-V:** Resources. **O.M.V-M; A.R-V; D.L.T-S; and N.V-P:** Data curation. **O.M.V-M; A.R-V; D.L.T-S; B.O-V; N.E; and N.V-P:** Writing—original draft preparation. **O.M.V-M; A.R-V; D.L.T-S; B.O-V; N.E and N.V-P:** Writing—review and editing. **D.L.T-S and B.O-V:** Visualization. **N.V-P:** Supervision. **O.M.V-M:** Project administration. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

#### CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

#### DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

Data Availability Statement: The data that support the findings of this study are available on request from the corresponding author (O.M.V-M).

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