

Research article

Crisis of institutional confidence: the impact of economic characteristics on democratic perception and transparency in Peru

Crisis de confianza institucional: el impacto de las características económicas en la percepción democrática y la transparencia en el Perú

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Abstract

Introduction: This study explores how the economic characteristics of Peruvian citizens affect their perception of democracy, transparency, and institutional governance. **Methodology:** We used data from the National Household Survey (ENAH) between 2014 and 2021. Statistical techniques included Chi² tests, ANOVA, and multinomial logit models to examine relationships between monetary poverty, income levels, and citizen perceptions. **Results:** People in poverty reported lower knowledge of democracy (17,5% vs. 47,3% of non-poor) and a more negative perception of its functioning. Significant differences were found between urban (62,7% aware of democracy) and rural areas (31,5%). Higher-income individuals showed greater democratic understanding but also more frequent involvement in corrupt practices. **Conclusions:** Monetary poverty and regional disparities limit access to information, reduce civic participation, and erode institutional trust. Efforts should focus on strengthening civic education and transparency mechanisms, particularly in vulnerable and rural communities.

Keywords: monetary poverty; citizen participation; democratic perception; institutional transparency; economic inequality; governance; institutional trust; urban and rural areas.

Resumen

Introducción: Este estudio analiza cómo las características económicas de los ciudadanos peruanos influyen en su percepción de la democracia, la transparencia y la gobernanza institucional. **Metodología:** Se utilizó una base de datos de la Encuesta Nacional de Hogares (ENAH) entre 2014 y 2021. Se aplicaron análisis estadísticos como pruebas Chi², ANOVA y modelos logit multinomial para evaluar la relación entre la condición de pobreza monetaria, el ingreso y las percepciones ciudadanas. **Resultados:** Las personas en situación de pobreza mostraron menor conocimiento sobre democracia (17,5% frente al 47,3% de los no pobres) y mayor percepción negativa sobre su funcionamiento. Se evidenciaron diferencias significativas entre zonas urbanas (62,7% conocen la democracia) y rurales (31,5%). Ciudadanos con mayores ingresos demostraron mejor comprensión democrática, pero también mayor exposición a actos de corrupción. **Conclusiones:** La pobreza monetaria y las desigualdades regionales limitan el acceso a la información, reducen la participación ciudadana y debilitan la confianza institucional. Se recomienda fortalecer la educación cívica y la transparencia pública, especialmente en sectores vulnerables.

Palabras clave: pobreza monetaria, participación ciudadana, percepción democrática, transparencia institucional, desigualdad económica, gobernanza, confianza institucional, zona urbana y rural.

1. Introduction

Little or no economic and political transparency in Peru is one of the challenges that affect trust in institutions and the effectiveness of government management. Among the most prominent problems are opacity in poor decision-making, poor access to public information, corruption and impunity. In this way, opacity limits citizen participation in government decision-making and makes it difficult to supervise government actions (Sagasti et al., 1999).

The deficient transparency of the various state institutions contributes to little trust and feeds the perception of impunity (Catacora, 2018). The existence of corruption networks and the absence of effective sanctions weaken citizens' trust in the State and hinder the effectiveness of anti-corruption policies (Pamphichi, 2002).

To address this problem, it was necessary to identify in depth the socioeconomic factors, such as the condition of poverty, monetary income, level of education, age, place of residence and how they affect the trust of government institutions, in the understanding and participation of democratic processes and how they affect the perception of corruption and transparency. Understanding these dynamics is essential to identify possible inequalities in citizen perception and design public policies that promote more inclusive, transparent, and democratic governance in Peru.

At present, the perception of citizens in relation to governance, democracy and transparency have to be treated in an analytical and in-depth way, considering the socioeconomic profile of citizens, these perceptions of the population take into account the socioeconomic conditions are conditioned by governability, democracy and transparency.

The study of Vargas et al. (2021) He considers that perceptions in many cases can be considered as excessive perceptions, leading to the risk of turning it into a so-called self-fulfilling prophecy. Like this Cabrera and Santiesteban (2023) They argue that with high levels of perception, a devastating context could result in the same corruption, also considering Thumb (2010), this leads us to a society that has high levels of distrust that does not allow them to work together as a collective in governance, transparency and democracy.

Furthermore, the digital era introduces new challenges and opportunities for transparency and institutional trust (Barra-Quispe et al., 2024). On one hand, digital platforms and open data initiatives can enhance access to information and public accountability; on the other, misinformation, algorithmic bias, and unequal access to technology can deepen skepticism and reinforce perceptions of exclusion (Quispe Mamani et al., 2023). Therefore, it is essential to incorporate technological dimensions into the analysis of institutional trust, especially among marginalized groups disproportionately affected by systemic inequalities.

In addition, regional disparities within Peru significantly shape perceptions of governance. Rural populations, particularly in highland and Amazonian areas, often report higher levels of distrust due to historical neglect, lack of infrastructure, and limited institutional presence (Quispe-Mamani et al., 2022). These regions face greater barriers to civic engagement and oversight, which exacerbates the sense of abandonment and weakens the legitimacy of the state apparatus (Mamani-Flores et al., 2025).

The role of the media and political discourse is also critical in shaping public perceptions of transparency and corruption. Sensationalist reporting, politicized narratives, and the strategic use of scandals by political actors often amplify perceptions of dysfunction, regardless of actual institutional performance (Mamani-Flores, Romero-Cahuana, et al., 2024).

This dynamic can create an environment where distrust becomes normalized, discouraging citizen participation and reinforcing a fragmented democratic culture.

Finally, fostering a culture of transparency requires not only institutional reform but also civic education and empowerment. Programs that promote critical thinking, legal literacy, and civic responsibility especially among youth can help rebuild public trust and reinforce democratic values (Mamani-Flores, et al., 2024). Strengthening participatory mechanisms at the local level, ensuring accountability, and promoting inclusive dialogue are key strategies for reversing the erosion of trust and fostering sustainable democratic governance in Peru.

2. Literature review

2.1. *Economic characteristics and monetary poverty of citizens*

Economic characteristics can have a significant impact on how individuals interpret and evaluate the functioning of democracy and transparency in public management, some econometric studies using data from ENAHO show that over the years the percentage of households in conditions of monetary poverty are more vulnerable (Morales, 2009).

Monetary poverty can affect the perception of governance by limiting citizens' access to basic services, job opportunities, and resources to meet their basic needs. According to studies such as that of Urbina and Quispe (2016), individuals who experience monetary poverty tend to take a more critical view of the government's ability to address their concerns and solve social problems.

Economic inequality can undermine the quality of democracy by limiting the political participation of marginalized groups and increasing the influence of economic interests in the political process. Research such as that of Verdera (2007) It has shown that economic inequality can generate distrust in democratic institutions and weaken citizens' civic engagement.

The authors Mujica et al. (2017) They mention that corruption really affects economic investment, and this affects the perceptions of citizens, I take into account monetary poverty as an important economic factor that affects governance, democracy and transparency. Montoya (2012) It discusses arguments about the inevitability of corruption offenses by considering certain examples of cases related to the illicit enrichment of public servants and bribery. Likewise, important contributions related to economic aspects are also shown.

Government transparency may be perceived differently by individuals in poverty, due to limitations in access to information and the ability to assert their rights. Studies such as that of Quispe (2017) They highlighted the importance of transparency policies that consider the needs and capacities of citizens living in poverty to ensure equitable participation in social control and accountability.

The author Vigil (2013) In his analysis of the economic characteristics he shows a "standard failure": the lack of a clear and unified definition, there is a correlation of economic conditions related to corrupt practices based on a sensitivity of the citizenry, Castañeda (2016) indicates that this causes a social impact. Mavila (2012) He details that economic factors are one of the factors on which corruption has the greatest impact, as in the case of the Judiciary, where it could not be fully institutionalized as an institution with autonomy and independence due to its continuous submission and renunciation of other powers:

“The governments of the day have tried to use this dependence and delegitimization politically to question its autonomy and not face the challenge of building public ethics based on transparency and accountability in the service of justice” (p. 333). There is also the case of the the Public Prosecutor's Office and Human Rights when evaluating the experience of prosecutors in the fight against corruption (Mujica et al., 2014).

The author Munive (2016) emphasises that anti-corruption work brings together state and non-state actors with specific economic characteristics that interact at strategic level; that is, at the level of public policy-making, therefore, it adopts a coordinated inter-institutional approach” that aims to “provide comprehensive, collaborative and coherent responses to confront corruption. Peña (2011) it also examines the initiatives taken in Peru to fight corruption after the collapse of the Fujimori government. Unlike other Latin American countries, which focus on promoting the cooperation of civil society and the media, Peru's lived experiences are mostly in the economic sphere. Imminently after the collapse, that is, during the transition of Valentín Paniagua, Peru's experience in Latin America was unprecedented in terms of speed, efficiency and transcendence. But, after Paniagua's transitional presidency, the fight against corruption has lost importance and some ineffective measures have been taken.

2.2. Area of residence of citizens

Citizens' area of residence can significantly influence their perception of governance, democracy, and transparency. Factors such as urban or rural environment, population density, and the quality of public services can shape how individuals evaluate the functioning of government institutions and their participation in the political process.

Residence in urban or rural areas can influence the perception of governance due to differences in the provision of public services and quality of life. Studies like the author's Nasser (2021) which has found that urban residents tend to have higher expectations about government performance compared to those living in rural areas, which can affect their level of trust in government institutions.

Population density in urban areas can affect political participation and the perception of democracy. Research such as that of Insulza (2015) who has shown that in densely populated urban environments, citizens may experience higher levels of political competition and active participation in political life, which influences their perception of the democratic quality and representativeness of government.

Residency in rural areas can influence the perception of government transparency due to possible limitations in access to public services and information. Studies such as that of Rodriguez (2019) They stressed the importance of transparency policies tailored to the specific needs of rural communities to ensure effective and equitable participation in public management.

According to Castro (2020) who analyzes the capacity of the State to influence rural and urban areas, finding severe restrictions in both areas that require specific strategies. The area of residence of the population is considered by the authors Yamada and Montero (2011) as rural and urban. Each of these zones includes a series of specific particularities, such as Pautrat (2006) who currently show significant differences between rural and urban areas based on vulnerability in rural areas today. Mujica et al. (2017) distinguish different levels of corruption (large, medium, small), in each of these areas that have specific conditions and entities in relation to the area of residence of the population.

The authors Meyhuay and Romero (2021) Those who identify shortcomings of the public administration related to internal control, propose alternative solutions according to each area of residence in which the population lives, according to Zevallos and Jaris (2016) Those who address the problem of corruption according to the needs of users or citizens who live in rural areas, perceive corruption differently compared to people who live in urban areas according to their experience. This also implies “the understanding that not all forms of corruption are not the same and cannot be addressed, prevented, and mitigated from the same perspective and intervention according to the area where the population resides” (p. 17).

The author Johnston (2015) states that the area of residence influences the perception of governance, Transparency and democracy Identifying factors that distinguish rural and urban, he took into account the data of the ENAHO, in its module governance, democracy and transparency, identifying differences in perceptions in each of the areas where he did his study.

According to Fajardo (2019) mentions that governance, transparency and democracy have a bad reputation in the urban area since outstanding traits of the perpetrators of corrupt acts are shown for having the media within reach and being informed and informed. Aymerich (2015) he considers that in rural areas the population is more disconnected from the public affairs of the State.

2.3. Monetary poverty, participation barriers and perception categories

Monetary poverty is defined as the condition in which a household's per capita monthly income is insufficient to cover the minimum consumption basket established by the National Institute of Statistics and Informatics (INEI). Operationally, this study considers individuals to be in monetary poverty if they belong to a household whose income falls below the official poverty line established by INEI for the corresponding year (Panfichi & Alvarado, 2011).

Participation barriers refer to the obstacles that hinder or prevent citizens from actively engaging in democratic processes and public oversight. In operational terms, this study identifies these barriers through indicators such as lack of access to public information, limited awareness of citizen participation mechanisms, insufficient economic, technological or educational resources, and generalized mistrust in public institutions.

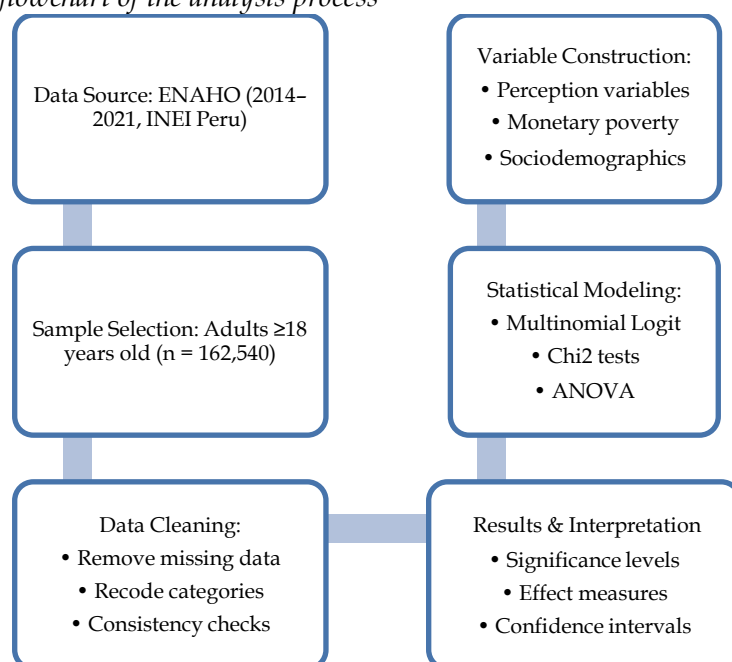
Perception categories are defined as the responses provided by citizens regarding three key dimensions: knowledge about democracy (yes / no), perception of how democracy functions (very poorly, poorly, well, very well, don't know), and the perceived importance of democracy (not important, slightly important, important, very important, don't know). These variables are drawn from the Governance, Democracy and Transparency module of the National Household Survey (ENAHO) between 2014 and 2021.

3. Methodology

The method used was the multinomial logit model, useful to establish relationships between the perception of citizens on issues of governance, transparency and democracy based on socioeconomic characteristics (X_i), the multinomial logit model is used to model discrete elections, assuming the assumption of independence from irrelevant alternatives (IIA). Let citizen “I” face in total “J” alternatives of choice or perception and chooses one of the alternatives, let “r” be the chosen alternative, so the probability of choosing alternative “r”.

Figure 1.

Methodological flowchart of the analysis process



At the national (figure 1) level, between 2014 and 2021, the total sample size was 291,185 private homes, of which 183,289 were urban and 107,896 rural and obtained a specific sample of 162,540 citizens aged 18 years and older, the objective was to know the perception of democracy, governance and transparency. The sample was probabilistic, aread, stratified, multistage and independent in each study department. The survey is carried out at the national level, in urban and rural areas, in the 24 departments of the country and in the Constitutional Province of Callao.

For the multinomial logistic regression models, odds ratios (OR) with their respective 95% confidence intervals (CI) were calculated to estimate the strength and direction of associations between socioeconomic factors and perception outcomes. The statistical significance was evaluated using p-values < 0.05. All analyses were conducted using STATA/MP v16.1. It was verified by applying the Chi2 test, which is especially useful for establishing whether there is a relationship between two categorical variables. Agresti and Kateri, (2018), Assess whether two categorical variables are independent of each other or whether there is a significant association between them (Sharpe, 2015).

The dependent and independent variables were extracted from the database of the National Survey of Households and Living Conditions (ENAHO) executed by the National Institute of Statistics and Informatics (INEI).

4. Results and discussion

4.1. Analysis of the condition of monetary poverty and level of trust in State institutions, democracy and transparency

4.1.1. Relationship between poverty and knowledge about democracy

The relationship between poverty and knowledge about democracy is statistically significant ($p < 0.01$), in 2014, out of every 100 citizens in poverty, only 17.51% do know about democracy, while 82.49% do not know (Table 1). In the group of citizens belonging to non-poor households, 47.35% know what democracy is and 52.65% do not know, in the following years, the pattern of behavior is recurrent until 2021.

Table 1.

Relationship between poverty and knowledge about democracy

Years	Household Condition	Do you know what democracy is?		Total	Chi2	Prob.
		Yes	No			
2014	Poor	17.51	82.49	100	1100.3	0.00
	No, poor thing	47.35	52.65	100		
2015	Poor	17.74	82.26	100	1100.3	0.00
	No, poor thing	46.33	53.67	100		
2016	Poor	17.47	82.53	100	1003.2	0.00
	No, poor thing	46.01	53.99	100		
2017	Poor	15.62	84.38	100	195.48	0.00
	No, poor thing	44.26	55.74	100		
2018	Poor	16.47	83.53	100	954.2	0.00
	No, poor thing	43.28	56.72	100		
2019	Poor	16.58	83.42	100	859.3	0.00
	No, poor thing	43.55	56.45	100		
2020	Poor	17.60	82.40	100	333.17	0.00
	No, poor thing	42.59	57.41	100		
2021	Poor	22.45	77.55	100	570.24	0.00
	No, poor thing	44.93	55.07	100		

Source: National Survey of Households and Living Conditions (ENAH) of 2014-2021 carried out by the National Institute of Statistics and Informatics (INEI).

Our results show that people in poverty are the ones who know the least about democracy, probably they have limited access to information. The scarce economic resources can limit access to quality education and political information, which in turn can result in poor people's understanding of democratic processes, socio-economic barriers can hinder active participation in political and civic life, perpetuating exclusion and inequality in the exercise of democratic rights (Vommaro, 2011).

Poverty can hinder access to quality education and information resources needed to understand democratic principles and processes, people in poverty may face additional challenges to actively participate in political and civic life due to time and resource constraints (Delamaza, 2020). Other studies, from previous years, argue that approximately 50% of the population does not know what democracy is, it is reasonable to deduce that there is a relationship between the lack of knowledge of the concept of democracy and their lack of preference towards the form of government, in Peru there are still sectors of the very poor population that are still not clear about what democracy means in a state of law (Mansilla, 2019).

4.1.2. Relationship between monetary poverty and the importance of democracy

Applying the Chi2 test, the relationship between poor or non-poor household status and the importance of democracy was statistically significant ($p < 0.01$), in fact, at the national level, in 2014, out of every 100 poor citizens, 61.20% consider democracy as an important element whose ages are over 18 years old. while in 2021, 61.18% responded that democracy is important (Table 2).

Table 2.

Relationship between monetary poverty and the importance of democracy

Years	Household Condition:	In your opinion, democracy in Peru is:					total	Chi2 (4)	Prob.
		Nothing important	Unimportant	Important	Very important	He doesn't know			
2014	Poor	3.17	8.47	61.20	9.85	17.32	100	598.5	0.00
	No, poor thing	3.11	9.39	62.23	18.98	6.28	100		
2015	Poor	2.81	9.80	61.63	10.13	15.63	100	538.9	0.00
	No, poor thing	3.20	9.46	62.61	18.84	5.89	100		
2016	Poor	3.10	9.88	62.17	10.35	14.50	100	538.3	0.00
	No, poor thing	3.13	9.80	61.48	20.28	5.30	100		
2017	Poor	3.15	11.50	60.02	10.18	15.16	100	397.57	0.00
	No, poor thing	3.30	10.80	59.93	19.26	6.71	100		
2018	Poor	3.44	9.61	61.63	8.75	16.57	100	458.85	0.00
	No, poor thing	4.02	10.37	60.39	17.86	7.36	100		
2019	Poor	2.99	9.38	62.58	9.58	15.47	100	347.47	0.00
	No, poor thing	3.77	9.62	61.16	18.19	7.26	100		
2020	Poor	3.90	9.27	64.41	8.80	13.63	100	137.7	0.00
	No, poor thing	3.29	9.31	61.24	18.83	7.34	100		
2021	Poor	3.03	9.08	61.18	13.80	12.92	100	242.1	0.00
	No, poor thing	3.13	7.85	60.76	21.82	6.45	100		
Average	Poor	3.20	9.62	61.85	10.18	15.15	100		
	No, poor thing	3.37	9.58	61.23	19.26	6.57	100		

Source: National Survey of Households and Living Conditions (ENAH) of 2014-2021 carried out by the National Institute of Statistics and Informatics (INEI).

During the study period, on average, 61.85% of poor people consider democracy important, similarly, 61.23% of people belonging to non-poor households also believe that democracy is important. In general, both the poor and non-poor perceive the importance of democracy as an intrinsic factor of citizen participation through different channels, it should not be reflected, only in the election of authorities, when elections are held. However, women are the poorest of the poor, and live in greater proportion than men in situations of poverty, both in developed and non-developed countries, these differences can aggravate women's participation in politics (Callejas, 2015).

The importance of democracy can promote transparency and accountability in the management of public resources, which can help reduce corruption and improve the equitable distribution of wealth (Sen, 1999). On the other hand, the importance of strong democratic institutions can ensure that public policies are designed and implemented in an inclusive manner, thus addressing the needs of the most vulnerable groups in society (Stiglitz, 2013).

4.1.3. Relationship between poverty and the perception of the functioning of democracy

Table 3 reports the relationship between socioeconomic status and the perception of the functioning of democracy, and was statistically significant ($p < 0.01$). Citizens in poverty, on average, 32.66% perceive that democracy works badly, while non-poor citizens believe that 45.62% work badly, these results confirm the distrust of citizens in public institutions that should promote a better functioning of a democratic State.

Table 3.

Relationship between poverty and the perception of the functioning of democracy

Years	Socioeconomic status	In Peru, does democracy work?					total	Chi2 (4)	Prob.
		too bad	Be	Ok	very well	He doesn't know			
2014	Poor	3.79	28.54	43.29	1.84	22.54	100	695.8	0.00
	No, poor thing	6.44	44.21	38.97	1.65	8.73	100		
2015	Poor	3.79	30.38	42.03	1.93	21.87	100	700.18	0.00
	No, poor thing	6.92	45.00	37.96	1.58	8.54	100		
2016	Poor	4.26	29.52	42.87	2.60	20.75	100	628.65	0.00
	No, poor thing	7.10	43.28	39.27	1.83	8.52	100		
2017	Poor	4.23	32.04	40.52	1.99	21.22	100	425.98	0.00
	No, poor thing	7.56	43.84	36.29	1.64	10.67	100		
2018	Poor	5.41	32.91	37.34	1.48	22.86	100	639.97	0.00
	No, poor thing	9.68	47.59	31.08	1.30	10.35	100		
2019	Poor	4.51	32.23	39.44	2.05	21.77	100	498.54	0.00
	No, poor thing	8.58	46.01	33.16	1.73	10.52	100		
2020	Poor	6.45	35.59	37.00	1.95	19.01	100	129.43	0.00
	No, poor thing	9.86	45.87	31.76	1.79	10.73	100		
2021	Poor	7.87	40.06	31.50	2.09	18.49	100	279.9	0.00
	No, poor thing	11.00	49.19	28.63	1.60	9.58	100		
Average	Poor	5.04	32.66	39.25	1.99	21.06	100		
	No, poor thing	8.39	45.62	34.64	1.64	9.71	100		

Source: National Survey of Households and Living Conditions (ENAH0) of 2014-2021 carried out by the National Institute of Statistics and Informatics (INEI).

The study on the qualification of the functioning of democracy in recent governments confirms that more than 50% of the adult population perceives that democracy works badly and very badly, and only in the 2018 study period, 60.8% of the adult population considers that democracy works as bad and very bad (UNDP, 2010). The perception of how democracy works can be influenced by several factors, including the socioeconomic status of individuals (O'Donnell, 2019). Indeed, people in poverty can have a different perception of the effectiveness and legitimacy of democratic institutions compared to those who do not experience poverty (Paramio & Revilla, 2006).

4.1.4. Relationship between monetary poverty and citizens' perception of transparency

It has been verified that there is a statistical relationship between socioeconomic condition and citizens' perception of transparency (Table 4), an indicator that reflects transparency, refers to whether in the last 12 months, if any member of the household requested, felt obligated or voluntarily gave gifts, tips, bribes, bribes to a worker or official of the State. In fact, the results show that, on an annual average, out of every 100 poor people, 3.10% were involved in acts of corruption, this figure is lower for citizens from non-poor households.

Table 4.

Relationship between monetary poverty and citizens' perception of transparency

Years	Condition	In the last 12 months, have you and/or any member of your household been requested, felt obligated or voluntarily given gifts, tips, bribes, bribes to a worker or official of the State?			total	Chi2 (4)	Prob.
		Yes	no	did not make use of the services of the State			
2014	Poor	3.33	96.19	0.48	100	46.12	0.00
	No, poor thing	1.43	94.46	4.11	100		
2015	Poor	3.12	96.39	0.50	100	55.43	0.00
	No, poor thing	1.22	93.09	5.68	100		
2016	Poor	3.61	95.57	0.83	100	73.15	0.00
	No, poor thing	1.03	88.31	10.66	100		
2017	Poor	2.95	96.08	0.98	100	47.75	0.00
	No, poor thing	0.99	86.86	12.15	100		
2018	Poor	3.26	95.54	1.20	100	32.43	0.00
	No, poor thing	1.40	81.85	16.76	100		
2019	Poor	2.87	96.43	0.70	100	12.99	0.00
	No, poor thing	1.35	81.84	16.81	100		
2020	Poor	3.21	96.05	0.75	100	11.88	0.00
	No, poor thing	1.78	71.81	26.41	100		
2021	Poor	2.47	96.44	1.09	100	11.05	0.00
	No, poor thing	1.42	75.24	23.34	100		
Average	Poor	3.10	96.08	0.82	100.00		
	No, poor thing	1.33	84.18	14.49	100.00		

Source: National Survey of Households and Living Conditions (ENAHQ) of 2014-2021 carried out by the National Institute of Statistics and Informatics (INEI).

In the study period (2014-2021), a recurrent behavior is observed in which the figures maintain a marked trend, so it is demonstrated that the poorest people in a higher percentage were victims or voluntarily gave a tip or bribe to a worker or official of the State. In Peru, corruption has always been one of the scourges that contravene values, from colonial times to the present day and has affected development and democracy (Goig, 2015), in the same way corruption affects the quality of democracy (Hermosa et al., 2017).

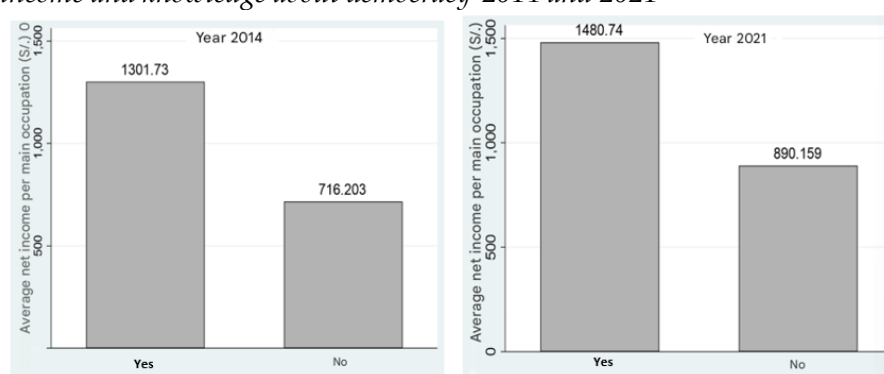
4.2. Influence of economic factors and place of residence on citizens' perception of governance, democracy and transparency

4.2.1. Average monthly net income and whether you have knowledge of democracy, 2014 and 2021

At the national level, citizens with higher economic incomes tend to have greater knowledge of democracy, in 2014, the average income of those who know about democracy was 1301.73 soles, while citizens who do not know about democracy were 716.20 soles (Figure 2).

Figure 2.

Average net income and knowledge about democracy-2014 and 2021



Source: National Survey of Households and Living Conditions (ENAHO) of 2014-2021 carried out by the National Institute of Statistics and Informatics (INEI).

Table 5 shows the relationship between average net income and political knowledge in adults.

Table 5.

Testing of averages for knowledge of democracy

	2014			2021		
	Obs	Average	Standard Error	Obs	Average	Standard Error
yes	2,511	1301.73	20.74	5,389	1480.74	15.8966
no	1,541	716.20	13.97	5,086	890.1588	8.721584
Difference		585.53	28.65			
t			20.43			32.0501

Source: National Survey of Households and Living Conditions (ENAHO) of 2014-2021 carried out by the National Institute of Statistics and Informatics (INEI).

The trend for the year 2021 is maintained, the average income of those who know about democracy was 1480.74 soles and those who do not know were 890.16 soles. In another study, they showed that the level of material wealth significantly influences the degree of support for democracy and the People who have a negative evaluation of the government's economic performance tend to show a lower level of support for democracy (Carrión et al., 2014). In addition, the study carried out by Roasting (2014) showed a significant association between a higher average net income and a higher level of knowledge about democracy among respondents. For its part, Panfichi and Alvarado (2011) They examined economic inequalities, specifically related to average net income, which influences the level of knowledge about democracy.

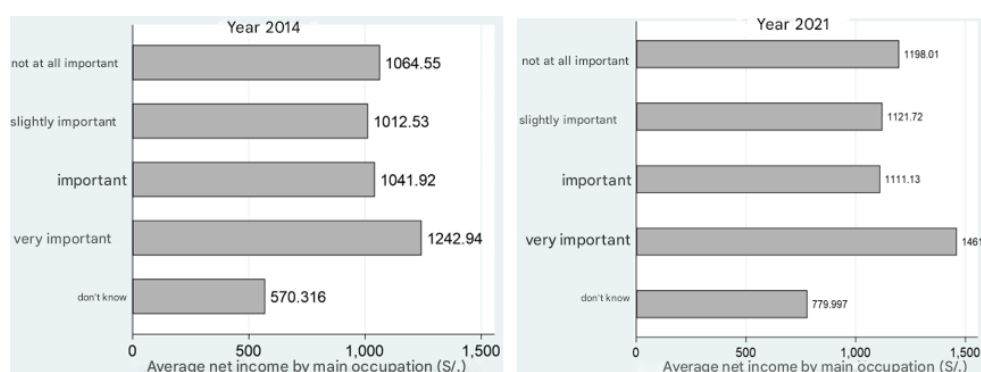
Through in-depth interviews and statistical analysis Chirinos (2014) examined how access to economic resources impacts on the understanding of democracy and political participation among young people. Likewise Adrianzén (1990) It found that economic inequalities are related to democratic support, likewise, people with higher incomes tend to show greater support for democracy compared to those with lower incomes. These results suggest that economic disparities may influence the perception of and support for democratic institutions in the European region.

4.2.2. Average income in relation to the perception of the importance of democracy, 2014 and 2021

At the national level, in Peru, those with higher economic incomes consider democracy to be very important (Figure 3).

Figure 3.

Average income in relation to the perception of the importance of democracy, 2014 and 2021



Source: National Survey of Households and Living Conditions (ENAHU) of 2014-2021 carried out by the National Institute of Statistics and Informatics (INEI).

Orellana (2016 and Degregori (2004) Analyzing the relationship between average net income and political knowledge, the authors find that average net income is positively associated with citizens' political knowledge. These results highlight the importance of addressing socioeconomic disparities to strengthen democratic participation in the country. Likewise Gonzáles (2005) Analyzing how the average income of citizens affected the perception of the democratic system, the results showed a positive correlation between a higher income and a more favorable perception of democracy, individuals with higher incomes tended to be more satisfied with the way the government works and to have greater trust in democratic institutions. For its part, Paramio and Revilla (2006). They found, that citizens with lower incomes tend to express lower levels of trust in the democratic system, this disparity in perceptions may be due to a variety of factors, including the ability to actively participate in politics and access to resources that influence quality of life.

4.2.3. Average monthly income in relation to the perception of the functioning of democracy, 2014 and 2021

Table 6 and figure 5, shows the results of ANOVA; and Figure 4 shows the relationship between average income and the functioning of democracy, which was statistically significant ($p < 0.01$).

Table 6.

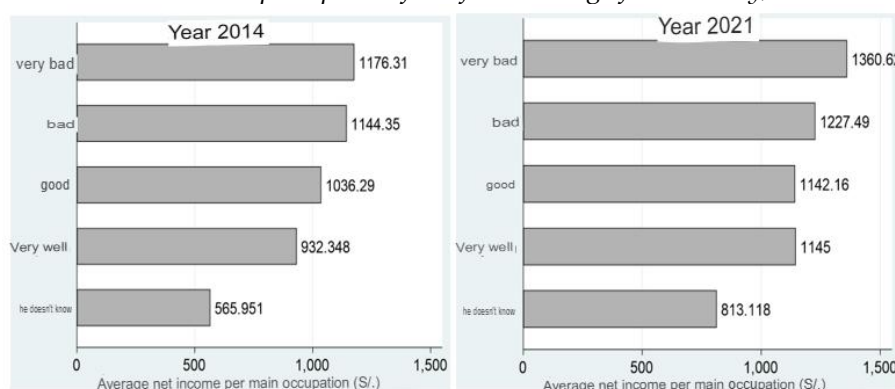
ANOVA Test (1)

Fountain	2014			2021		
	partial	G.L.	F	Partial	G.L.	F
opinion	55215328	4	16.1	9626633769	4	77.98
Residual	3447645492	4		295559632	4	
Total	3502860820	10,472		9922193401	10472	

Source: National Survey of Households and Living Conditions (ENAH) of 2014-2021 carried out by the National Institute of Statistics and Informatics (INEI).

Figure 4.

Average income in relation to the perception of the functioning of democracy, 2014 and 2021



Source: National Survey of Households and Living Conditions (ENAH) of 2014-2021 carried out by the National Institute of Statistics and Informatics (INEI).

Carrión et al. (2018) examined how the average income level relates to the perception of the importance of democracy in Latin America. Using primary data from public opinion surveys, the authors find that people with higher incomes tend to perceive democracy as more important compared to those with lower incomes, this finding suggests that democratic perceptions may be influenced by socioeconomic factors such as economic income.

For its part, Vásquez and Godoy (2021) examined the relationship between household income and democratic attitudes in sub-Saharan Africa. Using data from cross-national surveys, the authors find that people belonging to higher-income households tend to have more favorable attitudes towards democracy compared to those with lower incomes, these findings suggest that economic conditions may influence the perception of democracy in the region.

For its part Joy (2015) investigated how household income affects satisfaction with democracy in North America, people with higher household incomes tend to be more satisfied with democracy compared to those with lower incomes. Likewise The Man and the Beast (2024) explored how the average income level is related to the perception of democratic functioning in Latin America. At last Pease y Peirano (2011) In a comparative study of how economic inequalities are related to democratic legitimacy in Europe, these results suggest that economic conditions can influence the assessment of the legitimacy of democratic institutions.

4.2.4. Average income by main occupation in relation to involvement in corruption, 2014 and 2021

In Table 7, in relation to the question: if in the last 12 months, did you and/or any member of your household have been requested, did you feel obligated or voluntarily gave gifts, tips, bribes, bribes to a worker or official of the State?, the results were: between 2014 and 2021, the relationship between the average monetary income by main occupation and involvement in acts of corruption is evidenced ($p < 0.01$), those citizens who were involved in acts of corruption tend to have a higher average income (Figure 5).

Table 7.

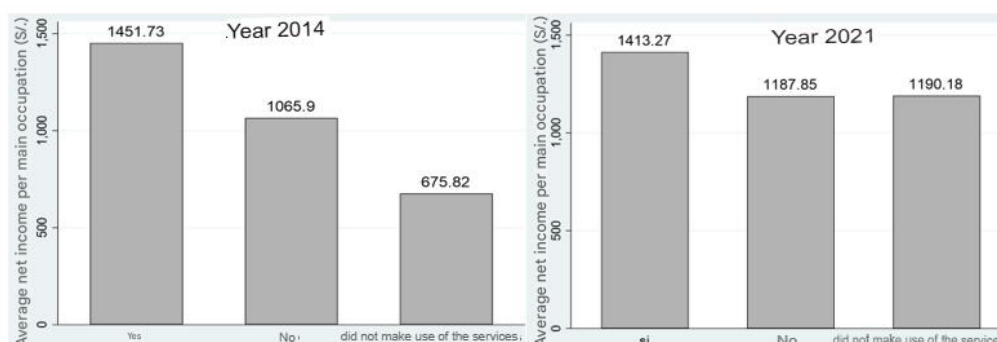
ANOVA Test (2)

Fountain	2014			2021		
	partial	G.L.	F	partial	G.L.	F
opinion	3395829018	4	16,1	10050948743	4	34.64
Residual	53515890	4		33360852	4	
Total	3449344908	10,472		10084309595	10472	

Source: National Survey of Households and Living Conditions (ENAH) of 2014-2021 carried out by the National Institute of Statistics and Informatics (INEI).

Figure 5.

Average income by main occupation in relation to involvement in corruption, 2014 and 2021.



Source: National Survey of Households and Living Conditions (ENAH) of 2014-2021 carried out by the National Institute of Statistics and Informatics (INEI).

Catacora (2018) examined how average income by main occupation relates to involvement in corruption in Latin America. Through analysis of survey data and corruption case records, the authors find that certain occupations with higher incomes tend to have a higher incidence of corruption. These findings suggest that socioeconomic differences can influence acts of corruption.

Likewise Palestine (2018) establishes the relationship between income level and corruption, To examine how average income per main occupation relates to involvement in acts of corruption in Latin America, the authors find that certain occupations with higher incomes tend to have a higher incidence of corruption, these findings suggest that socioeconomic differences may influence the predisposition of certain occupations to engage in corrupt practices in the region.

Also the study of Fajardo (2019) In the case of the European Communist Party (ER) that economic inequalities are related to corruption in Europe, the author finds that certain occupations with higher incomes tend to be more involved in acts of corruption compared to occupations with lower incomes, these results highlight the influence of socioeconomic factors on the prevalence of corruption in the European region.

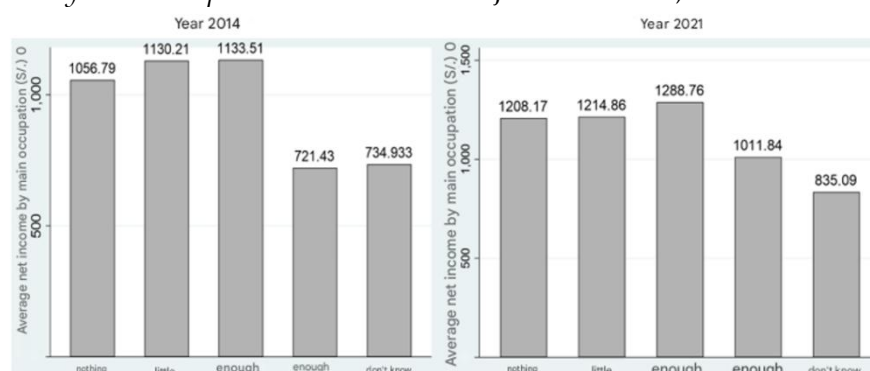
In addition, for other cases, Rollón et al. (2019) When examining the relationship between household income and corruption in sub-Saharan Africa, the authors find that families with higher incomes tend to be more involved in corrupt practices compared to those with lower incomes. At last Campos and Giovannoni (2007) In the study of how household income affects the perception and tolerance of corruption in North America, the authors confirm that families with higher incomes tend to perceive corruption less critically and to be more tolerant of it compared to those with lower incomes.

4.2.5. Average income by main occupation in relation to the judiciary, 2014 and 2021

Figure 6, at the national level, between 2014 and 2021, shows that the average income by level of trust in the judiciary. The group of citizens who trusted in the sufficient category have a higher average income.

Figure 6.

Average income by main occupation in relation to the Judicial Branch, 2014 and 2021



Source: National Survey of Households and Living Conditions (ENAH) of 2014-2021 carried out by the National Institute of Statistics and Informatics (INEI).

Daly and Navas (2015) examined how average income by main occupation relates to trust in the judiciary in Latin America, the authors find that people with occupations that have higher incomes tend to have greater trust in the judiciary compared to those with occupations that have lower incomes, these findings suggest that socioeconomic differences may influence the perception of and trust in the judicial institution in the region.

Likewise Estella (2020) In a comparative study, he demonstrated how economic inequalities are related to trust in the judiciary in Europe, the author finds that people with higher incomes tend to have greater trust in the judiciary compared to those with lower incomes in several European countries. These results highlight the influence of socio-economic factors on the perception of justice in the European region.

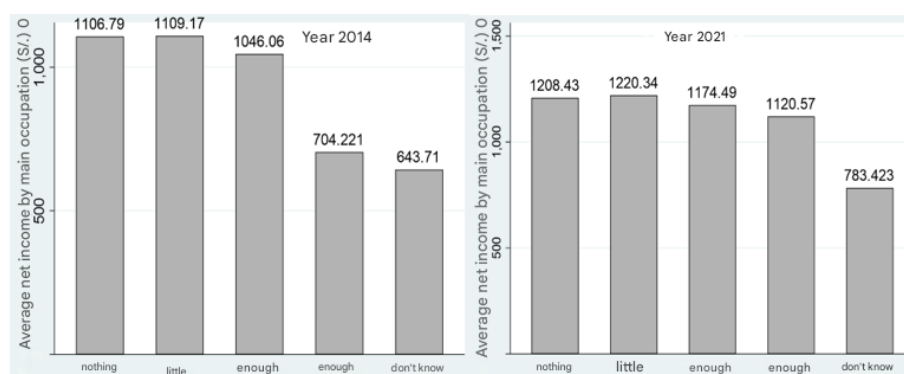
Likewise, the Justice and Change Institute (2019) In examining the relationship between household income and trust in the judiciary in sub-Saharan Africa, the authors find that families with higher incomes tend to have greater trust in the judiciary compared to those with lower incomes, these findings highlight the influence of socioeconomic factors on the perception of justice in the sub-Saharan region. Also, in his study, Mavila (2012) In my research on how family income affects trust in the judiciary in North America, the author finds that families with higher incomes tend to have greater trust in the judiciary compared to those with lower incomes, these results highlight the influence of socioeconomic factors on the perception of justice in the North American region.

4.2.6. Average income by main occupation in relation to the Congress of the Republic, 2014 and 2021

Figure 7 illustrates the average monthly income by main occupation based on the response they gave in relation to trust. In 2014, the average income of those who trust nothing was 1106.79 soles per month, while, in 2014, and for the year 2021, this figure was 1208.43 soles, it is evident that the level of trust of citizens is a function of economic income. By way of comparison.

Figure 7.

Average income by main occupation in relation to the Congress of the Republic, 2014 and 2021



Source: National Survey of Households and Living Conditions (ENAH) of 2014-2021 carried out by the National Institute of Statistics and Informatics (INEI).

Abaunza (2022) examined how the average income by main occupation relates to the perception of the Congress of the Republic in Latin America, the authors find that people with occupations that have higher incomes tend to have a more positive perception of Congress compared to those with occupations that have lower incomes, these findings suggest that socioeconomic differences may influence the evaluation of the legislative institution in the region. Similarly, Rosales (2017) The author found that people with higher incomes tend to have a more positive perception of Congress compared to those with lower incomes in several European countries, these results highlight the influence of socioeconomic factors in the evaluation of the legislative institution in the European region.

Likewise Figueroa (2016) In examining the relationship between family income and the perception of the Congress of the Republic in sub-Saharan Africa, the authors find that families with higher incomes tend to have a more favorable perception of Congress compared to those with lower incomes. In addition Abaunza (2022) investigated how family income affected the perception of the Congress of the Republic in North America, the authors find that families with higher incomes tend to have a more positive perception of Congress compared to those with lower incomes, these results highlight the influence of socioeconomic factors in the evaluation of the legislative institution.

4.2.7. Knowledge of democracy by place of residence, 2014 and 2021

In Peru, at the national level, during the year 2014 and 2021, on average, 62.68% of citizens in urban areas know about democracy, while only 31.53% of people living in rural areas know about democracy (Table 8), these differences in knowledge are due to the ease of use and access to information that exists in urban areas. Increased access to the internet and communication.

Table 8.

Knowledge about democracy by place of residence 2014 and 2021

Years	Residence	Do you know what democracy is?			Chi2	Prob.
		Yes	No	Total		
2014	Rural	37.21	62.79	100	228.98	0.00
	Urban	67.35	32.65	100		
2021	Rural	25.86	74.14	100	705.47	0.00
	Urban	58.02	41.98	100		
Average	Rural	31.53	68.47	100		
	Urban	62.68	37.32	100		

Source: National Survey of Households and Living Conditions (ENAH) of 2014-2021 carried out by the National Institute of Statistics and Informatics (INEI).

Osorio (2015) It states that people living in urban areas are more likely to support democracy than those living in rural areas.

Also, in the study, Agüero and Barreto (2012) As knowledge about democracy varies by place of residence in Latin America, the authors find that people who reside in urban areas tend to have greater knowledge about democracy compared to those who reside in rural areas. These findings suggest that the urban context may offer greater opportunities for access to information and civic education, which influences citizens' political knowledge.

Also Panfichi (2002) investigated the differences in knowledge about democracy between urban and rural areas in Europe, and found that people residing in urban areas have higher levels of knowledge about democracy compared to those residing in rural areas, these findings suggest that the urban environment can facilitate access to educational resources and political information. which contributes to the development of political knowledge.

In the same vein, Pachano (2011) and Urbina and Quispe (2016) In examining how knowledge about democracy is related to place of residence in sub-Saharan Africa, the authors find that people residing in urban areas tend to have greater knowledge about democracy compared to those residing in rural areas.

For its part, Meléndez and Vergara (2010) investigated the influence of place of residence on knowledge about democracy in North America, the authors demonstrate that people who reside in urban areas have higher levels of knowledge about democracy compared to those who reside in rural areas. These findings highlight the importance of the urban environment in the development of political knowledge in the North American region.

5. Conclusions

At the national level, between 2014 and 2021, citizens with higher economic incomes tend to have greater knowledge of democracy. Likewise, those citizens who were involved in acts of corruption tend to have a higher average income. In that same period, on average, 62.68% of citizens residing in urban areas know about democracy, while only 31.53% of people living in rural areas know about democracy. Male citizens with a higher level of education are more involved in acts of corruption and show less transparent behavior.

People in poverty show less knowledge about democracy (17.51% in 2014 compared to 47.35% in non-poor people) and a more critical perception of its functioning. This is attributed to limitations in access to education, information, and political participation, which perpetuates their exclusion from the democratic system.

Citizens with higher incomes tend to value democracy more, but they are also more exposed to becoming involved in acts of corruption. This suggests that, although the economic level favors a greater understanding of democratic processes, it does not necessarily guarantee a culture of transparency.

There are significant disparities between urban and rural areas. While 62.68% of urban people know about democracy, only 31.53% of rural people do, due to differences in access to information, public services and connectivity. Corruption and opacity in public management erode the credibility of institutions, especially among the most vulnerable socioeconomic groups. This reflects a vicious circle where citizen distrust weakens democratic governance.

The results highlight the urgency of implementing strategies that reduce economic inequalities, promote civic education and improve access to information, especially in rural areas. Likewise, it is necessary to strengthen transparency and accountability to rebuild trust in institutions and consolidate an inclusive democracy in Peru.

This study lays the groundwork for broader investigations into the link between economic characteristics and democratic perception. Future research should include qualitative analyses to better understand the underlying causes of low democratic engagement among economically vulnerable groups. In-depth interviews and focus groups could uncover the subjective experiences and cultural narratives that shape political disillusionment and distrust in institutions.

Moreover, it would be valuable to design and evaluate pilot interventions aimed at increasing political literacy, especially among rural and low-income populations. These could include community-based civic education programs, digital inclusion initiatives, and participatory mechanisms tailored to regional realities. Longitudinal studies that assess the impact of such interventions over time would contribute substantially to the field. Finally, comparative studies across Latin American countries with similar socioeconomic and political challenges could help identify regional patterns and best practices, contributing to the formulation of effective, evidence-based public policies.

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