DEMOCRACY IN THE SCHOOLS OF PERU: A VISION BASED ON SCIENTIFIC AND GOVERNMENTAL LITERATURE

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Abstract

To analyze the state of democracy in schools in Peru on the basis of the scientific and governmental literature that exists on the subject. Methodology: Documentary and qualitative approach study. Results. Both students and teachers are aware of very large gaps and inequalities, bureaucratized public institutions, privileged social classes and corruption at all levels both in the public and private sectors. Conclusion. Peru still has a weak democracy, which is reflected in the negative perception that students, teachers and parents have about it in the current situation the Peruvian political system is going through and in the emerging initiatives by the education sector regarding democratic participation.

Keywords: Democracy, Peruvian education, teaching strategies, corruption, racism.

Introduction

The future of democracy has to do with the fact that policies related to education, especially in a country like Peru, which has been going through complex stages, from internal armed conflicts and dictatorships to cases of corruption involving senior officials and presidents. In this sense, a series of actions are pending in Peru to achieve development.

Education must not only become a tool to help achieve better citizens, but also be responsible for defending, promoting and laying the democratic foundations of a country, through actions that contribute to political transition, protection of human rights, building a culture of peace and social reconstruction (Frisancho, 2009).

The aim of this article is to analyze the state of democracy in Peru's schools on the basis of scientific and government production on the subject. To this end, it is structured as follows: first, the main programs developed by the Government to foster democratic participation in Peru's schools will be presented.

In this sense, the characteristics and objectives of the programs will be reviewed in order to have an overview of the progress made in the area of political promotion and awareness at the basic levels of Peruvian education; then the subject of teaching methods for political and citizen education will be developed, following Magendzo (2004) and his proposal for citizen training. Finally, an analysis will be made of the perception of democracy in Peruvian schools.

For this, the sources will be the United Nations Development Programme ([UNDP], 2008) Human Development Report, entitled "Young People in Peru: Imagined Democracy"; the study carried out by the IEP and the Gustavo Mohme Llona Foundation, entitled "Citizenship from the School: Living in Peru"; and the International Study on Civics and Citizenship-ICCS 2016, conducted by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA).
METHODOLOGY

This article is based on the qualitative approach using the documentary research method. It basically consists of a review of the literature using the strategies proposed by Moncada-Hernández (2014), who poses as a process, first, the approach to the topic; second, the formulation of a question; third, the statement of the search; fourth, the choice of sources, search, selection, organization; and fifth, data analysis.

Thirty-eight base documents were used, selected from a set of scientific research projects conducted over the last nineteen years (2001-2019) in databases such as the Scientific Electronic Library Online (Scielo), the Network of Scientific Journals of Latin America and the Caribbean, Spain and Portugal (Redalyc), Ebsco Host, Dialnet, Proquest and institutional repositories of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), Grupo de Análisis para el Desarrollo (GRADE), Ministry of Education of Peru (MINEDU) and the Vanguard Digital Library for Social Science Research in the Andean Region and Latin America (FlacsoAndes), as well as multiple repositories of Latin American universities and journals from which an exhaustive selection process was carried out, choosing only articles from original sources.

Likewise, we sought to highlight how democracy is presented in basic education schools in Peru, which is why we excluded research that works with other populations that are not regular basic education students.

In regard to the search, we used as key words democracy, Peru, basic education, primary, secondary, and schools, filtering the results by year, language (in this case, Spanish), source, and database, obtaining at the end 38 review documents.

DISCUSSION

Despite the fact that Peru has been walking along the democratic path for almost 20 years, since the escape of the dictator Alberto Fujimori to Japan in 2001, the recent events with the Congress, dissolved by the President of the Republic Martin Vizcarra in September 2019, and in general the case of the suicide of a former president, escapes, imprisonments and preventive prisons motivated by the corruption of its democratically elected former presidents in four electoral processes, show that something is not working properly in the Peruvian democratic system.

Considering this socio-political context and after the analysis of the information obtained, the results we work with can be ordered in three subcategories: (a) current strategies of democratic student participation in Peruvian schools; (b) the problems that are evident in Peruvian schools regarding democracy; and (c) the perception of democracy in Peruvian schools. In the following lines, we will develop each one of them.

A. Programmes developed by the Government to foster democratic participation in Peru's schools

At the global level, education management emphasizes school autonomy and democratic participation as very important aspects in the search for quality and equity in the training of citizens. Thus, basic schools, as base organizations for the training of people, have an important role in the creation of attitudes and democratic achievements in children (Echevarria, 2003).

During primary education, children are prepared for life and familiarized with the rules of social life, in addition to imparting academic knowledge and skills. Under this rationale, education reforms have emerged in various countries in the region, including Peru, in order to convert the education community -including the principal, teachers, students, and parents- into a democratic space in which the education community is involved in the activities and management of the school.

In this sense, the documents reviewed point out the need to generate curricular changes and reforms that lead to improving the teaching-learning processes of Peruvian students at all levels of education. To this end, it is imperative to design and implement work strategies in public schools, to collect and analyze student perceptions of their learning processes, and to involve the community in decision-making.
These are only some of the concerns that, without doubt and if applied, will help to improve the country's education system. Next, we will report on the student participation strategies developed by the Peruvian Ministry of Education (MINEDU) over the years.


For Máiz (2003), there are different types of democracy in which civil society participation has greater space for participation and social inclusion is promoted and guaranteed: representative, participatory, deliberative and inclusive. These four qualities contribute to the formation of citizenship, a social construct that must be taught and learned. Of the four, participation stands out as a politically emerging and continuous form that is part of the democratic political system. Schools as elements that generate knowledge, skills, and values should also promote the democratic participation of individuals in society (Sabatini, 1998; Epstein, 1998; Caijao, 1998; Benavides, Cueto & Villarán, 1999).

In November 2018, more than 124 thousand high school students from 400 schools in Peru participated in the electoral process of School Municipalities, within the framework of the student participation strategy "Somos Pares" (We are Peers), developed by the Ministry of Education (MINEDU). The objective was that schools become a democratic space where students exercise their citizenship as part of their integral formation (MINEDU, 2018).

The initiative to form school municipalities allows children and adolescents to organize themselves with their schoolmates in order to achieve benefits not only for themselves, but also for their school and their communities. In addition, its promotion allows schools to develop through a series of activities that contribute to the comprehensive education of students through the promotion of values of citizenship and democracy and where they can express their opinions, participate and organize themselves (Martínez, 2008).

On the other hand, the National Office of Electoral Processes of Peru (ONPE, 2017) conceives the school municipality as an organization that represents the students of the educational institution. Its formation is achieved following the same procedures as in a democratic election, that is, through universal and secret voting, for a period of one year. Its formation promotes in students the exercise of their rights and responsibilities.

These school municipalities have such a level of development that they simulate the entire electoral process, the most important day being the celebration of the elections, in which the ONPE itself even supports. Electoral processes in schools generate a democratic culture, since students learn to organize themselves and to give shape, continuity and strength to their institutions within the school environment. Thus, students, through the exercise of universal and secret ballot, must elect their teams, mayor or mayoress, and the members of the board of directors of the School Municipality, who will exercise their position during the school year (ONPE, 2019). Although they were initially promoted by the Swedish NGO "Save the Children", at present the school municipalities are part of the MINEDU strategy "We are equals"1.

In the case of private educational institutions, the Student Council is used as the highest channel of student participation in the institutional life of the school. Its members (students) are democratically elected by the students themselves. The function of the Council is to lead and promote student participation in the various activities carried out by the educational institution. Likewise, the Council is also responsible for receiving and transmitting the concerns and suggestions of the students to the Management and other organizational bodies of the school. The council's board of directors is assisted by an advisor, who may be a teacher or coordinator delegated by the directorate.

1 “We are peers” is a student participation strategy that aims to promote and strengthen spaces for student participation in public educational institutions nationwide, through actions that promote their socio-affective and citizenship skills. It also contributes to the development of the competencies present in the national basic education curriculum.

In high school, if you do it, we all do it
This is the first action of the "We are equals" strategy. The National Strategy of Student Participation "In Secondary School, If You Do It, We Do It All" has as its main objective to strengthen and promote the citizenship skills of students in order to turn them into agents of change committed to the development of their school, their town and their region.

Likewise, the strategy allows students to feel that the school listens to their opinions, expectations, proposals or alternatives to improve their environment. To this end, students select a public issue for the educational community in general to work on throughout the strategy. This strategy is linked to the "Ideas in Action" competitions These are ideas worked on in collaborative teams organized creatively through Design Thinking.

**The Festivoces: a space to express ourselves freely**

"Festivoces" is another strategy in which all secondary level grades present the result of the work they did in the sessions of the Citizen and Civic Training area and in the hour of Tutoring. These activities are carried out in a creative, dynamic and festive manner; in addition, these spaces allow for the presentation of other forms of manifestations such as comic books, radio interviews, murals, dramatizations, videos and songs, all of which are related to themes

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2 For more information on this proposal, follow the link http://www.minedu.gob.pe/silahaces/

3 For more information on this proposal, follow the link http://www.minedu.gob.pe/ideasenaccion/
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addressed in the areas described above. These activities promote coexistence among the participants, and help to promote the proposals of the candidates to the School Municipality. The active participation of the student community in this type of event has an impact on school dynamics (MINEDU, 2017).

**B. Teaching methods**

Another problem in education that wants to form democratic citizens is the teaching method. In this sense, Magendzo (2004) identified three conceptions of political and citizen education that he called "modalities of citizen training", which are divided into (a) the patriarchal conception; (b) the rational scientific; and (c) the democratic conception. These modalities propose particular forms of the production of specific citizenship.

The patriarchal modality is characterized by ensuring that students recognize their place and role in the dynamics of the social division of labor. This conception asserts that democracy becomes only a formal mask of the hegemony of dominant groups. The "national interest" only favors those who have the power to define it with an interpretation advantageous to themselves. Political formation becomes a type of patriotism that seeks to promote and comply with established norms.

Within this conception, religious education plays a fundamental role. This subject is linked to Civic Education, which focuses on understanding the meaning of representative democracy and equal political rights. In addition, courses such as "Training for political citizenship" focus on individual freedoms and seek "to delve into the restrictions or limits to freedom, by virtue of the freedom of others and the common good" (Magendzo, 2004, pp. 37-38).

The second modality (rational science) assumes as a principle that the market is the agent that regulates social institutions. The scientific aspect takes a leading role in the generation of knowledge, although it leaves aside sciences such as social sciences and humanities. Civic education, in this modality, becomes a subject for vocational orientation and preparation for working life. For this reason, the content taught prioritizes economic, social, cultural and environmental rights, and leaves aside political issues. Under this perspective, in civic education:

It addresses those issues that are linked to tolerance, discrimination, cultural diversity, social inclusion and exclusion, social marginalization, identity, poverty, work, oppression, the right to education, health and housing (Magendzo, 2004, p. 40).

The third modality is democratic. In this, the objective of citizen education is to form citizens capable of building a better society. To this end, schools become places in which political ideals such as democracy and equity are
In order to achieve this, the participation of the entire community is essential, above all of students, since it is they who are called upon to get to know society in order to have a positive influence on it through political activities or volunteer work.

In this modality, the presence of critical content is high since it works on the premise that there is no knowledge or legislative structure that is alien to the questions. This means that the democratic conception of citizen education is approached from a vision of political citizenship as well as social and active citizenship. Active citizenship empowers citizens by informing them of the normative bodies and institutions charged with protecting their rights, in order to allow them to say "no" in the face of situations that compromise their dignity and to demand the fulfillment of their rights (Magendzo, 2004).

In recent years, the patriarchal modality has prevailed in Peru. Love and respect for the homeland and the symbols that represent it are complemented by knowledge of the laws and institutions. Likewise, compliance with the rules of coexistence, school and social discipline, and the learning of collective behaviour are assumed as normal practice (Morales, 2000).

In regard to the third modality (democracy), this has recent data in Peruvian classrooms with the strategies of "We are equals" and the strengthening of school municipalities. However, these are still isolated attempts in the curriculum that do not have an impact on the rest of the subjects; that is, they are initial attempts to awaken democratic awareness in students through activities promoted by public institutions such as ONPE. Nevertheless, the achievements that these initiatives can achieve are still far off.

To summarize, we will mention what Constantine (2012) said, for whom the scientific-rational model has a greater presence in pre-university schools (which emerged in the nineties), since these discard "traditional" content such as Physical Education or Civic Education by giving more hours to the subjects that will come in the university entrance exam.

Problems evidenced in Peruvian schools regarding democracy

For Romero (2007), the construction of democracy in Peru is a still unfinished task; and although there are glimpses of progress, these are imperceptible and slow. For the author, and despite the fact that in 2001 Peru recovered democracy, it still does not guarantee equal access to citizenship. Likewise, Manrique (2006) considers that the population that has managed to access the benefits and rights of the democratic system are few, which has led to the construction of a republic with a democratic regime, but with marked differences.

Peru's rulers are aware of social and economic inequality but never explicitly recognize this; rather, they emphasize informing the people that everyone is equal when exercising democracy by casting their vote to elect the rulers. However, departing from such silence, Maria Antonieta Alva, Minister of Economy of the current Government, said the following:

I think that in this country we people are still not worth the same. And as long as this country works like this, I don't think we're going to get ahead [...] Let's think about the media coverage of things that happen in San Isidro versus things that happen elsewhere. Let's think about the treatment of some public agencies, some hospitals. I think the big problem in Peru is that people are still not worth the same (Minister Alva: "The big problem in Peru is that people are still not worth the same", para. 5).

Reflections of this nature explain why the level of satisfaction with democracy in Peru is among the lowest in the entire Latin American region. Goldenberg (2018) raised a number of questions as to whether Peruvian democracy can survive corruption, or whether a democracy can survive and succeed in defeating pervasive corruption. Or whether Peru's democracy can develop a judicial system strong enough and independent enough to deal with the problem. Recent political events in Peru (the unsustainable relationship between the legislative and executive branches and the dissolution of Congress) show that these questions remain unanswered.

Although in Peru one can glimpse actions that directly attack the problems of corruption, the fight against this scourge requires solid institutions and strong leadership that brings the people together, and neither of these two
exist today in Peru. Thus, the question arises again «How does corruption affect and feed back into the Peruvian regular basic education system?

The prevailing racism

Despite the fact that over the last three decades Peru has undergone significant economic and political changes, various authors point out that Peruvian society continues to maintain the shortcomings of past centuries that feed discriminatory practices and marked racism (Callirgos, 1993; Portocarrero, 2007; Bruce, 2008; Manrique, 2009; Telles and Steele, 2012). What is worrying is that ethnic and racial discrimination still occurs in spaces such as schools and among new generations, mixing with other criteria of differentiation, with education being a major factor in the new ways in which Peruvians are racially recategorized (De la Cadena, 2007; Larson, 2007).

In the Peruvian school the socialization is made in two planes: one official and another alternative. The official space is governed by the fulfillment of goals. In the alternative space, on the other hand, the "living" is rewarded, the one who knows how to violate these rules and take advantage of them. This differentiation of spaces marks a hierarchy that is governed by physical characteristics determined by Andean features, physical defects, "motor" or Andean accent speaking or lesser sporting ability; also by socio-economic and personal features such as more pronounced poverty or shyness. Each of these becomes a burden for students within the school socialization process.

Several authors agree that the social gaps and the institutionalization of handicaps and prejudices in Peruvian society remain unchanged. This leads us to think about the role of schools in combating these problems. The causes are complex, highlighting, for example, authoritarianism, classism or corruption. As Constantino (2012) states, the school does not fulfill the mission of forming citizens, but preserves and prolongs the life of our problems as a society.

In this sense, and as Romero (2007) states, in Peru the Creole elites sought to differentiate themselves from the indigenous identity through the so-called "blanqueamiento", using correctly the Spanish language and English, being educated in private schools attended by the white elite, living in exclusive districts, spending the summer on elitist beaches and being members of an exclusive club. And this process is reproduced in the local elites, where it is very difficult for a foreigner to differentiate by racial phenotype from one another, but where the distinction between those who "think they are white" and those who are not is very clearly established.

In a study carried out by the Institute of Peruvian Studies ([IEP], 2016), to the question of "Why are the poor poor", the results showed a worrying panorama. About 40% of teachers and parents surveyed answered that there are poor people because people have become accustomed to living off the state or because they do not make sufficient efforts to get out of this situation, answers that coincide with 25% of the students interviewed. Similarly, when asked about indigenous people in poverty, about 20% of primary school students and parents surveyed stated that they are poor because they are less intelligent.

Another relevant study was conducted by the Peruvian Institute of Statistics and Information (INEI) in 2018, in which 14.0% of Peruvians surveyed still felt discriminated against. In the urban area, the feeling of discrimination was greater (14.9%) than in the rural area (10.0%). With regard to gender, the survey showed no notable differences since both men and women felt discriminated against (14.2% and 13.8% respectively). Considering the level of education, respondents who claimed to have higher education perceived greater discrimination (18.4%) than those with primary education (8.8%). With regard to the perception of feeling discriminated against, the results obtained in the 9 departments of the country analyzed exceeded 14.0%, with Puno being the department where the highest percentage is concentrated (26.9%); while in Apurímac, 2.9% of those surveyed said they felt discriminated against.

A common practice of various populist governments in Latin America is to seek the direct support of the poor, the indigenous or the peasantry. Citizen agitation advances without marked leadership and is exhausted within the limits of a political current and cannot establish a pluralistic civic culture (McLuchlan and Cueto, 1998). Building democracy in Peru means tackling different forms of representation.

It is evident that the government denies the existing diversity, since there is an attempt to impose homogeneity around a single culture: the Creole one. This proposal has colonialist overtones, which represents an obstacle to
modernization. In this sense, the challenge arises of rethinking the ways in which people understand plurality and diversity within the unity of the Nation (Manrique, 2006).

**Inequality in the school system**

Inequality is closely related to racism, being practically the cause and the consequence of it, feeding back on each other and generating a downward spiral in Peruvian society. Bello (2019) points out that, in the PISA, LLCE-UNESCO and Peruvian studies reports as "Children of the Millennium", the Peruvian school system is considered one of the most unequal and most segregated by socio-economic level in the entire planet. This affirmation is supported by its structure, which looks like a pyramid, with types of schools -both private and public- located in the different strata of the pyramid that do not allow for inclusion between those at the top (high socio-economic level) and those at the bottom (low socio-economic level).

The above contributes to the formation of the image of the school as a center of inequalities in society, which makes it the origin of a series of social and mental health problems including domestic and urban violence, frustration, aggression, delinquency, even resentment, racism, 6intolerance of diversity, etc.

Democracy in Peru has not allowed for equal treatment of citizens. There are still many sectors of the population that have not managed to access the benefits and rights granted by the democratic system (Manrique, 2006). Inequality in access to goods and services, education, the legal-political system and the labor market is one of the reasons why this phenomenon is difficult to combat. This reality leads Peruvians to believe that there are groups of power that dominate key sectors of the Government, influencing their decisions for their own benefit. An example of this is that around 60% of 4th year secondary school students, parents and teachers believe that the Government favors the sectors where the money is concentrated (IEP, 2015).

Therefore, State policies should promote the participation of the population in the political system, demonstrating respect for diversity and its organization. They must also generate mechanisms that succeed in integrating the population into the market and increase social and economic opportunities through access to education under conditions of equality.

**The corruption**

From the 1990s onwards, corruption in Peru became established at all levels and in all spheres of society. The events that took place in 2001 after the dissemination of the so-called "vladivideos" triggered a wave of protests that would end with the resignation of the reelected Alberto Fujimori via fax. Although at the time such revelations showed that corruption was a monster of impossible dimensions that had the democratic system on the ropes, this panorama does not seem to have changed much in recent years. The political-corruption binomial has not been fractured, it has survived these years and apparently has assumed other forms within democratic regimes (Lerner, 2017).

For Warren (2004), corruption in democracy (which, for the author, is the corruption of democracy) directly attacks the provision of public goods. The effects that this problem generates is distrust of political leaders and all those who have the responsibility of making decisions in state and non-state institutions. Living with the feeling that everything around us is contaminated by dishonest acts affects the foundations of the regime's legitimacy and considerably damages interpersonal trust.

In a study carried out by the company Transparency International in January 2019 and September of the same year, Peru maintained a high index of perception of corruption, ranking 105th out of 180 nations. This same institution reveals that the countries most affected by corruption are Venezuela (where 50% claim to have paid a bribe), Mexico (34%) and Peru (30%). Costa Rica, with only 7%, appears at the other end of the ranking.

Corruption not only has economic effects, but also political ones (Lagos, 2003). This means that if the frequency of corruption cases increases and citizens' perceptions of the phenomenon rise, this will affect support for democracy, especially in the institutions that represent it, such as political parties. This will contribute to the gap between institutions and citizens. The crisis of political parties has its roots in (a) changes in the structure of social interests, (b) their relative inability to respond to new changes, (c) the information revolution, and (d) the increased power of the media, which contributes to the perception that corruption has no limits (Franco, 1998).
Some important data to mention are those provided by the INEI (2018), which indicate that, in Peru, more than half the population (56.5 per cent) is of the opinion that democracy in the country functions badly or very badly, compared to 36.6 per cent who say it functions well. The perception of the malfunctioning of democracy is concentrated in urban areas (60.2%), and is somewhat lower in rural areas (41.1%). By gender, both men and women (58.4% and 55.1%, respectively) perceive that democracy functions poorly. Finally, considering the level of education, the results indicate that the higher the level of education, the higher the qualification of malfunctioning of democracy (primary education, 44.0% and higher level, 65.6%).

There are various proposals for reversing this situation. Poisson (2018), for example, points out that the response is linked to the democratization of societies. To this end, it is important to establish rules that everyone must respect. Likewise, for the author, political will is a determining factor in the fight against corruption and in ensuring that resources are not concentrated on certain groups within society. Not to accept corruption is to be transparent when making decisions. If no one knows exactly how resources are allocated to schools, for example, who can really verify whether those resources have reached their destination?

C. The perception of democracy in the Peruvian school

This section takes as its input three reports that are fundamental to understanding the perception of democracy. The first, the United Nations Development Programme ([UNDP], 2008) Human Development Report, entitled "Young People in Peru: Imagined Democracy"; the study carried out by IEP and the Gustavo Mohme Llona Foundation, entitled "Citizenship from the School: Living in Peru"; and the research entitled "International Study on Civics and Citizenship-ICCS 2016", carried out by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA). ICCS 2016 is the fourth standardized evaluation in citizenship by the IEA and is the continuation of ICCS 2009. Peru participated for the first time in this evaluation.

In the UNDP study (2008), young people do believe that Peru can change, although they are aware that this change must be gradual. Likewise, there is disillusionment with democracy, the realization of which requires change by building foundations for hope. This reality leads to the banishment of passivity in the face of problems and the denial of it, which leads to the generation of sustained changes in society. Eleven years later, the situation remains exactly the same, with no evidence of further progress or major changes to bring these ideals closer to young people.

As for the IEP research (2016), it indicates that interest in politics is concentrated among 4th grade students and teachers. The data show that 60% of students and 50% of teachers surveyed say they are interested in the policy. However, in terms of parents, the percentages vary (about 60% say they are little or not at all interested in the policy and the proportion of respondents who have no interest in it is almost 30%). One proof that interest in politics is necessary is that 70% of 4th year high school students, parents and teachers are very much in agreement or agree with the closing of the Congress in case acts of corruption of several congressmen are proved. It should be noted that, to date, Congress has already been closed and 84% of Peruvians supported this decision, according to the study conducted from October 2 to 4, 2019 by the IEP, in seven departments of the country.

As for the results of the International Civic and Citizenship Education Study (ICCS) carried out in 2016 (quoted in MINEDU 2016), they indicate a knowledge by students of what democracy is (34.8%), considering it as a political system. If this result is an advance, there is still a group of students who are unable to justify and evaluate political positions or laws based on democratic principles and the search for the common good (8%). This study also indicated that the higher the socioeconomic level, the higher the percentages of students in the highest performance levels of the Civics and Citizenship test. It is worth noting that, in this test, Peru is below the world average, having achieved only 438 points.

The UNDP report (2008) highlights that the emphasis of the definitions of democracy given by young people in the focus groups carried out is centered around "freedoms" and "equal rights". The results highlight the importance of freedom of opinion, expression, thought and choice. Furthermore, the interviewees relate the notion of democracy to freedom. In this sense, democracy is conceived as something unattainable since it depends on a stable political system, which is not easy to achieve.
Other results provided by the ICCS (cited in MINEDU, 2016) conclude that 51.5% of students surveyed stated that they voted in the last year to elect their class delegate or for the school municipality, a percentage that is of concern given that there is still a need to develop activities that promote participation in political activities such as the organization of assemblies and participation in school decision-making, among others. Students recognize that equality between men and women is necessary in order to participate in government. The remaining 48.5% do not have confidence in bodies such as Congress or the judicial branch.

Information and education are the tools that allow young people to acquire rights, personal and social maturity, and to develop the capacity to understand and transform their social, economic and political environment. In this sense, information as education should be considered as basic instruments for change. However:

The awareness of the difficulties to ascend socially is high: "the socioeconomic level from which one leaves to reach a university is fatal, because if one had a higher economic level, a higher income, one would study in a private university" (UNDP, 2008, p.117).

Finally, the young participants in the UNDP study consider social protest as an activity whose purpose is to achieve, in a legitimate way, the demands and requirements of the people. However, there are also those who think that although protest is a valid method, it does not have much chance of achieving clear objectives. There is no sign of pessimism among young people when they are asked about the future of the country. They are hopeful that real and substantial change can be encouraged and promoted, especially since they are the ones who assume to be real agents of change.

The real change is the personal will, the decision to get more involved in the decisions, without necessarily being linked to the political work. It is above all a feeling, a desire and even a will, but it does not come to be outlined as a proposal (UNDP, 2008, p.125).

In view of the above, it is necessary that classrooms promote values such as democratic coexistence and encourage student participation in activities that reinforce active citizenship. MINEDU must guarantee that the content of the educational curriculum is relevant to the Peruvian reality by promoting civic and citizenship education for students. To this should be added the efforts that the Government should invest to strengthen the programme called Strategy for the Promotion of Student Participation, which aims to promote the participation of students and citizens in political life. (MINEDU, 2016)

**CONCLUSIONS**

The analysis of the results of the research reviewed leads to the conclusion that Peru still has a weak democracy, despite going through the longest democratic phase in its history. Peruvian society still has political leaders made of clay, many of them involved in corruption scandals and supported by weak political parties that lack popular support. Although progress has been made, Peruvian society still perceives very large gaps and inequalities, bureaucratic public institutions, privileged social classes and corruption at all levels, both in the public and private sectors.

There are different innovative strategies used by the Ministry of Education of Peru to promote democratic coexistence among students in Regular Basic Education. However, they are only applied in specific subjects and year by year they are being integrated in a promising way into the programming of the activities of the country's state institutions. It is clear that only an education that is free of stereotypes and that generates equality based on the recognition of universal rights and as part of comprehensive training will break the paradigm by generating democratic co-existence based on citizens who respect the rights of others, care for the environment, and elect appropriate authorities.

In this way, democracy will be able to enrich Peruvian society as the fruit of a truly democratic educational community where diversity, respect, dialogue, research, plurality, a deep reflection on the rights and duties of people and experiences of student empowerment, such as School Municipalities or Student Councils, will be the mainstays of participatory policies in each Peruvian state and private educational institution.

However, ethnic-racial discrimination is the most serious problem affecting Peruvian society, which leads to national disintegration, exacerbating poverty and increasing social exclusion, blocking democratic and fair development based on equality. It is very worrying that in the 21st century, the study carried out by the Institute
Finally, corruption as an unhealthy and endemic "Marca Peru" is rooted in the powers and agencies of the State and in private entities as well. Four former presidents facing judicial proceedings for corruption and one who died as a result of suicide show why Peru is among the 50 most corrupt countries in the world. And this can only be changed with solid institutions, an open society in which the rule of law, the free flow of information, accountability and transparency prevail. With efficient legal systems, egalitarian and not merely formal democracy, with a political class that achieves consensus and social cohesion, with effective freedom of expression and a free press and, above all, with a quality public and private education system that meets international standards and is permanently evaluated with accreditation systems.

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