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Political participation of young people

Participación política de los jóvenes

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Abstract

The political participation of young people is a crucial issue for strengthening democracy and promoting a more inclusive and just society. This qualitative study, using a phenomenological approach, analyzes the perceptions of twenty-five young activists in the Puno region regarding their involvement in local and regional politics. The results show that young people consider their participation in social organizations and leadership positions fundamental, but they face significant obstacles such as economic inequality, corruption, and psychological violence, which limit their access to political office and their influence on public decisions. They also assert that the influence of economic power in politics promotes corrupt practices, excludes young people with fewer resources, and perpetuates inequalities along with internal migration. However, the participants also highlight factors that favor their participation, such as the opening of institutional spaces, the promotion of gender equality, and political responsibility, understood as both a burden and an opportunity to exercise leadership. Civic education, the creation of political training programs, and regulatory frameworks are key proposals for strengthening their role in decision-making. In conclusion, empowering young people, recognizing their potential, and ensuring equitable conditions are essential steps to strengthen youth participation and build a democratic and sustainable society in Puno.

Keywords: political participation, youth, corruption, equality.

Resumen

La participación política de los jóvenes es un tema de gran relevancia para fortalecer la democracia y promover una sociedad más inclusiva y justa. Este estudio cualitativo, mediante un enfoque fenomenológico, analiza las percepciones de veinticinco jóvenes activistas en la región de Puno acerca de su involucramiento en la política local y regional. Los resultados evidencian que los jóvenes consideran fundamental su participación en organizaciones sociales y liderazgos, pero enfrentan obstáculos significativos como la desigualdad económica, la

corrupción y la violencia psicológica, que limitan su acceso a cargos políticos y su influencia en las decisiones públicas. Asimismo, afirman que la influencia del poder económico en la política promueve prácticas corruptas, excluye a los jóvenes con menos recursos y perpetúa desigualdades junto con migraciones internas. Sin embargo, los participantes también destacan factores que favorecen su participación, como la apertura de espacios institucionales, la promoción de la igualdad de género y la responsabilidad política, entendida como una carga y oportunidad para ejercer liderazgo. La educación cívica, la creación de programas de formación política y la regulación normativa son propuestas clave para potenciar su rol en la toma de decisiones. En conclusión, empoderar a los jóvenes, reconocer su potencial y garantizar condiciones equitativas son pasos imprescindibles para fortalecer la participación juvenil y construir una sociedad democrática y sustentable en Puno.

Palabras clave: participación política, jóvenes, corrupción, igualdad.

Introduction

This study aims to analyze the political participation of young people in the Puno region, specifically those who have been actively engaged in the political arena, whether as elected or unelected candidates for positions such as congressional representatives, governors, mayors, councilors, and regional assembly members.

At the international level, youth political participation is predominantly characterized by apathy and disinterest. Despite representing a significant proportion of the population in many countries, young people's involvement in political processes and elections remains generally low. This can be attributed to a range of complex factors, including a lack of trust in political institutions perceived as distant, a frustrating sense that their opinions and concerns are disregarded by established political leaders, and an insufficient awareness of the critical importance of their participation in decisions that will inevitably affect their futures and those of their communities (Riveros, 2016).

Moreover, young people face deep structural barriers that further hinder their political engagement, such as unequal access to relevant and up-to-date information, a lack of financial resources necessary to participate in electoral campaigns or organized political activities, and persistent underrepresentation in key decision-making spaces. These conditions collectively foster a profound sense of alienation and emotional disconnection from the political system, which in turn drastically reduces young people's intrinsic motivation to become actively involved in politics (López et al., 2016).

In recent years, youth political participation has continued along this troubling trajectory. Despite the existence of various digital platforms, institutional spaces, and concrete opportunities for young people to engage in decision-making and strengthen democratic processes, apathy and disinterest among this population remain palpable across diverse contexts. This problem is clearly reflected in low voter turnout during elections, the scant representation of young people in relevant political positions, and a generalized lack of sustained civic commitment to public affairs that directly affect them (Soto et al., 2022). Recurring barriers have also been identified, including the lack of accessible and comprehensible information, entrenched distrust of traditional political institutions, the persistent perception that young people's views are not taken seriously, and other structural and cultural factors that perpetuate this vicious cycle.

This marked decline in youth political participation poses a formidable challenge to genuine democratic development and the patient construction of more just and inclusive societies over the long term. It therefore makes it absolutely necessary to analyze in depth the underlying causes of this multifaceted phenomenon and to design effective, context-sensitive, and measurable strategies to foster young people's active involvement in regional political life (Martínez et al., 2021).

The problem of youth political participation at the regional level has become a growing concern in Punan society. Although young people represent a significant and dynamic portion of the regional population, their tangible presence in local political processes remains minimal and barely visible. The lack of interest and genuine commitment on the part of young people in local decision-making translates directly into a regrettable absence of diverse ideas, innovative perspectives, and lived experiences in political debate and decision-making spaces (Rojas, 2017). This, in turn, inevitably leads to low effective representation of young people's specific needs, urgent demands, and legitimate aspirations in public policies and concrete actions implemented at the regional level (Centro de Desarrollo de la OCDE, 2017).

Furthermore, political apathy and the lack of active youth participation in local political life can lead to a progressive distancing from democratic principles and a gradual but steady loss of confidence in existing political institutions. This delicate situation creates a deep generational gap between youth and the traditional political

system, seriously hindering the construction of a more inclusive, participatory, and socially cohesive society (Araya et al., 2021).

Given this complex scenario, it is necessary to precisely identify the specific barriers and concrete obstacles that impede young people's full participation in local political life, while simultaneously promoting authentic spaces for horizontal dialogue and strategic collaboration that encourage their genuine involvement in decision-making. It is therefore essential to drive innovative and sustainable initiatives that stimulate authentic interest and committed participation among youth in regional political affairs, with the ultimate goal of ensuring truly equitable representation, greater diversity of representative voices, and collective participation in community-building processes that benefit the entire region (Consiglieri, 2019; Martínez & Alamilla, 2015).

Methodology

This study employed the in-depth interview technique, guided by a semi-structured instrument that allowed for flexible and context-sensitive exploration of participants' experiences. This tool was applied to twenty-five key informants, selected for their trajectory in the regional political arena, through virtual platforms such as Google Meet, Zoom, and telephone calls, supplemented by in-person interviews that enriched direct human contact.

The qualitative approach, for its part, facilitated the identification of common elements and emerging patterns in the shared experiences of participants, following a phenomenological research design that seeks to capture the subjective essence of their experiences. In this way, revealing inductions were obtained regarding how young people perceive and experience their political participation in the specific context of Puno.

Moreover, the density of qualitative data presented —abundant, diverse, and saturated with deep meanings— solidly supports the validity and robustness of the study. Having sufficient and richly nuanced information is an indispensable condition for understanding in depth the lived experiences, authentic perceptions, and meanings that young people attribute to their political involvement, as detailed in Table 1.

Table 1

Qualitative data density of the study

Item	Time	Pages	Words
1	0.34:54	9	3568
2	0:59:54	9	3567
3	0:59:49	9	3566
4	0:59:48	9	3566
5	0:59:46	9	3523
6	0:59:45	9	3365
7	0:59:31	9	3354
8	0:57:46	9	3354
9	0:57:45	9	3343
10	0:57:43	9	3343
11	0:57:42	9	3223
12	0:57:39	9	3130
13	0:56:38	9	3034
14	0:56:31	9	3030
15	0:55:47	9	3023
16	0:55:42	9	2999
17	0:54:58	9	2988
18	0:54:53	9	2985
19	0:53:44	9	2985
20	0:53:41	9	2923

21	0:50:54	9	2788
22	0:50:49	9	2231
23	0:50:32	8	2228
24	0:50:31	8	2128
25	0:46:53	7	2123

Note. Authors' own elaboration

Table 2
Phenomenological analysis category matrix

Central Category	Subcategory I	Subcategory II	Emerging Concepts
Youth Political Participation	Sociopolitical dimension	Key actors in social organizations	Youth empowerment; youth leadership; young people as active agents; breaking the passive role
		Politics based on economic power	Inequality of conditions; political corruption; vote buying; youth exclusion
	Factors favoring participation	Youth in politics	Opening of spaces; youth leadership; active participation; youth representation
		Gender equality	Political parity; women's inclusion; ethics and transparency; equity
	Factors hindering participation	Psychological violence	Political exclusion; youth delegitimization; emotional impact; demotivation
		Political responsibility	Political maturity; planning; social empathy; responsible leadership

Note. Authors' own elaboration

Results

Sociopolitical dimension: key actors in social organizations

It is essential to recognize young people as direct actors and protagonists in society, particularly within the grassroots social organizations that so strongly characterize Puno's community fabric. However, they have traditionally been used as puppets or foot soldiers in mobilizations, relegated to passive and subordinate roles rather than positioned as active agents in collective decision-making.

For this reason, it is urgent that young people occupy leadership positions in these organizations, which would allow them to gain practical experience and chart a solid path toward more committed participation in formal political arenas. This trajectory would not only transform them into direct actors with real impact on society but would also meticulously prepare them to assume leadership positions in the future, demonstrating their capacity in real-world contexts such as peasant patrols or civil defense committees.

Participants reflected a deep concern about the scarcity of opportunities that prevents young people from performing meaningful roles, and they firmly questioned the entrenched taboo that "young people are not prepared" to lead. In this regard, they raised the imperative need to genuinely empower them, providing the confidence and space to direct the destinies of social organizations. This initial step would catalyze more active, meaningful, and transformative participation in the country's political and social life, breaking cycles of exclusion and weaving a truly renewed democracy from the grassroots upward.

Politics based on economic power

The current political system openly favors those with abundant economic resources, drastically limiting equal opportunities and systematically marginalizing youth participation in the Puno region. Furthermore, this dynamic reveals how corruption has become institutionalized through entrenched practices such as the exchange of clientelist favors —favors for votes in remote communities— and the covert recovery of state investments through rigged public contracts. As one participant stated:

> *Access to politics is dominated by those who have economic resources, which generates inequality of opportunities, exclusion of young people, and normalizes corruption through handouts and recovery of State investments. It is necessary to reform politics and educate the population to promote transparency and fair participation (Vilca*).

This denunciation reflects not only a structural critique but also an urgent call to dismantle these barriers that perpetuate generational exclusion, opening real paths for young people from Puno to enter politics on their own merits rather than through others' pocketbooks.

Factors favoring political participation: youth in politics and leadership

An effective strategy for authentically engaging young people in politics and leadership lies in deliberately opening more institutional spaces for their active participation. In the province and region of Puno, there is a concerning lack of youth presence in these key areas, which seriously limits the transformative potential of the entire region and perpetuates stagnant visions in decision-making. Therefore, it is urgent to form small, compact, and well-prepared groups of young leaders who can scale their impact to the regional level and generate tangible and measurable results, as has been seen in successful experiences of youth collectives in Juliaca or in the peasant patrols of the Altiplano. Indeed, the committed participation of young people in politics and leadership is crucial for the integral development of any community or region, injecting renewed vitality into processes that often become bureaucratic.

By opening genuine spaces for their involvement, not only are fresh new ideas, innovative perspectives, and creative solutions to persistent local problems obtained —such as access to water in high-Andean communities or post-pandemic economic reactivation— but this generation is also empowered to contribute decisively to the sustained growth and collective prosperity of their community.

However, the absence of youth participation in politics and leadership inevitably generates limited and biased representation of young people's specific needs, vital interests, and legitimate aspirations in decision-making processes. Therefore, it is imperative to actively foster their strategic inclusion in these spaces to guarantee truly equitable representation that incorporates the voices of all social sectors, weaving a more vibrant, representative, and future-oriented regional democracy.

Gender equality in politics

Gender equity is fundamental in politics, especially considering that in the past, men were perceived as the only ones capable of holding leadership positions, perpetuating a macho vision that systematically marginalized women's capabilities. However, women not only demonstrate equivalent competence but frequently show greater adherence to solid ethical principles and impeccable values, in contrast to some men involved in corruption scandals that have tainted regional politics.

In this sense, the strategic inclusion of women in politics can catalyze greater moral integrity and genuine transparency in decision-making processes, as evidenced in local administrations where female leaders from Puno have prioritized community water management and the defense of indigenous rights without resorting to clientelist practices.

Furthermore, the concrete implementation of gender parity measures in elections is highlighted, such as the regulatory requirement that half of candidates be men and the other half women. This policy seeks to guarantee truly equitable representation of both sexes in political power spaces, fully recognizing that both men and women possess the unique capacity to bring complementary perspectives, innovative solutions, and transformative leadership to sustainable development and responsible governance of our society. As one participant noted:

> *Years ago, it was believed that only men could govern, which is why no space was given to women. But it has already been seen that sometimes they are more capable than men themselves and have more principles and values, unlike some who commit acts of corruption when they hold power. I think it is a good*

option and that this change should continue in provincial and regional elections; it has also been seen in congressional elections, where half of the candidates must be men and the other half women (Julián).

This testimony not only validates parity quotas as an effective tool but also inspires a profound cultural shift toward diverse leadership that strengthens Punan democracy from its roots.

Factors hindering political participation: psychological violence

Psychological violence represents an invisible but devastating barrier suffered by young people in the political sphere, particularly when they are systematically excluded or not considered legitimate political actors. This dehumanizing treatment —repeatedly telling them "a young person cannot be a leader" or accusing them of betrayal for questioning established structures— deeply affects their emotional world, leading them to prematurely give up on their political aspirations and abandon collective dreams.

For this reason, it is crucial to genuinely recognize and value youth participation in politics, providing them with real opportunities to develop as capable leaders and build confidence in contexts such as neighborhood assemblies or local development committees. Persistent exclusion or unfavorable treatment of young people generates a corrosive impact on their self-esteem and personal security, drastically limiting their capacity to make autonomous decisions and participate actively and sustainably in regional political life.

It is necessary to remember that young people constitute a fundamental and renewing part of society, and that their genuine involvement in politics is essential for building a truly inclusive, participatory, and community-rooted democratic system. Therefore, it is urgent to create protected spaces and structured opportunities where young people can freely express their fresh ideas, valuable opinions, and innovative proposals, finally being recognized as valid, legitimate, and indispensable political actors for Puno's future. As one participant expressed:

Yes, psychological violence exists... the fact of saying that a young person cannot be a political actor, accusing them of betrayal within an organization, or simply not considering them as a valid young political cadre. In short, it is something very unfavorable for a young person's political participation, because emotionally they give up, become discouraged, and no longer make the decision to become a political actor (Miguel).

This testimony lays bare the emotional wound that perpetuates generational exclusion, crying out for change that heals and empowers.

Political responsibility: family burden as a strength

The experience of having family responsibilities represents an invaluable strength for entering regional politics, transforming what some perceive as an obstacle into a mature responsibility that becomes a competitive advantage. Being a parent does not limit but rather enriches leadership capacity by forging essential skills for governing with long-term vision.

Specifically, parenthood has developed strategic planning skills and effective crisis resolution in family contexts —such as coordinating household budgets during times of drought or mediating conflicts between siblings— competencies that are indispensable for executing solid and far-sighted regional governance. Furthermore, this daily experience generates deep empathy that allows for authentic understanding of the needs of workers, single mothers from Aymara communities, and vulnerable members of society, in marked contrast to authorities without parental experience who often treat their subordinates with disdain and emotional detachment.

For this reason, family burden emerges as a decisive advantage in regional politics, endowing the leader with meticulous planning, genuine empathy, and creative problem-solving, constitutive elements of transformative leadership. Unconditional love for the family naturally extends to love for the community, positioning the authority as a true "father of the people" who makes collective decisions with the same protective dedication they devote to their children. As one participant expressed:

We have an open door to give everything for our land, and also the inspiration: looking at them, we say we have to do things well to generate opportunities for them too. So I think it is not an obstacle but a great responsibility, because we have to plan everything: with planning things go well, in all areas. I would even say it is a strength for a young person who wants to enter politics, because governing is not just directing local government; when you are already an authority, you face more political and social issues. So if one has the experience of having been a father or mother, one can put oneself in the shoes of a worker, one

can put oneself in the shoes of a brother who provides service in the entity, and we would know how to resolve the situation. Many cases have been seen of authorities who did not have family burdens, did not have children, did not know what it was like to be a mother, and treated their workers disparagingly, they did not understand them. We consider that this is not the case. Because ultimately, when one is an authority, one is a father of the people, and a father of the people has to put themselves in that position and provide solutions to any situation that arises in the entity. So I see it more as a strength, because as they say: he who loves his family can love everyone, and if one does not have that, how can one speak of others? (Rodolfo).

This testimony illuminates how highland parenthood is transmuted into community leadership, weaving the moral fiber of a more humane politics.

Discussion

Key actors in social organizations

It is essential to recognize young people as direct actors and protagonists in society, far from reducing them to a vulnerable or merely passive population in need of constant protection. This is complemented by key findings from Youth and Their Political Attitudes: A Study of the 2018 Pre-Electoral Scenario, which demonstrate that the active participation of young people in grassroots social organizations —such as peasant patrols or irrigation committees in Puno— is fundamental for strengthening democracy from its roots and ensuring that their specific interests are authentically represented in collective decision-making processes (Martínez et al., 2021).

On the other hand, Graterol (2014) argues with precision that the persistent lack of opportunities for young people to occupy leadership positions in these organizations responds to entrenched prejudices and cultural stereotypes about their supposed immaturity in leadership and political commitment. However, these authors point out that genuinely empowering youth —giving them real responsibilities in community management— constitutes a strategic and indispensable step for catalyzing their sustained participation in broader political and social life.

Finally, Araya et al. (2021) clearly articulate the imperative need to break the cultural taboo that "young people are not prepared" to assume leadership roles, instead promoting practical training programs and context-sensitive capacity-building that enable them to exercise concrete and measurable impact on regional decision-making. Likewise, it is vitally important to create horizontal spaces for dialogue and genuine participation where young people can freely express their innovative ideas, fresh proposals, and transformative visions, thus contributing decisively to the integral and equitable development of society as a whole.

Politics based on economic power

Politics dominated by economic power has created a fertile environment for endemic corruption in the Puno region, where access to political power depends mainly on candidates' personal wealth rather than their proposals or merits. This generates unequal competition that systematically marginalizes young people from Puno without resources, fostering corrupt practices such as electoral clientelism in Aymara communities and the awarding of public works to affiliated companies.

This is complemented by the findings presented in the study titled Political Participation of Youth in Paraguay: An Exploratory Study of Participation in the 21st Century, which demonstrates that this structural corruption and resulting inequality negatively impact sustainable economic development, prioritizing short-term projects —such as ephemeral roads for campaigns— over strategic investments in bilingual education or hydroelectric infrastructure that would foster genuine long-term growth (Riveros, 2016).

On the other hand, Jorquera (2021) emphatically argues for the critical importance of generating collective awareness among the population about the imperative need to invest in transparent politicians, authentically committed to the common good and free from spurious economic interests.

Subsequently, Cano-Correa et al. (2017) advocate decisively for implementing itinerant political schools and community awareness talks to educate especially young people about the relevance of actively participating in politics and selecting upright representatives who work tirelessly for the real benefit of the community, breaking the cycle of economic elites.

Finally, Araya et al. (2021) maintain that the synergy between rigorous research on political corruption and massive citizen education campaigns on the importance of supporting transparent and committed politicians is key to structurally combating corruption and inequality in Latin America. Both approaches converge in highlighting the

urgency of profoundly reforming the regional political system while fostering vigilant and empowered citizen participation, thus promoting truly sustainable, equitable, and human-centered economic development in Puno.

Youth in politics

The strategic creation of political training programs and personalized mentorships is essential for genuinely empowering young people and catalyzing their active participation in Puno's regional political life. These initiatives not only provide technical training but also build confidence and networks in contexts such as leadership schools in Juliaca or political oratory workshops in Quechua communities.

This is directly complemented by the findings presented in the article *School and Citizenship: Youth Political Participation in the Face of the "Crisis" of Educational Institutions*, where Ferolla (2019) demonstrates that involving young people in politics and leadership opens new concrete opportunities for community development and actively promotes essential democratic values such as peaceful alternation of power and accountability.

On the other hand, Tintaya and Cueto (2021) emphasize the critical importance of providing comprehensive support and specific resources to young people aspiring to become involved in local and regional decision-making, from training scholarships to access to digital advocacy platforms.

In parallel, Rojas (2017) underscores that the equitable representation of all social sectors in decision-making processes constitutes the fundamental pillar for guaranteeing a truly just, democratic, and cohesive society, where youth voices are not accessory but constitutive of power.

Finally, Martínez and Alamilla (2015) propose with strategic vision the immediate implementation of inclusive public policies that systematically foster youth participation in politics and leadership, creating progressive quotas in municipal councils and generational succession programs in regional governments.

Gender equality

The strategic inclusion of women in political leadership positions generates greater integrity and transparency in decision-making, thanks to their consistent focus on solid ethical principles and community values, as evidenced in local administrations where female leaders from Puno have prioritized transparency in the management of funds for bilingual education (Mendy, 2016).

This is directly complemented by the findings presented in the work titled *Political Participation of Youth in Paraguay: An Exploratory Study of Participation in the 21st Century*, which document how women have been historically underrepresented in Latin American politics despite their demonstrated competence and proven capacity to lead profound social transformations (Riveros, 2016).

On the other hand, Albornoz (2016) precisely points out that the decisive implementation of gender parity measures in electoral processes is fundamental for guaranteeing truly equitable representation of both sexes in key political decision-making spaces, breaking persistent structural barriers.

In this regard, Hernández (2019) adds that it is urgent to actively foster female participation in politics through cultural campaigns and promote an inclusive political culture that authentically values and respects gender diversity as a strategic asset for governance. Hence the imperative need to continue working tirelessly to achieve genuine gender equality in politics, fully recognizing the complementary potential contribution of both men and women to sustainable development and responsible governance of our regional societies.

Psychological violence

It is crucial to genuinely recognize and value youth participation in politics to prevent the psychological violence generated by systematic exclusion, particularly in contexts where young people from Puno are disparaged in political assemblies or ignored in community consultation processes.

This is directly complemented by the findings presented in the thesis titled *Discourse on Youth Participation from the Perspective of Members of Peruvian Youth Organizations. Cases: IVIA Perú, Nutriedúcate Perú, and Red Joven Sur*, where Consiglieri (2019) documents how persistent exclusion or unfavorable treatment of young people produces devastating consequences for their self-esteem and personal confidence, drastically limiting their capacity to become actively and sustainably involved in regional political life.

This evidence points to the imperative need to create protected spaces and structured opportunities where young people can freely express their innovative ideas, valuable opinions, and transformative proposals in the political sphere, since young people constitute a fundamental and renewing part of society, and their committed participation is absolutely crucial for building a truly inclusive, participatory, and representative democratic system that incorporates all voices from Puno's territory.

Political responsibility

Political leaders are called to act with authentic justice and responsibility, making decisions that truly benefit society as a whole, prioritizing the common good over particular interests in complex contexts such as water resource management in Lake Titicaca or attention to marginalized Aymara communities.

This is directly complemented by the findings presented in the work titled *Political Participation of Young People Belonging to Organizations that Contribute to Peacebuilding*, whose rigorous research on political representation highlights the critical importance of incorporating the lived experiences and diverse perspectives of citizens at all levels of political decision-making, avoiding elitist disconnection (López et al., 2016).

On the other hand, Albornoz (2016) argues with precision that political leaders must cultivate a genuine capacity to empathize with the daily needs and real concerns of their constituents. In this sense, family burden emerges as a decisive strategic advantage, as it forges deep skills of empathy and human understanding forged in daily parenting —mediating family conflicts, planning household budgets in times of scarcity— that are naturally transferred to public leadership.

Finally, Ciordia (2023) addresses in depth the transformative importance of empathy in politics, demonstrating how a perspective centered on authentic human relationships fosters greater community solidarity and strategic cooperation in political decision-making processes, weaving lasting bonds of trust.

Conclusions

Youth political participation in Puno is shaped by a complex constellation of sociopolitical factors that operate both as transformative catalysts and as structural barriers to young people's active involvement in regional political and social life.

Among the favorable factors, the urgency of opening genuine institutional spaces and creating concrete opportunities for young people to occupy leadership positions in grassroots social organizations —peasant patrols, irrigation committees, youth collectives— stands out prominently, which would catalyze their authentic empowerment, strategic preparation, and emerging leadership, contributing decisively to more meaningful, effective, and renewing participation in local democracy.

Likewise, the strategic implementation of training spaces such as itinerant political schools, community leadership workshops, and massive civic awareness campaigns would enhance young people's intrinsic interest and sustained commitment. This is complemented by the active promotion of gender equality, fully recognizing women's proven capacity to lead with integrity in political positions and guaranteeing truly equitable representation that diversifies voices and solutions.

Conversely, psychological violence —constant disparagement, systematic exclusion, and chronic devaluation of young people in the political sphere— generates deep demotivation, erodes their self-esteem, and undermines the confidence essential for active participation, perpetuating cycles of generational withdrawal. Furthermore, the hegemony of economic power in politics, characterized by entrenched corrupt practices, flagrant inequalities in access to resources, and the overrepresentation of financial elites, drastically limits youth participation. Young people from Puno, who frequently lack the economic means to compete on equal footing, face a system where corruption, institutional opacity, and disproportionate investment in electoral campaigns reinforce inherited privileges, excluding not only youth but all social actors with fewer resources.

Finally, the transformative perception of family burden as a foundational strength that forges critical skills of responsible leadership, strategic planning, and community empathy —essential for exercising public office with a "father of the people" vision— emerges with force. For this reason, the decisive opening of inclusive spaces, the genuine integration of young people into politics, and the immediate implementation of gender parity measures constitute key and inescapable strategies for enhancing their active participation, guaranteeing more just, diverse, and representative representation, and building a truly renewed and sustainable Punan democracy.

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