

## Forms of Abuse of Women Presidents and Safety Measures



### Social Science

**KEYWORDS :** Women president, Abuses, Village Panchayat, Forms of abuses, Stakeholder analysis, Women, Local Governance.

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### ABSTRACT

*Indian Constitution act has provided legitimate reservation of not less than 33 percent of total seats in local government institutions (It need to be noted that reservation provided is also not in the ground of gender equality, if so, women should get 50 percent seats to the total available seats), It is evident that political abuse of women presidents. This study was conducted in Madurai district with the objectives of studying background; find out the forms of abuse of women presidents from various stakeholders and to suggest strategies for safety measures to protect women presidents. This study found that the women presidents are faced physical, emotional, economical, and spiritual abuse from the ward members, panchayat secretaries, government officers, people and political parties. So it is essential to have policy change to preserve the women presidents from abuse of all stakeholders.*

### Introduction

Women constitute almost half the population of the world. But in many places and sectors they are considered as underclass or underpowered. The learned communities are appreciated that women's rights are entitlements and freedoms claimed for women and girls of all ages in many societies as part of human rights framework at large. In this context the 73<sup>rd</sup> & 74<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the Indian Constitution Act has ensured not less than 33 percent of seats for women in all local government institutions. With this initiative now at national level more than 1.3 million women leaders are able to occupy in leadership positions in local government institutions. Even being in such a power the women presidents are also facing all kinds of abuse.

### Women & Panchayat Raj in Tamilnadu:

In Indian social context, women are abused of political power for so many centuries. Most of the women Panchayat leaders are not able to ensure their responsibilities and use their rights in their working environment. As far as Tamil Nadu concern just above 40000 seats in Panchayat raj institutions are headed by women members. This accounts to 33.5 percent of total available seats. In Madurai district there are 431 village panchayats. Among this panchayats 141 is reserved for women presidents but currently there are 167 women village panchayat presidents.

### Statement of the problem

Women are abusing in all stages since childhood so the women are not willing and not allowed to participate in any public life. The 73<sup>rd</sup> and 74<sup>th</sup> amendment provides opportunity for women to participate in local politics. The women presidents are not able to perform their role due to abuse of various stakeholders so it is essential to make some policy changes to provide safety for women presidents.

### Objectives

- To find out the forms of abuse of women presidents from various stakeholders.
- To elicit the association between personal characteristics and abused by stakeholders and
- To suggest strategies for safety measures of women presidents.

### Materials and methods

To study these three objectives the interview method and observation methods were used. Mainly this paper is focused on the qualitative data. To complete this study the primary data has been collected from the Tamilnadu election commission website, and primary data has been collected from the women presidents. The observation method is used to collect the qualitative data about the physical and emotional abuse.

### Forms of abuse of women president from stakeholders

The women are seen as excluded groups in India. The importance was given to the women at family level but village level and society level the responsibilities were not given to the women presidents. The 73<sup>rd</sup> amendment provides not less than 33 percent reservation for women. It is a historically important event for women. After 20 years of this still the women presidents are not fully utilized their rights because of various forms of abuse by various stakeholders. The women presidents are highly abused than men president.

### Abused by Ward members

Generally people think that women are powerless so that even after become president the people are abusing them. The panchayat council includes all ward members of panchayat they have to work with president. But the ward members are not cooperating with president and abusing them. The researcher found that 49 percent of the women presidents are abused by ward members. About 18 percent of the women presidents were faced one kind abuse, 13 percent of them faced two kinds of abuse, 11 percent of them faced three kinds of abuse and seven percent of them faced four kinds of abuse. The ward members are abusing are in the forms of not participating in the meeting, not cooperating to panchayat activities, filing unnecessary petition, asking bribe, quarrelling, scolding, spreading rumour and not putting signature.

### Abused by Panchayat Secretary

The panchayat secretaries were doing physical, emotional, sexual, and economical abusing of women presidents. About 42 percent of the women presidents were abused by the panchayat secretary. Nearly one fifth (19 percent) of them were faced one kind of abuse, about 11 percent of the respondents faced the two kinds of abuse and eight percent of them faced three kinds of abuse. Only four percent of them faced four kinds abuse by secretaries. The forms of abuses are not cooperating to president, not showing the records, not coming to office, not providing information, receiving bribe, misusing the panchayat money, misusing the cheque and not showing accounts.

**Table -1: Women presidents abused by Panchayat secretary**

No of Abuse by Secretary	1	2	3	4	No
Percent of presidents abused	19 %	11 %	8 %	4 %	58 %

### Psychological abuse by people

The people are not neutralised and most of them were selfish when the president took right decision some people may affect those who are affecting they are abusing the women president. The people are abusing the women president in the form of filing unnecessary petition, police complaint, quarrelling, spreading rumour and damaging the asset. In the above abuse all women

president were facing any one kind of abuse. About 52percent of the women presidents were abused by the people. One fourth (27 percent) of the respondents faced one kind of abuse. About 18 percent of them faced two kinds of abuse, and Seven percent of them faced three kinds of abuse. Due to the high abuse of people most of the women presidents were not willing to perform their duty.

**Government officers**

The government officers are not cooperating the women president and they are mostly involving in emotional or psychological abuse. More than one fourth (28 percent) of the women presidents were abused by government officers. Based on researcher observation 90 percent of the respondents were abused but they are not shared. About 16percent of the respondents are faced one kind of abuse and nine percent of them faced two kinds of abuse. Only three percent of them faced three kinds of abuse. The government officials are abusing the women presidents in various forms such as not cooperating, delay of approval of project, asking bribe, gender discrimination, not respecting, and husband centred administration.

**Abused by local political leaders**

The presidents are belongs to various political parties. The ruling party leaders were abusing the women president and not allowed to perform. The local political leaders were abusing in the form of asking bribe, unnecessary petitioning, and threatening. One third(34percent) of the women presidents were abused by the political parties. About 13percentof them faced one kind of abuse followed by 15percent of them faced two kinds of abuse and six percent of them faced three kinds of abuse.

**Association of selected independent variables with the abused by stakeholders**

**Age**

The data shows that the calculated value of chi square value (3.553) is lesser than the tabulated value leading a null hypothesis. "There is no association between age and abused by stakeholders is accepted". It means there is no significance association between abused by stakeholders and age.

**Education**

The data revealed that the calculated value of chi square value (35.662) is higher than the tabulated value leading a null hypothesis. "There is no association between education and abused by stakeholders is rejected". It means there is association between abused by stakeholders and education.

**Table -2: Association of selected independent variables with abuses**

Association of selected independent variables with abuses by stakeholders		
S.No	Independent variables	Chi-square (X2)
1	Age	3.553
2	Education	35.662**
3	Caste	19.440**
4	Annual income of Family	14.032
5	Occupation of husband	13.288
6	Political party	14.786
7	Spoken skill	11.722

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level of probability  
 \* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level of probability

**Caste and constraints**

The data revealed that the calculated value of chi square value (19.440) is higher than the tabulated value leading a null hypothesis. "There is no association between caste and constrain faced from stakeholders is rejected". It means there is association between abused by stakeholders and caste.

**Annual income and constraints**

The data apparent that the calculated chi square value is (14.032) is lesser than the tabulated value leading a null hypothesis. "There is no association between the annual income and abused by stakeholders are accepted." It means there is no association between the annual income and abused by stakeholders.

**Occupation of husband**

The data evident that the calculated chi square value is (13.288) is lesser than the tabulated value leading a null hypothesis. "There is no association between the occupation of spouse and abused by stakeholders are accepted." It means there is no association between the occupation of spouse and abused by stakeholders.

**Political party**

The table revealed that the calculated chi square value (14.786) is lesser than the tabulated value leading a null hypothesis. "There is no association between political party and abused by stakeholders are accepted". It means there is no association between political party and abused by stakeholders.

**Spoken skill**

The data evident that the calculated chi square value is (11.722) is lesser than the tabulated value leading a null hypothesis. "There is no association between the spoken skill and abused by stakeholders are accepted." It means there is no association between the spoken skill and abused by stakeholders.

**Strategies for safety measures**

We all know that women are abused everywhere but abusing the women leaders is shame of democracy and governance. The government should ensure the following safety measures for protecting women panchayat president from various stakeholders. Otherwise the women participation in local governance will be questionable. Particularly the scheduled caste women panchayat leader life is become questionable. To avoid the abuse of vice president, wherever the president sheet is reserved for women the vice president sheet also can be reserved for women. The data shows that secretary's were abusing the women in various forms. So the district administration should appoint a women secretary for women headed panchayat. The psychological or emotional abuse is dangerous than the physical abuse. So the periodical counselling or rejuvenation programme can be conducted in the name of retreat.

**Conclusion**

The panchayat presidents are the leaders of thousands of voters. If the presidents are not safe how the normal or casual women will be safe. Every day we could read news of abusing women presidents so the women were loss their confident on their safe. The women were always with fear. Village level if we address the abuse of women presidents we could create confident among the other women. So the government has to take necessary step to safe guard the women president from various forms of abuse from stakeholders of panchayat.

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