



## The Leadership Qualities among the Elected SC/ Dalit Village Panchayat Raj Leaders in Nagapattinam and Thanjavur Districts in Tamil Nadu- A Case Study

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### Abstract

*Leader is the one who can influence others easily for a purpose. A leader therefore is a visionary, a seeker and a learned man with skills and abilities to take decisions for the good of the community. Leadership is a dynamic process that facilitates the achievement of goals. Leadership can also be defined as the ability to influence and to be influenced by the members of a group in the implementation of a common goal. The definition shows the task and duties of a good leader. The leader should have certain abilities to lead people and mobilize them in such a way that they are led in pursuit of a common goal or good. If the scheduled caste people's leader with vision along with much learning, with much leadership skills and abilities comes to power as president in the locality, definitively there can be meaningful progress towards sustainable human development, inclusion and stability can be better achieved through measures that promote and protecting human rights and the effective participation of all the marginalised can become inevitable one. On the whole the utilisation of the total human resources without any exclusion is expected. And it definitively can bring a mass development in the society especially in the Indian society.*

### General Introduction

Here in the first case study is of the Elected SC Panchayat Raj President of Madapuram village Panchayat, keezhaiyur block in Nagapattinam Districts of Tamilnadu. In the second case study is of the Elected SC Panchayat Raj President who is elected for the Village Panchayat in Thiruvallampozhil, Thiruvaiyaru block in Thanjavur Districts of Tamilnadu. Here Participation in Panchayat Raj Institution refers the different mechanisms used by the SC/ Dalit Panchayat Leader/President in the Panchayat Raj Institution for the people of the Panchayat Raj Institution to express their opinions and ideally influence regarding Panchayat Raj Decision for the development. And Decision Making Panchayat Raj Institution is the thought process of the SC/Dalit Panchayat Leader in selecting a logical choice from the available options. The

Leadership in Panchayat Raj Institution refers to the process of influence in the Panchayat Raj Institution in which the elected village panchayat president has influence in which he can enlist the aid and support of the people in the concern Madapuram Panchayat Raj Institution in the accomplishment of the common task in Panchayat Raj Institution. And the Involvement in Panchayat Raj Institution is the act or process of SC/Dalit Panchayat Leader of taking part in his/her Panchayat Raj Institution as President/Leader.

### Case Study -1

#### Socio Economic Background

Madapuram Gram Panchayat in Keelaiyur block, Nagapattinam District is headed by a young and energetic man Y. He is 42 years old. By profession he is an Engineer completed Politechnique. He has a wife and blessed with a female child. He

belongs to middle class family. His residence is in the Mudaliyar caste people's street. It is unique to this village that all caste people live together in the same street without any discrimination. The caste people who are living in Madapuram village were motivated by communist ideology. They are accommodating Dalits without any discrimination and also Dalits on the other hand have shown no inferiority complex. One can easily perceive that their self esteem seems to be very high comparing the Dalits of other areas.

### **Recruitment**

He belongs to the ruling political party. But he was groomed in a social transformation movement for Dalit emancipation and empowerment. As he was oriented in the communist ideology also, he was looking for an opportunity to serve the Dalits/SC people. A Gram Panchayat Raj Institution President can achieve many things for Dalits more than what a Dalit MLA can achieve. All the livelihood issues can be easily addressed through Panchayat Raj Institution if a Panchayat Raj Institution Presidents are sensitive to the problems of Dalits. His plea is that the Dalits should occupy their positions in Gram Panchayat Raj Institution on their own and perform their roles and responsibilities independently. He did not mind in getting job for his qualification, he contested in the election. However honest and dedicated he is, election did not spare him, as it has its own inbuilt weakness.

This is the second time he has been elected to this Panchayat Raj Institution as Panchayat Raj Institution President. He is serving the Panchayat Raj Institution out of his own interest only. Of course the former Panchayat Raj Institution president's and communists' role and guidance is playing a vital role behind his success. He has been elected from the reservation for SC in Panchayat Raj Institution. He is very bold in societal

activities and good at facing the public. His rapport with government officials and former presidents helps him a lot.

### **Participation in Panchayat Raj Institution**

He has attended more than four trainings related to Panchayat Raj Institution. He expressed that he has obtained from the trainings awareness regarding Law, rules and regulations) awareness about Govt. schemes, awareness about Govt. programmes and Knowledge about Panchayat Raj Institution systems. Since he is a committed man he was unable to attend many of his family meetings and functions with family members. He has never signed the attendance register without participating in the meeting as requested by the govt. officials. He too says "Panchayati Raj is better than the government Departments". He knows very well the role of social workers and the role of community social workers in PRI. And he complains that the government officials as well as the co workers do not encourage him

He has the opinion of that reservation for women in Local body elections would enhance women's participation in politics. He also expressed the view that he is not getting as equal an opportunity as his other caste male colleagues gets. Also of opinion that Dalits are still ignorant of Panchayat Raj Institution and its functions. The Dalit participation in Panchayat Raj Institution according to him is a wonderful platform to do service and to come out of the clutches of the caste.

### **On Panchayat Raj Institution System**

He considered the Panchayat Raj Institution a powerful instrument for transforming the life of the rustic folk, provided powers and responsibilities are given to the Panchayat Raj Institution system. He regretted that in Tamilnadu, the Panchayat Raj Institution is considered only an instrument to carry out the

schemes of the central and state Governments. The New Panchayat Raj system provides scope and opportunity for the deprived, marginalized and neglected to come up in life, provided good leadership is readily available at the grass root level to overcome the barriers in the institution and to work for the community.

### **Decision Making**

He is very much firm enough in taking decisions in Panchayat Raj Institution. It is due to various factors that sometimes he is unable to do that. The reason is nothing but that he is a Dalit. Getting co-operation of caste members seems to be somewhat difficult. He is able to travel in and outside Panchayat Raj Institution. Also as usual casually he is able to fulfill his family needs. He is eager to do new things for the betterment in Panchayat Raj Institution also he is eager to learn new things for the betterment of Panchayat Raj Institution in Panchayat Raj Institution.

### **Leadership**

In Panchayat Raj Institution he enjoys in making decisions and is very firm in that there is no 'gut feelings' at all when making decisions in Panchayat Raj Institution. Also never hesitates to consult with others but at the same time sticks by his decisions come what may. Also remains calm when he has to make decisions very quickly in PRI. He feels in control of things in Panchayat Raj Institution. Yet his decisions in Panchayat Raj Institution are governed by his ideals regardless of practical difficulties and of course the Indian curse Caste. Also he never makes decisions without considering all of the implications in Panchayat Raj Institution. He is planning in Panchayat Raj Institution well ahead. He never prefers to avoid making decisions in Panchayat Raj Institution if he can. He has a very good communication skill and serves as a spokesperson to air the needs of his community. He also stated that he

delegates work to those who are capable of taking up the tasks assigned.

### **Involvement**

He knows thoroughly about his Panchayat where he is the President. The involvement is 100% since from the first year of his first term as PRI president. He has all the minute details about the Panchayat. Also he has the priority list of the needs of the PRI. All these he acquired from the training that are arranged by the Government. He believes in doing his work with perfection and gets the name and fame out of it than by befriending people.

### **Gram Sabha**

Here the public do come to the Gram Sabha in large numbers. Proper and prior announcement is given usually. About two hundred men and three hundred women attend the Gram Sabha meetings. The NGOs create awareness among the people in respect of the Gram Sabha. The ward members regularly attend the Gram Sabha meetings. If proper orientation is given to the public, they will enhance their participation. There is a plan of forming a committee to discuss on the problem of alcoholism.

### **Panchayat Raj Meeting**

Once a month the meeting of the Panchayat Raj is convened. All the members attend regularly. The members give more attention to drinking water supply and proper functioning of the street lights. A few members used to take care of the EB staff and ensure the replacement of the old bulbs promptly. When one member was absent for two meetings he/she was pulled up and then he attended regularly. The fund available is informed to the members and they suggest the work. The priority is also determined by them. Accordingly the resolutions are passed. The SC members are very active and they are very serious in their intention to do service to their areas.

### **His Vision**

He strongly feels that people – centric activities can be generated only when people are mobilized and conscientised on development. To perform the above task a strong leadership with a sense of commitment is needed. Once people are mobilized they are to be conscientised on the process of development. If they are conscientised on development, they will start critiquing the current development scenario and decide what type of development they want. Based on the awareness, the need of the people will be assessed and available opportunity to meet the requirements of the society, steps will be taken at the Panchayat Raj Institution level to prepare a plan to achieve development.

### **Conclusion**

The position of the village Panchayat Raj Institution President is very significant and needs full time attention. So along with his family and friends he is spending lot of time in improving the village Panchayat Raj Institution. Being a honest and people's development orient person he has to face a lot of problems in the Panchayat Raj Institution administration. He is organizing other Dalit Panchayat Raj Institution leaders for the development of the people and giving orientations.

### **Case Study-2**

#### **Socio Economic Background**

Elected Panchayat Raj Institution Leader X is from Thiruvallamposhil in Thiruvaiyaru block. She is 37 years old. She is with her elementary school education. She is a widow. Her son who is of 18 years old is helping her in the Panchayat Raj Institution level activities. She belongs to ruling political party. She hails from a middle class family. She got elected on her electoral debut. Community played a vital role in her plunge into Panchayat Raj Institution. She has sought the help of the local villagers in equipping herself with the required skill sets of a

Panchayat Raj Institution President. She has the backing of her family members and relatives who go all out in their efforts to help her by all means. She feels secured in her nature of job and has undergone more than three trainings to develop her skills.

### **Recruitment**

Her husband was a Panchayat Leader. After his demise she has been elected as Panchayat leader of Thiruvallamposhil. This is the second time she has been elected to this Panchayat as Panchayat Raj Institution President. She is serving the Panchayat Raj Institution out of her own interest only. She has been elected from the reservation for women in Panchayat Raj Institution. Though she is not highly educated she is very bold in the societal activities and good at facing the public. She has been a member in a SHG for some times

### **Participation in Panchayat Raj Institution**

She has attended more than three trainings related to Panchayat Raj Institution. She expressed that she has obtained from the trainings awareness regarding Law, rules and regulations. She was able to attend family meetings and functions with family members some positive note is that the govt. officials in her area encouraging her to raise issues in the meetings. She has never signed the attendance register without participating in the meeting as requested by the govt. officials she says "Panchayati Raj is better than the government Departments. She knows very well the role of social workers and the role of community social workers in Panchayat Raj Institution.

She opines that reservation for women in Local body elections would enhance women's participation in politics. She also expressed the view that she gets as equal an opportunity as her male colleagues in her executing her functions. She stated that she does her household chores apart from her official workload.

### **Decision Making**

She herself feels that she is not that much firm enough in her decisions in Panchayat Raj Institution. It is due to various factors that she is unable to do that. First one is that she is a woman. Second one is that she is gone through only elementary education. The third one is that she is a widow. Most of her carrier in Panchayat Raj Institution is supported by her son.

### **Leadership**

Apart from that she believes in consultations when important decisions had to be taken and feels she is in control. She has good communication skills and serves as a spokesperson to air the needs of her community. She also stated that she delegates work to those who are capable of taking up the tasks assigned.

### **Involvement**

She knows thoroughly about her Panchayat Raj Institution where she is the President. The involvement is 100% since from her husband as Panchayat Raj Institution President. She has all the minute details about the Panchayat Raj Institution. Also he has the priority list of the needs of the Panchayat Raj Institution. All these she acquired from the training that are arranged by the Government. She believes in doing her work with perfection and gets the name and fame out of it than by befriending people. She revealed that she is an empowered woman by sharing the view that she doesn't bother others not accepting her because of her nature of standing up for a cause though all by herself.

### **Gram Sabha**

Usually the public do not come to the Gram Sabha in large numbers. Proper and prior announcement is given usually. About hundred men and two hundred women attend the Gram Sabha meetings. The NGOs create awareness among the people in respect of the Gram Sabha. The

ward members regularly attend the Gram Sabha meetings. If proper orientation is given to the public, they will enhance their participation. There is a plan of organizing evening tuition centre for the school going children.

### **Panchayat Meeting**

Once a month the meeting of the Panchayat Raj Institution is convened. All the members attend regularly. The members give more attention to drinking water supply and proper functioning of the street lights. A few members used to take care of the EB staff and ensure the replacement of the old bulbs promptly. When one member was absent for two meetings he/she was pulled up and then he attended regularly. The fund available is informed to the members and they suggest the work. The priority is also determined by them. Accordingly the resolutions are passed. The SC members are very active and they are very serious in their intention to do service to their areas.

### **Conclusion**

The position of the village Panchayat Raj Institution President is very significant and needs full time attention. So along with her son she is spending lot of time in improving the village Panchayat Raj Institution. Being a honest person she has to face a lot of problems in the Panchayat Raj Institution administration. She has to incur the displeasure of the officials and the high caste caste- minded people.

### **References**

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