

Labour would not let us stand, say Muslim women

From [The Telegraph](#) and the [Muslim Women's Network UK's complaints of sabotage](#).

Optician Fozia Parveen claims her efforts to become a Labour councillor in Birmingham in 2008 were scuppered by men within the party. She said: "At the time, I was aware of a smear campaign against me. They said that I was having an affair with one of the existing councillors. I was quite taken aback. People were turning up at my family home trying to intimidate my mum." Ms Parveen said Muslim men told her mother to stop her from pursuing becoming a councillor. She added: "It would be members of the local Labour Party. I didn't see them myself but my mum did say it was them."

Shazia Bashir was the first choice for Labour in a seat in Peterborough in 2007. She claims that when her father said he would not support her, Muslim men from within the local Labour Party made her step aside. They deny the claim. "Because I didn't have my father's consent and support, I had to step down. I was pressured into stepping down," said Ms Bashir, who was 31 and married with two children at the time.

Newsnight was told similar stories by other women who wished to remain anonymous.

One said: "They spread this slander about me... It's the way they get to you."

Another said she had been told by Labour members "Islam and feminism aren't compatible".

An advocate for gay rights was told: "This is un-Islamic. Leave that for white people." And many spoke of being

criticised for being too Westernised.

Today Mr Corbyn is due to address Labour's local government conference.

Jean Khote, a Labour councillor, said that the leadership was kept in the dark as talented female candidates were turned down in areas with high Muslim populations. She said those responsible would claim "there weren't adequate candidates among the women".

A Labour spokesman said: "The Labour Party's selection procedures include strong positive action procedures such as all-women shortlists and rules to ensure women are selected in winnable council seats. We have the best record of any party in selecting women and BAME candidates . . ."

All these women mentioned wear hijab. If they were in power would they have stopped the abuse of underage English girls? Or would they have regarded them as merely possessions of their menfolk's right hands? An ancient custom and sanctified by the Koran?