

## **VOTER ENGAGEMENT AND POLITICAL CONTINUITY IN WATTALA: INSIGHTS FOR INCLUSIVE GOVERNANCE AND PRACTICAL POLITICAL STRATEGIES**

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This research explores the reasons behind the United National Party's (UNP) sustained electoral success in Wattala, a constituency in Gampaha District, Sri Lanka. The study aims to understand why the UNP has maintained long-term electoral support in Wattala by examining voter behavior and local conditions, and how this knowledge can guide practical governance strategies. Based on 40 interviews with residents, along with analysis of socio-economic indicators and historical election statistics, the study identifies the key dynamics shaping long-term party support.

Findings reveal that the UNP's inclusive policies and responsiveness to community concerns have been central to maintaining voters' loyalty. Wattala's demographic composition, shaped by cultural traditions and historical migrations, has further influenced political preferences. The party's ability to address socio-economic challenges while embracing ethnic diversity underscores the importance of inclusive governance in multiethnic environments.

The research also highlights how ethnic and religious identities intersect with economic conditions, such as income and employment, to shape voter mobilization. These factors explain Wattala's consistent support for the UNP and offer insights into broader electoral patterns in Sri Lanka. The study concludes that recurrent UNP support in Wattala is driven by inclusive governance, socioeconomic realities, and ethnic-religious dynamics. Insights from this research emphasize the need for policies addressing inequality and promoting interethnic dialogue, demonstrating how academic findings can strengthen democratic stability, inclusive development, and contribute to shaping the future landscape of work in multiethnic societies.

**Keywords:** *Persistent voting patterns, Electoral support, Inclusive governance, Multiethnic communities, Voter behavior*