

# The Influence of Divide and Rule Political Strategy on Teachers' Commitment to Work in Selected Private Primary Schools in Namutumba Town Council

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## Abstract

This research examined the influence of divide and rule political strategy on teachers' commitment to work in Selected Private Primary Schools in Namutumba Town Council in Uganda.

It was revealed that head teachers' divide and rule political strategy had a positive and moderate significant influence on teachers' commitment to work ( $\beta = 0.472$ ,  $N = 162$ ,  $p = .000 < 0.05$ ). It is thus being concluded that when head teachers divide and rule their administrative staff, it may serve a double-faced perspective. In some cases, and schools, the outcome may be positive while in other circumstances the outcome may be negative. Obviously, head teachers cannot do without such a political strategy yet its influence on administrative staff performance is also undoubted.

**Keywords:** Divide and rule; political strategy; Teachers' commitment; private primary schools; Namutumba Town Council.

## 1. Introduction

Divide and Rule as a Political Strategy makes a serious mistake when they ignore/underestimate political risk. Organizations tend either to accept or ignore these risks or to avoid altogether situations that seemingly pose large political risks, even when those risks are accompanied by significant opportunity [1]. The instruments used by many organizations divide and rule are simply too blunt for the changing, complex political environment in which they operate. Political risk may have different characteristics than other types of risks but it can and should be managed.

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Divide and rule as political risk can enable companies to enter and navigate new markets and business environment, providing a potential for competitive advantage. Managerial awareness of organizational politics is helpful, if not necessary for the most effective reduction in politics through the implementation of strategies. Research consistently supports the idea that organizational politics has to be carefully managed or it was detrimental to the work [2]. This implies that organization politics can disorganize the institution itself and make to teachers to lose their commitment towards work.

**Divide and rule** is a strategy of gaining and maintaining power by breaking up larger concentrations of power in a team/office into parts so that individuals in that teams have less power than the one implementing the strategy [3].

The strategy of divide and rule has been attributed to sovereigns, ranging from Louis XI of France to the House of Habsburg. It was utilized by the Roman ruler Julius Caesar and the French emperor Napoleon.

In economics, the concept is also mentioned as a strategy for market segmentation to get the most out of the players in a competitive market.

The most basic thing that individuals usually do to put this method into practice is pressure individual employees by creating a sense of fear that their team is unhappy with them.

Working in an environment of divide and rule management can evoke the worst from you although that is not what is needed to succeed in using this method.

To many leaders who use this method, divide and rule method empowers employees in the long run.

Divide and rule method at work involves the following;

Creating or encouraging divisions among the subjects to prevent alliances that could challenge the sovereign and distributing forces that they overpower the other.

Aiding and promoting those who are willing to cooperate with the sovereign.

Fostering distrust and enmity between local rulers.

Encouraging meaningless expenditures that reduce the capability for political and military spending. One way that it works is when the manager collects information, and uses it to pit the other team members against each other. While that in turn might be completely false, and quite possibly the manager might have said the exact same thing to several other team members, if it is a favored approach for him/her. In this process – threats – veiled and unveiled are by no means uncommon. These threats will, as the bottom line communicates this (or something to the effect of this) to the employee.

Here, the manager hopes to have succeeded in his ultimate goal of getting the work done “his” (/her) way in either of these two ways;

The employee is jolted, and shocked and starts overcompensating. Hence making the manager feel like his approach was successful.

The employee feels like the pressure is too much for him/ her to take and resigns. Thus, enabling the manager to sign someone new up for the job, one who he feels is more eligible.

Advantages of this method include:

In a perfect world, where the problem is easy to divide, and the sub-problem at some level is easy to solve, divide and conquer can be optimal for a general case solution, like merge sort.

Parallel availability, divide and conquer by its very nature lends itself well to parallel processing.

The use of this technique is meant to empower the sovereign to control subjects, populations, or factions of different interests, who collectively might be able to oppose its rule.

However, out of all the methods and tactics a manager could use to amplify the productivity of a team, this for sure shouldn't be amongst them.

The study limited accessing current data on divide and rule strategy being difficult as many administrators were reluctant to release records and information due to security purposes and for the betterment of the schooling process and program while others did not have proper records.

The study involved travelling from one school to another and transport was not reliable due to poor roads. Some of the schools were situated in poor areas and this made it unsafe for the researcher to move freely.

This study also only covered private primary schools in Namutumba town Council, Namutumba District, and not the government aided primary schools. Secondary schools were not included in the study since the teachers do not teach single school and again do not face many challenges as those faced by teachers who teach in a single school full time.

## **2.Methodology**

The study adopted a cross sectional survey research design because the researcher intends to study a specific subset of the study population, collect and analyze data on the Influence of Information Management and Teachers' commitment to work in selected private primary schools Namutumba District. This design was appropriate because it involved collecting data from a relatively large number of respondents in its natural setting (selected schools), cheaply and in a short time [4]. This survey design was chosen because of its flexibility in data collection as it allows collection of both qualitative and quantitative data at the same time [5]. Both qualitative and quantitative approaches were adopted as a means of triangulation with the intention of getting quality and un-biased findings. According to [6], triangulation is the process of mixing up methodologies to exploit the synergies offered by the different methodologies. Being academic research

therefore, it was suitable to apply the mixed methods approach because it minimizes on the inadequacies of single methods in the two methods complement and verify each other thus reducing biasness and provide more comprehensive information. The quantitative approach will however take center stage in the study.

The target population for the area of study was attained from the selected schools. 4 Private primary schools were selected out of a total of 18 because they have a moderately sizeable work force that will provide a sample size large enough to give a confidence interval of desired width [7]. The target population consists of 236 respondents who included; Head teachers, Deputies, Director of Studies, Heads of departments, and Teachers. Head teachers are the overall managers of school affairs, deputies play supervisory role, directors of studies are custodians of teacher performance records, heads of departments conduct direct interaction with teachers while teachers are the implementers of school programs and processes and these are viable informers due to their respective connection to private schools in Namutumba Town Council.

The sample size constituted of 180 respondents and it was determined using [8] table and it will include employees in the categories of, 4 Head teachers, 4 Deputies, 4 Director of studies, 76 Heads of departments and 92 Teachers.

The sample shall be selected via the following sampling techniques: Simple Random Sampling, Purposive Sampling and Census Inquiry

There were different methods used for data collection which are; survey, interview, publications etc. The studies made use of secondary data in collecting the required data from the sources. Secondary data was achieved through the use of structured survey questionnaires. Therefore, the survey questionnaires were given to respondents from various selected private primary schools and later was picked up by the researcher. Furthermore, Quantitative research procedure was used for the completion of this study in order to provide in-depth data analysis of the research problem from various sources.

### **3. Conclusion**

This study is set to present key findings regarding the influence of divide and rule strategy and Teachers' commitment to work a case of private primary schools in Namutumba Town Council, Uganda.

The findings are categorized into the descriptive, inferential and qualitative findings for proper clarity. The findings are presented in line with demographic characteristics, response rate of respondents as well as objectives-related findings are presented, interpreted, analysed and discussed.

The researcher attempted to understand the demographic characteristics of the respondents in terms of sex, age, class and category of respondents [9].

There is evidence of significant relationship between demographic characteristics of employees and their commitment towards organizational activities. Details are presented in table:

**Table 1:** Demographic Characteristics of Respondents (N = 143).

<b>Demographic Element</b>	<b>Forms</b>	<b>f</b>	<b>%</b>
<i>Gender of Respondents</i>	Male	114	79.7
	Female	29	20.3
<i>Age of the Respondent</i>	30 Years & Below	64	44.8
	31 – 40 Years	64	44.8
	41 – 50 Years	11	7.7
	51 Years & Above	4	2.7
<i>Academic Qualification</i>	Diploma	41	28.7
	Bachelor’s Degree	98	68.5
	Master’s Degree	4	2.8
<i>Category of Staff</i>	Administrator	65	45.5
	Classroom Teacher	78	54.5
<i>Duration of Service</i>	5 Years & Below	67	46.9
	6 – 10 Years	56	39.2
	11 – 15 Years	18	12.6
	16 Years & Above	2	1.4
<i>Marital Status</i>	Single	52	36.4
	Married	91	63.6

**Source:** *Field Data (2023)*

Table shows results obtained from demographic characteristics and it was combined and discussed as follows;

Regarding the gender of respondents, 29 (20.3%) were female while 114 (79.7%) were male. This indicates that males were more than females. Having results from studies that incorporate responses from both sexes are more reliable than those from single sex [10]. Most importantly, the ability to get information from different sex settings helps to get a version that differs.

About the age of respondents, 64 (44.8%) were 30 years and below, 64 (44.8%) were between 31-40 years, 11 (7.7%) were between 41-50 and 4 (2.7%) were 51 years old and above. Majority of respondents were between 30 -50 years and so this distribution communicates that the respondents were mature enough and therefore; their responses could be considered valid. The distribution of respondents among age groups is very vital in social science studies. The researcher also considered it relevant to explore views of people in different age levels to spell comprehensiveness of responses.

Regarding the academic qualification, 41 (28.7%) had studied to diploma level, 98 (68.5%) had acquired bachelors while 4 (2.8%) had acquired masters. There is evidence that most of the respondents have a bachelor’s degree. This distribution opines that the respondents are elite enough to give correct responses as [11] states that, in the field of education, the educational class of the respondents enables the researcher to trust the kind of responses elicited from the study. Moreover, it was good for the study to have views from a variety of academic qualification settings.

About category of staff, 65 (45.5%) were administrators while 78 (54.5%) were teachers. Accordingly, administrators had the highest frequency of participation in the study. Understanding the category of respondents was important in order to understand issues related to organizational politics from the perspective of administrators as well as teachers. It has always been stated that teachers’ and administrators’ perspectives on

multiple dimensions of professionalism differ [12]. There is need to have a consideration of different characteristics of staff in a study.

About the duration of service of respondents, 67 (46.9%) had worked for 5 years and less, 56 (39.2%) had worked between 6-10 years, 18 (12.6%) had worked between 11-15 years and 2 (1.4%) had worked for 16 years and above. The results indicate that majority of the respondents had worked for at least 10 years and above hence giving them an edge in understanding and expounding the concepts with experience. There is a positive correlation between number of years one spends in the organisation and their commitment levels towards organizational tasks [13]. The researcher is of the view that staying longer creates a sense of organizational citizenship behaviour on the part of staff members.

About marital status of respondents, 52 (36.4%) were single and 91 (63.6%) were married. With majority of the respondents being married, their responses can be trusted as [14] alludes to responsibility of an individual in society which improves on the reliability of the responses given. Married people are known to withstand a lot of challenges and pressures while the same are good at keeping information privy to public. When such people are housed in an organization, such values are expected of them which may translate into effective management of organizational issues.

The researcher endeavored to access all respondents targeted in the study but it provides quite complex an undertaking. Accordingly, some were accessed as planned while some were not accessed on the given time whilst some filled the instruments in an incomplete way. The findings are presented in table 4.2.

**Table 2:** Response Rate.

<b>Instrument</b>	<b>Targeted</b>	<b>Returned</b>	<b>Completed</b>	<b>%</b>
Questionnaire	156	147	143	<b>92%</b>
Interview Guide	04		04	<b>100%</b>

**Source: Primary Data (2023)**

Table presents the response rate. Out of the 156 questionnaires distributed, only 147 were returned whereas 143 were filled fully and thus used in analysis. Meanwhile, all 4 interviews planned were conducted implying a 100% response rate. A return rate of 92% was obtained for the questionnaire and this is quite adequate enough given that [15] opined that the return rate of questionnaires in an academic survey should be between 23% and 49% if the study is directed at top managers in an organization and between 40% and 80% if the study is directed at mid-level managers or other employees. Since the current study targeted both mid-level and lower-level employees, the response rate was deemed appropriate.

The researcher sought to present responses on the dependent variable Teachers commitment to work in order to guide further analysis by having the basis for which regression is done to establish the influence of the elements of divide and rule on teachers' commitment to work. To ease the interpretation of findings, the results in the descriptive analysis was based on a combination of strongly disagree and disagree into disagreement as well as agree and strongly agree responses into agreement. Further, responses closer to 1 and 2 indicate a practice which

is less practiced while responses closer to 3 and 4 reflect a practice which is well handled in a school. Key findings are presented in table 4.3.

**Table 3:** Responses on Teachers’ commitment to work (N = 143).

ITEM	SD		D		A		SA	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Teachers promote teamwork in the school	16	11.2	16	11.2	44	30.8	67	46.9
All teachers engage in developing innovative ideas	5	3.5	21	14.7	62	43.4	55	38.5
All teachers do adherence to school policies	5	3.5	16	11.2	51	35.7	71	49.7
All teachers take appropriate decisions	12	8.4	25	17.5	52	36.4	54	37.8
All teachers given timely supervision	12	8.4	25	17.5	52	36.4	54	37.8
All teachers have timely appraisal	17	11.9	26	18.2	56	39.2	44	30.8
All teachers produce timely reports	20	14.0	27	18.9	54	37.8	42	29.4

Source: Primary Data (2023)

Table presents findings about the influence of organizational politics and Teachers’ commitment to work a case of private primary schools in Namutumba town council, Uganda. Findings about all the questions under the main objective are presented as follows; when asked whether Teachers promote teamwork in the school, 32 (22.4%) disagreed while 111 (77.6%) agreed. The high frequency of agreement indicates that teachers promote team work in the schools. This outright difference indicates that majority of the teachers are abreast with their role within the schools. Working as a group with uniform goals and plans promotes good working relationships and environment hence promoting commitment to work. This is in line with what [16] believes that helping and cooperating with others is an aspect of effective commitment to performance.

During interviews conducted with head teachers of the selected private primary schools, the head teacher school D indicated that the teachers work as a team to promote team work in the school. In a more detailed submission, the interviewee indicated that;

*“We work as a team so we have a team and when you look at the results in our files all these come as a result of commitment teachers put on their assigned works. Every member of staff will ensure excellent output for good of our institutions.”.*

This view was reiterated by the head teacher school C who insisted that they ensure that they move as a team whereby they limit taking things personal. They make sure that when they have an issue, they share it as a team and in case it is against any member of the department, they don’t take things personal but we take them very seriously and we discuss them and they are done among ourselves.

On whether teachers engage in developing innovative ideas, 26 (18.2%) disagreed while 117 (81.8%) agreed. This implies that indeed teachers are key in developing innovative ideas. It could be at coming up with ideas, discussing them, having them approved or even financing them. Either way, they end up appreciating and owning the ideas since they are a part of the schools. [17] calls upon heads of departments to recognize innovation and contributions made by fellow staff. The researcher is of the view that when teachers develop innovative ideas it may not breed continuity but involvement of others changes the terrain of creativeness and

innovation among staff. From the interview conducted, the head teacher school C indicated that'

*Involvement in transformation of school operations is one of the key parameters of teachers' commitment and performance.*

Though did not commit directly to innovative ideas as predetermined by the study in the questionnaire.

In establishing whether teachers ensure adherence to school policies, 21 (14.7%) disagreed while 122 (85.3%) agreed. It is quite clear that school administrators are at the lead of ensuring that all fellow staff follow and respect the school policies. It is also their role to remind fellow staff about the school policies. [18] postulates that heads of department are required to exercise leadership demonstrate vision and empower others in order to realize school policies and goals. It is clear that one of the key management movements today is compliance monitoring which is easily executed by teacher heads.

This was supported by the view of head teacher school B who stated that:

*"We have quite a number who are subscribing to our philosophy as a school and wherever we put something in place as a policy, they adopt to it but nevertheless we have some who are low at picking. You want to sell them the way of doing things as a school but they cannot easily adopt to it".*

Head teacher school C also quipped in with regular attendance and punctuality as indicators of teachers' commitment. Indeed, these are the first steps in the direction of adherence to school policies.

In discovering whether staff engage in appropriate decisions, 37 (25.9%) disagreed while 106 (74.1%) agreed. The high frequency of agreement shows staffs are at the fore front of taking appropriate decisions in their respective schools. [19] contends that appropriate decisions can be taken through organizing department meetings, setting department goals and managing department collaboration. When appropriate decisions are taken, staff heads show competence in their role and school progress is automatic. Nevertheless, the presence of some cases of disagreement also shows that some of the staff heads are not effective enough. On the issue of taking appropriate decisions, the head teacher school D offered that;

*"After the reports are presented by departments, we sit again as top administrators; the deputy, the directors and we analyze what transpired in every department, what are the necessary measures to put in place to see that each department performs to the expectations of the board or administrators".*

In establishing whether staff have timely supervision, it was determined that 37 (25.9%) disagreed and 106 (74.1%) agreed. The majority of respondents seemed to indicate that timely supervision is done by staff head. The other quite important role played by staff head is to supervise and monitor activities of the school. The findings also show that indeed staff heads do carry out supervision appropriately as required. [20] emphasize that supervision of both academic and other school related aspects like discipline as these affect student progress. However, some of the administrative staff may not be as effective at timely supervision as reflected in the percentage of disagreement.

Even during interviews, the head teachers were asked about indicators of staff work commitment and supervision was reported as one of the indicators. The head teacher school D lamented that;

*“The other indicator is that we ensure that these different administrative bodies assess the learners in their different departments and after they assessing the learners, they give us reports related to performance, related to discipline, academic performance then finally we get to know what is prevailing on the grass roots pertaining teachers’ commitment to work”.*

In ascertaining whether staff have timely appraisal, it was revealed that 43 (30.1%) disagreed while 100 (69.9%) agreed. The high agreement indicates that appraisal is conducted timely. However, a sizable frequency of disagreement cannot be ignored. Staff heads especially heads of departments and deputies ought to foresee the work done by others so they can make honest and true reflections of the work done. Heads of Departments play an active role in curriculum development and implementation, human resource management, students' affairs, management of physical facilities and school community relations.

In understanding whether teachers produce timely report, it was determined that 47 (32.9%) disagreed whereas 96 (67.1%) agreed. This implies that majority of staff produce timely reports, however, the slight percentage difference indicates that some of the staff fail to produce reports on time. [20] argue that a head of department should always produce timely and comprehensive reports on key issues. The researcher is of the view that not all staff heads are likely to be the same in terms of execution of tasks which makes the disparity a huge possibility.

The issue of making reports received the backing of head teacher school A who talked of making routine reports and influencing others to do well. The issue of reports was also echoed by the head teacher school D who also brought in the issue of meetings with departments to present reports about progress of their departments. This means that the head teachers are aware of the critical role played by reports in the school system and that every staff head should make sure of preparing the same.

When interviewees were asked about rating of teachers ‘commitment to work i.e., discipline academics among others, the head teacher school A claimed thus;

*“I want to be specific. It has two categories; in this school, discipline is rated differently and discipline is excellent while academics is good. so, I can say that overall, it is very good”.*

The head teacher school B stated that it is not excellent but very good. It is however the head teacher school D who raised a more comprehensive statement;

*“I rate my teachers’ performance and commitment to work to be very good performance level because I assess from myself the administrator, I look at all staff and, the roles they play. We have the deputies, we have class teachers, subject heads and you find that they engage themselves in various tasks and when they complete them very well, then certainly I believe that the rate which they are performing their duties is really very good performance. That’s the best I can explain to you”.*

The head teacher school C also stated that staff commitment in the school was not very good but generally good.

The researcher sought to present responses on divide and rule political strategy in order to guide further analysis to establish its influence on teachers’ commitment to work. To ease the interpretation of findings, the results in the descriptive analysis was based on a combination of strongly disagree and disagree into disagreement as well as agree and strongly agree responses into agreement. Further, responses closer to 1 and 2 indicate a practice which is less practiced while responses closer to 3 and 4 reflect a practice which is well handled in a school. Key findings are presented in table below. As far as divide and rule political strategy in selected schools is concerned, findings are presented in table.

**Table 4:** Responses on Divide and Rule Politics in Selected Schools (N = 143).

ITEM	SD		D		A		SA	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
My headteacher gives different pay cheques for different categories of staff	19	13.3	26	18.2	44	30.8	54	37.8
My headteacher uses a strategy that breaks up existing alliances among staff	19	13.3	40	28.0	53	37.1	31	21.7
The school has a different promotion system for staff	22	15.4	30	21.0	59	41.3	32	22.4
The school gives different roles to each staff	7	4.9	17	11.9	53	37.1	66	46.2
My headteacher ensures that there is a disparity of general social welfare between academic and non-academic staff	13	9.1	27	18.9	44	30.8	59	41.3

*Source: Primary Data (2023)*

Table presents findings about objective two. The objective set out to establish the influence of divide and rule political strategy on teachers’ commitment to work in selected private primary schools in Namutumba Town council. All set questions and their responses about the objective are presented as follows; in establishing whether headteachers give different pay cheques for different categories of staff, it was revealed that 45 (31.5%) disagreed while 98 (68.5%) agreed. This implies that different staff are paid differently depending on the kind and amount of work done. [21] had already analyzed salary differences between “public and private school teachers”, differences between “male and female teachers”, those between “teachers of differing racial and ethnic backgrounds”, those among “elementary and secondary teachers”, differences seen in “teachers with different qualifications”, and those for “teachers operating in differing work environments”.

On whether headteachers use strategies to break up existing alliances among staff, it was realized that 59 (41.3%) disagreed while 84 (58.7%) agreed. Whereas slightly more respondents said that some head teachers use strategies to break collaborations, there are those who disagree. This could be because they themselves do not notice what the headteachers do. In managing growing collaborations among teachers, many headteachers find ways of breaking them for fear of not full allegiance to their sides. Having full allegiance from the teachers guarantees the headteachers cooperation and good organizational performance. [22] contends that heads of institutions always change ways of keeping up with alliances or collaborations among teachers depending on perceived harm or good.

In ascertaining whether the school has a different promotion system for staff, it was revealed that 52 (36.4%) disagreed while 91 (63.6%) agreed. This implies that promotion of staff is different for different kinds of staff. Nevertheless, in some cases this difference was not reported. [23] argue that promotion requirements are adopted in appointment of classroom and or subject educators based on standards but there is always concern over the way such standards operate and thus attracting attention. This is usually true with staff especially in private schools.

In determining whether the school gives different roles to each staff, it was realized that 24 (16.8%) disagreed and 119 (83.2%) agreed. This out rightly opines that each staff gets to play different roles since they have different kinds of work they are hired to do. [24] opine that for a sound climate to be instituted in schools, the head teachers ought to ensure variation in roles given to teachers as some may be more suited to particular roles as opposed to others depending on the environment of work and culture of the institution. While the differentiation in roles may be a positive thing, some head teachers do it as a divide and rule gimmick.

Respondents were also asked whether headteachers ensure that there is a disparity of general social welfare between academic and non-academic staff, it was revealed that 40 (28.0%) disagreed while 103 (72.0%) agreed. This implies that academic staff get more privileges than the non-academic staff. Obviously, this can be defended through the amount of intellectual work done by academic staff as being more than that done by non-academic staff. [25] reiterate that signals of concern about differences in teacher working conditions have become a new norm in the public and policy spheres in the United States.

Regarding divide and rule, interviewees indicated that the practice exists in the schools though in varying dimensions and magnitude. Head teacher school A alluded to the following:

*“As a head teacher, personally my position as a head teacher we have sectarian management, you find that there are people who are pro; people you use to work for you, who are working for the organization but again working for the head teacher. And those people through you get information”.*

He also added that otherwise, if you don't go with that method of divide and rule, you end up failing to move the motion. So, you find that we manage through others and with isolation method. Isolate others, let others move. This is also made possible through appeasement policy.

Head teacher school B argued thus:

*“Definitely, the issue of divide and rule sometimes comes automatically; one, there are some you talk to and they are willing to move on and others seem not coming and definitely you must have your strongholds. So, under such a situation, even if I don't declare divide and rule, it comes itself”.*

Meanwhile, the head teacher school C distanced his school from the divide and rule policy claiming that this usually works in systems where directors are more than one.

Even head teacher school D was of the view that they avoid divide and rule politics in the school but was quick

to confess that there are situations where this cannot be avoided as well as situations that are premised on appointment. However, in a more detailed analysis the head teacher stated that;

*“What we do as a team here, we normally try to treat these teachers equally despite the fact that other issues like divide and rule happen because there is a full-time teacher and you have someone part timing. You cannot say you are giving a full-time teacher 500,000 and also give a part time teacher the same amount. So, in line with that, I don’t take it to be divide and rule but depend on the task you have because you are supposed to be paid depending on what you do as a teacher”.*

Much as the head teachers tried to distance themselves from a more direct divide and rule policy given their position in the school, it was obvious that they do have instances where they do practice it to survive in the school system.

The researcher computed a simple regression analysis to determine the influence of head teachers' divide and rule political strategy and teacher' commitment to work. The essence was to determine how much of teacher' commitment to work can be explained by head teachers' divide and rule political strategy. The results are accordingly presented in table above.

**Table 5:** Model Summary for Head Teachers' Divide and Rule Political Strategy and Teacher' commitment to work.

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted Square	R Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.472 <sup>a</sup>	0.223	0.218	0.53610

a. Predictors: (Constant), Head Teachers' Divide and Rule Political Strategy

Table represents a model summary for head teachers' divide and rule political strategy and teacher' commitment to work. Results indicate that R = 0.472, R square = 0.223 and adjusted R square = 0.218. In the model, the head teachers' divide and rule political strategy determined 22.3% of the variation in the teacher's commitment to work. In addition, there was a moderate correlation between the two.

In order to determine the significance of the regression model in explaining the influence of head teachers' divide and rule political strategy on teachers' commitment to work, a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted as reflected in table above.

**Table 6:** ANOVA Results for Head Teachers' Divide and Rule Political Strategy and Teachers' commitment to work.

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	13.202	1	13.202	45.937	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	45.984	160	0.287		
	Total	59.186	161			

a. Dependent Variable: Teachers' commitment to work

b. Predictors: (Constant), Head Teachers' Divide and Rule Political Strategy

When the researcher analysed the significance of the regression model presented in table above, the F-statistic was found to be 13.202 and the p value of .000 was found to be less than 5% significant level which shows that head teachers' divide and rule political strategy significantly influences teachers' commitment to work. Meanwhile, the regression analysis coefficients for head teachers' divide and rule political strategy and teachers' commitment to work is reflected in table above.

**Table 7:** Regression Coefficients for Head Teachers' Divide and Rule Political Strategy and Teachers' commitment to work.

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Coefficients		
1	(Constant)	1.712	0.204		8.399	.000
	Head Teachers' Divide and Rule Political Strategy	0.464	0.068	0.472	6.778	.000

*a. Dependent Variable: Teachers' commitment to work*

Results in table revealed that head teachers' divide and rule political strategy had a positive and moderate significant influence on teachers' commitment to work ( $\beta = 0.472$ ,  $N = 162$ ,  $p = 0.000 < 0.05$ ) meaning there is a statistically significant influence. [26] believe that Beta values below 0.3 are weak, those between 0.3 and 0.6 are moderate while those at 0.6 and above are strong. The beta score implies that a 47.2% improvement in teachers' commitment to work in private primary schools in Namutumba town council can be explained by effective head teachers' divide and rule political strategy. Equally, the 0.000 significance is also an indicator that divide and rule political strategy is well-executed by head teachers. The researcher observes that divide and rule is done differently by different head teachers and this is the reason behind the moderate influence. Also, when the divide and rule is executed well, performance of administrative staff improves while the vice versa holds true as well.

Having obtained this score, the researcher rejects the null hypothesis earlier set in the study that there is no statistically significant influence of head teachers' divide and rule political strategy on teachers' commitment to work in selected private primary schools in Namutumba town council and accepts the alternative hypothesis in the process. The finding is also closer to the view of Al-Ubaydli who believes that with putting subordinates especially high-ranking ones against one another to maintain control, overall performance is damaged. This is also true with smaller independent components among followers.

The influence according to interviewees can be both positive and negative. In this regard, the head teacher school A stated that;

*“It influences negatively because a school cannot work at the same time on a particular issue. You find that in divide and rule politics of schools a few teachers can be on board when others are not on board. And it equally divides the school administration in terms of student leaders and now the classes which compromises even academic performance output”.*

On a positive side though, it reduces on the pressure which is coming from the same direction. You find that now they cannot demand or refuse at once. So, it helps negatively but it can help you manage a small group. Regarding this, the head teacher school B observed;

*“That approach actually helps in such a way that you are able to get some people who are committed and you can trust them and you know they cannot let you down. And therefore, move to that pace. And for those who feel to be on the other side not coming, sometimes they find themselves also joining because they find themselves in isolation”.*

Head teacher school C also stated that;

*“Yes, proper handling of those clicks in school has helped the administrative performance of this institution that when it comes to academics, because these clicks have been broken, it means that there is teamwork towards the academic progress of this institution, likewise discipline and upholding of the name of the institution. People will leave the place satisfied and speaking one voice”.*

Equally, the head teacher school D indicated that if you work as an individual, you just move a short distance. You can be in a school for just one term and you are advised to change a school to go somewhere else.

#### **4. Review Of Related Studies**

Divide and rule policy (Latin: divide et impera), or divide and rule, in politics and sociology is gaining and maintaining power divisively. Historically, this strategy was used in many different ways by empires seeking to expand their territories. However, it has been hard to distinguish between the exploitation of pre-existing divisions by opponents, and the deliberate creation or strengthening of these divisions implied by "divide and rule".

Tradition attributes the origin of the motto to Philip II of Macedon: Greek: διαίρει καὶ βασίλευε diaírei kài basíleue, in Ancient Greek, meaning "divide and rule"

The strategy, but not the phrase, applies in many ancient cases: the example of Aulus Gabinius exists, parting the Jewish nation into five conventions, reported by Flavius Josephus in Book I, 169–170 of *The Jewish War* (*De bello Judaico*).[27] Strabo also reports in *Geographica*, 8.7.3 [28] that the Achaean League was gradually dissolved when it became part of the Roman province of Macedonia, as the Romans treated the various states differently, wishing to preserve some and to destroy others. [29]. The authors stated that Research conducted over 1000's of institutions, identifies some common strategies people employ to survive and succeed in the institution. Whilst there are clear differences across cultures and institutions, there is also consistency in the approaches people adopt to succeed in their institutions. [30]. The author stated that one such strategy, organizational psychologists have identified is where an individual seeks to exert control over colleagues applying a 'divide and rule' approach, to their institution.

This is where one individual takes a position of 'authority' by destabilizing and criticizing their other work

colleagues. [31]. The authors stated that the individual quickly seeks to become the one authority in the institution, by belittling colleagues, usurping anyone that may be a threat to their authority, and quickly forming close relationships with leadership. Stopping anyone that may stand in their way.

Does this strategy really work?

Whilst it would seem to be very beneficial, especially for the individual employing such a strategy. It may come at a cost, both to those people impacted in the institution and to business productivity. [32] the authors stated that given the individual will target colleagues that may pose them the biggest threat, to their competitive advantage, it is often those colleagues which are the brightest and best, who are the first to be in the firing line. These targeted individual's risk becoming disengaged, disempowered and demotivated, impacting business productivity. Worse still, they may even leave the business. [33] the authors stated that work colleagues that are more collegiate in nature, who avoid conflict, may often also be in the firing line and targeted as 'weak'. Meaning contentious workers may end up feeling destabilized and henpecked. Impacting the overall business productivity as well as individual engagement [34].

The authors stated that some institutions seek to deliberately recruit employees that are highly competitive. However, when I work with improving business cultures, I recommend some caution to managers in adopting this approach. Fostering environments where a 'divide and rule' approach as a competitive strategy applied by individuals to succeed, may come at a cost [35]. The author stated that Competition between colleagues, can often be at the expense of 'trust' between colleagues which can obviously have impacts on both productivity and institution collaboration. Indeed, fostering values of cooperation & collaboration, may actually improve both institution cultures and productivity. Competitive exertion of dominance in the institution, may seem like a 'survival of the fittest' approach. However, it doesn't stack up with the evidence, either from evolutionary biology, or natural selection.

Indeed, if you look at top predators, such as wolves, it is their ability to work together as a pack and collaborate, that allows them to take on and bring down prey, double their size. The same can be said for those hunted, animals adopting a 'safety in numbers' approach, from shoals of fish, to flocks of birds, helping animals achieve survival and species success.

Values of collaboration, as a valuable trait in individuals, was recognized by Forbes earlier this year, as one of the key characteristics, to look out for and encourage, when employers are looking to recruit, rather than competitiveness. The benefit being that such individuals are likely to be team players and helps institutions foster institution productivity and success.

While the concept of "divide and rule" can have negative implications for teamwork and collaboration, it is important to note that the specific impact on teachers' commitment may not have been extensively studied. However, the factors mentioned above provide a foundation for understanding the elements that can influence teachers' commitment to their work [36]. The author stated that "Divide and rule" is a political or administrative strategy that aims to gain and maintain power by creating divisions and conflicts among groups or individuals.

The term is often associated with colonialism, where colonial powers would exploit existing divisions within a colonized population to maintain control. The strategy involves fostering rivalries and tensions between different groups, making it easier for the ruling power to maintain dominance.

While "divide and rule" is not typically used in the context of teachers' commitment to work, it is possible to explore how this strategy could potentially impact teachers and their work environment. By creating divisions among teachers, such as pitting different departments or grade levels against each other, the administration may weaken collective support and solidarity. This fragmentation can lead to a lack of collaboration, decreased trust, and reduced commitment among teachers. If teachers are encouraged to compete against each other for limited resources, recognition, or rewards, it can create a hostile and unhealthy work environment. Favoritism and unequal treatment can further exacerbate divisions and erode teachers' commitment to their work. Divisions and conflicts can hinder effective communication within the teaching staff. When teachers are pitted against each other or perceive a lack of transparency from the administration, it can lead to a breakdown in trust and a decline in commitment.

A "divide and rule" approach can hinder opportunities for professional development and growth. If resources and support are distributed unequally among teachers or if collaboration and knowledge-sharing are discouraged, it can impede the professional growth of educators and negatively impact their commitment to the profession. It is worth noting that a positive and supportive work environment, characterized by collaboration, trust, and effective leadership, can counteract the negative effects of a "divide and rule" strategy. Building strong relationships, promoting open communication, and fostering a culture of teamwork can enhance teachers' commitment to their work and mitigate the impact of divisive tactics [37]. The authors stated that however, there is a considerable body of literature on teacher commitment and its relationship with job satisfaction. High levels of commitment are often associated with increased job satisfaction and vice versa. Teachers who are satisfied with their work environment, relationships with colleagues, administrative support, and opportunities for professional development tend to exhibit higher levels of commitment. The organizational climate plays a significant role in determining teachers' commitment. A positive and supportive climate, characterized by trust, collaboration, and effective communication, can enhance teachers' commitment to their work. Conversely, a negative climate, marked by conflicts, lack of support, and perceived unfairness, may decrease commitment levels.

Effective leadership and support from school administrators are crucial for fostering teachers' commitment. Administrators who provide clear expectations, recognize and value teachers' efforts, and offer support and resources contribute to higher levels of commitment. Conversely, a lack of leadership, poor communication, and inadequate support can adversely affect commitment. Access to professional development opportunities and the availability of resources for growth and improvement positively impact teachers' commitment. When teachers feel supported in their professional growth and have opportunities to enhance their skills and knowledge, they are more likely to demonstrate higher levels of commitment and positive relationships among colleagues can significantly influence teachers' commitment. Collaboration, teamwork, and a supportive network of peers create a sense of belonging and contribute to higher commitment levels. Conversely, a toxic or divided work environment can diminish commitment and negatively affect teacher morale.

## 5. Recommendations

The researcher makes the following recommendations:

Head teachers ought to hide the disparity in pay cheques or wages between different categories of staff as this may create tension among the teachers leading to inconsistent performance and intrigue at times.

Head teachers should equally control staff access to knowledge and information relating to promotions in the school. While it works as a political gimmick, when it is overt and well-known to all staff, it breeds resentment.

It is also very important to create fair systems during allocation of roles to individual staff.

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