MANAGING PEOPLE
MBA- MASTERS OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION



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Executive Summary:

Due to digitalization and globalization, people from different places work in multinational companies, and companies also hire different talents from any location in the world. In this scenario, international human resource management needs to manage the workforce in the USA and South Africa in an effective way so that a healthy work environment can be promoted in companies and countries that are also able to do profitable trade. The report contains in the first part contemporary and ethical issues that human resource professionals faced in both countries and how to deal with these issues. In the second part, the report focuses on the institutional training of the workforces of both countries so that they can respect cultural differences and create an inclusive working environment in their businesses. The Hofstede insights tool is used for comparison among both countries to understand the cultural differences. To manage people and diversity at work in both countries, three strategies are included in the report, which include promoting culture awareness, promoting effective communication, and promoting diversity and an inclusive work environment in work places. The report also contains recommendations for HR professionals, which helps to manage employees in both countries with efficiency. Overall, the research report helps to promote cultural awareness and build strong relationships among employees of South Africa and the USA for better trade.

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1. Introduction

In this modern era, different large companies expand their businesses in different countries for growth. To manage the workforce across different national boundaries, international human resource management practices play very important roles. International human resource management involves HR practices that help manage people around the globe. The main goal of the research is to examine the issues and problems related to human resource management in two different nations, which include South Africa, a developing nation, and the USA, a developed one. In the USA, a comprehensive understanding of the diverse cultural backgrounds of the American workforce is essential for managing HR as they navigate a complicated legal and regulatory environment. As they take into consideration various work ethics, communication styles, and management techniques, HR managers are required to comply with both federal and state labor regulations. In South Africa, HR management is influenced by the country's historical, social, and economic context.

HR managers must adhere to labor laws, address historical inequalities, and promote employment equity to ensure fair opportunities for all employees. Developing understanding and cooperation across cultural divides depends heavily on the human relationship management methods used in trade between the USA and Africa. Workshops that create cultural awareness can improve employee performance and create a positive work environment. For employees to avoid misunderstandings and build stronger relationships among coworkers, culturally sensitive communication abilities are essential. The process of implementing into practice a diverse and inclusive strategy involves evaluating the diversity landscape, establishing specific objectives, and ensuring transparency and dedication from the leadership. The report highlights the different ethical issues and HR practices to deal with those issues effectively. Additionally, it also focuses on different strategies that are required for both countries to train employees to work in the international market with efficiency.

Objectives of research

- Examine the difficulties and factors that come with managing human resources internationally, with a focus on South Africa and the United States in particular.
- Compare and contrast the HR management methods of a developing nation (South Africa) and a developed nation (USA).
- Analyze how these two nations' HR management systems are affected by historical, legal, and cultural aspects.
- Provide guidance and understanding to HR managers who work in global environments, especially those who must navigate the different difficulties of managing HR in South Africa and the United States.

Scope

The scope of this report is limited to the comparison of HR management practices in the United States and South Africa. It focuses on the difficulties and factors related to cultural variations, legal compliance, hiring and selection, training and development, pay and benefits, and international talent mobility.

2. Contemporary and ethical issues in international HRM management

There are several issues are faced by companies which are running their businesses in USA and South Africa. In the modern era, the major focus on sustainability productive of the companies so that they become corporate social responsible companies in the world (Matten and Moon, 2008). The different contemporary and ethical issues impact the success of companies in both countries

2.1 Compliance with labor laws and regulations

Companies operating in South Africa and the United States must comply with local labor laws and regulations. Every nation has its own laws addressing things like minimum wages, working hours, employment contracts, and workplace safety regulations. If they want to stay out of legal trouble and safeguard employees' rights, HR managers need to make sure that their HR policies and procedures comply with these laws. For example, in South Africa, employees usually face racism among white and black people; the white people get more opportunities

then black (Mabasa, 2023). In USA, people use issue of compensation from companies. For this international human resource management practices, it is required that both the countries compliance with labor laws and regulations.

2.2 Cultural Difference

The multinational companies mostly hire people at global scale which create cultural difference in work place. The people are fails to express their ideas and become reason of reduction in employee satisfaction and retention in multinational companies. International HR management is significantly impacted by cultural differences. There are cultural rules, values, and communication techniques that are different between South Africa and the United States. It is essential for HR managers to recognize and celebrate these cultural differences in order to facilitate effective cross-cultural team management, dispute resolution, and collaboration (Nagar, 2012). Failing to do so may result in miscommunications, a drop in output, and tense working relationships.

2.3 Language barriers

International HR management may face difficulties due to language barriers. There could be communication style differences even if English is a common language in both South Africa and the United States. HR managers must make sure that language obstacles are not an obstacle to successful communication, offer language instruction when needed, and put plans in place to close any gaps in communication that might occur. According to research, a 10 percent increase in the language barrier index results in a 7 or 10 percent decrease in trade among countries (Binks, 2021). Due to these reasons, for effective trade among countries, it is required that a clear and effective communication strategy be implemented among employees so that they can work properly without any bias.

2.4 Diversity and inclusion

One of the most important ethical problems in global HR management is promoting diversity and inclusion. The history of socioeconomic inequality is different in South Africa and the United States, two separate nations. In order to eliminate hidden biases, guarantee equal chances for all workers, and create an inclusive workplace, HR managers have to find solutions

(Nagar, 2012). Positive discrimination laws, diversity education initiatives, and creating an environment of respect could all be part of this.

2.5 Ethical sourcing and labor practices.

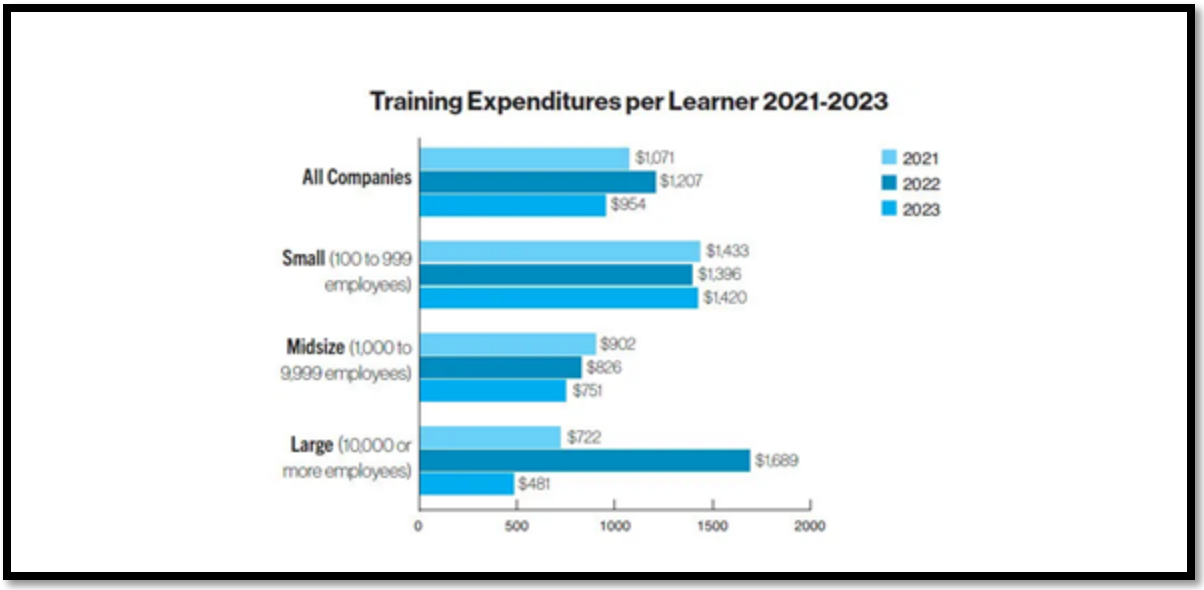
Global companies must take into consideration labor practices and ethical sourcing. HR managers are responsible for making sure that company labor policies and supply chains adhere to moral principles including respecting human rights, paying fair wages, and providing safe working conditions. This is especially crucial in South Africa, where social inequalities and labor exploitation in the past have brought attention to the need of ethical business operations (Matten and Moon, 2008).

Companies can develop a more sustainable and socially responsible approach to international HR management by investigating and addressing these ethical and contemporary problems. Legal compliance, cultural sensitivity, good communication, diversity and inclusion, ethical sourcing, and labor practices are critical policies and practices that HR managers must create in both the USA and South Africa.

3. Institutional arrangements in the USA and South Africa

3.1 Investment in training and development

According to research, it was found that USA companies will spend almost $101.8 billion on employee training in 2023 (Sedgman, 2023). The smaller companies spend more as compared to large companies for employee growth in the country, which is shown by the figure below:



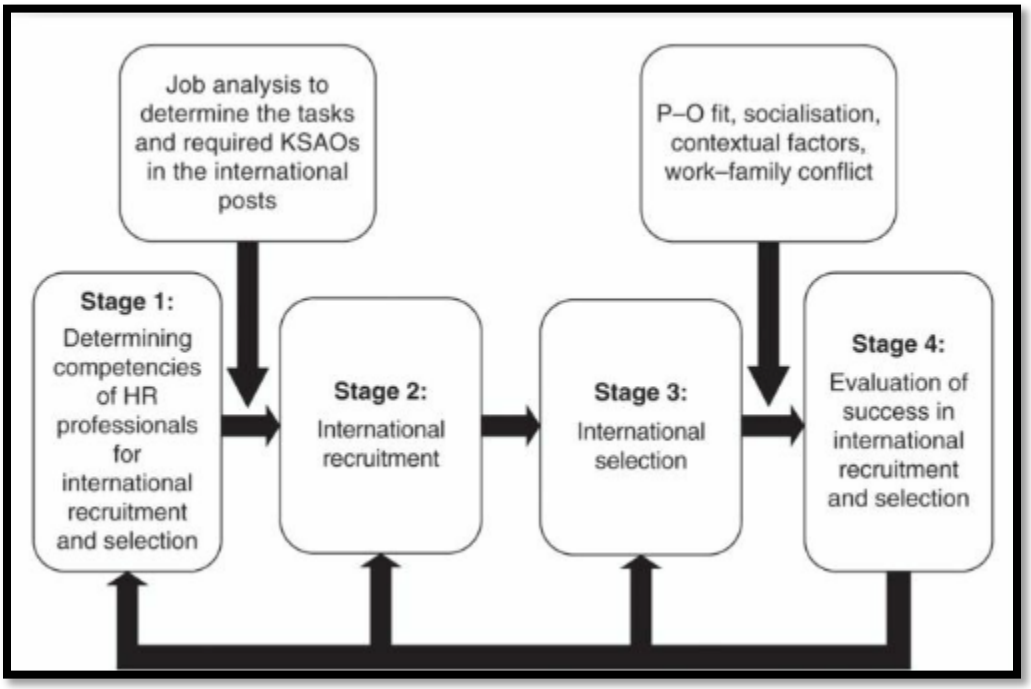
(Figure 1: (Sedgman, 2023))

In the United States of America, ongoing education and growth are highly valued. A lot of businesses invest a lot of money in training initiatives for both current and prospective staff members. The focus on training and development in HR practices is influenced by institutional arrangements, such as an effective education system, a culture of lifelong learning, and the availability of several training providers.

The historical background and socioeconomic issues of South Africa have an impact on the country's institutional framework for training and development. Through partnerships between businesses and educational institutions, as well as government programs, efforts have been made to reduce skills gaps and boost workforce development. Access to high-quality education and training is still uneven, though, and this might have an effect on HR procedures pertaining to training and development.

3.2 Requirement and selection

- In the USA, laws and regulations that promote equal employment opportunities and prohibit discrimination often serve as the guidelines for recruitment and selection procedures. Institutions that promote equitable employment procedures and enforce anti-discrimination legislation include the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) (U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, 2009). It is expected that employers will follow these rules and use inclusive and diverse hiring practices.
- In South Africa, the Employment Equity Act, which attempts to advance equality and correct past inequalities in the workplace, has an impact on the institutional structures . Businesses must use recruitment strategies to address the lack of representation of specific populations. This has an influence on HR procedures by directing hiring and selection procedures to give priority to diversity and representation.



(Figure 2: (Caligiuri, 1999))

3.3 Welfare of employees

- Labor rules and regulations, such as the Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA) and the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), have an impact on the institutional arrangements for employee welfare in the United States . These regulations provide guidelines for safe

working conditions, reasonable pay, and hours worked. Employee benefits like healthcare, retirement programs, and work-life balance initiatives are frequently given top priority in HR practices in the United States.

- Labor laws, such as the Basic Conditions of Employment Act and the Compensation for Occupational Injuries and Diseases Act, have an impact on the institutional arrangements for employee welfare in South Africa. These regulations set minimum requirements for working hours, pay, and safety and health in the workplace. The welfare and protection of employees in South Africa must be ensured by following to certain standards in HR practices (Andre, 2010).

3.4 Trade union membership and influence

- The trade unions have been historically important in influencing labor relations and fighting for workers' rights in the United States. Even if the number of union members has decreased recently, organized labor is still significant, especially in some sectors of the economy. Union-employer talks and collective bargaining agreements frequently influence HR procedures in union businesses.
- The trade unions have always played a significant role in influencing labor relations and promoting workers' rights in South Africa. The nation's institutional framework supports the freedoms of collective bargaining and association. Engaging with trade unions, establishing collective bargaining agreements, and using union representation to address workers' problems are some examples of HR practices in South Africa (National Labor Relations Board, 2023).

Examples of some institutional framework which are implemented into USA and South Africa:-

The national Labor Relation Act in USA

National Labour Relations Act (NLRA), sometimes known as the Wagner Act, is the 1935 federal law that regulates labour relations in the United States. It was established to address power imbalances between employers and employees and to safeguard workers'

rights to engage in collective bargaining (National Labour Relations Board, 2023). Establishing the National Labour Relations Board (NLRB)—an unbiased government body charged with monitoring union representation elections and implementing the law—is part of the NLRA. Apart from investigating claims of unjust labour practices, the National Labour Relations Board (NLRB) conducts elections to determine whether workers desire union representation (National Labour Relations Board, 2023).

The Fair Labor Standards Act in USA

To ensure compliance, employers must maintain accurate records of the wages, hours worked, and other pertinent data for their employees. The Wage and Hour Division of the US Department of Labour investigates complaints and brings legal action against violators of the Fair Labour Standards Act (FLSA) (U.S. Department of Labour, 2023). Protecting worker rights, achieving fair compensation, and putting an end to unfair labour practices all depend on the Fair Labour Standards Act (FLSA). To maintain a fair and equitable workplace, employers must comprehend the FLSA and abide by it. The Fair Labour Standards Act (FLSA), a federal statute enacted in 1938, established the minimum wage, overtime pay, and child labour laws in the US.

In addition to ensuring that workers receive fair remuneration for their labour, it sets guidelines for working hours (U.S. Department of Labour, 2023).

The Basic Conditions of Employment Act

The Basic Conditions of Employment Act (BCEA) is the principal piece of legislation in South Africa that dictates fundamental standards for working conditions and labour laws.Minimum wage, leave benefits, and working hours are only a few of the subjects it covers (South African Government, 2018).

One of the primary components of the BCEA is the minimum wage requirement. The National Minimum pay Act determines the minimum pay for the country. As of March 2021, the minimum wage in South Africa is fixed at ZAR 21.69 per hour. It is noteworthy that certain sectors or businesses may have minimum pay rates higher than the federal

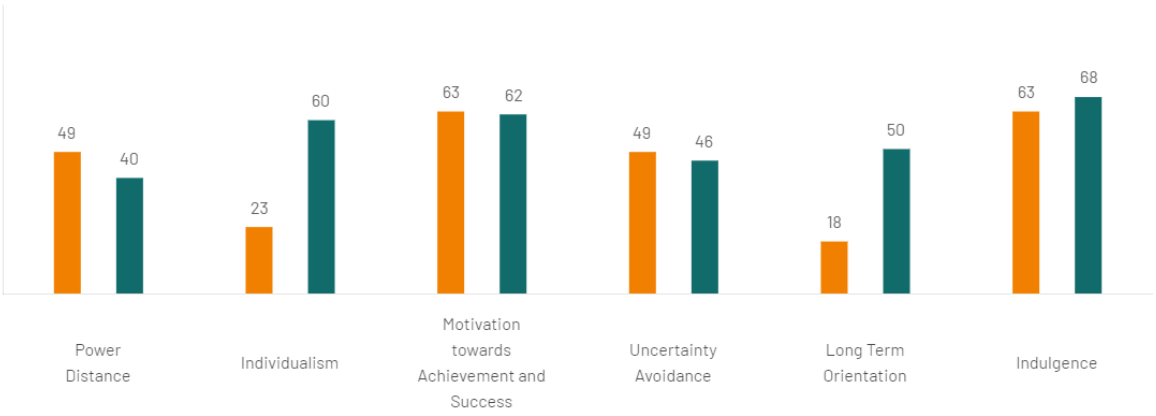
minimum wage (South African 12 Government, 2018). To provide fair compensation, employers must abide by the minimum wage laws.

All American businesses must abide by the two regulations mentioned above regarding employees, and human resources experts must do the same for all workers, regardless of their background. The laws and regulations pertaining to employment and other HR-related matters that support a positive working culture and bilateral relations between South Africa and the United States are the primary emphasis of the international human resources department.

4. Difference in Workplace Culture

4.1 Analysis of difference in workplace culture between USA and South Africa

To identify the culture difference among both the countries, the hofstede insights tool is used which is explained below:-



(Source: https://www.hofstede-insights.com/country-comparison-tool?countries=south+africa%2Cunited+states)

4.1.1 Power Distance:

The degree to which less powerful people in a society accept and expect power to be distributed improperly is known as power distance. With a relatively high Power Distance score, South Africa is more accepting of authority and hierarchical organizations. The USA, in comparison, has a lower Power Distance score, indicating a preference for flatter organizational

structures and more equitable interactions. The effect on HR management practices: While empowering staff members and encouraging a participatory decision-making process may be prioritized more in the USA, human resources professionals in South Africa may need to navigate and respect hierarchical systems (Ahlawat, 2017).

4.1.2 Individualism:

This dimension measures the degree to which a society puts personal interests ahead of group objectives. The USA scored highly on individualism, placing a strong emphasis on personal accomplishment, liberty, and freedom. Conversely, South Africa has a lower Individualism score, indicating a stronger focus on community, group cohesion, and collective identity (Ahlawat, 2017). While team-based approaches and collective awards may be more common in South Africa, individual performance evaluation and recognition may be the focus of HR practices in the USA.

4.1.3 Motivation towards achievement and success

The degree to which a society rewards aggressiveness, competitiveness, and a desire of success is known as achievement orientation. The USA and South Africa share a common emphasis on achievement, ambition, and personal success, as seen by their relatively high rankings in this field. In both countries, advancement chances, individual recognition, and performance-based rewards may be given top priority in HR procedures. There might be a focus on creating a competitive atmosphere, establishing ambitious goals, and giving staff members a platform to highlight their accomplishments and abilities (Ahlawat, 2017).

4.1.4 Uncertainty Avoidance

The degree to which a society wants to avoid uncertainty and feels threatened by contradiction is measured by the concept of uncertainty avoidance. The USA exhibits a relatively low Uncertainty Avoidance score, suggesting a greater degree of tolerance for uncertainty. A preference for structure, regulations, and certainty is shown in South Africa's higher Uncertainty Avoidance score. While HR practices in the USA may be more flexible and open to change, human resources professionals in South Africa may need to establish clear policies and procedures that promote a sense of protection and confidence (Ahlawat, 2017).

4.1.5 Long-Term Orientation:

This is the degree to which a community stresses savings, determination, and long-term planning. Both South Africa and the USA scored quite low in this area, suggesting that they prioritize immediate satisfaction above long-term planning. It is important to keep in mind, though, that South Africa typically scores somewhat higher than the USA, indicating a slightly stronger emphasis on consistency and long-term planning. HR strategies in both countries could give priority to short-term objectives and instant outcomes. HR practices related to talent development, succession planning, and organizational stability may be influenced by the possible significantly higher emphasis on long-term planning and determination in South Africa (Ahlawat, 2017).

4.1.6 Indulgence:

The degree to which a society allows the satisfaction of basic human requirements and the enjoyment of life is measured by indulgence. The USA scored rather highly in this area, reflecting a culture that places a high importance on individual fulfillment, leisure, and self-expression. In contrast, South Africa's lower score indicates a more moderation in excess and a stronger focus on self-control and discipline. In the USA, HR strategies might emphasize work-life balance, employee engagement, and creating a pleasant and productive work environment. HR procedures in South Africa might place a high value on self-control, discipline, and respecting the law (Ahlawat, 2017).

Difference among HR practices of USA and South Africa

Employment contracts are rare in the United States, where most jobs are at-will, meaning that either the employer or the employee may end the relationship at any moment (Practices, 2023). However, employment contracts are more prevalent and place more of a focus on job stability and protection from unlawful dismissal in South Africa. The states and municipalities may have greater minimum pay rates, but the federal government sets the minimum wage in the United States. The government sets the minimum wage in South Africa, and it is valid across the country. The minimum wage in South Africa is generally less than the minimum wage in the United States.

In South Africa, unionization and collective bargaining are more common than in the US. The

rights of workers to engage in collective bargaining and trade unions are better protected under South African labor legislation (Practices, 2023). In general, South Africa provides leave entitlements that are more generous than those in the US. While there is no federal regulation in the United States requiring paid vacation time, employees in South Africa have the right to a minimum of 21 consecutive days of annual leave. To rectify previous injustices, South Africa has particular laws supporting affirmative action and employment equity. It is essential for employers to take action to address inequalities and encourage diversity in the workplace. There is no national legislation of a similar nature in the United States.

4.2 Examples of workplace difference in both countries:-

4.2.1 Communication Style

The other difference between both countries can be explained with the help of communication styles and the decision-making processes of employees. In the USA, companies promote clear and transparent ways of communicating. The employees are open to sharing ideas with one another using a hierarchical structure (Inabo, 2021). The company's focus on teamwork and collaboration so that the workforce works together to achieve the objectives of the company, whereas in South Africa, indirect communication is used and more focus is on building relationships. The country's diverse lifestyle and varied cultural background are frequently reflected in professional communication. People may be less direct in their expression of views because respect for authority and seniority is frequently stressed.

4.2.2 Decision making process

The USA frequently uses active, flat management structure. Personal independence giving workers the freedom to decide in their areas of expertise is valued. Achieving results is the primary focus of efficient decision-making, which has its roots in data and analysis (Navigator, 2021). Because of social conventions and past traditions, decision-making procedures in South Africa could be more hierarchical and centralised. Influence comes mostly from seniority and authority, and numerous stakeholders may be consulted before making choices. Efficiency may not always take priority over promoting harmony and reaching agreement.

5. Managing human relationship among different culture

5.1 Strategies for managing human relationship

There are different strategies that help companies in the USA and Africa manage trade with one another and human relationships among different cultural differences, which are given below: -



(Figure 3: Self-created)

5.1.1 Promoting Cultural Awareness Strategies

To create a better workplace in companies in both countries, companies need to invest in global citizenship training, which means setting up workshops for employees to spread culture awareness and train employees on how to deal with other employees who are from different backgrounds. For example, if any of the South Africans work for a USA company, then the company must arrange training for that person from South Africa for better learning. It was found that companies improve their employee's performance by 30 percent after promoting culture awareness and training for employees. It really helps create a healthy work environment and helps employees understand one another's differences in a better way. It is also help to make understand employees to respect one another beliefs.

5.1.2 Promote culturally sensitive communication skills

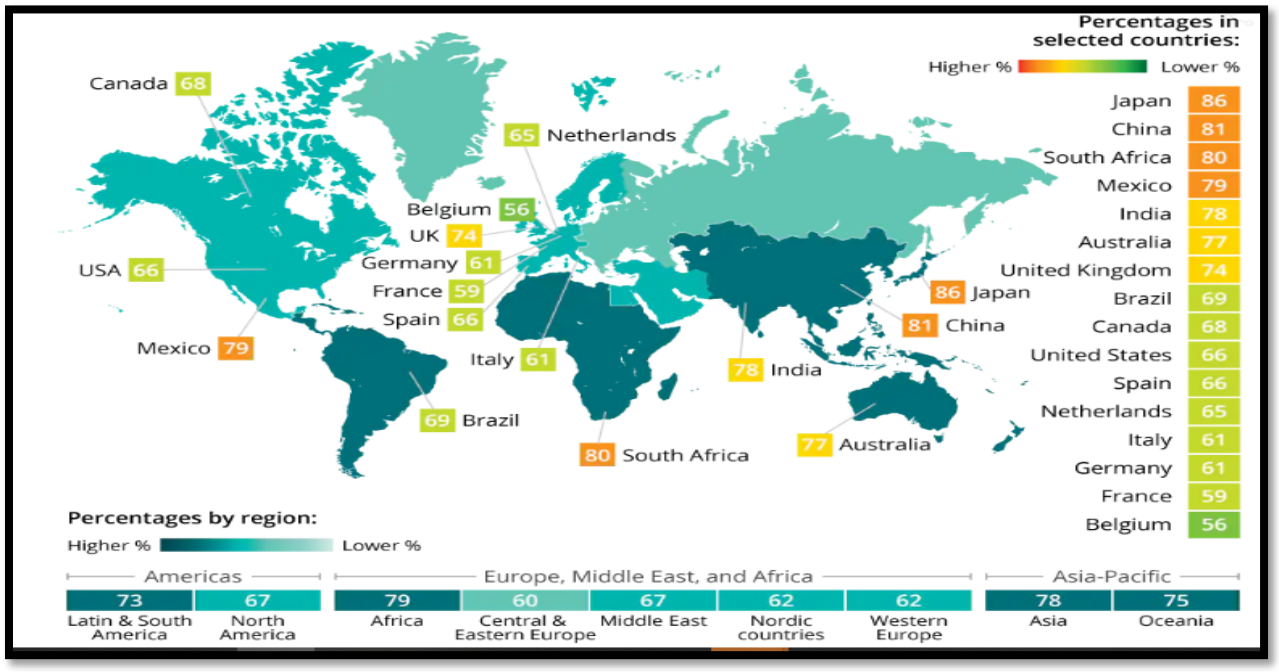
In South Africa as well as the United States, managing diversity in the workplace requires effective communication. Regardless of the language used, it's important to understand and enjoy the local way of life in order to prevent miscommunications and promote closer bonds between people. If you have American employees, for example, and they don't speak English well, you must train them in efficient communication. Encourage them to speak simply, without using any slang that might be confusing. When in doubt, English-speaking staff members should also feel free to clarify things. Similarly, it is essential to be culturally aware and flexible in your communication style when interacting with people in South Africa, where there are several official languages (WorldRef, 2022). Cooperation and understanding can be improved by giving your staff guidance on how to interact with clients and coworkers who might not speak the same language. Companies in the USA and South Africa can successfully manage diversity and create closer bonds with workers and clients from diverse backgrounds by encouraging efficient communication techniques and cultural knowledge.

5.1.3 Promoting Diverse and Inclusive strategy

It is essential to evaluate the existing condition of diversity and inclusion before creating an inclusive and diverse strategy for both countries USA and South Africa. This involves looking at the composition of the workforce, its representation at all organizational levels, and its current policies and procedures. Clear goals and objectives that target areas for improvement and are in accordance with the overall business plan should be defined based on the assessment (Bourke and Garr, 2017). Given the different cultural, social, and financial circumstances of the whole country, the strategy should address a range of diversity and inclusion issues, including gender, color, ethnicity, age, and disability.

Leadership responsibility and dedication are essential to the strategy's success. Senior executives should support diversity programs, set an excellent example, and hold each other and themselves responsible for achievements (Bourke and Garr, 2017). To bring in and keep different talent, methods for talent acquisition and retention should be put into place. This could entail reviewing hiring procedures, writing inclusive job descriptions, collaborating with different organizations, and giving minorities opportunities for growth and promotion.

By promoting this strategy in both countries, diversity can be handled better in companies and employees from different backgrounds can be managed better. The below given image the diversity in both countries:-



(Figure 4: (Bourke and Garr, 2017))

6. Recommendations for HR leaders to effectively managing cultural diversity

There are several recommendations for HR leaders to manage cultural diversity in USA and South Africa, which are given below:-

- HR managers should design a plan that is compatible with the objectives and core values of the company (Panel, 2022). Metrics to track development, action plans, and clear goals should all be part of this strategy.
- HR managers need to encourage an inclusive culture in which all staff members have a sense of worth, dignity, and empowerment. This can be accomplished by putting in

place procedures and policies that support diversity, like inclusive hiring guidelines, mentorship programs, and staff resource groups.

- Human resources managers need to provide courses that increase knowledge of implicit bias, cultural sensitivity, and inclusive conduct. These initiatives may promote a more inclusive workplace by assisting staff members in understanding and appreciating diverse viewpoints.
- Human Resources managers must use standardizing the interview process as one of their key strategies for creating truly diverse teams. Organizations can reduce the possibility of recruiting bias and ensure a fair and uniform interview process for all candidates by using digital, structured interviewing. Using this method, each job applicant is asked the identical set of questions in the same way and sequence.
- Senior leadership's active sponsorship of diverse, mid-career, high-potential personnel is an essential strategy for achieving workplace diversity and avoiding tokenism (Panel, 2022). By doing this, companies can efficiently utilize the variety of talent pool that is frequently present at the middle and front management levels and promotes inclusive behaviors.
- The employment regulations may be included in international trade agreements, such as free trade agreements or regional trade blocs, which organizations must abide by. HR departments should be aware of these terms and make sure that their employment policies comply with applicable trade agreements.
- Countries may vary greatly in the rules and customs regarding employment contracts and termination. Certain nations may have flexible policies when it comes to notice durations, severance compensation, and termination procedures ((Panel, 2022). HR departments should become knowledgeable about the unique laws and customs of every nation to guarantee compliance to the law and equitable treatment of workers.
- Human resources managers should set up channels for honest discussion and open conversation so staff members may express issues, recommendations, and personal experiences with diversity and inclusion. This may help in locating obstacles and chances for development.

7. Conclusion

In conclusion, managing human resources globally requires giving careful consideration to the different problems and difficulties that arise in different countries. The comparison of HR management methods between the developed country of the United States and the developing country of South Africa has been the main purpose of this paper. It is clear that both countries deal with particular challenges and issues related to cultural differences, legal compliance, recruiting and selection, training and development, compensation and benefits, and the mobility of personnel internationally. In both nations, observing labor rules and regulations is an important ethical concern. To safeguard employees' rights and stay out of legal trouble, HR managers must make sure that business policies and procedures meet with relevant local labor laws. Language and cultural barriers can also limit productive cooperation and communication in global corporations.

The HR practices are greatly affected by the institutional structures in the USA and South Africa, especially when it comes to training and development, requirements and selection, employee welfare, and trade union membership and influence. In the United States of America, a culture of lifelong learning, an efficient educational system, and the accessibility of training providers all contribute to a high emphasis on continuing education and training. In South Africa, efforts have been undertaken by the government as well as by businesses and educational institutions to close the skills gap and support workforce development. However, there is significant inequality in access to excellent training and education. The cultures of the workplaces in South Africa and the United States differ greatly. Comparing the USA to South Africa, the USA appears to have less power distance, higher individualism, lower uncertainty avoidance, and higher indulgence.

HR Professionals in South Africa may be more concerned with hierarchical structures, team-based methods, and explicit policies than those in the USA, which may place more emphasis on empowerment, individual recognition, and flexibility. The USA emphasizes transparency and independence in decision-making, whereas South Africa encourages indirect communication.

These differences also extend to communication methods and decision-making processes. Both in the USA and South Africa, HR leaders must manage cultural diversity effectively. HR managers can monitor progress and establish specific objectives by creating plans that are compatible with the company's goals and core values. Employee empowerment and a sense of value are increased when policies and practices that support diversity are implemented to create an inclusive culture. Providing education on unintentional prejudice and cultural sensitivity encourages people to understand and value different points of view. Fairness and the elimination of bias are ensured by standardizing the interview process through the use of digital, structured interviews. Diverse talent is sponsored by senior leadership to prevent tokenism and encourage inclusive conduct. Last but not least, establishing forums for open discussion enables the sharing of concerns and growth prospects. HR directors may effectively manage cultural diversity by putting these suggestions into practice.

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