The Role of Human Resource Management Within the South African Public Service in Ensuring Cultural Diversity Readiness for Public Servants Dealing with Different Cultures

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Abstract

As a result of a fast-changing world and work environment in a globalized public service, the public servants in South Africa are expected to adapt quickly to new conditions, problems, and changes, including dealing with different cultures and nationalities. A continually shifting setting that necessitates acclimating to a new culture can be challenging for any public worker who is expected to perform at the highest level consistently. Therefore, this article aims to determine the role of Human Resource Management departments in ensuring that all public officials are prepared for cultural diversity. This readiness can be achieved by providing public officials with cultural diversity training to increase their awareness and sensitivity to various cultures. The study utilized a qualitative methodology, and purposive sampling was used to sample a variety of documents that helped researchers establish the function of HRM departments in assuring the preparedness of public workers in South Africa for a rapidly changing world and workplace. The basis of this study is that HRM departments are responsible for training in this area. This paper contributes to the South African public sector literature by highlighting the importance of HRM departments in ensuring that all public officials are prepared for cultural diversity.

Introduction

As a result of increased globalization, people from many cultures, beliefs, and backgrounds are increasingly compelled to engage with one another (Gopalkrishnan, 2018). Good diversity management has been utilized to support and defend against prejudice for many years (Civitillo et al., 2018). Since the authors of this study have witnessed an increase in workplace diversity over time, it became intriguing to examine workplace diversity. Observing diversity management is an exciting aspect of attending an international business school with a diverse student group. Diversity has emerged as a crucial aspect of organizational leadership in recent years. In addition, as the number of demographic variances increases, it is anticipated that variety will become even more prominent in the future. Organizations must be varied to compete effectively in today's global economy, marked by international rivalry. Diversity in the workplace is necessary for employees to accept and adapt to change more efficiently and increase their inventiveness level (Verkuyten et al., 2020).

Furthermore, (Verkuyten et al., 2020) state that diversity concerns are growing much more essential and relevant, particularly in the future, as the differences in the population of many countries continue to grow in number. The ability to recognize, value, and manage diversity is a critical component of effective people management, ultimately increasing workplace efficiency (Civitillo et al., 2018). The increasing internationalization of business, greater worker flexibility, global market development, and raising the consciousness of varied individuals all contribute to the question of how diversity management can take

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advantage of the developing multiculturalism. This is a process in which diverse cultures or groups enjoy the same rights and opportunities, and no one is regarded as being less significant than another. By promoting equality in the workplace, an organization will attract and retain a highly competent workforce. Apart from identifying the diverse workforce, diversity management values and controls the multicultural workforce, considering the background, individual characteristics, and religious beliefs. This allows organizations to fully exploit and utilize employees' talents while also achieving organizational objectives (Gopalkrishnan, 2018).

According to a previous study, professionals in the management profession and organizations have established a growing interest in cultural diversity at work. According to the review's results, the subject is neither simple nor straightforward ((Hysa, 2020). It is also considered that an organization's approach to managing diversity determines whether it achieves negative or positive results rather than the variety itself (Stahl et al., 2021). Methods that can be used include attitude, initiative, task delegation, performance requirements, and motivating strategies. It is also known from the statistics that diversity management is an essential and significant aspect of human resource management in organizations (Gadi et al., 2018), especially for the future, given the growing number of demographic differences in the workplace.

However, according to the study's findings, employee retention, motivation, and performance are not necessarily affected by diversity but by an employee's sense of exclusion or inclusion in the organization's process (Adamson et al., 2021). However, how an organization and its employees perceive cultural diversity may hinder their capacity to interact effectively without their knowledge. In their work, (Civitillo et al., 2018) reference a study conducted by (Dover et al., 2020)in which it was established that perceptions of diversity practices differed amongst employees and managers within the same organizations. Employees believed that their workplaces were not implementing the various diversity practices and initiatives, but managers claimed that their organizations were implementing the different diversity practices and strategies well. Therefore, it can be argued that current practices may be at odds with how or what employees perceive the situation to be. To be effective, the performance requirements must be communicated appropriately and objectively determined (Ugwuanyi, 2020).

In addition, practitioners are strongly encouraged to utilize evidence-based management practices. Given that managers are frequently uninformed of the most recent research findings, it is not surprising that these findings are not incorporated into their courses (Daouk-Öyry et al., 2021). As a result of this condition, research-practice gaps in management have become a hotly contested subject (Gopalkrishnan, 2018). In human resource management, the knowledge gaps connected with research findings and conceptions regarding best practices in human resource

management (HRM) have been recognized as areas of concern (Harney et al., 2021).

In general, studies indicate that human resource practitioners are unaware of the most recent scientific data, with research showing that, on average, HR professionals appropriately respond to only half of research-informed practice questions (Wisshak et al., 2018). While these studies illustrate a gap between research and practice, they also identify specific functional areas where there is insufficient knowledge transfer between research and practice (e.g., staffing practices and the role of intellectual capabilities). This low degree of transmission has remained virtually unchanged in the first two decades of the twenty-first century (Wisshak et al., 2018), indicating that practitioners are not receiving sufficient exposure to the accumulating research findings. In addition, investigations have demonstrated a misalignment between the priorities of human resource management experts and practitioners. (Dirani et al., 2020), for instance, arrived at the conclusion that findings deemed extremely significant by academics were distinct from those discussed in practitioner papers. (Cheng et al., 2021) report a similar finding, stating a substantial difference in the themes of interest transmitted in academic and practitioner articles (e.g., motivation versus compensation and rewards). (Wang et al., 2020)noticed that.

In contrast, practitioners appear to be focused on formal, function-specific programs and their impact on organizational performance. The focus of research is on particular human resource practices and employees' experiences resulting from these practices. These findings suggest a mismatch between researchers and practitioners regarding what constitutes relevant and significant areas of interest. Consequently, there is cross-talk, with researchers failing to provide practitioners with information that can be used to support investment in human resource management and practitioners failing to tell researchers about the critical issues in the modern workplace.

Since its introduction in the 18th century, the training and education of public officials have evolved and changed as a result of an unpredictable and rapidly changing work and global environment within an international public sector (Van Jaarsveldt, 2016). Consequently, the education and training of public officials cannot be neglected. In this regard, (Zhang et al., 2021)assert that Human Resource Management (HRM) plays a crucial role in ensuring that employees are prepared for the "fast pace of globalization" impacted by varied cultures. Therefore, it is only logical that all public officials who operate nationally and globally with other cultures and in a mixed cultural milieu should be appropriately trained to address cultural diversity. According to (Chams et al., 2019), human resource management is vital for every organization, especially the public sector, in managing cultural diversity. In this regard, (Norman-Major, 2014)asserts that public officials will be able to provide excellent service delivery to the general public if they can adapt to varied work situations. According to (Rice et al.,

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2014), HRM departments are responsible for "initiating" concepts for training programs. Therefore, it may be claimed that public human resource research management is primarily responsible for educating employees in a culturally varied and complicated workplace (PHRM). Within the subject area of Public Administration, HRM is concerned mainly with staff recruitment and selection, performance evaluation, and training and development, including creating and maintaining cultural competency (Wyatt-Nichol et al., 2014).

Consequently, a subfield such as HRM should respect cultural diversity and make employees aware of cultural differences (Laurent, 1986). This is reinforced by (Landis et al., 2004), who assert that the development of intercultural competence may be demonstrated as a result of training based on coherent theory and thorough research. HRM should continually update these training programs to the changing needs of public personnel.

Human resource management (HRM) refers to human resources (HR) responsibilities such as planning, development, compensation, integration, and maintenance for this study (Norman-Major, 2014). In the public sector, HRM departments focus primarily on "people-related issues," such as career management and training and development (Van Jaarsveldt, 2016). Consequently, a cultural diversity training program refers to an intervention started by an employer, such as the South African public service, to educate professionals for the demands of their chosen vocation (Harney et al., 2021) within the theoretical context of general HR management.

According to (Norman-Major, 2014), cultural competency is neither properly recognized nor routinely measured within public administration. To evaluate the function of HRM in ensuring that the public service is adequately trained in cultural sensitivity, this paper will first examine the appropriate methodology. The complexity of the South African public service will be discussed next. Thirdly, the role of HRM in delivering training on cultural diversity will be examined. Fourthly, the comprehension of cultural diversity in a complex world and workplace will be reviewed. In conclusion, the significance of a cultural diversity training program will be discussed.

Methodology

Rice et al. (2014) state that the majority of scholarly literature in the field of Public Administration and public HR management provides little or no coverage of cultural competency. This paper aimed to contribute to the minimal information within the field of human research management in Public Administration to determine the responsibility of HRM to ensure that public servants are adequately trained for a culturally diverse work environment. As a result, a qualitative research method was used for this paper to examine the role of HRM in providing training for cultural diversity training within the South African public service. (Polonsky et al.,

2018) state that "Qualitative research methods involve utilizing a diverse range of data ... in various media". Hence, the author reviewed several sources, including books, articles, training programs, online information such as human resource websites, and research focused on developing practical cultural diversity training. This review assisted in determining the complex nature that public servants are working in that requires them to be culturally sensitive in a diverse working environment. The most relevant literature was identified according to the following criteria:

- A purposive sample of scholarly literature was selected by searching for literature that will assist the researchers in determining the role of HRM in the readiness of public servants in the South African public service
- Relevant literature was grouped into three categories, namely:

  o Scholarly views from academics that write extensively on the complex nature of the public service
  o Training programs
  o HRM roles and responsibilities.

The literature that was selected in each of the three categories for this research includes the following:

- articles, journals, and books that focused on HRM, training, and cultural diversity, were analyzed and discussed. These resources were obtained after doing a comprehensive search of the different databases, including libraries, and
- The World Wide Web was used to obtain additional information focused on cultural diversity within the working environment.

In keeping with the preceding, the research design for this study was essentially empirical. A literature review of the most current books and journal articles sheds light on the role and function of HRM in assuring the cultural diversity readiness of South African public officials.

NVivo12 was utilized to code the 97 documents chosen for study. As a result, a coding system was devised. The author then randomly selected 20 academic and 20 practitioner papers to code (Azungah, 2018). When the coding results were compared, it was found that there was a high level of agreement. Fixes were made to the source code to address any discovered issues. Following this, each document was coded using the predefined system. Then, it was determined that all articles had been encoded using first-order codes, which had been compressed into second-order principles and compiled into dimensions. The improvements agreed upon were implemented. We used Excel to create comparative tables to identify the gaps between the knowledge shared in academic and practice literature, focusing on practitioner-relevant topics underrepresented in academic publications and academic issues absent from practice publications. This investigation's conclusions are detailed in the next section.

Findings

The Complex Nature of The Public Service

No public service aspect can be implemented until it has become government legislation that provides directives and guidelines that affect its citizens' rights, freedom, needs, and aspirations. This relates not only to the challenges of the public service but also to the complexity of the public service. (Haruna, 2014)states that authors agree that public service is complex due to its values, including care, compassion, fairness, ethics, efficiency, and effectiveness. The loss of public ethics within the general section is a challenge for any government, as it could cause frustration among the public members. It could also be said that the public service is complex due to political accountability. (Grimsey et al.)argues that political responsibility "is answerable to the public in matters relating to the delivery of services."

In addition to the political participation mentioned previously, the nature of the public sector is highly complex, as it comprises personnel from diverse cultural backgrounds. This also applies to South Africa since the South African public service change exemplifies the pervasiveness of artistic effects in contemporary politics, according to (Levin, 2018). In its Annual Performance (Ping et al., 2019), the Public Service Commission notes, "There is a need to shift the mindset of individuals and to realize that despite our diverse histories, languages, cultures, experiences, perspectives, and interests, we share a shared destiny." Employees unwilling to adjust to a culturally diverse workplace may become ethnocentric. According to (LePoidevin et al., 2019), ethnocentrism is the practice of condemning the behavior of people of another culture as unreasonable without attempting to comprehend the significance of the other person's behavior in its context. Therefore, within the subject field of Public Administration, HRM is primarily concerned with staff recruitment and selection, performance evaluation, and training and development, including creating and maintaining cultural competency (Wyatt-Nichol et al., 2014). Consequently, a subfield such as HRM should respect cultural diversity and make employees aware of cultural differences (Laurent, 1986).

The Role of Human Resource Management (HRM) in Providing Training

According to(Clinton et al., 1994), the job of South African public workers "should be characterized by thoroughness." This "thoroughness" could also refer to the relevant human resources component of the public service agency providing intense and practical training. According to Regulation 74(2) of the South African Public Service Regulations, 2016, the public service must give personnel training and development opportunities to prepare them for the workplace. In addition, training is incorporated in section 7(3)(b) of the South Africa Public Service Act, enacted under

Proclamation 103 of 1994 (RSA 1994), which specifies that human resource managers are accountable for the proper utilization and training of workers, among other things. In addition, for an organization to be effective, training must play a significant and critical part in its success. One of the primary objectives of human resource management is to establish appropriate training programs for public servants at all levels to train and develop these people (Van der Westhuizen, 2016). According to (Chams et al., 2019), training and development are essential to the HR department's operations. This is supported by (Bello, 2020), who states that public servants must regularly update and supplement their knowledge to meet the challenges of an ever-changing global environment and that learning institutions, such as human resource departments, will be required to "facilitate" the transfer of this knowledge into the trainees' working environment.

(Chams et al., 2019)state that one of the challenges for HRM is how to operate effectively against factors like globalization and internationalization. In this regard(Syed et al., 2019)state that the importance of worker diversity was raised with globalization. This is also applicable within the public service. Therefore, the aim of training provided by an employer, such as the public service, is part of a process to change an employee into a professional and to apply the knowledge and skills obtained during training in the working environment (Popejoy et al., 2020; Salzman, 2018; Stahl et al., 2021; Van Jaarsveldt, 2016). Furthermore, training should provide the necessary "and usable knowledge, skills, abilities, and attitudes" to become a professional public servant to ensure good governance (Haruna, 2014). (Moran et al., 2014)argue that training is a means to "leverage employee potential." Training is needed if employees, such as public servants, lack specific knowledge and skills required to be effective in their working environment (Subban et al., 2014). As a result, the main aim of training and development is "learning … [which] refers to employees acquiring knowledge, skills, competencies, attitudes, or behaviors". To develop the knowledge and skills of employees, training and development are designed to improve the productivity of employees and empower them to develop their potential within the organization (Moran, (Azungah, 2018; Gadi et al., 2018; Grimsey et al.). Therefore, as (Van Jaarsveldt, 2016) states, training could also be a transformation process.

(Bello, 2020) rightfully argues', ' It is appropriate to ask officials how well their initial education and training have prepared them for personal and environmental uncertainty. This could be extended to ask about human resource departments' role in framing public officials for personal and environmental uncertainty. In line with the above, it can be deduced that human resource departments within the SA public service are responsible for training. However, when it comes to providing public servants with training relevant to cultural diversity to ensure the optimal delivery of service in a complex and fast-changing public service, it was confirmed by (Van der Westhuizen, 2016)that DIRCO provides cultural diversity training

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due to the deployment of diplomats abroad. In this regard, a survey conducted amongst South African diplomats indicated that 77,78% of participating diplomats indicated that not enough time is allocated to the cultural diversity training offered by DIRCO and 83,33% of the respondents thought that the effects of cultural diversity are underestimated (Brewis, 2018). It was concluded that the cultural diversity training program should be made compulsory for all family members of diplomats. Additional information through independent study or an information package might also be a way to improve awareness of cultural diversity (Brewis, 2018). The South African National School of Government provides training and development at all levels of government. The School of Government further confirmed that most departments do not comply with areas such as diversity management. Therefore, although training is an HRM function, raining is an HRM function, most South African public service training does not include cultural diversity training. The training in cultural diversity, similar to that at DIRCO, could be extended to other South African public service sectors. The importance of cultural diversity and cultural diversity training will be explained next.

Understanding Cultural Diversity in A Complex World and Work Environment

People from different cultures have distinct values, beliefs, and behaviors, which is the root cause of cultural incidents, and this can be viewed as a barrier to engagement with the potential for conflict (Goh et al., 2018). Integration into a new cultural setting necessitates a high level of adaptation since individuals will be frequently confronted with unknown and alien value systems and customs (Shayakhmetov et al., 2018). Cross-cultural encounters are susceptible to uncertainty, misunderstanding, and misinterpretation due to cultural differences (Kaihlanen et al., 2019). Therefore, according to (Moran et al., 2014), a person must acknowledge cultural differences without becoming paralyzed.

South Africa is lucky to have a community comprised of numerous cultures with distinct values and norms. On Heritage Day in 2012, then-acting president Kgalema Motlanthe urged South Africans to embrace their diversity, develop a natural urge to embrace all the languages and cultures around them, and immerse themselves in the richness of their collective cultural heritage. This encouraged South Africans to learn about the diversity of cultures in the country (Mahmood, 2020). Section 30 of the South African Constitution protects cultural diversity by stating that "everyone has the right... to participate in the cultural life of their choice". Additionally, cultural diversity is safeguarded under Article 4 of the UNESCO statement on cultural diversity (UNESCO, 2001), which emphasizes that the protection of cultural diversity is (and should be) an ethical necessity. The South African concept of ubuntu – "I am because we are" – also plays a role in cultural diversity. According to (Goh et al., 2018), ubuntu embodies several human qualities, including warmth, empathy, trust, respect, understanding, and authenticity, and it provides a solid

foundation for cross-cultural relationships and valuing diversity. Before developing solutions to the nation's challenges, (Levin, 2018) argues that including South African culture in the discussion and debate will generate more pertinent questions about the nation's future. Consequently, as a result of South Africa's diversity, education and training relevant to cultural diversity could aid in this regard and provide a deeper appreciation for cultural distinctions and diversity. All parties profit when cultural differences are understood and utilized as a resource (Moran et al., 2014). Understanding the other and what the other says begins with a normal human state, which establishes a field of similarity and a means by which cultural differences contribute to the enrichment and comprehension of an individual (Elias et al., 2020).

Consequently, the individual must expand their knowledge of cultural diversity (Goh et al., 2018). In cultural variety, it is necessary to be aware of other cultures; hence, cultural awareness plays an essential part in making individuals aware of cultural diversity. According to Gutentag, Horenczyk, and Tatar, the views and values of individuals of a different culture are not incorrect; they are simply different and distinctive, as neither set of beliefs and values is superior or inferior (Popejoy et al., 2020)) and should be viewed as something beneficial (2018).

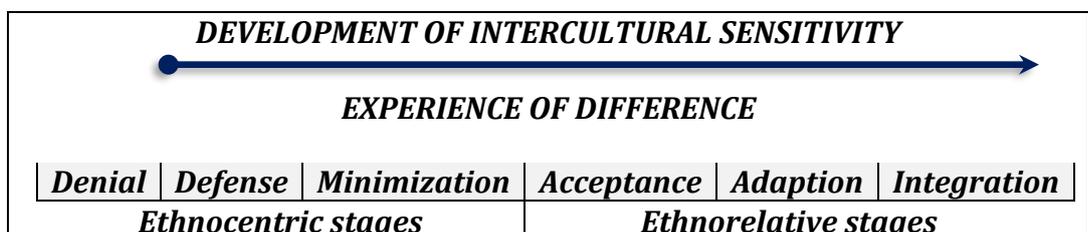**The Importance of Cultural Diversity Training**

The first cultural diversity training program took place in 1960 in the United States of America, and since then, different formats and methods of cultural diversity training have been developed ((Fathi et al., 2018). Cultural effectiveness allows a person to adapt faster with fewer complications, as they become more aware of the challenges facing them, as the training provides the efficacy that a person needs to different cultures. As a result, cultural diversity training "refers to learning efforts that are designed to change employee attitudes about diversity and develop skills needed to work with a diverse workforce". (Kempf et al., 2020)state that cultural diversity training enables individuals to learn both content and skills that facilitate effective interaction between different cultures and reduce misunderstandings and inappropriate behavior. Therefore, cultural diversity training programs should increase one's understanding of one's cultural heritage and one's ability to respond culturally sensitively and have a favorable attitude toward others from diverse backgrounds (Salzman, 2018).

Furthermore, (Vaccarino et al., 2018) state that cultural diversity training programs should prepare people for more effective interpersonal relationships when interacting with individuals from different cultures than their own. A training program in cultural diversity aims to provide information and serve as a guideline for interacting and reacting when confronted with a different culture. In addition, (Boswood, 2020) argues that preparatory cultural diversity training should not aim to demotivate participants but instead explain the problem and conflict areas when

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working in an intercultural environment. Cultural diversity training aims "to increase effectiveness across cultures" (Moran et al., 2014). Furthermore, cultural diversity training aims mainly to equip public servants with essential cultural knowledge and skills helpful to cope with the stressful experiences of culture shock and to assist in the learning and understanding of a new culture (Furnham, 2019; Landis et al., 2004; Laurent, 1986; Levin, 2018). This is supported by (Norman-Major, 2014; Pacheco, 2020; Ping et al., 2019), who states that "no employee can perform his or her duties properly … without suitable training". In this regard, (LePoidevin et al., 2019) state that a cultural diversity training program should aim to achieve, amongst others, outcomes relating to:

- about the culture – this outcome includes which values about the other culture are essential, and how the culture is reflected in historical, political, and economic data; and
- how to adjust to the culture – this outcome comprises having a non-evaluative attitude towards the culture and skills in predicting when the culture will be a factor in influencing behavior and how it affects behavior.

According to (Hysa, 2020), the objective of cultural diversity training is to eradicate values, preconceptions, and managerial practices that limit employees' personal growth. Training on cultural diversity should emphasize that culture fundamentally influences behavior (Salzman, 2018). Moreover, diversity necessitates the capacity to comprehend individuals from diverse cultural origins (Kaihlanen et al., 2019). As a result, the importance of cultural diversity training is to make trainees sensitive to other cultures and, as stated previously, there is a need in cultural diversity to be aware of different cultures; consequently, cultural awareness plays a vital role in bringing individuals awareness of cultural diversity. The development model of intercultural sensitivity (DMIS) is depicted in Figure 1 and the many stages a person goes through during training to become more culturally oriented.

DEVELOPMENT OF INTERCULTURAL SENSITIVITY					
EXPERIENCE OF DIFFERENCE					
Denial	*Defense*	*Minimization*	*Acceptance*	*Adaption*	*Integration*
Ethnocentric stages			*Ethnorelative stages*		

Figure 1. Development Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS)
Source: Based on Landis et al. (2004, p.153)

It can be seen from Figure 1 that by using practical cultural diversity training, the public servants become more sensitive toward different cultures by experiencing the various development stages from ethnocentric to ethno-relative. (Shayakhmetov et al., 2018) state that the development model evolves as interactions progress from a relatively

ethnocentric understanding of other cultures to a more ethnic-relative comprehension and appreciation. Thus, by becoming ethno-relative, the public servants working in a different cultural environment will be culturally competent, as seen above, and comply with the competency areas, which include having adaptation skills. The DMIS stages can be explained as follows:

- ethnocentric stage (to avoid cultural differences), where a person's own culture is experienced as central, cultural differences are denigrated, and elements of own culture are seen as universal; and
- ethno-relative stage (seeking cultural differences), which refers to a person's own culture seen in the context of other cultures, and other cultures are experienced as equally complex but as different constructions of reality. (Landis et al., 2004).

Ethnocentrism is the unconscious inclination to evaluate other cultures or nations based on one's standards and ideals (Irwin, 2020). According to (Moran et al., 2014), the career options of an ethnocentric employee, such as a public servant who is unable or unwilling to interact with members of another culture, are becoming increasingly limited. Ethnocentrism is pervasive and profoundly ingrained in the human psyche, and it is essentially antithetical to the concept of human equality (Irwin, 2020). According to (Kotze et al., 2019), ethnocentrism significantly impacts cross-cultural relationships. According to (Stahl et al., 2021), ethnocentrism is a fundamental characteristic of the human situation. This perspective could lead to ethnocentrism, xenophobia, and racism in the workplace. According to Norman-Major and Gooden (2015, p.349), cultural diversity competency is crucial since public employees interact with "a wide range of persons with different cultural norms, backgrounds, and orientations." Therefore, public service training and development should be able to address "the complexity, inconsistencies, and problems inherent in governance and public service" (Haruna, 2014).

Therefore, a training program should strive to make public workers more ethnorelative, ensuring that their own culture does not dominate other cultures. The cultural diversity training provided by human resource departments should equip public servants with the information and skills necessary to function in a culturally varied work environment. The objective of cultural diversity training is to enable individuals to adapt quickly to diverse cultures and, thus, be efficient in the workplace (Kempf et al., 2020). Consequently, a cultural diversity training program distinguishes between:

• cross-cultural training (when a trainer works with a group from a different culture or multiple cultures other than their own);

• teaching about cultures (training on intercultural relationships from a culture-general or culture-specific perspective, or both); or

• training delivered across and concerning cultures (the training is presented to people from diverse cultures, and the training content is either culture-general or culture-specific) (Landis et al., 2004).

The ultimate objective of cultural diversity training is for public officials to bear responsibility for developing strategies to adapt and communicate effectively when working with people of diverse cultures. (Pacheco, 2020). According to (Lee, 2018), the goals of a cultural diversity training program are for the learner to comprehend the significant characteristics of their own culture, compare these characteristics with those of other cultures, and respect the differences. According to (Fathi et al., 2018), training in cultural diversity is to equip individuals with intercultural competence. (Pacheco, 2020)asserts that cultural diversity trainers in the human resources department are typically expected to guide how to adjust to a new culture swiftly and painlessly. The most important aspect of cultural diversity training, according to (Lee, 2018), is educating a generation of individuals who can interact and work effectively with people of other cultures. According to (Kempf et al., 2020), cultural diversity training facilitates efficient cross-cultural relationships. Thus, cultural diversity training consists of specific information on how to adapt to a new culture, learn about cultures and, in particular, a foreign culture, and deal with cultural conflict situations. This is corroborated by (Ping et al., 2019), who claim that cultural diversity training should target specific training needs, in this case, the ability to be aware of and adapt to a foreign culture while minimizing culture shock.

Skills Development Through Cultural Diversity Training

HRM is responsible for employees to acquire new skills (Chams et al., 2019). In addition, (Norman-Major, 2014) claim that public administrators should have cultural competency skills to carry out their mission of serving the public. Therefore, Noe (2013) argues that to develop essential skills or close the skills gap, many employers engage in skills assessment, training, or a combination of the two. Therefore, public servants are expected to be professional in executing their duties, which requires training to gain specific skills and competencies (Van Jaarsveldt, 2016). In this regard, the SA government has zed that skilled employees are needed to increase the productivity of public services based on performance (Vyas-Doorgapersad, 2015). Within the SA spectrum, skills development includes using institutions of higher education (IHE) to enhance and invest in the skills and knowledge of the SA public sector workforce (Kroukamp et al., 2014). This also includes the National School of Government, which intends "to educate, train, professionalize and develop a highly capable, skilled and committed Public Service" (Stahl et al., 2021). As a result, public servants can equip themselves with the necessary knowledge and skills to carry out their jobs effectively. Therefore, it might be said that the skills development of SA public servants should include cultural competency skills such as cultural diversity.

According to (Syed et al., 2019), ineffective cultural diversity management by human resources could lead to conflict, demotivation, higher staff turnover, and poor organizational performance are all symptoms of a dysfunctional workplace. Furthermore, practical training and development in the public service ensure adequate public service delivery (Laurent, 1986; Mahmood, 2020).

Conclusion

This article focused on the role of HRM in ensuring cultural diversity readiness among public officials working in a distinct cultural working environment, either nationally, in government departments, or internationally, as diplomats, for instance. Under South African law, HRM is responsible for providing practical training to public servants. This includes cultural diversity training, which will equip public officials with the ability to adapt to a varied cultural setting. Without adequate training in cultural diversity, South African public servants may be intolerant of different cultures and nationalities and consequently be incapable of providing good service. In addition, this report may serve as a foundation for future research or study on the cultural diversity training program delivered to South African public officials. Consequently, human resource management's responsibility in the Public Administration is to guarantee an adequate cultural diversity training program for all public servants in South Africa.

Research Limitations

There are some limitations to this study that could be addressed by additional research. The first constraint is related to selecting the literature included in the analysis, which consisted solely of English-language papers being reviewed. Although this constraint is not as significant for academic literature because the sample covers a large number of research generated in various cultural contexts, it is substantial for practice because of the literature's tilt towards local knowledge. So, we recommend that future research include literature in regional languages to capture any disparities between different countries. Finally, some of our restrictions are due to the characteristics of the search strings that we utilized. Because we did not include the term 'employee' in our search, we could not have a large number of articles that focused on the direct impact of human resource management and diversity on employees. Even though we attempted to address this issue by doing a reference search, we feel that future studies should concentrate explicitly on the comparison of the direct impacts of human resource management and diversity on employees in research and practice communication.

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