



CaribHRForum
2008 **Survey Report**
on

*Regional HRM
Conferences*





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Regional HRM Associations

Name of Association	Year Started
BHRA: <i>Bermuda Human Resources Association</i>	1969
CISHRP: <i>Cayman Islands Society for Human Resource Professionals</i>	2000
HRMAB: <i>Human Resource Management Association of Barbados</i>	
HRMAJ: <i>Human Resource Management Association of Jamaica</i>	1980
HRMATT: <i>Human Resource Management Association of Trinidad & Tobago</i>	1989
HRPAG: <i>Human Resource Practitioners Association of Guyana</i>	



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Executive Summary

This survey addressed the value of regional HRM conferences to the participants, their representative organisation (company), the host HRM association, and the country with which they identify most. The conclusion is though the conferences have not reached or surpassed the stakeholder satisfaction gauge, there is optimism that with better planning they will improve overtime.

The survey has provided much needed evidence to finally assess what has been for a long time a suspicion, feeling or perception that the conferences were not meeting the expectations of all stakeholders. The results of the survey therefore addressed not just the benefits and value to the conference participants, but exposed the bigger picture of the status of HRM professionals and their requisite role and responsibilities in fast changing national, regional and global environments –politically, economically, socially and technologically.

The data represent the opinions and suggestions of 216 HRM professionals and related disciplines. They identified with 21 Caribbean countries stretching across from the Bahamas down to Suriname and the Netherlands Antilles. Most identified with Trinidad & Tobago. A variety of organisations (companies) was represented, and according to 17% of the respondents, their organisation's "current HRM disposition" was "very progressive". These progressive organisations tended to sponsor their employees at conferences. Only 129 of the respondents indicated that they had attended at least one conference in the last five years. Most respondents were female and most were in the 36 to 45 year age group. Respondents' formal HRM training ranged from diplomas and certificates to PhDs.

The results indicated that the intention of HRM conferences are appreciated but a lot more is required to get them to the standard that can guarantee maximum participation at all times. The three main factors that influenced decisions to attend a conference were, in order of prevalence - *the advertised theme, the presenters and the costs*. Relevance of the theme to the realities and context of the Caribbean was an expressed desire of the respondents, especially given the HRM challenges that will be presented by CSME. Respondents indicated that they attended

conferences mostly for networking, and in that regard, were concerned that conference participants were not always appropriate. The data showed that organisations were somewhat indifferent as to who should attend the conference – the HRM person or someone else in the organisation (company).

Further on the question of networking, two thirds indicated that they were members of their local HRM association, while only one fifth were members of CaribHRForum. The implication then is for the HRM community to get more connected if we are to make the degree of impact the region needs.

Respondents provided suggestions to improve revenue generation and the overall quality of the conferences. Suggestions for revenue generation included offering sessions for the local companies in the host country, selling DVDs, CDs, books, mugs, T-shirts; offering services such as personal consultation with prominent HR experts and getting sponsorship from private companies. Suggestions to improve the overall conference covered categories such as conference frequency, country location, social events, advertising and promotion and diverse organising committees.

The survey therefore offers a rich source of information that can be used as the baseline for comparison with future surveys. The exercise also presents itself as testimony to what can be achieved as the Caribbean HRM community struggles to improve and elevate its craft. It demonstrates that having a rich data set on everything HRM in the region can accommodate much needed research. Some areas include country comparisons of HRM practices, the impact of having HRM associations on the effectiveness of national HRM practices, the relationship between organisational characteristics and HRM practices, and whether there is a difference in HRM effectiveness between foreign-owned and locally-owned companies.

CaribHRForum Survey Team
28 October 2008

CaribHRForum 2008 Survey Report on Regional HRM Conferences

Introduction

This survey was sponsored and executed by CaribHRForum. The forum is a free network of Caribbean HRM professionals and other related disciplines. Members represent several Caribbean countries. This forum provides a venue and means for sharing information and discussing topical issues related to the field of human resource management. Since its inception in 2003, the forum has existed primarily as an email discussion list of over 300 members. CaribHRForum also publishes a free bi-weekly CaribHRNews that compiles HRM-related news from the region. The forum now has a website (www.caribhrforum.com) where members can share experiences and ideas as well as to make information available to the wider HRM community.

This HRM survey can be truly labelled a “virtual” survey. It has certainly taken advantage of the information and communication technologies available to the team, helping to keep costs at a minimum. Except for respondents living and working in the same country, there has neither been physical contact among the members of the survey team, nor between the survey team and respondents. This is truly encouraging for future surveys. The team thanks all participants and encourages everyone to be enthusiastic about these types of information collection undertakings. We can only get better from here. How successful we are depends on each one of us.

Background

The conversation about the value of HRM conferences has been on the front burner of CaribHRForum discussions over the years. Participants of HRM conferences began to question the value of the conferences they attended on two levels: personal and

organisational. For sometime the organisers and participants struggled with gaining an understanding about the factors influencing level of attendance, the usefulness of products and services offered at these conferences, and the overall lack of interest. In an effort to better address these troubling concerns, the participants who frequented the conferences called for a survey to get some quantitative evidence to support or decry their suspicions.

Purpose

The main purpose of the survey was therefore to determine the value of regional HRM conferences to participants, to the organisations they represent, to their HRM associations and to the region as a whole. The survey team also used this opportunity to increase awareness of and subsequently membership to the CaribHRForum.

Objectives

Given the purpose of the survey, the objectives were:

1. To understand what motivates HRM professionals to attend conferences
2. To understand what detracts HRM professionals from attending conferences
3. To determine how revenues can be improved at the conferences
4. To identify the best media for distributing information at conferences
5. To identify the preferred content for conferences
6. To assess the benefits from attending the conferences
7. To identify alternatives to attending conferences
8. To assess how organisations' characteristic and HRM attitude influence conference participation

Expected Results

Given the stated purpose and the need to realise the objectives of the survey, the results should provide the capability to determine relationships among various

variables. Below are some of the “soft” relationships (not statistical) the survey would need to expose:

1. Demographic profile of HRM professionals in the Caribbean
2. Relationship between organisational characteristics and likelihood of participation in conferences
3. Relationship between HRM professionals’ inclination to attend conferences and HRM competences
4. Relationship between HRM professionals’ inclination to attend conferences and organisation’s current HRM disposition
5. Relationship between HRM professionals’ inclination to attend conferences and country where located
6. Relationship between HRM professionals’ inclination to attend conferences and professional aspirations
7. Relationship between HRM professionals’ inclination to attend conferences and position in organisations
8. Reasons why HRM professionals do not attend conferences as they relate to content/theme, benefits, technology, facilitators/presenters, design, cost, scheduling, advertisement/announcement, prior experience, personal needs
9. Reasons why HRM professionals attend conferences as they relate to content/theme, benefits, technology, facilitators/presenters, design, cost, scheduling, advertisement/announcement, prior experience, personal needs
10. Suggestions for revenue generation for HRM associations
11. Suggestions for overall conference improvement

Methodology

The survey ran from September 15, 2008 to October 10, 2008. It targeted the population of HRM professionals and related disciplines in the Caribbean. It used members of regional HRM associations and HRM professionals in employer associations as the sample frame. Letters were sent to heads of these HRM organisations to appeal for support of the survey and to encourage their membership to participate. The letters also solicited questions that members might be interested in getting answered via the survey. An on-line questionnaire with 28 close-ended questions and 4 open-ended questions was distributed to these

organisational heads for onward distribution to their members (attached). This was done via email using the facilities of *Survey Monkey*, an online survey service (www.surveymonkey.com). Participants receiving the email were also encouraged to forward the link to other persons who were in the HRM or HRM related field.

Data Processing

Two hundred and ninety three (293) persons responded to the survey. However, 77 cases were rejected as the respondents did not answer all the questions, perhaps because they aborted the survey before completing the questionnaire. The final data set consists of 216 cases.

During the data processing it became apparent that some questions could have been constructed to include skip instructions given that respondents would have to answer all questions on a page to allow the survey to advance. For example, questions asking for feedback on conferences attended even though the respondent indicated that they never attended a conference. A code was applied to these responses so that they could be included in the totals. Some questions should also have had a "not applicable" or "not stated" option. This was addressed during the data cleaning stage as respondents used "other" to indicate situations where the question was not applicable to them. In hindsight, the questionnaire should have been able to identify respondents who were not necessary HRM practitioners, but were in related fields such as industrial relations.

The computer software *Statistical Package for Social Surveys (SPSS)* was used to process and analyse the data. Since this was not a survey upon which policies or major decisions would be made, the data is satisfactory enough to assess respondents' perceptions of the value of regional HRM conferences and to allow the HRM community to come to some "soft" conclusions.

General Results

This section provides summary statistics on the demographic profile of the respondents. The extent of respondents' HRM networking will also be assessed as

measured by the size of membership in local HRM associations and membership in CaribHRForum.

Basic demographics

The data revealed that 86% ($n=185$) of the respondents were female. The only countries for which respondents indicated they were male HRM professionals were Barbados (2), Guyana (1), Jamaica (4), St. Lucia (1), Trinidad & Tobago (11) and Turks & Caicos (1). With respect to age, the majority of respondent, 89% ($n=193$), were between 26 and 55 years, of which 37% ($n=80$) were in the 36 to 45 age group. Table 16 provides more details.

Just over 33% ($n=72$) selected Trinidad and Tobago as the country with which they most identified, followed by Jamaica 20% ($n=43$), Barbados 10% ($n=22$) and Cayman Islands 8% ($n=18$). Of the 29 respondents selecting "Other", 27 were from Suriname and two from Anguilla. Table 15 provides more details. Note that respondents were asked for the "country most identified with" and not "country of nationality", though it may be one and the same. Forty-one per cent ($n=106$) of all respondents indicated that their highest level of education was a masters degree, followed by bachelors degree at 36% ($n=78$).

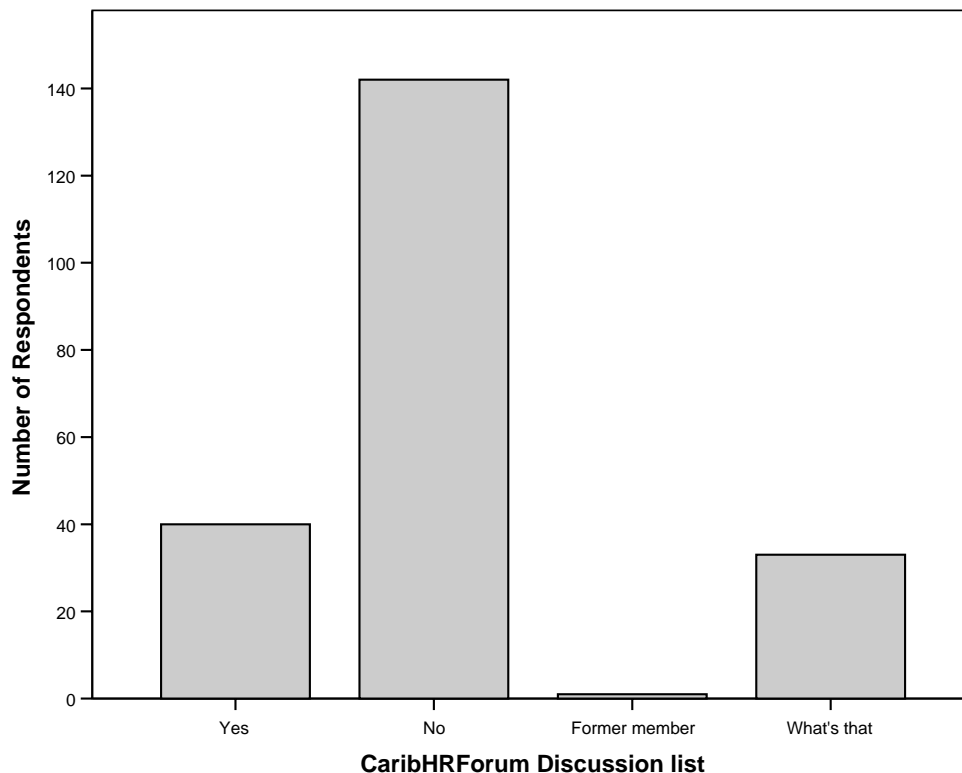
Respondents' HRM Networking

When asked why they attended or would like to attend conferences, 92% ($n=198$) of the respondents said because networking was "very important" or "important" to them. Respondents were also asked to indicate whether they were members of their local HRM association or a member of CaribHRForum. Sixty per cent ($n=129$) indicated that they were members of their HRM organisations whether professional, non-professional, student or affiliate. Trinidad & Tobago had the highest membership rate with 55 of the 72 respondents, or 76% indicating they had "professional" or "affiliate" membership. See Table 26 in the Appendix for more details.

In relation to highest level of formal HRM training attained, HRM association membership was highest among respondents with a masters degree. Forty three out of the 72 respondents, or 62% indicated that they had professional membership in their local HRM organisations. This was followed by persons with diplomas/certificates 41 out of 65 respondents, or 63% and bachelors degrees with 25 out of 46 respondents or 54%. The age group of most respondents who were members of their HRM organisation was 36 to 45. Forty six or 37% of the 40 persons in that group indicated that they held professional membership in their HRM organisation.

Regarding CaribHRForum, only 19% ($n=40$) indicated they were members. Sixty-six per cent ($n=142$) said they were not members and 15% ($n=33$) were not aware of the forum. See Chart 1.

Chart 1: CaribHRForum membership



Of the 40 respondents who were members of the CaribHRForum list, 17 identified with Trinidad & Tobago, 15 with Jamaica, four with Barbados, two with St. Kitts & Nevis and the remainder with other countries. See Table 27 in the Appendix for more details. There are also more females than male member. This is expected as female respondents out-number male respondents 6 to 1. See Table 1.

Table 1: Gender BY Membership in CaribHRForum

Gender	CaribHRForum Membership				Total
	Yes	No	Former member	What's that?	
Male	8	19	0	4	31
Female	32	123	1	29	185
Total	40	142	1	33	216

When membership in the CaribHRForum was compared with highest level of formal HRM training the results indicated that membership was more or less the same for persons with a masters degrees (13) and diploma / certificate (12). Interestingly, the same number indicated that they were not aware of the forum. See Table 2.

The results also showed that among the 40 respondents who where members of CaribHRForum, 28 or 70% indicated that their main duties were "only HRM" or "mostly HRM and other activities". All 40 indicated that networking at conferences was "very important" or "important".

Table 2: Highest Formal HRM Training BY CaribHRForum membership

Level of Formal HRM Training	CaribHRForum Membership				Total
	Yes	No	Former member	What's that?	
PhD	2	0	0	0	2
Masters	13	47	1	11	72
Bachelors	9	32	0	5	46
Diploma / Certificate	12	41	0	12	65
Other	4	22	0	5	31
Total	40	142	1	33	216

Representative Organisations and their HR Function

The word “organisation” will be used here to represent all the entities that employ people, regardless of the legal ownership. This section reports the characteristics of the organisations that are represented by the respondents in terms of employee size, industry, sector, current HRM disposition, competences of its HRM people, and the design of its HRM function.

Characteristics of Organisations

Most respondents, 85% ($n=183$) represented organisations that were in the services sector. The private sector was represented by 57% ($n=123$). Nearly 26% ($n=56$) of the respondents belong to organisations with more than 500 employees. When viewed by the industry, 25% ($n=54$) belonged to organisations that offered professional services, followed by financial services with 19% ($n=41$). See Table 19. Just under 12% ($n=25$) of the respondents were in organisations that offered government services. Most, 37% ($n=216$) of the larger organisations (more than 100 employees) were in Trinidad & Tobago. This also represented 67% of the 72 organisations represented in the data set.

HRM Disposition

On the question of their organisation’s current HRM disposition, only 36% ($n=77$) felt that their organisation was “progressive”, compared to 7% ($n=16$) who felt that their organisation was “very conservative or traditional”. Just over 17% ($n=37$) felt their organisation was “very progressive”. Organisations that were identified as currently “very progressive” or “progressive” tended to sponsor their employee at HRM conferences. See Table 22 for more details.

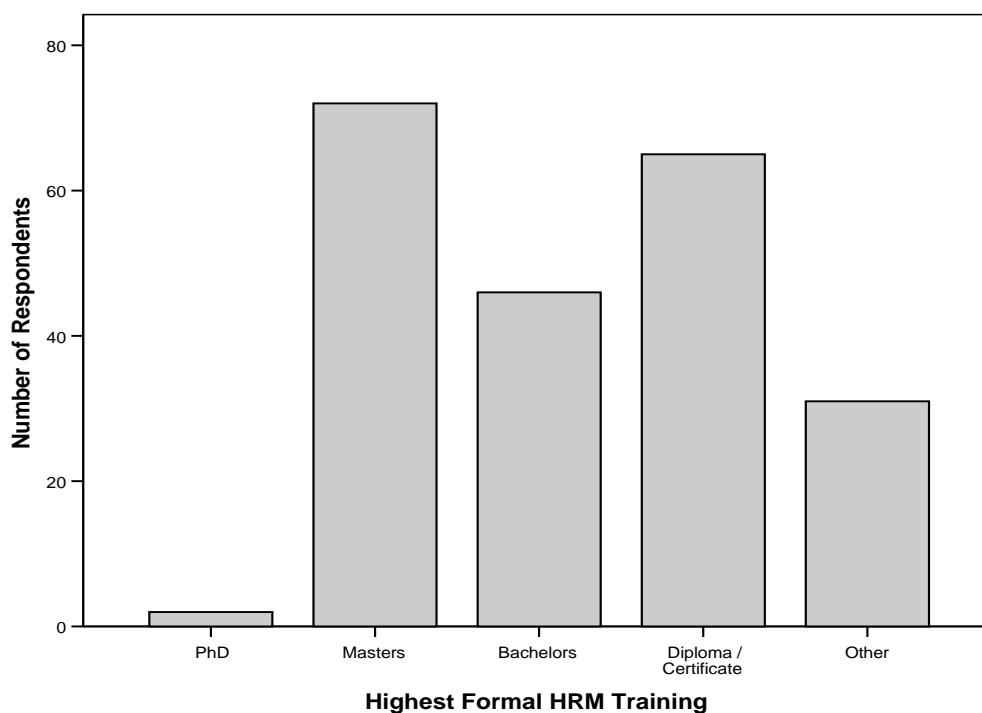
A look at how the size of country related to the current HRM disposition of their organisations indicated that perhaps the larger the country the more likely are their organisations to be concerned about their HRM philosophy. Fifteen of the 22 respondents, or 68% indentifying mostly with Barbados indicated that their organisations were either “very progressive” or “progressive”. Trinidad & Tobago

follows with 36 or 72 or 50% and Jamaica with 19 out of 43 or 44%. See Table 25 in the Appendix for more details.

HRM Competences

Regarding educational qualification and professional career aspiration, 33% ($n=72$) of respondents indicated that their highest level of formal HRM training was a masters degree (See Chart 2 and Table 17). Just over 44% ($n=96$) said their most desired career aspirations in relation to HRM was consulting, followed by practicing HRM, with 37% ($n=80$). Just under 5% ($n=10$) were interested in research. Most of those who are interested in consulting identified with Trinidad & Tobago 39% ($n=35$), followed by Jamaica 22% ($n=21$) and Barbados 9% ($n=9$). Aspirations for teaching ($n=25$) were mostly among those who identified with Jamaica 28% ($n=7$).

Chart 2: Highest Formal HRM Training



Regarding formal HRM certification, 50% ($n=108$) indicated that they had no professional certification, but were planning to work on it. Just under 17% ($n=36$) were certified, and nearly 20% ($n=21$) were currently working on being certified. See Table 18 for more details. When highest formal HRM training is compared to

country most identified with, Jamaica recorded the highest number of respondents with a masters degree, that is 12% ($n=26$), followed by Trinidad & Tobago with 10% ($n=21$). Only two respondents attained PhD level in HRM. One worked for an organisation with over 500 employees, though the respondent indicated that activities involved very little HRM activities. The other owned a consulting company and offered mostly HRM services and some other services.

Among the 80 respondents in the 36 to 45 age group, there was almost an even spread for their highest level of formal HRM training. Thirty one percent ($n=25$) were at the masters degree level, 31% ($n=24$) at bachelors degree level and 26% ($n=21$) at diplomas/certificate level.

HRM Structure

Most respondents, 37% ($n=80$) currently hold top management positions, followed by middle managers at 21% ($n=45$). See Table 20. Nearly 85% ($n=183$) of respondents indicated that their organisation has a specific HRM department, division or unit. Thirty-six per cent ($n=78$) said that their duties were entirely HRM related. See Chart 3 and Table 21.

For nearly half (49%) of the 183 organisations with a definite HRM section, the respondents indicated that they held either an executive or top management position. Table 3 illustrates.

Among those who indicated that their organisation had a specific HRM department, division or unit, 40% ($n=74$) said that their duties involved "only HRM activities".

When highest formal HRM qualification is compared to the number of employees in the organisations, the results show that 10% ($n=21$) of respondents with masters degree were found in organisations with 101 to 300 or over 500 employees.

Where respondents' duties were "only HRM activities", nearly 40% ($n=31$) had a masters degree followed by diploma or certificates for 31% ($n=24$) respondents.

Chart 3: Main HRM related Duties of Respondents

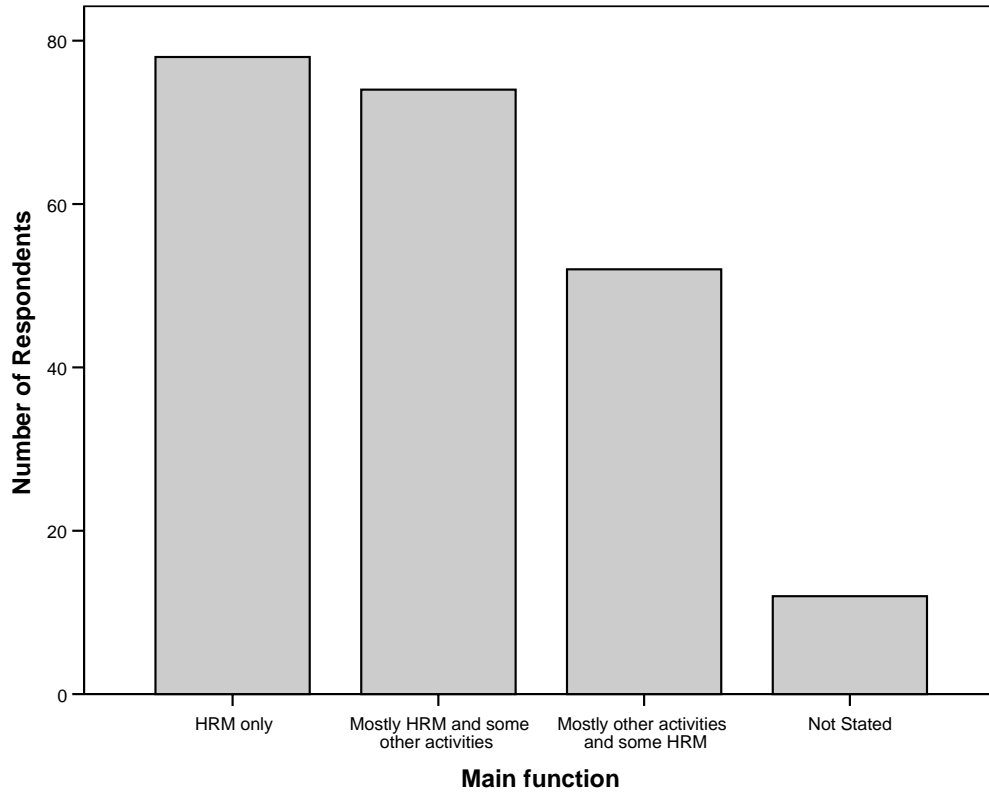


Table 3: Current position in organisation BY existence of specific HRM section

Current position in the organisation	Does organisation have a specific HRM section					Percentage
	Yes	No	Currently being considered	Not Applicable	Total	
	Number of Respondents					
Executive	18	6	0	6	30	13.9%
Senior Management	72	5	1	2	80	37.0%
Middle Management	41	3	0	1	45	20.8%
Junior Management	31	0	1	0	32	14.8%
Consultant / Contractor	5	0	0	5	10	4.6%
I prefer not to answer	1	1	0	1	3	1.4%
Administrative / Clerical	10	0	0	1	11	5.1%
Other	5	0	0	0	5	2.3%
Total	183	15	2	16	216	100.0%
Percentage	84.7%	6.9%	0.9%	7.4%	100.0%	

Conference Participation

Respondents were asked to indicate the frequency of attendance at regional and international HRM conferences in the last five years (See Table 4). They were also asked to indicate the degree of importance of attendance to their organisation and to themselves (See Table 6), and the factors that made the conference appealing (See Table 8) or influenced their decision to attend (See Table 9).

Level of attendance

Just over 40% ($n=87$) of the respondents indicated that they had not attended a regional HRM conference in the last five years and 76% ($n=163$) indicated that they had not attended an international HRM conference in the last five years. Among the 129 respondents who attended a regional HRM conference in the last five years, most were from Jamaica (32), followed by Trinidad & Tobago (30), Barbados (18) and Cayman Islands (10). See Table 23 in the Appendix for more details.

Table 4: Number of conferences attended

Number of HRM conference Attended in last 5 years	Regional HRM Conferences	International HRM Conferences	Regional Conferences outside home country
	Percentage of Respondents ($n=216$)		
0	40.3	75.5	75.9
1	23.1	11.1	10.6
2	15.7	6.5	6.9
3	11.1	3.7	3.2
4	4.6	1.4	0.5
5	2.8	1.4	0.9
more than 5	2.3	0.5	1.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

On the question of who bore the costs of attendance at the conference, 101 of the 129 or 78% who attended a regional HRM conference in the last five years, indicated that their employer bore the costs (See Table 5). This was evident in Trinidad & Tobago and Jamaica. Twenty five of the 30, or 83% who identified with

Trinidad & Tobago indicated that their employers sponsored their conference expenses. Similarly for Jamaica, 23 of the 32, or 72% who attended a regional HRM conference in the last five years, said their employer sponsored their attendance.

Note that the question on who pays does not refer to a specific type of conference – local, regional, or international. In that regard, the responses will be read as “who generally pays”. Among the “very important” reasons their organisation held for supporting the conferences were “networking” 13% ($n=27$), “training and development” 21% ($n=47$) and “to keep current” 29% ($n=63$). An average of 36% ($n=80$) respondents indicated that their organisations felt that these same reasons were “important”.

Table 5: Who (generally) covers major costs

Who pays?	Frequency	Percent
My employer	101	78.3
Myself	10	7.8
Split	4	3.1
Host conference / organiser	7	5.4
Other	7	5.4
Total	129	100.0

On a personal level, most respondents, 76% ($n=164$), felt that participating in conferences was very important to them for keeping current on HRM issues and trends. Networking was “very important” for 55% ($n=118$) and presenting ideas or research was “very important” for 32% ($n=68$).

Importance of who attends

Respondents were asked to indicate degree of importance of three factors that could influence their organisation’s support for their attendance at HRM conferences – networking, training & development and keeping current. Table 6 provides the results for the importance for these three factors. The data revealed that organisations are more interested in the HRM person using these conferences for training and development and for keeping current.

Table 6: Importance of conference to organisation

Reason	Degree of Importance to Organisation						Total
	Very Important	Important	Average	Less Important	Not Important	Not Stated	
	Percentage of Respondents (<i>n</i> =216)						
Networking	12.5	37.0	25.0	11.1	5.6	8.8	100.0
Training & Development	21.8	39.8	23.1	6.5	3.2	5.5	100.0
Keeping current	29.2	35.6	20.4	6.5	3.2	5.1	100.0

When compared to the organisation's current HRM disposition, selecting the key HRM professional was "very important" for 89% of the 37 organisations whose current disposition was "strongly progressive". See Table 28 in the Appendix for more details.

The respondents were also asked to indicate their organisation's preference for their attendance in particular or attendance of any other person in the organisation. Table 7 provides the results for this question.

The results revealed that according to the respondents, their organisation was somewhat indifferent as to who should attend the conference. Regarding the HRM professional's attendance ("my attendance"), organisations felt it was more or less of average importance, indicated by 63% (*n*=136) of the respondents. General attendance held average importance as well.

Table 7: Organisation's preference for who attends conference

Who attends?	Degree of Importance of Who attends Conference						Total
	Very Important	Important	Average	Less Important	Not Important	Not Stated	
	Percentage of Respondents (<i>n</i> =216)						
My attendance	14.8	31.9	31.0	11.6	5.1	5.6	100.0
General attendance	6.0	21.8	28.7	11.6	5.1	26.8	100.0

Appealing factors

It should be noted here that the results for assessing this element includes all respondents: i.e. those who attended conferences in the last five years and those who did not attend any conferences – regional or international. In so doing, the responses are interpreted as what appealed to those who attended and what would likely be appealing (pull factor) to those who did not attend a conference.

The conferences appealed to respondents for several reasons. The majority of respondents 79% ($n=171$) agreed that the “relevance of the content” of HRM conferences that they attended had the greatest appeal. Followed closely were those 68% ($n=147$) who agreed that a diverse group of knowledgeable participants, and those 65% ($n=141$) who felt that well-designed and well-timed conferences were appealing. On the question of costs, 89% ($n=191$) agreed that a reasonable cost of the conference was appealing. Having enough time to plan to attend was appealing for 58% ($n=123$) respondents who wanted to attend these conferences. See Table 8 for more details.

Quite understandably, most respondents agreed that conference theme/content, poor scheduling and unstructured conferences ranked highest as the factors that appealed to them least for regional HRM conferences.

Table 8: Factors that made Regional HRM conference appealing

Appealing factors	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Disagree	Not stated	Total
	Percentage of Respondents ($n=216$)				
Relevant content	79.2	14.4	3.7	2.8	100.0
Diverse and Knowledgeable participants	68.1	24.5	4.2	3.3	100.0
Products for purchase or take away	18.5	42.6	31.5	7.5	100.0
Well-designed, well-timed, sequenced sessions	65.3	26.4	3.7	4.7	100.0
Well-scheduled – on a convenient date	55.6	35.2	4.2	4.1	100.0
Well-advertised	58.3	29.6	7.4	4.2	100.0
Reasonable price	55.1	33.3	6.0	4.6	100.0

Factors influencing decision

The strongest factor that influenced respondents' decision to attend HRM conferences (whether or not they attended a conference in the last five years) was the advertised theme of the conference 82% ($n=176$) followed by the qualifications of the presenters 77% ($n=167$) and costs 66% ($n=148$). See Table 9. Interestingly, for respondents who felt that the theme was a "strong factor" that influenced their decision to attend a conference, their career aspiration were HRM consulting or practicing HRM. See Table 24 in the Appendix for more details.

The impact of experiences (negative or positive) with past conferences was a weak influencing factor for just under 35% ($n=75$). It should be noted too that respondents paid attention to the quality of conference presenters and facilitators. Just over 77% ($n=167$) of the respondents indicated that presenters and facilitators were a "strong factor" that influenced their decision to participate in an HRM conference.

Table 9: Strength of factors influencing decisions to attend HRM Conferences

Factors	Strong Factor	Weak Factor	Not a factor	Not stated	Total
	Percentage of respondents ($n=216$)				
Costs (fees, travel, hotel etc)	68.5	18.5	9.3	3.7	100.0
Advertised theme	81.5	11.1	3.7	3.7	100.0
Timing of announcement	53.7	31.9	7.9	6.5	100.0
Presenters / facilitators	77.3	14.4	5.1	3.2	100.0
Location	58.3	28.7	8.3	4.6	100.0
Previous conference experience	37.0	34.7	21.8	6.5	100.0
Expected benefits	51.9	24.5	19.9	3.7	100.0
Conflicting engagements	45.8	35.2	11.6	7.4	100.0

A further look at cost as a factor that influences attendance suggests that their organisation's current HRM disposition may influence who pays. When cost is compared with the organisation's current HRM disposition, the results revealed that among the 75 organisations that were either "strongly progressive" or "progressive", 62 or 83% sponsored their HRM people at conferences. Of the 33

organisations whose current HRM disposition was “average”, 25 or 76% paid the costs for the HR participant. See Tables 10 and 11 for more details.

Table 10: Organisation’s current HRM disposition BY Who bears attendance costs

Degree of HRM Disposition	My employer	Myself	Split	Host conference / organiser	Other	Total
	Number of Respondents					
Strongly Progressive	25	0	1	2	0	28
Progressive	37	4	1	1	4	47
Average	25	4	2	1	1	33
Conservative / Traditional	9	1	0	3	2	15
Very conservative / traditional	5	1	0	0	0	6
Total	101	10	4	7	7	129

Table 11: Organisation’s HRM disposition BY Who bears the attendance costs

Degree of HRM Disposition	My employer	Myself	Split	Host conference / organiser	Other	Total
	Percentage of Respondents (<i>n</i> =129)					
Strongly Progressive	89.3	-	3.6	7.1	-	100.0
Progressive	78.7	8.5	2.1	2.1	8.5	100.0
Average	75.8	12.1	6.1	3.0	3.0	100.0
Conservative / Traditional	60.0	6.7	-	20.0	13.3	100.0
Very conservative / traditional	83.3	16.7	-	-	-	100.0

Alternative methods

When respondents did not attend conferences they offered some suggestions for receiving conference content. DVDs ranked highest 49% (*n*=106) as the most likely alternative, followed by Power Point presentations 41% (*n*=89), and video/audio content on the internet 32% (*n*=68). See Table 12.

Table 12: Likelihood of alternative methods

Alternate Methods	Very Likely	Likely	Neutral	Not likely	Very Unlikely	Total
	Percentage of respondents (<i>n</i> =216)					
Post conference DVDs	49.1	25.0	4.6	18.5	2.8	100.0
Post conference CDs	30.1	27.3	13.9	25.0	3.7	100.0
Post Conference video / audio	31.5	21.3	17.1	27.8	2.3	100.0
Post conference Power Point Presentations	41.2	32.4	9.3	14.4	2.8	100.0
Real-time simulcast	24.5	17.6	22.2	31.0	4.6	100.0
Real-time webcast	27.8	24.2	18.2	25.5	4.2	100.0

Suggestions for Improvement

Respondents were asked to provide suggestions for improving the overall conference as well as to provide suggestions for increasing revenue for the conference host.

Revenue generating suggestions

Respondents offered suggestions that fell into a number of categories including products, services, sponsorships and presenters. Among the suggestions offered by respondents were sponsorships from companies, sale of memorabilia such as T-shirts and mugs, on-site training and private consultation from reputable (foreign) HRM persons, pre-conference workshops, sale of newsletters and other literature. More specific feedback is detailed in the Table 13 below.

Table 13: Suggestions for generating conference revenue

Category	Respondents' suggestions (in their own words)
Products	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Creating a reasonably priced magazine or newsletter so that members can be informed of the changes occurring within the field either regionally or internationally. b. Let each person pay for any additional literature that is taken, about anything of interest. c. Sale of CDs and DVDs with conference material d. Relevant literature for sale e. Sale of products relevant to the regional practices and

Category	Respondents' suggestions (in their own words)
	<p>legislation</p> <p>f. Booths with the latest HR books and papers for sale.</p> <p>g. sale of relevant HR books, CD, etc.,</p> <p>h. Have on sale reduced priced literature (packages if necessary) that could help organisations through some of the crises or issues they are facing.</p> <p>i. HR tools, such as training aids, could be on sale. Also items that could be used as reminders: -employees and management make the decision to change on a certain issue, this item doesn't matter what shape or form, could be placed at strategic locations as a reminder of that agreement - be it a poster, statue etc.</p> <p>j. Publication of HR journals</p> <p>k. Have a wider range of products for sale i.e. DVDs, books training materials</p>
Services	<p>a. Access to real time webcast for a fee</p> <p>b. Supply online journals for a fee;</p> <p>c. Conduct webinars</p> <p>d. offer short course in collaboration with regional universities (CSME credit)</p> <p>e. Online newsletter subscription</p> <p>f. Offer online certificate courses</p> <p>g. consultative services</p> <p>h. Hold pre-conference workshops that would be in addition to the conference fees. Could be used for certification.</p> <p>i. Apart from conferences, there can be cross regional training sessions that help to educate the regional HR and IR practitioners on the labour laws, cultural similarities and differences in the region. The role of the HR practitioner in the litigious society can be another topic to explore.</p> <p>j. Organising a trade show and collecting fees from both holders and advertisers</p> <p>k. Skill building sessions</p>
Membership	<p>a. Increase membership fees to include the payment for one session.</p> <p>b. Set up an HR regional committee and attendance fee for all members</p> <p>c. Annual membership fees,</p>
Partnerships/alliances	<p>a. Have alliances with companies to promote and sell the material or implement training</p>
Sponsorship	<p>a. Seek adequate sponsorship from affiliate organisations</p> <p>b. Solicit more corporate sponsorship.</p> <p>c. Seek sponsorships from organisations with strong HR</p>

Category	Respondents' suggestions (in their own words)
	<p>involvement</p> <p>d. The organisers could consider seeking sponsorships from large corporations. For example, these organisations could undertake to pay the accommodation expenses for guest presenters.</p> <p>e. Yes, there are some of us who do not work for private organisations and there is no sponsorship from Gov't. So we cannot attend. Post jobs for some of us who are very qualified but cannot get a job in the HR field.</p> <p>f. Encouraging companies to sponsor certain parts of the program and offering them an incentive to do so.</p> <p>g. more aggressive sponsorship</p>
Registration	a. Try commit attendees to register 1 year prior to the event
Targeted audience	<p>a. Target public sector employers and make them understand the critical role of the HR professional</p> <p>b. Facilitate an HR global summit every three years and have an HR conference targeting college and university students.</p>
Events	a. Coordinate a concert night at a minimum cost where one can vote for their favourite artist at say \$50 (JA) a bid
Memorabilia	a. Offer shirts, cups, etc., prior to arrival with price list for persons attending to choose what they wish to purchase to receive upon attendance. (a souvenir to show for their attendance)
Presenters	<p>a. Speakers who would attract general management not just HR managers</p> <p>b. Invite foreign HR manager from a large reputation company and let attendees pay for private consultation / sharing of practices.</p>
Other	<p>a. Direct links to HR practitioner's through networking and more aggressive advertising</p> <p>b. Maybe there can be a way for participants to donate specifically to a project that the association is working on. Giving the attendant the option to support a specific project of their interest.</p> <p>c. Internal fund raisers</p>

Overall suggestions

Among the suggestions to improve the conferences overall were: improved advertising – newspapers, more regional and a wider variety of media. Respondents also felt that having conferences span weekends may improve participation. There

was a call for more vibrant and knowledgeable presenters, and to design conferences so that there are simultaneous sessions allowing participants to choose accordingly. Respondents also noted the value of having the appropriate participants at the conference. This is supported by the data as respondents indicated that their representative organisation was somewhat indifferent as to who should attend the conference. However, where the organisation held a progressive philosophy about HRM, they tended to select the key HRM person.

Some respondents also felt that organisers should consider affordability for small organisations, as costs can constrain their participation. Logistics, such as choosing a central country location for conference can evenly distribute the time and costs for attendance. Suggestions also included having more social events such as tours.

Respondents also desired more relevant content, such as research and presentations that used case studies that referenced Caribbean situations, and topics that appealed to Industrial Relations specialists. There were some suggestions relating to the organising committee where some respondents felt that planning and preparation should include HRM managers. Advance conference planning as much as one year ahead was included as a suggestion to improve attendance. Details of suggestions are listed in Table 14 below.

Table 14: Suggestions to improve conference overall

Category	Respondents' Suggestions (in their own words)
Frequency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Perhaps have them every other year rather than every year. b. The local HR organisations could spread the conference around annually and have regional conferences, but have workshops at the local level. c. Have one conference every five years in different island.
Organising committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Join with companies/organisations and have joint conferences to strengthen the participation levels and planning/management elements. b. Too many times the caption "space is limited" yet housing and transport are often lacking. c. Offer more assistance for attendance especially when conference location is far away from where I'm located and in countries whose currency is not the EC dollar.

Category	Respondents' Suggestions (in their own words)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> d. The HR managers participate in the preparatory committee e. Disseminate conference date one year in advance f. Sponsorship for individuals who are not working but have the qualifications or in a Gov't occupation. g. Identify the needs of the target group to be reached, not those of the Organising Committee.
Schedule	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Review time schedules. Maybe on weekends too b. Extend the time of conferences from three to five days and include more social activities.
Advertising and Promotion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Publish topics and presenters at least 6 months before conference b. Advance planning / advertising is paramount c. Advertise in the region not only in own jurisdiction. d. Be proactive and market the conference that it brings added value to the organisation and employees. e. Will need to advertise in the press f. More aggressive and timely advertising
Design and Features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Have workshops at the local level. b. Simultaneous sessions need to be arranged with utmost care. People miss many sessions they are interested in due to clashes. c. More interactive workshops, fewer lectures. d. It is suggested that more time be allotted to each segment: - after a presentation more time should be given for discussion, especially for controversial issues, culture, change management, training, performance, restructuring/redundancy, salary and benefits etc. e. Include some "how to" sessions, and take away materials. f. Make sure that sessions are not too long g. There should be workshop sessions on new HR best practices to keep the participants current h. Make some of them cheaper or have the conference streamed to persons who are willing to pay a small cost to watch the stream online
Social Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Try to find a slot in the programme (a half day) to ensure that participants can view some sights and attractions of the host country. b. have more interesting non- conference activities;
Presenters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Ensure that facilitators (regional or international) engage their audience. Most participants learn by interaction. b. Choose vibrant persons to carry out the conferences, some people put you to sleep. c. Some presenters need to be guided re. Maintaining relevance

Category	Respondents' Suggestions (in their own words)
	<p>and applicability.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> d. Use a blend of international and regional CEOs for presentation e. Try to get speakers that can really keep you awake with their presentations. f. Learn the diverse needs of the region. Use a mix of regional and non-regional people to present. Get subject matter experts that have published research or noted professional books. Don't recycle the same presenters each year. Present topics that anticipate and help professionals anticipate future trends that drive capability and capacity in individuals and organisations.
Content / Theme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. More of the materials need to be distributed prior to the conference for participants' preparation. b. Ensure that changing themes within HR are emphasised e.g. organisational development; managing change; CSME c. Include case studies. d. Make the content not only relevant for discussion e. determine who the target audience is and ensure the topics and content presented is suitable; be fresh f. Choose relevant topics that would truly assist HR professionals with managing their human resource, with careful consideration to their time, with a focus on not making their attendance at the conference a waste. g. Avoid the mixing of public and private sector components on the same day. Interests and challenges are not always the same. Subjects chosen should reflect current trends and practical approaches to challenges in the workplace h. Briefs on sessions should also be specific to expectations and not mislead participants in content to be covered i. Use as many Caribbean case studies as possible j. I would very much like to see the Introduction of sessions on Industrial Relations with particular emphasis on how it affects the HR professional and expatriate employees particularly with the aspect of CSME.
Costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Please ensure affordability for small and medium size organisations b. Try to make the package as affordable as possible since participants may have to cover the cost personally c. Location should be middle/neutral to all countries or where it would cost less for transportation for majority of persons d. Change countries so that cost does not remain constant and local bodies get opportunities to be partners in their territory. e. Make them affordable and we will be there - every time f. Make sure it is affordable g. Timing is key, and the availability of funds. Often, I do not get

Category	Respondents' Suggestions (in their own words)
	<p>the opportunity to attend conferences due to "financial constraints".</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> h. Bear in mind that there are many who will support & attend once the cost is reasonable even if their employers don't support. Please watch this factor closely. i. Keep cost down by not using the most expensive hotels. j. Timing of the conference and making it affordable to persons who are self-employed consultants and may not be able to afford the full costs associated with such conferences unless planned and budgeted for well in advance. Obtaining preferred rates on air travel and hotel accommodation - making them more responsive to regional situations
Criticism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Most of the conferences locally and regionally appeal to persons with limited experience. Very little if any new knowledge is passed on - it becomes added vacation time
Location	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Rotate the conferences among most of the English speaking Caribbean not just a select few. b. Why can't the conferences be held in other regions, in other Caribbean countries? I gave up my attendance this year as I need a change from location.
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Members of HR organisation should be given a bit more benefits.
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. I would like to see more information about HR for training online.

Discussion

One of the most telling results of the survey is that the larger countries certainly have an advantage over the smaller countries. They have the most qualified HRM persons and the largest companies making possible for HRM to get more attention at all levels. Of note too is that females tend to be the dominant gender in this field. Another key feature of the sample that can be generalised to the wider Caribbean region is that certification in HRM is not as critical as it is for other disciplines such as accounting. A mere 57 respondents or 27% indicated that they either had a professional HRM certification or were currently working on obtaining it. When compared to the size of the organisation, number of employees did not appear to be a factor for importance or urgency for HRM certification. This begs the question - should certification be employee-driven or organisationally-driven? In

other words who should insist on certification, the HRM person, their organisation or the local HRM association? Moreover, what, if any, is the role of the government in HRM certification?

An encouraging characteristic of the survey sample is that most respondents are still relatively “young” and as such have enough time to develop, to raise the profile of HRM professionals and to make a difference in the perception of the profession in the region. However, the regional HRM community still needs to reach out some more, both nationally and regionally, to really influence how employees are treated in the workplace and to elevate the status of the HRM professional in the organisation.

Regarding HRM networking the evidence demonstrates that a lot more interaction is needed among the HRM community whether virtually, through CaribHRForum or face-to-face, through conferences and the local HRM association. There is evidence that a discussion forum such as CaribHRForum is useful as the highest level of membership were among HRM-trained professionals. That group indicated that their main function was steeped in HRM activities whether at work or through consulting. Using the HRM conferences to catalyse and improve networking is seen as the best approach for now.

Implications

The main implication from the survey results is that major restructuring of conferences is necessary -from pre-conference to post-conference. Some suggestions for improvement provided by the respondents draw attention to the importance of making the conference content /theme more Caribbean-relevant and CSME conscious. The call for more Caribbean HRM case studies is indicative of this thirst for situations with which participants can identify. It means then that perhaps a bank of case studies would need to be built. This can be useful not only to conferences when research is presented using these cases, but for instructing students of HRM.

The community cannot ignore the concerns of not only the smaller countries, but of the respondents that associate themselves with small organisations. We need to conduct further research to determine whether size of country is associated with the individual, organisational and national attention given to HRM. Very large companies (more than 1,000 employees) are few and far between in our Caribbean countries, and for the most part it is likely they may have the resources to satisfy their HRM needs more so than the smaller organisations. Smaller and family-owned businesses tend to be the most common business types in the majority of the smaller countries. We may also need to know whether foreign-owned companies tend to be more progressive in HRM than their local counterparts.

The regional HRM community needs to be very conscious of these and other differences as they will affect the attendance at conferences or even the ability for these disadvantaged organisations to purchase post-conference material. The potential to collaborate and provide evidence to allow for instance, county comparison of HRM practices and effectiveness, or an assessment of the impact of HRM association on effectiveness of national HRM practices, makes improving conferencing very appealing.

Respondents called for conference organisers to pay more attention to conference scheduling and location as a way to achieve a higher level of success. They called for rotating the location among the countries and scheduling the conference to run over weekends. There was also a suggestion to extend the duration of the conference from three to five days. Whatever the changes, the people who must ultimately be convinced are the ones who will be sponsoring/financing the attendance.

Recommendations

The implications from the survey findings point to several activities that need to be undertaken to improve the quality of future conferences. However, there are some preliminary events that must take place to ensure that the HRM people are available and can be reached, the data and information are available for research,

and there is a genuine desire for collaboration and networking evidenced by membership in HRM associations and CaribHRForum. Specifically, these recommendations are:

1. Encourage HRM organisations to update their respective **membership databases**
2. Establish a **regional database** of HRM professionals (practitioners, specialists, consultants)
3. Pay more attention to the **peculiarities of disadvantaged countries** and organisations when planning conferences
4. Develop a **case study bank**
5. Conduct **contextual and relevant** research
6. Conduct **frequent surveys** of HRM practices among Caribbean countries
7. Help establish **national HRM associations** in all countries
8. Establish a **regional HRM organisation**
9. Encourage HRM **certification**
10. Improve **networking** especially through CaribHRForum

Concluding remarks

The conclusion is though regional HRM conferences have not reached or surpassed the stakeholder satisfaction gauge, there is optimism that with better planning, they will improve overtime. For those who have never attended and who may read this report, it is imperative that they remain encouraged. The responsibility for improvement lies not only with the planning committee, but with the entire HRM community.

Several suggestions were offered for how the conferences could be improved which is testimony for the optimism and desire for conferences to continue. Some respondents called for conferences with more relevant themes, better presenters and appropriate participants. In particular, respondents noted the looming implications for HRM practices, the challenges for HRM professionals and the role we will need to play in the establishment of the CARICOM Single Market and

Economy (CSME). In some form or fashion we will have to influence both organisational and national policy formulation and strategies as we search beyond our boundaries for the best talents or opportunities to provide HRM services.

This report is useful to respondents, their colleagues, and the top management of the organisation they represent. It demonstrates the HRM community's commitment to improving the quality of its conferences with a view to adding value to participants, to their organisation and their country as a whole. Sharing the report may encourage organisations or other conference sponsors such as private companies, universities, individuals, or non-governmental organisations to support our efforts. They will realise the seriousness that we in the HRM community has attached to getting value for money.

This survey is the first in many that will provide the region's HRM community with the type of quantitative evidence that can help inform discussions and decisions about the value of regional HRM conferences. It demonstrates how collectively addressing common concerns and interests can lead to collaborative and appropriate solutions. Though there were some minor shortcomings with the survey methodology and questionnaire design we can only improve from here on. We all need to commit to this method of soliciting of HRM experiences, opinions and ideas as a way of improving our craft and carving our legacies.

Appendices

Table 15: Country respondents' mostly identified with

Countries most identified with	Frequency	Percent
Antigua & Barbuda	2	0.9
Bahamas	2	0.9
Barbados	22	10.2
Belize	1	0.5
Cayman Islands	18	8.3
Netherlands Antilles	2	0.9
Dominican Republic	1	0.5
Grenada	2	0.9
Guyana	3	1.4
Jamaica	43	19.9
Puerto Rico	1	0.5
St. Kitts & Nevis	4	1.9
St Lucia	4	1.9
St Vincent & the Grenadines	1	0.5
Trinidad & Tobago	72	33.3
Turks & Caicos	1	0.5
Virgin Islands	5	2.3
United States of America	3	1.4
Other	29	13.4
Total	216	100.0

Table 16: Respondents' age groups

Age Group	Frequency	Percent
25 and below	7	3.2
26 to 35	56	25.9
36 to 45	80	37.0
46 and 55	57	26.4
over 55	16	7.4
Total	216	100.0

Table 17: Respondents' HRM career aspirations

Desired Career Aspirations	Frequency	Percent
Consulting	96	44.4
Practicing	80	37.0
Research	10	4.6
Teaching	25	11.6
Other	5	2.4
Total	216	100.0

Table 18: Respondents' HRM certification

Stage of HRM Certification	Frequency	Percent
Yes	36	16.7
Currently working on it	21	9.7
No, but planning to start working on it	108	50.0
No, not interested	45	20.8
None	6	2.8
Total	216	100.0

Table 19: Main industry of respondents' current or most recent employer

Main industry	Frequency	Percent
Professional services	54	25.0
Agriculture	4	1.9
Manufacturing	16	7.4
Hospitality	27	12.5
Financial	41	19.0
Construction	6	2.8
Telecommunications	10	4.6
Government Services	25	11.6
Other	33	15.3
Total	216	100.0

Table 20: Respondents' current position in the organisation

Current Positions	Frequency	Percent
Executive	30	13.9
Senior Management	80	37.0
Middle Management	45	20.8
Junior Management	32	14.8
Consultant / Contractor	10	4.6
I prefer not to answer	3	1.4
Administrative / Clerical	11	5.1
Other	5	2.3
Total	216	100.0

Table 21: Respondents' main function at work

Main Function	Frequency	Percent
HRM only	78	36.1
Mostly HRM and some other activities	74	34.3
Mostly other activities and some HRM	52	24.1
Not stated	12	5.6
Total	216	100.0

Table 22: Respondents' organisation's current HRM disposition

Degree of Disposition	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Progressive	37	17.1
Progressive	77	35.6
Average	55	25.5
Conservative / Traditional	27	12.5
Very conservative / traditional	16	7.4
Not Stated	4	1.9
Total	216	100.0

Table 23: Country identified with BY Regional HRM conferences attended in last 5 yrs

Country most identified with	Number of regional HRM conferences attended in last 5 yrs							Total
	0	1	2	3	4	5	> 5	
Antigua & Barbuda	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	2
Bahamas	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	2
Barbados	4	6	6	2	2	1	1	22
Belize	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Cayman Islands	8	3	3	3	0	0	1	18
Netherlands Antilles	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	2
Dominican Republic	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Grenada	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	2
Guyana	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	3
Jamaica	11	12	5	8	2	4	1	43
Puerto Rico	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
St. Kitts & Nevis	2	0	0	1	1	0	0	4
St Lucia	2	0	2	0	0	0	0	4
St Vincent & the Grenadines	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Trinidad & Tobago	42	12	8	7	2	0	1	72
Turks & Caicos	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Virgin Islands	4	1	0	0	0	0	0	5
United States of America	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	3
Other	11	8	8	0	2	0	0	29
Total	87	50	34	24	10	6	5	216

Table 24: Conference theme as decision factor to attend HRM conference BY respondents' HRM career aspirations

Theme as a Decision Factor	HRM Career Aspirations					Total
	Consulting	Practicing	Research	Teaching	Other	
Strong Factor	80	67	7	19	2	175
Weak Factor	10	6	3	4	1	24
Not a factor	3	2	0	2	1	8
Not stated	3	5	0	0	1	9
Total	96	80	10	25	5	216

Table 25: Country identified with BY Organisation's current HRM disposition

Country most identified with	Organisation's Current HRM disposition						Total
	Strongly Progressive	Progressive	Average	Conservative / Traditional	Very conservative / traditional	Not Stated	
	<i>Number of Respondents</i>						
Antigua & Barbuda	0	1	0	1	0	0	2
Bahamas	0	0	2	0	0	0	2
Barbados	6	9	5	1	1	0	22
Belize	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Cayman Islands	3	11	2	1	1	0	18
Netherlands Antilles	1	0	1	0	0	0	2
Dominican Republic	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Grenada	2	0	0	0	0	0	2
Guyana	0	0	1	2	0	0	3
Jamaica	11	8	10	9	5	0	43
Puerto Rico	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
St. Kitts & Nevis	1	1	2	0	0	0	4
St Lucia	1	3	0	0	0	0	4
St Vincent & the Grenadines	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Trinidad & Tobago	8	28	18	9	6	3	72
Turks & Caicos	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Virgin Islands	0	1	2	0	2	0	5
United States of America	0	1	1	1	0	0	3
Other	2	13	10	2	1	1	29
Total	37	77	55	27	16	4	216

Table 26: Country identified with BY Membership in local HRM association

Country most identified with	Type of HRM Association Membership										Total
	Working on establishing an organisation	Professional / Member	Non-professional	Student	Affiliate	Past Member	Not sure of my status	No organisation exists	not a member	Other	
Antigua & Barbuda	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	2
Bahamas	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Barbados	0	17	0	1	1	0	0	0	3	0	22
Belize	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Cayman Islands	0	18	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	18
Netherlands Antilles	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	2
Dominican Republic	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Grenada	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	2
Guyana	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	3
Jamaica	0	21	1	0	0	1	3	0	16	1	43
Puerto Rico	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
St. Kitts & Nevis	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	0	4
St Lucia	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	1	0	4
St Vincent & the Grenadines	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Trinidad & Tobago	0	53	0	0	2	4	3	0	10	0	72
Turks & Caicos	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Virgin Islands	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	2	0	5
United States of America	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Other	0	4	0	0	0	3	1	11	9	1	29
Total	1	124	1	1	3	8	11	21	42	4	216

Table 27: Country identified with BY Membership in CaribHRForum

Country most identified with	CaribHRForum Membership				Total
	Yes	No	Former member	What's that	
Antigua & Barbuda	0	2	0	0	2
Bahamas	0	2	0	0	2
Barbados	4	14	0	4	22
Belize	0	1	0	0	1
Cayman Islands	0	13	0	5	18
Netherlands Antilles	0	2	0	0	2
Dominican Republic	0	1	0	0	1
Grenada	0	0	1	1	2
Guyana	0	3	0	0	3
Jamaica	15	24	0	4	43
Puerto Rico	0	1	0	0	1
St. Kitts & Nevis	2	2	0	0	4
St Lucia	0	4	0	0	4
St Vincent & the Grenadines	0	0	0	1	1
Trinidad & Tobago	17	42	0	13	72
Turks & Caicos	0	1	0	0	1
Virgin Islands	0	5	0	0	5
United States of America	0	3	0	0	3
Other	2	22	0	5	29
Total	40	142	1	33	216

Table 28: Organisation's HRM disposition BY Degree of Importance of Who attends conference

Organisation's Current HRM Disposition	Degree of Importance of Organisation selecting key HRM Professional to attend conference						Total
	Very Important	Important	Average	Less important	Not important	Not Stated	
	Number of Respondents						
Strongly Progressive	19	14	3	1	0	0	37
Progressive	10	36	23	4	0	4	77
Average	2	18	20	10	3	2	55
Conservative / Traditional	0	1	15	7	4	0	27
Very conservative / traditional	0	0	6	3	2	4	15
Not Stated	1	0	0	0	2	2	5
Total	32	69	67	25	11	11	216

2. About You

Please tell us a little about yourself

*** 1. Which country or territory do you most identify with?**

Country or Territory

Other (please specify)

*** 2. Your Gender:**

Male

Female

*** 3. Please indicate your age group (years):**

25 and below

26 - 35

36 - 45

46 - 55

Over 55

*** 4. Please indicate your highest level of education:**

PhD

Masters

Bachelors

Certificate/Diploma

High School or Equivalent

Other

Other (please specify)

*** 5. Please indicate the highest level of formal training in Human Resource Management you have received:**

PhD

Masters

Bachelors

Diploma/Certificate

Other

Other (please specify)

6. What are your most desired career aspirations as it relates to the field of Human Resource Management?

Consulting

Practicing

Research

Teaching

Other

Other (please specify)

7. Do you possess a formal Human Resource Management certification (CHRM, SHRM, etc)

Yes

Currently working on it

No, but planning to start working on it

No, not interested

*** 8. Are you a member of your country or territory's Human Resource Management organization (e.g. HRMAJ, HRPAG, etc.)**

Working on establishing a new organization

Professional / Member

Non-professional

Student

Honorary

Affiliate

Past Member

Not sure of my status

No organization exists

Not a member

Other

Other (please specify)

*** 9. Are you a member of the discussion list on CaribHRForum?**

Yes

No

Former member

What's that?

3. About Your Employer

Please tell us a little about your employer

10. What kind of business does your current or most recent employer undertake, primarily?

service related

non-service related

11. The main industry that your current or most recent employer belongs to:

Professional Services

Agriculture

Manufacturing

Hospitality

Financial

Construction

Telecommunication

Other (please specify)

12. The sector that your employer most identifies with:

Private

Public

Non-Governmental Organization (NGO)

Other (please specify)

13. The number of employees that your employer has on payroll:

1 - 5

6 - 25

26 - 100

101 - 300

301 - 500

Over 500

I don't know

I prefer not to answer

*** 14. What is your current position in the organisation?**

- Executive
- Senior Management
- Middle Management
- Junior Management
- Consultant / Contractor
- I prefer not to answer
- Other

Other (please specify)

15. Describe your main function:

- Human Resource Management only
- Mostly Human Resource Management and some other
- Mostly other and some Human Resource Management

Other (please specify)

*** 16. Is there a specific department / division / unit responsible for Human Resource Management functions?**

- Not Applicable
- Yes
- No
- Currently being considered
- Other

Other (please specify)

4. Your Conference Participation

Please give us some information about the conferences you have participated in.

*** 17. How many *regional* Human Resource conferences have you attended in the past 5 years? (To be regional, a conference must be conducted within a Caribbean country or territory.)**

0

1

2

3

4

5

more than 5

*** 18. How many international HR conferences (i.e. outside the Caribbean) have you attended in the last 5 years?**

0

1

2

3

4

5

more than 5

*** 19. How many regional conferences have you attended within the Caribbean, but outside of your country of residence?**

0

1

2

3

4

5

more than 5

20. When I have attended, the major cost of being at the conference was covered by:

my employer

myself

split

Other (please specify)

21. How would you rate your organization's disposition towards Human Resource Management?

	Strongly Progressive	Progressive	Average	Conservative/Traditional	Very Conservative/Traditional
Current Disposition	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Not applicable / Other (describe)

22. How would you describe your organisation's support for attendance at Human Resource Management conferences?

	Very Important	Important	Average	Less Important	Not Important
My Attendance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
General Attendance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

23. Your organisation supports HR conferences because they are seen as important for:

	Very Important	Important	Average	Less Important	Not Important
Networking	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Training and development	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Keeping current with HR trends and issues	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

24. You (personally) attend or would like to attend Human Resource conferences because they are important for:

	Very Important	Important	Average	Less Important	Not Important
Networking	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Remaining current with HR issues and trends	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Presenting your ideas, research, perspectives, etc.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

*** 25. The regional Human Resource Management conference(s) that appealed to you the MOST had the following characteristics:**

	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Disagree
Relevant content/presentations	jn	jn	jn
Diverse and knowledgeable participants	jn	jn	jn
Products for purchase or take away	jn	jn	jn
Well designed; well timed, sequenced sessions, etc	jn	jn	jn
Well scheduled on a convenient date	jn	jn	jn
Well advertised (providing enough time to decide and plan attendance)	jn	jn	jn
Price was reasonable	jn	jn	jn

Other (please specify)

*** 26. The regional HR conferences that appealed to you the LEAST had the following characteristics:**

	True	Somewhat True	Not True
Irrelevant content	jn	jn	jn
Inappropriate / unsuited participants	jn	jn	jn
Knowledgeable presenters / facilitators	jn	jn	jn
Poorly designed: sessions too long, not well sequenced	jn	jn	jn
Scheduling did not suit your personal time-table	jn	jn	jn
Not well advertised (found out late)	jn	jn	jn
Poorly priced	jn	jn	jn

Other (please specify)

*** 27. What are the factors that influence your decision to participate in a Human Resource Management conference?**

	Strong Factor	Weak Factor	Not a Factor
Costs (fees, travel etc)	jn	jn	jn
Advertised theme / topic	jn	jn	jn
Timing of announcement / advertisement	jn	jn	jn
The presenters / facilitators	jn	jn	jn
Location	jn	jn	jn
Previous conference experiences (positive or negative)	jn	jn	jn
Expected benefits, take-aways etc	jn	jn	jn
Conflicting engagements	jn	jn	jn
Other (please specify)	<input type="text"/>		

28. If you could NOT attend a regional Human Resource in person, which of the following alternate methods would you use to receive information?

	Very Likely	Likely	Neutral	Not Likely	Very Unlikely
Post-conference DVD's	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
Post-conference CD's	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
Post-conference video or audio via internet	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
Post-conference Powerpoint slides	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
Real-time simulcast to a location in your country	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
Real-time webcast to your computer	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
Other (please specify)	<input type="text"/>				

29. Do you have any suggestions to make to the organizers of regional conferences about alternate ways to generate revenue, in addition to attendance fees?

30. Overall suggestions to those organising regional conferences:

5. Optional Comments or Information

31. If you have any comments related to this survey, or to future CaribHRForum regional surveys, let us know here.

Also, the results of the survey will be released to CaribHRForum members, and also to each regional Human Resource organisation. To join CaribHRForum, follow the instructions below.

32. If you'd like to receive information on how to join CaribHRForum, and its discussion list, please give us your contact information.

Name:

Country:

Email Address: