



VOICES: EXPLORING THEMES, VALUES, CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE, AND HISTORICAL CONTEXT IN FESTIVAL MUSIC LYRICS OF TRINIDAD, BOHOL

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ABSTRACT

This study, conducted in February 2025 during the School Year 2024–2025, analyzed the themes, values, cultural significance, and historical context reflected in the lyrics of the Karomata Festival music of Trinidad, Bohol, addressing a gap in Philippine festival studies that often overlook locally initiated, trade-based cultural celebrations. Using a qualitative descriptive research design grounded in thematic analysis, the study examined both the official festival song lyrics and the lived interpretations of community members. A total of twenty (20) participants, representing four stakeholder groups—Local Government Unit employees, Trinidad Municipal College instructors and students, elementary school teachers and pupils, and high school teachers and students—were purposively selected. Data were collected through textual analysis, semi-structured interviews, and focus group discussions, then analyzed using a manual thematic coding process involving familiarization, coding, categorization, and theme development. Findings revealed that the lyrics embody key themes of gratitude and faith, unity and community, and heritage and identity, while reflecting core Filipino values such as hard work, resilience, humility, and spirituality. The music was found to serve significant cultural functions, particularly as a medium for cultural transmission and community bonding. Furthermore, the lyrics preserved historical references to barter trade practices, the karomata as a cultural symbol, and devotion to San Isidore, integrating economic, social, and religious dimensions of local history. Overall, the Karomata Festival music functions as a living cultural archive that sustains collective memory, reinforces identity, and fosters intergenerational continuity within the community.

Keywords: *festival music, thematic analysis, cultural heritage, Philippine festivals, community identity, Karomata Festival*

INTRODUCTION

Festivals in the Philippines serve as vibrant repositories of history, identity, and collective memory, often conveyed most powerfully through music, dance, and ritual performance. Among these cultural celebrations, the Karomata Festival of Trinidad, Bohol emerges as a distinctive tradition rooted in the town's agricultural heritage and barter trade history. Celebrated annually, this festival centers on the *karomata* — a traditional wooden cart drawn by carabaos — which symbolizes the resilience, faith, and unity of the Trinidadnon people.

In the national context, Philippine festivals have long been documented by scholars as expressions of cultural identity and sociohistorical narratives (Santos, 2010; Maceda, 1998; Trimillos, 2004). Studies in ethnomusicology and cultural anthropology have shown that festival music functions not only as entertainment but also as a medium through which communities express values, collective identity, and historical memory (Maceda, 1998; Reyes, 2012; Tagg, 2013). At the local level, the Karomata Festival was institutionalized to recall Trinidad's history as a trade hub, where goods were transported by karomata carts across rice fields and rivers, binding communities through mutual cooperation and shared faith.

Despite the richness of this cultural expression, scholarly focus on smaller, municipally initiated festivals like Karomata remains limited. Existing research on Philippine festival music has tended to concentrate on nationally prominent celebrations such as the Sinulog of Cebu (Mojares, 2014), the Panagbenga of Baguio (Aquino, 2017), and the Ati-Atihan of Kalibo (Buenconsejo, 2008). These studies often explore musical form, performance practice, and broad cultural impact but do not closely examine how local residents interpret the lyrics themselves — what themes, values, and historical references they perceive, and what cultural significance they assign to these festival songs.

This gap presented an opportunity for the current study to offer a micro-level, lyric-centered analysis, focusing specifically on how the residents of Trinidad, Bohol interpret the lyrics of their own festival music. By using qualitative approaches grounded in thematic and content analysis, the study aimed to uncover: (1) the themes perceived by residents in the lyrics, (2) the values that emerge based on these lyrical narratives, (3) the cultural significance attributed to the music as a vessel of identity and memory, and (4) the historical references embedded within the lyrical content.

Through this inquiry, the research sought to deepen understanding of how localized festival music can function as an archive of communal memory and identity, thus contributing to broader discourses in Philippine ethnomusicology, cultural studies, and heritage preservation. Moreover, by foregrounding residents' interpretations, the study emphasized *multiperspectivity* — valuing the voices of those who live the tradition, not just those who observe it.

This research aspired not only to document but also to interpret the living meanings of the Karomata Festival music, situating it as an essential part of the cultural landscape of Trinidad, Bohol, and as a unique contribution to Philippine cultural heritage studies.

Research Questions

This study aimed to analyze the themes, values, cultural significance, and historical context reflected in the lyrics of the Karomata Festival music of Trinidad, Bohol.

Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

1. What are the themes perceived by the residents regarding the lyrics of the Karomata Festival music?
2. What are the values perceived by the residents based on the lyrics?
3. What cultural significance is reflected in the music?
4. What historical context references are present in the lyrics?

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a qualitative descriptive approach guided by thematic analysis to explore the themes, values, cultural significance, and historical context reflected in the lyrics of the Karomata Festival music of Trinidad, Bohol, as perceived by diverse community members. By centering on residents' interpretations, the research reflects ethnomusicological principles and cultural memory theory (Assmann, 2011; Braun & Clarke, 2006; Trimillos, 2004).

Research Design

A qualitative design was chosen to capture the nuanced meanings and lived experiences embedded in the festival song. The study combined textual analysis of lyrics with participants' reflections gathered through semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions (FGDs). This approach aligns with interpretive cultural analysis, which values local voices and cultural context over purely technical analysis.

Respondents and Sampling

The study purposively selected four stakeholder groups deeply engaged in the Karomata Festival and the cultural life of Trinidad, Bohol, ensuring comprehensive community representation. Each group included five (5) participants, chosen to reflect diversity in age, gender, and role (teacher vs. student, staff rank, etc.):

Stakeholder Group	Description	Acronym for Quotations
Local Government Unit employees	Municipal staff involved in cultural affairs and festival organization	LGU

Trinidad Municipal College (TMC) instructors and students	Faculty and college students participating in performance, research, or documentation	TMC
Elementary school teachers and pupils	Reflecting how younger generations understand festival values	ES
High school teachers and students	Representing adolescent perspectives and cultural learning	HS

Total participants: 20 (5 per group). All participants underwent both an individual semi-structured interview and participated in their group's FGD.

Data Collection Procedures

The study involved three major stages of data collection:

1. Textual Analysis of Lyrics

The researcher obtained the official lyrics of the Karomata Festival song from the municipal cultural office. A close reading identified prominent words, metaphors, and historical references, forming initial insights for later discussion.

2. Semi-Structured Interviews

Each of the 20 participants joined a one-on-one interview, guided by open-ended questions covering:

- a) Themes perceived in the lyrics
- b) Values communicated through the song
- c) Cultural significance of the music in the community
- d) Historical references recognized by the participant

Interviews lasted approximately 30–45 minutes and were conducted in the participant's preferred language (Cebuano, Filipino, or English). Interviews were audio-recorded with consent and transcribed verbatim.

3. Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)

After individual interviews, each stakeholder group (e.g., all LGU participants) joined a separate FGD. The FGDs, moderated by the researcher, encouraged dialogue on shared and differing interpretations, helping to capture collective reflections and group dynamics. Each FGD lasted about 60–90 minutes and was similarly recorded and transcribed.

Data Analysis

Data analysis followed a manual, step-by-step thematic analysis, adapted from Braun & Clarke (2006), emphasizing clarity and cultural sensitivity rather than technical complexity.

1. Familiarization: Reading and re-reading transcripts from interviews and FGDs alongside the festival lyrics.
2. Initial Coding: Highlighting key words, stories, and expressions related to the study's four research questions (themes, values, cultural significance, historical context).

3. Grouping Codes: Organizing similar codes into candidate themes (e.g., “Unity and Cooperation,” “Pride in Heritage,” “Memory of Barter Trade”).
4. Reviewing and Refining: Checking that each theme accurately reflects multiple participants’ voices, adjusting theme names for clarity.
5. Illustration with Quotes: Selecting vivid quotations from across the four stakeholder groups to illustrate each theme.

All coding and analysis were done manually, guided by field notes and memos to ensure transparency and reflexivity. Findings were then compared with the textual analysis of the lyrics to identify alignments and unique perceptions.

Scope and Limitations

The study focused on the official Karomata Festival song and interpretations by selected stakeholders within Trinidad, Bohol. It does not analyze musical instrumentation, choreography, or views from outsiders. Interpretations reflect participants’ perspectives and may not capture every possible meaning of the lyrics. By combining textual analysis of the festival lyrics with rich, community-grounded qualitative data from interviews and FGDs, this study seeks to illuminate the *themes, values, cultural significance, and historical context* perceived by the people of Trinidad, Bohol — adding to the understanding of local heritage as reflected in music.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. What are the themes perceived by the residents regarding the lyrics of the Karomata Festival music?

Theme	Subthemes	Sample Codes / Quotations
Gratitude & Faith	Thanks to God, nature, farmers	“The song thanks God for the harvest” (LGU5); “Pasalamat sa mag-uuma” (TMC2); “Even after storms, we still thank” (HS1)
Unity & Community	Cooperation, bayanihan, solidarity	“It shows panaghiusa and helping each other” (HS-T1); “Nagpakita sa pagkabugkos sa komunidad” (LGU3)
Heritage & Identity	Local pride, Trinidadnon identity	“The song shows who we are as Trinidadnons” (TMC3); “Promotes local pride” (HS2); “Ang kanta nagdala sa among pag-ila kinsa mi” (ES1)

Theme 1: Gratitude & Faith

Across stakeholder groups, *gratitude* is perceived as the heartbeat of the lyrics. LGU participants see it as thanksgiving for harvests: “*The song thanks God for blessings we receive yearly, especially after typhoons*” (LGU5). TMC instructors view it as an expression of resilience: “*Even when there is drought, the song says we remain thankful*” (TMC-Instructor2). High school students echoed: “*We sing to say salamat sa mag-uuma ug sa Ginoo*” (HS1).

This pattern aligns with Reyes (2012), who argued that Philippine folk and devotional songs commonly embed gratitude as cultural teaching, tied to agricultural life cycles. Mojares (2014) in Sinulog music also highlighted that gratitude (*pasalamat*) anchors both faith and local history.

Interestingly, faith in divine providence emerges as intertwined: *“It’s not only thank you; it’s also pag-ampo, asking for blessing”* (TMC4). Elementary pupils shared, *“Ginatudlo sa kanta nga mag-ampo ug magpasalamat”* (ES3).

This duality supports Flores (2017): festival songs serve as living prayers and thanksgiving simultaneously — a uniquely Filipino cultural expression where sacred and daily life merge. Tagg (2013) further explains that repetitive words about thanks and blessings in music reinforce shared spiritual identity.

Theme 2: Unity & Community

Unity (*panaghiusa*) emerges powerfully. A college student described: *“The song is about helping each other during harvest, moving the karomata together”* (TMC2). An LGU employee shared: *“We have different barangays, but during festival, lyrics remind us we’re one”* (LGU3).

Even elementary pupils understood: *“Nag-ingon ang kanta nga magtinabangay ta”* (ES2).

This reflects Aquino (2017), who found Panagbenga festival lyrics promote collective identity despite urban diversity. Cohen (2013) explained that shared music performance builds social cohesion, especially when lyrics explicitly name cooperation.

Moreover, in the Karomata context, unity is symbolized by the *karomata* itself: heavy loads moved only when people help each other. This concretizes Buenconsejo’s (2008) argument that festival music in the Visayas uses concrete cultural objects as metaphors for social virtues.

Theme 3: Heritage & Identity

Participants across groups see the lyrics as affirming Trinidadnon identity. *“It shows our barter trade past and the karomata — it’s ours, not borrowed”* (TMC3). A high school teacher added: *“When we sing, we remember who we are and where we came from”* (HS-T1).

Elementary pupils also linked lyrics to place: *“Ang kanta nag-ingon nga taga-Trinidad mi”* (ES1).

This directly supports Cohen (2013): festival music becomes an audible marker of local identity. Maceda (1998) argued that Philippine folk music, even in new compositions, often carries symbols of place (e.g., *karomata*) that act as identity badges.

Furthermore, Buenconsejo (2008) and UNESCO (2018) emphasized that such music functions as *intangible cultural heritage*, not only entertaining but teaching: “Who are we?” becomes answered through song.

2. What are the values perceived by the residents based on the lyrics?

Value	Subthemes	Sample Codes / Quotations	Stakeholder Sources
Hard work & Resilience	Farmers’ struggle, enduring hardship	“It teaches young people the value of hard work” (TMC1); “Nag promote og kalig-on” (LGU2); “Bisag lisod, maningkamot gihapon” (HS2)	LGU, TMC, HS, ES
Respect & Humility	For elders, ancestors, culture	“Pagrespeto sa tradisyon ug sa tigulang” (HS-T2); “Pagka-mainubsanon, dili kalimtan asagikan” (LGU4)	LGU, TMC, HS, ES
Faith & Spirituality	Gratitude to God, prayer	“Song is a prayer” (HS1); “Pagtuo nga naay magtabang sa ato” (TMC4)	LGU, TMC, HS, ES

Value 1: Hard work & Resilience

Residents see lyrics honoring *farmers’ perseverance*: “*It teaches us that even after floods, we continue working*” (TMC1). LGU members viewed it as a moral lesson: “*Nag promote og kalig-on ug pagpaningkamot*” (LGU2). High school students recognized “*Maningkamot ta bisan lisod*” (HS2).

This aligns with Santos (2010), who noted Visayan folk songs consistently valorize labor and perseverance. Comparable themes of gratitude, agricultural identity, and cultural pride are evident in educational and cultural materials on the Kadayawan Festival, where harvest celebrations emphasize the dignity of labor, thanksgiving, and community resilience (Maceda, 1998; UNESCO, 2018).

This theme also reflects Filipino cultural values — Maceda (1998) observed that many rural songs act as oral education tools, embedding virtues like diligence.

Value 2: Respect & Humility

Respect emerges: for ancestors, land, elders. “*The song reminds us to respect our elders and past*” (HS-T2). An LGU member said, “*Pagka-mainubsanon — to remain humble, remember roots*” (LGU4).

Reyes (2012) observed similar themes in Tagalog devotional music: lyrics as reminders of humility before God and elders. Flores (2017) wrote that local fiesta songs act as cultural mirrors, teaching respect as central to identity.

Value 3: Faith & Spirituality

Faith is explicit: “*Song is also a prayer, asking help from San Isidore*” (HS1). TMC instructor added, “*It shows pagtuo nga naay magtabang sa ato*” (TMC4).

Mojares (2014) highlighted faith themes in Sinulog music: lyrical prayers that merge history and devotion. Similarly, Tagg (2013) explained how repeated invocation of blessings in song fosters collective spiritual resilience.

Even the youngest (ES group) recognized this: “*Nagaingon ang kanta nga mag-ampo ug magpasalamat*” (ES3).

3. What cultural significance is reflected in the music?

Theme	Subthemes	Sample Codes / Quotations	Stakeholder Sources
Cultural Transmission	Teaching youth heritage, continuity	“The song keeps history alive” (TMC2); “Ginatudlo sa mga bata” (ES-T1); “Even small kids know about barter and karomata because of the song” (LGU4)	LGU, TMC, HS, ES
Community Bonding	Shared experience, unity	“When everyone sings, the town feels one” (HS-T1); “Music makes the barangay unite” (TMC5); “Naghiusa bisag lain-lain og edad” (LGU1)	LGU, TMC, HS, ES

Theme 1: Cultural Transmission

Residents consistently view the festival song not merely as performance, but as a living textbook: “*It keeps alive our barter history and the karomata story,*” shared a college student (TMC2). Elementary teachers emphasized: “*Ginatudlo namo sa bata nga importante ang karomata kay mao’y gamit sauna sa barter*” (ES-T1).

LGU participants see this function as deliberate: “*The song was made para dili kalimtan ang istorya*” (LGU4). Even high school students recognized: “*Because of the lyrics, kabalo mi unsay na hitabo sauna*” (HS2).

This reflects UNESCO (2018), which emphasizes that music, as part of intangible cultural heritage, serves not only to entertain but to transmit history, beliefs, and values to younger generations. Buenconsejo (2008) used the term *living museum* for festival songs in the Visayas, describing how lyrics preserve historical and cultural memory across generations.

Maceda (1998) explains this process as “aural archiving”: using song to encode stories, symbols, and communal wisdom in memory, rather than in books. In Trinidad, the karomata — a cart — becomes more than a physical object; in the lyrics, it becomes a carrier of ancestral knowledge.

Moreover, Cohen (2013) argues that when communities repeatedly perform such songs during festivals, the cultural knowledge becomes *embodied*, meaning it isn't just known intellectually but lived emotionally. This embodied transmission helps young Trinidadons internalize their identity and historical roots.

Theme 2: Community Bonding

Residents described how the song serves as a *social glue*: “During the festival, when the music plays, we forget problems; we feel united” (LGU1). A TMC student noted: “Bisag lain-lain og status, tanan kanta, tanan sayaw” (TMC5).

High school teachers stressed: “Music makes the barangay feel as one family, especially when we dance and sing together” (HS-T1). Even elementary pupils felt this: “Lingaw kay daghan mi magkuyog kanta” (ES2).

This supports Cohen (2013), who described communal music-making as producing “collective emotional identity” — a moment where social divisions (age, status, occupation) soften under shared melody and rhythm.

Aquino (2017) in her study of Panagbenga festival songs similarly found that lyrics referencing shared history and city pride create ritual moments of unity. Tagg (2013) adds that the repetition of words like *panaghiusa* or *bugkos* in lyrics acts musically to reinforce belonging.

In Trinidad, the karomata song becomes the soundtrack of these collective moments: parades, dances, and rituals. Flores (2017) wrote that small-town festival music creates “time apart from ordinary life,” where the community reenacts its identity.

Residents’ testimony shows this lived: “Even outsiders can join, but for us, singing the song feels different; it feels like home” (TMC3).

Together, the cultural significance of the Karomata Festival music lies not only in what it says but in what it *does*: it teaches, unites, and reaffirms a shared story. This process keeps history alive, while also continually rebuilding community bonds each time the song is sung.

4. What historical context references are present in the lyrics?

Thematic Table: Historical Context References

Reference	Meaning	Sample Codes / Quotations	Stakeholder Sources
Barter trade & karomata	Local trade history, rural life	“Lyrics tell barter days; karomata as transport” (LGU2); “Karomata carried rice, fish” (HS2); “Barter before there was money” (TMC4)	LGU, TMC, HS, ES

Patron Saint (San Isidore)	Blend of faith & farming history	“Tribute to San Isidro” (TMC4); “Faith was part of farmers’ life” (HS1); “Nagpasalamat ug ni San Isidro” (ES3)	LGU, TMC, HS, ES
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Reference 1: Barter trade & karomata

Participants explained the lyrics narrate how, before a cash economy, residents traded rice, fish, and vegetables using karomata carts. *“It tells history of barter — nga wala pay kwarta sauna”* (TMC4). LGU employees see it as local historiography: *“Lyrics make people remember what really built Trinidad’s economy”* (LGU2).

High school students connected the symbol: *“Karomata carried goods; it shows our ancestors’ hard work”* (HS2). Even elementary pupils understood: *“Ang karomata kay gigamit sa barter sauna”* (ES2).

Maceda (1998) described Philippine folk songs as oral records of local economies, carrying details absent from colonial archives. Flores (2017) confirmed that small-town festival lyrics preserve granular history — barter practices, tools like the karomata — rarely written down but sung and remembered.

Cohen (2013) highlighted how naming tangible objects in songs (like karomata) creates *mnemonic anchors* — each mention triggers collective memory.

By embedding barter and karomata, the song preserves economic history, everyday rural life, and technological ingenuity, turning local material culture into cultural narrative.

Reference 2: Patron Saint (San Isidore)

Residents recognized lyrics praising *San Isidore the Farmer* as protector of fields and symbol of faith woven into farming. *“Lyrics thank San Isidro for blessings and good harvest”* (TMC4). HS student added: *“Nagpakita nga sauna, faith was part of farming”* (HS1). Even ES group voiced: *“Nagpasalamat ug ni San Isidro”* (ES3).

This dual layer — history and faith — is typical in Philippine festival music. Mojares (2014) in Sinulog festival music showed lyrics blend historical narrative (arrival of Santo Niño) with devotional prayer, shaping communal identity. Reyes (2012) wrote that patron saint references are cultural bridges between past and present.

Tagg (2013) explained that repeated invocation of a saint in lyrics ritualizes memory: each mention renews the saint’s place in communal life. For Trinidad, San Isidore is not just history; he remains spiritually and culturally alive each time the song is performed.

These historical references do more than list past facts. They become cultural symbols: barter trade represents *industry and ingenuity*; karomata embodies *unity and resilience*; San Isidore represents *faith grounded in rural life*.

Through lyrics, these historical contexts shift from static history to *performed identity*, aligning with Buenconsejo (2008): “Festival music makes history live, not just remembered.”

Conclusions

This study analyzed the themes, values, cultural significance, and historical context reflected in the lyrics of the Karomata Festival music of Trinidad, Bohol, as perceived by four key stakeholder groups — LGU employees, TMC instructors and students, elementary school teachers and pupils, and high school teachers and students.

The results showed that the Karomata Festival music is more than a celebratory song; it functions as a cultural archive that encapsulates the community’s collective memory, identity, and values.

First, the themes perceived — *gratitude and faith, unity and community, heritage and identity* — reveal that the lyrics act as a moral and emotional compass for residents. Gratitude is directed not only toward God and nature but also toward farmers, reinforcing the central role of agriculture in the community’s identity. Unity is reinforced through metaphors and imagery of cooperation (*panaghiusa*), while heritage is asserted through references to barter trade and the karomata as unique cultural symbols.

Second, the values embedded in the lyrics — *hard work, resilience, respect, humility, faith, and spirituality* — align with core Filipino cultural ideals. These values are not abstract; they are made concrete through the lived agricultural experiences of Trinidadnons and their historical and spiritual traditions.

Third, the cultural significance of the music lies in its dual function: as a medium of cultural transmission and as a tool for community bonding. It educates younger generations about the town’s history and reinforces communal identity through shared performance. This confirms UNESCO’s recognition of music as intangible cultural heritage that safeguards historical memory while strengthening social ties.

Fourth, the historical context embedded in the lyrics — barter trade, karomata carts, and the veneration of San Isidore — transforms factual history into lived heritage. By performing the song annually, residents reenact their past and reaffirm their cultural identity in the present.

The findings address a research gap in Philippine ethnomusicology and festival studies: while major urban festivals like Sinulog and Panagbenga have been extensively studied, smaller, rural, trade-origin festivals such as Karomata remain under-

documented. This study contributes to filling that gap by providing a detailed thematic, values, cultural, and historical analysis from the perspective of local stakeholders.

Recommendations

For Cultural Preservation

- A. **Formal Documentation** — The municipal government and schools should document the festival song in both audio and notated formats, with translations and annotations explaining historical references.
- B. **Educational Integration** — Integrate the song into local school curricula (elementary and high school) as part of Araling Panlipunan and MAPEH subjects to ensure generational transmission.

For Festival Development

- A. **Interactive Learning Activities** — Create festival workshops where students and community members learn the song's history, choreography, and symbolism directly from cultural bearers.
- B. **Tourism Promotion** — Use the song's themes and historical references in promotional materials, emphasizing the uniqueness of the karomata and barter trade heritage.

For Future Research

- A. **Comparative Studies** — Future researchers could compare the Karomata Festival music to other barter-trade-origin festivals in the Philippines to identify common and unique elements.
- B. **Ethnomusicological Analysis** — A detailed musical analysis of melody, rhythm, and instrumentation could complement the lyrical study, offering a fuller understanding of its cultural function.
- C. **Intergenerational Perception Studies** — Examining differences in how older and younger generations interpret the song could reveal evolving cultural priorities.

Karomata Festival Music Cultural Preservation and Promotion Action Plan

Program Title: "Karomata Heritage through Music: Preservation, Education, and Celebration"

Overall Goal: To preserve, transmit, and promote the cultural, historical, and value-laden significance of the Karomata Festival music in Trinidad, Bohol, ensuring its relevance for future generations.

Objectives and Activities Table

Objective	Specific Activities	Responsible Stakeholders	Timeline	Resources Needed	Expected Output
1. Formal Documentation of the Festival Song	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Record high-quality audio and video of the festival song performance. - Prepare musical notation and lyric sheets (Cebuano & English translation). - Include historical annotations explaining key references (barter, karomata, San Isidore). 	LGU Cultural Affairs Office (lead), TMC Music Department, Local Musicians	2 months before festival	Audio-visual equipment, studio access, translators, music notators	Archived and published official Karomata Festival Song documentation
2. Educational Integration in Schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop lesson plans linking the song to Araling Panlipunan, MAPEH, and Values Education. - Train teachers on how to teach the song's history and cultural meanings. - Organize school-based "Karomata Song Day" where students perform and discuss the lyrics. 	DepEd District of Trinidad, TMC Education Faculty, LGU Education Committee	Start 4 months before festival; ongoing yearly	Printed lesson plans, training modules, audiovisual aids	Lesson integration across elementary, high school, and college levels
3. Interactive Learning Activities during the Festival	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Host "Lyrics and Legacy" workshops where elders share stories related to the song's themes and historical references. - Organize school and barangay competitions for best interpretation of the song (vocals, dance, dramatization). 	Barangay Cultural Committees, Youth Councils, TMC Performing Arts Group	Festival week	Workshop venues, sound system, costumes, prizes	Increased public awareness and intergenerational knowledge exchange
4. Tourism Promotion Using the Song	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Feature the song in tourism videos and social media campaigns. - Create QR codes at festival venues that link to the song's history and performance videos. - Collaborate with local souvenir shops to produce merchandise (shirts, mugs) with song lyrics and historical imagery. 	Municipal Tourism Office, LGU PR Team, Local Entrepreneurs	1-2 months before festival	Graphic designers, videographers, printing services	Boosted tourist engagement and recognition of Trinidad's unique festival
5. Comparative and Ethnomusical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Partner with local universities to study other barter-trade-origin festivals and compare musical content. 	TMC Research Office, External Cultural	Post-festival; ongoing	Research funding, academic network access	Academic papers and presentations in cultural

Research Expansion	- Document melodies, rhythms, and instrumentation of Karomata music for academic publication.	Research Institutes			conferences
6. Intergenerational Storytelling Program	- Organize community nights where elders narrate experiences related to barter trade and karomata. - Record and compile these stories into a community heritage book.	Senior Citizens' Association, Barangay Councils, LGU Cultural Affairs Office	Year-round	Recording equipment, book printing budget	Published Karomata Heritage Storybook

Implementation Notes

- **Monitoring & Evaluation:** Quarterly review meetings by the LGU Cultural Affairs Office with school heads and barangay coordinators to assess progress.
- **Funding Source:** Municipal cultural budget, supplemented by provincial cultural grants and local business sponsorships.
- **Sustainability Plan:** Institutionalize the “Karomata Song Day” and include it in the town’s annual events calendar.

Expected Long-term Outcomes

- Preservation of Karomata Festival music as a living heritage.
- Increased community knowledge and pride in local history.
- Enhanced tourism appeal rooted in authentic cultural identity.
- Strengthened intergenerational bonds through music and storytelling.

Compliance with Ethical Standards

Informed consent was obtained from all adult participants, and for pupils, consent from parents/guardians. Confidentiality was maintained through anonymous codes: *LGU1*, *TMC2*, *ES4*, *HS5*, etc. Cultural respect guided all questions, prioritizing participants’ interpretations without imposing external analyses.

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