

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to identify the existing cultural practices of the Karao Tribe, to identify the methods of transmitting the cultural practices of the Karao Tribe, to identify the problems encountered during the transmission, and to identify the challenges affecting conservation of the Karao tribe's culture.

The data were obtained through interview schedule with the Karao tribes using guide questionnaires.

The findings stated that the existing cultural practices of the Karao tribe are as follows: *induthuan*, *sindad*, *colimbet*, *i-owac*, *sarey*, *wil-es*, *epas*, *ampasit*, *chanas*, *pedad*, and *sangbo*. These practices are transmitted to the younger generations through oral communication during family conferences, on actual event and during festival.

However due to the identified perceived challenges such as the change in spiritual belief, educational attainment, financial problems, transition period, technological effects, and intermarriage resistant among the youths and huge gap of communication between the youths and the elders happen.

Further research regarding the tribe may be done especially to their dialect and to their social institutions.



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INTRODUCTION

Rationale

Culture is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of a society, which the group uses to operate within and sometimes outside its environment (Garcia *et. al.*, 1984). According to them, this means that, culture, which affects a person from womb to tomb, only develops as man lives with others.

Sociologists however study culture into two categories, material culture and non-material culture respectively. According to Cliff (n.d.), material culture refers to the physical objects, resources and spaces that people use to define their culture like temples, schools, mosques, homes, goods and products and so forth that help in defining the members (of such community) behaviors and perceptions. On the other hand, he explained that non-material culture pertains to the nonphysical ideas that people have about their culture or the several processes that a culture uses to shape its member's thoughts, feelings and behaviors. Such processes include beliefs, rules, values, norms, morals, language, organizations and institutions (Cliff, n.d.).

Unlike material culture, non-material culture cannot be preserved in museums but can be documented and let it be executed on feasts to be continually practiced. This process would help in transmitting the cultural practices to avoid its death.

In the Cordillera, most ethnic groups have survived maintaining the customs and traditions passed to them by their ancestors. However, some have divided and almost lost their identity as a tribal institution because as it was stated earlier, cultural practices are



unlike artifacts, thus it cannot be preserved. This justifies that the performance of ritualistic events, reciting of rites, and executing of cultural activities help in maintaining the culture from generation to generation.

The study then focuses on the cultural beliefs and practices among the Karao Tribe of Bokod, Benguet. Barangay Karao is a tribe possessing rich culture yet dimly noticed even by their fellow Igorots, specially the youth.

Such cultures are the *indoto-an*, *pekkel*, *ele'was*, *iowac*, and *kecheng na payao*. On the other hand, their dialect is called *awa* or *iwaan* (Atos, 1982).

Many concerns have been striving to relay and preserve such mother culture. Museums were built, video documentaries were made, books were stitched, and oral historians mouthed their beliefs and practices through out their generation with the strong hope that those honored and treasured cultures live and be practiced if not neither developed nor rejected.

Thus, to document and be educated with the Karaos cultural practices, identifying the communication strategies and the best medium used is its necessity. In addition, the challenges brought about by the mainstream society are to be recorded.

Statement of the Problem

The Karao of Bokod is a not so known tribe in Benguet but was believed (and with few documentations) to be possessing rich tradition. Thus, initiating curiosity to learn and document their beliefs and practices, most importantly their communication strategies and the best medium used in handing their culture to their next generation.



This study aimed to answer the following questions:

1. What are the existing cultural practices among the Karao Tribe?
2. What are the methods of transmitting the Karao Tribe's cultural practices to the subsequent generation?
3. What were the problems encountered during the process of transmission?
4. What are the challenges affecting the conservation of the Karao Tribe's culture?

Objective of the Study

With the general objective of identifying the communication strategies of the Karao tribe in transmitting their cultural practices and the best medium used as well, the study specifically aimed to:

1. Identify the existing cultural practices of the Karao Tribe.
2. Identify the methods of transmitting the cultural practices of the Karao Tribe.
3. Identify the problems encountered during the transmission.
4. Identify the challenges affecting conservation of the Karao tribe's culture.

Importance of the Study

This study may serve as a reference as it will enrich one's knowledge about the Karao Tribe's cultural practices. This will also justify the vital role of communication in transmitting culture. Furthermore, communication students, practitioners, and/or



researchers may adopt and use the insights of this study for better and effective information dissemination.

Scope and Limitation

This study focused on the communication strategies practiced by the Karao Tribe of Bokod, Benguet in passing their cultural practices. The respondents were the members of the society especially the elders as the key informants, and the youths of the Karao Tribe. Library and internet research were also used.



METHODOLOGY

Locale and Time of the Study

The study was conducted from November 2009 to January 2010 at Barangay Karao, Bokod, Benguet (shown at Figures). Karao is more than three hours drive northeast from Baguio City and is one of the ten barangays of the Municipality of Bokod. The said barangay is bounded on the north and east by Barangay Ekip and Barangay Poblacion (also on its southern part), and on the west side is the Ambangeg of Bokod. In addition, Karao is five minutes drive from Poblacion, Bokod (Atos, 1982).

Respondents of the Study

The respondents of the study were specifically ten Karao tribe elders who possess rich knowledge and are still practicing their cultural beliefs and practices, and other five members of the society that may supplement significant ideas that may help in identifying and/or comparing the Karao's cultural practices, now and then. Eleven youths were also interviewed to measure their awareness on their tribes cultural practices.

Data Collection

Key informant interview (shown in Figure 2) was used in gathering needed data. Ilokano was used as a medium of communication because the interviewer can neither speak nor understand *awa* (Karao's dialect) and thus it is the most convenient and most appropriate for both the interviewee and interviewer.



Data Gathered

The data gathered were the cultural beliefs and practices of the Karao Tribe, their communication strategies and the best medium used in transmitting their cultural practices and the changes brought about by the mainstream society and/or by any new beliefs and practices introduced to the Karao culture. The awareness of the youth concerning their cultural practices was also recorded.

Data Analysis

The data gathered was organized, collaborated, summarized and was presented in a narrative form.



RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Existing Cultural Practices

The Karaos, in spite of the tremendous changes, sustained their customary practices up to this generation because they believe that their uniqueness and unity bring them blessings.

They value their reputation and their identity because this was exactly how their ancestors viewed it for themselves. As what Mr. Alfonso Alperéz, one of the key informants said in an interview that, “Isu ti kasta ti biyag ti ka-ap-ano” (It is how our ancestors’ life were). This philosophy helped them in resisting to the influences of the mainstream society that was believed to be bringing unity to their tribe. Table 1 shows the summarized cultural practices of the Karao tribe.

Family Practices. The *tulag* is the strongly practiced marriage approach nowadays among the Karao. Parents were no longer in control on who they wanted their children to be married with. The marriage may or may not be celebrated as long as the signing of the wedding documents is done by both parties.

According to the key informants, *tulag* which starts from "a boy meets girl" story that developed into a special relationship bonded by love, commitment and trust suited the ideal lifestyle of the present generation, having all the freedom in “choosing” and “deciding” for themselves. The beautiful union is then even sealed in a rite of marriage, by a vow of fidelity and love for each other and only death can break them apart.

On the other hand, *kalon* and *kaising* were only practiced in some remote parts of Karao.



Table 1. Description of the existing cultural practices of Karao

EXISTING CULTURAL PRACTICES	DESCRIPTION
Family Practices	
<i>Tulag</i>	It follows courtship, engagement and marriage. This is the dominant wedding practice of the Karao.
<i>Kalon</i>	Applicable only to those ages from late twenties to early thirties where in they are helped by the <i>eman kedons</i> to express their gratitude to their prospect husband or wife.
<i>Kaising</i>	It is the parents who plan for the marriage of their children.
Pregnancy and Birth	Karao depend on the ability and availability of medicines, doctors, clinics, and hospitals.
Death and Burial Rites	Normal wake is three nights (for 18 years old and above) Two nights (for 18 years and below) <i>Bangil</i> is done in honor of the dead.
<i>Chilos</i>	Collective term for their rituals

According to an interview with Mr. Geoffrey Gonzalo, a Barangay Kagawad of Karao, *kalon* (the process) is applicable only to any adult (males or females ages from late twenties and early thirties who are not yet married) who may want moral support in expressing his/her feelings to someone. He said that the role of the *eman kedon* (now they simply the married elders) is to help him/her express his/her feelings. According to him, in a case where a male is in need of help, the *eman kedon* will just accompany him to the



female's house then things are discussed. He added that when the female will positively respond to the offer, a wedding will be plan by both parties. On the other hand, he continued that when a female needs help, the male is invited to the house of the female to discuss things over. When the male agrees, a wedding will be planned.

He said that the planning of the wedding date and the celebration is now the couple to-be's concern. According to him, they are given weeks for wedding preparation in case one of them will withdraw. He exemplified that when the male is not going to the female's house anymore during the planning, with no valid reasons, it is understood that he is no longer interested in the wedding and when the female will say also that she is no longer committed to the plan, the wedding will be abandoned. In addition, he said that any expenses during the process is not required to be paid by the one who withdrawn.

Lastly, he noted that butchering animal is not a requirement during this process especially during the wedding celebration in order not to burden the soon to be couples who are just beginning to enter a new phase of life. He noted that wedding documents are enough.

Before, *kalon* only happens when elders intercede during a *cañao* in picking a woman for a man. To date, this is not is not practically done because an *eman kedon* must share with the expenses of the *kalon* (as human) when the *kalon* may not afford all the operating costs during the wedding.

Gonzalo said that today, *kaising* was always unsuccessful because children when grown insist on who they wanted and disobey their parents plans. In addition, he added that 'love' is one of the big factor that affects the decision of the children to say "No." to their parents, and when we talk about love he said that it is hard to contradict that. At



some instances, both parents may plan a wedding for their children, either their children are already born or yet to be conceived.

Pregnancy and birth. The Karao tribe depend on the ability and availability of doctors, medicines, clinics and hospitals to guarantee the mother and the child's safety and good health. They no longer depend on *manghilot* (native medwife). However, Gonzalo said that some precautions are still followed.

One of these is the "eel matters" where in according to Alperéz, either the pregnant wife or the husband must not catch or watch an eel during the pregnancy. This is so because, the Karao tribe believed that the watching and the catching of the eel brings death to the child. He further explain this with his story about a pregnant Karao woman who happened to pass through Baguio market, and saw the eels being sold along the market road. After giving birth, the baby grew for a little while but died afterwards. The cause of the death was believed to the of seeing the eels.

According to Mrs. Alicia Bankey, one of the key informants, eels are perilous to a Karao's life because this is what their ancestors had made pact with. Mr. Alperéz supported this in his statement that Karao's are to snakes as Ibalois are to eels. This means that, Karao's are safe with the snakes but unsafe with the eels, the Ibalois on the other hand, are in threat with snakes but are secured with eels.

In addition, Alperéz said that when the eel that was seen or caught was small, the baby will die during his/her childhood, however when it was big, the baby will die during his/her adulthood with or without a cause.

Furthermore, the not cutting of hair is not practiced anymore. According to Bankey, today's generation insist that the certain prohibition was never taught to them at



school.

Moreover, Genaro Lamsis, one of the key informants said that the husband must not also prepare a meal for his wife and for his family when the food was a fruit of treachery like robbing and other dirty work so that the soon to be born baby will not grow as a thief. He added that, this practically serves as an ethical teaching to any member of the society.

In addition, Gonzalo said that after the mother had given birth, she was served with native chicken's soup to help her gain her strength from giving birth. He said that the native chicken must not be fed with commercial corns and injected with any medicine to ensure that the nutrients from the chicken is pure and safe.

On the other hand, Gonzalo said that *manghilots* were no longer comfortable in assisting a laboring mother because of the fear that they might be the reason and/or accused responsible for the death of baby or whenever the delivery failed.

Death and Burial Rite. According to the key informants, the Karao's death and burial ritual stayed to be short and simple. They said that the normal wake lasts for three days and two nights where the dead is 18 years old and above. On the other hand, it could be for two days they explained that when the dead is below 18 years old.

In addition, the key informants mentioned that the wake can be extended when the relative of the dead is quite far, but butchering of animals starts only three or two days before the burial. Furthermore, they said that during the first day of slaughtering sacrificial animals, the corpse is clothed with white shirt and pants for males and white shirt and *tapis* (Benguet's traditional skirt) for females.

After that, they said that the corpse will be put in a coffin with a pure white



blanket or striped with black and blue called the *colabao*. Alperéz stressed that the coffin must be made of Benguet pinewood only for it was believed that the spirit of the dead dislikes any other material for the coffin.

Moreover, the key informants said that in the case of a normal wake, a *bangil* (three-pronged extemporaneous talk addressed to the deceased, to the bereaved family and to the general public in attendance) is done. According to them, *bangil* serves as an honor to the dead who have learned to work in the field (for males) and/or carry Benguet baskets (for females). In addition, they said that following their tradition, on the first night at 10:00 o'clock in the evening, the men and the women start the *bangil*.

Furthermore, they said that the *awas* (elder men) stay outside while the *i-inas* (elder women) sit inside the house as the caretakers of the fire. They noted that the fire must kept burning for it is a symbol of good health. They also explained that each selected *awas* participant must prepare his speech about the dead person whether good or bad for it also serves as an advice to everyone. In this situation, they said that a respected *awas* will open the *bangil* to start the story of the dead person when he/she was still alive.

According to them, the man's *bangil* is called the *seba*, which is followed by the woman's *bangil* called *o-wa*, which comes after every *seba*'s paragraph. They said that *o-wa* is the echo of the *seba*. According to them, this was done to relay the message to the dead and to inform him/her that they are telling his/her story. At the same time, they mentioned that the *makabaley* (host) goes around with a winnower of tobacco passed from inside of the house then to the outside to ensure understandings between the living and the dead.

The key informants said that on the second day pigs are butchered at every meal



for viand however it depends on the financial capability of the host. Bankey noted that religious groups are also welcomed to sing their pilgrim songs and prayer services.

Additionally, they said that a *bangil* is done again the second night at same time for the sake of those who missed the first night and as to compensate the shortcomings during the first night. At dawn, a dog is offered to the dead to serve as his/her company in his/her journey to the next world.

Moreover, they said that lightning before burial is considered a sign of something terrible to happen to the bereaved family. This is why they do the burial (third day) at any time early in the morning to avoid lightning strikes in the afternoon. They also said that to make the sneezing unnoticed, they strike bamboo sticks to make some noises during the burying process. This is done because they believed that sneezing burdens the bereaved family to butcher another pig to ward off any bad things to happen.

In addition, Aplerez stated that burial rites were only done at the *chengeg na baley* (ancestral house) sometimes called *puunan* (foundation house) (seen in Figure 3). This is so because, he said that Karao members may build their own houses, and may go to where ever they may please, but will certainly and will always be going back to their ancestral house when they die.

In addition, Alperez added that the bodies were mixed with the others when the burial site was already full. He said that this was believed to further strengthen their unity and their warm family relationships.

Chilos. Table 2 shows the different kinds of *Chilos* and its purpose and performance. They were categorized as follows: healing practices, thanksgiving practices and rituals for different occasions.





Figure 3. An extended *chengeg na baley*

Although some of the healing practices were forgotten because of the modern technology and availability of hospitals and clinics in the area, the Karao still observe some of these traditional healing rites when a physician is unable to sick or when a cause is not determined during the laboratory procedures. Healing rituals are done only with the prescription of a *mambunong*

Iowa is a ritual used for healing pig, dog and snake bites however, pigs and snake bites are cured at clinics and hospitals.

Sarey is a ritual for cleaning off any misfortune encountered by a Karao member such as accidents. In the case of Danceryll, a Karao adolescent (together with his younger brother) who encountered an accident by falling on a high sloping area, they were not



Table 2. Purposes of the different kinds of *Chilos*

KINDS OF CHILOS	PURPOSE/S
Healing Practices	
<i>Iowac</i>	For healing pig, dog and snake bites. Pig and dog bites are cured at clinics and hospitals. Healing snake bites may be done by any Karao member
<i>Sarey</i>	Healing and cleaning off of misfortune encountered such as accident.
<i>Wil-es</i>	Healing a sick family member or a pet that caused by cohabiting with other man/woman other than his/her wife/husband.
<i>Ampasit</i>	Healing an illness that was caused by a disturbed or harmed spirit.
<i>Pedad</i>	Healing an illness or the giving of clothes, blankets, shoes and money to an ancestral spirit.
Thanksgiving Practices	
<i>Pekkel</i>	Thanksgiving ceremony before harvest to ensure soil fertility and vast harvest.
<i>Ele'was</i>	A post-harvest thanksgiving for a vast harvest. It is simply a "blow out".
Practices for different events	
<i>Iduthuan</i>	It is a thanksgiving when the rite is offered to God and to other spirits called the <i>induthuan na akow</i> . <i>Induthuan na minatay</i> if it is done to appease the dead.
<i>Sindad</i>	A healing ritual if it will come after <i>colimbet</i> A thanksgiving ritual when it is intended to correct the defects of the <i>induthuan</i>



<i>Kecheng na payew</i>	Washing of the dirty body after a field work
<i>Chanas/Deyaw</i>	The blessing of a newly constructed house.
<i>Sangbo</i>	To keep the fortune brought by an unexpected animal entering a house.

allowed to enter the house until the ritual was complete. He mentioned that an egg was buried at their house's entrance (a round pebble and/or a round stone may be buried).

According to the key informants, this is done to be certain that the misfortune be concealed and will not repeat itself. After that Danceryll said that his foot and his brother's foot were held just above the buried egg and were washed (by any Karao member) with clear water. He continued that along with it was a prayer (saying that the incident will not happen again) uttered by a *mambunong*. However, Alperéz told that any adult committed to the ritual may do the prayer.

Wil-es on the other hand is a ritual done for curing an illness caused by someone who had relationship other than with his wife or husband if and only if the person is really guilty by confessing it. This is not always true to all of them because illnesses can be a result of many causes as explained by the respondents.

In this case, the key informants said that a pig is sacrificed with the *mambunong's* presence who will advise and will make the husband/wife who committed the sin to promise in front of his/her wife and the general public present that he will not repeat his/her mistake again.

At times, Gonzalo explained that the concerned couple was not allowed to eat the sacrificed pig's meat during the ritual because it is believed that eating the sacrificed animal will hinder the efficiency of the ritual. He said that a chicken is sacrificed merely for their viand.



Ampasit is performed in healing an illness caused by a disturbed or hurt spirit. Gonzalo said that as far as he can remember, unseen spirits prefer silent environment thus the noises produced by the products of technology such as chainsaws, jeepneys, motors and others are driving them away.

However when an *ampasit* happens, Gonzalo said that the ritual is performed on the actual place where the *ampasit* happened. A chicken maybe sacrificed but usually pigs are butchered depending on what the *mambunong* has to require.

Gonzalo said in his story that one day, his neighbor went to his garden to burn the dried leaves and weeds. After the burning is done, he started walking home when his neighbor's face begun to feel itchy and sore. Feeling uncomfortable, his neighbor scratched and rubbed his itchy face though it hurts. He said that, his neighbors face begun swelling upon scratching and rubbing. It happened then that Gonzalo's neighbor meet a *mambunong* along the way, who, upon looking at the swelling face concluded that it is caused by a disturbed and harmed unseen being.

According to Gonzalo, the *mambunong* advised the neighbor to sacrifice a pig at the place where he burned the dried leaves and weeds. With clothes and blankets alongside with the meat, the *mambunong* uttered his prayer to the disturbed/harmed spirit. Just after the *mambunong* said his last lines, Gonzalo claimed that he witnessed the actual disappearance of the swelling of his neighbor's face.

He continued that after performing the ritual, the healed person went home and sacrificed another animal, mostly chicken, as an announcement of his arrival (*kimibitan*). The *mambunong* served as the assistant of the healed individual in entering the house.

Pedad is another ritual done whenever their ancestor's spirit will ask something



through a dream and/or by making them sick.

In this case, the key informants said that sacrificed animal differs on what the *mambunong* has to require. Clothes, blankets and/shoes needed by the spirit is then delivered and will be relayed by the *mambunong* by saying that the spirits request is granted. They also said that the *mambunong* may also advice the dead to use the offered shoes, clothes, blankets and/or money in good terms and may no longer disturb the bereaved family.

Thanksgiving rites includes *pekkel* and *ele'was*. The key informants said that this ritual is not practically observed although the good effect is really seen because of financial requirements.

Gonzalo explained that *pekkel* is only done by wealthy member or by anyone with a strong faith on this ritual at the *alang*, a small *nipa* hut where they place the harvested rice and is built at the rice field. He said that the ritual is strictly done only at anytime early in the morning before the harvesting starts where a pig is butchered. He continued that before eating, a prayer is offered to God and to the other spirits to bestow a vast harvest.

According to Gonzalo, this is true to a certain family in their place who is observing *pekkel*. He said that for other farmers, they need to input large quantity of fertilizers on their rice fields and farms while this family will just plant the seedlings and will wait until the harvesting comes. He noted that they visit their plants but certainly, they do not apply fertilizers and chemicals.

On the other hand, *ele'was* serves as a “blow out” when a farmer had a vast harvest. A pig or a chicken maybe butchered at the house of the farmer.



Other rituals include: *induthuan*, *sindad*, *kecheng na payew*, *chanas/deyaw*, *sangbo*, and *inkileg*.

Lately, the rite of *induthuan* (for thanksgiving and funeral) is being done during festivals and on actual events. This is being performed by the different ancestral house organizations of the Karao tribe. Mr. Bankey said that this traditional ritual requires the strict adherence of meat division and allocation.

To date, *sindad* and *induthuan* (these rituals are their oldest and is the only practiced ritual during the headhunting period) are strictly for males and elder women. The youths were not allowed to join because this has been their practice before when headhunting was rampant.

Bankey said that most of the times, the males meet at the *abonan* (male's club house) (seen at Figures 4 and 5) to plan for their fighting strategies against the *busols* (headhunters) who are coming from the mountains to hunt them and how to protect the women and the younger generations. According to the key informants, the women and their children were left home so that they may not be involved in the fight.

He continued that during an *induthuan* or *sindad* only the elder women were allowed to carefully allocate meat for the males at the *abonan* for a good meal and for strength.

Ba-ac stated that *induthuan* pays attention to the congregation of the males on the *abonan* (now referred as the male clubhouse) to eat the meat allocated to them, and the exclusive participation of only the elders and the males of the Karao and the specified days when the meat were eaten. She explained that singing and dancing is not observed in





Figure 4. A modern *abonan* built out of blocks of cements, stones and green sheets



Figure 5. Details of the *abonan*

this ritual because this is not a feast. For this reason, she said that rice wine is not served in the *induthuan*.

According to the key informants, *induthuan* is furthermore divided into two types (except for their difference in classification and function, both types follow the same form), these are as follows:

Induthuan na Akow (day) is performed primarily to praise God. This ritual also beseech God for blessings, and/or to remove curses of harmful spirits which have brought illness or death to the family.

Induthuan ti Minatay (for appeasing the dead) is the more common type which is held on the *kaweldo* (seventh or eighth day) of the dead. According to the key informants, with the introduction and belief of the people on the ninth day (*pamisa*) brought about by Catholicism, the Karao added another ritual which was the *Kappe* (being the last funerary ritual) to observe the *induthuan ni minatay*.

However, he said that the *induthuan ni minatay* is still performed two to three days (the *kaweldo*) before the ninth day. The key informants said that, presently with the *kappe* ritual, the pig's meat in the *induthuan ni minatay* is cut-up in the house of the host (before it is only done at the *abonan*).

In addition, the key informants said that no bones of the pig are to be broken so that the dead may receive it as wholly as possible (seen at Figure 6). They said that if a slight mistake is committed in the cutting process, the whole ritual is invalidated and the dead for whom the *induthuan* is being offered is displeased. According to them, the elders may decide to butcher another pig if a mistake is committed.



On the other hand, *sindad* may come after *induthuan* and *colimbet* which is called *sindad na colimbet* to ward off the defects of the said rituals in order to usher luck. The key informants said that this is characterized by offering of one pig for the dead in exchange for the health of an ailing person or as a thanksgiving ritual when done after the *induthuan na akow*.

They said that there is no singing or dancing that accompanies this ritual but rice wine is present. According to them, a short prayer over the rice wine was made (prayers depend on the *sindad*'s purpose) before sacrificing the pig. Meat allocations for males were then brought to the *abo-nan* where the meat was eaten.

Kecheng na Payew. According to Umaking, one of the respondents, this was literally the washing of the body with water and soap after working.





Figure 6. The careful slicing of the pig parts

Moreover, *chanas* or *deyaw* is the blessing of a newly constructed house. According to the key informants, this may be associated with holy water and prayers offered by a priest. A *mambunong* may also be a celebrant together with the priest. According to them, when the *mambunong* and the priest are both present, the priest may do his service first after that the *mambunong* may do his concerns also.

Sangbo is a ritual done to usher luck when an unexpected animal enters a house such as snake, bird and/or lizard. The key informants noted that in order to usher such luck, they have to work in order to have good fortune. For instance, if they have a business, they should manage their business carefully and effectively so that they will gain more.

However, *sangbo* is not practiced by all the members of Karao because according to Alperéz, *sangbo* is done only by members who have strong faith in this and were wealthy. He said that they usually butcher a pig because it was believed that the sacrificed animal will be in return a good fortune. They claim that, when they will not do the ritual, no fortune will come and bad luck might happen.

Inkileg is done to appease someone's spirit who died of violence. According to Gonzalo, when the dead for example died last night, the ritual is done early next morning to the place where the incident happened. He said that while holding a native chicken, the *mambunong* will shout his prayer calling the attention of the soul of the dead person to follow him home to where his body is. According to the key informants, the *mambunong* will let go of the chicken in exchange to the soul of the dead. They said that the chicken may go wherever or may be taken by anybody who may pass it by as long as it will not return home with them.

They said that when the death is unexpected, the soul stays behind to where the incident happened even though the body was already brought home. This ritual is done to avoid the wandering of the soul and to make him/her aware of his/her death,.

Communication Strategies

Practically, Karao elders do oral communication in transmitting their culture.

The key informants said that although a dissertation was made and bites of information in the internet was available regarding the Karao tribe, spoken words are traditionally and is still the existing transmission of cultural practices among the tribe's



member. Oral communication was characterized by family conferences, storytelling, and family reunions and/or during rituals and through festivities.

Family conference. Ba-ac said in an interview that family conferences (usually before, during or after dinner when the family is more complete) help a lot in either relating their children on how they live before. This is when they also explain why a certain Karao member was punished for doing robbery, and the purposes of such rituals and other concerns. In other words, the conference is a perfect moment for them to tell their traditions' stories and to make their children understand why they should abide by the society's do's and don'ts. In addition, this is when they set examples for their children to learn.

Additionally, the key informants said that the *abonan* was where adults educate and reprimand male adolescents and young male adults who committed errors. For example when somebody committed robbery this is where they anonymously decide to penalize him/her with carabao. This is done to ensure that the members of the society conform in ways prescribed for them to do so.

Actual events. Alperéz said that they take opportunities during rituals such as *cañao* to relate to the youths. During occasions, an elder has a better opportunity to explain the ritual to the youths because they can relate. It is believed that by witnessing the actual event, understanding and accepting the process is more trouble free.

In addition, one of the youth responded that they are being connected to the life of their ancestors when they participate in rituals because they are reminded of them. She said that through the actual events accepting and/or rejecting the introduced culture to



them is easier. However, one of the youths said that they are only informed when they ask.

Festival. For a long time, the Karao's have not done any festivals to display their traditions. Only in January 2010 when OHUB (Oneness Hospitality and Unity brings and Blessings) festival was organized to celebrate the 1st Karao Foundation Day. The celebration was intended to promote their unity through their customary practices. It was also a means of transmitting their culture to the next generation.

With this festival, Abraham Beray, one of the key informants said that the youths were expected to appreciate their traditional rituals that have been nourishing them since then that they ended up united up to this date. He added that they believed that unity brings blessings among their tribe.

Due to the mentioned communication strategies, the Karao youths claimed that they are aware of their existing rituals. It is indeed inspiring to hear most of them saying that they love their own culture.

Nonetheless, they do not know the names of their rituals and it was not clearly explained to them why a certain ritual is being done because there is still huge communication gap among them and the elders and/or adults. As a result, other youths are losing interest to conserve their rituals because they do not understand them.

Induthuan is one of the confusing traditions among the Karao youth because children and adolescents are not allowed in the occasion. However, Ba-ac said that some of the youths asked their parents and to anyone who might relate to them the ceremonies.

Moreover, all the youth respondents said that only the *abonan*, and the *cheng ngeg na baley* were known to them both the name and the purpose because these are the



more salient features of the Karao society. This is shown on their consistent answers when they were asked about the purposes of the two social institutions. They knew that the *abonan* was where the males eat their meat allocations. They also stated that this is solely for males. However, they did not know the history of the *abonan*.

On the other hand, they also knew the terms of the ancestral house where in this serves as a cemetery for their clan and at times this is where wedding celebration was done.

Problems Encountered During the Process of Transmission

Resistance. During the transmission, Ba-ac said that some of the youths are resistant in accepting their culture although others accept it eventually. Thus, Bankey said that accepting and/or rejecting is selective. In addition, the resistance persists in an individual once he is introduced to the mainstream society.

However, this is true only to heirs who wanted a change in their lives. One of the youth respondents said secretly that he no longer appreciates his tribe's cultural practices because he wanted a change far from their tradition and similar to that of the outside world. He implies that he did not want to grow along with paganism (referring to his tribe's culture).

In addition, the youths are really losing their interest to learn their culture due to transition period.

On the other hand, most of the youths accepted their culture right away. One of the interviewee said that she loves her own culture and that she did not like any foreign



concepts to be added upon it because she said that she can no longer claim her culture as her own when mixed with other culture.

Lack of communication. One encountered problem during the transmission is the big gap of communication between the elders and the youngsters. As what Ms. Bauyan, a Karao teacher said that being busy with each daily lives, *Ikarao*'s tend to forget the essence of communicating simple things such as having family conferences and storytelling (although some observed family conferences).

She said that due to heavy work on the field, parents only think of getting enough rest upon arriving at home thereby missing the opportunity to have a chat with their kids. In addition, the youths preferred to be exchanging stories with their peers than with their parents.

Perceived Challenges Affecting the of Karao Tribe's Culture

Accepting and/or rejecting of the Karao's cultural practices were eventually optional. Table 3 illustrates the summarized effects of the challenges affecting Karao's culture as perceived by the key informants. These are the following:

Educational attainment. Educated Karao members were becoming resistant in accepting and in continually living their ancestors' customs and traditions because the introduction of education to them results to a broader understanding of themselves and of their environment.

Their higher level of educational attainments helped them in taking and in making choices. These includes the determining of right over wrong, extreme and "just enough", and/or practical or not.



As what Bankey had stated, other learned and students would contradict their tribe's traditional teachings by saying that, "*Ti inadal mi, isu ti aramiden mi.*" (What we learn is what we apply). But she added that this is selective though because most of the members treasure their culture. However, as education brings opportunities to pursue other and often more lucrative careers arise, fewer and fewer people are attracted to traditional craft.

Change in spiritual beliefs. One of the main victory of Christianity was its apostolic labor of introducing the one and only God. Bankey indicated that, Christianity made them realize that there are no other gods but God alone.

Other marked changes brought about by adopting Christianity were the adoption of the seventh, eighth, and ninth days, singing of pilgrims and ushering of prayers to the dead.

However, although people in Karao were Christianized, Ba-ac said that great numbers of the society members still practice animism, which is the appeasing of the spirits of the dead, and the worshiping of nature. In addition, Gonzalo said that they still observe their traditional rituals on healing cases when a physician cannot heal the sick.

Table 3. Effects of the perceived challenges in the conservation of the Karao Tribe's culture

PERCIEVED CHALLENGES	EFFECTS
Educational Attainment	Learned and students tend to decide basing on their educational knowledge where in what they learn is what largely applied. Career oppurtunities brought about by educational attainment are causing the members to have lesser time on traditional issues.



Change in Spiritual Beliefs	Christianity made the Karao people to believe that there is only one GOD. Pilgrim songs and prayers are observed during funerary rites and house warming.
Financial Problem	Financially unstable Karao members are not observing <i>babeng</i> , <i>pekkel</i> , <i>ele'was</i> , <i>apsul</i> , and <i>dawa</i> . They need not butcher number of pigs also during funerary rites and they are not required to celebrate wedding ceremonies, more important are the wedding documents.
Transition Period	Youths are becoming stubborn and are being too “intelligent” for their ages.
Technological Effect	Television is more interesting to the younger generations than spending time with the stories of the old folks and attending to the rituals being done. The availability and ability of medicines, clinics, hospitals and doctors to cure abandoned some of the healing rituals such as <i>apsul</i> , and <i>Iowac</i> .
Intermarriage	Intermarriages open the opportunity for intercultural settings.



In addition, Bankey said that as to their death and burial procedures, this has been their creed since it is very tough for them to let go of the ritual. Furthermore, they strongly respect the spirits of their dead.

Kagawad Ba-ac is one of the leading self-appointed promoter and preserver of her own culture. She is keeping a list about the customary laws of the Karao's and is highly encouraging researchers to document their culture.

Along with the introduction of Roman Catholicism, Protestants followed. Mrs. Antonio, a Southern Baptist missionary (nurse in profession) affirmed in an interview that the introduction of Christianity to her life, to her family and to her clan made them realize that their ancestor's customary laws that they have been living with for years are against God's teachings. Thus, making them totally abandon the said practices imposed to them by their ancestors.

To date, though they are Karao residents, they are no longer part of the tribe by excluding themselves from any traditional rites being done.

Financial problem. Although Karao possesses rich culture, some of their cultural practices are being neglected and are selectively practiced because of financial requirements. Alfonso, one of the key informant confirmed that *babeng* as one of the grandest cañao among the tribe is now being ignored because of the growing international economic crisis which causes goods to cost higher and higher. A small pig alone for example costs thousands.

The *pekkel* and *ele'was* are not practically observed also because only those wealthy and those possessing strong faith to the rituals are doing them. The key



informants said that number of offered animals during rituals were also minimized into one chicken or one pig or more depending on the ability of the host but normally pigs are not butchered only on small scale cañao, death and burial and wedding celebrations. The good thing is, any member of the tribe who is financially unstable is not forced to butcher number of pigs during funerary rites, housewarmings and especially at wedding celebration.

Furthermore, members of the tribe move away from their homes to locate better employment that may sustain the financial needs of their family thus having no time on traditional issues. According to one of the respondents, her family moved out of Karao to find more profitable jobs in Baguio to sustain their family's necessities especially her education.

After her parents found jobs, they settled in Baguio up to this date. Being far from her place of origin gave her no opportunity to any actual encounter of her supposed cultural heritage. Her parents, especially her father totally had no time to go home on traditional ceremonies. She only acquired knowledge regarding their culture through the stories of her mother.

Transition period. Gonzalo said that, younger generations are becoming "too intelligent" for their ages. They are becoming stubborn thus neglecting their elder's teachings.

He said that Karao elders are respectively strict back then, while the youths are so passive. During their generation he said that, they have no say to what were taught and introduced to them because they highly respect and obey their parents and the elders. This is the opposite for the youths nowadays who insist on their own point of views.



Because of these instances, elders are also losing their patience, persistence, and their excitement to teach the younger generations regarding their traditions. As what Bankey had said, “Basta insurumi, nangamong dan nu tungpalen da wennu saan.” (As long as we taught them, it is up to them to follow or not)

On the part of Mr. Lamsis one of the key informants, he may be open to change, but he is willing to exert effort in relaying their culture to the next generation.

Technological effect. In the field of technology, the key informants said that *apsul* is no longer being practiced due to the ability and availability of doctors, hospitals and medicines.

Moreover while older and middle-aged folks stay together and concern themselves about a certain preparation for a certain ceremony such as *pedad*, very few of the young people were. Lamsis said that you will find them in front of their televisions watching telenobela’s (Tagalog based drama) and/or MTV (Music Television). This is at times the scenario because the younger generations are not allowed to directly participate on some rituals such as the *induthuan* and *sindad*.

Intermarriage. According to Umaking one of the key informant, when an *Ikarao* interacts with another individual other than his tribe and resulted to intermarriage, the assimilation of new culture happens. Alpez said in an interview that in a situation where a certain family got sick that needs a *mabunong*’s consent, either of the husband’s or the wife’s culture is to be followed. Mostly, it is the wife’s culture that is being followed.



SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The study aimed to determine the communication strategies used by the Karao Tribe elders in transmitting their cultural practices and the medium used; to identify the existing cultural practices as it is compared from the past to the present, and why and how it is done; to identify the problems of the elders in transmitting their culture to the younger generations and why are the problems encountered; to determine the youth's awareness regarding their cultural practices and to identify the factors affecting cultural changes.

Ten elders who have rich knowledge on their culture and who are still practicing them served as the key informants in the study and eleven youths were also interviewed regarding on their awareness on their culture. Aside from interviews, photos were also taken.

The study revealed that, the Karao managed to continually practiced their culture up to this date. Their cultural practices is characterized by their traditional family practices which is centered in marriage, pregnancy and birth and death and burial practices; and *chilos* which pertains to all of their rituals except that of marriage rites. Their existing cultural practices are identified as follows: *induthuan, sindad, colimbet, i-owac, sarey, wil-es, epas, ampasit, chanas, pedad, and sangbo*.

The communication strategy used by the elders was oral communication thru family conference, during actual rituals and festivals. Problems during the transmission happened to be lack of communication between the youth and the elders, and resistant



youth.

The youth's are aware of their cultural practices but are not knowledgeable of the terms or of the names of the rituals.

The factors that contributes to cultural changes are identified as follows: changes in spiritual belief, educational attainment, financial problems, transition period, technological effect, and intermarriage.

Conclusions

The following conclusions are derived based on the result of the study:

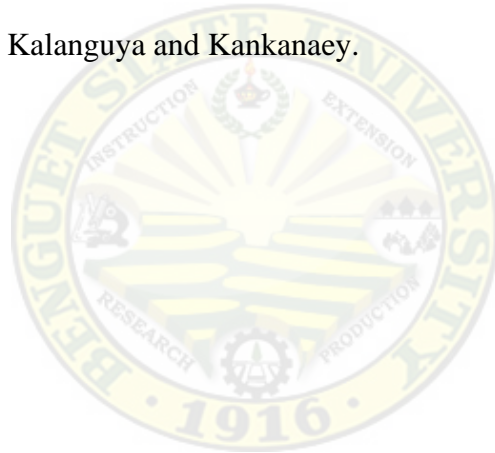
1. The Karao tribe possesses rich traditional practices that was characterized by appeasing and/or giving thanks to the dead and other spirits but only the elders are practicing them.
2. Oral communication stays to play a great role in passing culture to the next generation as shown by the Karao youths awareness to their rituals.
3. Although spoken word was effective in relaying such culture to the next generation, the growing resistance among the youths and the huge gap of communication between them and the elders affects greatly in the low efficacy of the transmission thus making them unaware of the names and the importance and purposes of their rituals.
4. There were several challenges in the passing on of the Karao culture to the younger generations.



Recommendations

The following are the recommendations based on the findings of the study:

1. Karao tribe who claims to be united because of their uniqueness must then be viewed not only as a tribal possession rather their oneness and unity may serve as a reminder to us all on how these ethics promotes a peaceful and intact society.
2. Researchers may undergo a more in depth study and documentation regarding the Karaos culture especially the *abonan* as it is the more salient feature of Karao and is unique compared to the other tribes in Benguet.
3. Researchers may also study their dialect called *awa/iwaan* because this is different from Ibaloi, Kalanguya and Kankanaey.



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APPENDICES**APPENDIX A.****Benguet State University****College of Agriculture****DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENT COMMUNICATION****La Trinidad, Benguet**

December 18, 2009

BRGY CAPTAIN

Karao Tribe

Brgy. Karao

Bokod, Benguet

Sir/Madame:

Warm Greetings!



I am Frenzyllle D. Bag-ayan, a fourth year Bachelor of Science in Development Communication (BSDC) student majoring in Communication Broadcasting (CommBroad) at Benguet State University (BSU). Presently, I am conducting my Undergraduate Thesis titled, “Communication Strategies in Transmitting Culture among the Karao Tribe of Bokod, Benguet.”

In line with this, I would like to plea from your good office for an assistance and/or accommodation for an interview on the issues that will supplement my objectives. My respondents would be five Karao elders, ten youths, and some past and present barangay officials.

The conduction will be on December 26-27 2009. We will be departing 12:00 noon from Baguio City.

Your participation in the study will be very much appreciated.

Please contact me at mobile number 0920-822-3821.

Attach here with is my research’s objectives.

Thank you very much! A blessed Christmas!

Truly yours,



FRENZYLLLE D. BAG-AYAN

NOTED BY:

ANNA LIZA BASQUIAL-WAKAT

Adviser

APPENDIX B. INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

DATE :
INTERVIEWEE:
OCCUPATION:
AGE :

Guide Questions:

1. What are your tribe's existing cultural practices in terms of the following?
 - a. Wedding celebration
 - b. Funeral rites
 - c. Agricultural practices
 - d. Healing practices
 - e. Thanksgiving rites
 - f. Others

2. Do you resist from the introduction of new ideas or of new culture in your society?
 - a. If yes, why? _____
 - b. If no, why not? _____

3. How is the Karao culture communicated to the younger generation?

_____ through books

_____ through computer



_____ through spoken words

On what occasion _____

_____ others

4. What were the encountered problems during the transmission of the cultural practices to the subsequent generation?

_____ lack of interest from the younger generation

_____ lack of communication between the elders and the younger generations

_____ resistant heir

_____ others _____

5. What are the differences of the Karao Tribe culture from past to present?

- a. As of the practices or rites?
- b. As to the participants involved?
- c. As to the proper time or occasion to perform?
- d. As to the length of time performed?
- e. As to the (number of) offerings given?
- f. As to the materials used in the practices or rites?
- g. Others?

6. What are the possible reasons for the changes in the cultural beliefs and practices of your tribe?

- a.)As to the practices or rites?
- b.)As to the participants involved?
- c.)As to the proper time or occasion to perform?
- d.)As to the length of time performed ?
- e.)As to the (number of) offerings given?
- f.)As to the materials used in the practices or rites?
- g.)Others?

7. In what way do you think you could preserve the good culture of your tribe?



APPENDIX C. GUIDE QUESTION FOR THE YOUTHS

DATE :
 INTERVIEWEE:
 OCCUPATION:
 AGE :

Guide Questions:

1. Are you aware of your cultural practices?

_____ Yes
 _____ No

2. What are the cultural practices that you are aware of in terms of the following?

- a. Wedding celebration
- b. Funeral rites
- c. Agricultural practices
- d. Healing practices
- e. Thanksgiving ceremonies
- f. Others

3. Do you appreciate the said cultural practices?

_____ Yes, why? _____
 _____ No, why not? _____

4. Do you resist from the introduction of new ideas or of new culture in your society?

_____ Yes, why? _____
 _____ No, why not? _____

5. In what way do you think you could preserve the good culture of your tribe?

