



SONGS OF THE SEA: THE SOCIO-CULTURAL FABRIC OF FISHERFOLK WORK SONGS IN WINNEBA

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ABSTRACT: *This article presents the findings of a study investigating the socio-cultural dimensions of work songs among the fisherfolk of the Winneba Fishing Community in Ghana's central region. It explores the significance of work songs in the daily lives of fisherfolk and their broader socio-cultural impact within the community. Employing a qualitative approach and utilizing a case study design, the authors gathered data through interviews, observations, and focus group discussions involving fifteen purposively sampled fisherfolk. The study was underpinned by the theories of Sense of Community as well as Understanding Music Making of a community. It was found that work songs are integral to various fishing activities in the Winneba fishing community, serving to foster community cohesion, enhance productivity, and preserve cultural heritage. The findings offer practical recommendations for the preservation and promotion of work songs within the Winneba fishing community.*

KEYWORDS: Work songs, fisherfolks, Winneba, Central Region, socio-cultural.



INTRODUCTION

The significance of work songs within diverse communities has garnered widespread recognition and scholarly attention over time. These songs serve multifaceted purposes, acting as conduits for cultural expression, modes of communication, and sources of motivation and coordination during laborious tasks. According to Onu and Ugwuoke (2019), work songs not only break the monotony of labour but also enhance productivity and foster a sense of camaraderie among workers. It is widely observed that the fishermen often engage in singing during their work to facilitate the task at hand. Moreover, in activities such as fishing, every participant takes part in the singing, with many of the songs characterized by simple, straightforward language interspersed with gibberish words to maintain rhythmic cohesion as done among Winneba Fishermen.

The Winneba people in Ghana's Central Region observe the Aboakyer bushbuck hunting festival. Aboakyer, a Fante word, means "hunting for game or animal" in the Central Region's native Fante language. The event was created to commemorate the Simpafo migration (the aboriginal name of the people of Winneba). The Winneba Fishing Community, located along the coast of Ghana, is known for its rich fishing traditions and practices. Fisherfolk, who form an essential part of this community, engage in various fishing activities and rely heavily on work songs during their daily labour. These songs are sung by a group of workers while engaging in tasks such as hauling nets, repairing fishing equipment, and carrying out other essential activities.

For generations, the fisherfolk of the Winneba community have complemented their fishing endeavours with the tradition of work songs. Despite this longstanding practice spanning centuries, there exists a notable absence of literature documenting these work songs within the context of a community where fishing predominates as the primary occupation. The performance of work songs as a social custom within Winneba's traditional fishing culture has remained largely unexplored in academic discourse. Previous research on work songs has primarily focused on agricultural, mining, and industrial sectors, neglecting the unique context and practices of fishing communities. For instance, in their study on work songs in rice paddy fields, Chi and Chi (2019) found that these songs not only facilitate communication and coordination but also serve as an effective stress-relief mechanism for workers.

Recognizing the socio-cultural significance of these work songs, the authors advocate their documentation and study. By shedding light on the frequent performance of work songs among fisherfolk, this paper not only adds to the current body of literature but also sets the stage for future inquiries into the activities of coastal communities across Ghana, where fishing holds sway as a primary occupation. Therefore, this paper delves into two primary questions: (i) What roles do work songs play in the daily lives of fisherfolk in the Winneba fishing community? (ii) What socio-cultural impact do these work songs have on the community? By addressing these questions, the study aims to not only preserve and promote the cultural heritage of the Winneba Fishing Community through an exploration of their work songs but also uncover the potential benefits of these songs for the fisherfolk. Ultimately, this work contributes significantly to academic discussions in music theory, composition, music education, ethnomusicology, and related fields.



THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The study's theoretical framework draws upon the Sense of Community Theory by McMillan and Chavis (1986) and then Blacking's theory of understanding music-making (1973). The Sense of Community Theory emphasises the importance of belonging and connection within a community, underscoring how individuals derive a sense of identity and fulfilment from being part of a community. This theory aligns with the communal nature of music-making among fishing communities, where work songs serve as a unifying force and a means of expressing shared history and values. Also, the theory situates work songs within the broader context of folklore, cultural anthropology, and sociocultural heritage. It explores how these songs function within traditional village life, contributing to social cohesion, motivation, cultural preservation, and artistic expression. By examining the multifaceted roles of work songs within the Winneba Fishing Community, the study seeks to shed light on their cultural significance and impact on community dynamics.

Furthermore, the theory by Blacking (1973) underscores the integral connection between music-making and cultural context, emphasizing that understanding music necessitates an appreciation of the creator's cultural values and the social and environmental factors that shape their artistic expression. Central to this theory is the recognition that music cannot be divorced from its cultural milieu; instead, it is intricately intertwined with the social, natural, and historical landscape of its origin.

In the context of studying work songs among fisherfolk, Blacking's theory highlights the importance of examining these musical traditions within their natural environment – the fishing community. This approach enables scholars to explore how work songs function as expressions of communal identity, labour coordination, and cultural heritage within the specific context of the fishing community. Overall, Blacking's theory provides a theoretical framework for investigating the role of work songs in fisherfolk communities, emphasising the need to consider these musical traditions within their cultural and environmental context to fully appreciate their socio-cultural significance.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Work songs have been an integral part of human labour throughout history, serving as a means of communication, motivation, and coordination. Among various occupational groups, Fisherfolks have developed their own unique repertoire of work songs to accompany their daily activities at sea.

Concept of Work Songs

According to Rorintulus and Wuntu (2023), a song is not just a melody with lyrics; it's a rich tapestry that weaves together culture, vocabulary, listening, grammar, and numerous other language skills into a compact package of rhymes and rhythms. This means it usually combines words with melody and performs vocally, although some composers have written instrumental pieces, or musical works without words, that mimic the quality of a singing voice. Lyrics encompass a sequence of verses, which are the main narrative sections of the song, along with a refrain—a concise phrase that recurs at the conclusion of each verse (Low, 2016). This explains that songs may exhibit a straightforward composition featuring just one or two verses,



or a more intricate arrangement comprising multiple verses and refrains. Regardless of whether the lyrics are sung or spoken, there is a discernible rhythm or cadence that propels the song forward. Motta (2012) believes that traditional songs are those sung within traditional communities, often passed down through generations and performed in ways that honour their cultural heritage and historical significance. These types of songs are connected with work.

Work songs, akin to other traditional folk tunes, are typically associated with specific communities, particularly among the elder members engaged in agricultural, fishing, and livestock activities. These individuals often create songs to accompany various tasks integral to their livelihood. They sing them while working or performing a task. They sing these songs as an accompaniment to work rather than songs about work. From the upshot, it is worth claiming that a work song is a musical composition intricately linked to a specific type of work. It is often sung during the execution of a task, serving to synchronize timing or to enhance productivity, or it may be a song associated with a particular job or activity. The singing establishes a rhythm that is essential for coordinated activity. The singing and the working do occur simultaneously, and integrate.

Wolterstorff (2015) posits that singing while working serves a dual purpose: it facilitates coordination among workers, thus enhancing efficiency, and it alleviates the monotony of tedious tasks, thereby improving workers' well-being. Gioia (2006) had earlier talked about this notion, describing work songs as not merely a musical genre but also a transformative tool with various classifications. Finnegan (1993) added that canoeing songs, a subset of work songs, are prevalent among riparian and coastal communities, particularly notable among the Chikunda people along the Zambesi River.

Contrastingly, Estrella (2017) highlights the historical context of work songs among Black Americans, tracing their origins from enslaved labourers to the evolution of spirituals and blues. These songs, sung by miners, sheep shearers, and even prisoners, have been transmitted from one generation to another, serving as a testament to their enduring significance in daily life. While their prevalence may have diminished, work songs remain a source of strength and solidarity for labourers, offering a medium for social, cultural, and economic expression.

Furthermore, alongside work songs, folklorists recognize “occupational songs” which narrate tales of workers, caution against job hazards, and impart knowledge about tools and techniques essential for various occupations, including those of fisherfolk in communities such as Winneba. Kebe et al. (2009) commented on how Liberian fisherfolk are slowly coming together through associations and cooperative societies that have been established:

The capacity of Liberian fisherfolk associations presents a valuable opportunity for the restoration and oversight of coastal fisheries resources and ecosystems to secure lasting advantages. Leveraging this potential, migrant fisherfolk, notably the Fante community, renowned for their organizational skills and cooperative relationship with fisheries authorities and local administrations, could play a pivotal role in guiding fellow fisherfolk towards the establishment of effective professional organisations. (p.42)

Indeed, the tradition of singing while engaged in work is not unique to Ghanaian fisherfolks but is a global phenomenon. In the United States, for instance, work songs have been integral to various occupations, ranging from agricultural tasks such as cotton picking to industrial endeavours like railroad construction. Even iconic American figures like cowboys and sailors



had their repertoire of work songs, with sailors relying on songs to maintain rhythm and coordination during laborious tasks aboard tall ships throughout the age of sail (Hugill, 2022).

The Evolution and Cultural Significance of Work Songs Throughout History

The utilization of work songs among Fisherfolks can be traced back to ancient maritime civilizations, where chants and rhythmic vocalizations served as essential tools for coordinating various tasks, including hauling nets and raising sails (Boersma, 2011). However, the trajectory of work songs took a somewhat divergent path during the 20th century (Pajooeshfar, 2023). While traditional forms of work songs gradually waned, influenced by changes in work environments, the use of technology and the rise of mass media, newly composed work-related music often drew inspiration from the traditions established by the labour movement. Savage (2020) suggests that the concept of work songs permeated popular music, blurring the boundaries between folk and mainstream genres, thereby complicating efforts to delineate between the two. This integration of traditional and contemporary influences reflects an ongoing interplay between traditional practices and modern cultural sensibilities.

What is notably different is that, in most cases, 20th-century work songs were crafted by professional musicians rather than actual labourers, placing the working class in the role of the target audience (Blake, 1997). Music served as a tool for politically enlightening the working class, particularly during the first half of the century (Gaspar, 2016). These work songs, serving as a form of oral tradition, play a vital role in preserving the knowledge and skills necessary for successful fishing (Lomax, 1960). Among Fisherfolks, work songs serve multiple functions within their work activities. They serve as a mode of communication, enabling Fisherfolks to synchronize their movements and coordinate tasks effectively. As noted by Onu and Ugwuoke (2019), the repetitive nature of these songs helps establish a rhythm, guiding actions such as rowing or pulling nets.

Furthermore, the joint singing of work songs fosters a sense of cooperation and unity among Fisherfolks. It allows them to feel and work as part of a cohesive group rather than as individual workers. The rhythmic structure of the songs encourages collaboration and ensures that all participants are equally involved within the given rhythmic framework.

Moreover, the rhythmic and repetitive nature of work songs can act as a psychological stimulant, instilling a sense of stamina, strength, and determination among Fisherfolks (Alpertan, 2020). The lyrics often portray stories of resilience and triumph which, in turn, foster a sense of pride and motivation among the workers (Gioia, 2006). Thus, manual labourers, whether working alone or in groups, often engage in singing songs to accompany their strenuous physical tasks, as well as their routine or repetitive activities (Nketia, 1962). According to Finnegan (2018), a song sung while working is a unique genre in oral literature. They postulate that work, especially physical labour ceases to be boring when it is accompanied by a song and music. In this regard, there is a song for almost every type of work as earlier mentioned and people are always creating new songs out of new jobs or working situations. Additionally, work environments offer a platform for the performance of satirical songs, which may not be suitable in other settings. These songs serve as rhythmic outlets, transforming the monotony of labour into an engaging activity. Consequently, the pace of work is influenced by the tempo and rhythm of the song. Higher speeds lead to more intense labour efforts, while slower tempos can significantly slow down productivity.



Work Songs in Coastal Communities

Traditionally, songs are deeply intertwined with the fabric of everyday life and are integral to the cultural identity of communities. Nketia (1966) emphasises that the absence of organized music, communal singing, drumming, and dancing in a village signifies a lack of vitality and cohesion within the community. Music-making, thus serves as a vital indicator of community vibrancy and social unity. Across Ghanaian society, each community boasts a rich heritage of musical traditions passed down through generations. In this regard, occupational groups like fishermen have their own distinct repertoire of songs, reflecting their economic and social activities (Sobang, 2014). These songs often celebrate individual achievements or recount the collective history of the community. Reflective songs, in particular, serve as a means of preserving cultural memory and transmitting moral lessons, including praise for virtuous deeds and reminders of past mistakes.

According to Akuoko (2008), socio-cultural practices encompass a distinctive blend of spiritual, material, intellectual, and emotional components, delineating the identity of a society or social group. These practices embody the accepted norms and standards of behaviour within a community, shaping individual conduct and contributing to the preservation of cultural values. Inglis (2005) observes that fishing practices and lifestyle choices among fisherfolks are culturally nuanced, reflecting the diversity of local traditions and customs. Fisherfolk, as a traditional institution, utilises work songs as a means of imparting social, cultural, and moral values to its members. By examining the socio-cultural impact of work songs within fishing communities, we gain valuable insights into the role of music in shaping communal identity and reinforcing cherished cultural norms.

Influence of Work Songs on Work Performance

Several studies have explored the impact of work songs on work performance in other occupational contexts, demonstrating their positive effects on productivity and efficiency (Dangaura, 2022; Ismaila, 2022; Keeler & Cortina, 2020; Makamani, 2022; Wikeley, 2022). A recount can be made of research conducted among agricultural workers in Africa by Roberts (1959) who found that singing work songs improved the speed and accuracy of task completion. Some researchers have reported music to have positive objective and subjective effects on performance, some to have no impact on performance; still others have shown music had negative effects on performance. Playing music at the workplace has been shown to alleviate boredom, frustration, fatigue, and errors among employees, thereby reducing turnover rates and boosting overall production within firms (Roberts, 1959). In addition to the above research indicating positive objective effects of music on performance, music has also been shown to have positive subjective effects on workers. For instance, McGehee and Gardner (1949) conducted a study on female workers engaged in complex industrial tasks and discovered that these workers perceived music as beneficial for their job performance, although, no objective performance differences were observed. In a review of several non-quantitative ethnographic studies of the effects of music in the workplace, Uhrbrock (1961) concluded that most factory workers prefer to have music playing while they work, though the effects of music on the quality and quantity of productivity were not clear at that time. In fact, music may affect the morale of workers as Jacoby (1968) argues.

METHODOLOGY

This research employed a qualitative approach to delve deeply into the socio-cultural dimensions of work songs within the fishing community, examining their impact on individuals and the reasons behind their performance by fisherfolk. Adopting a case study design, the research focused on a singular entity—the fishing community—within a specific timeframe and set of activities (Creswell, 2013). Various data collection methods, including interviews, observations, and focused group discussions, were utilised to gather comprehensive insights. The sample consisted of 15 participants selected purposively from five fishing groups, comprising group leaders, lead singers, and the eldest members. This non-randomized selection method was chosen based on the research's objectives, primary inquiries, and stakeholder interests, ensuring a thorough exploration of the phenomenon under study as indicated by Patton (2015) and echoed in the work of Korb (2021). The sample for the study is presented as follows:

Table 1: Sample size

Respondents	Number of Respondents
Leaders of the five groups	5
Lead singers of the groups	5
Eldest of the groups	5
Total	15



Figure 1: Winneba Fishermen pulling their nets amidst performing rhythmic songs

The study involved interviewing the leaders of the five fisherfolk groups to understand the significance of the different songs sung at sea. Additionally, each group of three members was interviewed to explore the impact of work songs on their social lives and the wider community. Observations were made during performances of the songs while the fisherfolk pulled their nets and engaged in other tasks, accompanied by rhythmic melodies. These performances were documented through video recordings following

multiple observations by the researchers. Activities such as pulling the net from the sea to the shore and manoeuvring the canoe were observed alongside the singing. The responses underwent a meticulous process of scrutiny, assembly, description, analysis, and interpretation in narrative form to elucidate their

meaning and achieve a certain degree of objectivity through triangulation with respondents' inputs. To comprehend this wealth of information, the researchers meticulously interpreted and analysed the data, employing the organizational framework inherent in qualitative research. This involved categorizing information into keywords and descriptive phrases, facilitating a thorough, careful, and reliable evaluation of the accumulated data.



PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

The researchers observed that work songs among the fisherfolk are typically performed collectively during various tasks such as pulling nets from offshore canoes, hauling canoes from the sea to the shore, and repairing nets before or after fishing expeditions. According to the data, after unloading the day's catch, the fisherfolk commence singing while pulling the canoes ashore with song themes encompassing topics like love, crime, marriage, divorce, and other social issues. This singing is particularly intensified during this period to uplift the spirits of the tired members who have just returned from fishing and need a distraction from their fatigue.

Furthermore, it was noted that the fisherfolk in the Winneba community utilise work songs as a vehicle for fostering effective communication and promoting positive moral conduct among community members. This observation aligns with the perspectives of some researchers (Agordoh, 2002; Merriam, 1951) who have also recognized work songs as a medium for oral communication. Participants explained that these songs are intentionally structured to instil good morals in individuals. One respondent for instance said this:

The songs serve as a vehicle for the dissemination of moral values.

Participants emphasized that singing while working serves as a soothing mechanism, helping to alleviate stress and maintain a cheerful demeanour during and after strenuous labour. Work songs were credited with boosting the morale and self-assurance of fisherfolk, playing a pivotal role in supporting artisanal fishing practices, as noted by Galkiene and Monkeviciene (2021). By singing, fisherfolks are able to sustain their work efforts for extended periods without succumbing to boredom or fatigue. The function of the lead singer was highlighted as pivotal in ensuring the group's endurance and productivity. The lead singer is tasked with orchestrating the rhythm of the work and introducing improvisations to keep the group engaged and energized throughout the day. Work pauses only when the leader ceases singing, underscoring the leader's influence in driving the group's collective efforts. As the fisherfolk sings, the leader initiates the song, prompting responses from the rest of the group, thus maintaining cohesion and momentum. One respondent said this:

Work songs contribute significantly to enhancing our work environment and infusing enjoyment into our daily tasks. They have the remarkable ability to transform a dull day into a lively and enjoyable experience for us. Singing songs while engaging in our daily activities serves as a form of therapeutic relief for our spirits. The melodies inspire us and aid in maintaining focus and concentration throughout our fishing endeavours

Several participants expressed the sentiment that songs play a vital role in motivating them to remain active and complete their tasks efficiently and promptly. They elaborated on how work songs constitute an essential component of the fisherfolk's lifestyle, serving as a means of expressing their innermost feelings and emotions. Another respondent said this:

songs serve as a mechanism to maintain orderliness and prevent accidents by keeping them alert and focused on their tasks.

It was found out from the participants that in the fishing industry, tasks such as paddling, mending nets, and pulling nets require repetitive actions, making singing a way to infuse rhythm into the work and increase efficiency. The authors noted a correlation between the use



of work songs and the success of fishing endeavours in Winneba. Work songs are perceived as essential tools to aid in the performance of labour-intensive tasks, as highlighted in the focus group discussions, where participants emphasized the repetitive and physically demanding nature of fishing work.

Observations made by the researchers underscored the vital role of songs in mobilizing and uniting fisherfolk for collective tasks, particularly in settings devoid of mechanical resources. Participants likened the absence of songs during work to a car running without fuel, indicating that songs serve as indispensable motivators for carrying out tasks such as net pulling and canoe manoeuvring with rhythmic precision. The study, again, revealed that work songs play a crucial role in regulating the pace of work, which can often be repetitive and predictable. Despite the potential monotony, the rhythms inherent in work songs are tailored to synchronize with the laborious tasks in fishing, thereby enhancing efficiency. The themes extracted from participant responses shed light on the multifaceted impact of work songs on the lives of fisherfolk.

The study revealed that collective singing among fisherfolk fosters a sense of unity and cooperation, encouraging individuals to perceive themselves as integral parts of a cohesive group rather than isolated individuals. This finding resonates with the perspective put forth by Pretty and Ward (2001), who emphasized the significance of social bonds in shaping the livelihoods of fishers. Participants elaborated on how work songs are utilised to address social issues within the community, including the behaviour of certain elders. Through group discussions, it became evident that singing together not only strengthens bonds but also serves as a means of social critique and correction. Moreover, the participants highlighted the role of work songs in nurturing friendships and providing social support, thereby mitigating feelings of isolation and loneliness. By engaging in collective singing, fisherfolk cultivate a sense of camaraderie and inclusivity within their community, fostering a shared sense of belonging. Nketia (1999) noted how music-making in the communities is a social event:

Hence, public performances occur during communal gatherings, where individuals convene for leisure, recreation, ceremonies, festivals, or collective tasks like infrastructure construction, trailblazing, search operations, or firefighting—responsibilities often delegated to specialized agencies in industrialized societies. These events serve as opportunities for social bonding and cultural expression within the community. (p.12)

The research findings unveiled that work songs among fisherfolk extend beyond fishing activities, permeating various communal events and occasions. Participants emphasized that group singing fosters social cohesion and camaraderie, facilitating the sharing of experiences and fostering connections among community members. These songs serve as a medium for disseminating information, often addressing prevalent social issues within the fisherfolk community. One of the participants told the researchers this:

Work songs serve as a unifying force among group members during work activities, fostering a sense of camaraderie and mutual understanding. In a setting where individuals with diverse behaviours collaborate in group tasks, singing together acts as a bridge, promoting ease and familiarity among team members. As work often entails interacting with new faces in different locations, work songs provide a natural avenue for initiating conversations and building rapport with unfamiliar individuals, thereby facilitating bonding within the group.



Work songs play a vital role in enhancing social cohesion within fishing communities, as observed among the tight-knit populace of Winneba. Not only do these songs foster familiarity among community members, but they also strengthen the bonds of social relationships that bind them together. Moreover, participants emphasized that work songs serve as a potent medium for disseminating information and raising awareness within the fishing community. This aligns with the views of scholars such as Nketia (1999) and Agordoh (2002), who highlight the organizational structure of musical expressions as a mode of social control. Through work songs, fisherfolks articulate sentiments of protest against social injustices or significant events, channelling their collective emotions into expressive forms of communication. Mbaegbu (2015) emphasised the thoughts and expanded the impact of work songs and African music in society:

Work songs serve multifaceted functions within fishing communities, serving as versatile tools for various social and practical purposes. They are instrumental in exerting social control, fostering social integration among community members, and signalling important events or activities. Additionally, work songs serve as effective channels for disseminating information and inspiring individuals to action. They provide entertainment and recreation, offering moments of respite from laborious tasks. Moreover, work songs serve as sources of encouragement, motivating workers to persevere through challenges. In some cases, they are utilised as mediums for soliciting supernatural assistance or expressing gratitude through acts of reparation and thanksgiving. Overall, work songs emerge as dynamic expressions of communal life, fulfilling diverse needs and aspirations within fishing communities. (p.178)

Indeed, the study underscored that work songs in the fishing community are deeply intertwined with the act of labour rather than merely serving as sources of entertainment. Typically performed by groups of fisherfolk, these songs are intricately linked to specific tasks at hand. They afford participants the chance to engage in a shared creative endeavour, fostering a sense of communal experience through collective singing. Moreover, work songs serve as a channel for the expression of group sentiments, allowing individuals to articulate shared emotions and experiences within the community setting.

CONCLUSIONS

The work songs of Fisher Folks in the Winneba Fishing Community hold significant cultural and practical value. They play an important role in enhancing productivity, communication, and teamwork among workers. The study elucidated the multifaceted role of work songs among fisherfolks, shedding light on how these musical performances serve as vehicles for communication, expression, and social cohesion within the Winneba Fishing community. Through work songs, fisherfolks inform, praise, critique, motivate, and caution, reflecting the diverse range of experiences and values inherent in their society. These songs serve as a mirror to the deeds and ethos of individuals, offering both celebration and admonition for their actions. In terms of socio-cultural values, work songs emerge as powerful conduits for promoting social harmony and community bonding. They foster friendships, hone social skills, instil a sense of belonging, and cultivate teamwork and cooperation among fisherfolks. Moreover, these songs provide a sense of achievement, mutual support, and shared commitment towards common goals. They serve as a cultural touchstone, imparting a distinct identity to the fishing community and preserving its rich heritage. Finally, Winneba Fishing community work songs



serve as agents of social awareness and cultural preservation, disseminating knowledge, reducing injustices, combating social vices, and upholding traditional values. By documenting and preserving this musical tradition, future generations can continue to benefit from the cultural legacy of the fisherfolks, ensuring that their rich musical heritage endures for posterity. In a rapidly changing world, the preservation and recognition of such cultural traditions are essential. The work songs of the Winneba Fishing Community provide a window into the community's history, values, and way of life. They are a testament to the resilience and strength of the fisherfolks and their enduring relationship with the ocean: the songs of the Sea. It is crucial to acknowledge and celebrate these work songs as a valuable part of Ghana's cultural heritage and to ensure that they continue to thrive for generations to come.

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