




## TUNES OF TRADITIONS IN FOLK SONGS: UNRAVELLING BALTI SOCIETY'S FABRICS THROUGH THEMATIC ANALYSIS

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KEYWORDS	ABSTRACT
Folksongs, Dominant, Themes, Values, Balti Society	The research aimed to conduct a thematic analysis of the selected Balti folksongs, with the goal of identifying the dominant themes in these songs and examining how they reflect intricate nuances and values embedded within Balti society. Qualitative research methods were employed, using data meticulously selected from works of Syed Muhammad Abbas Kazmi and Muhammad Abbas Khargrong as primary sources. Moreover, various books and articles were used as supplementary sources. Analysis followed Johnny Saldana's code-to-theory model, involving three stages of coding: first, second, & third cycle coding. Findings revealed that culture, religion, politics, affection, & fidelity are all elements contributing to a balanced & harmonious life in Balti society, providing sense of identity, purpose and stability. Conversely, accusations were found to create conflicts, & disrupt harmony in individuals' lives. Research concludes by suggesting pathways for future researchers to explore interconnections & relations among these dominant features. Translated versions of songs were used to make research accessible to foreign scholars, fostering cross-cultural collaboration across linguistic barriers.
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### INTRODUCTION

Literature can be defined as form of expression that communicates ideas, emotions, and experiences through language. It is form of artistic expression that uses language to create meaning and beauty, as noted by Kolaiti (2010). Literature encompasses numerous genres such as poetry, prose, drama, and fiction. In contemporary times, the definition has expanded to include oral literature. Literature is as old as the human history itself. It serves as a method of recording, preserving, and transmitting

knowledge, entertainment, spirituality, relationships, and historical events. In ancient eras, when access to written preservation was limited, the tradition of oral literature emerged as the primary medium for recording and transmitting valuable narratives from the past (Kamarudin, 2020). Oral literature, also known as traditional or folk literature, refers to forms of literature that are spoken or sung rather than written down. It is transmitted from generation to generation through storytelling, folksongs, and various forms of verbal performance. One notable characteristic of folk literature is that the writers are typically unknown, as the stories and songs are passed down orally through the community over time.

Indeed, the original writers of folk literature are often not known, as these stories and songs are typically passed down through generations orally. As noted by Eslit (2013), folk literature is often attributed to important figures in the past who were significant within their communities. Moreover, as highlighted by Samreen (2013), every nation possesses a unique identity shaped by its history, tradition, and culture, which is reflected in its literature. The geographical and historical context of a community plays a crucial role in shaping its artistic and literary expression. In case of Baltistan, an important region in Pakistan, there exists the rich literary history. Before the advent of writing, literature in the Baltistan region was transmitted orally. In areas where written languages were not developed, oral transmission served as primary means of passing down knowledge, norms, values, & ways of living to future generations in natural and organic manner. There is no indication of original writer. It is usually referred that literature has been told from their precedents who were important person in the past (Eslit, 2013). According to Samreen (2013), geographical and historical context of community plays crucial role in shaping its artistic and literary expression. Before the knowledge of writing, when humans did not have any source to jot down their literature, they transmitted it orally in Baltistan region.

In region where languages are not developed, oral transmission is used as primary means of passing down knowledge, norms, values, and ways of living to their offspring in the natural way. Hafeez-ul-Rehman has highlighted the significance of folklore in shaping lives of people in primitive societies. Folklore served as a means of education that imparts the histories of nations, cultural traditions, and values. It includes various elements like myths, lullabies, riddles, proverbs, folksongs, and nursery rhymes, all of which provide insights into the realistic representation of a community and its place in the world. Besides, folklores and folksongs serve as engaging medium for educating, instructing, & entertaining public by considering as tool for cultural preservation and understanding (Rehman, 2010). According to Samreen (2013) Balti literature was transmitted broadly through folk songs of Baltistan. Balti folk literature is divided into several categories, like folksongs, folk stories, riddles, ballad and proverbs. Folk literature mainly includes folksongs, folk stories and proverbs, of which folksongs are the most important. In ancient times, Balti folksongs were used for expression of the people's inner feelings. These songs delve into the emotions of ordinary Balti individuals, portraying their joys, sorrows, and everyday life in an authentic manner and also provide insights into their historical experiences.

Muhammad Hasan Hasrat, in the Baltistan ka Saqafati Encyclopedia, asserts that Balti folksongs narrate the experiences of the Balti people from the pre-independence era. During that time, Balti

individuals lacked literacy skills, and communication with outside world was primarily restricted to mountainous areas like Chitral, Gilgit, Nagar, Tibet and Ladakh. With modern communication methods absent, folksongs emerged as a potent means of connection for those separated from their loved ones by years. Crucially, they served as the primary mechanism for safeguarding the cultural heritage and traditions of the region such as their history, customs, beliefs, and social dynamics. One particularly notable song, "Bono Maryam," exemplifies how messages were conveyed over folksongs during that period. The literary tradition of Baltistan is a tapestry woven with threads of history, culture & spirituality, reflecting rich heritage of this mountainous region. Rooted in oral storytelling passed down over generations, Baltistan's literary heritage encompasses a diverse range of forms, from epic poetry to folk tales and spiritual writings. At the heart of this tradition are the timeless narratives that celebrate the courage, resilience, and wisdom of Balti people. Folk songs, known as tamchyong, resonate with tales of love, longing, and heroism, offering a glimpse into daily lives and aspirations of community.

Additionally, Baltistan boasts strong tradition of oral poetry, with bards known as "bakhmbrangs" weaving intricate verses that chronicle historical events and cultural milestones. Furthermore, the region's close ties to Tibetan Buddhism have fostered a rich corpus of spiritual literature, including sacred texts, philosophical treatises, and mystical poetry. From the ancient manuscripts housed in monastic libraries to vibrant performances held during festivals, the literary tradition of Baltistan continues to thrive, serving as a testament to the enduring legacy of its people. By analyzing the lyrics, melodies, and themes of Balti folk songs, one can gain insights into various aspects of Balti society, such as their history, customs, beliefs, and social dynamics reflecting the joys, sorrows, struggles, and triumphs of the Balti people. Each folk song is the repository of cultural knowledge, passed down through generations, reflecting the joys, sorrows, struggles, and triumphs of the Balti people. This paper in hand explores the dominant themes deeply embedded in Balti folksongs that have been influential in shaping and reconfiguring its values, practices, social and cultural norms of Balti society. Thus, the research question is: What are prevailing themes deeply ingrained in Balti folksongs? How have these themes shaped and molded the values, practices, and social and cultural norms of Balti society?

### LITERATURE REVIEW

Folk songs are a rich tapestry that weaves together the threads of a society's culture, history, and experiences. Through their lyrics and melodies, they offer a unique window into the values, beliefs, and struggles of community. Like a mirror reflecting the soul of a nation, folk songs capture the joys and sorrows, the triumphs and tribulations, of a people. They tell stories of love and loss, of struggle and resilience, of hope and despair. And in doing so, they provide a powerful lens through which to understand the complexities and nuances of a society, its people, and their place in the world. By listening to folk songs, we can gain deeper gratitude for diversity and richness of human experience, and ways in which music can both reflect and shape our understanding of ourselves and our world. Folk songs have long captivated attention of researchers from various disciplines, drawing general scrutiny in previous decades. Their significance is undeniable, as anthropologists discovered their key role in lifestyles of ancient cultures. Lyrical content of traditional folk songs serves as evocative

reminders of enduring, universal features of the humanity, encircling themes existence, affection, labor, and adversity.

Previous research on folk songs has explored their themes, societal importance, and their influence in shaping societies. Folk songs have long been the vital part of Balti culture, serving as a means of expression, storytelling, and community bonding. This literature review aims to explore the existing research on Balti folk songs, examining their role in deciphering Balti society, culture, and history. Studies have shown that traditional Balti folk songs are rich in cultural and historical significance (Khan, 2017). They often revolve around themes of love, nature, and social issues, providing insight into the values and beliefs of Balti people (Hussain, 2015). The previous Research has highlighted the importance of folk songs in shaping and expressing Balti cultural identity (Ali, 2018). Through the lyrics and melodies, these songs convey the community's experiences, struggles, and aspirations, serving as a powerful medium for cultural preservation and transmission (Rehman, 2020). Balti folk songs have also been found to contain social and political commentary, offering unique perspective upon region's history and politics (Shah, 2019). Therefore, by examining these songs, researchers can gain the deeper understanding of the social and political dynamics that have shaped Balti society (Hussain, 2015).

Moreover, studies have explored role of gender in Balti folk songs, revealing that women's voices and experiences are often marginalized (Khan, 2018). However, folk songs also provide a platform for women to express themselves and challenge societal norms (Ali, 2018). These kinds of researches have been carried out across the globe that shows how significant these folk songs are in shaping of the societies. Thwala eloquently underscores the profound significance resonating within tapestry of Tingabisa folksongs. Thus, these songs stand as emblems of national pride, harmoniously sung by families, clans & national enclaves during pivotal ceremonies. A rich symphony of themes, ranging from history's echo to the intimate chords of love, the rhythms of nature, the cadence of politics, the reverberations of dissatisfaction, and crescendo of education, intertwines to craft a panoramic vista of the human experience. In this linking, uniting these thematic threads, these songs transcend their individual narratives to weave a tapestry that envelops the people's collective values, norms, and cultural identity (Thwala, 2017). A similar study was conducted by Ruchika Rai that delves into the exploration of the Bhojpuri folksongs, which offer a window into the dynamic world of the Bhojpuri society and culture.

These songs authentically reflect the daily experiences, both joyous and sorrowful, of its people. Moreover, they serve as valuable historical records, documenting history, regions, societies, religions & languages of Bhojpuri-speaking community. One prevalent theme in these folksongs is migration integral part of Bhojpuri society, which warrants thorough examination encompassing its recurring patterns, historical context and profound impact. Migration is subtly talked in Bhojpuri folksongs often mentioned in initial verses before delving into its wide-ranging effects (Ruchika Rai). Pansori, a traditional form of Korean musical storytelling, involves a performance by a singer and drummer. Thematic content of five famous Pansoris: Chunhyangga, Simcheongga, Heungboga, Jeokbyeokga and Sugungga, was investigated by Kang (2022). Through a thorough analysis of their lyrics, study revealed that these Pansoris explore themes such as love, loyalty, filial devotion, temperance, and a

fusion of Confucian values with humor. According to Manuel Cabungcal and Divina Gracia Sabio, folksongs serve as windows into the rich lore, culture, and historical heritage of various tribes and communities. Passed down orally from one generation to next, these songs indeed undergo changes in their lyrics over time.

Nevertheless, the fundamental essence and primary themes of these folksongs remain consistent. Examining five folksongs from different regions of the Philippines, each representing indigenous and ethnic groups, these songs focus upon the qualities of women. Filipinas are depicted as diligent, trustworthy, sincere, reliable, careful, honest, graceful, hygienic, patient, nurturing and possessing unique beauty. These attributes, celebrated in Philippine folksongs, were observed & documented by Spanish observers who encountered & interacted with local culture (Cabungcal, 2021). Previous research has employed various methodologies, including ethnographic fieldwork, interviews and textual analysis (Rehman, 2020). Future studies could benefit from interdisciplinary approaches, incorporating musicology, anthropology & sociology to offer inclusive understanding of Balti folk songs and their significance. The reviews indicate that folksongs are vital for preserving culture across various societies, reflecting values and identity of their origins. However, there is a noticeable gap in research when it comes to analyzing themes within Balti folksongs. Thus, the aim of this study is to uncover dominant themes present in Balti folksongs and shed light on their role in mirroring Balti society. This research endeavor will pave the way for future scholars to explore diverse themes within Balti folksongs.

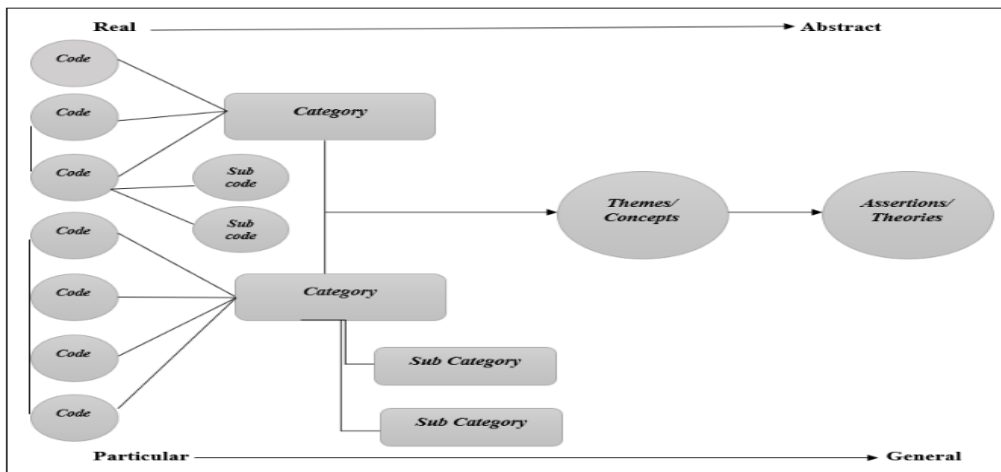
### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Since the objective of this research endeavor is twofold: to identify dominant themes within Balti Folksongs and to formulate assertions based on findings. Therefore, the qualitative research method was employed, as it best suits our purpose. As per Villanueva (2022), qualitative study collects and interprets information to synthesize it in order to uncover the most reflective meanings found within text or data. For this purpose, two most senior poets of the Balti language, were selected. The data was meticulously chosen from the works of Syed Muhammad Abbas Kazmi and Muhammad Abbas Khargrong. Specific lines and verses from the Folksongs served as the primary data. The researcher purposefully selected specific songs and verses based upon recurring themes within these lines. The researcher has opted Saldana's model, "Code to theory model" for the purpose of analysis. Saldana's model consists of three levels: 1<sup>st</sup> cycle, 2<sup>nd</sup> cycle & third cycle coding. Researcher has employed a data-driven approach, wherein codes emerge directly from data itself. In this approach, scholars collect relevant data, preprocess it, and then apply coding techniques to derive insights. Obtained results are then used to inform decisions. Thematic analysis approach is utilized by researcher to analyze the data. Thematic analysis is one of most common forms of analysis in qualitative research (Namey, 2012).

TA is accessible, flexible, and increasingly popular method of qualitative data analysis. Thematic Analysis is a method for systematically identifying, organizing, and offering insight into, patterns of meaning (themes) across a dataset. Over focusing on meaning across a dataset, TA allows researcher to see and make sense of collective or shared meanings and experiences (Braun, 2012). Thematic analysis is a method utilized for identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns (themes) within data.

It involves organizing and describing dataset in rich detail, while interpreting various aspects of the research topic (Boyatzis, 1998). This approach offers significant theoretical freedom and is highly flexible, allowing researchers to modify it according to the needs of study. Its main advantage lies in providing rich & detailed account of qualitative data (Alphonse, 2017). Still, despite its widespread use, thematic analysis is not without its drawbacks. Scholars must sustain impartiality in conducting thematic analysis to prevent biases from affecting results. Unprofessional or simplistic approaches can compromise value & validity of analysis, leading to possibly misleading or overly positive results (Clarke, 2006).

Figure 1 A Streamlined Code-to-Theory Model



### Data Analysis Process

The researcher has chosen to utilize Johnny Saldana's model, "Coding Manual for the Qualitative Researchers," for the purpose of analysis. Saldana's model consists of three levels: first cycle, second cycle, and third cycle coding. Thus, to streamline the analysis process, researcher has adopted the following structure:

### First Cycle Coding

During the initial coding of data, referred to as the first cycle, the researcher has employed the elemental coding method, as it aligns well with the nature of data. Elemental coding serves as basic yet focused filters for reviewing the corpus, laying the groundwork for the subsequent coding cycles (Saldana, Coding Manual for the Qualitative Researchers, 2009). This method encompasses five categories: descriptive coding, process coding, initial coding, structural coding, and in vivo coding. For first cycle of coding, researcher has specifically chosen to utilize in vivo coding and descriptive coding techniques.

### Coding the Data

In qualitative inquiry, a code is typically word or short phrase that symbolically assigns summative, salient, essence-capturing, and evocative attribute to a portion of language-based or visual data (Saldana, Coding Manual for Qualitative Researchers, 2009). Outline proposed by Saldana (2016)

was selected for the study due to its simplicity and comprehensiveness. It was found that Saldana's coding process goes over three cycles. First cycle entails assigning preliminary meanings and labels to the data, the second cycle focuses on identifying relationships and patterns, and third cycle aims to solidify emerging assertions from text. This process is iterative and involves overlapping between the coding cycles.

### In Vivo Coding

In vivo coding derives its root meaning from "in that which is alive." As a code, it refers to a word or short phrase extracted directly from actual language found in qualitative data record, representing the terms used by participants themselves (Saldana, *Coding Manual for Qualitative Researchers*, 2009). Descriptive coding involves summarizing, typically as a noun, the basic topic of a passage of qualitative data (Saldana, *Coding Manual for Qualitative Researchers*, 2009). Researcher adhered to Saldana model & meticulously reviewed texts of folksongs. To ensure no details were overlooked during the original coding, the researcher reanalyzed the text. Each time a new code emerged, it added valuable richness and depth to data. Some similar codes were omitted to facilitate the further data analysis. Initially, descriptive coding was employed for data examination. However, it became evident that certain texts necessitated In Vivo coding. This prompted researcher to utilize In Vivo coding, enabling a comprehensive analysis of the text. This approach proved beneficial in utilizing language directly from the text, thereby preserving the authentic voices of folk song singers of that transcriptive coding.

Table 1 In-Vivo Coding

Codes	Text	Cycle Code
APRICOT OIL	Rivers of apricot oil are flowing	In Vivo
POLO	Is it the justice of riding on saddled and scoring consecutive goals in the <b>polo</b> ground?	In Vivo
SINGING	Oh, my son Abda Khan! Below in the valleys	In Vivo
GATHERING	our teenagers organize <b>singing gatherings</b>	In Vivo
REIGN	O King Ghorī Tham! In the <b>reign</b> of you and Albaldy, in that blessed <b>reign</b>	In Vivo
ARRESTED	King of Testy! Testy's Murad! The mother did hundreds of exorcisms to achieve him. He is being <b>arrested</b> and taken away.	In Vivo
CRUELTY	O Raja Amir Haider, what a time has come, <b>cruelty</b> came upon us.	In Vivo
MOSQUES & MONASTERIES	King of Testey! Testey's Murad! The mother circumambulated <b>mosques</b>	In Vivo
WORSHIP	Long nights. Yes, this long night! (In the first part of this long night) I <b>worship</b> the lord who gives life.	In Vivo

Table 1A In-Vivo Coding

Codes	Text	Cycle Code
FOURTEEN	Long nights. Yes, these long nights! In the second part of this long night. I keep remembering <b>fourteen infallible</b> .	In Vivo
INFALLIBLES		
ARDENCY	Behold the scarlet rose is blooms in the illustrious garden of Braḡ Hilal Bagh, the garden of Maḡpoon But wait, it is not a crimson rose; it is none other than Anchan Ali Sheer Khan!	Descriptive
DEVOTION	My King Bahram! I will Sacrifice myself for you.	Descriptive

LONGING	If I do not wither, who else will wither, the day of meeting the handsome companion of my childhood. Do not know when it will come.	Descriptive
UNFAITHFULNESS	You married me when I was young. And now left me, when half of my hair of my is white. After the disloyalty Kufa's carpenter, who can be trusted now!	Descriptive
SEPARATION	O Jan Ali! This girl is not afraid of this beating but afraid of your <b>separation</b>	In Vivo
ATTACHMENT	The height of Kharizoom! The height is like Abele Oh, my statuesque, I will sacrifice my life to your beautiful height.	Descriptive
INFATUATION	If any of my childhood friends has a feeling for me, then go to the city and bring any news of Gul Halima Khatun!	Descriptive

### Second Cycle Coding

The second cycle coding methods are advanced techniques for reorganizing and reanalyzing data coded through first cycle methods (Saldana, *Coding Manual for Qualitative Researchers*, 2009). In second cycle coding, we combine codes that are similar into categories in order to attain the desired outcomes.

### Category

According to Johnny Saldana, a category is a descriptive term or phrase that identifies a cluster of codes. During the initial cycle of coding, the investigator revisited the generated codes and made various modifications. This involved renaming or rephrasing some codes, removing redundant ones, and merging a few codes. As a result, six major categories were developed. Initially, the researcher had generated 16 different codes while coding data corpus in first cycle. These 16 codes, together with their corresponding coded data, underwent recoding as needed. Subsequently, the codes were categorized based on their similarities in the second cycle coding stage. The categorization resulted in formation of six categories. The first category comprised five codes, the second category consisted of the five codes as well, and the third category included six codes. This pattern continued for the remaining categories.

Table 2 Codes Categories

Codes	Categories
APRICOT OIL, POLO, SINGING GATHERING	Culture
REIGN, ARRESTED, CRUELTY	Politics
MOSQUES AND MONASTERIES, WORSHIP, FOURTEEN INFALLIBLES	Religion
ARDENCY, DEVOTION	Fidelity
LONGING	Accusation
UNFAITHFULNESS, SPERATION, ATTACHMENT	Affection
INFATUATION	

### Third Cycle Coding

The process that enables one to transition from multiple codes in the 1st and 2nd cycles of coding to a few major themes and concepts, or at least one theory, is described by the Saldana in his "Coding



Manual for Qualitative Researchers" (2009). The third cycle of coding encompasses focused, axial, pattern, and theoretical coding. The researcher specifically chose theoretical coding as it aligns well with research question. This coding approach proves to be suitable for effectively addressing the research objectives.

**Theoretical coding**

A theoretical code functions like an umbrella that covers and accounts for all other codes and categories formulated thus far in grounded theory analysis. Integration begins with finding primary theme of the research, what is called in grounded theory central or core category (Saldana, Coding Manual for Qualitative Researchers, 2009). In third cycle of coding analysis, the objective is not only to transform the data but also to delve deeper and reveal additional insights. During this stage, categories are merged to generate themes, ultimately resulting in formulation of grounded theory from collected data.

Table 3 Codes Categories

Categories	Themes	Theory
Culture, Religion, Politics	Adherence to basic currents of life	Culture, religion, politics, affection and fidelity act as paving ways towards a balanced life while accusation breed conflict in life
Accusation, Affection, Fidelity	Craving breeds fidelity & conflicts in life	

**Theme 1**

Adherence to the basic currents of life: The theme of adherence to the basic currents of life explores the fundamental principles and practices that individual in Balti society follow. It emphasizes the importance of staying connected and aligned with the fundamental aspects of human existence. This theme encompasses a comprehensive exploration and understanding of the essential elements that shape and guide the life of Balti people. Adherence refers to the act of following, abiding by, or maintaining a consistent alignment with certain principles, values, or patterns. It focuses on how cultural norms, religious beliefs, and political ideologies shape and influence people’s behavior and choices in the Balti society. Culture encompasses the shared values, beliefs, traditions, customs, and practices of Balti society. Thus, adherence to cultural currents involves respecting and upholding cultural traditions and values that have been passed down through generations. As mentioned in the Balti folksongs;

Gamba hilchanghri kha le sharba hiltanmo taned  
 Shrang brangmoye Abda Khani shah

Translation: Oh, my son Abda Khan, below in valleys our teenagers organize singing gatherings.

In ancient times, singing gatherings in Balti society served as powerful symbols of cultural identity. These gatherings brought communities together, providing platform for expressing shared tradition, values, and narratives over music. By participating in these communal singing events, individuals reinforced their sense of belonging and connection to their cultural heritage, fostering a deep sense

of identity and unity among people. In previous decades of Balti society, kings frequently hosted singing gatherings to convey their emotions and sentiments. These gatherings were held as a means of fostering a sense of togetherness and unity within realm. It entails the recognition of importance of cultural identity and heritage and integrating them into one's daily life. Cultural adherence encompasses many aspects, including rituals, language, and customs. Apricot oil is cultural element in Balti culture.

Choli mari ya phuchab guad

Translation: Rivers of apricot oil are flowing

In Balti society, apricot oil holds particular importance due to its uniqueness. It holds a special place as it is not only crucial ingredient in traditional meals but is also served to guests as symbol of hospitality & cultural richness. Cultural adherence influences one's sense of belonging & identity. It can involve embracing cultural symbols, artifacts, and art forms, and participating in cultural celebrations and festivals. This adherence fosters a sense of connection to one's cultural heritage and can donate to personal and collective identity formation. Adherence to religious currents involves following religious teachings, rituals, and practices. It involves engaging in worship and rituals. As stated in Balti folksongs,

Xhan thaqringisi le mantakh ya dy xhan po le  
Xhan pola khusum besy na ghodhi no duged  
Xhan thaqringisi le mantakh ya dy pochik pole  
Strog minti ashi khwangla na fcholen duged

Translation: Long nights. Yes, this long night! (In the first part of this long night) I worship the lord who gives life.

These practices include acts of prayer, meditation, chanting, seeking a deeper understanding of one's faith, purpose in life, and performing specific rituals and sacraments. Balti people have strong faith in the fourteen infallibles, as evident in these lines.

Xhan thaqringisi le mantakh aye po chik po le  
Hilxhahma chubje xhangmi na yutu ben duged

Translation: Long nights. Yes, these long nights, In the second part of this long night. I keep remembering fourteen infallible.

The Quran, a sacred text for many Muslims, serves as a guide for religious practice. It emphasizes important qualities like honesty, compassion, forgiveness, justice, and love for others. The heart of Balti religious adherence is faith and belief in teachings, doctrines & principles of Islam. Adherents place their trust in the wisdom and guidance provided by their religious tradition and strive to live their lives in accordance with those beliefs. Adherence to the basic currents of life highlights the significance of aligning political ideologies and actions with fundamental aspects that shape and sustain human existence in Balti society. It emphasizes the importance of political systems, policies, and practices that are designed to promote the well-being, rights, and dignity of all citizens. As mentioned in folksongs:

Yari thoqma skor h le ni Shah Behram Cho le

Translation: My King Bahram! I will Sacrifice myself for you.

From the line above, it can be inferred that the Balti kings had a strong connection with the hearts of their citizens, and this greatly influenced the attitudes of the people. The political climate of that era can be perceived through the medium of folksongs. Political adherence involves ensuring human rights are safeguarded and advocating for equality and justice in Balti society. It requires fostering a political environment where citizens are treated with dignity and respect, regardless of their backgrounds and social statuses.

Cho Ghorl Tham! yangna Albaldy ya tus la  
Tus bzangmo bing, choli mari ya phuchab guad

Translation: O King Ghorl Tham! In the reign of you and Albaldy, in that blessed reign

Adhering to these principles means creating inclusive Balti society that offers equal opportunities for all, free from discrimination, oppression, and systematic injustice. Culture, religion, and politics are interconnected and often influence one another in various ways. Religious beliefs and cultural practices are closely connected, and political ideologies can impact cultural norms and affect how people express their religious freedom. Detailing theme of adherence to the basic currents of life involves exploring how these various dimensions intertwine and influence one another. It requires examining the ways in which the individuals can cultivate and sustain a harmonious balance across these dimensions, recognizing that neglecting any one of them can have diverse repercussions on overall well-being.

## Theme 2

Craving breeds fidelity and conflict in life: Craving involves an overwhelming desire for something or someone. Love is a powerful craving, when individuals deeply crave for love and connection it results in fondness, infatuation, and attachment. In this connection, as it has been mentioned in the folksong;

Na ghondhi nuye nari sningla janmi  
marbiyong na dio chat khan chi so mayongi le  
Bonoye maqpon pi ni maqpon khan

Translation: Oh, my Mapoon! The great khan! But the fire flaming in my heart, to extinguish it, I did not get anyone.

Cravings arise from a spectrum of emotions, including longing, yearning, and aching. Balti women frequently yearn for loved ones who travel out of town for labor, sentiment poignantly captured in their folk songs. When one experiences a deep attachment or longing for someone or something, the fear of separation intensifies, fostering fidelity. Profound desire to sustain a connection leads Balti individuals to exhibit faithfulness, commitment, & devotion to relationships or bonds, as eloquently portrayed in these lines from folk songs.

Niawal ashigmo ni Satti yangna  
Barbey bey tukh po nala onged ley

Translation: O my beloved Satti, I am afraid of the pain, Of being separated from you.

In the Balti society, intense cravings can evoke a profound sense of longing for both something and someone. Therefore, this longing, in turn, fosters the fidelity, as individuals steadfastly pursue that which they desire.

Ni rgasha niamxhar pona thukpi jacchi ley  
Nala mintakh namyod ley

Translation: If I do not wither, who else will wither, the day of meeting the handsome companion of my childhood. Do not know when it will come.

Accusations of cowardice and unfaithfulness often spring from the depths of intense desires within Balti society. When love among Balti people reaches extraordinary heights for particular person or object, their expectations soar alongside it. But, if those very expectations are shattered, individuals are quick to point fingers and hurl accusations of unfaithfulness and cowardice towards the source of heartache. Similarly, the figure of stepmother often becomes entangled in this web of accusation in Balti society, stemming from an insatiable yearning for love. This dynamic leads to conflict and discord in their lives, as their cravings collide with harsh realities of life, societal norms within Balti society. Such conflicts echo over poignant realms of folk song, resonating with intricate struggles of human existence.

Na naso yatona le yangi khiyongsy le  
Na skaghar pang pong na guana yangi skiorbo le  
Ni shingkhani le kufa pala hiltasy sula chi ghdiang le

Translation: You married me when I was young. And now left me, when half of my hair is white. After the disloyalty of, Kufa's carpenter, who can be trusted now!

It underscores dual nature of intense desires or attachments. On one hand, when individuals harbor a strong craving/ yearning for something, it can fuel their dedication and loyalty towards attaining or preserving it. This fidelity emerges from deep commitment to fulfilling desire, leading individuals to invest significant effort in pursuit of their cravings. In this sense, craving can be viewed as driving force that cultivates a sense of loyalty and steadfastness among Balti people. Indeed, on the other hand, the same craving that fosters fidelity can give rise to conflicts and challenges in life. When individuals harbor intense desires, they may encounter obstacles posed by others who are seeking to fulfill their own cravings.

This can lead to conflicts and tensions as people struggle for fulfillment of their desires. Clash amid different desires and resulting conflicts can create a sense of discord and tension in various aspects of life within Balti society. Cravings can indeed breed both fidelity & conflict in life. Strong desires or attachments can lead individuals to exhibit loyalty, commitment, and devotion in their pursuit of fulfilling desires. Still, these very cravings can spark conflicts, tensions, and challenges, especially when they clash with realities & societal norms of Balti society. Dual nature of cravings underscores the complex interplay amid personal desires and external factors, shaping dynamics of relationship and society as a whole.

### Assertion

Indeed, an assertion can be likened to a proverb, encapsulating condensed lesson of wisdom derived from our experiences. It serves as a valuable nugget of insight that we transmit to future generations, drawing from the depth of our collective knowledge and understanding. Hence, just like proverbs, assertions carry the weight of accumulated wisdom, offering guidance and perspective to those who heed their message. Culture, religion, politics, affection, and fidelity act as a center paving way

towards a balanced life while accusation breed conflict in life. Culture, religion, politics, affection, and fidelity each play crucial roles in fostering a balanced life. They offer individuals with a sense of identity, purpose, stability, grounding them in beliefs, values and relationships. Still, accusations can serve as disruptive forces, leading to conflicts and upheaval in one's life. When accusations are hurled, they can fracture trust, sow discord, and destabilize delicate symmetry that these elements strive to maintain.

Thus, while the former elements contribute to a sense of wholeness and coherence, accusations have the potential to undermine that balance, accent importance of communication, understanding, and reconciliation in preserving harmony. Embracing the positive aspects of culture, religion, politics, affection, and fidelity is essential for leading a balanced life. These elements contribute to personal growth, meaningful connections, and sense of purpose, enriching our experiences and relationships. Still, it's equally crucial to recognize potential harm caused by accusations & to cultivate empathy, open-mindedness, and constructive dialogue. By fostering thoughtful and seeking resolution over humble communication, we can navigate conflicts, promote harmony in our lives & communities. This balanced approach allows us to honor our values while embracing diversity of experiences that shape our world.

### DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION

The findings of this study reveal two core themes that underlie the cultural expression and social narratives of the Balti community: "Adherence to basic currents of life" and "Craving breeds fidelity and conflicts in life". These themes are deeply embedded in Balti society and play a crucial role in shaping and reshaping community. The first theme, "Adherence to basic currents of life", suggests that the Balti community prioritizes fundamental values and principles that lead to a balanced and harmonious life. This is reflected in their emphasis on culture, religion, politics, affection, & fidelity as central forces that promote well-being, justice, and sustainability. The community's adherence to these values and principles fosters a sense of unity and cooperation, leading to a more stable and prosperous society. The second theme, "Craving breeds fidelity and conflicts in life", highlights the complex and multifaceted nature of human relationships within Balti community. While craving and desire can lead to the conflicts and societal tensions, they also foster loyalty and commitment among community members. This theme suggests that the Balti people's strong sense of loyalty and fidelity is rooted in their cultural values and social norms, which prioritize family, community, and social harmony.

The study's findings have important implications for our understanding of the Balti community and its cultural expression. They suggest that the community's emphasis on the fundamental values and principles, as well as their strong sense of loyalty and fidelity, are key factors in promoting social cohesion and stability. Furthermore, the current study's results highlight the importance of cultural expression and social narratives in shaping and reshaping society, and demonstrate the value of folk songs as a window into cultural and social dynamics of a community. Overall, this study provides a nuanced and multifaceted understanding of the Balti community and its cultural expression, and highlights the importance of prioritizing fundamental values and principles, as well as fostering loyalty and fidelity, in promoting a harmonious and stable society. The methodical analysis of Balti

folksongs using thematic analysis has provided valuable insights into the lives and experiences of ordinary Balti people. Consequently, by employing the Johnny Saldana code-to-theory model, the researcher meticulously examined specific lines and verses from folksongs, identifying key concepts and assigning codes to them. Through the process of categorization and merging, two major themes emerged. The first theme delves into the importance of adhering to the fundamental currents of life in Balti society.

This theme emphasizes the interconnectedness and mutual influence of various dimensions in an individual's life, underscoring the need of maintaining harmonious balance across these dimensions for overall well-being. The second theme explores how craving can both breed fidelity and give rise to conflict in lives of Balti people. While strong desires attachments can inspire loyalty, assurance, and devotion, they can lead to conflicts, tensions, and challenges when they clash with reality and societal norms. Combining these themes yields an assertion that culture, religion, politics, affection, and fidelity serve as pathways to balanced life, fostering personal growth, meaningful connections, and a sense of purpose. Conversely, accusations can disrupt harmony and hinder progress in Balti society. To attain balance, individuals must cultivate empathy, open-mindedness, positive dialogue to resolve conflicts and promote harmony. Through this comprehensive thematic analysis, research has shed light on prevalent themes within Balti folksongs, uncovering rich insights into the cultural heritage of the Balti people. Still, it also highlights the potential for further exploration, suggesting the existence of additional themes yet to be explored within Balti folksongs that reflect intricate facets of Balti society.

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