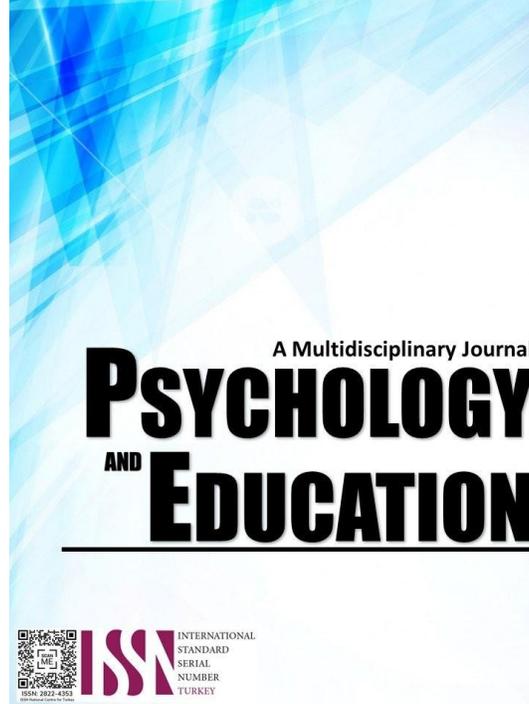


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Traditional Bol-anon Mystic Belief System in Contemporary Bol-anon Narratives

Shiela Marie S. Ranque-Solera*

For affiliations and correspondence, see the last page.

Abstract

Apart from being hailed as the country's first UNESCO Global Geopark, Bohol is also recognized for its efforts to preserve its rich cultural heritage despite adapting to modernization. This study uses discourse analysis to analyze the dominant endemic cultural heritage featured in Bol-anon narratives using Folklore Theory and Post-Colonial Theory. The study reveals that healing arts are observed in shamanic ritual performances and using anting-anting. It also illustrates that folk beliefs weave a vibrant cultural tapestry featuring mythical creatures such as santilmo, ungu, wuwog, tambaloslos, engkanto, wakwak, and sigbin. It also describes Bol-anon's strong religious veneration, showing their profound devotion to the Christian faith. Having folkloric spirituality and a strong Christian faith establishes a complex belief system that reflects the resilience of Bol-anon in adapting to changing circumstances while preserving core cultural identities. The identity as Bol-anon is a foundation to maintain true Bol-anon character and foster harmony within their community. Since they serve as vessels freighted with social beliefs and values for the future, there is also a need to evaluate Gen-Z's perception of cultural preservation amid globalization.

Keywords: *Bol-anon narratives, Bol-anon literature, folklore, cultural heritage, folk beliefs*

Introduction

Castor (2024) reported that oral narrative retelling is a pillar for families and communities among different cultures. In the Philippines, these narratives facilitate the transmission of values, traditions, and shared histories, which are fundamental to the nation's heritage. Dimzon (2016) also sees that short stories are knitted through the interplay of the expression of power, orality, and oral traditions. He argued that these oral elements are a potential way for writers, particularly Hiligaynon, to deal with various manifestations of supremacy, oppression, and social injustices while establishing a connection to primordial and acclaiming their regional individuality within the broader scene of Philippine literature.

Speaking of oral tradition, the island of Bohol, known for its scenic tourist attractions and historical sites, is also rich in cultural heritage, specifically oral literature. Much of this oral literature is already compiled, analyzed, and archived. Despite this, people still have low regard for this kind of literature, which calls for something more convincing to convince people that the Filipino oral tradition is as interesting as that of Westerners.'

Bojos et al. (2016) acknowledge that Bol-anon has rich folklore, which is a great help in establishing a nationalistic identity. It also serves as a testament that sheds light on the mystical and natural origin, mathematical calculation systems, Rizalian reformation, their norms, lifestyle, environmental awareness, and romantic narratives about love and tragedy.

Labad et al. (2023) imply that Bol-anon gives high importance to their tradition as their way to express their faith and cultural identity despite the threat of modernization and the shifting social dynamics. Tradition leads people to be involved in the community and collaborate with other community members to achieve their common goals, making their tradition their source of pride and developing their spiritual strength for the community.

To understand Bol-anon folklore, this study analyzes the mystic belief system featured in Bol-anon narratives, delving into the following: it seeks to: (1) identify recurring cultural themes and values in these narratives, (2) examine how they reflect the unique identity and worldview of the Bol-anon people, and (3) contribute to ongoing efforts to preserve and revitalize local oral traditions as essential elements of the Filipino cultural heritage.

Research Questions

It examined the common cultural heritage featured in Bol-anon narratives. It investigated how healing arts in shamanic ritual performance and the use of anting-anting shape Bol-anon cultural practices. It analyzed how folk beliefs contribute to the cultural tapestry of Bohol, focusing on the integration of mythical creatures such as santilmo, ungu, wuwog, tambaloslos, engkanto, wakwak, and sigbin in Bol-anon narratives. It explained how folkloric spirituality and Christian faith blend to create a multifaceted Bol-anon belief system that reflects the resiliency of the Bol-anon across changing times while maintaining the core of their cultural identity.

Literature Review

Esilit (2023) argues that folklore encompasses the expressive culture of a population, manifested through stories, music, dance, legends, oral traditions, proverbs, jokes, popular beliefs, customs, and other cultural elements. These practices serve as a medium for sharing cultural narratives. He further emphasizes that folklore highlights daily traditions and embraces the significance of religious and mythological aspects.



The relationship between shamanism and local folk beliefs is closely tied to health practices. Aparece (2013) pointed out that cultural narratives are key in shaping a community's understanding of wellness and health, reflecting their experiences and worldview. Pelila (2020) also noted that folktales, often regarded as non-fiction by people, serve as reference points for events and individuals, preserving descriptions of culture and beliefs passed down through generations.

Folklore guides communities to live in harmony with nature, others, and the spirit world, instilling morals and values through myths, folktales, proverbs, songs, epics, rituals, and humor. Eslit (2023) stressed that folklore creates lasting memories, serving as a repository of a community's beliefs, traditions, and values.

Myths, rituals, and folk practices are viewed as expressive culture in Folklore Theory (Dundes, 2007; Eslit, 2023), which carries the tradition, values, and identity. It is cultural and descriptive since it is concerned with the way things work in communities.

Cervantes (2023) highlighted that Filipino folk beliefs in mystical and invisible beings reflect a transpersonal worldview that fosters deep interpersonal relationships. Meanwhile, Labad et al. (2023) noted that the Bol-anon people are deeply committed to their Christian faith, which is intricately woven into their cultural practices and community life. Religious traditions such as the Hugos exemplify the resilience of their Catholic faith in the face of life's challenges.

Post-Colonial Theory (Ashcroft et al., 2013) critiques the impact of colonial history on culture and identity and points out the tensions, hybridity, and resilience of the people formerly colonized. It is more political and critical, that is, it revolves around power, identity, and resistance.

In essence, these narratives reflect the profound devotion of the Bol-anon people to Christianity, shaping their personal, familial, and communal lives. Bacalla (2021) suggests that the Bol-anon people's deep religiosity is evident in the many priests they produce, some known as singing priests, and their participation in religious events like fiestas and novenas.

Macaranas (2021) emphasized the importance of preserving folk religiosity, which is a blend of pre-colonial animistic beliefs and Catholicism, in maintaining Filipino cultural identity. The practice of folk religion through festivals and rituals reinforces faith and enriches religious discourse, aiding in the reinterpretation of religious teachings to ensure authenticity.

Liu, Huang, and Li (2024) highlighted the challenges of preserving folk beliefs in the face of urbanization and population migration, which have led to the decline of traditional spaces for rituals. They also explored efforts to modernize folk beliefs, such as using cartoonish representations of deities and incorporating electronic dance music to engage younger generations, alongside the potential of social media as a tool for cultural preservation.

Results and Discussion

Eslit (2023) postulates that folklore is made up of expressive culture manifested through tales, music, dance, legends, oral history, proverbs, jokes, popular beliefs, customs, and other cultural matters of a certain population. It is deemed to be the set of practices that serve as ways for stories about culture to be circulated. He further explains that it equally focuses on ordinary traditions observed daily, while it assumes the importance of religious and mythic aspects.

In looking into how mystical healing arts sift through the ten Bol-anon folk narratives, it is revealed that mystic healing, the heart of the community's beliefs and practices, stands as a holistic approach that can be used to describe the spiritual and philosophical disposition of the people.

Table 1. *The Mystical Healing Arts in Bol-anon Narratives*

Title of the Bol-anon Folk Narratives	Mystical Healing Arts
A Healing Dream	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Stopping the bleeding of wounds, curing snakes and other venomous animal bites, pacifying and even warding off demonic spirits using Latin incantations or tawal ● Keeping a small handmade booklet of Latin mantras ● Following and watching the wounded snake and memorizing all the herbs eaten by the snake
Dapdap of Memory The Baptism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Eating a twig that miraculously grew in the old wooden cross in the cemetery ● Observance of initiation rites using prayers in Latin before doing traditional circumcision ● Consulting a shaman to tame elementals ● Consulting shamans to cure illnesses. When someone gets sick, shamans cure the illness.
The Big Boulder	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Doing ritual offering of young chickens to appease the anger of <i>jatuts</i> ● Using amulets as advised by shamans
The Frogs Elvira	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Doing rituals offering a white pig to appease the anger of <i>jatuts</i> ● Associating a mysterious woman as a <i>jatuts</i> using the description of a shaman
The Folk Doctor and the Wakwak	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Healing through a healing oil made during the Holy Week
The Blood of Ungu and The Mysterious Pig	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Driving away the wakwak with the use of a stingray's tail

Uray Itas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Consulting a quack doctor when someone turns into wakwak ● Saying a prayer in Latin ● Wearing the clothes inside out when attacked by tambaloslos
Childhood Shaped by Light and Shadows	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Healing through mutya and trabangko ● Wearing of an amulet or a habak ● Observance of rituals by Sukdan

As shown in Table 1, the mystical healing arts in Bol-anon narratives are rooted in people's belief that God blesses shamans with the knowledge and the power to perform rituals using Latin prayers to cure, ward off evil spirits, and protect themselves from evil forces. Shamans serve as local doctors who are consulted by people with health problems and explain the causes of occurrences closely related to folk beliefs.

Mansukhani (2017) stated that shamanism is a prehistoric spiritual practice that is evident in traditional communities across the world. Through spirit guides, healing procedures, and trance states, shamans perform healing ceremonies to help members of the community who have physical or psychological problems. In the performance of their duty, shamans guide themselves with dreams for soul journeying and symbolic interpretation. People also believe that nature has the power to heal because the amulets, herbs, and healing oils used by shamans are sourced from plants, animals, minerals, water, and other natural resources.

The mystical healing arts present in Bol-anon narratives demonstrate an inherent belief that nature has the ability to heal, and shamanism has a crucial role in this context. The narratives exemplify the blend of pre-colonial cultural practices, religious undertakings, and folk beliefs that are vital to the Bol-anon community and their well-being.

In Bol-anon narratives, there is a dominant belief that nature possesses inherent healing properties. This belief is manifested through the use of various natural elements in healing practices, including amulets, herbs, and healing oils derived from plants, animals, and minerals. These natural resources are fundamental in the rituals performed by shamans, who act as mediators between the spiritual and physical realms. Shamans serve as local healers gifted with the divine knowledge and power to execute rituals, mumbling Latin prayers to heal illness, drive away evil spirits, and protect people from evil forces.

The efficacy of shamanism in resolving health concerns is interrelated with local folk beliefs. Aparece (2013) noted that the essence of cultural narratives in shaping the understanding of the community on wellness and health as ritualistic systems reflects their communal experiences and worldview.

The narrative, *A Healing Dream*, states that the use of Latin prayers and safeguarding a small booklet of Latin mantras helps in healing physical illnesses, including animal bites.

The narrative, *Dapdap of Memory*, emphasizes the Latin prayer recitation during traditional rites, resonating with the importance of ritualistic prayers in doing mundane practices.

The narrative, *The Baptism*, illustrates how a shaman resolves people's concerns about engkanto, showing the spiritual magnitude of their health concerns.

The narrative, *The Big Boulder and The Frogs*, highlights ritual offerings, such as young chickens and white pigs, indicating their belief in the need to establish harmony with nature, which they believe is stewarded by supernatural entities.

Narratives like *Elvira*, *The Folk Doctor*, and *the Wakwak* describe the cultural relationship between identity. Protection and well-being involving supernatural forces.

Childhood Shaped by Light and Shadows presents a collection of practices, such as prayer and wearing clothes inside out during an attack by engkanto, to the use of many amulets, such as mutya and trabangko, stressing the complex approach to healing and protection.

Their healing arts practices involve divine inventions to invoke spiritual powers from deities to seek healing and protection, as shown in their prayers, Latin incantations, and shamanic rituals. Shamanic tradition serves as an intermediary between the worldly and psychic realms because people consult shamans to cure illnesses and perform rituals. They practice herbalism for natural remedies, surrendering to the power of rituals and nature in the selection of the right herb and the creation of its essential oils. They also apply symbolic actions and rituals in seeking healing and protection, such as wearing clothes inside out when conjured by jatuts or tambaloslos, offering ritual sacrifices to appease the anger of jatuts, creating healing oil in the Lenten season, and performing circumcision rituals.

These narratives encapsulate Bol-anon mystical healing arts, indicating that the natural world, spirituality, and cultural identity have a multifaceted interconnection. Each narrative reflects a collective memory of healing practices deeply rooted in the community's heritage, demonstrating how beliefs continue to shape their interactions with health and wellness through supernatural and natural means.

These narratives serve as a testament to the rich tapestry of Bol-anon culture, where healing practices intertwine with spirituality, tradition, and the reverence of nature. Pelila (2020) asserted that people believe cultural narratives, such as folktales, to be non-fiction that can be a reference to people and events and carry descriptions of people's culture and beliefs passed down through generations.



Folklore educates the community to live adhering to the standards of healthy and harmonious living in dealing with nature, other people, and the spirit world through using morals and values depicted in myth, folktales, proverbs, folk beliefs, songs, poems, epics, rituals, and humor. Eslit (2023) stressed that folklore truly has the power to create a memory that can be a reservoir that stores people's beliefs, traditions, and values.

Table 2. *Bol-anon Superstitious Beliefs in Bol-anon Narratives*

Title of Bol-anon Folk Narratives	Superstitious Beliefs
A Healing Dream	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● When a mananawal is not given a donation when healing, he will lose his teeth. ● Mananawal cures the animal bites. ● Latin incantation cures.
Dapdap of Memory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Prayers become powers when calling the gods of water, light, trees, and sea. ● Dapdap is dwelt by the goddess, enchanter, duwende, agta, and other shape-shifting beings
The Baptism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Amulet provides protection and power ● <i>Jatuts</i> can participate in human activities. ● Eating the food of <i>Jatuts</i> can lead to death.
The Big Boulder	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Big boulders are kingdoms of <i>jatuts</i>. ● Inexplicable diseases are caused by <i>jatuts</i>. ● <i>Jatuts</i> imitate human physical features and activities
The Frogs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Shamans can drive away evil spirits ● <i>Jatuts</i> can disguise themselves as animals. ● <i>Jatuts</i> can hurt humans
Elvira The Folk Doctor and the Wakwak	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Jatuts</i> participate in the activities held in the community. ● At midnight, wakwak hunts.
The Blood of Ungu and The Mysterious Pig	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Wakwak can disguise themselves as animals. ● Wakwak harms pregnant women. ● The spell of wakwak can be passed from one person to another. ● Wakwak must be killed or else her family will also suffer. ● Wakwak can transform into a dog and a crow. ● The power of wakwak is manifested through a black cloth.
Uray Itas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Many insects come out of the dead body of wakwak. ● <i>Santimo, ungu, wuwog, tambaloslos, engkanto, wakwak, and sigbin</i> are manifestations of evil forces.
Childhood Shaped by Light and Shadows	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Sukdan and other folk doctors can heal and drive away evil spirits ● Prayer in Latin is powerful ● Wearing <i>habak</i> and using <i>mutya</i> and <i>trabangko</i> can drive away evil spirits. ● Abang can cause another person's death.

Table 2 presents the Bol-anon folk beliefs as a means for people to understand the mysteries around them, and is also a way for cultural expression. The interweaving of people's spiritual elements with everyday life shows Bol-anons' tradition that integrates their experiences, regard towards nature, and their collective fear.

The folk belief about mananawal, a traditional healer, resonates a nuanced connection between the Bol-anon people and their folk healing practices. Based on their lore, when a mananawal is not compensated for his service, he will lose his teeth. This belief shows how the reciprocity of the economic and spiritual realms is reflected in the customs of healing. This superstition highlights the intertwining of economic and spiritual reciprocity in their healing customs.

The narratives about the dapdap tree emphasized the belief that humans live alongside mystical beings who take the same roles in life as they do. It implies that people are mindful of creating a harmonious community for everyone, and proper decorum must be maintained. It also signifies that Bol-anon believes that prayers invoke power against evil forces.

The narratives, The Baptism, and Elvira describe the intrinsic caution observed by the community when they interact with other people in the community. In the narrative, it is told that *jatuts* are capable of engaging in human activities that might lead them to fatality, so eating food from strangers must be avoided.

The narrative, The Big Boulder, and The Frog illustrate that people associate natural occurrences with supernatural actions. The big boulders, for example, are believed to be the kingdom of the *jatuts*, who are believed to cause unexplainable illnesses. The frogs are believed to be the disguise of *jatuts* who can hurt people if harmed. This belief instills collective fear that leads people to be mindful of their actions within their community.

The narratives about wakwak describe the nocturnal mythical creature that preys on pregnant women and other vulnerable human beings at night as a shapeshifting being that can disguise itself as animals such as a dog, a crow, or even an old woman to pursue its



prey stealthily. Wakwak is also used as a concept of a spell. There is a belief that its curse can be passed to another person, like a contagious disease. Its presence can also be manifested with objects like black cloth or insects. Wakwak embodies transformation and complexity within the context of Filipino folklore, as well as collective fear.

The narrative, Childhood Shaped by Light and Shadows, features mythical creatures such as wakwak, ungu, and sigbin that induce fear among the Bol-anon and push people to devise strategies for survival, such as consultation with the sukdan shaman and other folk doctors for healing and protection, recitation of Latin prayers, and use of amulets. The narrative also introduces the concept of abang, which also induces fear because it can cause a person's death. It implies that moral and material debts are carefully monitored through spiritual lenses.

The Bol-anon folk beliefs are critical avenues to understanding the mysteries of Bol-anon expressive culture and way of life, elucidating how daily life is intertwined with the spiritual realm and how the lives of human beings are influenced by their beliefs in the supernatural world. It serves as a reservoir of a code of conduct integral to fostering a sense of mindfulness and upholding moral decorum, guiding people on how to act accordingly. Cervantes (2023) posited that Filipino folk beliefs about invisible and mystical beings manifest an inherently transpersonal Filipino worldview that extends into the dominion of the Filipino psyche and can foster harmonious and intimate interpersonal relationships. Filipinos consider their relationship with nature and their community not only as part of the supernatural phenomena but as part of their wide cosmic context, cultivating a deep sense of respect and harmony among all entities, both human and spirit. These transpersonal contexts enhance people's sense of empathy and rapport, and deepen their insights into the world. This view can be compared to Folklore Theory, as myths, rituals, and folk practices can be viewed as the forms of expression of a culture that conveys and passes traditions, values, and identities (Dundes, 2007). The theory highlights the cultural and descriptive role of folklore in the construction of community life, meaning to lived experiences, and enforcing collective identity.

As shown in Table 3, Bol-anons have a strong adherence to Christian beliefs and practices such as attending Holy Mass, praying the Angelus, performing auroras, celebrating fiestas, participating in Holy Week activities, saying prayers before and after meals, and incorporating religious expressions into everyday language.

Table 3. *Bol-anon's Reverence for Religious Activities*

<i>Title of the Bol-anon Urban Legends</i>	<i>Reverence for Religious Activities</i>
A Healing Dream	People go home for the Holy Week and attend Hugos. Families are fond of telling stories about saints and praying the Angelus They dream of having a priest in the family and serving priests with the finest meal
Dapdap of Memory	The circumcision ritual commences with a prayer.
The Baptism	People attend baptisms.
The Big Boulder	People start the ritual with the sign of the cross and acknowledge the power of the Christian God.
The Frogs	Rituals are done honoring the Christian God, using it to weaken the <i>jatuts</i> .
Elvira	People celebrate a fiesta.
The Folk Doctor and the Wakwak	People observe the Holy Week celebration People use the name of God to express relief or worry.
Uray Itas	People observe the Holy Week and Misa de Gallo.
Childhood Shaped by Light and Shadows	People say a prayer before and after meals. People observe auroras.

The narratives show how Christianity has been deeply ingrained in the Bol-anon culture, reflecting a strong belief in the Christian faith for spiritual guidance and protection. The narratives exemplify that Christianity is profoundly integrated into the cultural fabric of the Bol-anon people. It shapes their practices and beliefs, guides how to deal with community interactions, sustains personal aspirations, maintains family dynamics, and honors daily spiritual rituals. Invoking the Holiness of God provides Bol-anon relief, as shown in the pervasive regard for the Christian faith.

The narratives show that Bohol has the dominant presence of Christianity, which plays an integral role in molding the values of the community and the people's cultural identity. It serves as a fundamental component in their spiritual framework in navigating life and its adversities, articulating their hopes, and engaging with each other, capitalizing on their faith in the Divine Providence.

The Bol-anon Christian faith deeply impacts people's pursuits and relationships within the sphere of their homes and in the community. It teaches people how to embrace common values such as love, compassion, and reconciliation that need to be sustained in their daily lives. Their indulgence in their Christian faith shows strong family bonds and devotion towards their responsibilities, which are nurtured by unity strengthened by faith.

In healthcare, the Christian faith also shows its penetration. They anchor physical and spiritual healing to their faith, which is evident in their way of invoking God's presence before they begin their traditional rites.

Bol-anon Christian faith also strengthens community engagement manifested through active participation in religious activities such as celebrating fiestas, observance of the Holy Week, and attendance in Hugos, among others. These activities strengthen Bol-anon's communal bonds and shared identities, fostering connections and a collective sense of faith.

The use of religious language is infused in Bol-anons' everyday interaction, showing the relief it provides to them and reinforcing their spiritual identity. Bol-anons invoke the holiness of God in their daily conversations, highlighting that faith is their foundation for resilience and personal support. Storytelling about saints and biblical characters is an integral part of religious education in Bol-anon families. It plays a role in reinforcing faith and cultivating moral teaching in children. It underscores how Bol-anon families maintain the tradition of values inculcation at home.

The Bol-anon community also pays deep respect and reverence to spiritual leaders such as priests and other religious personalities. It is shown in the act of serving the finest meals to them, demonstrating their appreciation to them in their effort to guide people to faith, and resonating with Bol-anon hospitality.

Labad et al. (2023) imply that Bol-anon people are deeply devoted to their Christian faith. Their faith is intertwined with their cultural practices, artistic expression, and community life. Their religious tradition, Hugos, for example, is a pillar that demonstrates the strength and steadfastness of their Catholic faith while facing different challenges in life.

To sum up, the narratives reflect the Bol-anon community's profound devotion to the Christian faith that shapes the dynamics of their personal lives, family relationships, and community. It also serves as an important element of their beliefs and practices that mold their cultural identity. Bacalla (2021) suggests that Bol-anon people are deeply religious. It is evident in the number of priests who have been produced, some of whom are famous as singing priests. They are also known for their devotion to religious activities, such as celebrating fiestas that encourage Bol-anon people to come home to fulfill their sacred duty of paying homage to their patron saints. Aside from fiestas, they are also devoted to participating in novenas and Holy Mass, joining processions, and fulfilling their Panata. They are also raised to give gratitude to their God for the blessings they receive through lighting a candle in the church.

This religious devotion could be regarded as an interpretation of the Post-Colonial Theory (Ashcroft et al., 2013), both as the result of colonialism and as a manifestation of cultural perseverance. It was through Spanish colonization that Christianity was introduced, redefining the cultural identity of the Bol-anon people. However, rather than the simple assimilation, their perpetual devotion depicts hybridity in which indigenous ideas of community, kinship, and spirituality blend with Catholic ways. This brings out the strains between colonial past and local identity as well as demonstrates how the Bol-anon people were able to struggle against erasure by turning the resulting traditions imposed into a source of unity, cultural pride, and long-lasting faith.

Conclusions

Bol-anon people show a complex belief system that resonates with their resiliency and adaptability across changing times. The intertwining of their traditional beliefs and Christian faith helps maintain their core values and cultural identity, fostering unity and harmony within their community. It embodies how Bol-anon people live while interacting with their community, nature, and their belief system. It explains how their beliefs become significant since they are seen to cultivate values and consciousness for the betterment of humanity.

It is also a foundation on how people navigate life when facing adversities in the present times, strengthening their spirituality and identity. Macaranas (2021) emphasized that understanding and preserving folk religiosity is important in cultivating faith, enriching religious discourse, and upholding Filipino cultural identity. The folk religiosity of the Filipinos is developed from the combination of their pre-colonial animistic belief and their Catholic faith. They preserve their indigenous practices as they embrace Catholic doctrines, shaping their values, identity, aspirations, and beliefs. They validate their faith, identity, and independence using millennial movements. They authentically practice their beliefs through traditional festivals and religious rituals. Thus, the recognition and preservation of folk religion among Filipinos has the power to support their growth and the development of the religion. It is also essential in the reinterpretation of religious teachings because both the faithful and the church aim to pursue teaching authenticity in their faith, religion, and beliefs.

The Bol-anon belief system in their narratives shows how Bol-anon lives while dealing with the community, nature, and their belief system. They explain how their beliefs become significant since they are seen to cultivate values and consciousness for the betterment of humanity. The narratives resonate with the collective wisdom, imagination, belief, and cultural practices of the Bol-anon people, making them an important resource for understanding their way of life across generations.

Liu, Huang, and Li (2024) emphasized the challenges in the preservation of folk beliefs due to rapid urbanization and large-scale population migration, resulting in the decline of traditional street spaces and religious buildings crucial for ritual activities. It also assessed the effectiveness of modernizing the folk belief by portraying deities as cartoonish Electric-Techno Neon Gods in Taiwan and the idolized "Prince of Deity" in Fujian to catch the interest of the young generations. The renewed interest is also augmented by adapting modern electronic dance music. They also acknowledged the use of social media platforms as a potential tool for dissemination.

Generation Z is uniquely positioned to redefine cultural preservation for the modern world. There is a need to examine how they foster community engagement and inclusivity in the light of millennial movements. In this way, cultural heritage is preserved while embracing innovation.

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Affiliations and Corresponding Information

Shiela Marie S. Ranque-Solera
Bohol Island State University
Main Campus – Philippines