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INTRODUCING VAJRAYANA SYMBOLS AND CHANGES IN YOUNG DEVOTEES' UNDERSTANDING AND INTEREST IN PUJA BHAKTI: A PRE-EXPERIMENTAL EVALUATION AT VIHARA DHARMA JATI

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Abstract

Vajrayana worship employs ritual objects, gestures, mantras, and visual forms whose meanings are not always immediately understood by young devotees. This study describes changes in cognitive understanding and affective interest after a structured introduction to Vajrayana symbols among 16 young Buddhists at Vihara Dharma Jati. A quantitative pre-experimental one-group pretest-posttest design was used. Understanding and interest were treated as two distinct outcomes and were measured before and after the educational activity. The aggregate records available for this revision indicate that mean understanding scores increased from 38.90 (SD = 6.24) to 77.90 (SD = 7.70), while mean interest scores increased from 41.80 (SD = 6.48) to 83.60 (SD = 8.24). Because respondent-level data, item-level responses, and the complete statistical output were unavailable during editorial reconstruction, inferential statistics, confidence intervals, and standardized effect sizes could not be independently verified and are therefore not used as the basis for causal claims. The findings are interpreted as descriptive evidence of change following the program, not proof that the program alone caused the change. The study suggests that contextual explanations of ritual symbols may support young devotees' understanding and situational interest, while also showing the need for stronger instruments, complete data archiving, and a controlled comparison in future research.
Keywords: *Vajrayana, Ritual Symbols, Cognitive Understanding, Religious Interest, Puja Bhakti*

Abstrak

Puja bhakti Vajrayana menggunakan benda ritual, gestur, mantra, dan bentuk visual yang maknanya tidak selalu langsung dipahami oleh umat muda. Penelitian ini mendeskripsikan perubahan pemahaman kognitif dan minat afektif setelah kegiatan pengenalan simbol Vajrayana pada 16 pemuda Buddhis di Vihara Dharma Jati. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif dengan desain pra-eksperimental satu kelompok pretest-posttest. Pemahaman dan minat diperlakukan sebagai dua luaran yang berbeda serta diukur sebelum dan sesudah kegiatan edukatif. Rekaman agregat yang tersedia dalam proses revisi menunjukkan bahwa rata-rata pemahaman berubah dari 38,90 (SD = 6,24) menjadi 77,90 (SD = 7,70), sedangkan rata-rata minat berubah dari 41,80 (SD = 6,48) menjadi 83,60 (SD = 8,24). Karena data per responden, respons per butir, dan output statistik lengkap tidak tersedia pada tahap rekonstruksi editorial, statistik inferensial, interval kepercayaan, dan ukuran efek tidak dapat diverifikasi secara independen dan karena itu tidak dijadikan dasar klaim kausal. Temuan ditafsirkan sebagai bukti deskriptif mengenai perubahan setelah program, bukan sebagai bukti bahwa program merupakan satu-satunya penyebab perubahan. Penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa penjelasan kontekstual atas simbol ritual berpotensi mendukung pemahaman dan minat situasional

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pemuda, sekaligus menegaskan perlunya instrumen yang lebih kuat, pengarsipan data yang lengkap, dan kelompok pembanding pada penelitian selanjutnya.
Kata Kunci: *Vajrayana, Simbol Ritual, Pemahaman Kognitif, Minat Keagamaan, Puja Bhakti*

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A. Introduction

Puja bhakti is a setting in which Buddhist teachings, practices, emotions, and communal life converge. During worship, reverence for the Three Jewels may be expressed through scriptural recitation, mantra chanting, meditation, offerings, gestures, and the use of ritual objects. Because religious practice is not conducted solely through abstract ideas, ritual objects and actions should be understood as part of the way a community produces, remembers, and experiences meaning. Research on Buddhist materiality shows that artifacts may function as markers of identity, objects of offering, and ritual implements; however, the meanings attached to them are not necessarily identical for every practitioner (Brox, 2019; Teiser & Huang, 2024). The presence of symbols in a vihara, therefore, does not in itself guarantee that devotees understand their doctrinal meanings or ritual functions.

The relationship between visual form and religious discipline is especially prominent in Vajrayana. In ritual practice, the vajra, or dorje, is commonly paired with a bell, or ghanta. Museum documentation explains that the two are used together in ritual recitation and hand movements. The vajra is commonly associated with method or compassionate action, while the bell is associated with wisdom and the realization of emptiness (Metropolitan Museum of Art, n.d.; Rubin Museum of Himalayan Art, n.d.). The British Museum also describes the vajra as a symbol of indestructible absolute reality and documents the distribution of this ritual form in Indonesia, Nepal, Tibet, and Japan (British Museum, n.d.). This contextualization matters because symbolic meanings are layered and depend on tradition, texts, lineages, and contexts of use. An introduction to these symbols should consequently avoid reducing each form to a single, fixed meaning.

Esoteric Buddhism developed through transregional networks of teachers, texts, icons, and centers of learning. Historical studies demonstrate that esoteric Buddhist traditions circulated across South Asia, maritime Southeast Asia, and East Asia. Vajrayana should therefore not be treated as a tradition isolated within a single cultural region (Acri, 2016; Davidson, 2002; Gray, 2007; Samuel, 2008). At the same time, studies of ritual materiality caution that explaining icons only as doctrinal codes may overlook how devotees interact with, care for, offer to, and assign value to those objects in everyday life (Brox, 2019). A symbol-introduction program should thus go beyond memorizing names and definitions. It should connect form, function, ritual context, and the limits of authority in explaining esoteric practices.

Religious symbols also operate in social and cultural domains. In an article published in *Abrahamic Religions: Jurnal Studi Agama-Agama*, Dewi (2022) places

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symbols within the processes through which people create and transmit culture. This perspective can be applied cautiously to understand how symbols in a vihara acquire meaning through education, habituation, and social interaction, rather than through their physical presence alone. Nevertheless, the assumption that explaining symbols will automatically increase religiosity requires empirical examination. Learning about symbols may improve knowledge without necessarily changing enduring motivation or the frequency of ritual participation.

Religious education for young devotees is particularly relevant because the relationship between younger generations and religious institutions is dynamic. A study of lay Buddhist youth education in Vietnam shows that the use of vernacular language, social media, and pedagogy connected to lived experience can create an engaging and participatory learning space (Nguyen, 2021). Other research indicates that young people may relate to Buddhism through emotional identification, adaptive ritual forms, and digital spaces, even when their institutional attachment is uneven (Ouyang, 2025). Research on experience-based Buddhist education likewise emphasizes active engagement and reflection as ways of connecting religious content with learners' lives (Lau, 2024). These findings cannot be transferred directly to Vihara Dharma Jati, but they provide a theoretical basis for examining an educational approach that explains ritual practice in language and examples accessible to young people.

The Indonesian context suggests that youth involvement in religious education and puja bhakti is shaped by more than one factor. Sumadyo et al. (2022) found that Buddhist adolescents' interest and motivation to perform puja bhakti were associated with both internal and environmental factors. Articles in *Abrahamic Religions* also demonstrate the relevance of social support. Sutriniasih et al. (2026) discuss the relationship between parental involvement and motivation and children's participation in Buddhist Sunday School, while Gunawan et al. (2026) show that peers may facilitate decisions to attend, shared travel, and social comfort during puja bhakti. This evidence cautions against interpreting changes in interest after a symbol-introduction program as the product of the intervention alone. Family support, friends, religious mentors, schedules, and prior experience may also contribute.

Contextual Buddhist educational programs nevertheless have practical potential. Praptiyono et al. (2026) report a Tantrayana worship training program that integrated explanation, practice, guidance, and reflective evaluation to improve devotees' understanding and skills. Budarsana et al. (2026) show that Buddhist values may be integrated into learning through direct experience, while Thanissaro (2018) finds that education and spirituality can be interrelated in the experiences of Buddhist adolescents. However, community-service programs and qualitative studies do not offer the same causal evidence as controlled experiments. Local research remains necessary to document what changes, among whom, and under what learning conditions.

Conceptually, this study distinguishes understanding from interest. Cognitive understanding refers to participants' capacity to recognize and explain symbols and to

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connect them with their ritual functions and meanings. Interest is a motivational construct with cognitive and affective dimensions, including attention, perceived value, positive feelings, and a tendency to reengage (Hidi & Renninger, 2006; Renninger et al., 2022). This distinction is important because religiosity, motivation, and learning outcomes may be related without being identical constructs (Hardy et al., 2022). The four-phase model of interest development explains that an educational stimulus may trigger situational interest, but maintained situational interest and individual interest require support, knowledge, personal value, and repeated engagement. An immediate increase in scores after a single activity is therefore insufficient to establish that religious interest has become stable or enduring.

The distinction between the two constructs has methodological consequences. A test of understanding should assess knowledge or the ability to explain meaning, whereas an interest scale should assess attention, feeling, value, and inclination to participate. Combining the two into a single score would obscure what actually changed. Sound instrument development requires a construct definition, an indicator map, expert assessment, readability testing, item analysis, and examinations of structure and reliability (Boateng et al., 2018). Cronbach's alpha may be useful for estimating internal consistency, but it does not establish construct validity and may increase merely because a scale contains many or repetitive items (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011).

Against this background, the research gap is not simply a lack of studies on Vajrayana symbols. It is the limited empirical evaluation that separates changes in symbolic knowledge from changes in interest in worship within a local community. This study does not test whether understanding mediates interest because the design and available data do not support mediation analysis. It addresses two questions: (1) how did descriptive scores for understanding Vajrayana symbols change before and after the program; and (2) how did descriptive scores for young people's interest in puja bhakti change before and after the program? With this formulation, the title, objectives, instruments, results, and conclusion consistently recognize two explicitly distinct outcomes.

The contribution of the study is contextual and methodological. Contextually, it documents an initial evaluation of ritual-symbol education among a Buddhist youth community at Vihara Dharma Jati. Methodologically, it underscores the importance of not equating changes in understanding with changes in interest and of not converting pretest-posttest change into a causal claim in the absence of a comparison group. A cautious practical implication is that symbol-related instruction should be contextual, dialogical, and connected to practice. Its effectiveness would still require stronger testing with documented respondent-level data and a more robust design.

B. Method

The study used a quantitative approach with a pre-experimental one-group pretest-posttest design. All participants completed an initial measurement, attended the

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Vajrayana symbol-introduction program, and completed a final measurement. This design can describe change within the same group, but it does not provide a counterfactual estimate of what would have occurred without the program. Without randomization and a control group, observed change may be influenced by history, maturation, testing effects, changes in measurement, regression to the mean, or experiences outside the program (Bierer et al., 2025; Capili, 2024). The term *pre-experimental* is therefore used consistently, and the results are not presented as definitive causal evidence.

The study was conducted at Vihara Dharma Jati within a community that practices Vajrayana puja bhakti. The accessible population consisted of young people involved in activities at the vihara. Sixteen participants completed both the initial and final measurements. The source manuscript describes the sampling strategy as total sampling, meaning that all members of the accessible population were included. However, the available documentation does not record participants' age, gender, length of involvement at the vihara, prior worship experience, or previous Vajrayana education. The absence of these characteristics limits assessments of representativeness and the transferability of the findings.

Understanding of symbols and interest in puja bhakti were treated as two separate outcomes. The understanding instrument was intended to assess recognition of the names, functions, and basic meanings of the symbols discussed in the program. The interest instrument was intended to assess attention, attraction, positive feelings, perceived value, and inclination to participate in worship. This separation follows the conceptualization of interest as a cognitive-affective construct and prevents a knowledge score from being treated as direct evidence of motivation (Hidi & Renninger, 2006; Renninger et al., 2022).

The questionnaires were administered through Google Forms at pretest and posttest. The available documentation does not include the instrument blueprint, the number and wording of items for each scale, the theoretical score range, the procedure for reverse scoring, expert-review results, item-total correlations, or separate reliability coefficients. Scale validation requires evidence beyond a general statement that an instrument is "valid and reliable," including alignment between item content and construct definitions and testing in a relevant population (Boateng et al., 2018). Because alpha coefficients were unavailable and could not be recalculated without item-level responses, no unverified reliability value is reported (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011).

The intervention consisted of an introduction to Vajrayana symbols connecting the name of each object, its visual form, its function in worship, and its basic meaning. The symbols identified in the manuscript include the vajra, ghanta, mandala, mudra, mantra, and meditation figures. The explanation of the vajra and ghanta is framed cautiously because curatorial sources indicate that they are used as a pair and may represent the unity of method and wisdom (Metropolitan Museum of Art, n.d.; Rubin Museum of Himalayan Art, n.d.). The instructional content should also distinguish general knowledge suitable for community education from esoteric practices requiring guidance or authorization within a lineage.

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The available documentation does not record the date, number of meetings, duration, facilitator's identity and competence, order of content, media, participant activities, interval between pretest and posttest, or implementation-fidelity checks. The program was consequently treated as a single Vajrayana symbol-introduction activity and was not analyzed in terms of dosage, session variation, or facilitator characteristics. This documentation limitation constrains procedural replication and prevents the influence of instructional content from being separated from facilitator or group-atmosphere effects.

The documented procedure comprised the pretest, the symbol-introduction program, and the posttest. The available records do not report an ethical approval number, the approving institution, the form of informed consent, participants' legal-age status, identity-protection procedures, or data-storage mechanisms. This English version does not add unverifiable ethical information and reports the limitation transparently.

Understanding and interest were analyzed separately using the available aggregate statistics. For each outcome, the number of participants, minimum, maximum, mean, and standard deviation were reported at pretest and posttest, together with the change in means. Respondent-level data and complete statistical output were unavailable; consequently, the analysis did not include a paired-samples *t* test, confidence intervals, or effect sizes. Tests of normality and linearity were likewise not used as a basis for the conclusions. Restricting the analysis to descriptive statistics keeps the interpretation aligned with the evidence that can be examined and avoids unsupported inferential or causal claims.

C. Results and Discussion

1. Results

a) Scope of the available data

The aggregate record contains four sets of statistics: understanding at pretest, understanding at posttest, interest at pretest, and interest at posttest, each for 16 participants. Individual scores, score frequencies, item-level responses, and complete SPSS output were unavailable. Outliers, distributions of difference scores, consistency of participant matching, item validity, reliability, confidence intervals, and effect sizes were therefore not examined. The results below present the descriptive statistics contained in the aggregate research table.

Table 1.
Descriptive statistics for understanding and interest before and after the program

Outcome	Time	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	SD	Change in mean
Understanding of symbols	Pretest	16	28.00	48.00	38.90	6.24	-

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Outcome	Time	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	SD	Change in mean
Understanding of symbols	Posttest	16	66.00	92.00	77.90	7.70	+39.00
Interest in puja bhakti	Pretest	16	32.00	52.00	41.80	6.48	-
Interest in puja bhakti	Posttest	16	64.00	94.00	83.60	8.24	+41.80

Source: aggregate research statistics.

The aggregate statistics show changes in the same direction for both outcomes. Mean understanding increased by 39.00 points, from 38.90 to 77.90. The score range also shifted: the minimum increased from 28.00 to 66.00, while the maximum increased from 48.00 to 92.00. Descriptively, the entire posttest range lies above most of the pretest range, although conclusions about change for each participant cannot be established without paired respondent scores. Mean interest increased by 41.80 points, from 41.80 to 83.60. The minimum increased from 32.00 to 64.00, and the maximum increased from 52.00 to 94.00. This pattern is consistent with aggregate change following the activity. Labels such as “low,” “high,” or “very high” were not used because the manuscript does not provide the number of items, the theoretical minimum and maximum scores, or the basis for constructing category intervals. Without this information, categorical labels would suggest a degree of precision that cannot be audited. Understanding and interest were not combined into a single test. Change in understanding represents a cognitive outcome, whereas change in interest represents an affective-motivational outcome. No analysis demonstrates that improved understanding caused improved interest or mediated the association between the program and interest. Such a relationship remains a theoretical hypothesis for future research.

b) Examination of the pattern of change

The aggregate comparison reveals the direction of group-level change but not the distribution of change among individual participants. Means and standard deviations may conceal variation in response and do not establish that every participant changed by the same magnitude. Because individual data were unavailable, the study does not provide a paired table or graph of individual change and limits interpretation to the group-level pattern. Changes in scores must also be distinguished from changes in behavior. The interest scale measures self-reports at the time the questionnaire was completed, whereas actual participation would require evidence of attendance or involvement in subsequent activities. Situational interest may rise immediately after an engaging session without persisting when environmental support declines (Hidi & Renninger, 2006; Zhu et al.,

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2009). Because follow-up attendance records were unavailable, the findings are not used to claim that participants subsequently attended puja bhakti more regularly.

c) Limits of the statistical analysis

Inferential statistics are not reported because paired individual scores and complete analytical output were unavailable. Changes in means are therefore not interpreted as evidence of statistical significance or a causal relationship. Understanding and interest remain distinct outcomes, and the conclusions are limited to the direction and magnitude of descriptive change within the study group.

2. Discussion

The aggregate change in understanding is consistent with the expectation that symbols already present in the ritual environment may become more comprehensible after they have been explained. Religious artifacts are not merely visual objects; their use, associated narratives, and ritual actions shape how devotees connect them with doctrine and identity (Brox, 2019; Teiser & Huang, 2024). At Vihara Dharma Jati, the program appears to have provided an initial vocabulary and framework for recognizing the functions of symbols. This interpretation remains tentative because neither the knowledge instrument nor individual responses were available for examination.

Instruction concerning the vajra and ghanta may be especially meaningful when it does more than assign a definition to each object and instead demonstrates how the two are related in practice. Curatorial sources describe the vajra and bell as implements used together, commonly explaining their relationship in terms of method or compassion and wisdom (Metropolitan Museum of Art, n.d.; Rubin Museum of Himalayan Art, n.d.). This paired framework may help participants organize new information. Variation across texts and traditions must nevertheless be acknowledged so that symbol education does not reduce a complex tradition to a single definition.

The aggregate change in interest can be interpreted through interest-development theory. Situational interest may be triggered by new material, a relevant mode of presentation, or an opportunity to interact with previously unfamiliar objects. For this initial interest to persist, it must be supported by knowledge, personal value, positive feeling, and opportunities for renewed participation (Hidi & Renninger, 2006; Renninger et al., 2022). A posttest administered immediately after the program if it was indeed administered immediately—would therefore be more likely to capture a situational response than stable individual interest. Follow-up measurement and behavioral indicators, such as actual attendance, would be required to assess persistence.

The descriptive findings are also broadly consistent with studies of Buddhist education that emphasize pedagogical relevance. Nguyen (2021) demonstrates how accessible language and pedagogy connected to young people's aspirations may support engagement in Buddhist programs. Ouyang (2025) shows that young people's relationships with Buddhism can develop through emotional experience and through

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adaptations in media and ritual. These similarities do not establish that the same mechanisms operated at Vihara Dharma Jati. They instead support the value of designing instruction that is communicative and responsive to participants' experiences.

In Indonesia, Praptiyono et al. (2026) report that Tantrayana worship training combined theoretical explanation, practice, guidance, and reflection. Such an approach may inform program development because understanding a symbol need not be separated from learning how it is used appropriately. Dewi's (2022) article in *Abrahamic Religions* likewise helps locate symbols within cultural processes and the transmission of meaning. Both sources support the importance of symbol education, but neither is sufficient to demonstrate the causal effectiveness of the program examined in the present study.

The increase in interest cannot be explained through knowledge alone. Sumadyo et al. (2022) show that Buddhist adolescents' interest and motivation are related to internal and external conditions. Sutriniasih et al. (2026) demonstrate the relevance of parental roles, while Gunawan et al. (2026) show that peers may support attendance and comfort during puja bhakti. Because educational activities occur in a social setting, interaction with the facilitator and other participants may also have influenced responses. A control or comparison design would be needed to distinguish the effect of symbol-related content from social attention and the atmosphere of the activity.

A one-group design has value as an initial evaluation, particularly when a new program is implemented in a small population. It cannot, however, eliminate threats to internal validity. Change may occur because participants have already encountered the same items at pretest, wish to provide answers they believe are expected, or experience other religious events between measurements (Bierer et al., 2025; Capili, 2024). Terms such as "caused," "proved," "extraordinary transformation," and "radical change" are consequently avoided. The more accurate formulation is that descriptive change was observed after the program.

Instrument limitations also affect the meaning of the results. If understanding items took the form of agreement statements, the scores may represent confidence or perceived understanding rather than factual knowledge. If interest items asked about intentions to attend immediately after the facilitator delivered the material, responses may have been affected by courtesy bias or a desire to please the researcher. Boateng et al. (2018) emphasize staged scale development and validation. Tavakol and Dennick (2011) caution that internal consistency is not equivalent to unidimensionality or validity. Future instruments should distinguish a knowledge test, an interest scale, and behavioral indicators.

The absence of individual-level data is a principal limitation. Means, standard deviations, minima, and maxima are insufficient to determine whether the same individuals changed, whether entry errors were present, or whether a few extreme scores drove the pattern. A paired-samples *t* test requires a difference score for every participant, and the relevant normality assumption concerns the distribution of those difference scores (Kim, 2015). With N = 16, graphical inspection and the Shapiro-Wilk test would be

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important because formal tests alone have limitations (Ghasemi & Zahediasl, 2012; Mishra et al., 2019). Without individual observations, statistical inference must be withheld.

Even if a future paired test yielded $p < .05$, the finding should not be interpreted only through a significance threshold. Wasserstein and Lazar (2016) emphasize that a *p* value does not measure effect size or importance and does not provide the probability that a hypothesis is true. Lakens (2013) and Sullivan and Feinn (2012) recommend reporting effect sizes and confidence intervals so that readers can evaluate magnitude and uncertainty. For paired designs, the definition of the effect size should be stated explicitly because different standard-deviation denominators yield different estimates.

A cautious practical implication is that education about symbols may be developed as one component of community religious education, rather than as a single intervention presumed to increase attendance. Instruction can begin with objects actually used in the vihara, connect form with function, provide opportunities for questions, and avoid esoteric claims beyond the facilitator's competence. Parents, peers, and religious mentors may also be involved because young people's engagement is shaped through social networks (Gunawan et al., 2026; Sutriniasih et al., 2026).

Symbol education must also consider the ethics of representing a tradition. Accessible explanations may introduce young people to ritual terminology, but excessive simplification can erase variations in meaning and the relationship between symbols and practice lineages. Transregional historical scholarship demonstrates that esoteric traditions circulated through networks of teachers, texts, and icons, not through a fully uniform list of symbolic definitions (Acri, 2016; Davidson, 2002). Educational content should therefore identify its sources, contexts, and explanatory limits and should involve a guide with appropriate traditional competence.

The study should not assume that all participants began with an identical level of prior knowledge. Family experience, length of association with the vihara, access to digital materials, and participation in the community may shape responses. Studies of contemporary Buddhist education show that language, media, social relationships, and opportunities to participate all contribute to young people's interest (Nguyen, 2021; Ouyang, 2025). Recording baseline characteristics would permit a more proportionate analysis without turning a small study into an overgeneralized account.

Future evaluations should retain anonymized data under consistent participant codes. Instrument blueprints and questionnaires can be appended; content validity can be assessed by a Vajrayana specialist and a measurement specialist; pilot testing can be conducted in a comparable group; and reliability can be estimated separately for each construct. The program should have a concise manual recording session objectives, content, duration, facilitator, media, and activities. A comparable comparison group, follow-up measurements, and attendance data would strengthen the study's capacity to assess sustained change.

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Analytically, the central theme of the study is the positioning of Vajrayana symbol introduction as a form of religious education that connects cognitive and affective domains without conflating them. Ritual symbols are not merely visual objects; they are media through which functions, meanings, and religious identities are carried in community life (Dewi, 2022; Brox, 2019). Based on the aggregate statistics available, mean understanding and interest moved in the same direction after the activity. A contextual introduction to symbols may therefore be interpreted as a learning space that helps participants recognize religious practice while also eliciting situational interest. The change in interest cannot, however, be attributed solely to increased knowledge because involvement in puja bhakti is also related to parental support, peers, religious mentors, and the social atmosphere of the activity (Sumadyo et al., 2022; Sutriniasih et al., 2026; Gunawan et al., 2026). The principal theme is consequently not proof of causation, but an account of how contextual, dialogical, and socially embedded symbol education may support both understanding and interest among young devotees. This interpretation remains descriptive because a one-group design offers no comparison through which the influence of the program can be separated from other factors (Bierer et al., 2025; Capili, 2024).

D. Conclusion

The available aggregate statistics show substantial descriptive changes in two distinct outcomes following the Vajrayana symbol-introduction program. Mean understanding increased from 38.90 to 77.90, while mean interest increased from 41.80 to 83.60. These findings support further evaluation of the program and suggest that contextual explanations of symbols may help participants understand religious practice while eliciting situational interest. The findings do not demonstrate that the program was the sole cause of the observed changes. The one-group design, small sample, incompletely documented instruments, limited intervention details, and lack of individual-level data constrain statistical inference and causal validity. The results are therefore reported descriptively and interpreted within the scope of the evidence available. In its present form, the study is best positioned as an initial descriptive evaluation. The vihara's administrators may use the findings to refine educational materials, while subsequent research should employ replicable procedural documentation, validated instruments, a comparison group, and follow-up measurement. These boundaries keep the practical recommendations proportionate to the evidence.

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