

**The Study on Recovery, Extension and Evaluation of
Kajoli ECL Centres for and Setting up of a Kajoli
Foundation**

Final Report

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

With uniqueness the Kajoli Model School pursues the goal of nurturing interest for study among the pre-primary children belonging to the disadvantaged families. Its method of teaching deviates from the conventional one which primarily comprises of lecturing the students. Instead, it applies the technique of games. This model is also low cost engaging the female teachers who belong to the same village with moderate education level (e.g., secondary school or higher secondary college graduates mostly) and the space for the class and remuneration of the teacher are organized by the community. Selected teachers are given training by RIB initially for three days and later annually once, both free of cost. RIB also provides teaching materials and curricula free of cost. The teaching method applies a number of techniques to dispense with monotony or boredom generally felt by the pre-primary children when they sit for study instead of games and engage them in the class. Three subjects, namely, Bengali, English and Arithmetic are taught to the students. The model's uniqueness also includes a component of providing খিচুড়ি rice-pulse mixed meal to the students by their mothers by rotation. The school program was started with Bengali and Arithmetic, later English was added. The program was started in 2005. At present there are one hundred schools functioning in the districts of Nilphamari, Panchagarh and Naogaon.

This study has been commissioned to assess the effects of the school program. In order to assess the effect, the ToR has prescribed a number of objectives which include the assessment of the inclination for study among the children, their advancement of knowledge through this program or the attainment of literacy and numeracy competence. It also intends to assess the program's effect on rural women and community to build solidarity among them. Apart from understanding the outcome of the education program and the report will also help establish a Foundation to keep on providing the support RIB presently provides. The establishment of a Foundation will not change its present community level initiative.

The methodology combined qualitative and quantitative approaches. The qualitative approach comprised of individual interviews of the respondents, group discussion of the respondents and observations. The respondents included the teacher, mother, student, primary school headmaster, RIB officials and others. Quantitative approach comprised gathering data on selected socioeconomic information of the fathers of the children, observation-based assessment of literacy and numeracy competence and nutritional assessment.

The findings of the study revealed positive outcomes in various respects and this report also examined the logical premise that justified the evidence of positive outcomes. The findings on the development of interest for study was found positive through class observation and discussions with the mothers and teachers. The study then delved into the teaching method to find out the premise for developing interest. The teaching method has innovated pictorial technique in which a card is printed with a picture and a word. Both in Bengali and English these cards are arranged in a pocket board which are introduced to the students by the teacher. Later on, the students are called to pick up a picture from the pocket and identify the object of the picture. The identification of a picture and the learning of a word by a student takes place simultaneously. The class observations showed that the students became impatient to be

called by the teacher to pick up a word ahead of other fellow classmates. Therefore, the learning of vocabulary turned into a game of picking up a picture card with a word. Mothers also informed that they do not need to urge their children to go to class because they are so eager to come to the class. The teaching methods also uses songs, dance, recitation or story telling which are hardly noticed in the conventional teaching method. Above practices were found effective methods to attract the children in study and ensure their attention in the class. During the class observations students were found much eager to recite a rhyme or a poem. The mothers and teachers also endorsed the role of pictures for effective teaching and making learning an interesting exercise.

Knowledge advancement and competence of the students were both qualitatively and quantitatively assessed. With the help of class observations, it was found students were quite competent to identify a word, pronounce it correctly, spell it correctly and writing it correctly. In addition, observation-based competence assessment was also made quantitatively. The pre-primary Kajoli students are not assessed in a conventional way of answering written questions on a script, instead the teacher assesses their competence during the class practice of the lessons. For example, they are asked to pick up a word, pronounce it or spell it out. They are also asked to write down words and alphabets on the board. Our quantitative assessment remained consistent with it. The study found that the student learnt words and alphabets from the pocket cards in an innovative manner. This report has laid special emphasis on class practice for the success of the teaching program. The students are not required to prepare lessons back at home.

The quantitative result shows that about 98 percent children correctly identified a Bengali word from the set of words and wrote also correctly that word on the blackboard. As high as 95.3 percent of the students correctly identified an English word they were asked for from the set of cards and correctly wrote that word on the blackboard. With respect to arithmetic 99.2 percent correctly counted number and added/subtracted number correctly. The tally of the three subjects shows that 92.2 percents correctly answered questions on Bengali, English and Arithmetic while the rest 7.8 percent answered either of the above two correctly.

The cognitive capacity of the children has been found attained by them. There are stories in the Bengali manual followed by multiple choice questions, their answers are needed to be logically thought out. The students were found to answer such questions correctly. Besides the above, they were asked similar questions where the answers needed to apply logical intelligence during the class observation, and the children were found to correctly answer such questions.

A large part of the students in Kajoli Model School are from the families where the fathers' main occupation is laboring to earn income (about 41 percent). There are 6.5 percent who are share croppers. Own land cultivation is the main occupation of 13.4 percent of the fathers. 27.3 percent fathers do not know reading or writing while 57.3 percent attended school with or without the completion of the school final. However, the marginality of the children was found convincingly in the nutritional data, because all (a sample 129 students) were found under weight in BMI calculation.

The teachers were found a critical component in the Kajoli Model School system. They were those who received training, mobilized mothers, contributed class space where no other community member came forward, taught the children with devotion, commitment and competently. In course of this program implementation, they turned out to be important catalyst with the role of champion. However, RIB's critical role was equally important. Mothers were also found to have played the role of watchdog

particularly to remain updated about their children's progress and acting accordingly. Apart from the children's attainment of academic competence, the program has contributed to their behavioral development in terms of spontaneity and confidence. The interviews of the primary school headmasters revealed the good performance and continuation of study by the Kajoli graduates.

PURPOSE, OBJECTIVES AND UTILIZATION OF THE STUDY

The main purpose of the study is to assess the Kajoli Model school in order to make recommendation for the establishment of a Foundation to sustain the program without affecting its present form of community initiative. Towards this goal the study has undertaken an empirical exercise in the light of the objectives as presented in the respective ToR. The Kajoli Model has uniqueness of its own. Through people's research of RIB it was learnt that there were special circumstances which discouraged the disadvantaged families in rural areas of Bangladesh to send their children to the school. One such circumstance resulted from the fear of the parents that their children will not be able to continue with study because they were not capable for this pursuit or their economic condition is not suitable for it. The Kajoli designer thought if the interest for study can be inculcated into the children of such families that will create motivating force to opt for education with its continuation. Thus, the model wanted to provide education to the pre-primary children from this section in the mode of games.

It examined the initial ideas of the model in Magura district in the village called Kajoli (from where the name of the model is derived) and attendant successes motivated its large-scale replication. The very process of unfolding of this model as a program was equally revealing. In a response to the advertisement to apply for this school to RIB plenty of applications were submitted. In many places the schools in this model were also opened with the expectation that regular financial support will come from RIB to keep the school functional. At the very initial stage being a funding organization RIB extended some financial support to such schools but soon started focusing more on the community initiative to make it a sustainable program. Witnessing this strategic shift many schools were shut down by the organizers particularly those who viewed it as a source of revenue from RIB, but many survived too who wanted to make it a truly community initiative one. Despite so many odds like the Covid 19 crisis as many as 80 schools are now there in Nilphamri, Panchagarh and Naogaon. This study has now been commissioned to find out how such schools with a unique mode of teaching and a substantial engagement of the community are functioning, what contributions these are making to the evoking of interest for study among the pre-primary children belonging to the class of marginal social existence, what is the level of attainment of success among these children to acquire literacy and numeracy or what kind of effects it created on the rural women who are working as teachers in these schools.

There are three major actors in the Kajoli school program, namely, pre-primary students, their mothers and the teachers. Besides them, there are champions or catalysts who volunteer their time and labor to the functioning of the school in various ways, seniors of the community who help mobilization of community initiative and other well wishers. While this study will focus on them with a varying focus, it will ascertain the contribution of the Kajoli school in the promotion of education, empowerment and community initiative. It is a low-cost program with limited material support from RIB such as the provision of learning materials, teachers training or monitoring. In a condition of dependent development when a program is sustained exclusively by external support, it is an imperative to verify how Kajoli is sustaining with minimum of such external support and this study is driven to that goal.

METHODOLOGY

The methodological approach of this study has combined quantitative and qualitative procedures. The nature of the study has required such combination. To assess the effect of the Kajoli program a number of issues have been investigated what includes inclination of the Kajoli children for study, attainment of competence, community initiative of the mothers or the teachers' feelings about their job. Some of the issues here are suitable for quantitative assessment while the others for qualitative assessment. The combination of the two has provided opportunity for triangulation of the quantitative and qualitative assessment.

The Kajoli schools are distributed in three northern districts, namely, Nilphamari, Panchagarh and Naogaon. There are 50 schools in Nilphamari, 15 schools in Panchagarh while 15 in Naogaon. This assessment comprised of different exercises that included individual interview, group discussion, class observation and observation-based competence test of the Kajoli students.

At the beginning detail discussion was made with the main designer of the model Dr. Shamsul Bari and the national coordinator of the program Ms. Ruhi Naz. Above discussions allowed to gain understanding of the main aspects (e.g., targeting the pre-primary children of the disadvantaged groups or nurturing liking for study among them) of the model, its development over time, challenges it faced, and its present state of functioning. The outcome of the above discussion and the objectives of the study as enunciated in the ToR provided the premise to develop data collection instruments, fieldwork plan and the types of respondents the study will cover. Kajoli's two field officials were also contacted over phone and suggestions were sought from them how to make the fieldwork feasible. By organizing online meeting with the representatives of the funding organization and RIB, our understanding of the study and methodological approaches were shared along with gaining additional insights about the strategic priorities deserving attention.

To conduct intensive class observations five Kajoli schools from Nilphamari and Panchagarh were visited. Observation-based competence assessment of the students in quantitative terms was carried out in six schools in Nilphamari comprising 129 students. The same set of students were also subjected to nutritional data collection. Selective socioeconomic information of the father was gathered from 15 schools in Nilphamari and Naogaon. Ten teachers from Nilphamari, Panchagarh and Naogaon were interviewed. Mothers group discussion and individual interviews were conducted in Nilphamari, Naogaon and Panchagarh. Students group discussion and individual interviews were conducted in Nilphamari, Panchagarh and Naogaon. Head teachers were interviewed in Nilphamari and Panchagarh. The field officials of the Kajoli school in Nilphamari and Panchagarh were interviewed.

A seven-member research team took part in this study. The team members had training in social science research techniques such as building rapport with the community, administer data collection tools, coding and others. The team spent ten days in the field to meet teacher, mother, children, primary school teacher and others. Quantitative data have been processed and output generated in SPSS.

NARRATIVE DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

i. Selective features of the Kajoli Model School

In order to comprehend the relevance and significance of the findings of this study captured in qualitative and quantitative terms there is a need for having a brief understanding of the Kajoli Model School, particularly its few unique features. It is a program that intends to arouse interest for study among the children of the marginal and disadvantaged group in rural Bangladesh belonging to the pre-primary age category. The model is an outcome of a people's research commissioned by RIB. Past experiences showed that there was indifference among the marginalized and socially disadvantaged groups towards children's education. The indifference resulted from the thought that education is something suitable for the rich people. In addition, for poor parents it is difficult to spend money for children's education for a long period. On the other hand, child labor brings quick income to the poor parents. RIB thought that it is possible to explore a model where interest in education can be infused into the children when they are very young and by making low cost it may be made attractive to the poor parents. While designing such approach RIB consciously avoids the conventional model of teaching which consists of dissemination of knowledge mainly through lecturing. Instead, it consists of the approach of engaging the children in games and enabling them to read, write and count. The program started with Bengali language and Arithmetic in 2005, later incorporated English in 2010. The model is also directed to inculcate voluntariness among the community people that will drive them to initiate efforts to organize and sustain the school. As a part of such initiative the model motivates the rural women with educational competence of elementary level to work as a teacher in the Kajoli school. The space to be used as the class room will come from the community, the Kajoli Model surmises. It lays special importance to training of the teacher to orient them to the teaching of the pre-primary children in a mode of game. The Model has developed curricula that is administered for a period of one year and the students become ready for admission into the primary school. Mothers are seen here as an important part of the model with a number of roles to be played by them. That the community will act through the mothers is an important strategic approach of the model. Monitoring is also an important part of the program along with meeting of the mothers and maintain regular contact with the teachers to address functional problems and carry out trouble shooting. The model also kept a component of feeding the children in the class where the food in the form of খিচুড়ি will be provided by the mother of each student in a sequential manner.

ii. Socioeconomic Background of the Kajoli Students

To review the socioeconomic background of the students of the Kajoli Model School this study has gathered information from more than 400 students in different districts of the Kajoli School. The information relates to the educational background and occupation of the fathers of the children. When the issue of social marginality of a person in rural Bangladesh is discussed above two variables provide substantial idea about it. Education and occupation are determining variables to shape an individual's social status and income in general. There are other variables that are also relevant in the analysis of social status and income, such as lineage background, caste group association or the amount of cultivable land, but the time limitation of this study could not allow to gather data on wide scale. Therefore, it remained confined to two proxy variables of education and occupation. Table 1 (presented

in the quantitative section of the annex) shows that 27.3 percent of the fathers of the students are illiterate who cannot read or write. 57.3 percent attended school who may or may not have completed the final examination after ten years of study. 15.1 percent attended college who may or may not have completed the final examination. None studied above college level. About 41 percent of the fathers are labor in terms of main occupation who live on earning wage income. In terms of marginality, they (wage workers) may be considered as the appropriate households. There are 6.5 percent who pursue sharecropping as the main occupation, they may also be considered as poor households since the lack of necessary cultivable land pushed them to sharecropping by taking land from landowners on rent. They have to give half of the produces to the landowner as the form of rent. There are 13.4 percent fathers who live on cultivating own land, this category may include economically non-deficit and deficit households both. There are a few whose main occupation include business or service. These categories may also include economically deficit or non-deficit households.

iii. Inclination for study:

The children studying in the Kajoli model school are very young, particularly those, who are three to four years old. There are children who are five years old, and a few may be found six years old. The children from this age group have got a natural inclination towards games for a substantial part of a day. Getting engaged in study by giving up games is not something the children of this age bracket will like. Then how the children of the Kajoli school got engaged in study through the effective utilization of a game? Or in other words how this model transformed game into study? We have examined this issue in a number of ways. For example, with the help of empirical evidences and by reviewing its method of teaching. The Kajoli teaching method is designed in a manner that the children will learn the subjects like Bengali, English or Arithmetic through a mode of games. Therefore, synchronizing game and study is a major innovative feature of this model that contributes immensely to arouse interest for study among the pre-primary children. The method of teaching of Kajoli model is briefly elaborated below.

There are three subjects namely, Bengali, English and Arithmetic which are taught to the students of Kajoli Model school. Bengali is the mother tongue of the Kajoli children and they learn conversation in Bengali from the same linguistic community in which they are born. If we call it natural learning it is not above limitation, for example, to learn writing in Bengali additional efforts are needed. On the other hand, in their conversation there may be the preponderance of dialects. There may also be the lack of use of wide-ranging vocabularies found in a standard text. Therefore, institutional learning of Bengali is needed to allow the Bengali students like the Kajoli children to enrich vocabularies, learn standard pronunciation and acquire writing skill. On the other hand, English is a foreign language for Bengali speaking Kajoli children, which needs institutional learning. The same with Arithmetic which also needs learning and training.

The next question is then how the Kajoli teaching method provides the opportunity for games while imparting linguistic and computational skills to the children? In the case of Bengali and English languages the use of picture cards and in the case of Arithmetic the use of laced beads constitute important part of this method comparable with games. Pictures represent the symbol of objects expressed in a word. For example, the picture of a boat is printed in a card along with the word. The student is introduced at first

with this word and picture simultaneously. In course of class practice to learn this word the symbol of boat gets memorized by the Kajoli students. The opposite side of the picture card of boat does not have this symbol, but only the word. After the introduction of the picture side of the boat, the picture less side of the word boat is introduced to the student. This transition from picture to picture-less word helps the Kajoli child significantly to learn 130 words in Bengali and 60 words in English. Both mothers and teachers noted above point while being interviewed in course of this study. For example, the mothers of the children in Sarkarpara, Panchagarh underlined this point, similarly the teacher named Utsa Rani of Niphamari also pointed it out. However, such endorsement does not confine to these two examples only, and the case studies of other teachers and mothers substantiate this claim.

With regard to Arithmetic the introduction of numbers is done through a laced-beads on a strong nylon string. 100 beads of two colors (blue and red) are arranged on this string. Each bead in the lace represents one digit, in this way the children come to learn first the counting of digit, and then gradually learn the rules of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. A clip is also used comparable with a bird that hops along the string of beads and where it pauses the beads are counted by the students.

How fun is made in Kajoli teaching method, that attracts the children in learning? There is a pocket board where picture cards of words are arranged one after one. The teacher reads out the words to the students. In order to find out whether a student is capable to identify a word taught in the class, the students are called by the teacher to the pocket board and asked to find out a particular picture card with word. This particular exercise of coming to the pocket board and identify a picture card is actually a big fun to the students. It turns out to them playing a game. Each of them remain very eager to pick up a word before other fellow classmates. No longer the class appears boring or monotonous to them. Class observations in Nilphamari and Panchagarh showed how much eager the students were to come to board to pick up a card with picture or count beads.

Rhymes and songs are also part of the game and the elements of attraction to the students. For example, the teacher in the village Daspara in Nilphamari told in her interview that she begins her class often by singing a song that the children like. By listening to a song, the children become restful in the class, she told. On the other hand, the Kajoli students are also fond of listening to stories (case study Nilufar, Nilphamari) and it also contributes to the evoking of interest in the class among the Kajoli students. The Bengali curricula of Kajoli includes many stories that are told to the students by the teachers.

Alongside the use of songs and rhymes to attract the students, affectionate behavior of the teacher towards the children is also important as observed by Utsa Rani in Daspara from Nilphamari. The tender mind of the pre-primary school children looks for such warmth in interaction, she added. Another teacher from Nilphamari also underlined that scolding affects the mind of the students adversely, it affects their spontaneity and infuses fear in them. So, she remains very careful that her behavior to the students does not seem harsh.

Mothers added examples in this regard to explain that how much are their children fond of attending classes. Now they do not need to be told by their parents to go to school, they added. The children have

learnt discipline and routine that brought inclination in their mind towards school, said by some mothers. The spontaneity of the children in study is also found in reciting rhymes back at home also.

iv. Knowledge building and advancement in the learning of the curricula: From different angles this point has been examined involving qualitative and quantitative approaches. It also includes the assessment of their skill to identify words, to write or to count. We would like to begin this discussion by focusing on class practice in the Kajoli Model School. Each day two hours the children are taught in the class and the subjects are Bengali, English and Arithmetic. There are thirteen word sets in Bengali and ten word sets in English. There are five steps in teaching vocabularies which include the following: in the first step the student picks up a picture card of a word from the pocket board, in the second step the student picks up a word card without picture, in the third step the student picks up a card with a single alphabet and arrange them into a word obtained in the picture card. The successful completion of the above three steps brings them to the fourth step where they learn word and spelling both, once the technique of arranging single alphabet to obtain a word is mastered by a student the fifth step is reached to construct words of free choice. Such practices are done every day in the class. There is no homework back at home and there lies the main key to their success. There is a sequence followed by the Kajoli teacher to carry out class practice of teaching vocabulary, spelling, rhymes, poems and others items. In each class the set of words are displayed in the pocket board in the upper row and the teacher reads out one by one which is reciprocated in chorus by the students. After the completion of this practice individual students are called to the pocket board to pick up a word directed by the teacher. This practice enables the teacher to verify the capacity of the student to pick up a correct word with and without pictures (in the opposite side of the picture card the word is printed without the picture). Since this practice is followed by finding out individual letter from the lower row, the teacher can verify immediately whether the student has learnt the spelling of the word and can identify single alphabet. All such practices in the class allows a student to acquire the knowledge of vocabulary and spelling. In the next slot of practice, the students learn writing on the board. All students come to the black board one by one and write on it the word they have learnt. Therefore, reading and writing are practiced in the class not at home by the Kajoli students that contribute to acquiring skill and competence.

Apart from vocabularies in Bengali the Kajoli students also learn many stories and each story is followed by a few questions. The answer to this question requires application of cognitive mind by the students. Let us give an example from the designated manual.

“Mina and Rita are two very close friends. One day Mita invited Rita to visit her home. Mina went to Rita’s home. Rita took Mina to a room.” Question: what is offered by Rita to Mina to sit on? a. Rice husking tray b. Chair c. Ball. From the above three answers the students will choose an answer. It shows the students will have to understand the difference of three answers in terms of their suitability for sitting on it. It reflects students’ cognizing ability. By picking up the correct answer the student also learns a word.

Besides, transferring such cognitive skill the students also practice how to describe themselves in words and sentences. It also contributes to enhance imaginative capacity. Respective curricula also require the

students to learn days and months in Bengali. What should be emphasized here is this that all such tasks are practiced in the class in front of the teacher.

In English the students learn vocabularies, apart from the use of verb, tense and rhymes. In Arithmetic they learn counting, addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. The review of curricula reveals that the students are introduced standard rhymes such as Twinkle Twinkle Little Star or আমাদের ছোট নদী চলে বাঁকে বাঁকে। Students' performance, weakness or shortcomings all are assessed directly in all classes. The teacher knows by name which student has got weakness in which subject; we learnt it from the class observation in Panchagarh. Above mentioned individual attention of the teacher to the student is the main strength to transfer necessary skill to the students.

Most mothers often not only accompany their children to the class but sit around and observe the practices and performances. This has been possible because the school is located in the village and the students are from the surrounding neighborhoods. The physical presence of the mothers around also enables to identify the problems of their children by themselves in relation to class participation and take measures accordingly if problems are found. Another component that contributes to the quality of Kajoli teaching is the monitoring by the RIB officials at the field level. In this respect they observe the classes and watch the performance of the students. This gives important opportunity to assess the progress of the children directly. Regular meetings of the RIB field officials with the mothers also contribute to assess the performance of the students.

In this research specific exercises have been carried out to formulate precise idea about the level of performance of the students. Kajoli Model has got its own approach to assess the students' performance in reading, writing and counting. The conventional examination system comprised of setting question and taking examination on it is not consistent with this model and the designer of the model thought that the conventional examination system which consists of answering written question in a script is not appropriate for the pre-primary school children. The designer of the model also emphasized that Kajoli model is more interested to evoke interest for study among the pre-primary children than train them as skilled performers whom we generally call "good or meritorious students". This model stresses that the Kajoli graduates will enter primary school and go through the conventional examination system there. However, Kajoli model does not ignore correct learning. Its teaching and assessment are a continuous process and integrated in nature. With this background in mind the research team sought to carry out the task of assessment in the same manner the class teacher normally carries out in the class.

We followed the following steps: The class teacher called all students in the class to the pocket board one by one and asked them to identify words from Bengali and English from the sets of words they were taught in the class. Then the student was asked to write that word on the blackboard. It means that a student was needed to identify a word and write on the board. If the student correctly completed it, he or she received marks otherwise not. Similarly, the student was asked to count a number in the laced bead and add/subtract numbers on the black board. If the total task (e.g., counting and adding numbers)

could be done by the student then he or she received marks otherwise not. This assessment was conducted in six schools in Nilphamari. As many as 129 students took part in the class assessment.

There are four tables in the annex on quantitative data that includes the results. Tables 3, 4, 5 and 6 are these tables. We are presenting here brief discussion on these four tables. In table 3 the result on Bengali assessment is presented. About 98 percent correctly identified a Bengali word from the set of words and wrote also correctly that word on the blackboard. Table 4 reports on English assessment. As high as 95.3 percent of the students correctly identified a word they were asked for from the set of cards and correctly wrote that word on the blackboard. With respect to arithmetic 99.2 percent correctly counted number and added/subtracted number correctly (Table 5). Table 6 reports the tally of the three subjects. It shows that 92.2 percents correctly answered questions on Bengali, English and Arithmetic while the rest 7.8 percent answered either of the above two correctly.

As a part of triangulation (i.e., examining the validity of the quantitative data by gathering and comparing qualitative data on it) we have assessed the students' performance through class room observation in Nilphamari and Panchagarh. As many as five schools were observed. The outcome of the class observation is presented in the annex on qualitative data. Of the five class observations that we made, the result of one is briefly narrated here. When we reached the class in the morning it was found that the Bengali was taught. The class teacher Rubina was calling students one by one to pick up a Bengali word from the card set in the pocket board and read out the word. We saw Rizwan picked up the picture of বৈঠা or Oar. Then he picked up single alphabets to arrange them into a word. Tasnim was called to pick up the picture of a নৌকা or a boat. After picking up the picture he picked up individual letters that constitute the word boat, then arranged the letters accordingly. Alfaz was called next and picked up ডিম or egg. He also picked up the individual alphabets and placed them in order. In this way Nobo came and picked up বাটি or blade, Adib picked up মোম or wax, Maria picked up বউ or bride, Dola picked up চোখ or eye, Heem picked up বৈটা or oar Maruf picked up নৌকা or boat. All of them also picked up individual letters for each word, and arranged them properly to obtain the corresponding words. Afterwards the English session started. The third set was selected for revision which included the pictorial words Zebra, Bird, Queen, Boy, Fly, Lamp, Kite and others. Adib was called first to pick up Kite, Rezwan to pick up Lamp, Tasmia to pick up Queen, Alfaz to pick up Bird and Maria to pick up Boy. All of them correctly picked up the word cards and individual alphabets subsequently. They all properly placed the letters to obtain the corresponding words. The third session was on Arithmetic. At the beginning, the hard nylon string with colored beads was tied on two sides where the pocket board was placed. It was tied in a manner all the students in the class can see it from their place of sitting. Then the teacher called Maria to count from 1 to 5, and she did it correctly. Himu was called to add 5 and 5 and also did it correctly. Then Tayiba counted from 11 to 15, Riya from 21 to 25 while Tasnim 1 to 5. With these activities this session came to an end.

The triangulation of the quantitative and qualitative data indicates here that the Kajoli students have acquired linguistic and numeracy skills. If we call such skill as functional skill what will be necessary to start their career in the primary school, the foundation for that skill has been established among the

Kajoli students. However, their knowledge development is not confined to gaining literacy and numeracy, it has gone beyond that being derived from poetry, rhymes and stories taught to them parallelly.

v. Developing the habits of reading: Kajoli students are provided with four story books with the following names: অজ- এর যাদুকর, আলিবাবা ও চল্লিশ চোর, গল্প শুনে পড়তে শেখা, কাজলির ছড়া ও কবিতা। There are two important objectives in this regard, enabling them to read Bengali text on their own therefore, in the primary school they won't feel to cope with the new curricula and secondly, developing affinity for stories. The story books are introduced once the teachers find that the students have adequately learnt alphabets and vocabularies. Many mothers reported in their discussion that their children have become quite fond of reading the story books provided by the Kajoli school and those procured by their parents from outside.

vi. Development of cognitive capacity among the Kajoli students: Thinking logically is the evidence of cognitive capacity and the respective verification shows its presence among the Kajoli students. There are short stories in the Bengali manual of the Kajoli school. Each story is followed by a set of questions, the answers of these questions are not given in the stories what needs the students to think logically and find out an answer from the multiple choice given below the story. While we were observing classes, we found some teachers read out short stories and asked questions with multiple answers. The answers were not given in the stories and the students needed to think logically and identify the answer from the multiple choice. We would give in the following one such example to testify how the logical understanding of the children was identified. For example, in Dashpara, the teacher Nipa Roy narrated the following story from the Bengali manual. The story is translated in the following: "Hena is very happy today because she will visit the village fair with her uncle at the afternoon. The fair is taking place in a field within her village. Hena became ready without wasting any time. She desired to buy many things from the village fair. By how she will go to the fair?" Answers were the following given at the end of the story. A. On foot. B. By aero plane. C. By a truck. D. By a bus. The students answered, "on foot", which was the correct answer. We asked the teacher Nipa Roy did she teach the story to the students earlier, Nipa replied negatively. From this example, we concluded that the students applied their reason and chose the correct answer in terms of the perspective presented in the story. We would give further example from the class observation made in course of the field study. This example is taken from Bishmuri, Nilphamari. The following is the translation: "A jackal and a crane will visit the house of tiger uncle. The house of the tiger is at the end of the jungle. The jackal and the crane will have to walk down the entire distance. Both completed their breakfast. What will be eaten by the crane in breakfast?" Answers: A. Cabbage; B. Biscuit; C. Fish. I asked the students to answer the question and they correctly answered it. In Tangrargarh I asked the students that a bird can fly in the sky but the human being cannot fly, why? They answered that it is because human beings do not have wings to fly. This example is also evidence of logical thinking of the children.

vii. Social empowerment and the creation of education champions: The teachers constitute an important part of the system on which the success of the Kajoli Model school largely depends. As noted earlier the women who work here as teachers are from the villages where the schools are located with an

educational background of moderate level. For example, this study interviewed ten teachers and most of them are school or college graduates (SSC/HSC completed) and only one reached the degree level beyond the higher secondary which is yet to be completed. The designer of this model thought that to make it low cost there is a need for the women teachers from the village with a moderate educational level who would love this occupation and will not be interested to assess their accomplishments exclusively in economic terms. The traditional division of labor in Bangladesh dominated rural society for several centuries that preferred to see the women are married off early, exclusively engaged in producing and raising children and carrying out those works that could be done only within the premise of their houses and courtyard. In the last few years two important changes took place in rural Bangladesh, girls are in a greater number have got enrolled in the primary and secondary schools and newly emerged export-oriented garments factories located in the cities and towns of Dhaka, Chittagong, Joydevepur or Ashulia created job opportunities for women with elementary education. As a result, many rural women took jobs in these factories. But there are many rural women who did not want to move to town and work in garment factories. On the other hand, getting the job of a teacher or a manager in urban areas is not easy for the rural women with a background of moderate level of education (e.g. school or college graduates) so there are many women of the comparable category who stayed back in village. The teaching job of Kajoli brought an opportunity for the women like them to utilize their time and energy meaningfully. In other words, the Kajoli Model School is contributing to the advancement of pre-primary education as well as social empowerment of the women traditionally the victims of patriarchy.

Social empowerment of the women may be defined as a condition where women are economically, psychologically or culturally placed with security, dignity and respect. The teachers of Kajoli earned some money as tuition fees from the students. Its amount depended on the number of enrollments in the class. It was found to range from TK1500 to TK3000, marked by irregularity of payment on the part of a few parents, quite likely for those parents who mainly live on selling labor as wage workers. By any estimation the amount of money was not big earned by the Kajoli teachers, but it was the recognition of the worthiness of the rural women. It symbolized that they have got the capability to utilize their time and energy economically worthy. The above feat of economic empowerment was accompanied by the deep sense of respect that the teachers receive from the students and neighbors. Bulbuli gave an example how respectfully she was welcomed by her ex-students in a local primary school she was visiting for some reason. The headmaster of that school was pleasantly surprised but later came to know that they were her previous students in the Kajoli school. Psychological satisfaction and the feeling of respect contributed to the feeling of accomplishment among the Kajoli teacher, that in turn aroused their sense of social empowerment. This exemplified the mainstreaming of the Kajoli teacher, because this school by virtue of its contribution to the advancement education in the village earned institutional reputation and as teachers they commanded special status in the village.

The micro-credit program among the rural women commenced from 1980s gave the women folk an important opportunity to get engaged in small business and work in public space. Later on, BRAC introduced non-formal primary education in rural Bangladesh that also allowed women to become socially visible in the education sector. So the process which was commenced few decades ago have

been consolidated further with the program of Kajoli Model School in rural Bangladesh. This program has also contributed to the cultural change in patriarchal mindset, because the in-laws of the Kajoli teacher extended support to them to run their school program successfully.

Kajoli teachers were also found the education champions in the village. A number of responsibilities are carried out by them. They needed to maintain regular contact with the RIB field officials at the beginning as well as during the operation of the school. They mobilized the mothers to send their children to Kajoli schools. They did not exclude those children who failed to pay tuition fee. They called it their passion to work as a teacher. Many of them also organized space themselves for the class. Their high-level commitment and devotion to their profession eventually got translated into good performance of the Kajoli students and satisfaction of the mothers. If it is claimed that the Kajoli Model has earned institutional resilience and continuity, the key actors will certainly be the teachers apart from the RIB program officials.

viii. Mothers as important actors representing the community: The Kajoli Model School is for the pre-primary children who are significantly dependent on their mothers for almost everything. They are not independent decision makers. Therefore, the motivational level of the mothers mattered to a large extent with regard to the enrollment of the children into Kajoli School as well as the continuation of their study. This study revealed that the Kajoli School was successful to arouse interest for study not only among the students, but among the mothers also, and it was possible because mothers found it worthy to educate their children in the Kajoli School, because of its effective method of teaching as well as teachers' high level of commitment. Most mothers spent their substantial time whenever possible in Kajoli School and observed the performance of their children. During the conversation with the research team, it was noted by the mothers that they are impressed with the mode of teaching, particularly the pictorial mode. They said that with the help of the pictures Kajoli students learnt words very quickly. Playing game with card was also praised by them. It was also felt by the Kajoli teachers that mothers' seriousness about the education of their children inspired them to carry out their jobs with utmost sincerity and professionalism.

Why the mothers were serious about the study of their children? The mothers who could not attend school during their childhood or studied only a few classes were eager to see that the same fate did not repeat in the case of their children. They pointed out that remaining illiterate or *মূর্খ* is a curse in life, and they never wanted that such misfortune takes place in the lives of their children. This indicated that how much seriously the mother linked children's wellbeing with the condition of literacy. They also pointed out that without education one cannot function in the present world and they gave examples from their village life. They said that to obtain any service from the governmental agencies there is a need to read documents, understand it and sign it. If someone is not literate then that person will be deprived of accessing such services, they added. Above realization drove them to integrate their children with the Kajoli School more seriously.

The group of mothers in a Kajoli School is actually the representation of the community. The relationship among the mothers was found cordial and they acted collectively to ensure that the school functions without disruptions. They considered it is their collective responsibility to ensure that the tuition fee is paid regularly to the teacher, although some parents could not pay it regularly. They said that the tuition fee they pay is pretty nominal and compared to the service of the teacher it is negligible. But added they are not financially strong to increase it further. To sustain school program economically reflects here the community spirit of the mothers.

The most pertinent example of community mobilization through the program of Kajoli took place a few years ago when a group of mothers were organized and given grant money to undertake income generating activities. In this connection they bought cattle and raised it to sell it in the market. The objective was attained and income was earned. In this way this group also undertook some other activities, however it could not survive for a very long. Therefore. The present level of community mobilization where the teacher and mother got united to establish and sustain the school seems to be the effective means for this goal.

ix. Transformation of the children: In a previous section it is noted that significant literacy and numeracy has been attained by the Kajoli children. But the transformation of the Kajoli children has gone beyond that. They underwent significant changes in various respects. For example, many were afraid on the first day in the class, but gradually such fear disappeared and now the class is a favorite place to them. They were found jubilant and spontaneous during the class observation or discussion. They were no hesitation or nervousness of the Kajoli children to recite a rhyme or a poem in front of the research team in course of the fieldwork. Such phenomenon may be called the manifestation of their confidence. They answered the questions asked by the teachers in the observation session and also answered the questions asked by the observation team often effortlessly. They have been able to make their parents proud by learning the skill of writing, reading or reciting poems. With much satisfaction and pride their parents said that their children are well mannered and disciplined by virtue of Kajoli school.

x. Comparison with the primary school: When the government introduced free pre-primary school in rural areas, some parents in the Kajoli school withdrew their children from there and admitted them in the free pre-primary school. It happened in Naogaon as revealed from the interview of the teachers. After sometime these parents withdrew their children from the free pre-primary school and brought back to the Kajoli school. The reason they put forth to bring back the children was the low-quality teaching. In different sections of this report it is pointed out that the Kajoli model is not a conventional mode of teaching, it is playing games with cards. These cards are pictures. Introduction of a picture along with a word appears to be a form of game, particularly when the students are told to pick up words from the pocket board. Easily understood it is different from conventional lecturing. Parents also reported that government pre-primary school does not pay attention to individual students, the teacher addresses the entire class as a body. The lack of individual attention left the weak students unattended and the continuation of the weakness. The case of Kajoli is just opposite, they said. The mother-teacher connection in the Kajoli school also gave an edge over the free government pre-primary school. The Kajoli teacher is trained to use songs, recitation, dance and other aesthetic means in the class to remove

the element of monotony. The pre-primary students actually traded-off their games time with class time. Therefore, blending fun and teaching has made it a different form of demagogy.

xi. Younger siblings admission into Kajoli school: The discussion of the findings above indicated mothers' satisfaction with the quality of teaching provided in the Kajoli school. This prompted a few mothers to admit the younger siblings into this school. The empirical finding in Sarkarpara, Panchagarh shows that the third sibling was admitted into Kajoli school. The example is the following: "Adib is a student now, his two elder siblings also studied here. His mother Jannati who never attended school was found strongly committed to the education of her children. The eldest is a daughter who is now a college student, it shows that there has been continuity in education in this family." Above example also implies that the trickling down of the love for education in the family and the community was working here.

xii. Head teachers' reflections: After the completion of education in Kajoli Model School the graduates enter the primary school. This study has interviewed two headteachers in Nilphamari and Panchagarh. One of them teaches in a privately run primary school while the other in a government primary school. Both of them and their colleagues observed that the students from the Kajoli school performed well in the class. Their performances in language and arithmetic is pretty well, they reported. There are a few other subjects like social study and religion in the grade one of the primary school, the performance of the Kajoli students is also found satisfactory, added the class teachers of the government primary school who were present at the time of discussion in Shikarpur, Panchagarh. They also noted that the method of teaching in Kajoli School played important role in the good learning outcome of the students.

xiii. Curricula review and teachers training: There is a special role of curricula and teachers training in the Kajoli program deserving special attention from the organizer. The unique feature of the curricula is its designing for the pre-primary students and accordingly rendering it suitable for this age cohort. It is gathered from the concerned RIB official that it is regularly reviewed in the light of the class experiences of the teacher. In course of review the basic mode of pictorial teaching is not changed, textual lessons like short stories, rhymes or poems are reshuffled to make it more effective in terms of linguistic, cognitive and cultural skills. Similarly, teachers training procedures and contents also undergo modification or incorporation as a part of recent research findings on relevant issues and to address the felt necessities arisen in course of teaching by the teachers.

xiv. Nutritional status: There is a component in Kajoli Model that relates to the nutritional issue of the students and social solidarity issue of the community. The original design of the model urges the mothers to provide খিচুড়ি or rice-pulse mixture to the students by rotation, meaning each mother of the student will provide it each day, in this way rotational contribution will be ensured. Above component will contribute to nutritional enhancement of the students and infuse the feeling of community solidarity among the mothers, the model originally thought. Our field study has shown that it is not a regular phenomenon in different schools. One of the major reasons identified by the parents for this discontinuation is the timing of the school. It is the following: the class is held in the morning and the children come to school from home after taking their breakfast. So they do not feel enough hungry for a

meal like খিচুড়ি। However, we cannot rule out another factor although not explicitly pointed out by the parents. It is the following: the marginal economic condition puts up obstacle to arrange money to prepare it, particularly in the months when wage work is not available or the crops are standing in the field. T

This study has assessed the nutritional status of the children by calculating Body Mass Index or BMI. The findings are presented in tables 7 and 8. This study has gathered data of 129 Kajoli students from six different schools on their height and weight to calculate BMI. The BMI score less than 18.5 refers to the underweight status. It is found all of them are underweight. Table 8 shows that average BMI is 13.60. The highest is 16.05 and the lowest is 11.79. The nutritional status data indicates the marginal status of the families to which these children belong. Thus, there is enough room for nutritional improvement of the Kajoli students.

ANALYSIS AND EXISTING FRAMEWORK

The Kajoli Model School is meant for those who are socially disadvantaged. Such disadvantages result from different social conditions related to poor education of the household head, deficit income or very limited resource command. Pursuing education for the children among these households in this condition is not always feasible for different reasons. For example, the vicious cycle like poor education of the parents leads to occupation with low-income which in turn, reproduces poverty and illiteracy. In the condition of chronic poverty, the career of education may not seem profitable to the parents of the children as an alternative to child labor that ensures immediate income to the household. On the other hand, increasing commodification of education (i.e., one can read in a more reputed educational institution if one can spend more money to become more competitive in the job market) may present long term educational career to the parents of the children not economically profitable, again as an alternative to child labor. Let alone, the hardship of pursuing educational career that requires patience, practices and merit as well.

Did Kajoli Model intend to transform the structural basis of disadvantages of the households who would send their children to its school? Actually, Kajoli Model wanted to nurture interest for education among the children of the disadvantaged households, to make learning interesting to them and eventually integrate them into the mainstream education increasing their skill to enter primary school without hassles. One cannot rule out such integration may help some households to become non-deficit household from deficit households in future. However, literacy and numeracy would definitely enhance the social status of the Kajoli students and their families because of their educational upliftment.

The quantitate and qualitative data furnished in the previous chapter has created the premise for presenting an analysis in what type of framework Kajoli model operates and how far it has been successful to reach desired goals. While presenting narrative discussion in the previous section the empirical evidences have been provided in the light of the findings as designed in accordance with the objectives enunciated in the ToR. By and large the study found that the program has attained a number of goals that it intended to achieve. There are two cardinal issues that largely determined the positive

outcome from the program implementation. One relates to the design of the program, or the very Kajoli Model and the quality of the implementation.

The design rightly pointed out that by using the mode of games it will be able to catch attention of the pre-primary children for study. It was a challenge how such games will be designed. Pretty innovatively it designed picture cards to represent a word. From the point of view of communication, a picture is highly effective for the learning of vocabularies. The simultaneous presentation of a picture and the corresponding word in a card enhances its appeal as a game to the children. The learning through games is further intensified with the practice of picking out a card from a pocket. Soon the children enter into the competition with each other as to who will pick up a card correctly before others. The Kajoli children perhaps unknowingly enter into a learning spree in the guise of a game. Once the image of a picture and a word are imprinted in the memory of a child, the students enter into the phase of non-picture orientation. At this stage memorizing a word and its constituting alphabets becomes easy for a child. Such practices continue for a few months and the students learn not only word but also its alphabets. At this stage each student learns how to arrange alphabets for a word. All above practices are pretty effective to learn vocabulary and alphabets.

To make class teaching further effective this model places profound importance on the use of aesthetic and entertaining items to bridge the gap between the formal environment of the class and the fun-loving children's mind. These means include songs, dance, recitation and storytelling. Stories are always enthralling to the children as we know from the evidence of ঠাকুয়ার ঝুলি in Bengali society. Songs and dance are the age long components of festivals and fun, so this model skillfully uses these means to combine learning and games together. The element of game can also be found in the way the model teaches arithmetic, the very use of laced beads and a clip.

Its curricula also deserve attention particularly its component of stories that intends to infuse logical thinking in the mind of the students along with introducing new vocabularies. The rhymes and poems that have spellbound the children, years after years have been introduced here and the observed spontaneity of the children to recite them testifies to this observation.

By selecting women of moderate educational background, the model remained low cost. Most teachers represented the background the design aimed at. Selected teachers mobilized the mothers and in the case of need the teachers also provided space for the class. The community spirit is manifested through the collective efforts of the individual mother to make financial contribution and keep the school functioning. Training to develop skilled teachers, mothers' deep interest for children's education and the monitoring made by the RIB field officials resulted in the quality education that the children received.

The empirical exercise comprising qualitative and quantitative approaches has produced evidences about the competence attained by the students. Mothers' satisfaction about the quality of education and primary school teachers' satisfaction about the quality vindicated the effectiveness of the model and its quality of implementation.

While the given nutritional status of the Kajoli children testifies to the marginality of their social condition it also indicates certain challenge, if there is a good correlation between nutritional status and achieving in the educational program.

We may now present a brief description about the conceptual framework that results from the empirical verification. Kajoli initiative to launch a low cost and community participated educational program for the pre-primary school coincided with the aspiring mothers from the disadvantaged background who wanted to integrate their children into an educational process. Appointed teachers became the catalyst owing to their social condition to mobilize the mothers who are aspiring for children's education. Training, innovative method of teaching, appropriate curricula constituted the robust supply side through the committed teachers. The demand side comprising of the vigilance of the mothers to receive good quality education created a condition for the generation of the good quality education. RIB's monitoring comprising of mothers' meeting and class observation contributed to the attainment of the goal. Innovative teaching method infused the spirit of games among the students that in turn enabled them to for acquire effective learning. Programs' sustainability has been demonstrated on two counts: despite community's contribution for salary and space the schools has remained functional while donor driven many similar programs winded up. Even after Covid 19 many shut down schools reopened. Despite resource limitation to put in place more manpower in the field for wider coordination and monitoring the program could keep up its pace. Therefore, the effectiveness of the model and whole program deserves appreciation towards transforming it into a program of wider scale in terms of geographical spread and further quality enhancement.

RECOMMENDATION

This study has been commissioned to evaluate the functioning of the Kajoli Model School in Nilphamari, Panchagarh and Naogaon. In course of evaluation, it will examine school's effect and contribution in the light of the objectives enunciated in the ToR. Evaluation result will finally recommend should a Foundation with endowments be established that will cater to the basic needs of the Kajoli centers without affecting present level communitive initiatives.

The overall finding of this study is positive in the sense that it has found that these schools are contributing to the expansion of education among the pre-primary school children from the class of people who are subject to numerous social constraints in their survival struggle. The study agrees that its present component of community initiative should not be affected and its replication in new areas will be worthy of pursuit. However, before its expansion serious and careful estimation will be needed how many schools should be opened new and in which areas. Of course, with the present manpower from the side of RIB further expansion will add new pressure and new challenges.

The establishment of a Foundation with endowments will be justified on the basis of the study findings. The present manpower comprising a national coordinator, two field officers who are not fully dedicated to this program because of their other official responsibilities, is quite inadequate from the point of view of monitoring and carrying out other activities. At present the schools are spread in a wide area in geographical terms, therefore to ensure regular visit is not an easy task to be accomplished. In many schools it has been found that the materials like pocket cards have become very old out of frequent use or clip is not there to use in the arithmetic class. It means there is a shortage of resource to make regular replacement. Chalks to write down on the board are not adequately supplied. Above shortages imply that additional financial resources are needed and which can be made through the establishment of a Foundation with endowments.

Therefore, resource availability will largely determine how many new schools should be opened new. Resource availability will also determine the quality of implementation. Since this study has found that

Kajoli Model is effective in terms of arousing interest in study in the pre-primary children of the disadvantaged families and prepares them well in a period of one year educationally and psychologically both, the imperative for its expansion is logically sound. Another important factor is the secular character of the Kajoli education program deserving its sustenance and expansion. In terms of its mode of teaching and the contents of the manual the model clearly exhibits the above-mentioned secular character.

This study will like to make the following recommendations on the basis of the discussion with the relevant actors:

- i. The frequency of mothers meeting should be increased in first two years in the newly opened school;
- ii. Mothers' meeting regularity should be ensured;
- iii. The frequency of children fair may be increased;
- iv. Annual teachers' retreat may be organized to review the functioning, constraints and further improvement of the school program;
- v. Mothers' gathering at the upazilla/district level may be organized annually;
- vi. Kajoli volunteers/champions may be invited in the annual gathering of the mother;
- vii. Training program may be increased for the teachers to provide more inputs on demagogy and other aspects;
- viii. Mat may be provided to the classes for the children to sit on it;
- ix. Worn out materials replacement should be done immediately;
- x. To ensure above recommendations RIB manpower needs to be increased with dedicated responsibilities;
- xi. Nutritional status needs attention, the program may be tagged with national nutritional program.

CONCLUSION

As a model of teaching Kajoli reflects its own uniqueness. It has been successful to combine game and study for the pre-primary school children. The use of pictures to introduce vocabulary constituted the

premise of game which has been further strengthened with the procedure of picking up cards with pictures and a word from the pocket board. This game has aroused strong urge in the mindset of the students to pick up a card ahead of others and feel the pride of picking up it correctly.

To characterize the above procedure of learning one may call it a journey of pictorial understanding to picture less one. It is followed with the identification of the individual alphabets in the light of the word, not as a part of the set of alphabets. By arranging alphabets for a word the Kajoli students acquire the capability of identifying individual alphabets, so it is different from the conventional mode of learning.

Above innovativeness with regard to the language learning is also noticed with regard to learning Arithmetic. It is a game of counting in a lace with beads. Again, there is competition among the individual students to come ahead of others and count a number or add numbers.

Class practice is a major key to the transfer of literacy and numeracy to the Kajoli students. All lessons are taught in the class, students learn writing with a chalk on the blackboard, the teacher physically verifies the performance of the students in the class. No homework back home is given.

Teachers and mothers are important pillars of this program. With the help of training rural women with moderate educational background have become efficient Kajoli teachers. They have been inspired to such an extent that they mobilized the mothers to send their pre-primary school children to the Kajoli school and the mothers arranged fees themselves to pay to the teacher in recognition of the services given to their children. As a result, a certain level of self-propelling capacity has been gained by the Kajoli school as a consequence of community initiative comprising the roles of a teacher and a mother.

The empowerment implications of the program for the rural women are quite striking. Those who are Kajoli teachers would have found it quite difficult to get such jobs in the government primary schools in the rural or urban areas. This program has helped them to come out of the patriarchal division of labor, earn economic and social status.

The program has attracted those who belong to the disadvantaged class in rural areas. A large proportion of the fathers are wage labor. Their educational background is also minimum or moderate. The data on nutritional status also vindicates a point that they belonged to the marginal section of the community.

This model also bears special implications when examined from the perspective of Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). The avowed goals of SDG seek to eliminate poverty, ensure quality education, remove hunger and pave the way for good health and wellbeing among others. Kajoli is a model of education for the pre-primary children from the marginalized families. It aims to imbue interest for education among the children with the expectation that such internalized motivation will be an important premise to get inclined towards study as they (Kajoli graduates) would grow up in course of time. It will not be an impractical expectation from the findings of this study that being imbued with the interest for study the Kajoli graduates will further strengthen their pursuit for education. On the other hand, the study substantiated the evidence of effective learning by the Kajoli Children contributing to the goal of quality education. Besides the above, Kajoli's contribution to the creation of enabling condition for the pre-primary children of the poor families is an important investment towards elimination of poverty, hunger and ill health. The above statement attains its validity from the relevant research results exhibiting the vicious cycle between poverty and illiteracy. One can firmly observe that educational

attainment is the most effective instrument for the children of the poor families to get rid of poverty, hunger and morbidity, which are in turn are causally connected.

The study recommends the establishment of the foundation with endowments without affecting present mode of community initiative. There is also the need to increase manpower of RIB to ensure the quality implementation of the program.

ANNEX: QUALITATIVE DATA

A. INTERVIEW OF THE TEACHERS

1. Utsha Rani, Tangnargarh, Tupamari Union, Nilphamari

Utsha Rani has been teaching for four years in a Kajoli school. Before that she taught in a BRAC school. She has passed her Higher Secondary Certificate Examination or HSC. She now lives in her in-law's house at Tangnargarh village. Her father-in-law is a small cultivator. Cultivation is also the main occupation of her husband. The family owns little amount of cultivable land, which will be about 1.5 bigha. When the BRAC school was shut down she started this school being motivated by the field staff of the RIB. She received training for three days in this regard. The school is located in the premise of her in-law's house.

Rani is very happy being a teacher. The utilization of time and skill through teaching gives her much satisfaction, as she observed. Love and affection what she receives from the students and their parents remain continuous source of inspiration to deliver her worth more meaningfully and effectively, she added. She observed that her household premise becomes lively when the children and their parents step in for the class. She feels her own importance in a society where the women are treated as goods, less of a human being. She praises her in-laws profoundly, because without their support it would have been next to impossible to operate the Kajoli school program.

Her level of satisfaction increases significantly when she compares the condition of the children before they joined the school and the condition after a few months. At the beginning they even did not know how to sit in the class or how to take part in learning practice. They were introvert and shy. Many of them hesitant to express oneself. Class manner was not known to them, she added, such manner or routine are not regimentation, it is spontaneous, it is an ingredient necessary to carry on the class work. Gradually they have learnt it by their class participation, not forced from above. Rani highlighted the affectionate approach to win the heart of the children in her class. She feels any kind of abuse, physical or verbal, will be destructive for the children and the class.

She then shifted to the issue of Kajoli mode of teaching. Because she earlier also taught in BRAC school there was an inclination for making comparison in her interview. In her opinion the blending of playing game and learning language or arithmetic is the main strength of the success of Kajoli method. There are also songs sung to the children to present a lesson. In such mode of presentation students like the tunes so much that they forget it is the exercise of learning a book lesson. Students are also very fond of stories, which create suspense in their mind. There is a story of a tiger and the children are much fond of it. They come to the school and regular attending class becomes the premise for getting used to a routine. If learning becomes a matter of monotony, students' attention become inadequate.

Usha particularly praised the method of teaching arithmetic. It is based on using a laced beads with two different colors arranged alternatively. There is a clip to divide a number or numbers from the rest of the lace. This clip is introduced as a hopping bird to the students and they enjoy it immensely.

Pictorial presentation of words and alphabets is also very effective. Similarly, manuals are also very important from where they get necessary guidance. The training introduces then to pedagogy of Kajoli model which is completely different from the traditional teaching. RIB field officials regularly visit them and monitor the program that also contributes to the ensuring of good outcome of the program. She praised the education fair organized by RIB from where she came to know about Kajoli model and got inspiration to join as a teacher.

2. Nipa Roy, Dashpara, Ramnagar Union, Nilphamari

Nipa Roy is the teacher of Dashpara Kajoli school. She came to this village through her marriage and she lives in her in-laws house. Her husband is a auto-rickshaw driver. Nipa completed her School Final Examination or SSC. When we arrived in this school she was teaching students. She was very patient to display the cards and reading loudly the name of the object shown in picture and the corresponding word. At that time, she was teaching Bengali. She was showing the words like আম, ঘর, মই and others. When she read out the name of the object in the picture all the students reciprocated her. Afterwards she showed the opposite side of the card which did not have picture except a word. Again, she loudly pronounced it and reciprocated by the students. After finishing a row of cards, then she started calling students one after by name to come to her and pick up a word. After picking up the word the student asked the fellow students did, he pick the correct card what the teacher told him to pick. When the students picked up the correct card fellow students clapped, otherwise not. We asked the teacher what is her opinion about the cognitive capacity of the students particularly their reasoning capacity about some issue which she did not discuss in the class. She replied that the capacity of understanding of the students appeared to her good. We requested her to read a story from the manual and asked question which is given there. Such question is asked to examine the vocabulary of the student and it engages reasoning capacity quite substantially. She then read the story of Hena which is following: "Hena is very happy today because she will visit the village fair with her uncle at the afternoon. The fair is taking place in field within her village. Hena got ready without wasting time. She desired to buy many things from the village fair. By how she will go to the fair?" Answers are the following given at the end of the story. A. On foot. B. By aero plane. C. By a truck. D. By a bus. The students answered on foot, which was the correct answer. We asked her did she teach the story to the students earlier, Nipa replied negatively. From this example we concluded that the students applied their reason and chose the correct answer in terms of the given perspective.

After the completion of the class, she continued with talking to us. She was describing her experience how she motivates the students in the class and said rhyme is an excellent tool with which the teacher can quickly attract the children's attention and ensure participation in the class. To give an example she said that when she recites আমাদের ছোট নদী চলে বাঁকে বাঁকে...with clap it captivates the children so intensely that they request her to repeat it again. She also added in this respect that when the children first come to the class it takes them three to four days to get settled in the class.

We asked how she decided to open the school, because it has started three months ago. She answered the question in the following way. There is a man named Girish who lives in Dashpara and works as an education champion, volunteering his time and labor to promote Kajoli school in his union. In this way he requested Nipa's father-in-law to engage her daughter-in-law as a teacher of the Kajoli school. The father-in-law liked the proposal and agreed to give a space in the porch of his house to be used as the class room. Then Nipa talked to different mothers of the village whether they are interested to send their children to this school. She noticed tremendous interest in them what gave her courage to start the school.

3. Kamrun Nahar, Hamida Akhter, Helali Begum, Ozita Khatun. Nilphamari

The following account is derived from a group discussion.

Kamrun Nahar is still a student of Karmicel College under National University and expecting to pass her final examination very soon. She is from Uttar Borovita Madya Para. Kamrun started her school recently. She earns about TK1500 to TK1700 each month from this school as tuition fee. Before she started this school, she used to teach some students in her home. The mothers of her neighborhood noticed it. One day they told her to include their children in her class. Earlier her aunt used to operate a school in a different neighborhood in the same village which was shut down following the break out of Covid. Kamrun gathered information about her aunt's school program and came to know it was a Kajoli Model school. This preliminary information helped her to establish contact with the field coordinator of the Kajoli Program. When she received the approval of opening Kajoli school she was given three days training on Kajoli Model which eventually led to the establishment of her school.

Hamida is another teacher took part in the discussion, she is from from Chenmari Vangapara. She started her school in 2023. Earlier she used to run a school of similar nature supported by BRAC. When BRAC winded up their program she decided to start school with the support of RIB. There are thirty students in her school who ranged from 4 to 6 years. All parents contribute some money for the education of their children and it amounts to TK3000, but sometimes all parents cannot pay such money. Her husband owns a mill where paddy is husked. Hamida said engagement in teaching the students allow her to utilize her time meaningfully and she can earn some money also.

Helali's school is situated in Ronochondi Uttar Para. Her aunt used to run this school, later she gave her the responsibility of teaching. Then she received training from RIB on the methods of teaching followed in Kajoli school. For some years in between the school was closed.

The fourth teacher was Bulbuli. Her school is located in Koimari Tutupara. She has got 20 students in her school. Her husband owns 15 bigha of land that gives economic stability in her family.

Except Kamrun Nahar others have not completed school final examination. They like teaching because it earns them lot of respect. They think women's role in rural areas is changing, some are joining garments industries or factories and some are working as wage worker. The teaching in Kajoli school has brought for them respectful opportunity to engage professionally. Middle class women in rural areas like them cannot go to garments factory outside the villages nor cannot work as wage workers, for them teaching in Kajoli school is very good opportunity. Bulbuli gave an example to explain how much respect she received from her Kajoli student. A few days back she was visiting a local secondary school on a different purpose. She was walking in the school premise with the head teacher, at that time many students came forward and welcomed her addressing আসসালামু আলাইকুম। This event brought some surprise to the head teacher and he asked her how so many boys knew her, Bulbuli replied that they were the students in her Kajoli school.

All four teachers above teachers observed that the method of teaching used by the Kajoli school is very effective to teach the students. They can learn well Bengali, English or Arithmetic. When asked what type of problem they face in running their schools they mentioned that there are many parents who cannot regularly pay the tuition fee of their children. Varying age of the students is another problem. Those who are too young such as three or four years old sometimes grasp the lessons slowly than the children who are five or six years old. The children who are five or six years old in the Kajoli school include those who cannot perform well in the primary school. Their parents bring them to Kajoli school for a good training so they can perform well in the primary school in future. The teacher does not get salary from RIB or

does not get any money for the school space are some problems they added. BRAC school, they said, receive financial support from the program such as teachers' salary or rent for the class room space.

4. Rimi Begum, Shikarpur, Panchagarh

Rimi is the teacher of this school. She has passed School Final Examination or SSC. The place where the class takes place is her father-in-law's house. The main occupation of his husband and father-in-law is agriculture. She started this school in 2009. The field coordinator of RIB came motivated her to start this school. She was briefed on how the school functions and what are the rules or procedures. Rimi then contacted the mothers of her village and found that they were interested to send their children to this school once founded. She then received training from RIB on demagogy and contents of the curriculum. So far many batches of children have graduated from the Kajoli school, and some of them are the students of the colleges.

Rimi has gathered profound experiences as a teacher over the last many years in the Kajoli school. She said its method of teaching is special in terms of its effectiveness. She noted that there are two sides needed to be taken into consideration to understand the uniqueness of the Kajoli method. Firstly, how the subjects are presented to the students and secondly how the classes are held. Pictorial presentation is a major mode that allows the students quickly identify different words and retaining in their memories. The pre-primary students are very young, they need to feel comfortable with the class room situation. To ensure this aspect the use of songs, swinging movement, while delivering rhymes and telling stories were found quite effective to catch their attention in the class. She said clapping is also a good technique to keep them relaxed in the class. It takes about seven days' time to get the students settled in the class, she added. Each day after the completion of the class she tells stories to the students and she found it contributes to bring relaxed mood in the students.

Rimi pointed out that training plays special role for the teaching skill development of the teachers particularly with regard to demagogy and English teaching. Since English is a foreign language, it needs special attention and the manual provided by RIB helps them well to impart good English teaching to the students, she added.

The Bengali language teaching in Kajoli model has got a number of components, she explained. When they start learning vocabulary, side by side they are also told stories by her. After a few months they are found to make sentences describing themselves. Poem and story reading also takes place around this time she added so by seven to eight months she can complete most of the lessons and get time for revision. She also said that other two subjects are also covered by eight months and the remaining months are used for revision.

Rimi placed special emphasis on the role of the RIB field level officials. She believes that monthly meeting of the mother in this respect is very effective to consolidate their ties with the Kajoli school. Mothers' feeling of belongingness gets further strong. Regular monitoring, in her opinion, plays a good role to ensure quality of both teachers and the students.

5. Rubina Akhter, Sarkarpara, Bangari, Panchagarh

This school was established in 2009 and Rubina has been teaching here since then. Now it is located in a room which is a part of the house of her sister. She received training a number of times, apart from that she also visited the village Kajoli of Magura district where this school first came into existence as a part

of initial experiment. It means she is an experienced Kajoli model school teacher. The name of the village Kajoli of Magura also became the name of the model.

Rubina said that this school has filled in the gap what the mother could not do. For example, she added, most mothers remain so busy with their household chores therefore giving time to the children for study is very difficult. Then she said, the mothers who are educated may not be familiar with the curricula now followed in the school. She also opined that for pre-primary children class room practice is most important, because the intensive attention from a teacher what is received by a pre-primary student in the class for the preparation of the lessons cannot be made possible at home. The very environment of the class, she said, cannot be created at home, it is a group practice, individual student is called to pick up card and identify word and also asked to write on the board, all such practices are very important and cannot be made possible at home. She further added if a teacher does not give personal attention to each student in pre-primary stage learning remains incomplete. Then she reflected on the importance of training she received from RIB. She learnt how to teach a child completely from this training. Without such training, she said, a teacher cannot carry out the tasks needed to teach the lessons of the manual following Kajoli model.

Rubina gave an example how Kajoli school has enhanced the expectation of the mother about their children from a school. The mothers of her school prefer a primary school which is located in a different place. The one which is located in her village is not liked by these mothers because they are not happy with the teaching of this primary school. The school authority came to her to send Kajoli graduates to this primary school. However, it created some problem then the RIB field coordinator came and settled the issue with the primary school authority.

Finally, Rubina was requested to reflect on the time that she requires to cover all lessons comprising different subjects in the manual. She said that to complete five stipulated steps as enunciated in the manual requires seven to eight months. She referred to both English and Bengali. However, other sections such as storytelling or rhymes also get started side by side. She said it is a journey of pictorial to non-pictorial learning. With Arithmetic she concentrates on counting number from one to hundred first. Multiplication table is introduced around the time when counting exercise has been done for a month or so. She teaches arithmetic rules such as addition, subtraction or division only after the students have learnt counting numbers properly.

6. Emily Hasda, Naogaon

Emily has been teaching in this school for more than eight months. Before that she taught in a BRAC school for three years. First, she came to know about Kajoli school that the salary of the teacher is not paid here by the organization. Then she started contacting the mothers in the vicinity to find out, are they interested to send their children to this school and pay some fee for their education. She received positive response from the mothers. At the beginning the number of students was not many, which gradually increased.

There are fifteen students in her school. Each students pays Tk100 each month. Most parents pay the fee regularly, however there are a few who cannot always pay the fee on time. This money helps Emily to meet her family expenditure. Her income is not much compared to her need but teaching has become a part of her passion.

There are no big problems that affect the functioning of the school but the shortage of materials sometimes creates problems to run the school program. Emily receives profound respect both from the students and their mothers. The students are very young. Sometimes they create problems like engaging in physical scuffle or leaving the class without informing the teacher. In this regard she has to depend on her patience to convince the students to remain refrained from the activities that affect the discipline of the class. In a very few occasions she took resort to scolding the students to ensure discipline in the class.

The introduction of the free pre-primary school by the government encouraged some parents to take their children to those schools. Not many parents did it. However very soon their experiences in those schools turned bitter, because they found that the teachers of those schools did not teach the students with personal attention as given by the Kajoli school, where each student receives individual attention regarding learning the lessons. Their frustration led them to bring back their children to Kajoli school again. In this respect she thinks that the method of teaching is the most important feature of the Kajoli model. She also found that the children are extremely fond of games, and the Kajoli model has combined games and learning. For example, the children are extremely eager to get a card where pictures and words are printed and to read out it to others to demonstrate their learning skill. Such motivation enhances their inclination towards study. They also enjoy the procedure when they are taught lessons with the help of claps, because it makes the learning rhythmic. As a mark of their seriousness hardly the students will be found remaining absent in the class. They compete with each other to read out the cards in the class. They also like the chorus reading. Sometimes Emily divides them into small groups to practice their lessons among themselves. All above contributed to the enhancement of their attention in the class. Both the manuals and cards are helpful for the teachers and the students. Beads and clip that are used to teach arithmetic is also found effective. The content of the manual for different subjects can be covered within the stipulated time, which is one year.

The role of RIB has got special importance in terms of a number of things carried out in this program. When the teacher first starts their school, they receive a training for three days, where they learn the contents of the manuals on Bengali, English and Arithmetic. Demagogy is also a part of this teaching. Since infusing interest in study among the pre-primary school children is a big challenge the Kajoli model has introduced games as a method of teaching and this training orients the teacher to such approach. Besides each year the teacher receives refresher training for one day given by RIB which gives them opportunity to discuss about the problems they face and seeking suggestion for their solution. So Kajoli model is also dynamic in a sense, it tries to address emerging problems in the teaching of pre-primary students. Besides, the monitoring by RIB about the quality of teaching is another dimension of its role in making this model functional and effective. It impresses the parents and others that just in a span of one year these children came with empty skill of learning and go back with a substantial gain.

7. Morium Begum, Vatpara, Naogaon

Morium Begum started her school from the month of Ramadan this year in Vatparul. There is a background how she started planning to open the school. One day she met Hafizur, who is a local journalist but connected with RIB through his participation in its different programs, in that meeting she came to know that RIB encourages local initiative for the education of the pre-primary children, and she decided to get integrated with this program. At the beginning like other teachers, she also received three days training on different subject manuals and the method of teaching. The training was given in the

upazilla headquarter of Sapahar. She started her class in the porch of her house, because she did not get any place for this purpose. Seventeen students are there in her school, each of them pays TK 100 monthly. However, there are some parents who cannot pay the money regularly because of their inadequate income. Morium accepted and adjusted with the irregularity of payment on the part of the parents because they belong to the class of the poor people. However, the occasional deficit of fees did not make her unhappy when she found that how much respect she received from the students, their mothers or even the villagers. Such respect inspired her profoundly to impart good teaching as well as to continue with this profession. Through this school program intimacy has developed between Morium and the mothers. They are very happy about her teaching to the extent that they came to her to take help to write something or to understand a land deed.

When she asked about the behavior of the children in the class she replied that most of the time they are attentive and disciplined in the class. In a very few occasions they become restless, and when it happened, she has a good solution to this problem. Story telling is a good panacea for remove restlessness or indiscipline among the students. She found scolding or force does not work much to restore discipline among the students of pre-primary age. Their fondness for rhymes also impressed her. Sometimes they would request her to recite a rhyme what they liked very much.

Different aspects of Kajoli model are liked by her students. Picking up a card and read out the word to other students is much liked by them. They feel proud when they correctly read out a word from a card. They also like chorus in learning vocabularies. Morium underlined that students need a fear free atmosphere in the class to study effectively. She allows them to ask question when they cannot understand anything in the class. There are some lessons that need class exercise for a longer time than others. English vocabulary needs longer time for its memorizing. Picture card is excellent in this regard to learn a word and memorize it. The training from RIB helped us to teach English because it is different language. The students have already learnt different rhymes such as Teddy Bear, Two Little Black Birds, or Twinkle Twinkle Little Stars.

Morium also faced the same problem like Emily, that the mothers of a few children took their children to free pre-primary school which is completely free of cost., However, after sometime they brought them back when they found it was not a good place for imparting education to the pre-primary children. Individual attention to each student is almost absent there. However, such schools created more attraction to the students as there are swings, sleeper, football or playing ground for the children.

Morium underlined the importance of the support she received from RIB. She noted a few like, training at the beginning, refreshers training or monitoring. The act of monitoring is quite important because it creates special effect on the teacher and students to maintain routine, discipline and quality of study.

B. GROUP DISCUSSIONS WITH THE MOTHERS

1. Dashpara, Ramnagar, Nilphamari

As many as ten mothers were present in the discussion. They themselves never attended school while they were children. However, they lamented that they did not attend school while they were children. One of the common reasons was the absence of any school in the vicinity of their villages. Besides early marriage also restricted such opportunity for them. At present, they feel, illiteracy is a curse or

demeaning for social status. In the past illiteracy was considered so demeaning like now. People did not bother much in the past for illiteracy. The Bengali word শূন্য is now considered a disrespectful issue at present. On the other hand, literacy is extremely necessary. For example, they said, if they need any service from any institution, they need to read relevant papers or need to sign some documents, all such necessities presuppose literacy.

Having a school like Kajoli in the village is a blessing for them. It helps them travelling a long distance for their children to get education. They are also very happy with the method of teaching of Kajoli school. They think this method can ensure attention of the children to the teacher. Picture is easily understood by the children and gets imprinted in their mind. The laced beads are also very effective to teach numeral and arithmetic.

Since the school is located within the village they can watch progress of their children because they often come and sit here when they can manage some time. They expressed deep gratitude to the teacher and her in-laws family that they were kind enough to provide a space for the school. They give some money to the teacher each month and they consider it is their contribution to keep the school functional.

2. Tupamari, Nilphamari

In this discussion along with mothers two fathers were present, their wives were not at home so they came to attend the discussion program. One of the father's names was Rabindranath who is very young. His main occupation is cultivation, he himself is an owner of small land and to make up the deficit take land for sharecropping from others. Another father was Tarapada, he is also very young. He is also a small cultivator. He also takes land from big landowners to cultivate under sharecropping. The mothers who were present included Nargis, Dolly, Moni and others.

While commenting on the outcome of teaching and learning by the children they expressed satisfaction and observed the method of teaching based on playing game is a good approach. The children have learnt Bengali and Arithmetic well. There is scope for improvement with English, and the parents are very serious about English because they think competence in this language implies gaining advantage in many things. However, the Kajoli school is not only learning linguistic skill or numeracy competence for them, they underlined how their children became well mannered and disciplined in the last few months after they became the students of the Kajoli school. One of them also said that only few months ago they used to spend most of their time in playing outside, making their body dirty with mud and soil, but now they are different, following a routine, eager themselves to come to class, and getting engaged in learning. Parents also believe that their children will survive by doing some jobs so without education it would not be possible for them to get a job. The parents want to see their children as doctors or engineer in future, the kind of education one needs to become a doctor or engineer can be obtained from the institutions which are highly competitive to get admission. It implies two things, parents see their children's future in the jobs which are primarily urban in terms of their nature, and good academic results are prerequisite to get admission in medical colleges or engineering university. It is a change in the vision of the rural people, at least among those who were present in this discussion, peasant life is no longer opted by them.

While commenting on the quality of study obtained from Kajoli school that the children have learnt numerals 1 to 50 and can write comfortable 1 to 10. They have memorized most lessons properly. But

some parents were found too serious about children's education and collected exercise books for their children to be practiced at home preferably in the evening. Most of them can read and write what they learn from the class. However, a few students are there who are not good at arithmetic. In counting they are good but not good while asked to solve some arithmetic problems. Kajoli school is highly praised by the parents because it is located within village and safely they can send their children here.

3. Shikarpur, Banghari, Panchagarh

A number of mothers came to the meeting. For example, it included Ferdousi who studied up to class ten. Morasalin's mother Sharmin was there who passed School Final or SSC examination. Imran's mother Parvin studied up to class ten. Mousumi is the mother of Labonyo who was there and during her childhood completed seven grade. But Misti's mother never attended school. But the trend is this that many mothers attended school and continued up to different classes.

While giving observations on the quality of teaching in the class most expressed their satisfaction about it. They are happy about the progress in all subjects, that includes Bengali, English and Arithmetic. The interest of their children in study also increased significantly during this period. For example, Morsalin's mother was afraid about her daughter, will she be ever interested in study at all, because she was so much fond of playing games only. But in course of attending classes, she has become quite attached to study. She no longer needed to be urged by her mother to go to school. Some other mothers also gave same opinion about the inclination of their children to playing games only. Kajoli has brought the opportunity to these children to turn attention towards study out of own affection, not imposed from outside. Some of them even sit for study at evening in their home on their own, in order to perform well in the classroom. Mothers also take care that the children attend class regularly.

The mothers also passed observation on the method of teaching as they found it unique when compared with other schools and assessed in terms of educational outcome of the children. The pictorial presentation of the volabularies or engaging children in games to pick a card with alphabet and arrange them into a word produced very good result in terms of learning. Pictures are better representation, they opined, because the students can identify pictures very quickly and can also remember the corresponding word better. The also said that Kajoli model is oriented to individual child, it means all students are given individual attention by the teacher in terms of acquiring learning skill. Giving individual attention produced good results for the children's learning.

While describing everyday's experience regarding the school they said that often they accompanied their children to the class. Such visit allowed them personally observe the progress of their children in the class. It has been possible, they said, because of the location of the school in the vicinity. They added that Kajoli school played special role for the advancement of education in their village.

4. Sarkarpara, Panchagarh

A number of mothers were present in the discussion program. For example, Moyna was there who is the mother of Ivy. Moyna herself attended school up to class eight while she was child. Rezina was there who is the mother of Sumaiya. Rezian also attended school during her childhood. Taiba's mother Abeda was also there, she passed her college final examination. Jannat is the mother of Adib who was the third child studying in this school. Adib's elder two sisters were students here and one of them is now a college student.

All mothers praised profoundly the teaching of this school. They said having a school like Kajoli in their village means getting opportunity to send their young children to the class. They said they are very happy to witness that their children are now disciplined and attentive to the study. They added, that the main strength of the Kajoli school lies in the attention given by the teacher to each and every student. Such intensive attention contributed to the acquiring and enhancement of the competence of their children. They also added that the classes are held regularly, and the teaching is efficient and affectionate. They noted that it took only few days that their children got off fear and become settled in the class. Soon they started loving attending classes, added by the mother. In course of this discussion they gave more reasons why they think that Kajoli model is better, in this respect they liked to compare with the government primary school in which individual level attention to the students is not given, which is the case in Kajoli. Teacher pays attention to each and every student. Besides mothers sometimes come and sit around the class room and can observe themselves the performance of their children. They also said that monthly meeting of the mother is a good practice where they get the opportunity to discuss the problems faced by their children in their study. They underlined in this respect the fee that they pay for the children is very nominal and they consider it as a token fee. They opined that their children learnt Bengali and Arithmetic very well, a few children are found little weak in English. But they praised the teaching of Bengali and English vocabularies, their children have learnt many vocabularies.

C. INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEWS OF THE MOTHERS

1. Pritha Rani, Gopalpur, Naogaon

Pritha Rani has three children. The eldest is in secondary school and two other children who are four years and three years old are the students of Kajoli school. She is very happy with this school for their quality of teaching. The teacher pays attention to individual students. All students are not of same quality so general class is not always enough for all students what needs individual attention, and the Kajoli school provides that.

Prithi also said that without education we are handicapped nowadays so she is providing opportunity to get education to all her children. In the past I used to come to the school teacher to write or read some documents but now my eldest daughter can write and read for me. We hope our children will be able to get job when they will contribute to the family to reduce economic pressure and improve condition.

The teaching models is specially praised by Prithi. The students very quickly learn the words seeing pictures. She cannot teach at home because she cannot read or write so she is exclusively dependent on this school. All students learn their lessons in a body that is also stressed by her. Her two children learnt alphabets and rhymes that impressed her profoundly. She feels that the children became friendly when learn in a group or take part in a chorus. Mothers' meeting also increases bond among them. She thinks it is their responsibility to pay the fee otherwise how the school will function, if there is no such school their children will remain illiterate.

The location of the school in the same village is very important for them. It is become easy for them to bring children here. She feels happy to observe that once her children did not know anything but now learnt so many words and numbers. They are much disciplined now which they were earlier. Our children also love their schools immensely and hardly remain absent in the class.

2. Zohra, Naogaon

Zohra has one daughter who is 4 years old. She is the student of this school. She came to know to know about Kajoli from Hafizur bhai, who is a local journalist and connected with RIB. Then I came to the school and became convinced to get my daughter admitted here. I call the teacher চাচি or aunt, she is a good teacher and I am happy.

This school is necessary for us, for example I studied only up to class three but I want that my child should study much monger than me. Education and respect are synonymous in our society that thinking drove me here. Educational background also determines one's income opportunity, that is also important to send my daughter to this school.

I always accompany my daughter to the class. My daughter can write her name, can recite rhymes, know so many words in English, can count numbers, draw the figure of a flower all above are the gift of this school to my daughter. I have also learnt manythings from this school because I remain seated in the class while my daughter is there. I found the use of card to teach words is very effective, our children consider it as a game and less of a routinized study. The use of stick and laced beads are also equally effective to learn numbers by the children. Actually practical example is necessary for the children than mere description. My daughter comes to class on her own, we nowadays hardly press her for this purpose. The distribution of খিচুড়ি is not mandatory for us, the children who study here comes from the houses closely located, they come here being fed at home, so food does not become necessary for them.

Almost all mothers are involved here. We attend meeting here organized for the mothers. Each of us contributes TK100 for the education of our children. We are happy that some support comes from outside, although I do not know the name of the organization. I think the teaching style of Kajoli style may be attributed to develop interest among the children for study. The fathers hardly come to school, most mothers come here and our relations are also very cordial. Some occasional quarrels among the children do not matter in front of the cordiality among the mothers.

D. GROUP DISCUSSIONS WITH THE CHILDREN

1. Tupamari, Nilphamari

Eight children took part in the discussion. They like games and the Kajoli class that they attend is the opportunity for playing game to learn words. Already a few months they have been attending schools. Classmates are friendly to each other. They like to play games so much that in the class room they also play games.

Already they have learnt many vocabularies both in Bengali and English. When asked to tell the meaning of Fox, Box or Cat all of them could tell the meanings. Then they were asked what we can see in the open sky, one of them said sun, another said star. অনামিকা said she watches birds flying in the sky. Some names of birds also came up, দোয়েল, চডুই, টিয়া। Why birds can fly but human being cannot, the question was posed to them, অনামিকা said human being does not have any wing with which it can fly in the sky.

নয়ন and রাজন said they like playing games and attending class both. They also said they are very happy to learn English, Bengali and Arithmetic because they want to go to high school and beyond. They love their teacher because she works very hard to teach them in the class. In the first few days they were afraid in the class because they did not know anything of English or Arithmetic. At present they are not afraid. They like the method of chorus to learn a word. They have enough time to play games outside so not unhappy with attending class. There is a big playground in the primary school located near the boundary of the village. They play football there. Watching cartoon film on television is also a very favorite thing to them, there is one cartoon called Fatty and Skinny which they like most.

Both English and Bengali rhymes are loved by them. Twinkle Twinkle Little Star is found by them most fascinating. In Bengali a few rhymes are liked most by them which include হাটটি মাটিম টিম, আমাদের ছোট নদী চলে বাঁকে বাঁকে। By this time of interview they became excited and demonstrative. Some of them told all the names of days of a week in English while others the English months of the year. Then the class teacher asked them who want to write on the black board, all raised hands. First some of them wrote the numbers on the black board while others showed how to add one digit with other, but they remain confined to 1 to 10, giving the impression they are more comfortable with that. Some of them wrote a few Bengali words on the blackboard. Finally, they sang the national anthem together.

2. Dashpara, Ramnagar, Nilphamari

This school has been opened only three months ago. Most of the children are 3 to 4 years old. When we reached the school the class was ongoing. On the pocket board the Bengali words are on display. The teacher was introducing picture cards to the students along with the written words. When the total set of the picture was shown the opposite side only with the word names was shown to the students and they were asked the name of the word one by one. When a student was asked the name of the word he came to the front of the class. He picked the card as asked by the teacher and read it out to the other students. If the word is correctly identified the other sitting students clapped otherwise not. It was found most students correctly identified the word they were asked for. This game continued for sometime and we were watching sitting in the courtyard. The class taking place on the porch of the house. Few mothers were also sitting at one corner. The teacher was Nipa Roy and it was her in-laws house.

After the class was over, students welcomed us. They were looking very happy and there was no hesitation to talk to us. They said they like card game very much. Like other games what they usually play this game is also favorite to them. In course of discussion they were asked what will happen if the school cannot function, they said it will hurt them immensely because they are so fond of their school.

Since they have yet completed the part of vocabularies the teacher has not yet introduced the short story with questions from part three. We wanted to understand their cognitive reasoning and requested the teacher to read out a story. The from the part 3/1 the teacher read out the story 1. The story is the following: "Hena is very happy today because she will visit the village fair with her uncle at the afternoon. The fair is taking place in field within her village. Hena got ready without wasting time. She desired to buy many things from the village fair. By what she will go to the fair?" Answers are the following given at the end of the story. A. On foot. B. By aero plane. C. By a truck. D. By a bus. They answered on foot, which was the correct answer. This reasoning may be considered as the evidence of cognitive understanding of the students. This story was not introduced yet to them, they heard it first time from our interview. They understood that in a village like the one they live people move place to

another on foot. Plane, bus or truck are not relevant in this example. Some of them also explained why they opted for the answer “on foot”.

Then they said that they are friendly to each other. They play different games together. They are also not afraid of learning because their teacher loves them and do not scold them. Their teacher also sings songs to them and recites many rhymes what they enjoy a lot. So they love their school.

3. Sarkarpara, Panchagarh

Kajoli children were found jolly and expressive, it is the general trend. Just after the class they stood in a circle and recited Twinkle Twinkle Little Star in a chorus. This exercise was done to bring them into order said by the class teacher. Then they sat down to talk to us. The children were asked whether they feel bad when they are not allowed to pick up a card from the pocket board or write a word on the black board. It was asked because all students of the class are not always called for the same practice by the class teacher. The class teacher said if someone is not allowed for one class, is called in the next class. However, she always keeps in mind which student is weak in which lesson, so she called for practice accordingly. The students said that they feel bad if not allowed to pick up a word or write on the board. The discussion with the children in Sarkarpara was brief because the responses were found almost similar to the ones found in other places. For example, they said they value their friendship in the class or fond of playing games in the field such as football or cock-fight. However, to understand their cognitive capacity they were asked the following question: if they find that a tree is very tall to climb up, what they would do then. They answered that they would use a ladder to climb it up. It showed that quickly they could connect the contexts in a logical manner.

4. Shikarpur, Panchagarh

The children were found free and enthusiastic while taking part in the discussion program. They were asked why they were so eager to come to the board to pick up a card? They said that they feel bad if they are not given opportunity to pick up a card or write on the black board. Although they could not articulate their exact feeling but their mood transpired that they feel ignored if not called to pick up a card or write on the board. There was a feeling of subtle competition among them in this regard. In many occasions they come to school alone from their homes. They said that they love their school very much and will be hurt if ever the school is closed down.

E. INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEWS OF THE CHILDREN

1. Sapahar, Naogaon

Afia Khatun is four years old. She is admitted by her mother in the school. At the beginning she was afraid in the class. All were unknown in the class so she was afraid. Gradually she became close to all other students in the class and now they have become friends to each other. No longer she is afraid of other students in the class. She did not know the classmates earlier, but they have become friendly through playing different games such as গুটি খেলা or লুকোচুরি খেলা . Sumaiya is her best friend in the class. She was also afraid of the class teacher at the beginning. Now she is not afraid, she knows her by now very well, and not afraid at all. Afia is fond of doing arithmetic but she is not good at subtraction. She likes English because she learns words from the pictures. Afia likes to come to class everyday and

also likes her study. Songs and rhymes are most favorite to her. She likes her school because of songs and rhymes being told by her teacher. She likes the following rhymes: Teddy Bear, Rubby. মউমাছি, আভাগাছে তোতাপাখি, are favorite rhymes of her. গুটি খেলা, মৌমাছি খেলা are also her favorites. Afia does not have friends outside her class, thus she likes to come to class to play with the friends. She also said that she has learnt Bengali, English and Mathematics through games. She learnt স্বরবর্ণ, ব্যঞ্জনবর্ণ, ফলের নাম, ফুলের নাম in Bengali. She also learnt Bengali rhymes. Comparatively she likes English less, because she commits mistakes in English more than she commits in Bengali. Learning the names of the words from picture is also a favorite method to her. She has learnt addition, subtraction, and multiplication tables. Afia stressed that pictorial learning is very favorite to her. At the beginning she could not identify words or numbers, she used to commit mistakes, gradually she has learnt it, class teacher helped her a lot in this regard. Afia feels proud because she knows many words, she is praised by her mother, it also increases her pride. She likes reading books and she reads her class books mainly.

2. Gopalpur, Naogaon

Sanjay is four years old. Class started in January. Her mother brought him to the class and got him admitted. On the first day he was very afraid but the class teacher adored him a lot to remove the fear from his mind. In course of time Sanjay became friendly to his class mates and playing games together contributed much to build bond with the friends, as he indicated. In the first day class he saw the pocket-board which was hanging on the wall that created much interest to him. After sometime the class teacher called each student to draw cards from the pocket, which excited them a lot as a form of game. The picture printed on the card was much exciting. Flower, boat, flag and other pictures in the cards impressed him much. He was afraid that mistake in the class work will invite scolding from the teacher, but it did not happen so. Instead of scolding he was given affectionate attention. He said, "at the beginning I could hardly do things correctly in the class, I was weak in the arithmetic particularly, the rules of multiplication or division was difficult to be learnt, many Bengali words could not be memorized by me, the same was with English words, but I learnt gradually in the class. My teacher always extended help whenever I faced problem with any lesson. She taught us how to write different alphabets. It took time to learn different alphabets but at present I have learnt most of them."

He added, "When I first got admission, I hardly knew anyone except Masum. Me and Masum are so close that we do many things together. We follow each other in many cases. Both of us like ফুচকা, if one cannot buy it, the other will buy it for both. I have other friends also like Ontu or Emon. They also offer snacks to me. Most of friends are from my class, we are like each other's brother. I love my school because I have got education from here. Our class teacher is so affectionate that we can learn here without any fear. Moreover, this is the place where I can play with my friends. Our teaching method is excellent where we learn playing a game. It is different from other schools. I have learnt rhymes from my class and my mother is so happy seeing my progress.

Our learning method is different and fascinating. We learn multiplication tables by clapping our hands. The name of flowers, fruits or animals we have learnt from pictures. Our teacher first shows us pictures and then tell us what is shown in pictures. When a student is asked to pick up a picture then he can learn its name. We use claps and rhymes to learn vocabularies. By picking up cards and placing them in correct order we learn vocabularies. Pronouncing lessons in chorus is also used in our class. If we commit mistake our class teacher corrects us. Each lesson is practiced 10 to 15 days when it is not easy, and it

allows us to learn it properly. Sometimes the students also take lead in chorus, for example, Sumaiya is sometimes given responsibility to conduct chorus in learning vocabularies. We are proud of our school because we get our education from here. All of us are friendly to each other, is another source of pride. When I first came to school I did not know anything of Bengali, English or Arithmetic, which I have learnt now. I have learnt the rhymes like Teddy Bear, the names of the days or the rhyme like ঐ দেখা যায় তলগাছ। These are the gains that I have derived from my school.”

F. GROUP DISCUSSION WITH THE OLD KAJOLI STUDENTS

1. Professorpara, Nilphamari

They were ten in numbers. They came here to meet their teacher, and our research team. At the beginning they told their names. Some of them are studying at government primary school, while others in private primary schools. In rural areas of Nilphamari, a new trend has started, people have less faith on government primary schools and more interested to send their privately run primary schools. Their parents are not happy with the quality of teaching of the government primary schools. In the privately run primary schools the teachers provide intense attention to the students, if any student's performance is found not good, teacher pays personal attention for improvement, such type of one-to-one attention is absent in government run primary schools. One of the observations found common in course of our discussion of the issue with different categories of students is the following, the teacher of the government run primary school is not serious. On the contrary privately run primary school or kindergarten provide better quality teaching. There is a relationship of accountability between the parents and the teachers of the privately run primary schools. The parents enquire about the performance and progress of their children from the teacher. Classes are also regular.

When we talked with the Kajoli students we found they were not as vibrant as they as we found with incumbent Kajoli students. The incumbent Kajoli students were mostly found expressive and jolly. In this case it was absent. We came to know the method of teaching of Kajoli is intensive which is not same even in the privately run primary schools let alone government run primary schools. However, they said they love Kajoli schools and miss their teacher. They often go to the house of the teacher and report their progress in the school, even sometimes seek academic help from her.

G. CLASS OBSERVATIONS

1. Sarkarpara, Panchagarh

The batch of students which has been subject to this observation has already spent eight months in the class, it was in Sarkarpara of Panchagarh district. At the beginning the Bengali class was observed.

Rizwan picked the picture of বৈঠা or Oar. Then he picked single alphabets to arrange them into a word. The competition among the students to come to the pocket board and pick up a word was found quite intense among the students. When Rizwan completed his turn, five students were found to have raised hands to come to the pocket board. Among them Tasnim was called to pick up the picture of a নৌকা or a boat. After picking up the picture he picked up individual letters that constitute the word boat, then arranged the letters accordingly. Alfaz was called next who picked up the picture of a ডিম or egg. He also picked up the individual alphabets and placed them in order. In this way Nobo came and picked up

বটি or blade, Adib picked up মোম or wax, Maria picked up বউ or bride, Dola picked up চোখ or eye, Heem picked up বৈটা or oar Maruf picked up নৌকা or boat. All of them also picked up individual letters for each word, and arranged them properly to obtain the corresponding words.

Afterwards the English session started. The third set was selected for revision which included the pictorial words Zebra, Bird, Queen, Boy, Fly, Lamp, Kite and others. Once the teacher placed the words in the pocket board many students raised their hands to pick up a word. Adib was called first to pick up the word Kite, Rezwan to pick up Lamp, Tasmia to pick up Queen, Alfaz to pick up Bird and Maria to pick up the word Boy. All of them correctly picked up the word cards and individual alphabets subsequently. They all properly placed the letters to obtain the correspond words.

The third session was on Arithmetic. At the beginning, the thick hard string with colored beads was tied on two sides where the pocket board was placed. It was tied in a manner that all the students in the class can see it from their place of sitting. Many students raised their hands and expressed their willingness to count number in the laced beads. It showed their enthusiasm in the class participation. Then the teacher called Maria to count from 1 to 5, and she did it correctly. Himu was called to add 5 and 5 and also he also correctly added. Then Tayiba counted from 11 to 15, Riya from 21 to 25 while Tasnim 1 to 5. With these activities this session came to an end.

2. Shikarpur, Panchagarh

It was 9.30 AM in the morning, the English class was in full swing. The set of cards which included Pen, Cow, Hen, Key or Jog were taught by the teacher to the students. This batch was being taught for about ten months by then. So, the observed class also a revision class. There were eighteen students in the class, most of them were four to five years old, a very few were three years old. It is likely that the children of three years may repeat one more year before they take admission into primary school. Two sets of cards were displayed in the pocket board in two consecutive rows. The upper row included the cards with pictures and corresponding words. The lower row included individual letters. The teacher read out the words in the picture one by one. After the completion of this exercise the student Imran was called to pick up the word Cow. After picking up the word, Imran turned to the fellow classmates and asked, "Friends, have I picked up the right word?" Because he picked up the correct word, his fellow class mates clapped approvingly. Next Bipasha was called to pick up the word Hen and write down on the board. She did both correctly. Then Moon came and was asked to write Hen, she also correctly wrote it. Anha wrote Hen and Rahi wrote Jog.

After the completion of the picture side, it was turned over to pick and read the right word by the students. From the pictureless sets Piarani was called to pick up the word Pot what she did correctly. Then she was asked to pick up and arrange the individual letters for the same word. She correctly did it. Sohan was asked to do the same for the word Cow which he did correctly. Rahi was asked to pick up the pictureless word Pen along with individual letters, she performed all the task correctly. Ferdousi picked up Pot, Ankhi picked up Hen, Maria picked up Cow correctly along with individual letters to arrange them to get the same word. All of them completed the assignments correctly. Here came the end of the English session.

Bengali revision session with fifth set of the thirteen sets was started. At the beginning Rahi came and read out all the words of the set. Bipasha was called to pick up the picture of a হাঁস or a Duck, Imran for টিয়া or a Parrot, Sathi for Horse, Mussalin for Boat. All above students completed the task successfully

and this part of the session came to an end. In the next part, Ferdousi was asked to pick the letter নৌ কা which she did correctly and set the words to get the full word. The next turn was for Rahi for the word বেল, and he did it correctly. Misti Rani was asked to pick up ম and ল, she also did it correctly. Mostakin was asked to do the same for the word ভেড়া and completed correctly. Labonyo was asked to pick up letters that constitute টিয়া and Sohan for ঘোড়া. Both of them completed the tasks correctly.

Then the students were asked to recite poems/rhymes from their book. In this exercise Aditya, Moon, Ferdousi, Musa, Bipasha Rani, Imon, Mustafiz and Morium took part. They recited the following: আম পাতা, বাক বাকুম পায়রা, আয় ছেলেরা আয় মেয়েরা, আনারস খাও and others.

The third session on Arithmetic then started. The laced yellow and red beads on a strong synthetic string was tied on two sides. It was tied in a way that all students could see it properly. At first Labanya was called to count from 1 to 20, which she performed successfully, in this way Rahi counted 21 to 30, Anha from 31 to 40 and Morsalim from 41 to 50. Then the teacher carried out exercises on addition, subtraction, and division. She asked the result for $4 + 3$; $5 + 1$; and $5 + 2$, in a chorus the students answered correctly. Then she asked if 2 bananas are taken out of 4 bananas what will be the result, the answer was right. Individual students were called one by one to recite the multiplication tables of 2, 3, and 4, they completed correctly. A number of students which included Moon, Rahi, Ankhi, Musa, Ferdousi, Maria and Bipasha wrote 14, 17, 42, 21, 3, 12, and 1 respectively.

Then the teacher read out two stories from the Bengali manual, the first one was on Hena. The second one was on a Jackal and a Crane. After the completion of the reading the teacher asked them questions with multiple choice. It may be noted that these answers are not taken from the stories, students are needed to find out the correct answers thinking logically. Above evidence may be said to have shown the cognitive capacity of the students.

3. Bishmuri, Nilphamari

When we arrived there, we found that the class was taking place. The teacher was Nilufar who was showing English cards with pictures and corresponding words. She was loudly reading each word and displaying accompanying picture. In this way she was presenting a row of cards. The same procedure was also followed here, at first the teacher read out, it was reciprocated by the children in a chorus, it helped them also to memorize the word. After the presentation of the picture set, the cards were turned over to learn the same words without pictures. Each word was pronounced by the teacher and reciprocated by the students in a chorus. Afterwards the teacher called individual students to come and pick up a word from the pocket board. After the picking the student read out the word what was picked up, if it was correctly identified he or she received approval clap from the fellow classmates, otherwise not. At this point we saw great enthusiasm among the students to come and pick up a word. It was a big competition among the students to come first, pick up a card, correctly read it out and receive the clapping of approval. The students themselves were also vigilant if anyone take recourse to any cheating like secretly looking into the picture and identifying the word from there.

Afterwards the students were called one by one to write words on the blackboard, both English and Bengali. The teacher chose the words from the set of words. In this exercise also there was noticeable competition among the students to come to the blackboard before others to write down a word. All above features displayed the great enthusiastic participation of the students in the class.

Then I took permission from the teacher to read out a story to the students from the Bengali manual and I was given kind permission by the teacher. The I chose a story of a jackal and a crane. "A jackal and a crane will visit the house of tiger uncle. The house of the tiger is at the end of the jungle. The jackal and the crane will have to walk down the entire distance. Both completed their breakfast. What will be eaten by the crane in breakfast? A. Cabbage; B. Biscuit; C. Fish" I asked the students to answer the question and they correctly answered it. From this example we may make some observations on the cognition ability of the students. The story did not include any hint about the possible answer, but they cognized themselves to answer the question.

4. Daspara, Nilphamari

When we arrived the school, the class was taking place and Usha Rani was teaching Bengali. In the card board a set of Bengali words with pictures and names of the words. The respective set included the words like আম, ঘর, বক, মগ, জগ and others. The teaching was reading out the cards. When she finished pronouncing the word, the children reciprocated in a chorus. She called Mrittika to pick up বক or crane. She picked it up and then read it out correctly. Then came Aniruddah who was asked to pick up ইট or brick. He also picked up successfully and showed the picture to the fellow classmates. They clapped together indicating it was right. Next student who was called was Labonno who was said to pick up ঘর or house. It was done correctly with the clapping of the fellow students.

When the practice of identifying and reading out the words was over the students were asked to write down words on the board which they learnt a little while ago. Many students raised hands to come to board and write down a word. In this respect first came Jannati who was told to pick up মগ and write on the black board. She completed it correctly. For this exercise the following students were called included Partha, Hasi, Pipasha, Govinda and Kayum. They picked up and wrote the following words: গুল, বই, বক, আম, and মই।

After the completion of the Bengali language practice, Arithmetic class practice started. To conduct the arithmetic class, the colored laced beads on a strong nylon string was tied on two sides which could be seen by all the students of the class and also within their reach to count the beads. First the teacher counted one by one and the students reciprocated her. Then the teacher started calling out students and count number on the laced beads. Many students raised hands and teacher called Nijhum, Srabon, Srishti, Eva and Partha. They rightly counted number on the laced beads.

H. INTERVIEWS OF THE HEADTEACHERS

1. Nilphamari

Jotish Roy was the headmaster of Shopnoshiri Kindargaten. A few months ago he left that school and establish another school named...There were 275 students in that academy and many of them were from Kajoli model school . So he was in a position to make reliable comment on the quality of Kajoli students. Shopnoshiri is a private school where the students receive primary level education. Jotish observed that private primary school is becoming popular in rural areas because of intense attention given to the students which is not the case in other streams. Classes are held regularly and the standard

of class teaching is kept high. Above features inspire the parents to choose private primary school in rural areas.

He found the Kajoli students are very good in different subjects which they are taught. Their stock of vocabulary was found good compared to the students who came from different background. He added, in Kajoli school personal care is given to each student. This is one of the major reasons why they perform well when they come to primary school. They come here with an orientation of devotion and sincerity, as a result they remain serious when they come here. Their results are also good and sometimes better than those who do not have such background. They are found quite attentive in the class. In his school he found that the Kajoli students are regular and always inclined to perform well in the examination.

2. Panchagarh

The name of the primary school is Shikarpur Government Primary School. The name of the head teacher is Nasima Begum. Our discussion took place in the room of the headteacher. However, at the time of the interview a few other teachers were also present who supplemented the opinions given by the headteacher. The names of the Assistant Teachers who were present are the following: Nasima Akhter, Gita Rani, Salma Begum, Ashura Begum and Babul Chowdhury. There are more than ten students who are presently studying in this school and they are from the Kajoli Model School. The teachers who were present there apart from the headteacher taught these students and recollected their experiences. All of them praised the performances of the Kajoli students in the class. Some of them observed their experiences in class one and the performances of the Kajoli students. Kajoli students learnt Bengali, English and Arithmetic. In the primary school there are subjects like environment, society or religion. The performances of the Kajoli school students in class one was not good only in the three subjects they learnt in their school but also in other subjects. The headteacher gave her explanation why the performances of the Kajoli school students is good, and in this respect they noted the Kajoli method of teachers. She said the use of the equipment like picture card has got special importance with regard to ensuring good teaching. The Kajoli students learnt well when they were taught with picture cards and others aids.

I. INTERVIEWS OF THE KAJOLI MODEL DESIGNER AND RIB OFFICIALS

1. Designer of the Kajoli Model, Dr. Shamsul Bari

As a part of people's research program Dr. Bari and his team met rural people to gather their views on education. They found that there are many families in rural area who are socially and economically disadvantages considered education as expensive, and something suitable for the rich people. The research team wanted to prove such belief wrong and develop a model that will allow access of such socially and economically disadvantaged rural people to their children's education. The team also took into consideration the issue of economic resources that will be required to operate the program in a sustainable manner. Since the external support primarily from the donor agencies is not a perpetual one and also in a process of shrinking now the model needed to be a low cost one. Therefore, there was a need to motivate the community that they will come forward to extend such resources and allow their children to see the light of education. The model also surmised to integrate the virtue of philanthropy here and engage those who are capable to take part in such philanthropic acts. The model wanted to identify champions or catalysts who are inclined to spend their energy and time for motivate and engage the community in such initiative. The research at the beginning identified a group of missing

communities miles apart from engaging their children in education. However, in course of time people from other classes came forward to send their children to Kajoli school. Owing to fact that it is low cost, it was planned that the teacher will be those women who possess elementary education and with the help of the training they will acquire skill to teach the pre-primary children in a manner comparable with games. The Model first came into existence as an educational program in the village of Kajoli in Magura to which Dr.Bari belongs, its name became Kajoli model school. The research team also identified a number of Champions or Catalysts in rural Bangladesh. The model also designed curricula for the students and training procedures for the teacher. Notice by RIB was published in the national dailies inviting applications for the establishment for such school. Many applications were received and the applicants thought that establishing such school they will be connected with a perpetual source of external economic support. When they came to know that participation in this program will need substantial involvement of the community at different levels including resource mobilization, many applicants withdrew their efforts. However, the strength of the model was demonstrated when it was found that many Kajoli Model Schools came into existence and continued their function. There have been different forms of community participation, mothers never lost their interest to keep the school functioning, in the cases where space for the class room was not found, the teacher herself provided some little space for the classroom. Young rural women with elementary education background came forward to work as teacher, to them it was very fruitful utilization of time and energy. To them it was also a mark of social respect. In many village father-in-law's came forward with the request that their daughter-in-law are given the opportunity to work as teacher in Kajoli Model School. The program started in 2005. At the initial stage RIB provided to some applicants some financial resources to build a structure as a class room. Interestingly, the schools with such RIB's support became non-functional in course of time while those functioned without support is still functioning. At present about 100 schools are there, mostly in Niphamari and Panchagarh, a few in Naogaon. Each school has got 15 to 30 students, with variation. The resilience of the Kajoli Model School has been proved in a number of ways. One of the important examples in this respect is its sustenance despite being limited support from outside. There are many national big NGOs who shut their schools once their donors no longer funded their schools. Above schools could not keep on functioning without external support, it is different for the Kajoli School. During COVID 19 school program got halted but it has been resumed again. At present RIB provides small fund for a national coordinator, print teaching manuals and provide training for the teachers. So the need for a Kajoli Foundation is immense to have a touchstone for coordination and training.

2. National Coordinator, Ms. Ruhi Naz

We started discussion with the present state of the program. COVID 19 struck a blow to the program because many schools were shut down. Therefore, it was urgent to reopen the school when the COVID 19 crisis came to a moderate condition with the effect of vaccination and other measures. With the help of the current project supported by Porticus it was possible to reopen more than 70 schools. In addition, 10 new schools were also opened. At present there is a need for increasing manpower to operate the program with optimum level efficiency. There is a need for manpower who will be completely dedicated to the Kajoli program only. At present the national coordinator as well as the field officials carry out multiple responsibilities apart from giving time to Kajoli program. It should be exclusive to sustain the present level of operation and further improvement. The issue of commitment of the teacher and the officials received special importance while focusing on the aspect of efficient functioning of the program.

The need for a Foundation is crucial at present. RIB provides material support and training to this program. Sometimes the materials like picture cards become worn out requiring quick replacement, and the Foundation may be useful in this regard. Teachers training particularly the refreshers course can also be made more frequent if the Foundation comes into existence. Foundation will be able to support the provisioning of additional and exclusively dedicated manpower for the Kajoli program. It has been strongly endorsed in the discussion that present community initiative cannot be altered with the establishment of the Kajoli Foundation.

3. Ms. Sharmin Akhter, Consultant for the Development of Learning Materials and Trainer for the Kajoli Teachers

Shamima has been working on curricula and training of the Kajoli teachers for quite a long. She elaborated on the procedures how curricula are revised time to time. The basic feature of the teaching method is not changed in course of routine review. It means the pictorial method of teaching is maintained. By incorporating new rhyme or poem the task of updating is carried out. In English curriculum new topics were added, particularly the grammar, comprising active verb and tense. The inclusion of grammar topic was made to give guidance to the teacher. In course of discussion Shamima also agreed that English teaching should be based on learning stories and rhymes written in English language to enrich the understanding of the students. She also said that the frequency of refreshers training of the teacher will also contribute to the enhancement of quality of the teacher. In course of refreshers training, information is gathered from the teachers about the problems they faced in the class. These problems are addressed either in the same training or in the next training. Such problems are related to the contextual perspective of each school where it is located. However, the generic mode is found applicable to the Kajoli students irrespective of the geographical locations of the school.

4. Field officials (Mr. Matiur Rahman and Mr. Munna Shah)

Kajoli model started in 2003. RIB was funding organization. Some NGOs took money from RIB and operated in their own way. North Bengal became the main area of functioning. In 2005 we wanted to start 30 schools. RIB had Monga mitigation program. Education became important element. 23 centers were opened in Nilphamari. It was not through the NGO. In 2007 there were 100 schools. Through kins, friends, circular or workshops the Kajoli sympathizers were searched. Five Champions were found: 2 in Nilphamari, 2 in Natore, 1 in Panchagarh.

Above description relates to the activities that took place between 2007 to 2009. The NGO named Janani opened 49 centers taking training from us. NGO model did not work very they closed all centers.

Challenges: Teacher may leave the job. If teacher shifts one village to another also wants to shift the school. Sometimes other NGO like BRAC wants to allure the teacher, BRAC pays salary to the teacher.

Kajoli teachers are important pillars of this program. However the volunteers like Girish in Nilpahamri or Hafiz in Naogaon also extended support to open new school or solve problems if faced by the school. Commitment is more important than salary to remain functional in this this program.

For the teacher there are 3 days training at the beginning, then yearly refresher program for 1 or 2 days. So far about 54,000 have graduated from Kajoli program. There is a plan to form alumni body. Many Kajoli graduates are now the students of college. There is student fair organized in the village.

In 1915 a mother's organization was formed. Small grant was given as seed money with what they bought cattle, raised and sold out later on. However, this mother's organization became non-functional after some years.

Kajoli school has created educational awareness in the villages. Many young women have been benefitted by this program.

J. SHORT REVIEW OF THE MANUALS

Bengali

The Bengali manual consists of seven parts. Some of the seven parts are further divided into sections. In the following the content of each part is described to present an idea how and what is taught to the Kajoli students to infuse Bengali language competence among them.

Part 1

This part is divided into three sections. The third section gives general instructions to the teachers how would they teach Bengali and use the manuals for this purpose. There are 130 pictorial cards and corresponding vocabularies. These 130 vocabularies are divided into 13 sets. Five steps are formulated how each set will be taught to the students. In each class 45 minutes are allotted for Bengali exercise. With regard to introducing pictorial vocabulary cards 20 to 25 minutes will be spent for teaching and enabling them writing, 10 minutes for rhymes and optionally some minutes may be spent to for dance and songs.

Part 2

The sub-section 2/1 presents the names of 130 pictures. Then it describes the corresponding words and the alphabets abovementioned words are consisted of. In this manner 13 sets arranged in the matrix. Sub-section 2/2 describes how to use word/alphabet cards. At this point five steps are introduced. Step 1 describes that students will picture cards from the pocket hangings. In step 2 students will pick cards without pictures. In step 3 the students will arrange single alphabet card to a construct a word as given in

the abovementioned set. In step 4 they will learn the alphabets and words. In step 5 out of free choice words will be constructed.

Part 3

In this it is intended that the students will learn words from the stories. A number of small stories are given here followed by questions, in course of answering such question the students will pick an answer from the given set. This exercise also demands students cognitive understanding. From the following example this point may be clarified.

Story given in Bengali and translated here: Mina and Rita are two very close friends. One day Mita invited Rita to visit her house. Mina went to Rita's house. Rita took Mina to a room. What is offered by Rita to Mina to sit on? a. Rice cleaning kula b. Chair c. Ball. From the above three answers the students will choose an answer. It shows the students will have understand the difference of three answers in terms of their suitability to sit on. It reflects students' cognizing ability. By picking the correct answer the student also learns a word.

In the sub-section 3/2 students are taught words that are classifying, such as vegetables, fruits, animals, food, furniture and others. Students are taught the names of different vegetables for example.

Part 4

Brief descriptive writings are presented by which a student learns how to elaborate on certain theme involving himself or herself. It may be subject's sibling or a village in which she lives. By learning these stories, the students are familiarized with the ways one takes recourse in terms of communicative features descriptive of a particular theme.

Part 5

The students are taught here Bengali 7 days, 12 months, parts of the human body and colors.

Part 6

This part is divided into a number of sub-sections. 6/1 includes 13 Bengali rhymes. 6/2 includes prominent Bengali poems written by Rabindranath Thakur, Kazi Nazrul Islam, Jasimuddin and Nabakrishna Bhattacharja.

Part 7

This part is also divided into a number of sub-sections. 7/1 includes the national anthem of Bangladesh, the song of Ekushey February, patriotic songs and others. 7/2 includes a set of Bengali stories which are circulated across the generations.

English

The English manual consists of three parts and seven chapters. Kajoli follows pictorial presentation of alphabets and learning pronunciation and meaning from the pictures. Everyday the teacher will spend

one hour for the teaching of English. In the first 15 to 20 minutes the game of pictorial cards. Next 25 to 30 minutes the drill of main rules of grammar along with conducting conversation in English, next 5 to 10 teaching English rhymes and the last 5 to 10 minutes the name of the days, the name of the months, the name of the colors and others. English was introduced in 2010, while the Kajoli school was started in 2005.

PART 1

Chapter 1

It has subchapter 1.1. It includes vocabulary cards, their Bengali pronunciation and meaning. In 1.2 there is finding out card with pictures, then finding out card without pictures, arranging individual alphabets to construct a word and others.

Chapter 2

In 2.1.1 students learn the use of verbs such as am, are or is. Through 8 drills it is taught. 2.1.2 includes the use of have or has. Here 4 drills are allocated. 2.1.3 includes the drills how to use My, Your or His. There are 9 drills here. In 2.1.4 action verb such as I play, we play etc. There 18 drills for this purpose. 2.1.5 includes the construction and use of present tense in sentence. 12 drills are allocated here.

Chapter 3

How to ask a question is taught here. The use of what, when and others are included here.

PART 2

Past tense is taught here, such as the use of was or were. With the help of 11 drills, it is taught. It refers to the sub chapter 2.2.1. In 2.2.2 the use of Have or Has is taught in three drills. In 2.2.3 further varying use of was and were is demonstrated with nine drills. In 2.2.4 action verb is taught with the allocation of 5 drills. In 2.2.5 past continuous tense it taught with the help of 4 drills. In 2.3.1 future tense it taught in 6 drills. Sub sections 2.3.2, 2.3.3, 2.3.4 and 2.3.5 illustrates further use of future tense with more drills.

PART 3

Chapter 4

In this chapter the students are taught English rhymes. The following rhymes are there: Twinkle Twinkle little Star, Two Little Black Birds, Teddy Bear, Baa Baa Black Sheep, Pussy Cat, Colours, What Can I Do, I Can See and Buckle My Shoe. There is also a rhyme for numbers.

Chapter 5

In this chapter there are five sub-chapters. In 5.1 the students are taught seven days of the week, in 5.2 the twelve months of the year are taught, 5.3 teaches different colors, 5.4 teaches different parts of the body while 5.5 teaches how to count numbers from 1 to 100.

Chapter 6

How to conduct conversation in English is taught here. How to greet one, how to introduce oneself, introducing family members or how to pose a question are taught here. There are 24 modes of conversations here.

Chapter 7

Speaking exercise is conducted here with the help of 8 exercises.

ARITHMETIC

The arithmetic manual is divided into 6 chapters. The procedure of teaching arithmetic is engaging the students into a game and by taking part in a game learning the numbers, the addition of numbers, the subtraction of number and the multiplication of numbers. Colored beads arranged in a nylon lace, individual cards and a clip are the main instruments/equipment that the teacher uses to teach arithmetic. The Bengali name of the manual is গণিতমালা। Literally a long lace tied on two sides makes it a garland.

Chapters 1,2,3 4

Above four chapters are introductory in nature explaining different aspects of this manual which include the objective of this manual, description of equipment or instruments, application and outcomes of the application of the manual.

Chapter 5

It describes how the colored beads lace has to be hanged in a way counting the numbers can be easily done by the teacher and fully visible to the students how the teacher is counting and the outcome.

Chapter 6

The chapter is divided into a number of sections. Each section describes different aspects that finally impart the stipulated rules to the students.

Section 6.1.1 describes how the numbers 1 to 10 will be taught to the students using the laced colored beads. Section 6.1.2 describes the use of the clips and symbolizes it as a hopping bird changing its position from one place to another and counting the number in each position. Section 6.2 is about the application of numbered cards is introduced to the teachers. Section 2.1.1 exercise is confined to the number 1 to 10. Section 2.1.2 teaches reverse counting to the students, such as 10, 9, 8...Section 6.2.3 explains how next sets of number up to 100 will be introduced step by step. Section 6.3 shows how the teacher will teach addition between 1 to 10. Section 6.4 explains the steps to teach subtraction. Section 6.5 introduces the procedure of multiplication. There are sections 6.6, 6.7 and 6.8 that further consolidates arithmetic learning of the students being exposed to the notion of unit, simple division and the game of identifying a number by the teacher enabling students counting from 1 to 100.

ANNEX: QUANTITATIVE DATA

Description	Frequency	%
Not literate	114	27.3
Attended school	239	57.3
Attended college	63	15.1
Other	1	.2
Total	417	100

Occupations	Frequency	%
Agriculture labor	170	40.8
Sharecropper	27	6.5
Cultivating own land	56	13.4
Service	51	12.2
Business	55	13.2
Other	58	13.9
Total	417	100.0

Result	Frequency	%
Correctly pick a word and write on a board	126	97.7
Could not do the above	3	2.3
Total	129	100

Result	Frequency	%
Correctly pick a word and write on a board	123	95.3
Could not do the above	6	4.7
Total	129	100

Table 5: Arithmetic Competence Test Result		
Result	Frequency	%
Correctly count a number and add numbers	128	99.2
Could not do the above	1	.8
Total	129	100

Table 6: Three Subjects Competence Test Result		
Result	Frequency	%
Correctly answered questions on 3 subjects	119	92.2
Correctly answered questions on 2 subjects	10	7.8
Correctly answered question on 1 subject	-	-
Could not answer question in any subject	-	-
Total	129	100

Table 7: Description of Nutritional Condition Based on Body Mass Index (BMI)		
Description (corresponding BMI)	Frequency	%
Obese (≥ 30.0)	-	-
Overweight (25.0 – 29.9)	-	-
Normal (18.5 – 24.9)	-	-
Underweight (< 18.5)	129	100
Total	129	100

Table 8: Maximum, Minimum and Mean BMI with Standard Deviation	
Maximum BMI	16.05
Minimum BMI	11.79
Mean BMI	13.60
Standard Deviation	.67114

