

BILINGUALISM: A POTENTIAL APPROACH FOR ENHANCING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND BOOSTING STUDENTS' COGNITIVE ABILITIES

Dr Chintan Vaghela^{1*}

^{1*} Assistant Professor, Pandit Deendayal Energy University

***Corresponding Author:** Dr Chintan Vaghela

*Assistant Professor, Pandit Deendayal Energy University

Abstract

Bilingualism is widely acknowledged as a means to promote sustainable development and improve students' cognitive abilities, presenting substantial advantages in learning environments as a tool for sustainable development. This abstract also examines the many advantages of this approach to pursuing sustainable development. This research also seeks to establish the relationship between language mastery and increased intelligence among college students in analyzing the boon associated with bilingualism. Therefore, this research aims to determine whether bilingualism contributes to achieving sustainable development goals involving cross-cultural learning to foster the culture of global citizenship. This scholarly paper provides an extensive review of the relevant literature and research studies indicating the impact of bilingualism on cognition, learning, and culture. More significantly, the text argues for bilingualism to be implemented in policies and practices to create an improved society better equipped to provide social and educational support for the development of the interrelated global population.

Keywords: Bilingualism, Sustainable Development, Monolingualism

Introduction

Some of the crucial concerns of educators, researchers, and policymakers for several years have been related to the mastery of two languages, known as bilingualism. There is substantial recent research that supports the evidence that being bilingual pays and contributes to the implementation of sustainable improvement in particular and the talent development of the person in general. This paper looks at the possibility of bilingualism in creating sustainability, explicitly emphasizing the students' achievements. The world's social relations are closer due to globalization and the enhancement of technologies, thereby easing the barriers to cultural relativism. It has also become crucial in today's society to learn as many languages as possible in order to be applicable internationally. Firstly, bilingualism makes people better communicators, which leads to an easy flow of intercultural interactions, secondly; people with this feature are considered good-looking as they gain the ability to attract people from different cultures; last but not least, bilingualism is a determinant factor of people to embrace change through cooperation with different people from all over the world thus leading to better action for the betterment of this world.

Scientific research has unequivocally demonstrated that bilingualism can have a profoundly advantageous impact on cognitive abilities. Bilingual individuals generally exhibit enhanced problem-solving and multitasking capabilities and solid attention-management skills. These advantages can directly impact the level of satisfaction in education and the potential for career success. The modern world has widespread interconnectedness, diverse cultural expressions, and significant economic interdependence. Language fluency has become a precious asset in today's globalized world. It allows individuals to overcome language barriers and better understand various cultures and viewpoints. Research indicates that bilingual individuals exhibit enhanced cognitive flexibility, problem-solving

abilities, and skills in government administration. These qualities lead to personal advantages and contribute to broader societal advancement. Bilingualism provides a highly effective solution to the environmental challenges, social injustice, and economic disparities that our planet is currently facing. Bilingual individuals can promote enhanced comprehension and the development of enduring resolutions by establishing linguistic connections that link global sustainability discussions.

Implementing bilingualism into academic frameworks offers numerous advantages to the learning environment. Multiple research studies emphasize the cognitive advantages it provides students, including enhanced problem-solving abilities, increased creativity, and more extraordinary multitasking abilities. Bilingualism enhances instructional performance and equips individuals with essential skills for navigating our dynamic, interconnected world.

Globalization And The Importance Of Bilingualism

Globalization has been defined by its interconnectedness, encompassing geographical, linguistic, and cultural boundaries within a constantly evolving financial system and way of life. Bilingualism has become increasingly important in today's globalized world as it offers communication services, cultural options, and opportunities for sociolinguistic progress. This discussion explores its influence and emphasizes its significance in expressing cross-cultural information within the constantly changing context of globalization. The intent is to lessen the disparities resulting from globalization by fostering mutual understanding through effective interaction and translation services.

According to Grosjean (2010), bilingual individuals possess a cognitive edge with enhanced problem-solving abilities and cognitive flexibility. Multilingual people are valued in the economic landscape and heavily influenced by Globalization. Global companies seek bilingual professionals who navigate multicultural markets and facilitate international collaborations. The benefits of Bilingualism are directly related to improved career and employment opportunities. Bilingualism is also critical in maintaining cultural heritage in the face of globalization and its homogenizing effects. Multilingual people contribute to the preservation of linguistic diversity and safeguard endangered languages and cultures (Crystal 2012). Bilingualism in educational settings has been shown to impact cognitive development positively. Bialystok's (2009) studies suggest bilingual children have better metalinguistic awareness and cognitive control. These are attributes vital in navigating a globalized environment. As our global community becomes ever more interdependent, Bilingualism shines as an invaluable asset. As the global village becomes smaller than ever, Bilingualism transcends mere communication to become a vital tool for understanding an increasingly interdependent globalized landscape. Globalization's unstoppable rise requires workers with the linguistic agility to navigate between cultures (Cenoz & Genesee, 2014). Bilingual individuals who negotiate semantic bridges are precious within this interdependent terrain: their fluency allows access to diverse markets, fosters cross-cultural collaboration, and unlocks knowledge previously locked away behind language barriers (Edwards, 2012).

Bilingualism offers more than economic dividends: studies by Bialystok (2009) and Hakuta (1986) also reveal cognitive advantages. Bilingualism enhances executive function - the brain's orchestra conductor responsible for critical thinking, problem-solving, and attention control - leading to enhanced executive function performance due to Bilingualism; bilingual students demonstrate higher academic achievements while showing improved memory skills (Green & Paez 2014). However, Bilingualism's reach goes further into the fabric of sustainable development itself. By cultivating cultural understanding and empathy between cultures, Bilingualism helps bridge the divides and fosters a sense of global citizenship (Demetrious 2016). Bilingual individuals serve as cultural ambassadors, sharing

their knowledge for mutual gain toward creating a more sustainable future for all. Bilingualism provides monolingual speakers access to a vast amount of previously unavailable information. Bilingual individuals acquire the ability to utilize media, literature, and research, which are crucial resources for comprehending global matters. A proficient Portuguese scientist could directly retrieve deforestation data in the Amazon from Brazilian sources, thereby enhancing discussions on global environmental conservation.

Nevertheless, the prevalence of bilingualism in society is still unequal despite its remarkable advantages. Educational systems typically prioritize monolingualism over bilingualism, and the distribution of high-quality bilingual education programs is inconsistent across various communities (Garcia 2009). Investing in society's dynamic structure is essential to fully realizing its vast potential. This can be achieved by implementing educational policies emphasizing Bilingualism and equitably utilizing top-notch bilingual programs. Additionally, fostering cultural exchange and embracing linguistic diversity will contribute to the enhancement of global society.

Insights into the Link Between Bilingualism and Sustainable Development

The duality of language, referred to as bilingualism, has been focused on in many studies and policies among educators, researchers, and policymakers for quite some time. Studies conducted in the contemporary world offer proof that proves the effectiveness and sustainability of the value of bilingualism in contributing to the improvement process of an individual, as well as the promotion of the development of cognitive talent. This paper aims to establish the benefits of bilingualism as a key to sustainable development and as an influence on the students' performance. Due to globalization and technological advancement, there has been an increase in the interconnection of countries, hence the existence of common cultural barriers. Knowing more than one language is perhaps considered one of the most valuable assets nowadays, and globalization plays an essential role. Interpretation of translation and bilingualism, intercultural interaction, beauty, and continuous improvement through international relations and unity are some of the benefits of bilingualism.

Sustainable Development Through Bilingualism Approach

The economic strengths of bilingualism are the possibilities to improve financial sustainability, develop an international market, and innovate new ways of doing business. Baker (2011) did a study showing that half of the customers may be bilingual, so bilingual individuals may be advantaged in the task market since they will be able to talk and interact with the diverse customers much better and be able to work and succeed in the worldwide enterprise environment much better. Bilingualism is to reason rather seriously and solve complex issues at one stretch, which is advantageous for business growth and entrepreneurialism (Grosjean 2010). Education with a bilingual option is a way of preserving social stability and increasing cultural awareness – components essential to maintaining social harmony. Multilingualism promotes cultural heritage through recognizing different languages and proper communication between people of different cultures, thus reducing societal tension and promoting togetherness and harmony (UNESCO 2003). Education is one of the significant areas where bilingual programs are embraced, and research has revealed the importance of the practice. Incorporation of tolerance and empathy in the interaction of the different cultures will assist in the creation of an equal and polite society (Cummins 2005). Bilingualism is essential in environmental conservation because of the present stress on the literary ability to embrace environmental skills and cooperation in international matters. In a study by Garcia and Kleifgen (2010), the writers demonstrated how bilingual educators can conduct environmental education in multiple languages, enabling college learners to perceive environmental issues from various perspectives. In addition, bilingual individuals connect two

languages in ecological negotiations between countries, offering cooperation possibilities and exchanging experiences (Dixon 2016).

Advantages of Bilingualism in Increasing Sustainable Development

Learning two languages, or being bilingual – meaning that one can speak and understand two languages – was beneficial both at the cognitive and social levels (Noort et al., 2019). In addition, these could be very useful for personal benefit and contribute to sustainable development at the societal level. Sustainable development, according to (Brundtland 1987), is the use of resources so that the flow of resource use will not be impaired for future generations to meet their wants. This paper will attempt to outline the benefits of speaking two or more languages, which are essential in the development of society through the cognitive and sociocultural aspects. Previous research has demonstrated that bilingualism positively affects cognitive control, the capacity to oversee and manage attention, thoughts, and actions (Noort et al., 2019). This is why the effect is sometimes referred to as “bilingual advantage.” It has been established that bilingual persons perform better in attention and switching tasks than monolingual ones (Bialystok 2011). This cognitive advantage can inspire enhanced performance in class, better job prospects for graduates, and, thus, sustainable development. Another advantage of bilingualism is that it may slow dementia and cognitive ageing effects as we age (Alladi and others, 2013). Code-switching makes the cognitive system executive work effectively on the brain, contributing to problems, decision-making, and memory. From the intellectual perspective, sustainable development goals are achieved since the cognitive decline is postponed by bilingualism, implying less burden on health facilities and a better quality of life for older adults.

The concepts of bilingualism facilitate social integration and relationships between different groups (Grosjean 2012 P 120). Increased cross-cultural tolerance may also be a positive side effect of bilingualism as inter-group relations may improve and tensions between ethnic groups may reduce. See, for instance (Lee & Kim 2011). Thus, bilingualism is seen as helping enhance the social fabric, with respondents believing that social tensions are less likely to arise when people are bilingual.

Wei (2008) also identified bilingualism's ability to promote linguistic and cultural endowment and maintenance of language. Thus, Bilingualism promotes such diversity and serves as a positive input to the sustainable development of the society because it preserves cultural diversity. Moreover, bilingual skills can involve various advantages in cognitive and sociocultural requirements, such as increased attention and the working memory process. Benefits in sociology, like enhanced social cohesion or conservation of language, could help attain sustainable development.

The positive correlation between bilingualism and sustainable development lies in the active mutual interaction between the representatives of different cultures to understand their counterparts from other cultural backgrounds and reduce the possibility of conflict (Grosjean 2012).

Empowering Students With Bilingual Skills For A Sustainable Future

Bilingualism has been acclaimed to affect attentional control, problem-solving, and academic performance positively (Adesope et al. 2010). As mentioned earlier, bilingual children are known to develop better and enhanced attention control and cognitive flexibility, which is helpful in academic and working environments (Bialystok 2017). Evidence also shows that it facilitates learning quantification skills, science, and literacy (Collier 1995). Bilingual education provides an understanding of how to perform academically for students and promotes sustainable development. This educational approach also helps learners develop intercultural sensitivity because the value of linguistic and cultural diversity is promoted (Byram, 1997). Thus, learning more than one language helps students gain exposure to several perceptions of the world, norms and values, and lifestyles, fostering tolerance and acceptance of different cultures (Cummins 2008). Intercultural competence

supports internationalization and fosters cultural inclusion as societies tackle global issues of environmental stewardship, societal equity, and human dignity (United Nations 2015). It reveals that students learning two or more languages allows them to interact with people from different cultures and mediates social interactions between individuals. Standard language enhances employment prospects and economic mobility amid the increasing interconnectedness of workplaces worldwide (Grosjean, 2016, p. 1225). They also sometimes require fluent employees in two languages as they easily translate messages between different countries and their institutions (Lazaro Ibarrola 2020). Bilingualism has always been connected with higher earnings and promotions, which benefits students by offering them more income and jobs (Gogolin, 2019). Education can help institutions prepare students for meaningful employment and develop sustainable economic growth by acquiring bilingualism.

Education through two languages can positively impact students' awakening and environmentally friendly behaviour (UNESCO 2016). It is equally important to note that when educators integrate environmental topics and language learning activities in their lesson plans, students learn more about the state of the environment while being equipped with the concept of sustainable living (Mehmeti & Schau, 2019). Bilingual students also help influence change within their communities by promoting environmental conservation through language, such as sharing information about sustainability, fundraising for sustainability projects, or engaging in sustainable activities (Zentella, 2016). Therefore, the availability of bilingual education enables our planet to have an eco-literate citizenry to enhance the planet's survival a crucial contribution towards the preservation of the environment!

Bilingualism and Cognitive Abilities of Students

Executive functions are higher-order cognitive abilities that involve planning, problem-solving, impulse control, and practical switching of mental sets. Thus, the study has shown that bilingualism has certain advantages when meeting executive duties. Research by Bialystok (2011) found that Bilingual children were more intelligent than Monolingual children when doing tasks involving inhibitory control and cognitive manipulation. Kroll Bialystok (2013) conducted a study and concluded that bilingual subjects performed better in tasks involving selective attention or switching tasks than monolingual people. Thus, benefits derived from bilingualism stem from the need to flip between the two discrete language systems repeatedly. In their work, Bialystok, Craik, Luk (2012) opine that enhancing the cognitive load improves the executive management systems and the performance of tasks that require the same techniques. Metalinguistic focus is the ability to look at language as a topic of cognition. Research has indicated that bilingual kids showcase higher degrees of metalinguistic focus than their monolingual counterparts. Bialystok (1988) supplied evidence showing that bilingual children performed more advanced than monolinguals in sentence grammar judgment and error correction tasks.

Additionally, Ricciardelli (1992) suggested that bilingual children displayed more skill distinguishing between semantic and phonological factors of phrases. Bialystok (2001) proposes that Bilingualism can enhance metalinguistic recognition by stimulating children to study and contrast the structural traits of different languages (Bialystok). Cognitive flexibility is the ability to transition among one-of-a-kind mental states or activities. Multiple research suggests bilingual students demonstrate better cognitive flexibility in evaluation than monolingual folks. Prior and MacWhinney (2010) discovered that bilingual adults had been extra gifted in transitioning among tasks that required distinct cognitive strategies. Similarly, Kovacs and Mehler (2009) determined that bilingual babies displayed a sturdy capability to examine artificial language systems, suggesting a more desirable cognitive flexibility.

Bialystok Craik (2010) says that using two languages helps with thinking. When bilingual people switch between languages, their brains are more flexible. This is because they have to change how they feel

and talk. It helps them when doing different things and dealing with new words (Bialystok & Craik, 2010). Some research shows that being bilingual is good for thinking, but others are unsure. This might depend on how old the person was when they learned the language, how well they spoke it, or how rich they were (Paap & Greenberg, 2013). Also, most research only looks at a few thinking abilities. However, to know what it means to be bilingual, we need to do more research (Bialystok 2017).

Effective Approaches to Promoting Bilingualism in Education

Studies have demonstrated the many cognitive advantages of being bilingual, such as improved executive functions such as inhibitory control, focus, attention, and working memory (Bialystok, 2018). Bilingual individuals tend to possess cognitive flexibility, which enables them to quickly adapt to changing cognitive demands in educational settings (Adesope, Lavin Thompson & Ungerleider 2010). Studies have also demonstrated the long-term advantages of Bilingualism for elderly individuals (Bialystok, Craik & Luk 2012). Various strategies have been deployed to foster language acquisition for these bilingual learners. Implementing dual-language immersion programs, in which instruction in both a student's native and additional languages is offered simultaneously (Lindholm-Leary & Borsato 2006), can be an effective strategy in helping children attain Bilingualism while simultaneously fostering academic success across both languages.

Scaffolded instruction, a teaching method that assists language learners in building their language abilities, has proven its ability to promote Bilingualism (Gibbons 2002). Scaffolded instruction helps promote autonomy in language proficiency by gradually decreasing support as students attain proficiency in their desired language. Effective bilingual education requires relevance and cultural sensitivity for success. Teachers must demonstrate knowledge and appreciation of their students' cultural and linguistic heritage (Garcia 2009). Studies have revealed that using culturally sensitive pedagogies can increase engagement and academic success among bilingual learners (Gay, 2018). Positive attitudes regarding Bilingualism should be fostered within an inclusive school environment that recognizes and respects linguistic diversity (Wright 2017). Parental engagement cannot be underestimated when it comes to encouraging Bilingualism. Studies have highlighted parental involvement's positive influence on their child's language development and academic achievements (Kim 2015). Engaging parents in maintaining their native languages while providing resources and assistance for becoming bilingual can be an effective strategy for increasing children's language proficiency and cultural identity (Chao 2006). Furthermore, encouraging collaboration between schools and parents by offering bilingual literacy programs may further advance children's language acquisition (Escamilla 2014).

A practical bilingual program for education is dependent on highly skilled teachers. Teachers need expertise and experience to assist students with bilingual language development (Lucas Grinberg and Lucas 2008). Furthermore, professional development programs emphasising culturally relevant teaching methods, language acquisition assessment strategies, and culturally sensitive assessment methods help educators address the diverse needs of bilingual students (Menken & Garcia 2010). Cooperation among administrators, educators, and language specialists is vital for maintaining the long-term viability of bilingual programs (Bunch 2013).

Bilingual Education Implementation in Schools

Implementing bilingual education programs in schools has long been a source of contention and research. This literature review sheds light on its history, benefits, challenges, and best practices associated with this form of instruction. This review comprehensively addresses this critical educational

issue using various scholarly sources and academic publications. Bilingual education dates back to the early 20th century, when immigration into the US increased, and an education system needed to address its needs (Garcia 2009). Early advocates of bilingual education, such as Joshua A. Fishman and Wallace E. Lambert, provided a theoretical foundation for this approach by emphasizing its cognitive and cultural benefits (Baker 2006).

Various types of bilingual instruction have been developed in the past. The models vary in their educational goals, approaches to instruction, and balance between together children's primary and native language during instruction. Numerous studies have emphasized bilingual education's academic, cognitive, and socio-cultural advantages. The research conducted by Krashen (2009) and Thomas & Collier (2012) has shown that students enrolled in well-planned bilingual programs typically outperform their monolingual peers in their academic performance, especially in the long term. Cummins (2000) also stressed the importance of acquiring cognitive academic ability (CALP) for both English and French to achieve academic performance.

Further, bilingual education has fostered positive attitudes toward cultural diversity, fostered cross-cultural understanding, and enhanced students' cognitive flexibility and problem-solving abilities (Bialystok 2011; Grosjean 2010). Genesee (2008) has pointed to the cognitive advantages of Bilingualism as an education strategy, such as improved executive function and metalinguistic awareness. Though bilingual education has numerous documented advantages, its implementation has encountered various hurdles and criticism. One of the primary concerns raised against bilingual education is its potential to impede the acquisition of the majority language, typically English, in the US (Rossell & Baker 1996). Critics claim this may lead to academic underachievement and socio-economic disadvantage for students from minority language backgrounds.

In addition, the success program for Bilingualism depends heavily upon skilled bilingual teachers, suitable educational materials, and adequate budget and resources (Howard Lindholm-Leary, Rogers Olague Medina, Kennedy, Sugarman and Christian 2018). Shortages in these areas can compromise the quality and effectiveness of bilingual education programs. Research has identified several best practices and effective models for implementing bilingual education programs. Lindholm-Leary (2001) and Thomas and Collier (2012) have emphasized the importance of long-term, additive bilingual programs that aim to develop proficiency in both languages rather than transitional or subtractive models prioritizing the majority language over the students' native language.

Two-way immersion programs, in which native speakers of both languages are integrated into the same classroom, are particularly effective in promoting academic achievement, language proficiency, and cross-cultural understanding (Howard et al., 2018; Lindholm-Leary, 2001).

Effective bilingual education programs must also involve an active partnership between families, schools, and communities and ongoing skilful training for teachers and support staff (Genesee in 2008; Garcia and Garcia, 2009). In addition, culturally responsive pedagogies and the inclusion of students' indigenous cultures and languages in the curriculum have been recognized as essential elements for creating positive learning environments and encouraging student involvement (Cummins, 2000; Nieto, 2010).

Pragmatic Bilingualism: Techniques for Educators

In our increasingly globalized world, efficacious communication skills across several languages are now an important resource. Education professionals play a vital role in encouraging pragmatic

Bilingualism, which uses bilingual abilities in real-world settings. This review, therefore, comprehensively reviews this significant educational concern using research and publications. The notion of pragmatic Bilingualism is discussed in the context of pragmatics, dealing with language use, the roles that determine the meaning of language, and how people interact (Kasper and Rose 2001). There are guidelines set by authors like Bachman (1990) regarding the communication of competence in language use, along with stressing the notion of Language pragmatics in the proper use of language.

Several measures have been suggested to promote pragmatic Bilingualism in schools. The CLT method, according to researchers including Sauvignon (2018), Richards (2006), and Coyle (2018), involves the use of effective classroom materials and articles that will, in turn, assist the students in learning the language. Also, the language integrated and material teaching (CLIL) method looked at by Coyle, Hood, and Marsh in the research also introduces the subjects together with the language and enables the student to use the language meaningfully. The following are strategies that teachers can use to ensure that their students embrace Bilingualism. Integrating newspapers, TV, and social media could let the students experience how language and cultural aspects are used in real life (Gilmore, 2007). Other advantages of role-plays and simulations include further exposure to how language is used in real-life situations (Uso-Juan Martinez-Flor & Uso-Juan 2008).

Pre-teaching aspects of the use of language, politeness norms, and appropriate behavior could also be beneficial (Ishihara & Cohen, 2010 & Taguchi, 2015). Metapragmatic discussion, awareness-raising activities, and critical incident analysis can facilitate the students' construction of the ability to communicate in a foreign language (Alcon-Soler, 2015. Rose & Kasper, 2001). Moreover, teachers can promote pragmatic Bilingualism through cooperative learning and peer discussion (Swain, 2000). Structured activities like group and pair work, where the students have to explain to one another with an option to comment on each other's actions, may enhance linguistic awareness and talent (Storch 2002). Potential issues and concerns When implementing practical strategies for Bilingualism, suitable potential teachers will likely encounter many challenges. It may be challenging to teach effectively when using accurate materials or those corresponding to cultural and language contexts (Ishihara & Cohen (2010). Teachers will also need guidance and professional development to integrate practice components into their second language teaching (Alcon-Soler, 2015).

However, motivation, language competency, and culture are considered personal factors in learning and could impact the learning outcomes regarding practical Bilingualism (Taguchi 2015). As such, teachers need to consider these factors and work with them to ensure that their strategies are amended. The assessment of pragmatic competence poses additional challenges because it generally helps to determine the communicative effectiveness of language in a specific situation and incorporates various aspects of sociolinguistics. (Wantana & Baddar 2009) Researchers have discussed Various assessment methods, like role-plays, task-based activities to complete discourse, and multimedia and virtual environments (Roever 2011) (Taguchi & Roever 2017). Also, outcome-based formative self-assessment and portfolio assessment can bring a great deal of understanding to the progression of students (Ishihara & Cohen 2010)

Conclusion

Thus, bilingualism has been approached and established as a strategy that is quite helpful in maintaining and developing students' brains sustainably. This paper provides an extensive literature review of the benefits of bilingualism in terms of cognitive improvements and socio-cultural and global prospects, explicitly considering the chances of benefit aid in the UN's Sustainable Development Goals. The

advantages of bilingualism include executing cognitive function, awareness of language, and cognitive plastics. This type of education prepares students to address problems and make decisions, and it enables them to possess the critical-thinking skills that would allow them to succeed in the complex world that is fast emerging. Furthermore, Bilingualism is crucial in enhancing Global cultural and social harmony and linguistic diversity. In addition, Bilingualism plays a central role in sharing and fostering the understanding of cultural differences, enabling people to form and become a part of a team and do the same thing with complete dedication. Thus, it encompasses sustainability in both the natural environment and social aspects. There are essential incentives that can be derived from Bilingual education. The proposal of the programs that require bilingual education, such as the use of the Dual-Language immersion program and the education that is considerate of cultural differences, will enhance the master and intercultural language among the students and better prepare them for their desired jobs. Bilingualism is argued to be a positive phenomenon that can unleash the brain's potential, promote development compatible with retaining sustainability, and create connections within the world. This is why if we maintain Bilingualism in line with education policies and standards for knowledge development with international requirements, we will nurture a generation that fits the global market and creates an ecologically sustainable environment for all.

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