Parents must focus on their children’s education to move PNG forward

By John Maine, Student at the Social Work Strand, University of Papua New Guinea

Education is one of the most powerful tools to transform human life. However, much of the attention required by children is not often given to them by some of their parents. Furthermore, some parents fail to invest in their children’s education resulting in the increase in number of unemployed youths and social issues in the country.

Some children often receive little or no assistance on education from their parents. Some parents are too busy with their work and do not often have time to mentor their children. Other factors such as orphanage and polygamous marriages also result in the neglect of children which may trigger irrational behaviour among them. Inadequate guidance of children by their parents and guardians remain a big challenge in Papua New Guinea (PNG). If it is not managed properly, it has the potential to slowdown human resource development in PNG. In order to improve performance of children in school and their attitude toward learning, parents should monitor their children’s progress in school.

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To support education as an important tool in the development of PNG, the Government introduced the Tuition Fee Free (TFF) Policy in 2012. This was primarily aimed at increasing the number of learned people in the country to contribute to sustainable development. However, parents are the first teachers to facilitate and provide a platform for their children to get educated and have a better future.

Some students drop out from formal education as a result of lack of proper guidance from their parents. Others are either suspended and terminated from school as a result of poor performance, breaking school rules and engaging in criminal activities. This has the potential to contribute to a decline in quality of education mainly due to lack of proper discipline and support by the parents.

Obviously, some parents use their money for other social or cultural activities, such as bride price, compensation from tribal fights and entertainment. However, they give little or no attention to their children’s education. As a result, children who do not get proper support from their parents divert their attention away from schooling. Some students are not performing well in school mainly due to the fact that their parents have no time to mentor them and monitor their progress in school.

Parents can help children do well in school

Discipline is vital to motivate children to develop positive mindsets. This can assist to steer them in the right direction. If the intention is to make our children do well in school and contribute meaningfully to the development of PNG, the following should be considered:

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- Parents should provide more time to mentor their children on education and how to contribute positively to the society. If parents guide their children properly, especially at a tender age, it can help them perform better in school. The act of discipline in all ramifications of life that parents transfer to their children has the potential of making them become better citizens of the country.

- Provide educational awareness program to emphasise the importance of mentoring and guidance in children’s performance in school and their attitude toward learning. Conducting awareness on the importance of education and informing parents on how to guide their children in school can help more students succeed. This has the potential to increase skilled labour force that can contribute more meaningfully to PNG’s economy.

- Parents should take responsibility in raising their children and mentoring them using biblical principles. This has the potential to reduce anti-social behaviour among students in schools and increase academic performances.

- The success of PNG will be determined by the quality of its education system. But this goes back to the foundation of how the basics are taught. This is where discipline from parents is vital in building a strong foundation for their children.

**Conclusion**

Each year, thousands of students drop out from the formal education system in PNG. Some of them, tend to engage in criminal activities for survival. This behaviour has resulted in an increase in social problems in the country. The law and order issues have become a challenge for the Government. One of the potential contributors is the lack of proper discipline and control of children by their parents at a tender age. Proper discipline from parents provide guidelines to assist children to do well in school and contribute meaningfully to the development of the country. Thus, parents must focus more on their children’s education to move their children and the country forward.