

BEYOND YOUR CGPA

THE POWER OF SOCIAL CAPITAL.

Growing up, especially in our African setting, our elders and all those around us would tell us to focus on Education with undivided attention. Our parents told us that we should study hard and attain the best grades.

I am very certain; that they could tell us with a pure heart. They coined most proverbs such as " A pencil doesn't rot" (ekalamu tevunda) and this proverb crosses all Tribes in Uganda.

Well, most children went to school specifically to study and get good grades. They didn't want to get involved in anything else Because they were not taught about the power of making friends or practicing co-curricular activities. Everybody talked about reading and studying hard for better grades.

In Uganda today, your CGPA almost means nothing in the working world. Wait, I said ALMOST but not totally nothing.

We have heard people say, who knows you? Who is your father? Well, this is about how strong you have connected with people. It's not about who just knows you but how much you have invested socially.

When I talk about my personal experience, The person who connected me to the very first hospital I worked in was my fellow backbencher who used to dodge, and I could sign for him and sometimes submit his assignments. This is one way I was building my social capital. Social capital describes a lot of things ranging from skills, resources, and values shared within a group of people. Social capital is something huge. It is bigger than your CGPA.

It is far bigger than your 20 points. It is bigger than the compliments you got from your lecturers for submitting your work earlier than anyone else. Social capital is the right way to deal with people in wisdom, not manipulation.

They are activities that should be done outside the class work. It can be swimming, singing, or doing something else. These are the activities that bond people together. It is almost if not the whole part of creating that bond that makes a group of individuals together. I recently hosted my buddies at my place, it was a little late. Our chairperson had decided that we buy cooked food and then we just eat together, I said no, let's buy raw food and we cook together. That evening, each of us cooked what he was good at. Within two hours, the cooking was done, and we surely enjoyed it. Bonding together is

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through different activities but for a common goal.

And most of the time, it is the way you talk to people, how you check on them, and how you follow them up that strengthens the bond. Normally, among your circle, there's someone who knows someone who knows someone who knows someone you want. Children should be told as early as yesterday that it's not about grades.

There's a perception about High school that I love most, they say when you advance to study A level, there's a way a student is shaped and moulded. This perception of acquiring knowledge about socialism.

It's much more important to learn the power of social capital as you chase better grades.

If by any chance you finished school and you are stuck and can't get 100k, this

message is for you. You were the problem. You soaked yourself in books and thought your grades were going to bring you money. It is not evil to study hard and get good grades, but my problem comes when you fail to build a sensible social capital.

80% of relatives who normally promise us jobs usually say, first graduate and send me your documents. This is always a total scam! Nobody cares about your grades.

Connections of Gig plugs, and hustle plugs, are right beside you, your classmates, church mates, and the guys you play soccer with. Leaving all other factors constant, those are your plugs.

Those are the people your kids will call aunt or uncle; those are the actual connections to your future kids.

There is another class of people called introverts. These people can stay in the

house for a whole day. We have boys in the Men talk who proudly say that I don't know my neighbors where I stay, am always inside. Wow!

It's a little hard to explain but for some reason, it shouldn't be that way.

Opportunities can't come fly to you. In other words, opportunities are always chased by people. The Ankole people coined a word during COVID-19 times called 'gamba nogu', It means to talk to this one. Those days, it was a must to have someone to talk to authorities before you access some places or what you would be looking for. This Ankole jargon best describes what social capital is.

In the Bible, I recall the Apostle Paul telling the Philippians to work on their Salvation with fear and trembling. In the same way, any man should work on their social capital with fear and trembling.

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In the book titled School of Money, the writer noted that the biggest part where money is hidden is in people. I'm now talking to the people who say, I don't like talking to people, talking to people is not my thing, I don't have time to socialize, I came to school for academics nothing else, After church I have no business talking to people, I am that, am this, I can't do that, I can't be that, Socializing with this and that, etc

My friend, you are just weak In fact you are not going to believe it after going to school for academics not anything else. Personally, ever since I finished school, no one has ever asked me for my transcript for a job, I mean no one.

When it comes to social capital, don't joke with these people you call spoilt. People discuss opportunities on crates of beer. They may be drunkards yet have mastered

the art of being human rather than religious. Pastors connect sons and daughters of men who give them money but drinkers sign papers of strangers. That is Humanity above religion.

Smokers share a cigarette, but some Balokole can have a bag of rice in the house while the neighbor sleeps hungry. Drinkers can share a bottle of beer but religious leaders with collars find it hard to connect people to diocese bursaries.

Leaving other factors constant, as you are being a selective introvert, Be smart and sharp. However,

Here is how social capital relates to your experience:

1. Networking, the backbencher friend who connected me to my first job exemplifies the power of networking. Through his connections and relationships, he was able

to provide me with an opportunity that I may not have had access to.

2. Trust and Reciprocity: By signing for your friend and helping him with assignments, you built a level of trust and reciprocity in your relationship. This trust led him to feel comfortable recommending me for a job, knowing that I was reliable and competent.

3. Access to Information: Social networks often provide access to valuable information about job openings, industry trends, and career advice. By being involved in social activities and maintaining connections with others, you can stay informed and potentially uncover new opportunities.

4. Career Development: Engaging in extracurricular activities, forming relationships with mentors, and

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participating in professional organizations can all contribute to your social capital. These activities not only enhance your skills and knowledge but also expand your network and increase your visibility within your field.

The streets of after school have less if not no memory of you speaking the best English, handing in coursework first, or even being the first in class. Building a Social network will teach you how to talk to people, how to swallow your pride, handle situations, and how to sell milk to the cow.

While education and academic achievements are important, social capital complements them by providing access to opportunities, resources, and support systems that can significantly impact your career trajectory.

Balancing both academic excellence and social connections can lead to a more well-rounded and successful professional journey.



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