



# Creating Networks for Success: Social Capital and Recent College Graduates



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## ABSTRACT

For most students, college is a time for constructing relationships with students, faculty, and members of the business community. While attending a four-year university, networking with colleagues and making connections helps students develop their social acumen. Upon graduation, the obvious goal is to receive a rewarding job with an organization where the graduate feels he or she is welcomed. Beginning to work in an unfamiliar environment is a daunting experience for most young professionals. One of the ways this is combated is by building and forming relationships with the people in their new environment.

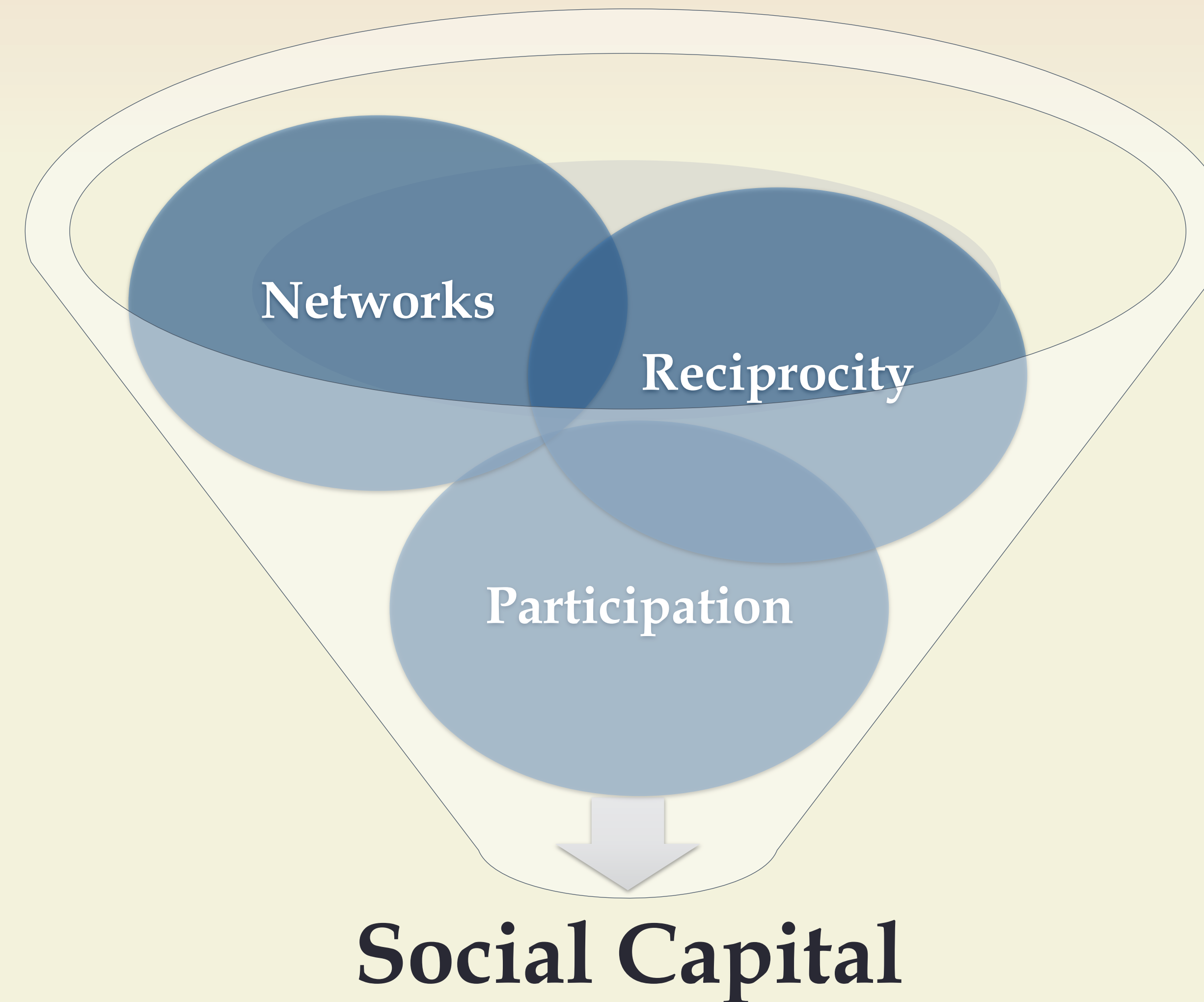
## RESEARCH QUESTION

How do recent college graduates use social capital to adapt to their new business setting?

## RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

I want to look at how college graduates develop social capital and use it to their advantage. Cultivating social capital can vary depending on cultural similarities and differences and familiarity with the current city and company. In order to highlight similarities of graduates' experiences, I compare four groups of individuals:

1. Graduates living and working in a familiar locale versus graduates living and working to an unfamiliar locale
2. Graduates who had an internship experience with their current company versus graduates who did not have an internship experience with their current company



Social capital is defined as “the network of social connections that exist between people, and their shared values and norms of behavior, which enable and encourage mutually advantageous social cooperation.”

## METHODS

	Internship	No Internship
Familiar Locale / Similar Cultural Aspects	2-4 interviews	2-4 interviews
Unfamiliar Locale / Different Cultural Aspects	2-4 interviews	2-4 interviews

## CONCLUSION & IMPLICATIONS

- Building social capital plays a significant role in a new college graduate's attachment to the current city and company
- Social capital is key in forming professional relationships
- Emotional attachment plays a large role in the fondness of their city and organization.
- There may be idiosyncratic factors and self-representation bias in some of the interviews.

Through interviews and mining and data analysis, I hope to uncover reoccurring themes - certain actions or activities that have influence on their decision to stay at their first city/company out of college.

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