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# How to write a concept paper with practical sample by Dr Lango

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## **How to write a simple Academic project concept paper for a classroom assignment by Dr. Lango.**

A concept paper enables in putting thoughts and ideas into paper for consideration for research. It is from the concept paper that one develops the research proposal which can either be business or academic oriented. Most students, and especially the postgraduate students who have a mandatory requirement of undertaking research, usually goes direct to the research proposal. Some quotas also have professed the school of thought that a concept paper and research proposal are the same. As good as they may seem similar, they are different in the process and presentation. The concept paper aim is to capture the thoughts and ideas while the research proposal captures the ideas in a structured manner for approval to research. Therefore, in order to write a simple concept paper, follow these steps:

### **1. Concept paper title**

Every paper must have a title and concept paper is not left out as one needs to have a title that summarizes what the paper is about. The title should be as brief as possible and to the point such that by a glance one would know exactly the paper's intention. **Example:**

*“Leveraging on Mobile Payment Methods to gain Competitive Advantage by local based businesses”*

### **2. Introduction**

Introduce the concept by giving a brief on how it will contribute to the organization or company having more opportunities as a result. Also, state your understanding of the main objective of the targeted area of implementation clearly introducing the gap intended to be addressed. An introduction is like the sitting room of the concept paper as it determines a lot on the person proposing the concept. During presentations, this section also, act as the persona guide to how the rest of the presentation is preempted. **Example:**

*Mobile payment methods have popularity with big businesses operating in large towns and cities across the world. These payment methods enable the business customers to access their cash at the point of sale and do not need to have physical money to complete their transactions. This study will therefore help in understanding the mobile payment methods preferences for the local based business and how and why these preferences have failed to prevail. The research will therefore address that gap that is viewed as the low uptake of mobile payment methods by the local based businesses which are essentially operating in remote areas. This concept builds upon the various insights that have been undertaken by various researchers in the business and information technology field to bridge the gap of strategic implementation of information technology systems in business to gain competitive advantage.*

### 3. Need for this Study

One of the senior professors where the author teaches refer to this section as “*who dies if the concept is not implemented*” and further advises that it should addresses the pertinent societal need. The need of the study should have a concrete evidence in the sense that the source of the need must be documented and verifiable. It is also important to look at what other scholars have done on the concept previously, and whether this is enough to answer the questions intended for the study. **Example:**

*It is estimated that more than 5 billion people have access to mobile phone devices and that out of this figure about a third of the population is based in local areas. Further, the village-based businesses do not have immediately access to the physical money banking system as they are located kilometers away. Porter (2011) notes that in order for businesses to achieve and sustain superior performance, they must be able to implement systems that are competitively superior. Budree and Williams (2013, September) and Namada (2018) established that the areas with large number of low-income earners experienced low uptake technological advancements and businesses in these locations are not keen on leveraging on technology. The concept will therefore be intended to identify the salient factors that local businesses can apply in leveraging on mobile payment methods to gain competitive advantage.*

### 4. Background

This section indicates that some research has been carried on the area of interest, however there still exit a gap that needs to filled. It is important therefore to outline several studies that have been undertake on the topical area summarizing their conclusive evidence and relevance to the study area. A more descriptive background will then be structured from the worldview, regional, and localized perspective. For a shorter-version concept paper this may not count however it is important to show that some study have been done but little research in the area of interest and how the concept seeks to solve this gap.

*Several studies have concluded that mobile payment methods is one of the major factors put in place by businesses in gaining competitive advantage, however this has also, not been achieved in remote areas. As a result, Onyango et al. (2014) in their study on mobile phone technology and the evident performance of micro and small enterprises, concludes that there is an impact on the use and implementation of mobile phone technology to achieve the full business performance. In order, therefore to achieve competitive advantage, Porter (2011) advises that the strategy implemented should be geared towards achieving full potential competitively.*

*Many scholars also agree that there is a significant relationship between mobile payment methods and gaining competitive advantage to sustain an improved performance. Most also argue that the mobile payment method of use will be dependent on the location and nature of need. The handbook by Namada (2018) notes that the concept of organizational learning must be down-trotted to the*

*local businesses to learn which mobile technology suits their operations and how this technology can be leveraged to achieve competitive advantage. The literature and conclusions from the scholars however fail to answer specific questions that related to leveraging on mobile payment methods to gain competitive advantage for local based businesses. Most of the studies were focused on businesses and companies in towns and cities with the area of interest majoring on performance whether competitively or not. This study will therefore be focused on the factors of consideration for leveraging on mobile payment methods to gain competitive advantage by local based businesses.*

## **5. Objectives**

These are the broad and specific objectives the research seeks to answer. It should be stated starting with the words “To” and linked to the general and the specific area where the study is to be undertaken. Both the general and the specific objectives must be regularized to conform with the topic of the concept. **Example:**

*The research paper seeks to achieve its general objective of leveraging on mobile payment methods to gain competitive advantage by focusing on the following specific objectives:*

- 1. To determine the influence of perceived risks on the use of mobile payment methods to gain competitive advantage by local based businesses.*
- 2. To determine the influence of M-Payment characteristics (mobility, reachability, convenience, and compatibility) on the use of mobile payment methods to gain competitive advantage by local based businesses.*
- 3. To assess the influence of personal innovativeness on use of mobile payment methods to gain competitive advantage by local based businesses.*

## **6. Research Questions and or Hypothesis**

The research can choose to answer either questions emanating from the research literature and especially from the research objectives, or hypothesis scenarios and test at the end of the research whether they were accepted or not. Example: Choosing research questions.

- 1. Does perceived risks influence the use of mobile payment methods to gain competitive advantage by local based businesses?*
- 2. Does M-Payment characteristics (mobility, reachability, convenience, and compatibility) influence the use of mobile payment methods to gain competitive advantage by local based businesses?*
- 3. Does personal innovativeness influence the use of mobile payment methods to gain competitive advantage by local based businesses?*

## 7. Research Methodology

This is the *how* of the concept and describes how the concept will be achieved once it reaches the research level. It should define the intention on the design of research to be conducted, the population targeted, and the type of data to be collected. **Example:**

*The study intends to use cross sectional survey design in determining the leverage on mobile payment methods to gain competitive advantage by local based businesses.*

*The study will sample 478 local based businesses registered in Kenya out of a population of 4 thousand which are mainly registered and operated in village area settings.*

*The study will collect both primary and secondary data, and the quantitative data generated will be analyzed using descriptive statistics which will include percentage distribution, mean and the frequency counts. The qualitative data from the study will undergo transcription and reported in themes and sub-themes. The relationship between the independent and dependent variables will be explained through multiple regression.*

## 8. Research Timeline

This is to indicate the allocation of time for undertaking the research and breaking to specific section and finally indicating the overall schedule of the research. Timelines are importance in concept paper as they are used to determine the length of the research and the funding needs over the period. In academic concept papers, this period is usually pre-defined by the various university standards and one should have a look at their university standards on the research paper duration. The timeline must also include how the initial and final phases of the academic project is to be achieved. This is where the difference between a research proposal and concept paper vary, in that ***the concept paper lists both the research proposal and research final study timelines while the research proposal only lists the research study timelines.***

### Example:

*The project is expected to be completed in 17 weeks with the following indicated as the activity's durations for every section of the research project:*

| <b><i>Research Section</i></b>                          | <b><i>Duration</i></b> |
|---|------------------------|
| <i>1. Title</i>   | <i>1 week</i>          |
| <i>2. Introduction</i>                                  | <i>1 week</i>          |
| <i>3. Need for this Study</i>                           | <i>2 weeks</i>         |
| <i>4. Background</i>                                    | <i>3 weeks</i>         |
| <i>5. Objectives</i>                                    | <i>1 week</i>          |
| <i>6. Research Questions and or Hypothesis</i>          | <i>1 week</i>          |
| <i>7. Research Methodology</i>                          | <i>2 weeks</i>         |
| <i>8. Data analysis interpretations and discussions</i> | <i>3 weeks</i>         |

|  |         |
|--|---------|
| 9. <i>Summary conclusion and recommendations</i> | 2 weeks |
| 10. Reviewing work for final submission          | 1 weeks |

## 9. Reference

The reference materials used for the concept paper must be outline under the reference section following a standard format that is approved by the university. Remember there are several formats for referencing various articles and other academic work and only one must be used at one particular time for a standard practice. **Example: Using the APA refencing format**

- Porter, M. E. (2011). Competitive advantage of nations: creating and sustaining superior performance. simon and schuster.*
- Namada, J. M. (2018). Organizational learning and competitive advantage. In Handbook of Research on Knowledge Management for Contemporary Business Environments (pp. 86-104). IGI Global.*
- Budree, A., & Williams, K. H. (2013, September). Factors influencing the uptake of mobile banking in developing countries: A case study of M–Pesa in South Africa. In Proceedings of 22nd Internafional Business Research Conference (pp. 9-10).*
- Onyango, R. A., Ongus, R. W., Awuor, F. M., & Nyamboga, C. (2014). Impact of adoption and use of mobile phone technology on the performance of micro and small enterprises in Kisii Municipality Kenya. World Journal of Computer Application and Technology, 2(2), 34-42.*

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## **ACADEMIC CONCEPT PAPER - Sample by Dr. Lango**

*“Leveraging on Mobile Payment Methods to gain Competitive Advantage by local based businesses”*

### **Introduction**

Mobile payment methods have popularity with big businesses operating in large towns and cities across the world. These payment methods enable the business customers to access their cash at the point of sale and do not need to have physical money to complete their transactions. This study will therefore help in understanding the mobile payment methods preferences for the local based business and how and why these preferences have failed to prevail. The research will therefore address that gap that is viewed as the low uptake of mobile payment methods by the local based businesses which are essentially operating in remote areas. This concept builds upon the various insights that have been undertaken by various researchers in the business and information technology field to bridge the gap of strategic implementation of information technology systems in business to gain competitive advantage.

### **Need for this Study**

It is estimated that more than 5 billion people have access to mobile phone devices and that out of this figure about a third of the population is based in local areas. Further, the village-based businesses do not have immediately access to the physical money banking system as they are located kilometers away. Porter (2011) notes that in order for businesses to achieve and sustain superior performance, they must be able to implement systems that are competitively superior. Budree and Williams (2013, September) and Namada (2018) established that the areas with large number of low-income earners experienced low uptake technological advancements and businesses in these locations are not keen on leveraging on technology. The concept will therefore be intended to identify the salient factors that local businesses can apply in leveraging on mobile payment methods to gain competitive advantage.

### **Background**

Several studies have concluded that mobile payment methods is one of the major factors put in place by businesses in gaining competitive advantage, however this has also, not been achieved in remote areas. As a result, Onyango et al. (2014) in their study on mobile phone technology and the evident performance of micro and small enterprises, concludes that there is an impact on the use and implementation of mobile phone technology to achieve the full business performance. In order, therefore to achieve competitive advantage, Porter (2011) advises that the strategy implemented should be geared towards achieving full potential competitively.

Many scholars therefore agree that there is a significant relationship between mobile payment methods and gaining competitive advantage to sustain an improved performance. Most also argue that the mobile payment method of use will be dependent on the location and nature of need. The handbook by Namada (2018) notes that the concept of organizational learning must be down-

trotted to the local businesses to learn which mobile technology suits their operations and how this technology can be leveraged to achieve competitive advantage. The literature and conclusions from the scholars however fail to answer specific questions that related to leveraging on mobile payment methods to gain competitive advantage for local based businesses. Most of the studies were focused on businesses and companies in towns and cities with the area of interest majoring on performance whether competitively or not. This study will therefore be focused on the factors of consideration for leveraging on mobile payment methods to gain competitive advantage by local based businesses.

### **Objective**

The research paper seeks to achieve its general objective of leveraging on mobile payment methods to gain competitive advantage by focusing on the following specific objectives:

1. To determine the influence of perceived risks on the use of mobile payment methods to gain competitive advantage by local based businesses.
2. To determine the influence of M-Payment characteristics (mobility, reachability, convenience, and compatibility) on the use of mobile payment methods to gain competitive advantage by local based businesses.
3. To assess the influence of personal innovativeness on use of mobile payment methods to gain competitive advantage by local based businesses.

### **Research Questions**

4. Does perceived risks influence the use of mobile payment methods to gain competitive advantage by local based businesses?
5. Does M-Payment characteristics (mobility, reachability, convenience, and compatibility) influence the use of mobile payment methods to gain competitive advantage by local based businesses?
6. Does personal innovativeness influence the use of mobile payment methods to gain competitive advantage by local based businesses?

### **Methodology**

The study intends to use cross sectional survey design in determining the leverage on mobile payment methods to gain competitive advantage by local based businesses.

The study will sample 478 local based businesses registered in Kenya out of a population of 4 thousand which are mainly registered and operated in village area settings.

The study will collect both primary and secondary data, and the quantitative data generated will be analyzed using descriptive statistics which will include percentage distribution, mean and the frequency counts. The qualitative data from the study will undergo transcription and reported in themes and sub-themes. The relationship between the independent and dependent variables will be explained through multiple regression.



## Research Timeline

The project is expected to be completed in 17 weeks with the following indicated as the activities durations for every section of the research project:

| <b>Research Section</b>                          | <b>Duration</b> |
|--|-----------------|
| 1. Title   | 1 week          |
| 2. Introduction                                  | 1 week          |
| 3. Need for this Study                           | 2 weeks         |
| 4. Background                                    | 3 weeks         |
| 5. Objectives                                    | 1 week          |
| 6. Research Questions and or Hypothesis          | 1 week          |
| 7. Research Methodology                          | 2 weeks         |
| 8. Data analysis interpretations and discussions | 3 weeks         |
| 9. Summary conclusion and recommendations        | 2 weeks         |
| 10. Reviewing work for final submission          | 1 weeks         |

## Reference

- Porter, M. E. (2011).** Competitive advantage of nations: creating and sustaining superior performance. simon and schuster.
- Namada, J. M. (2018).** Organizational learning and competitive advantage. In Handbook of Research on Knowledge Management for Contemporary Business Environments (pp. 86-104). IGI Global.
- Budree, A., & Williams, K. H. (2013, September).** Factors influencing the uptake of mobile banking in developing countries: A case study of M-Pesa in South Africa. In Proceedings of 22nd Internafional Business Research Conference (pp. 9-10).
- Onyango, R. A., Ongus, R. W., Awuor, F. M., & Nyamboga, C. (2014).** Impact of adoption and use of mobile phone technology on the performance of micro and small enterprises in Kisii Municipality Kenya. World Journal of Computer Application and Technology, 2(2), 34-42.

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