



14th PALFA 2025 Conference



Theme: **Shaping the Future of Africa through Innovative Literacy Approaches**

The future for the African continent as envisioned in the Pan African 2063 Agenda for “an integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa, driven by its own citizens and representing a dynamic force in the global arena” calls for immediate action. The dynamic and unpredictable revolution in new and emerging technologies, especially Artificial Intelligence (AI) and machine learning, demands that we have a well-educated citizenry for Africa's advancement and sustainable development.

Having been in the forefront of literacy empowerment in Africa since 1999, the Pan Africa Literacy For All (PALFA) is positioned to support the new agenda through literacy dialogues. This will ensure that Africa, as a continent, contributes significantly to the building of a “literate, creative and adaptive citizenry equipped with 21st Century skills for a competitive global environment”. This lofty vision will however remain a mirage if the depressing education and literacy statistics at the continental, regional and national levels are not addressed as a matter of urgency and priority. The African continent, as a youthful population with low literacy rates, is characterised with high percentage of out-of-school children (ages 5-9), while seven out of 10 children are unable to read and comprehend a passage at age 10.

Global digital technology companies seem to advocate “buttonification of education” as a panacea, arguing that Edtech can save time and money by generating teaching and learning materials like curricula with a press of a button. However, critical scholars identify the risks and potential harms from algorithmic biases based on western knowledge systems and racialized power relations, including the standardization of instructional design, and the marginalization or exclusion of African indigenous knowledge systems. Since education does not exist outside of literacy development, PALFA 2025 seeks to move beyond these dichotomous debates and envision what literacy education should look like in “The Africa we want” in the context of Agenda 2063.

Consequently, to identify “what works” in literacy education in Africa, PALFA 2025 invites contributions that reimagine the Africa we want without homogenizing peoples and places; and how we might (re)design governance structures, curriculum, and pedagogies in accord with these visionings without falling prey to the pervading influence of tech-solutionism. Nonetheless, literacy practices in Africa need to take into account the ebbs and flows of the global context that include:

- Changes and advances in information and communication technology revolution
- Globalisation and changes in production
- Global security concerns
- The impact of climate change,
- Utilisation of technology to ensure a decent standard of living, and
- Epistemic violence and equity manifest in curricular content, pedagogies, and technologies.

African literacy teachers, scholars, researchers, policy makers, and international development agencies and indeed, governments need a collective and strategic response to re-imagine literacy as an empowerment tool to shape the future of Africa. Therefore, the 14th Pan Africa Literacy for All Conference sets the stage for the broad objective of re-imagining literacy learning, practices, policies, research, and scholarship as an empowerment tool in the context of the Pan Africa 2063 Agenda.



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Conference specific objectives are to:

- Interrogate political, economic, socio-cultural, environmental, technological, and globalisation factors affecting literacy education policies and practices.
- Examine epistemic violence and epistemic equity as manifest in curricular content, pedagogies, and technologies and their consequences, particularly for marginalized groups.
- Demonstrate the deployment of digital literacy and technologies to accelerate literacy learning
- Present emerging trends to mitigate low literacy learning outcomes through learner engagement
- Critically examine language, literacy policies and practices in Africa and beyond
- Present evidence-based policies and instructional practices for foundational literacy and the challenges for scaling including in areas affected by armed conflict and forcible displacement

Sub-themes

1. Innovative Approaches to Foundational Literacy
2. Mother Tongue Education, Indigenous Knowledge Systems and Literacy Development
3. Literacy and Language Policies in Africa
4. Literacy, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in Multilingual Context
5. Literacy, Female Voices and the Future of Africa
6. Artificial Intelligence and the Future of Literacy Development in Africa
7. Innovative and Emerging Technologies, Teacher Empowerment, and Learner Engagement
8. Libraries, Global Book Supply Chain, Material Development, and Intellectual Property Rights in the Context of Machine Learning
9. Literacy Education for Refugees, IDPs, and Mobile Populations
10. Literacy Evaluation, Assessment and Data Sovereignty
11. Literacy and STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics) Education
12. Multiple Literacies, Environmental Education and Sustainable Development Goals
13. African Children's Literature and the Representations of Identities and Human Relations.

Conference outcomes

The Conference is expected to bring new insights to the conceptualisation of literacies in the 21st century, as well as how new and emerging technologies can be leveraged for sustainable development. No doubt, the interactions will highlight what associations, institutions, development agencies, and governments can do to take Africa to the next level of sustainable development as envisioned in the Africa's 2063 Agenda of the Africa we want by using literacy as an instrument of empowerment. Ultimately, the organisers will compile and publish papers presented at the Conference for wider dissemination to open robust and sustained Pan Africa literacy dialogues in the years after the Conference.

Conference Presentations

Presentations will include:

- Individual/Co-author(s) Presentation
- Poster Presentation
- Workshops
- Panel Presentation
- Special Sessions
- Exhibitions



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The 14th PALFA Conference will be hosted in the megacity of Lagos, known as the Atlantic City, 'the city that never sleeps', and Africa's economic hub. The University of Lagos which is the venue of the Conference is surrounded by the Lagos lagoon and nestled between lush greenery and serene lakes, suitable to harvest learning and innovation. Consequently, the 14th PALFA Conference expects to attract both local and international literacy leaders and promoters, early childhood educators, curriculum specialists, multilateral and development partners, policy makers, researchers, scholars and academics, literacy material developers/producers, both local and international, to converge and showcase cutting-edge knowledge, skills and innovations in literacy learning, practices, programmes, and approaches to re-imagine literacy as a veritable tool in shaping the future of Africa.

Call for Abstract

Abstracts are invited from participants that address any of the aspects of the subthemes.

1. The abstract should include the objectives/questions addressed, methodology and/or approaches; key results/findings; significance/impact of the research/study; and three to five keywords pertinent to the abstract.
2. The abstract should include the title, name(s) of author(s), institutional affiliation of the author(s), email address, and the sub-theme under which the presentation should be considered.
3. Indicate the mode of presentation:
 - a. Individual Paper
 - b. Panel Presentation
 - c. Poster Presentation
 - d. Workshop Session
 - e. Exhibition
4. Completed abstracts, which should NOT be more than 250 words, should be submitted to: palfa2025@gmail.com

Datelines for Abstract Submission and Response

- (i) Open: December 1, 2024
- (ii) Deadline: May 31, 2025
- (iii) Acceptance: June 30, 2025

Conference Participation Fee

1. Nigerian Participants: N30,000/N40,000: (LiPAN members/Non-members).
2. Other African Participants: USD 100
3. Non-Africans: USD 150
4. Students: USD 50/N20,000 (Foreign/Nigeria)

For more information regarding registration, accommodation, hotel reservations, airport transfers, and the sights and sounds of Lagos, please visit: <https://lipanonline.org/palfa2025>

CONTACT: Literacy Promotion Association, Nigeria (LiPAN)

Office Address: (Rm 606) Department of Comm & Lang Arts, University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria

Email: info@lipanonline.org

Conference Chair:

Professor Nkechi M. Christopher
+234 08033708262

Programmes Chair:

Professor Gabriel B. Egbe
+234 8033449268

Note: Presentations at the Conference will be both physical and virtual.

Conference Date:

October 13 - 17, 2025

Venue: Faculty of Social Science (TETFUND Lecture Theatre

University of Lagos, Akoka, Lagos State, Nigeria

A Pre-conference Workshop for Basic Education teachers will be held on 13 October, 2025