

# A THEMATIC ANALYSIS OF SELECTED NOVELS OF CALIXTHE BEYALA

BY

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## ABSTRACT

Extant studies on the works of Calixthe Beyala have been investigated from psychological, feminist, and stylistic analysis with little or insufficient attention to the thematic analysis prominent in Beyalian novels. This study, therefore, examines thematic preoccupations in Bayalian novels with the view of finding how Beyalian novels are able to reflect and refract socio-political, negritude, and economic realities and experiences. The study reveals that Beyalian novels are characterised with thematic preoccupations of sexual abuse, violence and women and girl-child oppression. The study concludes that Beyalian novels are a reflection of social realities not only in Francophone African countries but also Anglophone. The issues explicate socio-cultural, economic, political realities and experiences which exemplify the depression, oppression and subjugation suffered by women in a male-dominated African society.

**Keywords:** thematic analysis, Beyalian novels, oppression, violence, and sexual abuse

## Introduction

No writers write in a vacuum. Writers deploy different creative approaches and methods in their texts to reflect and refract socio-political values and realities of in their countries. This is because, since literature ‘finds its expression in language; therefore, language remains a vital tool in literature with a view to re-creating and explicating events and realities in the society (Osundare, 2010). Ashcroft (1995:20) posits that:

Language carries culture, and culture carries, especially through orature and literature, the entire body of values by which we come to perceive ourselves and our place in the world. Language is thus inseparable from us as a community of human beings with a specific form and character, a specific history, a specific relationship to the world.

Ashcroft asserts that language and literature are inseparable. They are both deployed in the representation of realities. Most times, writers may be implicit in their concern. They try to project realities. Among ways of explicating realities is the thematic preoccupation analysis.

A theme can be referred to as the moral lesson(s) behind a story, text, play, event, and situation. According to Amenorvi and Grumah (2019), a theme may be referred to the lesson behind a subject matter. A theme is sometimes and interchangeably defined with “motif” (Abrams,

1999). Abrams further opines that a theme is “more usefully applied to a general concept or doctrine, whether implicit or asserted, which an imaginative work is designed to incorporate and make persuasive to the reader” (Abrams, 1999:170). Theme simply refers to issues which have received the attention of a literary writers. The analysis of theme is called thematic analysis.

A thematic analysis is the analysis of thematic preoccupations in a text. Thematic preoccupations revolve the issues in a text. Writers most times use issues to convey their attitudes and feelings on socio-political happenings, events, and realities. Issues are a pointer to the social and personal experience of a writer. According to Chijoke Uwasomba (2014), the writers irrespective of their ideological persuasion have a duty to discharge to the society and to themselves because writers are saddled with social responsibility to communicate certain social and personal experiences to an audience. The need to expose the thematic preoccupations in the francophone writers particularly Calixthe Beyala and her selected works has informed this study. The thrust of this paper, therefore, is to examine the thematic preoccupations in selected works of Calixthe Beyala in order to revealing how Calixthe Beyala has refracted personal and social experiences and realities in the francophone context.

### **Statement of the problem**

Previous studies have examined the thematic preoccupations in the works of African writers. Olayinka (2014) investigated juvenile disorders in selected works of Calixthe Beyala. Situated within Freudian psychoanalytic and Nietzsche’s resentment theories, the work specifically showed the angst of Calixthe Beyala to oppression, girl-child abuse, violence women oppression and other in a male-dominated African society. The study examines neurotic disorders of oppressed adolescent females in Calixthe Beyala’s novels. The study concludes that Calixthe Beyala’s works are characterised with male- dominated patriarchal oppressive themes such as gender discrimination, female-sexuality control, girl-child commodification, marriage, forced marriage, motherhood, widowhood, and rape, incest or paedophilia. While Olayinka examines Calixthe Beyala’s works from psychological approach, ours is purely a linguistic analysis of the selected text.

Halimi (2015) examines the question of “self” and women identities in Calixthe Beyala’s texts from the liberal human orientation to existentialist points of view. The study, investigates how women construct their identities within the ambit of social and fictional francophone context. The study asserts that certain trivial anti-feminist discourses are valorised through natural multidimensional and anti-racialist social realities. Though the study and the current study are similar in a number of ways, there exist certain dissimilarities. While Halimi investigates the construction of women identities in Calixthe Beyala’s works, ours focusses on the thematisation of social and personal issues in Calixthe Beyala’s works.

Ajibade (2017) cursorily examined the major thematic preoccupation of Nigerian literature. Situating the work within the ambit of the first generation of Nigerian writers, the study, specifically, revealed that thematic thrusts of Nigerian writers include reincarnation, anti-colonialism, gender, religions, feminism, marriage, love, morality, mortality and politics. The similarity of this study with the current work is that they both examined how writers use thematic preoccupations to reflect realities. However, there exist a lot of dissimilarities. While Ajibade work is situated in the Anglophone context, ours is in francophone. Also, while Ajibade copiously selects and investigates a number of Nigerian writers, ours is on one writer-Calixthe Beyala.

Olayinka (2018) specifically investigates the representation of female bodies in the subversion of hegemonic practices in selected works of Calixthe Beyala. The study examines how female bodies have been object to man's oppression, ridicule and denigration. Female bodies, aside from being regarded as man's property, have become the oppressive tools of taboos, marriage, maternity, servitude, excision, infibulations, and virginity test and so on. Women, therefore, need to resist, exterminate, and overturn these oppressive tools and thereby there is a need to invoke a new female image. The study concludes that Beyalian novels call for radical reordering of female bodies. Beyala radically calls for demystification of cultural beliefs which projected the subjugation of African women in a male dominated society. While this work examines the representation of female bodies in exterminating women oppressions in Beyalian novels, this study examines how Beyala depicts her personal and social realities in her novels.

From the foregoing, it can be observed previous studies have paid little or no scholarly attention to the thematic preoccupations in Calixthe Beyala's novels. This study, therefore, examines the thematic preoccupations in Calixthe Beyala's novels with a view to revealing the personal and social experiences of the author in the francophone context.

### **The biography of Calixthe Beyala**

Calixthe Beyala is a francophone writer and an essayist. She was born in 1961 in Eton from Saa, a city situated about seventy-two kilometers from Yaounde, the capital of Cameroon and was separated from her mother at the age of five but raised by an elder sister in one of the ghettos in Douala. Beyala was influenced by her grandmother's stories and enjoyed the world of energetic women and storytelling, and this makes life unbearable in the shantytowns of Douala. She was fascinated by the stars and they became part of her world of fantasies and literary expression. At seventeen, Beyala migrated to France where she wrote her baccalaureate and became a writer. She published her first novel called *The Sun Has Looked Upon Me* in 1987. Two years later, she founded an organisation that promotes social and political equality for all immigrants and minorities in France. In 1995, she published *Loukoum: The Little Prince of Belleville*.

Among the concerns of Beyala are poverty, violence, subjugation of female characters, sexual abuse, child trafficking, illiteracy, corruption, and so on. Beyala is saddened by the high level of poverty and illiteracy in a male dominated African society. All these are explicated in Calixthe Beyala's works. However, the works of Beyala have received literary criticisms and reactions. For instance, Pierre Assouline and Paule Constant have accused Beyala of plagiarisms because Beyala plagiarises the works of Alice Walker, Paule Constant, Ben Okri and others. Contrariwise, Beyala justified her works by vacillating in her responses that she had drawn from the source which the other writers borrowed from.

The recurrent themes in Beyala's novels have centred on violence, sexuality, and subjugation of female characters in a male dominated society. She is mostly concerned with the subservience, selfhood, female body, authenticity, and performance in Africa. For instance, Nfah-Abbenyi (1997) opines that:

Beyala subverts and politicises not only "woman" but the woman's body experiences. She achieves this by articulating a sexual politics that need not necessarily define womanhood in

relation to motherhood. Identity, subjectivity, and sexuality are intricately linked”.

This suggests that Beyala is uncompromising and she succinctly represents sexuality in her novels. Beyala, through her works, depicts hard realities using a postmodern tool in justifying anti-patriarchal literary style and centres on the themes of violence, sex, and imagery. The works of Beyala contain nonlinear narratives. Her narratives are traceable to Africa oral traditions, which unravel the misery and misfortune of African women in a male dominated society. Beyala’s works challenge the maltreatment, subjugation, oppression, and victimisation of African women. All these, Beyala brought into limelight through the theme of sex(uality) and violence.

#### **The synopsis of the two selected Calixthe Beyala’s novels**

The four selected novels are the following: *C’est le soleil qui m’a brûlée*, *Tu t’apelleras Tanga*, *Comment cuisiner son mari à l’Africain* and *C’est le soleil qui m’a brûlée*

This novel tells the story of a young girl called Atéba Léocordie. Atéba Léocordie struggles towards achieving a self-determination in an urban ghetto general quarter. The environment is known for high promiscuity, corruption, divorce and so on. Abandoned by her mother during her childhood stage, Atéba, the heroine, is raised by a domineering aunt who treats **her niece** and the array of lovers in her life with contempt. Ada, her aunt, seeks to ascertain the position of authority under the guise of family honour by subjecting Atéba to the egg ritual. Ironically, Atéba is still a virgin. Ada publicly brandishes the virginity as if it were a trophy. It is by condoning and reinforcing such cruel practices on women's bodies that adults like Ada could control children such as Ateba. The young woman rebels against what she considers to be a society that has no sense of direction or hope for a better future, and her introspective look at her society confronts this status quo. Her act of defence is seen in the way she presents women’s body. Humiliated and violated by the egg ritual, she seeks solace in her friendship with a young prostitute called Irène. Through this friendship, Ateba depicts the subjugation of women and their struggles to be free from male domination as necessary. When her friend dies from an abortion, she commits a murder that in the rashness of her adolescent mind. She vows to destroy every man that comes her way. She describes man as an agent of women’s subjugation through a violent act that is self-liberate. The recurring statement in the novel is that “God created woman on her knees, at the feet of a man.”

#### ***Tu t’apelleras Tanga***

Raised by a father who orders her not to look at people in their faces, Tanga is a typical example of a woman who refuses “to be on her knees at the feet of men.” Physically battered and psychologically damaged by rape and incest at the tender age of twelve by her father, Tanga was forced to undergo a clitoris test in order to go into prostitution by her mother. Tanga, like Atéba, is determined not to let the tragedies that have become part of her daily life deny her the efforts of self-actualisation in a post-colonial climate of destitution and violence. Women are prostitutes and children are a cheap commodity. Tanga’s story reveals the degradation that children in the African slums are forced to live with. This is an indictment on a society that has lost its traditional family values. Nevertheless, in the bleakness and hardness of Beyala’s stories, there is a persistent glimmer of light at the end of the tunnel. The women and the children that are at the centre of her stories seek out other forms of self-determination. They are not condemned to rot in their slums or sell their bodies in order to make money. What we see constantly is Beyala’s ability to portray tragic

conditions that Africans in the post-colonial era has created something to live with. She also leaves the post-colonial subject with a potential for change.

For instance, Ateba seeks for Irene's friendship. She never judges her lifestyle, but uses the friendship to understand what happened to her own mother and many other women. She also has an ability to dream about the stars, moon, and sun and write letters to other women. In the same way, Tanga's friendship with a group of disinherited but streetwise children brings her closer to children, especially their daily, live realities and experiences. Tanga gives a new meaning to her own existence. This one is different from the constant possession and objectification of her body.

She spiritually survives death through the woman called Anne-Claude with whom she shares her story in prison. Women in Beyala's stories are an intrinsic and inevitable component of a network of support for other women, even though individual women must eventually redefine their own lives.

### ***Comment cuisiner son mari à l'Africain***

The title, *How to cook your husband in the African way*, focuses on the life experiences of Aissatou. The first step of Aissatou who wants to "capture" Mr Bolobolos' heart was to visit Professor Gombi, the marabout of the city. It was believed among the elders of their time that "an African woman who does not have a marabout is like a ship without a compass. She is without a spiritual guide" (MAM Pg43) "Une africaine sans marabout c'est comme un navigateur sans boussole, dissent les vieillards. Sans guide spirituel, elle court à sa perte" (MAM Pg43). Une Blanche qui a déjà compris que la magie africaine peut l'aider à obtenir "Retour dans vingt-quatre heures du bien-aimé-affection-immédiate-fidélité à l'infini-satisfaction sur-le-champ ou rembourse-casse sa bouche de mépris et baisse les yeux." This means that a white woman who understood the African magic would help her to achieve an immediate affection, bring loyalty to the infinitely satisfaction on the spot with immediate effect, twist her mouth with contempt and lowered her head".

Aissatou fell in love with her neighbour, but the man was a womanizer and was always seen with only pretty young girls. The young woman went ahead to prepare a good traditional recipe for his mum to seduce him. The culinary is total, and the menu contains the following: crocodile 'Boa', antelope, the 'ngombo' (draw soup), all served with plantain and ginger juice.

Aissatou's pretext aims to explain how she intended to capture the attention of the young and handsome Bolobolo by not willing to be seduced by the unique physical trappings of the storyteller. However, with perseverance, strength and enticing aroma, Bolobolo eventually succumbs to the culinary charms of his pretty neighbour.

### ***Maman à un amant (MAA)***

*MAA* deals with the issue of adultery among the migrants in France. The protagonist is a boy called Loukoum his father Abdou and M'aryam his step mother who decided to get a white lover and had the desire to learn how to read and write in Belleville. Loukoum, on the other hand, fell in love with a white girl called Lolita. It also exposes the black migrant woman who seeks liberty like the white women. *Maman a un amant (MAA)* is the beginning of an innocent but thought-provoking story of a migrant child, his father and step mother in Belleville.

The narrator in this novel is Loukoum. He recounts the story of his father, stepmother and siblings who live in Belleville, a shanty town mostly populated by African migrants. When M'aryam goes on vacation for a change of environment, everything turns upside down. During the vacation, she falls in love with a white man. After the vacation, she travels home and the relationship continued with her desire for love and freedom not minding the African community of Belleville where she belongs. There she is always reminded about her culture that is the need to reproof her whenever she misbehaves.

The novel is full of humour made by Loukoum and Loukoum enriched the memories of his mother through humorous actions. M'aryam is a prototype of a courageous African mother. Through her, Beyala pays homage to the women who came from Africa, who struggled for survival from their native country coupled with the tasks of taking care of host of children. She has a freckle husband, who is burdened with economic difficulties and the personal aspiration for freedom. After vacation, M'aryam Traoré continues her adulterous life and the quest for reading and writing.

#### **Thematic preoccupations in Calixthe Beyala's novels**

The following are the major themes in Calixthe Beyala's novel: sexual abuse, violence and women and girl-child oppression.

#### **Sexual abuse**

Sexual abuse is one of the themes in Calixthe Beyala's novels. In the novel *The Sun Hath Looked Upon Me*, Beyala presents the story of Ateba, who became conscious of herself at a very tender age of nineteen. Abandoned by her mother, Betty engages in prostitution at the age of nine, while Ateba, who was raised by her aunt was sexually abused. CSB has girl-child abuse as the central theme. The text discussed about a 19-year-old girl who was abandoned by her prostitute mother to go and live with her aunt in an African town of Awu. She was caught between the expectation of her aunt who seeks a higher bride price for her and her fragile violent hold on sanity.

Beyala gives an illustration of sexual abuse in an African Ghetto; in addition, she supported women's voice across racial, religion and class barriers. In the text, the girl-child is meant to sell herself for the purpose of feeding the family through prostitution. In addition, female genital mutilation is part of the abuse suffered by the women and girl-child. Words like "la prostitution" (prostitution), "crime" (crime), 'la deuille' (bereavement) characterise the novels.

### Excerpt 1 :

Hassan est planté devant moi. Il attend sûrement à me soumettre à son désir. Le seul mot qu'il a prononcé suffit à me marquer, à décortiquer toutes les entrées amoureuses j'offre le corps pour nourrir la famille. Je refuse l'habit qu'il veut me faire endosser.

English translation

Hassan stands right in front of me. He is making sure that he will submit me to his desire. The only two words he has spoken are enough to mark me, to take the husk off like “any amorous embrace in which I offer my body to feed the family. I refused the suit which he wanted me to wear’

The words such as “soumettre” (to be submissive), “desire”, (desire), “amoureuse (in love with), “nourrir la famille” (to feed the family) evince the thematic concern sexual abuse of women and girl-child in selected works of Calixthe Beyala. These words depict the unfortunate fate that befell the girl-child and women even after independence of Africa. Beyala focuses her story on African culture practice after independence. African leaders have continued to cherish foreign culture and relegate their culture to the background. The genital mutilation is an inhuman treatment lavished on the girl-child in order to be transformed into womanhood. In the society, woman is regarded as an item meant for sale. This is because woman is part of the man's property. That was the reason Ada, Ateba's aunt, was shopping for the wealthiest man that will marry Ateba. In this situation, the girl-child does not have a say, whatever the adult says is binding on her. Let us consider the excerpt below:

### Excerpt 2 :

Hé dis ! Ça coûte combien ça, ces fringues ?  
Que c'est ! beau tout ça !  
Aie ! Sida ! Sida !  
Bof, non, juste Gono, Gono,  
He he ! Moi j'aimerais bien l'avoir ce poisson-là dans mon lit.’  
TTTp53-54

English translation

Hey! How much did that gear cost?  
Pretty fancy all that!  
Ay! Aids! Aids  
Nah, the clap-only the clap,  
Eh, eh, me, I wouldn't mind that fish!”

The excerpt above illustrates the attitude and ideology of men generally towards a woman. It is as if women are just mere objects; meanwhile, the unmarried ones are regarded as prostitutes. Hence, the above comment is directed to young Tanga who as a single girl went to a beer parlour to drink and relax like men. These are actions generally reserved for men. Immediately the men saw her, they began to make jest of her. Meanwhile, it was her mother who made her angry because she went out and could not bring anything from her previous outing with monsieur Jean. The poor Tanga was frustrated and was left with nothing to eat. It means she has to engage in prostitution before she could feed her family. It is the traditional duty of the parents to fend for their children,

until they are mature and become independent. What can be inferred from the above is that sexual abuse is the recurrent thematic issue in the works of Calixthe Beyala.

### **Violence**

Violence is another thematic concern in the works of Beyala. Beyala is concerned with both domestic and public violence. Women have suffered a lot of violent attacks and abuse in their domestic sovereignty. This shocking revelation in the novel demonstrates the violent illusions about the African woman which negritude literature has undergone. Beyala in this novel has given a voice to those who had experienced the emotional and psychological effects of life in the African ghetto.

The following excerpts adequately portray the feeling, which perverts the selected texts. The feeling of regular insults, assaults, and molestations against Ateba by her aunt and the men that came around, in order to exploit and harass her sexually is exemplified below:

### **Excerpt 3**

Jean se racle la gorge:  
Qu'es tu es venue faire dans ma chambre?  
J'avais un message pour toi. J'étais venue te le transmettre."  
"J'avais un message pour toi. J'étais venue te le transmettre."  
Singe-t-il. Tu ne crois quand même pas que je vais gober ça ! Tu  
me prends pour qui, hein ?  
Mais...

### **English translation**

Jean clears his throat:  
What did you come to do in my room?  
I had a message for you. I had come to pass it on to you. "  
"I had a message for you. I had come to send it to you.  
"Monkey he said. You do not believe that I'm gobbling this!  
You take me for whom, huh?  
More ...

The excerpt above shows the weakness of Ateba and also the emotional fragility and exploitation used by Jean to conquer Ateba's love by forcing her to dance to his tune. This thereby justifies the assertion that "a woman is a weaker sex" in *Tu t'appelleras Tanga* (TTT). Women are exploited and are violently molested by the male counterpart. It is not surprising that Beyala uses some foul language in her expression about how women are treated as second class citizens and exploited because of the African culture that relegates a woman to the background; the woman's place is in the kitchen, a woman is meant to procreate and keep the home tidy, and do home chores. This suggests that women have suffered domestic violence in the hand of men all because of the cultural practices. Men have over the years hid under the canopy of cultural beliefs to perpetrate the evil of violence against women. It must be said that Beyala in her novels condemned any form of violence against women. This is because women have been objects of ridicule and molestation by men.

### **Oppression and subjugation**

Oppression and subjugation are another thematic preoccupation in Beyala's work. Beyala criticised the way women are oppressed and subjugated in the African society. For instance, a typical African man feels that he can marry any woman of his choice, divorce her and remarry at will. When the woman decides to do likewise, she is condemned and regarded as outcast, prostitutes and aberration. This same action, when carried out by women, is seen as a taboo. The African woman is regarded as a commodity that can be used and be disposed at will. It is only the man that takes the decision even concerning the woman. For instance, the moment a woman starts flirting, she is being stigmatised and becomes the topic of discussion at every beer parlour just like the case of Ma'maryam going out with Monsieur Tichit.

One issue that is prominent is the inferiority complex of the African women who migrated to Belleville. They try to bleach their skins and lightened their complexion, which Beyala calls 'blanchissement de la peau'. They also go to the extent of looking for talisman on how to woo their lost lover to come back, after he must have left. These habits found in the midst of most African women are common among both married and unmarried ones. When there is a competition on a man, women especially those who found themselves in a polygamous home cannot function without a marabout or soothsayer.

From Tanga in *TTT* to Ateba in *CSB* through M'ammariam in *MAA* and to Aissatou in *CCM* the author bemoans the oppression of women hegemonised under African traditional beliefs. Beyala further lamented the oppression and subjugation of women to the extent that women have to sell their body to men to feed the so-called husband. For instance, the young Tanga was made by her parents to sell her body in order to feed them. In *TTT* and in *CSB*, the girl child is made to be an object of trade. Here is the conversation between Mother old and Tanga:

### **The indispensable role of women in an African society**

The role of women cannot be over-emphasised. This is because women are the backbones of socio-economic and political developments in any nation. No nation can attain any greatness without the cooperation of women fold. In the novels of Calixthe Beyala, women are presented as indispensable. This is a confirmation to the fact that African female writers are womanists, liberal feminists, or motherists. Unlike Europeans 'radical feminism, African writers sue for peace and co-existence between male and female gender oppressed in Beyalian novels, their impacts are in public and domestic domain cannot be disputed. Also, in Beyalian novels, women believe that men feel they are inferior to them. Therefore, what a woman is created for is to procreate, do the house chores and to take care of the husband and children. Beyala always satirising the beliefs about the gods and the traditions of the African society writes that: "Hier matin j'ai trouvé un oiseau mort sur mon bureau... Et un autre matin un linceul ... Et tel autre collègue a à essayer de m'ensorceler en me dérochant mon mouchoir. (*TTT* Pg, 24). It means "yesterday morning, I found a dead bird on my desk ... And one morning it was a shroud ... on yet another morning, a colleague tried to bewitch me by stealing my handkerchief."

From Tanga in *TTT* to Ateba in *CSB* through Ma'maryam in *MAA* and to Aissatou in *CCM*, the author bemoans the oppression of women by African traditional beliefs. The position of a woman in the society is conditioned by the African tradition. Beyala's criticism was concerned with the injustice meted on women in the male-dominated African society. The most lamentable

situation is that as young as Tanga was, she was made by her parents to sell her body in order to feed them. This is to say that Tanga is the breadwinner of the family. The existence of the family collectively depends on Tanga for survival. In *TTT* and in *CSB* for instance, the girl-child is a sex object. This is explicated in the excerpt below:

**Excerpt 4:**

Mother: D'où tu viens comme ça ?'

Tanga : Sortie

Mother : Tu as ramené quelque chose ?

Tanga : Rien

Il y a des jours avec et des jours sans.

Il n'y aura pas de demain. J'arrête. (TTT, 53).

English translation

Mother: Where have you been, like that?

Out!

Mother: Did you bring anything back?

Tanga: Not a thing"

Some days are better than others. There wouldn't be any tomorrow. I am stopping.

This statement is credited to Mother old to her daughter. Rather than stopping and scolding her daughter from engaging in prostitution, Mother Old encouraged her daughter. Beyala melodramatically describes prostitution in a less trivial way. She normalises abnormalities. This was done to capture the less effects of such acts on the readers.

Another cultural practice in *TTT* mentioned by Beyala is the fact that mother old one is a widow she has lovers, yet she pretends to the children that she is waiting for the time of her death when she will join her husband. At night she sneaks out to join her lover, and sneaks in early in the morning. She did not know that her daughter Tanga is always spying on her. Beyala in her usual manner wants the reader to have a deep thought about women's ordeal in a male dominated world. In *CSB*, Ada whose niece Ateba is staying with, as a guardian, does not have the time to sit, and discuss with her, about her needs or her worries. All she cared about is to get rich suitors to marry her. That is the reason, when Jean came to look for an accommodation in Ada's place, instead of showing him the rooms; she rather resolves to send Ateba to show him the rooms thereby exposing her to sexual harassment. Because Jean used that opportunity to talk to the girl about his type of women and his escapades. Another aspect in *CSB*, Beyala portrayed God as one who is deaf, and old. Because Ateba in her thought was carried away to think in such a way. Bayela, has no time in concealing anything that seems to be like taboos in the African tradition she says the facts the way they are not minding the shame in saying some of the horrible atrocities done by parents exposing their children to early sex. That is what makes her outstanding in her novels.

## Conclusion

This study has examined the thematic preoccupations in Beyalian novels. The novels have revolved the themes of sexual abuse, oppression and subjugation, violence and the indispensable roles of women in male dominated African society. Beyalian novels castigate social maladies and vices that characterise her African native country because of the molestations of women and girl-child and discrimination lavished on black people. The violence was lavished on women by men and by women on women. Women, generally regarded as second class citizen, suffer humiliation and are oppressed. She opined that women should not be an incubator of children but also a national asset to a nation. This is because no nation can attain greatness and achieve Millennium Developments Goal without the contribution of womenfolk. It must be said that violence is a hindrance to the achievements of MDGs and it has silenced the voices of many women.

Though women are oppressed and culturally and socially molested, Beyalian novels described women as indispensable women and integral part of a society. Thus, the novels underscore the roles of women in Africa. Women ensure day-to-day running of home affairs, busy with children upkeep and meet the yearning of their husband sexually. It must be noted that women in Beyala's works are focused and determined and are the epitome of cultural values and virtues. Unlike some of their men counterparts, who are lazy, unserious and nonchalant, women are hardworking, serious and ever ready to carry out any assignment given to them. Women are determined to overcome any frustration and socio-culturally imposed barriers and oppressions. What can be inferred from Beyala's works is that the author is concerned with societal issues, which could be political, social, economic, and cultural. Beyala exemplifies the oppression and subjugation suffered by women in a male-dominated African society.

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