

**Title:**

**The Heart of a Servant Leader within the West Africa context: Interactive Session with Governor Babatunde Raji Fashola, Lagos State, Nigeria**

**Authors:**

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**Abstract:**

In the literature, little is written on the leadership process in organizations in the West Africa sub-region. It is a truism that much of what is known about leadership in West Africa is nothing but the “dark side of leadership” hence many scholars eschew research inquiry relating to the sub-region. However, some few leaders in West Africa especially Nigeria are creating ripple in national and international fora. A glowing example of this category of leaders is Governor Babatunde Raji Fashola of Lagos State who was invited to speak at Harvard University as a result of the impact of his servant leadership style transforming Lagos State of Nigeria on many fronts and facets. Raji Fashola has been adjudged locally and internationally to be making a difference in governance by being a leading light in the Nigerian polity. The main objective of this write-up is to see through the heart of Fashola in his leadership of Lagos State, the most influential state in Nigeria with a population of over 17 million people, and playing host to about 60% of the industries in Nigeria; and contributing up to 25% of the national GDP. Even though, the empirical examination of the leadership style of Fashola employing the Organization Leadership Assessment (OLA) instrument (Laub, 1999) showed significant servant leadership traits of 80.33%, the consequent interactive session with Fashola revealed his heart as a servant leader beyond words corroborating the transformation on ground in Lagos State, Nigeria.

## 1.0 Introduction/Background:

Nigeria is in need of a good leadership model that can leverage on the abundance of natural and human resources the country is blessed with to initiate transformational social and economic changes that West Africa will be proud of. Nigeria got her independence from Britain on 1<sup>st</sup> of October 1960. Nigeria celebrated her 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary as a sovereign nation on 1<sup>st</sup> of October 2010 but through irony of fate twenty nine years out of these fifty years, the nation was under military rule that stifled infrastructural and economic development at all levels of government. It is to be pointed out that many people in national discourse, seminars and workshops have inferred that good and effective leadership is the *sine qua non* to the nation's greatness. One of the Nigeria's novelists celebrated nationally and internationally, Chinua Achebe, also a social commentator, once wrote a book in which he bemoaned the trouble with the Nigerian nation. It was Achebe's opinion that the trouble with Nigeria is summarily and simply put a leadership failure. He wrote inter *alia*: "I am saying that Nigeria can change today if she discovers leaders that have the ability, the will and the vision" (Achebe, 1983, p. 1). Hence, much of what is known in the West African sub-region about leadership, whether in the private or public is "the dark side of leadership" (Conger, 1990). The dark side of leadership portrays much of tyrannical or despotic form of command and control which does the followers or constituents little or no good.

However, there is a ray of hope in Nigeria presently in that we are witnessing few young leaders exhibiting some good leadership traits and attributes especially at the state government level. One of these leaders is Babatunde Raji Fashola, the Governor of Lagos State, Nigeria. Lagos State is situated in south western part of Nigeria with a population of 17 million representing more than 10% of the nation's population estimate of 150 million people (Lagos State Government, 2010). In terms of size, Lagos State is the smallest but in terms of population; it is the most populated state after Kano State in the northern part of Nigeria. It is noteworthy that Lagos State is home to not less than 60% of the foremost industries in Nigeria. The state contributes about 25% of the Nigeria's Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Lagos State is also home to 45% of the Nigeria's skilled labour

force. In addition, the main gateway to Nigeria is through the city of Lagos as about 70% of international flights to and fro Nigeria is through the Murtala Mohammed International Airport (MMIA) (Lagos State Government, 2010). Similarly, movement of people and products through the sea to and fro Nigeria is mostly done through Apapa Port situated in Lagos State (Lagos State Government, 2010).

It is remarkable and pertinent to mention that at least on two occasions, Raji Fashola has attested to the virtues of servant leadership as originally propounded by Robert Greenleaf. First, at the Chairman's week of the popular and elitist Ikoyi Club, in February 2009, Governor Fashola stated that he will not like to bemoan the inglorious past of Nigeria as a sovereign nation stating that that should be a clear reminder of a road that Nigerians must not travel again. He argued further:

“Rather, I will focus on our strength and skills as clear indications of what *we* can do if *we* simply resolve. The leader is only one man. Even if he can do the job of two or more persons, he cannot be more than one person. This is where *our* resolve is important. The choice lies with us. It is people with such resolve, who make such clear choices ‘*that inspire leaders who truly are servants*’ to make those choices possible.” (Fashola, 2009)

Second, as a guest speaker in a leadership summit organized by Movement for Islamic Culture and Awareness (MICA), Fashola described a good leader as ‘one capable of showing clear sensibility to the feelings of the led about critical issues’ adding that the influence of a good leader is not necessarily exerted by the personal authority of the leader but ‘*by being the servant of the community whom he leads*’ (Fashola, 2010). Here again, Fashola attests to the traits of a servant leader in his speech. This is rare among public leaders within the Nigerian context where display of personal power and authority is the order of the day.

Moreover, to add another feather to Fashola's cap, in far away land, the echo of his impact in leadership in the West Africa sub-region seems to be vibrating. It is on record that the impact of Fashola's administration has been felt in such a prestigious institution as Harvard University, USA. This world renowned institution through its African Caucus of the John F. Kennedy School of Government invited Fashola as a keynote speaker at

the “*African Focus 2010*”. Fashola spoke on the topic: “*Re-imagine, Re-define, Re-invent: A new Paradigm for Africa’s Leaders-The Lagos Experience of Challenges and Opportunities for Transformation*”. In his speech, he stated that the best way to seize the opportunity offered by democratic governance is to prepare for it and plan to use it for only the purpose of public good (Ireland, 2010).

### **1.1 Governor Babatunde Raji Fashola’s Profile**

Babatunde Raji Fashola was born on June 28th, 1963, at the Island Maternity Hospital, Lagos to the Fashola Family of Isale-gangan, Lagos. Babatunde Raji Fashola, also a direct descendant of the Shomade Family of Isale-Eko, began his educational career at Sunny-Fields Primary School, Adelabu, Surulere in Lagos State. He then proceeded to Birch Freeman High School, Surulere, Eko Boys High School, Mushin and Igbobi College, Yaba (all in Lagos State in pursuit of academic laurels for his secondary and post secondary education). Thereafter, Raji Fashola, having made up his mind early in life to be a legal practitioner proceeded to the University of Benin to study law. There he obtained the LL.B (Hons) degree in 1987.

Mr. Fashola was called to the Nigerian Bar in November 1988 after a successful one year stint at the Nigerian Law School customary for all law graduates. He started cutting his legal teeth as a litigator in the year 1990 in the chambers of Sofunde, Osakwe, Ogundipe and Belgore. He later joined the law firm of K. O. Tinubu & Company where he rose to become the Managing Partner from 1994 to 2002. It was from this legal firm that the erstwhile Governor of Lagos State, Asiwaju Bola Ahmed Tinubu saw in him the competency of an administrator and decided to appoint Raji Fashola to serve as his Chief of Staff. He resigned voluntarily after serving from August 2002 to November 2006 to contest as a gubernatorial candidate of Action Congress in Lagos State.

However, apparently unknown to many people, Fashola had the opportunity to serve the community and the state in many capacities before and after being appointed as the Chief of Staff to the erstwhile Governor of Lagos State, Asiwaju Bola Ahmed Tinubu. This

really gave him insights into governance and prepared him for the exalted office of the governor of the most influential state in Nigeria-Lagos. It is on record that Fashola, at various times, served in the following capacities:

Secretary, Lands Committee of the Transitional Work Groups; 1999

Member, Panel of Enquiries into Allocation of Houses on the Mobolaji Johnson Scheme at Lekki, 2000

Member, State Tenders Board; 2002 – 2006

Member, State Executive Council; 2002 – 2006

Member, State Security Council; 2002 – 2006

Member, State Treasury Board; 2002 – 2006

Chairman, Ad-Hoc Committee on the Review of Asset Distribution among Local Governments.

It is historic that Fashola was popularly elected as Governor of Lagos State on the 14th April 2007 and sworn in on the 29th May 2007, as the 13th Governor of the state-the youngest governor to be in the saddle of leadership in Lagos State. Fashola is married to Abimbola Fashola and the union is blessed with children. Fashola, by religious inclination is a Muslim, a Yoruba by tribe but he is a much detribalized Nigerian and speaks English and his mother tongue, Yoruba fluently.

He is a member of the Nigerian Bar Association (NBA), the International Bar Association (IBA) and an Associate of the Chartered Institute of Taxation of Nigeria. He is a Notary Public of the Supreme Court of Nigeria, and has been variously honoured with awards and certificates of merit, including the Distinguished Alumnus Award conferred on him by the University of Benin Alumni Association. He belongs to the prestigious senior membership of the bar referred to in Nigeria as the Senior Advocate of Nigeria (SAN). He is the first Governor of Lagos State to belong to the referred group of SAN.

An astute and distinguished administrator, Raji Fashola, has within more than three years in the saddle as the governor won the hearts of many Lagosians (as people of Lagos are

usually referred to) and Nigerians, both at home and in the Diaspora. It is in this regard that more honours have come his way unsolicited. Among such are: Fellow, Chartered Institute of Arbitrators, and Grand Patron, Association of Nigerian Theatre Practitioners (ANTP), Lagos State Chapter. Raji Fashola was also honoured by the Lagos Command of the Nigerian Police for his unparalleled support to the Nigeria Police Force (NPF) just as he also bagged Professional Award for Excellence in the field of law awarded by the Igbobi College Old Boys Association's (ICOPA) of which he is a member.

Moreover, the media, the supposed watchdog of the nation, noticed the leadership qualities and the deliverables of good governance emanating from the Governor Fashola's administration in Lagos State. It is remarkable that within his first year in office as a governor, Fashola was voted The Governor of the Year 2007 according to the LEADERSHIP Newspapers published in Abuja, the Federal Capital of Nigeria. He was also conferred with the Governor of the Year for Infrastructure Development according to the Board of Editors of THISDAY Newspapers. He is also the Governor of the Year 2007 in the judgement of Global Excellence Magazine. In addition, he was also the Sun Man of the Year Award winner for the 2009 in the public sector category. Sun Newspaper is one the favourite national daily (Adesina, 2009).

Mr. Fashola is an ardent sportsman who passionately loves playing and watching soccer. He belongs to a number of social clubs, notably Eko Club, Island Club, Ikoyi Club, Lagos Lawn Tennis Club and Eagle Club, Surulere. He is a Patron of the Lagos Island Club, Yoruba Tennis Club and the Lagos Country Club by virtue of his office as Governor of Lagos.

## **1.2 Fashola's Leadership Style: Servant in Heart and Hands?**

Even though Governor Fashola became the Governor of Lagos State on the platform of the Action Congress of Nigeria (ACN) (an opposition party) on May 29<sup>th</sup> 2007, he seems to have won the hearts of many Lagosians-as residents of Lagos are called-within about a year in the saddle. Unknown to many Lagosians however, Fashola is following the

philosophy and principle of leadership of Robert Greenleaf-the original proponent of servant leadership model. It is significant to note that stated Fashola in one of his numerous speeches, eulogizing the traits of servant leadership as propounded by Robert Greenleaf (1977) stated *inter alia*: “I strongly believe that if there is any challenge facing us in this country and Africa in general, it is the challenge of leadership” (Fashola, 2009) thus corroborating Achebe, 1983 and Kouzes & Posner, 2003. It is the view of Fashola that effective leaders are not at rest with themselves until they make lasting impact on the followers. He went further in quoting Greenleaf in that speech:

“Awareness is not a giver of solace...It is a disturber and an awakener. Able (servant) leaders are usually sharply awake and reasonably disturbed. They are not solace seekers.” (Spears, 2004, p. 3)

It can be inferred that Governor Raji Fashola, as the topmost leader of government business in Lagos State, Nigeria is advocating servant leadership practice as a model for Nigeria’s economic, social and political recovery from the abyss she has sunk to as a nation at par with such nations as Singapore, Malaysia and Indonesia at independence. There are pertinent questions to ask at this stage. Firstly, is Fashola, as number one civil servant, indeed a servant-leader? To what extent is the practice of servant leadership discernable within the Lagos State Civil Service taken the latter as his primary constituency of influence?

Moreover, Kabasakal and Bodur (2004) in Global Leadership Organizational Behaviour Effectiveness (GLOBE) research programme argued that countries with the highest humane orientation value score (Nigeria, Finland, Singapore, and Austria) are among the lowest scoring countries for humane oriented practices. It is a reality that these four countries which are located in three continents namely Africa (Nigeria), Asia (Singapore), and Europe (Finland and Austria) do not practice humane orientation in the leadership roles even though there is a strong desire for humane orientation within the followers. It was the conclusion of Kabasakal and Bodur (2004) that

‘servant leadership may provide a model by which leadership development programs could present to leaders in these countries how to lead in ways that are in line with the followers’ Culture-Endorsed Leadership Theory’ (CLT) (p. 215).

In essence, some scholars have canvassed that the inculcation and institutionalization of servant leadership practice will do well in schools, colleges, private and public organizations in Nigeria since the culture of the vast Nigerian populace as expressed through the human orientation value score is in tandem with such model of leadership according to the Global Leadership Organizational Behaviour Effectiveness (GLOBE) research programme (Ekundayo, J.M. O *et al.*, 2010).

## **2.0 Research Methodology**

It is true that Babatunde Raji Fashola quoted from Robert Greenleaf, the original proponent of servant leadership model but there was no empirical evaluation to assess his leadership style. In the light of this, the writer of this piece with his research assistant conducted a research inquiry between the months of October to December 2010 on the leadership style of Governor Fashola in Lagos, Nigeria. The Organizational Leadership Assessment (OLA) instrument (Laub, 1999) was used in the research study.

The participants were employees of Lagos State Civil Service (LSCS). Governor Fashola is seen as the No. 1 civil servant in Lagos State and also the head of government business. The samples were drawn from five ministries of the LSCS. The five ministries were those working closely with the government to impact constituents' lives in Lagos State. They are: Ministries of Health, Works & Infrastructure, Education, Environmental & Physical Planning and the Governor's Office. The population for the research inquiry was the total number civil servants of Lagos State, N=18,687 and the sample size, n= 433. The sample size was chosen to give a good representation of the LSCS according to consensus of scholars (Sekaran, 2003). It was discovered that the mean score on the OLA was 132.55 out of a total score of 165.00. In essence, this is 80.33% score on the OLA scale justifying a high degree of servant leadership practice by Governor Raji Fashola of Lagos State bearing in mind that this score was arrived at taking into considering all categories of civil servants with varying age, employment levels, educational levels, tenure within the civil service, etc (Ekundayo, J.M.O., 2011).



Thereafter, in order to validate this research study thus satisfying the rigor of research, attempt was made to do a face-to-face interview with the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of government business in Lagos State, Nigeria, Governor Babatunde Raji Fashola. There was something shocking in the course of the interview, he refused to rate himself as a leader which many political leaders in Africa would have loved to do. The interaction sheds more light on the quantitative inquiry especially about the followership inclusion in the leadership which is seemingly innovative in the Nigerian context. The interview was conducted in the afternoon of 1<sup>st</sup> of November 2010 in the prestigious office of the governor, referred to as Lagos House, Alausa Ikeja, Lagos State of Nigeria.

### **3.0 Interview session with the Lagos State Governor, His Excellency Babatunde Raji Fashola, SAN**

*Interview Team:* John M. O. Ekundayo, Researcher/PhD Candidate, Universiti Tun Abdul Razak, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia and Mr. Kehinde Ogunyemi, Research Assistant

#### **Preamble:**

The interviewer appreciated Governor Babatunde Raji Fashola for the access given to conduct the research study within the Lagos State Civil Service bearing in mind that the researcher first contacted the Governor through email which is not an easy terrain for followers to get in touch with most political leaders in Nigeria. In addition, the researcher alluded to the fact that there have many unprintable epithets written and said about Nigeria in the international media and that Lagos State is seemingly becoming a beacon of hope. It appears that many Nigerians in the Diaspora especially in South Eastern nations of Singapore and Malaysia are glad in that at least something good is coming out of our Nazareth called Nigeria. This can be witnessed within Lagos State in areas of Infrastructural Development, Transportation, Judiciary, Youth Empowerment, Employment Generation, Security of life and property, etc.

*In this interview, which is also available in the video format (DVD), the abbreviation, BRF, is used to denote the Lagos State Governor.*

**Question1:**

In your speech at the Chairman's Week of Ikoyi Club, February 2009, Your Excellency, you quoted Robert Greenleaf (the original proponent of Servant Leadership Theory) and also stated *inter alia*: "The choice lies with us. It is people with such resolve, who make such clear choices, *'that inspire leaders who truly are servants'* to make those choices possible." In the light of this, Your Excellency, Do you see yourself as a Servant Leader?

**BRF:** We have been denied by nature the ability to see ourselves. You can see other people but you cannot see yourself; this is a factual reality. You may look at the mirror but that does not still tell you how people perceive you. The cognitive sense of how people perceive you, for instance, what you think about me when your eyes are focused on me, I will never know. In an attempt to answer your question, for me, the public service is for me a privilege; it is not a meal ticket. I have another job; I am a lawyer. I tell myself every time I come here (this office) that this is a momentous privilege which must be used only for the best reason. The best reason is to use it for people's benefit in a way that is structured, that looks at today's problems, helps to solve them and also proactive in anticipates tomorrow's challenges. There must be adequate preparation to meet these challenges. You, as a leader, must recognize that you have a limited time and therefore you must not see these challenges as your sole responsibility to solve and therefore you must prepare a future for somebody to push forward from. So, you must dream dreams as we do now and you must lay plans for those who would take over from you. So, from the first day you come in, you must plan your exit. *In that sense therefore, we tend to run government as a big public corporation with a very competitive edge, like the private sector, recognizing that if we do so we can make profit; not in cash but in the improvement of the lifestyle and quality of life of our people. So, that is what we try to do in running of government business.*

**Question 2:**

Your Excellency, what is your understanding of Leadership? In addition, how would you describe Servant Leadership in a polity?

**BRF:** In the late half of the last century and particularly more so in this century, I think the concept of leadership has become a global challenge for many nations as many of the traditional leaders of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries were the classic models of the time as they were warriors. Those times are now over; societies are now faced with new challenges necessitating a paradigm shift demanding for a change in orientation and perception of leadership. *Essentially, traditionally and even historically, the leader of the people is the servant of the people.* If you domesticate it, it is that person that everybody loves to follow, it is that individual who bears the burden of every assignment, and it is that person you turn to when there is a problem. They exist within a nuclear family, club, alumni, association, and in the same way within a state or country. *The leader of the people is really their servant;* it is that person you normally will contact when you are looking for a friend's phone number and you will have the premonition that he is sure to know the other friend's number. It is that person who comes to your party not to enjoy himself but to ensure that you have a successful party going a step further to ensure that your guests are well taken care of. A leader is therefore a person with sense of a burden. This model can be extrapolated in any sense; within the family and the society at large.

**Question 3:**

How inclusive is the followers' input into the process of Decision Making, Policy Formulation and Policy Implementation in Lagos State within your tenure as the CEO of government business?

**BRF:** *It is the most potent tool that I have used and I recommend it to people who have to lead organizations. First, it is the strongest binding force for team building; and if you do not have a team, you cannot be a superman.* The leader is supposed to find answers to all questions but the reality is that he does not have knowledge in every field where there is a problem. So his decision making must be informed; he must base his decision on information and make a choice between one, two or three alternatives and see which alternative gives “*the greatest good to the greatest number*” as that is the final crucible for decision making. In the midst of so many alternatives, which one gives you the greatest good for the greatest number; because it can not give you the greatest good for everybody? Not everybody will agree... *because democracy is not about unanimity but about the majority.* In Lagos what we try to do, first in terms of ... when we set out with this government for example, one of the first things that I did after my election was to conduct a poll across the state asking the citizens what they expected from the government that they elected. When we got the result of the poll, the next thing we did was to tour every local government based on the findings we got from the poll; and in each local government the feedback we got...people wanted drainage, water, schools, roads, security, employment, etc. We had Town Hall meetings in every local government; and we listened to the youths, the women and the adult men; and from the feedback we got, we came back to match what we had received in paper (opinion poll earlier conducted). But during those Town Hall meetings, we used to ask them, we hear that this is what you say you want, and then they say yes, so that validate that (our initial findings). So we now tell them that out of these four things, we may not be able to do everything in one year or in indeed in four years, you choose the order in which you want us to do them. So in some places where they wanted roads, jobs, water, and security, we allowed them to choose (based on their order of priority) and we came back and involved a plan and a budget that targeted an immediate response to what they had said they wanted. So that is why you will not find a complaint in any of our local governments today that we are doing the wrong thing. If you get the compliant, it will be they want us to complete it on time...we have given them what they asked for. Beyond that we have this *100 Day meetings*, and what we decided to do there was....there was this 100 day mentality from the days of Franklin Roosevelt, and they (people) use it to stampede, in

Nigeria, newly elected officials...100 days, what have you done? *So, of course, I was also subjected to the 100 days mentality but we spent the 100 days planning.* But we noticed that the 100 days funfair ends after the 100 days, but we now make a commitment that for as long as we are in government, *we will use every 100 days to engage with our people and so we have done that for 1,200 days, so that means we have done 12 stakeholders' summit in 3 years plus and we dedicate each segment, each 100 days, to strategic sectors of the society.* We dedicated one to the public service, we dedicated one to the youths, we dedicated one to the artisans and market women/men, we dedicated one to the diplomatic community, we dedicated one to political class, we dedicated one to the media, we dedicated one to the professionals (core private sectors), and I think two in-between, we broke ourselves into teams within the government, and went to meet with the people instead of inviting them. So we had those Town Hall Meetings (THM) in sessions in all the Senatorial Districts of the state where each commissioner was explaining and answering questions about ministries and departments, some of which were not his, so that is the team we have built through consultation; every commissioner can speak of what is going on in the other ministry without necessarily having worked there.

**Question 4:**

How, Your Excellency, will you rate your Leadership performance within the last 3 years in the saddle of government business in Lagos State?

**BRF:** Honestly, I cannot rate myself. You see, even when a country wants to rate its credibility, it consults an independent body like Fitch to say do a rating for us. Right now I still have work to do and it is not finished. I still have about six months to the end of my first term. So I cannot be busy looking at what I have done. I am spending my time looking at what needs to be done. So may be when I have finally finished I will be able to soak it up but right now I don't look at success, my job is not to look at success, my job is to look at problems.

**Question 5:**

In life, there are so many values that people cherish. If you were to choose, what is your greatest value?

**BRF:** It is the ability to tell the truth.

**Question 6:**

In politics in Nigeria sir, as it is, do you think that we can still maintain our competitive edge and still be telling the truth?

**BRF:** *That is what I have done since when I became Governor. I made a promise to the people; I documented that promise as my social contract with Lagosians. I have gone from day after day trying to implement that policy and do more; and every time that there has been a problem, I have quickly gone back to them and I said, oh that thing we promised that will happen in 3 months, we are going to require 5 months to do it. These are the problems...and our principles have been that we made these promises voluntarily; there is no excuse, so we cannot give any excuse for not discharging the promises. So that is part of the attempt to be truthful. So first, we make informed promises irrespective of what the opposition may be saying or doing. We know what can be done, and therefore we are honest with the citizens, because we intend to do it. Many people in many states have promised this and that and when they get to the saddle they find out that they cannot perform. Whether you make a mistake or not, it does not invariably put you in good light with the electorate because they are already cynical and they begin to distrust you. But if you are up front with them, you do what you commit to do that is our greatest collateral here because it gives us integrity. And when they hear us say we will do something they know that we will do it. And that is why they are voluntarily coming to pay their taxes. So in the Nigeria political family, I believe that it is possible, we have demonstrated that here (Lagos State). Nobody can point to one thing that we promised to do and we have run away from; some we have not completed but they would see that we are at it.*

*[The interviewer noted and commented positively on the improvement in the provision of security in Lagos State compared to when he was in Nigeria before travelling to Singapore in 2005. He also appreciated the Private Public Partnership (PPP) initiative of Lagos State government which has boosted development in the state of aquatic splendour]*

**Question 7:**

As the 2011 elections draw close, do you believe the followers will vote for you again as their Governor? And what are the new programmes and projects that the administration will embark upon or initiate in your 2<sup>nd</sup> term in office?

**BRF:** Well as the elections come forward, we are optimistic because we are the popular party here (Lagos State) and we will run a robust electioneering campaign against our opponents. At this point, first is the sustenance of what we have been able to do, we can not afford a set back; that is very important thing to do. In terms of what they campaign issues are, at this time, we are looking to improve on the housing stock, we are looking to improve on the water supply, because we had a short and medium term plan policy for water supply; we have addressed the short term, we have delivered 30 million gallons of water per day under the short term policy; we are constructing new water facilities that is de-centralizing (the existing facilities); we have added another 65 million gallons per day due to improved power generation at the Iju Water Works. Cumulatively, we have added almost 100 million gallons of water per day to the Lagos State water supply but it is not enough. We now need to build bigger water supply and treatment facilities; that is what we want to focus on. Of course, we also intend to develop the tourism opportunities in greater details because our investment in infrastructure has paid off, so we devote more time in developing the tourism economy of Lagos to ensure that we create an economy by doing more for the environment. So these are the issues for consideration in the next dispensation.

**Question 8:**

Your Excellency, you mentioned the issue of housing as one of the vital programmes that you intend focusing on in your next term in office, if voted in by the followers in the April 2011 general elections. I live in South East Asia (I have been in Singapore and Malaysia for over 5 years), housing delivery for the citizens in Nigeria, is one issue that bleeds my heart, knowing that in Nigeria, we are far behind in providing affordable housing for the followers. If you are elected for the 2<sup>nd</sup> term, can you shed some light on what way you will handle this issue?

**BRF:** *(At this juncture the Governor put one of his hands on his chest, and raised his voice).* That is my trade secret; I am not letting it out!

*(There was a spontaneous burst into laughter by virtually all in the room)*

**Question 9:**

What is your Advice, Your Excellency, for the up and coming young leaders in Nigeria because many have lost hope in Nigeria?

**BRF:** I will start by saying that it is a privilege and I say that the public service is an opportunity to decide what you do with your own life. I have that opportunity today. Not only I am deciding what happens to my own life, I am deciding what happens to the lives other people who are not privileged to hold this office. *That is why to serve is a privilege. So it is not a meal ticket; it is a rare opportunity and it must be seized and used for what it is.* Of course, the only way to succeed here is a very brutal and uncompromising hard work. In this economy, my day starts by 7 a.m. and ends at about 3 a.m. That is what it takes. So it is a lot of hard work. So people want to see you, people want to get things done, and you have your own goals that you set and must be kept. And also they are unplanned things that will come out of the good work that challenge your already made plans. So it is just brutal and uncompromising hard work.

*The interviewer ended by appreciating His Excellency, Governor Babatunde Raji Fashola, SAN, for taking time out of his precious time to honour the interviewer*



*and his research assistant. He, in turn, appreciated us as well. The interview took about 30 minutes.*

#### **4.0 Conclusion and Implication:**

It is worthwhile doing this research study as there is a dearth of peer reviewed research articles about the leadership process in the West African context in literature. The face-to-face interview adds validity and richness to the findings of the quantitative study done earlier on the leadership style exhibited by Governor Fashola (Black, 2010). It is gladdening to see that the greatest value that Fashola esteems is truth telling. In the quantitative inquiry carried out through the use of survey questionnaire, it was discovered that Fashola was rated high as displaying authenticity which is one of the core values of the servant leader (Drury, 2004 and Laub, 1998). This is an excerpt from the interview for emphasis:

*“Many people in many states have promised this and that and when they get to the saddle they find out that they cannot perform. Whether you make a mistake or not, it does not invariably put you in good light with the electorate because they are already cynical and they begin to distrust you. But if you are up front with them, you do what you commit to do that is our greatest collateral here because it gives us integrity.”*

In addition, Fashola attested to taking the followers along in the decision making process in the state’s transformation which was corroborated in the leader of government business being rated high in providing leadership and sharing leadership. He argued that a leader cannot make headway by neglecting the followers. Rather, he advocated for team building to pull the latent skills inherent in the workforce together for the organization’s good as the leader does not have answers to all questions.

*“It is the most potent tool that I have used and I recommend it to people who have to lead organizations. First, it is the strongest binding force for team building; and if you do not have a team, you cannot be a superman. The leader is supposed to find answers to all questions but the reality is that he does not have knowledge in every field where there is a problem. So his decision making must be informed; he must base his decision on information and make a choice between one, two or three alternatives and see which alternative gives ‘the greatest good to the greatest number’”*

Moreover, it is surprising that Fashola refused to rate himself in the interview with him: “Honestly, I cannot rate myself”. This is a ‘height of humility’ display by any political leader in the annals of Nigeria’s history. This is also a core value of a servant leader. It is the norm for most leaders in West Africa to blow their own trumpets whenever there is the opportunity to do so.

All said and done, there is correlation between the quantitative and qualitative inquiry thus adding richness to the research and validating the findings. In conclusion, on a national front, servant leadership can be adopted in Nigeria in running both the private and public institutions to serve “*the greatest good to the greatest number*” (in the words of Fashola). Thus it can be stated in a way that Fashola is handling down a legacy of servant leadership in Nigeria; and bearing in mind that Nigeria is the heartland setting the pace for the whole of the West African sub-region, Fashola is by extension bequeathing a servant leadership style for the up and coming generation of leaders in the sub-region.

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