AN APPRAISAL OF PRESIDENT MUHAMMADU BUHARI’S STRATEGIC SILENCE ON SELECTED NATIONAL ISSUES AND ITS IMPLICATION ON HIS GOVERNMENT’S IMAGE

By

Andrew Asan Ate (Ph.D)
Associate Professor/ Head, Department of Mass Communication, Edo State University, Uzairue
Email: dr.ate4life@gmail.com/ate.asan@edouniversity.edu.ng

Obinna Johnkennedy Chukwu, Ph.D, BL
Department of Mass Communication, Edo State University, Uzairue, Edo State
chukwu.obinna@edouniversity.edu.ng; obinnakennedy@yahoo.com

Jamila Abubakar Dauda
Department of Mass Communication Edo State University, Uzairue, Edo State
Sayhi2jamila@yahoo.com
Abstract

This study examines the strategic silence under President Muhammadu Buhari’s administration in Nigeria. Anchored on Shannon and Weaver mathematical model of communication and spiral of silence theory, the study beams a searchlight on instances of President Buhari’s strategic silence, public perception of Buhari’s silence on sensitive national issues; and the implications of his silence on his administration’s image. The study which adopted qualitative research approach recommends that President Muhammadu Buhari should personally cultivate the culture of addressing Nigerians on sensitive national issues to give the people a sense of belonging and trust and that the president should change the negative perception of his administration by reducing the rate at which he depends on media team and spokespersons to communicate to the people on virtually everything.

Keywords: Appraisal, strategic silence, national issues, government image and Buhari.

Introduction

It is generally believed that silence is golden. However, in some situations, silence, can be counter-productive, especially in a political environment where people expect their leaders to address them and assuage their fears on certain issues. In politics, illicit silence is sometimes employed as a propaganda technique in communication, especially when the communicator feels that talking may bring more harm, than good to him/her. Wilson (2005, p.43) contends that a “political leader who refuse to speak on urgent public issues relinquishes to the public and the adversary press the right to read or speak his mind for him.” He added that “sometimes, the mass media may overblow the issue involved in the public
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Originality Report</th>
<th>PRIMARY SOURCES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>13%</strong> SIMILARITY INDEX</td>
<td>1. <strong>punchng.com</strong> Internet Source 4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12% INTERNET SOURCES</td>
<td>2. <strong>docplayer.net</strong> Internet Source 1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2% PUBLICATIONS</td>
<td>3. <strong>sk.sagepub.com</strong> Internet Source 1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5% STUDENT PAPERS</td>
<td>4. <strong>papers.iafor.org</strong> Internet Source 1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5. <strong>ink.library.smu.edu.sg</strong> Internet Source 1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6. Submitted to University of Bedfordshire Student Paper 1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7. <strong>dspace.stir.ac.uk</strong> Internet Source &lt;1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8. <strong>research.icanig.org</strong> Internet Source &lt;1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9. Submitted to Sheffield Hallam University Student Paper &lt;1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Phuong D. Le, Hui Xun Teo, Augustine Pang, Yuling Li, Cai-Qin Goh. "When is silence golden? The use of strategic silence in crisis
communication", Corporate Communications: An International Journal, 2019

20 Submitted to Auckland University of Technology
Student Paper

21 Submitted to King's College
Student Paper

Exclude quotes On
Exclude bibliography On
Exclude matches Off