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Reasons for the introduction of indirect rule in west africa

Preview Preview Last week I wrote many articles on indirect rule in Nigeria. In my last article, I explicitly explained what indirect is, and the reasons why indirect rule failed in Eastern Nigeria. Having done that, I will now disclose to you the reasons for indirect rule in Nigeria. In other words, i will be tell you why the British decided to use indirect rule for Nigeria during colonization.why Indirect Rule was adopted in NigeriaIn light of the above, if you are a student, researcher or scholar, searching the internet to know the reasons for indirect rule in Nigeria, you are in the right place. I enjoin you read carefully so that you will be able to understand the reasons explained here.Meanwhile, if you still need detailed explanation of what indirect rule in Nigeria is, please read my article on "Why indirect rule failed in the east here". Now, let's quickly see the reasons for indirect rule in Nigeria.Also read:1. Cheap nature of indirect ruleApparently, the core reason for indirect rule in Nigeria was because of the cheap nature of the system. Since indirect rule used the local authorities, the colonial masters didn't spend too much money on the administration. They were able to rule through the local authorities by giving gifts and little money to the illiterate leaders.So, considering the fact that they didn't have enough money to run the administration and the fact that direct rule will be more difficult and expensive, the colonial masters decide to use indirect rule because it was cheaper.2. Language difficultiesAnother reason for the introduction of indirect rule in Nigeria was language barrier. At the inception of colonialism, Britain found it extremely difficult to communicate with the people of Nigeria because only few were educated enough to understand. Consequently, indirect rule was thought to be the best system of administration because it helped to solve the problem of language barrier.So, instead of communicating directly to the people, who were obviously not able to understand English, Britain used those who could understand and speak to control the system. By so doing, they didn't went through the stress of speaking directly to the people to convince them of their intentions.3. Participation by local authoritiesKnowing fully well that Nigerians would be more receptive to a system where their local leaders in authority are part of, indirect rule seemed to be the best option for colonial masters at that time.Even though the local leaders were not really in control of the system, Nigerians (the north especially) didn't want to go against their leaders. On the other hand, the colonial masters ruled the country in disguise of incorporating the local leaders into their system. This was undoubtedly one of the reasons why indirect rule largely succeeded in some parts of the country.Also read: Donoghue v Stevenson: Facts, Issues and decision of the courtreasons for Indirect rule in Nigeria4. Lack of British personnelsWhen the colonial masters entered Nigeria, many of them were killed by local diseases in Nigeria. They were unable to stay in Nigeria because our weather condition was not conducive for them. Thus, many of them had to leave. This largely reduced the number of British personnels that were supposed to administer the affairs of the local people.The colonial masters considered that even if they were to use direct rule (that is, the opposite of indirect rule), they didn't have enough personnels to control all the parts of Nigeria. Based on this, indirect rule was adopted in Nigeria so that the few British personnels around, would be able to control the local people via their local leaders.5. Success of indirect rule in other countriesFollowing the success of indirect rule in places like Ghana and other African countries, the colonial master thought that it will be wise to use indirect rule in Nigeria too.More so, it is argued that another reason why the colonial masters used indirect rule in Nigeria was because of the failure of direct rule in many countries. Thus, in other not to fail, indirect rule was the best option for the British.6. Reduction in the possibility of rebellionAgain, Britain adopted indirect rule in Nigeria because they were trying to avoid rebellion by Nigerians. I have stated earlier that Nigerians seemed to be more receptive to indirect rule because the system used the traditional leaders of the people to rule them. This made it impossible for the people to oppose the rule by the colonial masters, as that would be an opposition to their own leaders.So you see, the colonial masters were very wise to have adopted indirect rule. That was the reason why they were not vehemently opposed by the local youths during the precolonial era of Nigeria.7. To preserve the custom and tradition of the peopleAnother important reason for the adoption of indirect rule in Nigeria was to preserve the native law and customs in Nigeria. Unlike the French policy of assimilation, the British didn't want to introduce any system of government that is capable of causing crisis or rebellion by the people. So to resolve this, indirect rule seemed to be the perfect system.So by ruling the people indirectly through their leaders, the colonial masters were able to achieve their aim of colonialism even without introducing a new tradition or taking away the people's original customs and tradition.8. Britain's unwillingness to be involved financiallyEven when Britain was aware of all the benefits they will get from colonialism, they didn't just want to be involved financially. They intended to get the biggest benefit with little capital and indirect rule was the best system to achieve this.Basically, they didn't contribute financially to the system. That was why tax system was introduced in every region of the country so that the people will be able to generate funds that will indirectly be used to administer the affairs of the people again.MUST READ:In conclusion, it is pertinent to note that many reasons contributed to why indirect rule was used in Nigeria during colonization. The points mentioned in this article are just some of the major reasons why the colonial masters thought that Indirect rule was best for Nigeria.For more information about indirect rule, i highly recommend that you watch the video below.Edeh Samuel Chukwuemeka ACMC, is a Law Student and a Certified Mediator/Conciliator in Nigeria. He is also a Developer with knowledge in HTML, CSS, JS, PHP and React Native. Samuel is bent on changing the legal profession by building Web and Mobile Apps that will make legal research a lot easier. Preview Preview Indirect Rule is a system of administration in which the British colonial master adopted and utilised the traditional political institutions of the people (the chiefs) to govern the people under the guidance and control of the British government officials.Indirect rule was the basic principle of British colonial administration which was first introduced in Nigeria by Lord Fredrick Lugard.Reasons for Introducing Indirect Rule in NigeriaLarge size of the country.Lack of personnel.Lack of finance.Language barrier.Preservation of traditional institutions.Fierce resistance by Africans.The Principle and Structure of Indirect RuleThe principle of indirect rule administered by traditional rulers was applied throughout Nigeria and colonial officers were instructed to interfere as little as possible with the existing order. In 1916, Lugard formed a Nigerian council, a consultative body that brought together six (6) traditional leaders including the Sultan of Sokoto, the Emir of Kano, and the King of Oyo to represent all parts of the colony.Lugard used the annual session to inform the traditional leaders of British policies, leaving them with no functions at the council meeting except to listen and assent.Unification meant only the loose affiliation of three (3) district regional administration into which Nigeria was sub-divided (into Northern, Western and Eastern regions). Each was under lieutenant governance and provided independent government services.Indirect Rule in Northern NigeriaOne of the reasons for the adoption of indirect rule was for the purpose of local government, along traditional lines. The system rested upon native courts and native authority ordinances.The protectorate of the Northern Nigeria was divided into six (6) provinces and each was under a British official known as "resident". Each province was then sub-divided into districts and placed under district commissioners.The system of indirect rule was first introduced in the Northern Nigeria around 1906 by Sir Lord Fredrick Lugard when he was a high commissioner of the protectorate of the Northern Nigeria. The system was a huge success in the Northern Nigeria mainly because of the highly developed traditional system of administration of the area. The Emirs were made use of in the administration including a new admiral, who was appointed by Lord Lugard himself.Reasons for the Success of Indirect Rule in the Northern Part of Nigeria1. The Use of Traditional Administration:One of the factors that contributed to the success of indirect rule in Northern Nigeria was the use of the existing traditional system of administration. Lord Lugard recorded a huge success mainly because he used the highly developed traditional system of administration that was already in existence in the Northern Nigeria.2. The Submissiveness of the People:The people of Northern Nigeria accepted the indirect rule system happily and whole-heartedly since there was no tampering with their norms, values and traditions.3. Religion:Islam was the dominant religion the people of Northern Nigeria practiced. Islam, by nature, is a conservative religion, and as a result, helped greatly to make the people of the area more obedient. This created room for the success of the system of indirect rule.4. Well Organised System of Taxation:A lot of money was generated from the taxation system of the Northerners and it was used in the running of the government of the area. Since the British government was not ready to involve itself in any heavy financial responsibility, they retained this system.5. Autocratic Nature of the Emir:Since the indirect rule was a continuity of the Emirs' administration which was autocratic (influential and brutal sometimes) in nature, the citizens still feared and respected them, thereby, making the new system of indirect rule to succeed greatly.Why Indirect Rule Was Not Successful in the WestIndirect rule in the West was not successful because of the following:There was no centralised administration like in the North. The imposition of tax led to riots in the Iseyin and Ikara.Early emergence of educated elite who strongly criticised the indirect rule.Influence of Christianity that eroded the powers of the Obas.Why Indirect Rule Failed in Eastern NigeriaIndirect rule in the East was a total failure due to the following reasons:There was no centralised authority or chief.System of taxation was not practiced in the East. An attempt to introduce it by warrant chiefs led to the famous Aba women riot of 1929 during which thirty-two (32) people were killed.The influence of Christianity and educated elite.Advantages of Indirect RuleIt preserved native laws and traditional institutions.It was very economical.It maintained law and order.It gave citizens a sense of belonging.It eliminated unwholesome traditional practices such as human sacrifice.Disadvantages of Indirect RuleIt excluded the educated elite.It encouraged bribery and corruption.It slowed down constitutional development.Exploitation of economic resources of Africans.It did not train future leaders.It prolonged colonial rule.[Attributions and Licenses]

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