

COLONIAL ADMINISTRATIVE SYSTEMS / POLICIES IN AFRICA

After scramble and partition of Africa, each European country that participated, considered developing a system of administration that could best suit its interests. Eventually, by 1900, four main systems had emerged.

- Direct rule used mainly by the Germans, Portuguese and Belgians
- Indirect rule by the British
- Assimilation applied by the French, Portuguese and Belgians
- Association by the French after abandoning Assimilation.

N.B The Portuguese and Belgians wavered between these various systems.

DIRECT RULE

As the name suggests, it referred to governing territories directly through the local European officials such as commissioners, governors, district officers and directly appointed African chiefs by colonialists. All these were responsible to the Colonial secretary.

The system was mainly applied by the Germans but also by other European powers like the Portuguese and Belgians in varying degrees.

The system ensured total eradication (overthrow) and replacement of indigenous political structures with European political systems.

The system called for a large number of European administrators for its personnel because most of the Africans were illiterate and could not provide the required skilled man power.

Again, with such huge man power, the system required huge amounts of money to pay for salaries of administration.

DIRECT RULE IN GERMANY EAST AFRICA (TANGANYIKA)

REASONS WHY THE GERMANS USED DIRECT RULE

1. The Germans were convinced that it was only through Direct rule policy that they could effectively occupy their colonies, dominate the Africans and promote their superior culture hence the application of Direct rule
2. Direct rule was used because the Germans had enough funds provided by the German government and parliament. Those two greatly supported the system in their areas of operation
3. It was easily applied especially in Tanganyika because much of Tanganyika had the non centralized states with different systems of governance,

therefore, the use of force was one way of fully controlling the societies such as the Chagga, Nyamwezi, Sangu among others

4. Direct rule was applied because most Africans were illiterate and therefore the Germans wanted to use the elites and since the Germans were educated they were used to govern their different areas of control hence the application of Direct rule
5. It was also used because their counterparts the British and French had used different systems of governance hence the application of Direct rule
6. The Germans believed that their policy of direct rule would enable them to overcome African revolts and resistances but instead they ended up facing more revolts. Thus, in order to overcome them, more force was required together with employing their own people to fight the Africans. Hence they also employed the askaris and jumbes
7. The Germans also lacked colonial experiences when they hurriedly occupied territories in Africa without studying the situation on the ground. Therefore due to such, the best system which they could use was direct rule.
8. Unlike the British who used collaboration, the Germans appointed their own officials whose rule was directly felt and therefore causing revolts. This in turn became a favorable ground for the use of force to curb down the revolts thus the use of direct rule
9. Germans were anxious to rule over their conquered territory at the same time they had to give jobs to their unemployed people at home.
10. They also wanted to have a dual influence over their colonies .i.e. political control as well as the exploitation of African resources to the maximum. Therefore, direct rule was one way in which they would have the dual influence
11. In some areas, there was lack of respectable chiefs and therefore German appointed their own who helped them in the promotion of the direct rule. Most of these were puppets who danced to the tunes of the Germans

HOW DIRECT RULE WAS APPLIED IN EAST AFRICA.

1. By 1898, the main pattern of Germany East Africa had been established
2. At the top (apex) of their administration was a governor who was the head of the colony stationed at Dar es Salaam in most cases was a soldier.
3. The governor had wide powers and authority and was directly answerable to the colonial minister in Berlin-Germany.

4. For effective administration, Germans divided Tanganyika into districts and by 1914; they were twenty two (22). Each was under a district officer called **Berzirksamtmann**, a police force and a small army to maintain law and order in the area.
5. The district officers acted as judges and appointed chiefs to preside over courts and administer punishments on their behalf. They also acted as the highest court of appeal. Districts were divided into counties which were further divided into sub counties and sub counties were divided into villages of 20,000 to 30,000 people.
6. The districts of Rwanda and Burundi were left under traditional authority but supervised by the Germany residents. Here, the Germans applied indirect rule.
7. Areas that showed hostility to Germany rule were put under military rule. By 1914, the two districts of Mahenge and Iringa were under Germany military control because they were chaotic.
8. In 1904. The governor's council was set up to advise the governor. It was composed of Europeans only.
9. Below the districts, were Swahili Arabs called Akidas and below them were the Jumbes who were in charge of villages.
10. The Akidas and Jumbes were charged with collection of taxes and supervision of economic developments like cotton schemes. They were also supposed to appoint and dismiss junior African chiefs and preside over local courts.
11. Many local chiefs lost their powers and were replaced by Akidas.
12. It was only in Unyamwezi where local rulers were left with traditional roles but still, they were made Akidas and therefore serving the governor.
13. In other areas, puppet chiefs were created to promote Germany interests for example in Usambara after death of chiefs Samboja and Unyanyembe after death of Isike.
14. Germany administration was characterized by mal-administration, cruel methods of tax collection and forced labour on road construction and communal cotton growing.
15. In areas where there was organized leadership (Kingship), the Germans applied indirect rule, for example among the Chagga.

Successes and failures of Direct rule on Germany East Africa

Successes

1. Although the rebellions failed, they marked the beginning of nationalism in Tanzania. This system enabled Tanganyika to avoid the politics of Tribalism and sectarianism.
2. There was construction of roads and railways to ease the administration. It was to help the while transporting their raw materials and administrators like the Tanga railway by 1894, the Bgamoyo-Tabora railway. These helped them to further connect deeper into the interior and hence extended their rule
3. German colonial government in Tanganyika managed to build towns or urban centers. For instance Bagamoyo, Iringa, Mbeya, Dodoma among others and these became colonial administrative head quarters
4. The Germans were able to establish military bases and many of these became headquarters eg Mahenge and Irings were the military bases and it was from these bases that they extended direct rule to as far as Chagga land, Usambara, Usagara, Sangu among others.
5. Law and order was maintained and in this case the Germans were able to crush several rebellions eg the Abushir rebellion of 1888 in the coastal areas of Tanganyika, Hehe rebellion under chief Mukwawa by 1898 and the great Maji maji rebellion of 1905-07 in southern Tanganyika. They even built some prisons at Bagamoyo where law breakers were jailed hence maintaining law and order.
6. The direct rule policy also promoted unity in Tanganyika but this was done indirectly. In this case, they were able to spread their civilization and also the people adopted western culture hence uniting the people in their areas of operation.
7. In as much as direct rule was used, the Germans also spread Christianity in Tanganyika mainly through the holy ghost fathers who mainly operated in the coastal area of Tanganyika

8. They also introduced education in Tanganyika where by many schools and technical institutes were established. Research was also conducted which enabled them to later establish projects in Tanganyika such as the cotton schemes and many others eg the Amani institute of Agric Research established in the interior of tanganyika hence transforming the economy and also improvements in Agriculture as big plantations were established like in Southern Tanzania they established big cotton plantations.
9. The system was success full in the abolition of slave trade and later the establishment of legitimate trade, thus the Germans were able to exploit the African resources of Tanganyika
10. The Germans were able to win collaborators and these were mainly the Akidas and the Jumbes. These were used ass colonial agents. Besides, there were also some African chiefs who were used by the Germans to fight their fellow Africans.
11. There was provision of employment especially the Akidas and Jumbes. They were got from the coast of East Africa and given the powers to rule over the villages in the interior of Tanganyika.

Failures

1. The African chiefs lost their powers. They were replaced by German officials and they became ordinary men like other people. Others were killed such as chief Mukwawa who was beheaded, Kinjikitile Ngwale of the maji maji rebellion was later killed which late brought in conflicts
2. It greatly undermined African Traditional Religion and therefore the culture fabric was destroyed in Tanganyika. This therefore affected many of the societies that were already decentralized
3. Germany rule was not liked by Africans because it was harsh and oppressive. People suffered under it.
4. There There was forced labour on plantations, roads and other public works.

5. Germans imposed taxes on people of Tanganyika. They had to pay a hut tax of 3 rupees.
6. The Germany policy of Direct rule also led to land alienation where the Germans settlers were encouraged in Tanganyika, took up the most fertile land, opened up plantations but forced Africans to provide labour and also pushed them into concentration camps hence being rejected in areas like Bukoba.
7. The policy did not prepare Africans for self rule, training was not provided to the local Africans but instead the Akidas and Jumbes were to implement the policies of their colonial masters to the Germans.
8. The system therefore intimidated the Africans and made them to remain inferior to the German Colonial masters.
9. It led to the breakdown of tribal institutions and their boundaries. The Germans divided Tanganyika anyhow not considering the various tribes and their extension.
10. Because of their harsh rule, the Tanzanians resisted the Germans which brought about a lot of fighting like of the Hehe rebellion and Maji-maji rebellion. In most cases they used spent a lot of time and money to curb down these resistances.
11. Direct rule led to exploitation of African resources. This was because direct rule encouraged efficiency and as roads were constructed, it became easy for the Germans to exploit African resources.
12. There was loss of land as the Germans had to get where to settle and where to grow their crops.
13. There was complete loss of independence.
14. There was increase in population.

THE BRITISH INDIRECT RULE POLICY IN AFRICA

Indirect rule was a deliberate policy of colonial administration which was based on existing indigenous political institutions, use of existing indigenous authority in power under supervision of colonial officials.

The founder of this system was Frederick Lugard ; in his book "The Dual Mandate in Tropical Africa" which argued that it was a double responsibility of the British to preserve indigenous institutions while at the same time developing them with a view that time will come when colonies would be left to administer themselves.

The system was used by the British in Buganda where it was claimed to be successful. In Nigeria and Gold coast (Ghana), but the success or failure of the

system is a matter of debate because it was used in various ways depending on the communities that were being governed.

The method was applied by Lugard who had earlier worked in India and Southern Nigeria among the Yoruba.

Why the British Applied Indirect Rule?

1. Africans were found to be rich/ economical. Sometimes they would not be paid and at times if paid it was done in kind. They even did a lot of work in order to please their masters. Thus it was economical to use Africans and this saved the British tax payers money.
2. There was lack of adequate personnel to do administrative work. The British officials in East Africa were few in number and the few who were there could not manage big areas and that is why they resorted to the use of African chiefs and leaders.
3. British government did not have enough money to Cater for administrators. In some instances, some African chiefs were willing to do the work free of charge and therefore the British had to use them.
4. The British wanted African chiefs and leaders to act as shock absorbers. In case there was resistance to some of the policies applied by the British, it could be directed to the natives.
5. Africans had a high mortality rate caused by the tropical climate and diseases especially malaria that had claimed a large number of lives. In this case, they feared to move directly into some areas of Africa and therefore had to use the existing African kings and chiefs on their behalf
6. The Africans were also considered a better choice because the leaders knew their people much better than the Europeans. The local leaders spoke the African languages unlike the British who needed interpreters.
7. The existing mode of administration which had a well defined line of authority and this was the centralized system. In this case, the local kings and chiefs were used to promote their administration such that even their subjects felt secure being under their administration. This therefore enabled them to apply the system easily
8. In some areas the African chiefs and kings were given petty items like mirrors, old cloths and other gifts which bound them closer to the British officials. In such circumstances the British further used them to implement their policies as the case was in Sokoto caliphate of Northern Nigeria where

they had their Emirates and Emirs, in Buganda where the Kings were given numerous gifts like Mutesa I

9. It was also a symbol of effective occupation as per the Berlin Conference of 1884-85 where they agreed that any power claiming a territory should effectively occupy it and that's why the British used indirect rule to occupy Nigeria, Uganda and Malawi
10. It was applied because in some areas their rivals had used other systems to administer their colonies. France had used assimilation, Germany direct rule and thus the British chose to use indirect rule.
11. They used indirect rule in order to fulfill the dual benefits that is political control as well as economic exploitation. Hence African leaders were used so as to exploit the available resources.
12. The system had been used with a measure of success in India and due to this, it was also applied in Africa. It was always a British policy that if one method had scored success, then it could be used in other British colonies hence its application in Nigeria, Uganda and Malawi where it scored success.
13. The presence of collaborators necessitated indirect rule in such circumstances, some Africans were very much willing to help the British in their administration like Sir Apollo Kagwa, Nuwa Mbaguta, Semei Kakungulu.
14. In some societies which had strong centralized systems of government like Buganda and the people respected their rulers, the system had to be applied. Direct rule could be opposed by such people hence use of local leaders/ chiefs.
15. In some places like Bunyoro where the British were resisted by Kabalega, they had to apply indirect rule as they knew that direct rule would be opposed hence in such hostile environment, the British could not send their officials but instead used African chiefs and leaders.
16. The British had the problem of language barrier and even lacked the geographical knowledge. In such circumstances, they often used interpreters who at times misinformed them thus they opted to use African chiefs because they knew the native language well.
17. It was applied because of ignorance of Africans. Many thought that the white man had come and would go and therefore offered to work hand in hand with the British. The British capitalized on their ignorance to use them.

18. Unlike the Germans who wanted to use some educated people, the British did not mind if the chief was effective, they could use that one to exploit the resources whether he was educated or not.

How Indirect Rule was applied? (Main features)

How direct rule was applied simply means its application and in this case there were the use of existing native chiefs and kings who also worked hand in hand with the British officials, this system was very applicable in the Centralized areas especially in Northern Nigeria, Central Uganda and some parts of Central Malawi.

1. At the top of the British administration was the colonial secretary for all colonies based in London. He was in charge of colonial affairs and was answerable to the British parliament and cabinet
2. Below the colonial secretary, there were governor generals heading the colonial administration in every colony. In Uganda, Entebbe was the headquarters. These were whites and were answerable to the colonial secretary.
3. Below the governor generals, there were the provincial commissioners heading every province. These were answerable to the governor general.
4. Below them, there were district commissioners heading every district. These took orders from provincial commissioners and worked under their close supervision. Note that the above were all British officials.
5. The districts were further divided into counties each under a county chief. This was an African and took orders and policies from the district officials.
6. Counties were subdivided into sub counties under sub county chiefs. These were also Africans and were answerable to the county chiefs.
7. Sub counties were divided into parishes under parish chiefs. These were answerable to sub county chiefs.
8. The parishes were further subdivided into sub parishes under sub parish chiefs and these took orders from parish chiefs.
9. Below the sub parish chiefs were village headmen heading every village. These got orders from sub-parish chiefs and would pass them on to the common man.
10. All these chiefs i.e. from village headmen to the governor formed a chain of command.

11. Indirect rule worked at the local level from the district up to the village. All these positions were for the Africans. Top positions (central level) were for the British officials).

Qn. To what extent was the British Indirect rule policy successful in Uganda?

In Uganda, indirect rule policy was largely successful in Buganda kingdom but elsewhere, it was largely a failure as discussed below:

1. In line with its cardinal aim, indirect rule succeeded in preserving traditional leaders especially in Buganda, Ankole, Acholi like in Buganda by 1900 Buganda agreement, the Kabaka who was the supreme authority in the kingdom was preserved, in Ankole, the Omukama was preserved and in Acholi, Rwoti was preserved.
2. The system in Buganda also maintained the traditional legislative institutions like the Lukiiko which was the native parliament of the land was preserved; though with some adjustments.
3. The Policy in Buganda also maintained the traditional administrative divisions. Administrative units like the Saza's, Gombololas etc were preserved.
4. Besides, indirect rule also preserved the traditional chiefs. The Kabaka remained with powers to appoint these chiefs who were responsible for maintaining law and order in their areas of jurisdiction and performed of other duties like collection of taxes, supervision of public projects etc.
5. The system also succeeded in maintaining the traditional judicial procedures in Buganda agreement. Traditional court system and laws were maintained though they were gradually adjusted to fit in the colonial system.
6. The system succeeded in cutting British expenditure of running the colony/protectorate of Uganda. By using the native rulers, who collected taxes and maintained law and order, the British were able to cut on the expenditure hence saving the tax payers money in the Metropole.
7. The policy was equally successful in training Ugandan leaders and preparing the Country for self-rule. By maintaining and using the native rulers, they were able to acquire basic skills in modern management which helped them to administer their affairs at a later date.
8. Indirect rule became a useful instrument in suppression of African resistance. By using native rulers and institutions, Ugandans did not easily

realize that they had been colonized; even when it got to know that they had been colonized, the traditional leaders who were given godly respect by their subjects acted as shock absorbers hence minimizing chances of resistance.

However, indirect rule was largely a failure in Uganda, most especially in societies where there was political fragmentation i.e. segmentary societies.

1. In Eastern Uganda, the policy failed because instead of using the native traditional rulers, the British extended Ganda imperialism by employing their Baganda collaborators like Semei Kakungulu was used to overrun Busoga and was later installed the Kyabazinga (warrant chief) of Busoga kingdom. This totally contradicted with the principle of indirect rule.
2. Elsewhere, in Uganda, the native rulers and their institutions were disregarded. Small units of administration presided over by chiefs, clan heads etc in Bugisu, Teso, Karamoja were dismantled and in their place colonial agents especially from Buganda were imposed.
3. In Western Uganda especially Kigezi where the institution of Kingship was unknown, the Baganda collaborators were brought and imposed on the people. This led to the reason of their institutions.
4. Besides, even in Buganda and other kingdom areas, indirect rule was judged on basis of its features. Principles failed because in Buganda the Kabaka was maintained as a real puppet of the British interests in the Kingdom.
5. The traditional legislative i.e. Lukiiko in Buganda, Rukurato in Buganda and Toro were maintained in name but in practice they were subject to control by the Lancaster House in Britain. Any law passed by the native parliament which was not in conformity with the British law was declared null and void.
6. Even judicial procedures were tempered with. Sensitive cases were only handled by the British manned courts like gone were the days when the Kabaka could pass a death sentence.
7. The native chiefs who were maintained became puppets of the gang of chiefs who surrendered Buganda's agreement of 1900.
8. Other institutions like the traditional land tenure system, religion, culture and customs were all compromised in the interest of the colonial policies

like in Buganda, the land tenure system was completely changed by the 1900 agreement in total disregard of the principle of indirect rule.

9. Indirect rule also failed to promote unity of Uganda as a colony hence delaying nationalistic struggle for independence. By promoting and preserving traditional rulers and institutions of the diverse ethnic groups of Uganda, the sense of unity was buried as tribal loyalties over shadowed national allegiance. Regional and district nationalism became a common phenomenon.
10. Indirect rule failed to give Africans/ Ugandans a chance to manage their affairs. In most cases, top local government posts were occupied by the white personnel like most district commissioners were British officials thus African traditional rulers were only preserved for convenience.

INDIRECT RULE IN NIGERIA AND HOW IT WAS APPLIED

- The brain child of indirect rule in Nigeria was Captain Fredrick Lugard who introduced it in 1900.
- On top of the administrative structure was the secretary for colonies/ Minister in charge of colonies based in London.
- Below him was the governor in charge of northern Nigeria and the other in charge of Southern Nigeria. Below was the district commissioner who was purely whites.
- In northern Nigeria where it was first applied the Islamic centralized state of the Sokoto Caliphate created by Uthman Dan Fodio was preserved. At the top was the Sultan/ Caliph who was the overall King and chief political authority.
- He was retained as the chief political authority with powers to appoint officials under him. However real authority was in hands of the governor who reserved the powers to dictate the colonial policies.
- Below the King/ Caliph were provincial governors known as Emirs. These continued to be appointed by the King. They collected taxes, maintained law and order and day today administration of areas under their jurisdiction. However they were more answerable to the governor who had powers to dismiss them especially if their performance was lacking in implementation of colonial policies.
- Under indirect rule, in northern Nigeria, the native customary law based on the Sharia was retained. Islam remained the religion of the land and Islamic Courts were equally retained presided over by Moslem judges known as

Qadis. However, the native law was gradually moderated to suit the British system i.e. any law passed by the native Court which unfavoured the Colonial policy was declared null and void.

- Elsewhere in Nigeria, Indirect rule was applied by attempting to introduce the Emirate system of Northern Nigeria. Among the Yoruba, the power of Alafin of Oyo was consolidated among the obas chiefs but it was resisted since the authority of the Alafin was already fading.
- Among the Ibo of Eastern Nigeria, the British attempted to create warrantee chiefs. Unfortunately, because of the traditional Ibo democracy based on the village, the system was resisted and ended up failing miserably.
- In northern Nigeria, among the educated people of Egbaland, Abeokuta and Lagos, the British tried to introduce a system similar to what they had done in northern Nigeria but since they were not used to such conservative and dictatorial elements, it failed completely.

Successes of Indirect rule system/ policy in Nigeria.

1. The Fulani Emirs and Chiefs were left in their administrative positions but under the supervision of British officials like R.D.O's and commissioners.
2. Emirs continued to develop local projects like markets, schools, railways, agriculture and health and even paid the local emirate staff.
3. The Emirs continued to administer justice through emirate courts of law like they could flog, fine or imprison but the British officials could regulate.
4. The Fulani Emirs supervised public works like cutting grass, roads, agriculture and others acted as shock absorbers.
5. They could appoint chiefs to help in day to day affairs but with advice of British officials.
6. Resistances were minimized, law and order was maintained.
7. British education was promoted
8. Language barrier problem was solved.
9. The area was effectively occupied by the British. Lower Chiefs commanded respect.
10. It solved the man power problem.
11. Minimal costs were incurred by the British administration in Nigeria.

Failures of the system/policy/mythical evidences of indirect rule

1. Disrespect for the traditional African leaders it had promised to preserve. Like in Northern Nigeria, Lugard deposed some un co-operative Emirs and Caliphs and substituted them with his appointees.
2. Africans were conditioned to serve without any willingness to serve.
3. It was applied only at the local government level. The top managerial officials like the Colonial governor, provincial and district commissioners were all white men.
4. It undermined the establishment of Islamic code of conduct in northern Nigeria like in 1914; the native court ordinance stripped off the Sultan of Sokoto Caliphate his judicial powers.
5. It failed to work in the segmentary societies for example among the Ibo 'Warrant chiefs' were appointed who were artificial and therefore rejected in these communities.
6. The system isolated the elite Africans in the colonial administration and yet it purported it was training Africans to manage their own affairs.
7. In some areas of Nigeria, British used the Frontier Police to implement the indirect rule system. This is a testimony that it was a failure.
8. The central government was exclusively British for the fear of economic exploitation sabotage.
9. Destruction of unity among the West Africans like powers of Caliph increased at expense of Emirs.
10. Northern Nigeria, Sokoto Caliphate system of administration which was extended to other parts of Nigeria was more of direct rule than indirect rule hence a failure.
11. Africans were not wholesomely royal and submissive as many resisted. The British taxation system and forced labour.
12. The culture of Nigerians was not preserved as for example in religion and language.
13. The British carried out land alienation; land was not preserved in its Nigerian traditional control.
14. Then African chiefs employed in indirect rule system well not well trained on how to handle British policies hence a failure.

Thus in conclusion, to a large extent, indirect rule was a failure in Nigeria as it violated most of its set objectives.

THE FRENCH ASSIMILATION POLICY IN WEST AFRICA

- Assimilation was the policy meant to mold the colony in the exact image of the colonial power. It aimed at creating people similar to the French in all aspects except colour. The culture, language, law, civilization and all aspects of life were to be French and not to be Africans.
- The word assimilation comes from a French word 'assimiler' which means to cause to resemble. This policy aimed at turning people of French colonies into French citizens by substituting their indigenous culture with that of the French.

The policy had three important features:

- Administrative assimilation; the phenomenon of establishing administrative identity between colonies and France.
- Political assimilation; sending representatives to French institutions such as parliament.
- Economic assimilation; advocated for integration of economies with those of Metropolitan France.

Why did the French adopt this policy?

1. It was thought best way of undermining some backward tribal tendencies in French West Africa-To erase barbaric West African cultures.
2. Long contact of the French in coastal areas of Senegal i.e. towns of Goree, St. Louis, Rufisque and Dakar. Inhabitants there had been detribalized. People were thought to have adopted French culture and civilization.
3. The policy had economic advantages to France like properly assimilated people would produce raw materials for French industries and offer market, useful for investment as well as source of employment to the French hence the adoption of the policy.
4. French revolutionary ideas of Liberty, equality and fraternity were regarded as applicable to all men everywhere. Reason. This is reason as to why French parliament passed a law granting to those entire practical and civil rights of French citizens.

5. They also believed that, their civilization was the best in the world and that, it was good for their colonial subjects. This was the view of social Darwinism.
6. Like the Portuguese and Belgians, the French for along time regarded their colonies as their overseas colonies and extensions of the French Government and not merely colonies for imperial exploitation.
7. The French wanted to create a class of African Frenchmen who would help in developing their colonies socially and economically such class would be employed in education, business and administration.
8. French policy had political advantages for the French. A successful assimilation policy would enable France to get permanent overseas colonies for political advantages such as political glory and prestige.
9. They also wanted a uniform administrative policy in their French African colonies. Through this, any Administrative officer would work in any colony. This would therefore enable them rule out confusion in their colonies hence the adoption of Assimilation policy
10. The French wanted to create allies. They thought that their subjects in the colonies if assimilated would also support France in times of trouble. This was so after the Franco-Prussian war of 1870-71 where France was humiliated
11. They also thought that assimilation was a cheap exercise. This was based on the belief that the French Government could not use a lot of resources on training Administrators. Therefore they believed that the assimilated people would be easy to govern hence the adoption of the policy.
12. It was also used due to the circumstances that prevailed in the region of occupation. Unlike the British that had acquired large centralized institutions, the French had occupied the hostile communities such as the Mandika state hence opted for Assimilation as a basis of effective occupation.
13. The French used Assimilation because their counterparts had used other systems of Administration. Eg British used indirect rule while the Germans used Direct rule hence the adoption of Assimilation policy
14. Desire for adequate staff or personnel to assist them in administration. In this case the assimilated people expected to speak the French language, to take on the French culture and more so they would be understood. This therefore encouraged the French to use the Assimilation policy

15. In 1883, the policy of assimilation gained ground in the French parliament where they passed a law granting citizenship to all the French people born in French colonies. This law gave the assimilated full political and civil rights, thus with the law in place, it further promoted the policy and hence its adoption.

THE STRUCTURE /FEATURES OF FRENCH ASSIMILATION ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY IN AFRICA

The French used a centralized system (federalism) in their administration with its base at Dakar in West Africa. This was because their territory from Senegal to Congo was a consolidated block of land.

1. At the top, there was a Secretary for colonies resident in Paris. He was responsible for all colonial issues and therefore answerable to the French cabinet and Parliament.
2. He was followed and assisted by a governor General whose head quarters were at Dakar, the Capital of Federal system in West Africa. He was mainly advised by French officials
3. French federation was divided into different colonies each under a Lieutenant governor who reported to the governor General. He was usually in charge of the day to day political affairs and the administration of the subjects.
4. Again each colony was divided into provinces called 'Cercles' each under a French provincial ruler called 'Commandant de cercle' who was answerable to the Lieutenant governor and in order to have his work done he was backed up by a parliamentary police force.
5. Below him were 'chefs de subdivision' at the district level. These were equivalent to the district commissioner in the British system.

N.B Important to note that all the above posts were reserved for the French nationals.

6. Below the subdivision chiefs were the cantons, the highest post an African could hold. These were basically African administrators who could reach out to the grass root people.

7. The cantons were divided into locations and sub locations and each of these had a chief

8. At the bottom of the structure were the villages each under a village chief. Thus the sub location chiefs and village chiefs played a similar role and always reported back to the Canton chiefs

The Canton chiefs and his sub chiefs had the responsibility of conscripting Africans into the Army as well as implementing forced labour. With such a system therefore, Assimilation policy was applied and it succeeded in Senegal although failed in other colonies.

CASE STUDY; WEST AFRICA SENEGAL

Senegal was chosen as a nursery bed for the French policy of Assimilation because the French merchants had operated there for quite a long period of time. While they were there, the French language would be spoken by the majority of the Senegalese merchant class. It was against this background that the French later adopted this policy as a way of compensating their loss of Alsace and Lorraine in Europe during the Franco-Prussian war

In Senegal, Assimilation was practiced in four major regions of Dakar, Goree, St Louis and Rufisque hence the name Qatre communes

HOW THE ASSIMILATION POLICY WAS APPLIED IN SENEGAL

1. Through the granting of the French citizenship. The French parliament confirmed French citizenship by fulfilling the following conditions
 - One had to be absolutely loyal to the French government and one's loyalty would be used as a yardstick to become a full citizen
 - One ought to have served for a number of years in the colonial civil service. That's about 10 years
 - One also had to be fluent in French speaking and reading and therefore had to abandon the native language
 - One also had to be 18 years old, had to be rich, monogamous and a staunch catholic.

Through the above conditions, one would become a full citizen and in the process it enabled the French to implement the assimilation policy in Senegal.
2. Assimilation was also implemented through French representatives in parliament. In this case, in 1848, the French parliament passed a law that required the Senegalese to elect one member to represent them in the

parliament. This gave them a fair hearing in the French parliament. Thus, in order to fulfill the representation, Blaise Digne was elected as the black French man representative in the French parliament representing all the black French men of the colonies

3. The Senegalese were divided into two classes that's the subjects and the masters commonly known as citizens. The citizens were those who were fully assimilated while the subjects were the un privileged, segregated and uncivilized.
4. Senegal as a model of French local government was divided into 4 communes that's Dakar, Goree, St Louis and Rufisque. These communes were under the French officials and these were based in Dakar and Paris. The communes were subdivided into Cantons, locations, sub locations as well as villages and this enabled them to reach out to the grass root people and therefore assimilation was implemented.
5. The system was also implemented through French education system in case French education was extended to the communes and in order to implement the education system, the French officials used missionaries. The missionaries provided elementary education which was left in the hands of the catholic mission. However secular education was later introduced.
6. Under the French law and through political institutions, the assimilation policy was implemented these resembled those of France for example councils ie municipal, town as well as general councils. All these councils had leaders to govern them and this was done through the application of the same law. However, the French law was above the traditional law
7. It was also applied through the use of assimilators. These were the Africans who had mastered the French culture as a result of their long interaction with the French merchants and more so even with the French way of life. They were used to teach French history, literature.
8. Through the use of a new set of African chiefs known as the warrant chiefs. These were appointed by the French officials in to positions of authority after getting assimilated. It should be noted that the warrant chiefs were not in traditional African sense. They were just imposed to help in mobilizing labour, recruit soldiers and even supplement the French administration
9. The system was also implemented through the integration assumption. In this case all finances and resources were integrated and shortly after a

budget was provided on how resources would be utilized. This was helpful to their part because they were able to provide salaries for the government officials, construct roads, hospitals and other facilities. Since the finances were controlled at Dakar the application of the system became easy.

SUCCESS OF FRENCH ASSIMILATION POLICY IN SENEGAL

1. In the first instance, citizenship was granted. For Senegal, inhabitants of the Communes of Goree, Dakar, Rufisque and St. Louis were granted citizenship by virtue of birth. Africans in those communes later came to be equipped with French history, literature and morals which were some of the attributes of assimilation consequently; pride in French culture was attained by many though how this was measured is not known
2. Also, it is in Senegal that the elective principle was implemented. For example in 1914, a Senegalese called
3. 'Blaise Diagne, was elected a representative to the French. It should be noted however that, this elective principle was effected long after 1844 when the Senegalese were declared French citizens. In addition, Diagne went to the lower and not to the upper chamber of the French parliament. It is therefore not known how long the Africans would take to be fully assimilated into the French political system.
4. From the onset, the French insisted on the use of their language. The French was used in administration even when dealing with Africans. In schools, no teaching was done in vernacular such that African children were forced to learn French from the day they entered school. Even African chiefs were chosen more for their ability to speak French than for any other qualities. In this way, the French were successful in passing on their cultural imperialism.
5. In addition, the system of law used was native justice but all the same, the French administrators came to wield great judicial powers over Africans. Apart from minor civil cases that were handled by Africans, all criminal cases were under the control of the French. In this way, the French were successful in implementing their judicial code.
6. In pursuance of their policy of equality, freedom and liberty for all races, the French administration committed itself to the abolition of all forms of

slavery and slave trade. Although the French have been accused for having substituted this earlier system of slavery with another form of slavery, forced labour at least by 1914, human trafficking had been out of French West Africa.

Failures of Assimilation

1. In the interior, it was discriminatory and defeated its aims. It considered some Africans as French citizens while others as French subjects, a fact that explained their varying privileges and opportunities from the French government. This discredited the policy both in France and in West Africa.
2. The French feared economic and political competition with assimilate Africans. If many Africans acquired citizen status, they would demand for self determination. There was also a possibility of dominating French government policy through their representation in the national Assembly.
3. The policy was very expensive and considered wasteful of tax payers money in France. The French policy of indirect rule where it was applied proved cheap and more favourable for colonial exploitation.
4. The policy had opposition from within West Africa. The Muslim communities were hostile to ideas of Catholicism and monogamy. The French found out that, deeply rooted African cultures and political institutions in some states could not easily be overthrown in favour of assimilation.
5. The policy was attacked from all corners of France. Scholars in France called it unwise and unrealistic since it was impossible to convert Africans into Frenchmen. Africans were people of distinct races which needed to be respected.
6. The system of education established did not encourage assimilation because it was in hands of missionaries whose main aim was evangelization.
7. The policy was attacked for lacking foresight. It was argued that, it contained seeds of liquidation as the assimilated would deprive the French of the colonial subjects for exploitation.
8. Due to limited communication owing to the under developed infrastructure, in terms of roads, railways, telegraph lines and the like considered decision making was left to the Lieutenant governor of each of the colonies. There was also lack of control of lower African chiefs such as

location and sub-location. These were greatly underpaid which made them develop extra judicial despotic conduct.

➤ **Similarities and differences between British and French colonial administrative policies**

Similarities

1. In both, policy making was done at home by the metropolitan governments. The parliament passed their policies to the colonies through the secretaries for colonies. Local authorities made policies concerning minor issues.
2. Both established new laws based on home judicial systems like the French code Napoleon and British judicial system were used in settling issues in the colonies. They both undermined the local authorities and they regulated punishments to local authorities in regard with European statute.
3. Both systems employed Africans at lower levels of administration like all posts from the district commissioner to governor general were filled by the British and pure Frenchmen.
4. Both systems were built on fundamental misconception that the Africans were backward in the level of civilization and the colonial administrative policies were designed to develop Africans.
5. Both had legislative councils. These institutions were initially established by the British but later the French also developed them. They were meant to enact some laws and take them for approval in metropolitan colonial offices.
6. Both failed to achieve what they were set to do. Indirect rule failed to preserve traditional institutions while assimilation was abandoned in favour of association.
7. Both systems used indirect and direct rule. They employed traditional chiefs to govern on their behalf. Whereas there were no recognized chiefs, both appointed their own chiefs (warrant) thus making it direct rule. Like in Eastern Uganda, the British used direct rule and in West African towns like Kaduna, Lagos, Freetown.

8. In both, chiefs were not answerable to their colonial masters. The French and British had no respect for traditional authority in African societies. The French had no respect monarchs, they undermined them. Similarly, the British destroyed powers of some African leaders like Asantehene in Asante empire.
9. Both survived on colonial exploitation based on taxation and forced labour. In both, African local leaders were used to collect taxes and supervise forced labour.

N.B Against this background of similarities, some historians have asserted that "the differences between indirect rule and assimilation were more of a myth than reality. In both Africans were used as mere functionaries of colonial rule. The colonized people suffered almost similar consequences.

Differences

1. The French established a highly centralized and authoritarian administration. The French administered all their colonies as a federation under a Governor General at Dakar under whom was a hierarchy of officials in each colony. The British on other hand established a separate administration in their colonies. i.e. British colonies were administered independent from the other and got orders from the secretary for colonies based in London.
2. Assimilation was more expensive in terms of man power requirement and financial costs than British indirect rule. The French emphasis on employment of French citizens including those who were assimilated was more costly than British employment of traditional or local chiefs who in actual sense paid himself through locally generated revenue.
3. The British tried to use indirect rule and respected traditional customs and leaders while the French tried to use assimilation policy that never had such characteristics.
4. The British respected traditional methods of choosing chiefs and respected rules of succession. The French on the other hand chose their own leaders whom they posted in French West Africa. Hence local chiefs under French were nominees who lacked traditional approval- From French citizen group.
5. They differed in their attitude towards colonies. While the British regarded them as separate entities, the French regarded them as overseas provinces.

6. The French policy led to creation of French citizens while the British made no attempt to turn Africans into British. Assimilated Africans enjoyed all the rights and privileges of French citizens. Africans were also allowed to have representatives in French national assembly. British system of administration did not provide for anything of this nature.
7. Unlike assimilation that aimed at destroying African cultural and social institutions, indirect rule did not attack African cultures and social life at least directly. This was probably because of British superiority complex and fear of devastating African society in process of cultural intermixture. British had respect and fear of African cultures.
8. African chiefs under the British enjoyed more power and authority than those of the French. Whereas both used chiefs to collect taxes, the British allowed some control of finance to local chiefs while the French took away all the revenue and used it the way they chose.
9. In French West Africa, all revenue was collected to the central/federal pool (treasury) at Dakar. It was the duty of the governor General to use it for the benefit of the colonies. On the other hand, each colony in British West Africa managed to own financial resources. Therefore, the development of each colony depended on the revenue collected. In French West Africa, development was more equitable because revenue was shared according to the need of each colony.
10. The British unlike the French, did not attempt to pass laws in English legislature for all their African colonies or protectorates. Instead, the governor of each territory drew up laws according to the area under his authority. However, it is vital to recognize the fact that, laws made in British colonies and protectorates had to be approved by the British secretary of state for colonies based in London. He could pass it, amend, criticize or cancel it down.

SAMPLE QUESTION

1. How unrealistic was the policy of Assimilation in West Africa?
2. Why and how was assimilation policy applied in West Africa?
3. Account for the failure of assimilation policy in west Africa
4. To what extent was the assimilation policy in West Africa successful?

5. 'Assimilation policy in West Africa sowed its own seeds of destruction' Discuss
6. Compare assimilation policy with the British policy of indirect rule
7. Why and how was indirect rule applied in west or East Africa?
8. 'Indirect rule was more of a myth than a reality' Discuss the validity of the statement with reference to either Nigeria or East Africa
9. 'Assimilation policy and indirect rule were different in meaning but similar in purpose.' Discuss
10. Account for the failure of indirect rule in Africa.

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