

How did Britain colonize Nigeria?

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Britain utilized three strategies in order to gain their rise to power in the colonization of Nigeria. Colonialism, “is the act of moving a significant number of citizens from a home nation into a new conquered territory”. As aforementioned they successfully did so by three means, one is by coordinating treaties. Seizing power and gaining control, British successfully established treaties with the chiefs of the Niger Delta, which ultimately allowed them to proclaim the central and eastern coast of Nigeria as protected land by the British, ultimately granting them power to control the oil in that area.

This in turn led to large European merchants coming over to partake in the palm oil industry, ultimately leading to the British enslaving the Nigerian people in order to produce the oil and demonstrate their power over them. Not only were the British exerting power, but their influence had grown as the Church of England’s Church Missionary Society promoted their own healthcare and education, which demonstrates another tactic of the British to colonize Nigeria, by means of converting Nigerians to Christians (Soomo, 2013).

The people of Nigeria, however, did not comply willingly. They continued to flex resistance until their freedom from British rule was gained. However, through punishment of the law, those who resisted were forced to build houses for colonial officers, roads to be able to move trading goods from Nigeria to Western parts, and rebellious men were either surrendered by chiefs or given monetary punishments in an attempt to keep Nigerian rebels at bay.

Despite using inferior firepower and weaponry, Nigerians resisted by means of violence, refusing to sign treaties and negotiation. Smaller wars and guerilla warfare became the tactic of Nigerian rebel groups. The Ekumeku, a rebel force operating under no specific authority figure, met secretly in different locations to devise a plan of attack in order to rid their people of dominance under British rule, and when ultimately spreading became a threat to the British, one of many rebel groups seeking freedom from British reign.