NAME: EFFIONG BLESSING EDET

COURSE: LEGAL METHOD

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LEVEL: 100

***Secondary sources of law***

These are background resources that explain, interpret, analyse the precepts and content of the law. The secondary source of law is regarded as a good way to begin a research such that there are citations to primary sources to enhance researches with legit explaining. Therefore the secondary sources of law help in breaking down the law to the understanding of everyone despite the class. Secondary sources of law are made in use when there are no primary sources of law to reckon on. These sources of law play very important roles in the judiciary like the making judicial precedence available through law reports, determining authorities. Secondary sources of law are also persuasive and authoritative (especially the law reports) and they can’t be cited but the primary sources can be cited. In the court where cases are being brought, one party is made to present primary sources of law while the other party of law presents the secondary sources of law which is afterwards decided by the scale of justice.

Example of the secondary sources of law in Nigeria includes:

1. Law reports:

These are series of books that contain judicial decisions and opinions from the selection of case law in agreement with the court (Supreme Court, court of appeal and high court or tribunal court). Court opinions are legally binding under the rule of judicial precedence and these are for countries that practice common law like Nigeria. The first law report in Nigeria was N.L.R (Nigerian Law Report) which commenced publications in 1916 but covered the period from 1881-1955. Other law reports includes: N.W.L.R (Nigerian Weekly Law Report), ALLNLR (All Nigerian Law report), SCNLR (Supreme Court of Nigerian Law Report) and so on.

1. Legal periodicals:

Legal periodicals consist of article written by judges, lawyers, professors and so on about areas of law in the society. Examples of these periodicals includes law journal, law review.e.t.c.The importance of this is to highlight changes and development in the existing law and provide citations to significant.

1. Treaties and textbooks:

These are written works dealing formally and systematically with the political subjects containing important facts about the laws of the community and also invoves in the breaking down of these facts in order to understand. The textbooks als assist especially for lawyers and practictioners as their research could be enhanced with the help of these materials.

Other examples of secondary sources of law include:

1. Casebooks; as the name implies it stores cases that has been dated back till date
2. Encyclopaedias; they help a lot in research purposes
3. Law restatement and so on