**SECONDARY SOURCES OF LAW**

Secondary sources of law are background resources. They explain, interpret and analyze. the secondary sources of Nigerian law are the indirect ways through which we get our law. Say for law reports, secondary sources of Nigerian law are of persuasive authority in the law courts. Law reports are only authoritative due to the fact that they serve as the vehicle through which judicial precedent is carried. The distinction between primary and secondary sources of law is very useful in determining authorities to follow in the law courts. If a case is brought before a court and one party uses a primary source of law as his authority while the other makes use of secondary sources, the scale of justice would tilt in favor of the person who presents primary sources of law. Secondary sources of law are only made use of whenever there are no primary sources of law to fall back on.

Examples of secondary sources of law includes :

* Law reports: series of books that contain judicial opinions from a selection of case law decided by courts. When a particular judicial opinion is referenced, the law report series in which the opinion is printed will determine the case citation format.
* Text books and treaties: a formal written agreement entered into by actors in international law, namely sovereign states and international organizations. A treaty may also be known as an international agreement, protocol, covenant, convention, pact, or exchange of letters, among other terms.
* Periodicals, journals and legal digests: A periodical is a publication that issues articles, etc. periodically throughout the year. A digest is essentially an index to case law; it takes the headnotes that summarize the points of law discussed in each case and organizes them by subject.
* Case books: A casebook is a type of textbook used primarily by students in law schools.Rather than simply laying out the legal doctrine in a particular area of study, a casebook contains excerpts from legal cases in which the law of that area was applied.
* Legal dictionaries: A law dictionary is a dictionary that is designed and compiled to give information about terms used in the field of law.
* Newspapers ; a printed publication (usually issued daily or weekly) consisting of folded unstapled sheets and containing news, articles, advertisements, and correspondence.
* Law wikis and blogs : A website that displays postings by one or more individuals in chronological order and usually has links to comments on specific postings.
* Law firm and professional association newsletters: a bulletin issued periodically to the members of a society or other organization that discusses matters relating to the law.

**BENEFITS OF SECONDARY SOURCES OF LAW IN THE LEGAL PRACTICE**

* Secondary sources are the first step in the research process for a number of reasons: they save time, direct you to the key primary resources, help you get up to speed quickly, and give insight into how to frame your legal argument and strategy.
* As a starting point, secondary sources save an invaluable amount of time by directing you to the most relevant cases and statutes, summarizing the law, and allowing you to get a snapshot of how the law is being treated.
* Secondary sources also assist you in getting up to speed quickly on an area of the law that you may not be familiar with.
* Secondary sources also do more than send you in the right direction. They contain expert insight and analysis which helps you to craft your legal strategy and frame your arguments. This is particularly invaluable when it comes to less established areas of the law where it pays to know nuances about the law, such as the rationale and policy arguments behind the direction that the law may or may not be taking. Being aware of these nuances can give you an extra edge in designing your legal strategy and argument.