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**COLLEGE** : LAW

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**COURSE** : LAW 102

Assignment

**Discuss secondary sources of law in Nigeria. Times New Roman, front 12, justify your work**.****

**Secondary Sources of Law in Nigeria**

Law, as according to **Sir John W. Salmond(1862-1924)**, can be defined as a body of principles recognized and applied in the administration of justice in a state.

Sources of Law refer to materials or references from which lawyers, officers of the law or judicial officials find reliable and consistent authorities for legal issues.

Having defined all relevant terms, it is imperative to state that there are two types of sources of law (primary and secondary) and the purpose of this essay is to explore, discuss and expatiate on the secondary sources including examples, justifications, contradictions and origins. Now, what are secondary sources of law?

Secondary sources of law are mainly in document form. They are particularly important for countries that operate through a written and rigid constitution because it is in written form that those laws are written and preserved. Examples of secondary sources of law include law reports, journals, periodicals, textbooks and so on.

**Law Reports**

Law reports are references to decided cases which are used by litigators and judges alike to decipher the position of the law and great judicial officials in particular areas of jurisdiction and legislation. They are important for smooth judicial administration especially in countries that operate with judicial precedents like Nigeria.

The oldest law reports in the world are the **Year Books(1282-1537). The first law reports in Nigeria is the Nigerian Law Reports which began in 1881.**

Other forms of law reports in Nigeria include:

* Weekly Law Reports: **The Nigerian Weekly Law Reports** **(NWLR)** is evidently the most popular and reliable law reporting company in Nigeria. It was established in **1985 by late Chief Ganiyu Oyesola Fawehinmi, SAN(1938-2009)** to boost the effectiveness of law reporting in Nigeria.
* Foreign Weekly Law Reports: The Weekly Law Reports of England, were published since **1953**, The Weekly Law reports are the most comprehensive and up to date general series of reports for England and Wales. Covering around 280 cases a year, the WLR publish more cases than any other general series of report. Volume 1 cases cover procedural matters and point of law of general interest.
* Victoria Law Reports: They are a series of law reports which reports significant cases from the supreme court of Victoria in its first decision and appeal decisions jurisdictions. **The reports were initially titled the Victorian law report (1875-1956), before adopting their present tittle in 1957.**
* All Nigerian Law Reports: The All Nigerian Law Reports (All NLR) started its activities in 1961 but was abandoned in the 1970s. This publication contains reports of the federal Supreme Court of Nigeria from 1961 to 1963 and the Supreme Court of Nigeria from 1963 to 1990 and that of High Courts. A.N.L.R also report cases of the Court of Appeal and the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council.
* Nigerian Monthly Law report: The Nigerian Monthly Law Report (NMLR) was the first private owned law report in Nigeria. It is owned by Associated Publishers (Nig) Limited. N.M.L.R first made its publication in 1964 but stopped in in the 1970s. Research shows that N.M.L.R contains decisions of the various High Courts, the Court of Appeal of the Western State of the Supreme Courts of Nigeria.
* University of Ife Law Reports: The University of Ife Law Report (UILR) started in 1971. It is the first University Law Report in Nigeria. UILR contains reports of the cases decided by the Supreme Court, the Western Court of Appeal and the High Courts. UILR stopped its publication after 1977 for some unknown reasons.
* Supreme Court of Justice of Nigeria: The Supreme Court of Nigeria Judgement (SCJN) is also a well-known private law report in Nigeria. This publication has been active since 1991. It was established by Liberty Publications Ltd to deal exclusively with Supreme Court of Nigeria Judgments on monthly basis.

 - Common Wealth Law Reports: These are the authorized reports of decision of the high court of Australia. They are published by the law book company a division of **Thomson Reuters.**

**Textbooks and Treatses**

A textbook is a reference material primarily for academic purpose which contains legal information. They are written by jurists and scholars and play an important role in the formation of laws all around the world.

They could be of persuasive authority where there is scanty information on the judicial issue at hand. Examples of well known scholars include: Professor Sagay, Ese Malemi, Late Chief Justice Legbo Idris Kutigi, A.V Dicey, Hood Phillips etc.

When such a source of law is used, it’s effectiveness is dependent on the integrity and personality of the author as well as significance of the legal issue at hand.

**Periodicals, Digests and Jornals**

They are many various types and examples of these in Nigeria. Some are published by law faculties while some are published by private law publishers. They are all important in the formation and application of law in Nigeria. Examples include **Nnamdi Azikiwe University Journal, Afe Babalola University Journal, African Human Rights Journal etc.**

In the same vein, examples of digests include: **the Digest of supreme courts cases. Digests** are abridgment of cases i.e summary of issues, facts, arguments as well as verdicts.

Legal dictionaries include Jowitt’s Dictionary of English Law, Stroud’s Judicial Dictionary etc.

In conclusion, secondary sources of law are important in the formation and implementation of law in judicial proceedings in Nigeria and as such, can not be neglected. They are of persuasive authority and weight of their persuasion is dependent on their origin and reputation of integrity.