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Introduction to Legal Methods II (LAW102)

Discuss the secondary source of law in Nigeria.

A good place to start a research project is with a secondary source. A secondary source is not the law, it is a commentary on the law. A secondary source can be used for three different purposes: it might educate you about the law, it might direct you to the primary law, or it might serve as a persuasive authority. Few of the sources do the three jobs well. The important classes of legal secondary sources include: treaties, periodical articals, legal encyclopedies, ALR (All Law Report) annotations, restatements and loose- leaf services

Secondary sources of law are the sources of law that do not carry a dominant legal weight and binding effect. The legal authorities contain in these kind of sources are diluted and persuasive which are not binding on any court of law. According to Beredugo (2009), secondary sources of law are less significance sources of law that carry barely persuasive legal authority or effect and are therefore , not binding on any court of law. Secondary sources can be useful in court of law or resorted to where the court finds the opinion or fact underlying the authority contained therein. Secondary sources can also be referred to in court if it supports the authorities of the primary sources. Examples of secondary sources of Nigerian law includes:

* Decisions of courts of foreign countries
* International conventions, treaties, and resolutions of international bodies;
* Statements or opinions of jurists and learned authors contained in law textbooks, journal, periodicals, dictionaries, letters, speeches, and interviews;
* Legal opinions contained in nullified judgments.

Secondary sources of law also include all sources that provide helpful introductions to legal subjects, synopses of decisions, statutes, and regulations in a given field, analyses of trends and historical background of law, explanation of new or difficult concepts, descriptions and analysis of the law and its developments and citations to primary sources through footnotes and annotations.

Reference(s)

* Yale law school, Lillian Goldman Library
* Library philosophy and practice (e- journal) Libraries at University of Nebraska- Lincoln