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COURSE TITLE: LEGAL METHOD I

**SECONDARY SOURCES OF LAW IN NIGERIA**

Legal researchers are encouraged and advised to begin with secondary sources of law, which are likely to lead to specific primary law such as statutory references or case citations. Secondary sources of law are a great place to begin one’s research; they explain legal principles more thoroughly than a single case or statute. Secondary sources include;

* Legal encyclopedias
* Law reports
* Law journals and reviews
* Treatises

**LEGAL ENCYCLOPEDIAS**

Legal encyclopedias contain brief, broad summaries of legal topics, providing introductions to legal topics, providing introductions to legal topics and explaining relevant terms of art. They also provide citations to relevant primary law and sometimes give citations to relevant major law review articles.

**LAW REPORT**

Law report contain in-depth articles on narrow topics of the law. It contains the judgements of courts which are published periodically. Examples of law reports are: **Nigerian Weekly Law Report (NWLR)**, **Supreme Court of Nigeria Law Report (SCNLR);** while some foreign law report include: **English Report (ER), International Law Report (ILR), American Law Report (ALR).**

**TREATISES**

Treatises are books on legal topics that provides explanations, analysis and tips on the most relevant primary sources. Treatises range from single volume overviews to extensively detailed multi-volume sets. They may come in form of bound books updated with pocket parts or loose leafs with easily replaced pages. Some treatises are intended for law students while others for practicing lawyers.

**LAW JOURNALS**

Law reviews are scholarly publications, usually edited by law students in conjunction with faculty members. They contain both lengthy articles and short essays by professors and lawyers, as well as comments, notes, or developments in the law written by students. Law reviews often focus on new or emerging areas of law and they can offer more critical commentary than a legal encyclopedia or a law report entry.

Secondary sources are particularly used for ;

* Learning the basics of a particular area of law
* Understanding key terms of art in an area
* Identifying essential cases and statutes

Secondary sources of law are of great help to legal researchers and practitioners because they further explain legal terms and principles than and sheds more light on primary sources of law, this is why every secondary source of law has an expository and explanatory attribute.