

NAME : ADESUJI PROSPER TENIOLA

COURSE CODE: LAW 102

MATRIC NO: 19/law01/009

SECONDARY SOURCES OF LAW

The materials used for legal research are generally divided into two broad categories: **primary sources** and **secondary sources**. Primary legal sources are the actual law in the form of constitutions, court cases, statutes, and administrative rules and regulations. Secondary legal sources may restate the law, but they also discuss, analyze, describe, explain, or critique it as well. Secondary sources are used to help locate primary sources of law, define legal words and phrases, or help in legal research. In short, anything that is more than the actual law is considered a secondary source. **Secondary Law** consists of sources that explain, criticize, discuss, or help locate primary law. Examples of secondary legal sources include:

- o Legal dictionaries
[*Black's Law Dictionary, Nolo's Plain English Law Dictionary*]
- o Legal encyclopedias and digests
[*Gale Encyclopedia of American Law, American Jurisprudence, Washington Digest*]
- o Law reviews and journals
[*Virginia Law Review, Seattle University Law Review, Yale Law Journal*]
- o Legal treatises, nutshells, hornbooks, deskbooks
[*Criminal Law in a Nutshell, Principles of Employment Law, American Constitutional Law, Washington Civil Procedure Deskbook*]
- o Manuals and guides on how to practice law
[*Washington Practice, Washington Lawyers Practice Manual*]

Secondary sources of law are background resources. They explain, interpret and analyze. They include encyclopedias, law reviews, treatises, restatements. Secondary sources are a good way to start research and often have citations to primary sources.

The secondary sources of Nigerian law are the indirect ways through which we get our law. Save 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. Secondary sources of law are only made use of whenever there are no primary sources of law to fall back on.