

SS1 Government – Week 2

Topic: Government as an Academic Field of Study

1. Government as an Academic Discipline

Government, as an academic field of study, is the systematic and scientific study of the principles, institutions, and processes of governance. It explores how decisions are made in society, how power is distributed, and how authority is exercised and controlled.

This study equips students with the knowledge of how government works, the

relationship between the leaders and the governed, and how to ensure that justice, equality, and the rule of law are upheld in a state.

As an academic subject, government is also called Political Science, especially at higher levels of education.

2. Why Study Government?

There are several reasons why government is studied in schools:

◆ a. Understanding Political Systems

It helps students understand how different political systems like democracy, monarchy, and dictatorship function, and how laws are made and enforced.

◆ b. Development of Civic Rights and Duties

By studying government, students become aware of their rights (like freedom of expression, right to vote) and duties (like obeying laws, paying taxes, and voting responsibly).

◆ c. Promotion of Good Governance

It enlightens citizens about the need for accountability, transparency, and the separation of powers, and empowers them to hold their leaders accountable.

◆ d. Encourages Active Citizenship

Students learn how to participate in governance through elections, joining political parties, or becoming public servants.

◆ e. Foundation for Career Opportunities

It serves as a foundation for careers in:

Law

Civil Service

Politics

Diplomacy

Journalism

Teaching

◆ f. Helps in Resolving Conflicts

Government studies equip learners with tools to analyze conflicts in society and how to resolve them peacefully.

◆ g. Builds Patriotism

It instills national values, pride, and love for one's country, helping to create responsible and patriotic citizens.

3. Subfields of Government

The study of government is broad and can be broken down into various specialized areas or subfields. These include:

● i. Local Government



Definition:

Local Government is the grassroots level of government closest to the people. It is the third tier in a federal system, below state and federal levels.



Functions:

Provision of basic services (e.g. health centers, local markets, street lighting).

Registration of births, deaths, and marriages.

Maintenance of local roads and drainage.

Promotion of agriculture and education at the local level.

Collection of local taxes and levies.



Importance:

Brings governance closer to the people.

Encourages participation in decision-making.

Accelerates local development.

ii. Public Administration

Definition:

Public administration is the implementation of government policies by appointed officials known as civil servants.

It involves the organization and management of public programs and the behavior of officials tasked with these

functions.



Areas Covered:

Government budgeting and finance

Public policy implementation

Human resource management in public offices

Organizational behavior in government agencies



Importance:

Ensures efficiency in the delivery of public services.

Trains competent government workers.

Promotes effective execution of

government policies and laws.

Careers:

Public administrators work in ministries, local governments, regulatory agencies, and public corporations.

iii. International Relations

Definition:

International Relations is the study of political and diplomatic relationships between countries. It covers foreign policy, international law, diplomacy, and global organizations.

Areas Covered:

Conflict resolution and peacekeeping

Roles of international organizations (e.g., United Nations, AU, ECOWAS)

Global trade and diplomacy

Foreign policy analysis



Importance:

Promotes peace and security across nations

Encourages international trade and cooperation

Helps nations understand each other's policies

Trains diplomats and foreign service

officers



Careers:

Diplomats, policy analysts, international journalists, foreign affairs officers, etc.



Conclusion

Government is not only a system of rules and institutions but also a vital academic discipline. Studying government provides students with the knowledge, values, and skills to become responsible citizens who can contribute meaningfully to political and societal development.



Summary Points

Government as a discipline is the study of politics, power, and governance.

Studying government enhances knowledge of rights, duties, and political participation.

Subfields include Local Government, Public Administration, and International Relations.

Each subfield serves specific functions in governance and development.

