Examining the Impact of Digitalization on Income Tax Planning in India

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ABSTRACT

This study explores digitalization's impact on income tax planning and management in India amid rapid technological advancements and a growing focus on digital finance. It assesses how digitalization influences income tax planning methods, compliance processes, and overall tax management efficiency. Through a thorough examination of relevant literature and empirical data, the research aims to provide insights into the benefits, challenges, and potential outcomes of digitalization in this context. Findings suggest positive effects, including improved process efficiency, enhanced transparency, increased taxpayer engagement, simplified compliance, and a better overall taxpayer experience. The majority of respondents support the adoption of digital platforms for income tax planning and management.

1.0 Introduction

The development of digitalization has had a pervasive effect on numerous sectors, inflicting good sized modifications in commercial enterprise operations, government features, and societal interactions. Within the realm of taxation, digitalization holds the capacity to revolutionize earnings tax planning and management, imparting both tremendous potentialities and ambitious demanding situations. India, particularly, has skilled sizable repercussions from these modifications, witnessing a great shift towards digital methods in recent years. The primary goal of this research paper is to research the effects of digitalization on tax planning and management in India. In doing so, it'll delve into the consequences for taxpayers, tax authorities, and the general tax surroundings.

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Tax planning could be attributed to the interrelation nature of the socio-economic, psychological, demographical, and institutional factors that researchers try to investigate and examine during their long journey of attempts to understand the motivations behind tax planning and the role of digitalisation.

Income tax planning involves developing and organizing one's financial affairs in a way that legally minimizes tax liability, while adhering to established laws and regulations. This entails maximizing deductions, exemptions, and credits to reduce taxable income and optimize tax outcomes through proactive decision-making and the structuring of financial activities. Income tax planning may also involve long-term strategies such as investment planning, retirement planning, and estate planning in order to minimize tax liabilities.

Income tax planning is a vital facet of each individual and corporate monetary decision-making, enabling taxpayers to optimize their tax obligations whilst adhering to the felony framework. Traditionally, profits tax planning worried hard office work, guide calculations, and a robust dependence on physical files. However, the advent of digital technology has brought approximately a paradigm shift in tax strategies, emphasizing automation, transparency, and performance.

Income tax management, is the ongoing administration and handling of income tax-related matters throughout the year. This includes tasks such as maintaining accurate financial records and documentation, calculating and paying taxes, filing income tax returns, complying with regulatory requirements, and responding to inquiries or notices from tax authorities. The goal of income tax management is to ensure compliance with tax laws and regulations, prompt reporting of income, and meeting tax obligations to tax authorities. Income tax management is the process of planning and implementing strategies to minimize an individual's income tax liability.

In light of those trends, it is imperative to scrutinize the impact of digitalization on tax planning strategies and control practices in India. The impact of digitalization transcends procedural changes and might have far-achieving results for each taxpayer and tax authorities. One great factor lies within the improved accessibility of statistics and assets, empowering taxpayers with real-time records, equipment, and calculators to resource in tax making plans choices. Digital structures permit people to get right of entry to their economic data, realise their tax obligations, and with ease discover various tax-saving alternatives. Furthermore, it facilitates seamless communique and interplay among taxpayers and tax government, mitigating statistics asymmetry and fostering transparency.

Nevertheless, the transition closer to digitalization additionally brings forth demanding situations that necessitate interest. One such mission is the presence of a virtual divide, in which positive segments of the population may also encounter barriers in

effectively gaining access to and making use of digital platforms. Bridging this divide and ensuring inclusivity will become crucial in an effort to save you capacity disparities in tax compliance and get admission to tax benefits.

To comprehensively check the effect of digitalization on income tax making plans and control in India, this studies paper will adopt a multidimensional technique. It will conduct analyses of pertinent literature, government reviews, empirical statistics, and case research, drawing insights from the reviews and views of the stakeholders involved. By inspecting how digitalization has motivated tax making plans strategies, compliance strategies, tax management efficiency, and taxpayer experiences, this examines goals to provide precious insights and hints.

The tax administration introduced numerous transformational initiatives to streamline the tax compliance landscape and track data availability for taxpayers as well tax administrators. These efforts have resulted in positive outcomes and taxpayers particularly appreciated data accessibility and availability on tax portals and the reduced time spent on compliance. For example, pursuant to electronic filings, all correspondence with tax authorities, including responses filed by taxpayers, are accessible by taxpayers. This acts as a repository of information for taxpayers, which they can utilise. Another noteworthy initiative is the mobile app, which makes relevant information readily available for taxpayers.

2.0 Review of Literature

Appasaba *et al.* (2022) investigate individual taxpayers' knowledge and satisfaction levels for Ujjain, a city in Madhya Pradesh, utilising primary data from a survey of 100 respondents and data analysis methods such as ANOVA and Chi square F statistics. According to the study's findings, the majority of individual tax payers are unaware of the procedures for e-filing and e-payment. As a result, significant efforts must be done to raise tax payer knowledge of the benefits of e-filing.

Uyar *et al.* (2022) explore how education could prevent tax evasion in light of digitalization. The study included 142 countries, and the findings show that education quality has a major influence on preventing tax evasion. This includes the general quality of education, particularly in math, science, and management education, all of which play a vital role in reducing tax evasion. The effect is more obvious in nations where education is heavily digital. Importantly, the study's findings are resistant to endogeneity issues. Finally, the report recommends that policies and educational initiatives focus on education quality to combat tax evasion.

Trumboo (2022) analyse this suggestion by drawing from the existing literature and research on the matter. The research concludes that it is consistent with fiscal policy and equity principles. The study recommends setting a reasonable monetary threshold for agricultural income to be taxed at the national level. The results indicate that implementing such a measure would enhance revenue, prevent tax evasion, and broaden the tax base in the country.

Jain (2022) comprehend the income tax brackets and pre-payment planning individuals undertake before paying their taxes. Awareness of various tax-saving tools is crucial for people to plan effectively and avoid overpaying. Tax planning is an essential element of financial planning as it helps individuals reduce their tax liabilities by efficiently managing their taxes. This study compares several tax-saving investment options including HDFC tax saver direct plan, SBI long-term equity fund, and TATA India tax savings fund, as well as fixed deposits offered by public and private banks like SBI, PNB, UNION, AXIS, HDFC, and ICICI. Additionally, the authors explore other avenues such as Public Provident Fund, Post Office Scheme, and National Savings Certificate using a t-test methodology.

Cecily (2022), in research conducted in Chennai, find that many taxpayers neither agree nor disagree that high tax rates increase tax cheating. Respondents advocated for the use of government auditors to guarantee tax compliance. In India, tax evasion is rampant among businesses, professions, politicians, and public workers. This has a detrimental impact on taxes, revenue, and the community as a whole. Many sectors in India generate black money to avoid paying taxes, but the government has implemented regulatory measures to prevent tax avoidance.

Kumar *et al.* (2022) observe that people may manage their tax responsibilities proactively by using tax-saving methods. Tax planning is an important part of financial planning since it helps to lower tax bills. This may be accomplished by utilising Chapter VI A, which offers exemptions, refunds, and deductions while ensuring that investments are aligned with long-term goals. The major goal of the study is to find the most effective savings device and calculate the amount of tax savings it delivers. According to the findings, the most widely used tax-saving measure is a home loan, which scored first in the survey, followed by National Saving Certificates, which ranked second.

Cesis *et al.* (2021) find that individuals occupy an important place in society, and executing any system in a country would be difficult without their entire participation. Citizens play an important part in contributing to the country's income by paying taxes on their income, sales, property, and other assets. The two major kinds of taxes are direct and indirect taxes, with income tax falling under the direct tax group. It is only applied to one individual and cannot be transferred. Individuals, corporations, firms, local authorities,

organisations of persons, bodies of individuals, Hindu Undivided Families, and artificial juridical persons are all included under the Income Tax Act of 1961. Every taxpayer attempts to reduce their tax obligation by implementing a variety of strategies, which this research investigates.

Khan & Zada (2021) examine teachers' saving habits and reveals the most popular tax-saving investment choice. The researchers hope to promote financial planning and tax knowledge within the teaching community. Teachers may satisfy their financial demands by highlighting the significance of financial planning. Elementary data were collected from 87 randomly selected teachers from Nagpur's primary and secondary schools using a standardised questionnaire. The data were analysed using Excel and SPSS. Teachers are aware of the tax system and begin saving money as soon as they have a job, with LIC premiums being the most popular investment. Financial planning aids decision-making in a variety of financial sectors, and private teachers save money by avoiding excessive taxation.

Chattopadhyay (2021) observe that using fundamental principles of macro-economics, it is feasible to unearth occurrences of tax dodging in the underground economy. Such findings can offer valuable perspectives on macroeconomic analysis and fiscal policies in India. This paper suggests an updated approach to deducing the autonomous expenditure multiplier, to better address the presence of the shadow economy. The paper as a whole scrutinizes the conventional understanding of the black economy in macroeconomics at three distinct levels.

Vyas & Gondaliya (2020) assess how well individuals understand taxes and how to cope with them. The study investigates how various categories of individuals perceive tax return filing and planning. Employing data from 250 employed persons in the Bardoli region using a Google Docs survey, and using the Chi-square test, the findings indicate that a person's age, income level, and other factors influence what they know about tax preparation. People who make more money frequently require expert assistance with tax administration, although others have the skills to do it themselves. Respondents are aware of the 80C and 80D deductions, but they do not receive tax breaks for school loans or gifts.

Bahuguna (2020) conclude that effective tax planning is critical for Indian wage workers who want to decrease their tax payments, maximise their savings, and accomplish their financial objectives. This may be accomplished by investing in tax-saving plans and obtaining life and medical insurance. It is critical to understand tax regulations and employ tax planning combined with comprehensive financial planning, with long-term goals in mind. Examining and getting professional guidance regularly can assist in optimising tax-saving potential and assure regulatory compliance. Smart tax planning can assist Indian

wage workers in meeting their financial objectives while minimising tax liabilities and boosting savings.

Venkatesan (2020) observe that tax planning helps taxpayers to lower their tax burden within the parameters of the law by utilising exemptions, deductions, refunds, and relief. This research looks at the attitudes of 250 business taxpayers regarding tax preparation, taking into account aspects including gender, education level, turnover, and operational expenditures. The data show that some factors influence their attitude toward tax preparation while others do not. The analysis of the study can assist the government in developing fund mobilisation methods tailored to the business class. Tax planning is essential for taxpayers because it ensures tax advantages and the correct discharge of tax responsibilities. Mujawar & David (2022) aim to ascertain the role of mindfulness among employed individuals in relation to various tax planning methods available under the Income Tax Act. Additionally, it seeks to identify the factors that influence the tax planning behaviour of employed individuals. Currently, many employed individuals lack the ability to effectively plan their taxes, leading to incorrect investment decisions. Consequently, tax planning is both crucial and achievable with the requisite level of comprehension and effort.

Kumar & Tanwar (2020) conclude that the level of financial literacy and tax literacy correlates with several demographic variables, including gender and occupation. Findings from the research indicate that individuals generally possess a low level of tax literacy and financial literacy. It was observed that tax literacy is closely linked to tax compliance and tax morale. People willingly shoulder the tax burden due to a sense of societal responsibility, rather than being motivated solely by the benefits and entitlements offered by tax laws. In Delhi, respondents demonstrate awareness of both conventional and contemporary tax-saving mechanisms. "The tax administration has been ahead of taxpayers in using and implementing technology in tax. This is reflected in taxpayers' responses, who accept that a digital-friendly tax administration has acted as a catalyst for technology uptake in tax. India Inc. has been proactively adopting digital/automated tools in their tax functions. The next step in such transformation would be data extraction with automation, which can encompass unified solutions in reconciliations and computations, ultimately leading to tax filings."

3.0 Objective

To assess the level of familiarity with the digitalization of income tax planning and management in India.

Null Hypothesis (H0): The adoption of digital platforms has not made it easier for taxpayers to comply with income tax regulations.

Alternate Hypothesis (H1): The adoption of digital platforms has made it easier for taxpayers to comply with income tax regulations.

4.0 Methodology

This study is based on the empirical descriptive research method and using primary data which is collected from the 405 respondents through a questionnaire, which contain 17 questions related to the research objectives. The time period for the study is after the digitalisation of tax services, the sampling technique adopted is convenience non probability technique for selecting the sample size and the number 404 is a representative sample according to Sample Size Determination using Krejcie and Morgan Table. It shows that the sample for the population above 10,00,000 is 384.

The question wise research methodology are as follows:

- *Familiarity with Digitalization (Question 1):* Calculate descriptive statistics such as mean, median, and standard deviation to assess the level of familiarity among respondents. You can also categorize the responses into different levels of familiarity (e.g., very familiar, somewhat familiar, not familiar) and analyse the distribution.

- *Changes in Compliance Rates (Question 2):* Compare the compliance rates before and after the introduction of digitalization using inferential statistical tests such as paired t-tests or Wilcoxon signed-rank tests, depending on the distribution of the data. This will help determine if there are significant changes in compliance rates.

- *Efficiency Gains (Question 3):* Analyse the responses to identify common themes and patterns regarding the main efficiency gains achieved through digitalization. Conduct qualitative data analysis using techniques such as thematic analysis or content analysis.

- *Transparency in the Income Tax System (Question 4):* Use a Likert scale or a similar rating scale to assess the level of transparency. Calculate descriptive statistics such as mean and standard deviation to determine the overall rating.

- *Changes in Taxpayer Behaviour (Question 5):* Analyse the responses to identify any observed changes in taxpayer behaviour and conduct since the adoption of digital platforms. Conduct qualitative data analysis to identify common themes and patterns.

- *Statements (Questions 6-10):* Use a Likert scale or a similar rating scale to assess the level of agreement with the statements. Calculate descriptive statistics such as mean and standard deviation to determine the overall agreement level.
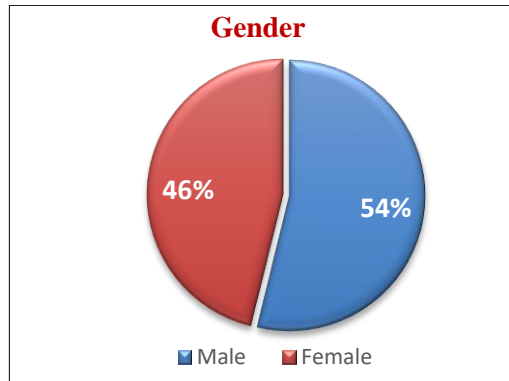
5.0 Results/Analysis

Table 1 & Figure 1 show that there are 218 male respondents and 187 female respondents which is an almost equal representative sample for the study.

Table 1: Gender of the Respondents

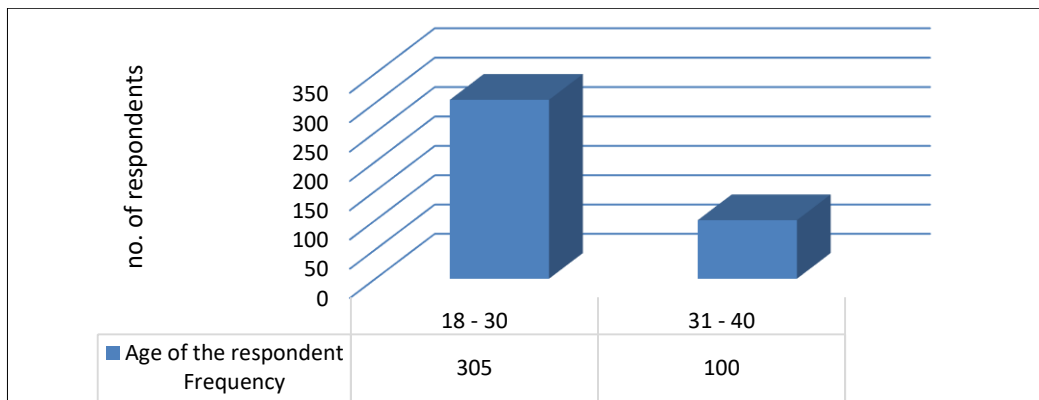|	Frequency	Percent
Male	**218**	**53.8**
Female	**187**	**46.2**
Total	405	100.0

Source: Self-compiled through SPSS

Figure 1: Gender of the Respondents

Source: Self-compiled through SPSS

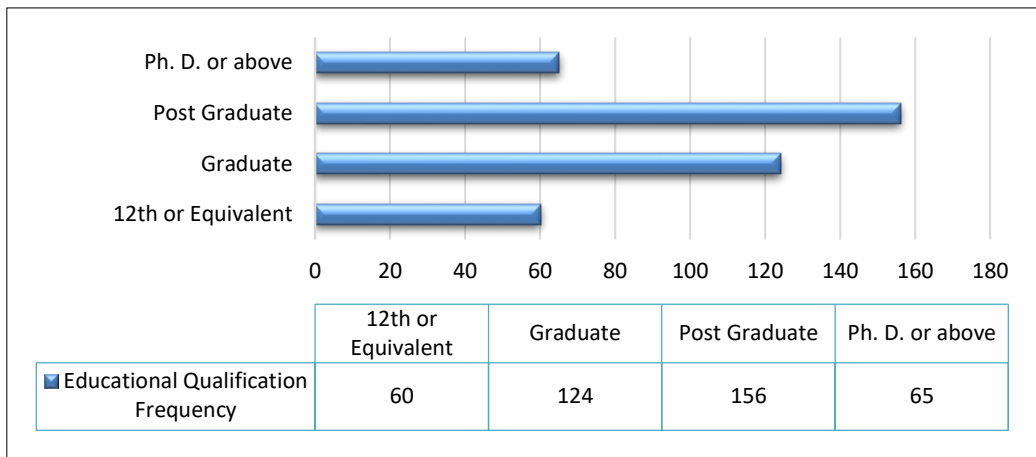**Figure 2: Age of the Respondent**

Source: Self-compiled through SPSS

As shown in Figure 2, this covers the age groups of 22 years, which include most of the variations of population of India as need of the study.
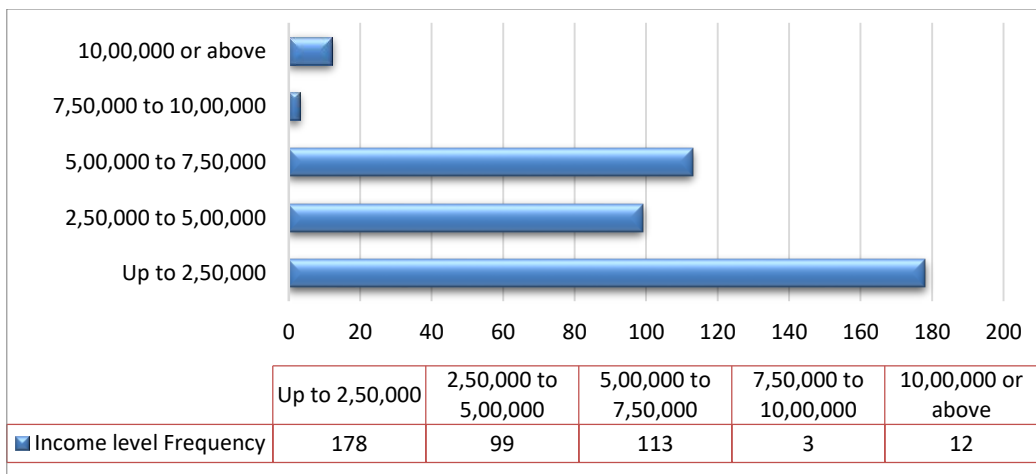
As shown in Figure 3 the educational qualification of the respondents is mostly post graduate followed by the graduate and data have sufficient variations of the respondents which represent the variation in sample population.

**Figure 3: Educational Qualifications of the Respondents**

	12th or Equivalent	Graduate	Post Graduate	Ph. D. or above
Educational Qualification Frequency	60	124	156	65

Source: Self-compiled through SPSS

Figure 4: Income Level of the Respondents

|	Up to 2,50,000	2,50,000 to 5,00,000	5,00,000 to 7,50,000	7,50,000 to 10,00,000	10,00,000 or above
Income level Frequency	178	99	113	3	12

Source: Self-compiled through SPSS

As shown in the Figure 4 the income level of the respondents mostly fall under the minimum slab that is up to ₹ 2,50,000 followed by the 3rd slab ₹5,00,000 to ₹7,00,000 this is a good variation of the respondents because they involve in the tax planning and managing their income to minimise their tax liabilities.

Figure 5: Types of Occupations of the Respondents
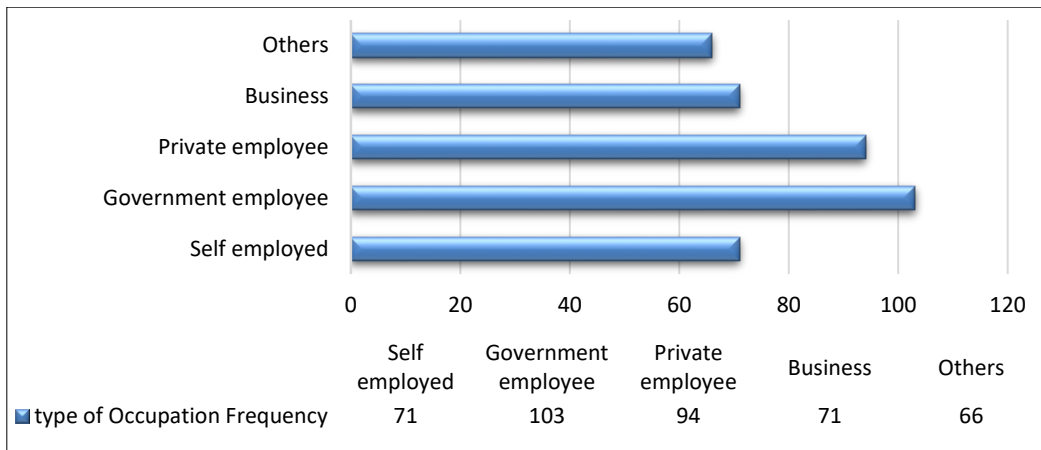
Source: Self-compiled through SPSS

Figure 6: Mean Median & Std. Deviation of the main responses
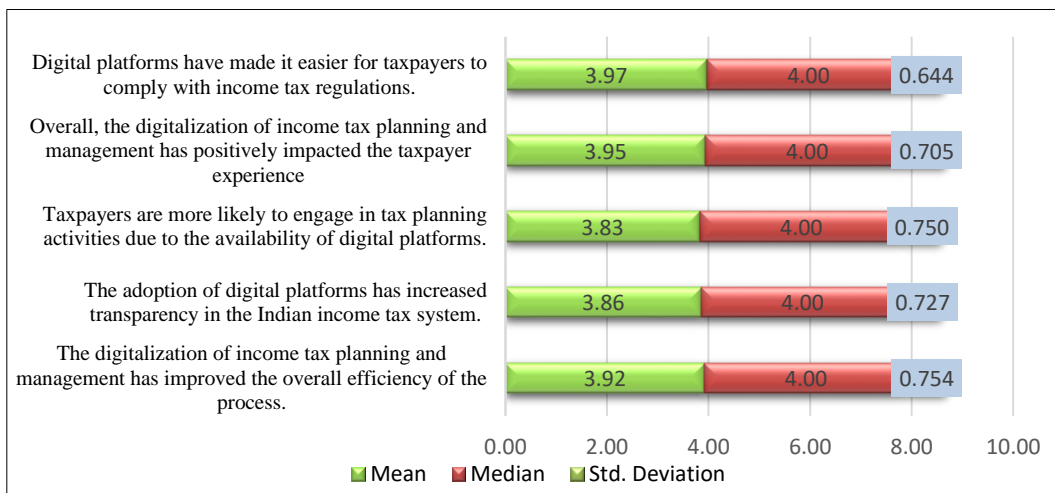
Source: Self-compiled through SPSS

As shown in the Figure 5 most of the respondents were government employees followed by private employees and the other included students, research scholars and all others which are not comes under the 4 mentioned categories. This is an excellent group of responders since they are involved in tax planning and controlling their income to reduce their tax payments.

Table 2: Questions wise Mean Median & Std. Deviation of the Main Responses

Questions	N	Mean	Median	Std. Deviation
The digitalization of income tax planning and management has improved the overall efficiency of the process.	405	3.92	4.00	0.754
The adoption of digital platforms has increased transparency in the Indian income tax system.	405	3.86	4.00	0.727
Taxpayers are more likely to engage in tax planning activities due to the availability of digital platforms.	405	3.83	4.00	0.750
Overall, the digitalization of income tax planning and management has positively impacted the taxpayer experience	405	3.95	4.00	0.705
Digital platforms have made it easier for taxpayers to comply with income tax regulations.	405	3.97	4.00	0.644

Source: Self-compiled through SPSS

To determine the minimum and the maximum length of the 5-point Likert type scale, the range is calculated by $(5 - 1 = 4)$ then divided by five as it is the greatest value of the scale $(4 \div 5 = 0.80)$. Afterwards, number one which is the least value in the scale was added in order to identify the maximum of this cell. The length of the cells is determined below:

- From 1 to 1.80 represents (strongly disagree).
- From 1.81 until 2.60 represents (do not agree).
- From 2.61 until 3.40 represents (true to some extent).
- From 3:41 until 4:20 represents (agree).
- From 4:21 until 5:00 represents (strongly agree).

Figure 6 and Table 2 show the Likert scale data of 5 rating questions which was coded as 1= Strongly disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree and 5 = Strongly agree. As mean and median of the dataset shows that average mean of all five is 3.90 and median 4, it means that most of the respondents are agree with the above mention's statements.

- That is the digitalization of income tax planning and management has improved the overall efficiency of the process.

- The adoption of digital platforms has increased transparency in the Indian income tax system.
- Taxpayers are more likely to engage in tax planning activities due to the availability of digital platforms.
- Digital platforms have made it easier for taxpayers to comply with income tax regulations.
- Overall, the digitalization of income tax planning and management has positively impacted the taxpayer experience

As per the above discussion the combined mean of all the above statements is 3.90 which fall under the 'From 3:41 until 4:20 represents (agree)' it means that the adoption of digital platforms has made it easier for taxpayers to comply with income tax regulations. Hance, we accept the alternate hypothesis. And reject the H0.

Figure 7 shows that 245 respondents agree that digitalisation of income tax planning has improved the overall efficiency of the process and 74 respondents strongly agreed on the same. And mean of responses is 3.92 which support the statement.

As shown in Figure 8, 237 respondents agree that overall, the digitalization of income tax planning and management has positively impacted the taxpayer experience.

Figure 7: Overall Efficiency of Digitalisation of Income Tax Planning
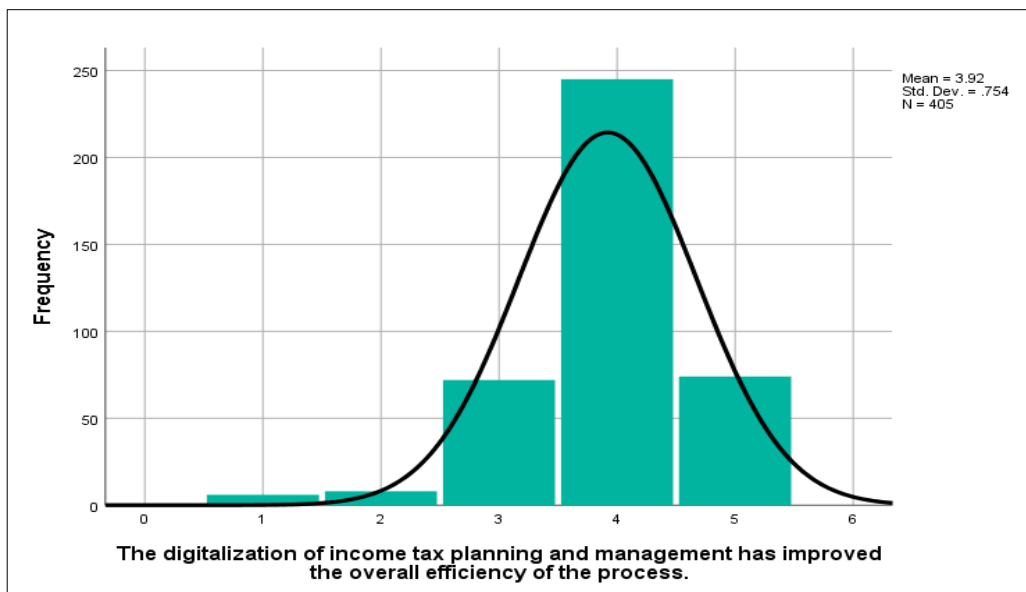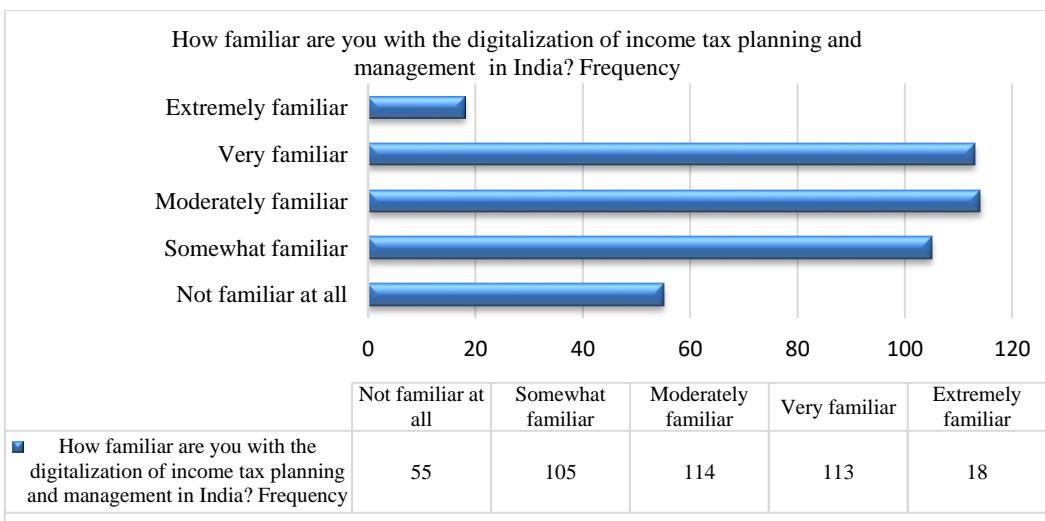

Source: Self-compiled through SPSS

Figure 8 shows that 131 respondents believe that reduction in paperwork and manual process and 122 respondents believes that faster processing of tax returns gain efficiency through digitalization of income tax planning and management. At last 86 respondents believe that through digitalization the accuracy improved in tax calculations.

Figure 8: Frequency of Responses on Efficiency Gains Achieved through the Digitalization of the Income Tax Planning
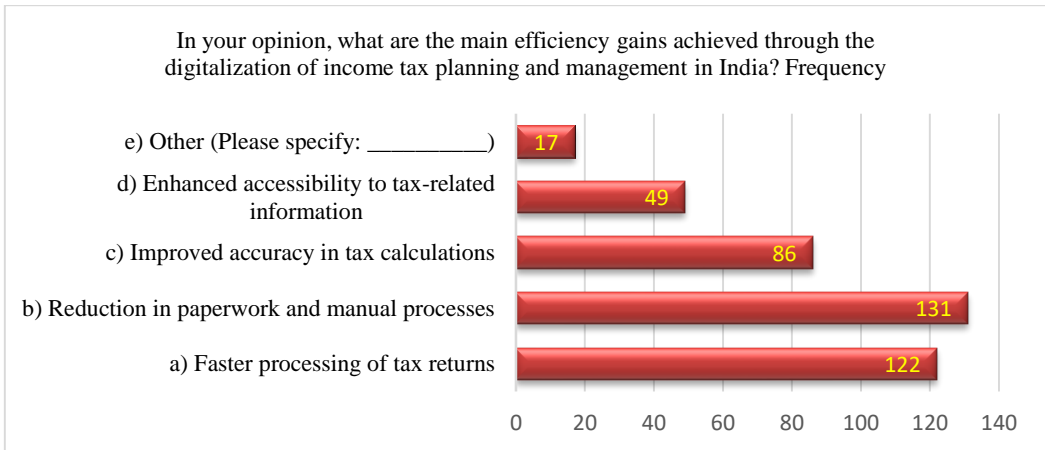
Source: Self-compiled through SPSS

Figure 9: How familiar are you with the Digitalization of Income Tax Planning and Management in India?

|	Not familiar at all	Somewhat familiar	Moderately familiar	Very familiar	Extremely familiar
■ How familiar are you with the digitalization of income tax planning and management in India? Frequency	55	105	114	113	18

Source: Self-compiled through SPSS

As the Figure 9 states that the 350 respondents familiar with the digitalization of income tax planning and management in India.
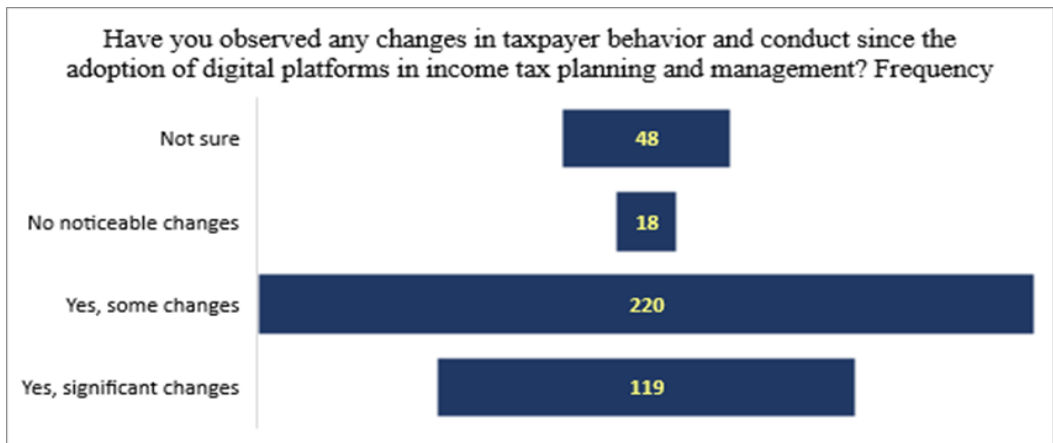
As mention in the Figure 10 the most of the respondents believe that compliance rate have increased since the introduction of digitalisation in the country.

Figure 10: Changes of Income Tax Compliance Rate through Digitalisation of Income Tax Planning
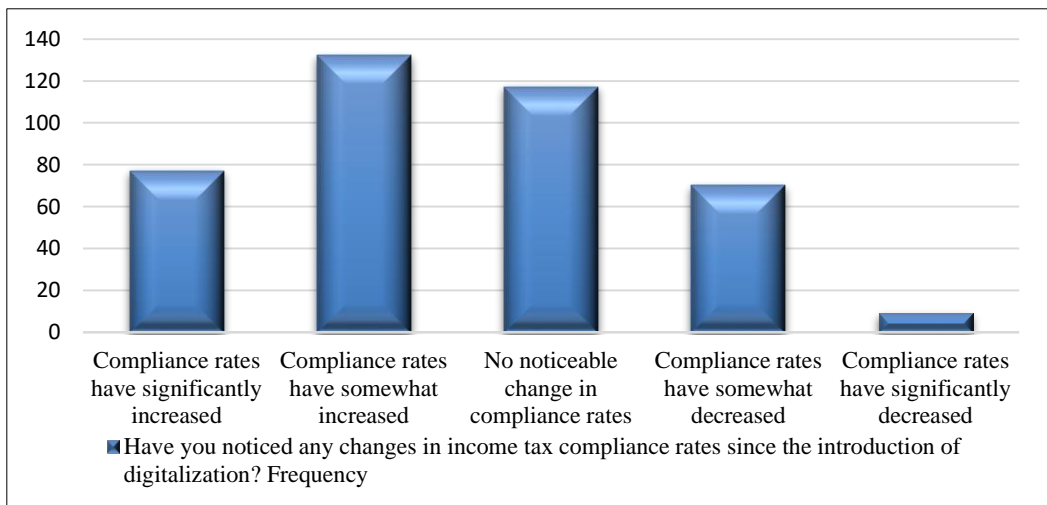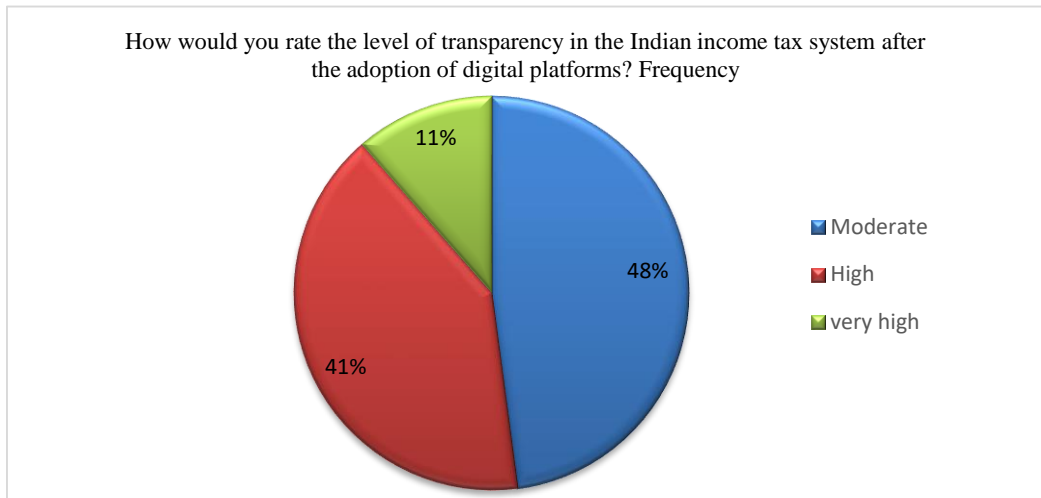

Source: Self-compiled through SPSS

Figure 11: Frequency of Significant Changes in their Tax Planning

Source: Self-compiled through SPSS

Digitalisation in any economy transform everything of that economy and the behaviour of its citizens. As people make lots of decisions from the access of information, they make their decisions more precise and correct specially manage their finance and tax planning, as the above Figure 11 shows that 220 and 119 respondents agreed on, they feel some or significant changes in their tax planning and management in the era of digitalisation.

Figure 12: How would you Rate the Level of Transparency in the Indian Income Tax System after the Adoption of Digital Platforms?

Source: Self-compiled through SPSS

Digitalization has greatly enhanced the level of transparency in the tax system of India. This positive transformation is supported by the data presented in Figure 12 of the study, where 48% and 41% of the respondents share this belief.

5.1 Findings

- The Likert scale data from Figure 6 and Table 2 indicate that the adoption of digital platforms for income tax planning and management is positively perceived by the respondents. The mean and median scores ranging from 3.83 to 3.97 suggest agreement with the statements.
- The combined mean of all the statements is 3.90, indicating agreement with the positive impact of digitalization on income tax planning and management.

- Figure 7 and Figure 8 further support the positive impact of digitalization. A significant number of respondents believe in the improved efficiency and positive impact on the taxpayer experience.
- The majority of respondents are familiar with the digitalization of income tax planning and management in India, as shown in Figure 9.
- Figure 10 illustrates that most respondents believe that the compliance rate has increased with the introduction of digitalization.
- Figure 11 indicates that a considerable number of respondents have experienced changes in their tax planning and management due to digitalization.
- Figure 12 demonstrates that digitalization has enhanced transparency in the tax system, with a significant percentage of respondents supporting this belief.

6.0 Conclusion

In conclusion, the research findings suggest that the digitalization of income tax planning and management in India has had a remarkably positive impact on various aspects of the tax system. The introduction of digital platforms has significantly improved the overall efficiency of tax-related processes, reducing the time and effort required for both taxpayers and tax authorities. This digital transformation has streamlined operations, enabling faster processing of tax returns and refunds, and reducing errors associated with manual entries. Moreover, the digitalization initiative has substantially increased transparency in the tax system. By utilizing online platforms, taxpayers can now easily access their tax records, track the status of their filings, and ensure that all transactions are accurately recorded. This enhanced transparency helps in building trust between taxpayers and the government, as it minimizes the chances of discrepancies and fraud. Digital records also provide a clear audit trail, which is crucial for both compliance and regulatory purposes.

Another significant benefit of digitalization is the increased engagement of taxpayers. With user-friendly interfaces and readily available online resources, taxpayers are more inclined to participate actively in the tax process. The ease of compliance with tax regulations has been another major advantage brought about by digitalization. Online platforms offer step-by-step guidance through the filing process, automated calculations, and reminders for due dates, making it simpler for taxpayers to adhere to regulatory requirements. This convenience is particularly beneficial for small businesses and individual taxpayers who may not have the resources to engage professional tax advisors.

By simplifying the compliance process, digital platforms have helped reduce the administrative burden on taxpayers and have contributed to higher rates of timely filings.

Furthermore, the taxpayer experience has been positively impacted by the shift to digital platforms. The convenience of online services means that taxpayers can file their returns, make payments, and access information from anywhere and at any time. This flexibility is especially valuable in a country as vast and diverse as India, where access to physical tax offices can be challenging for many. The reduction in the need for physical visits to tax offices not only saves time and costs for taxpayers but also reduces congestion and workload at these offices, leading to more efficient service delivery.

The majority of respondents agree that digitalization has brought about significant improvements, highlighting the positive outcomes observed across various metrics. These include enhanced efficiency, greater transparency, increased taxpayer engagement, easier compliance, and an improved overall experience for taxpayers.

In summary, the digitalization of income tax planning and management in India represents a progressive step towards modernizing the tax system. By leveraging technology, the government has been able to create a more efficient, transparent, and user-friendly tax environment. The positive feedback from taxpayers and the observed benefits underscore the importance of continuing to advance digital initiatives in the tax domain. As digital platforms continue to evolve and integrate more sophisticated features, the potential for further improvements in the tax system remains substantial, promising even greater ease and efficiency in the future.

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