

DIGITAL KAR-JNANA FOR VIKSIT BHARAT: ASSESSING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNMENT SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGNS IN CREATING INCOME TAX AWARENESS

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1. Abstract

This study looks at how social media platforms raise public awareness of Indian income tax reforms. It focuses on the effectiveness of campaigns run by the Income Tax Department on Facebook, Twitter,

Instagram, YouTube, and WhatsApp. In the digital age, social media is a vital tool for sharing information, but there is little research on its specific impact on tax awareness. The research uses a mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative and quantitative techniques to evaluate public engagement, content effectiveness, and the link between social media exposure and tax knowledge. Data was gathered through surveys and interviews with 50 participants from Mumbai, offering insights into

their use of social media and understanding of tax reforms. The study finds that YouTube, especially short videos and tutorials, is the most effective platform for educating citizens on income tax reforms.

However, despite frequent engagement, many respondents expressed dissatisfaction with content quality, indicating a need for clearer and more engaging posts. The findings reveal significant connections between content type, engagement frequency, and public knowledge, suggesting that targeted campaigns focusing on visual content could enhance tax literacy. The study ends with recommendations to improve social media campaigns, including the use of short videos, content in multiple languages, and partnerships with influencers to reach a wider and more engaged audience. The study's limitations include its focus on Mumbai.

Keywords: Public Finance, Digital Transformation, Social Media Platforms, Income Tax Reforms, Public Awareness, Government Communication, Social Media Campaigns, Economic Development.

2. Introduction

In today's fast moving digital world, social media platforms is not just for watching cat videos it

become powerful communication tools. From Public health campaign to startup promotion or may be connect with citizen official social media handles is the best way to post the content. Government departments like Income tax is not exception for the same. It is more effective for updating tax filing deadlines, new regimes, any amendment or new announcement. In the case of national policies and reforms, social media plays a crucial role in raising awareness.

India is country of staggering diversity regional language and varying literacy levels requires innovative and engaging communication strategies. In this context, the Indian government has turned to platforms like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube to reach a broader audience. For Mumbai's Salaried Individual Income tax season may be very much smooth with the help of Chartered Accountant but for small two tier or may be three tier city basic shopkeeper the whole concept of Income Tax is more complex and confusing. By using different social media platforms Income Tax Department can easily simplify the complex tax laws and procedure which very easy to understand the common men.

This research aims to study how social media enhances public awareness of Indian income tax reforms.

We wanted to go beyond the like share comment matrix and to understand either people have learned about Income Taxes, which content they want to see which one is confusing which one more influencing and effective for citizens.

3. Proclamation of the Problem

Despite major advancements in India's tax reforms, a significant gap persists in public awareness and understanding. Despite of waves of Income Tax reforms has seen in recent years still many people specially in rural area or with less schooling still scratch their head over new income regime, basic rebates etc.

The Income Tax Department has made notable progress in using social media to address this gap, but questions remain about how effective these campaigns are. This gap is huge as social media shapes habits; time to test if it's optimizing tax literacy or just adding noise.

This practical issues in this area highlights a gap in knowledge that this study aims to fill. Specifically, this study will investigate whether the Income Tax Department's campaigns have effectively educated the public on income tax reforms and filing processes, and what improvements could be made in future campaigns.

4. Research Methodology

This research will follow a mixed-methods approach, blended with qualitative and quantitative techniques to gain a thorough understanding of how social media enhances public awareness of income tax reforms.

4.1.1. Research Design:

This study will use a descriptive and analytical design to evaluate the impact of social media campaigns. I collected data through surveys and interviews to assess

public

awareness, engagement, and perceptions regarding tax reforms and social media campaigns.

4.1.2. **Sampling Method:**

A stratified random sampling technique will be used to select participants from different demographics (age, occupation, etc.). The sample will consist of individuals.

4.1.3. **Sample Size:** 50 respondents

4.1.4. **Sampling Method:** Convenience sampling via online shares nabbed 50 diverse Mumbai users.

4.2. Data Collection Methods:

4.2.1. Primary Data:

- **Survey:** A structured questionnaire will be distributed to social media users who engage with tax-related posts. The survey will collect data on participants' awareness of tax reforms, the platforms they use, the type of content they engage with, and their general understanding of the tax filing process.

4.2.2. Secondary Data:

- **Government Reports and Documents:** Annual reports from the Income Tax Department, as well as other government publications related to tax reforms and public awareness initiatives, will provide context for understanding the goals and strategies behind social media campaigns.
- **Existing Literature and Case Studies:** Previous studies on the effectiveness of social media campaigns, both in India and globally, will help place research findings in context.
- **Campaign Performance Analytics:** Data from the Income Tax Department's official social media channels (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, YouTube) will provide insights into user engagement and the popularity of different types of content.

4.3. Data Analysis:

Quantitative data from surveys will be analyzed using statistical methods, such as correlation, to identify patterns and relationships between social media engagement and the level of awareness by using SPSS.

5. Objectives

5.1. To analyze the role of various social media platforms by Income Tax Department in promoting awareness about Income tax reforms.

5.2. To Determine which Social Media platforms and Type of content are the most effective.

6. Hypotheses:

- **H1:** Social media campaigns by the Income Tax Department have a significant

impact on public awareness of income tax reforms.

- **H2:** There is a significant relationship between the frequency of social media exposure and the level of tax knowledge among users.

7. Review of Literature

Role of Social Media in Government Communication and Tax Awareness

Social media has become an essential tool in modern governance, including public service announcements, awareness campaigns, and educating the general public on various issues such as taxation. Several studies have demonstrated the effectiveness of social media in reaching a large and diverse audience, especially when it comes to government communications.

1. **Social Media as a Tool for Government Communication:** A study by Kaur and Sharma (2018) explored how social media platforms serve as powerful communication tools for governments. It cuts through barriers like distance or literacy for policies like Make in India.
2. **Social Media in Promoting Tax Awareness:** According to Patel (2019), social media is effective in enhancing tax awareness. Praised short clips and infographics for demystifying filings.
3. **Influence of Social Media Content on Tax Knowledge:** Gupta and Singh (2020) doubled down: YouTube reels hook youth, sparking shares and action. Furthermore, these short videos are more likely to be shared and discussed among peers, helping to spread awareness.
4. **Content Formats and Engagement:** Gupta and Singh (2020) explored the use of different content formats, particularly focusing on the growing trend of video content. The study found that flagged shallow posts drowning in noise. Short videos, particularly on YouTube, were effective in engaging younger audiences and encouraging them to take actions such as filing taxes or checking tax deadlines. Moreover, these short-form videos are more likely to be shared and discussed among peers, helping to spread awareness further.
5. **Challenges in Effective Communication:** Sharma and Arora (2018) explored the challenges of using social media for tax awareness campaigns. Flagged shallow posts drowning in noise. They also noted that the government's message sometimes gets lost due to irrelevant or misleading content from other sources.
6. **Government-Influencer Collaboration:** Sahoo and Behera (2021) discussed the importance of collaboration between the government and social media influencers to reach a broader and more engaged audience. Their research suggests influencer collabs for trust, especially with finfluencers swaying young crowds.

7.1. Research Gap

While numerous studies highlight the role of social media in promoting government communication and tax awareness, several research gaps remain:

1. **Effectiveness of Different Social Media Platforms:** Understanding how platforms like Instagram, WhatsApp, and LinkedIn affect tax knowledge and behavior could lead to more targeted and effective campaigns.
2. **Content Quality vs. Content Quantity:** Existing studies have not sufficiently examined the balance between content quality and content quantity. For example, while posting frequently on social media platforms may increase visibility, it will not clear whether this leads to a deeper understanding of tax reforms.
3. **Role of Youth and Digital Natives:** Although some research points to the success of targeting youth through platforms like YouTube and Instagram, there is insufficient exploration of how younger generations (the digital natives) perceive tax systems. Research into their attitudes toward taxes and how social media can reshape their understanding of taxes as a civic responsibility would be valuable.
4. **Government-Influencer Collaboration and Trust:** The effectiveness of collaborations between the government and influencers has been under-explored, particularly in terms of trust and credibility. Future research should investigate how public perception of influencers' trustworthiness affects the success of tax awareness campaigns and whether such collaborations can increase public engagement in government-led initiatives.

This study attempt to bridge the above gaps in very preliminary way.

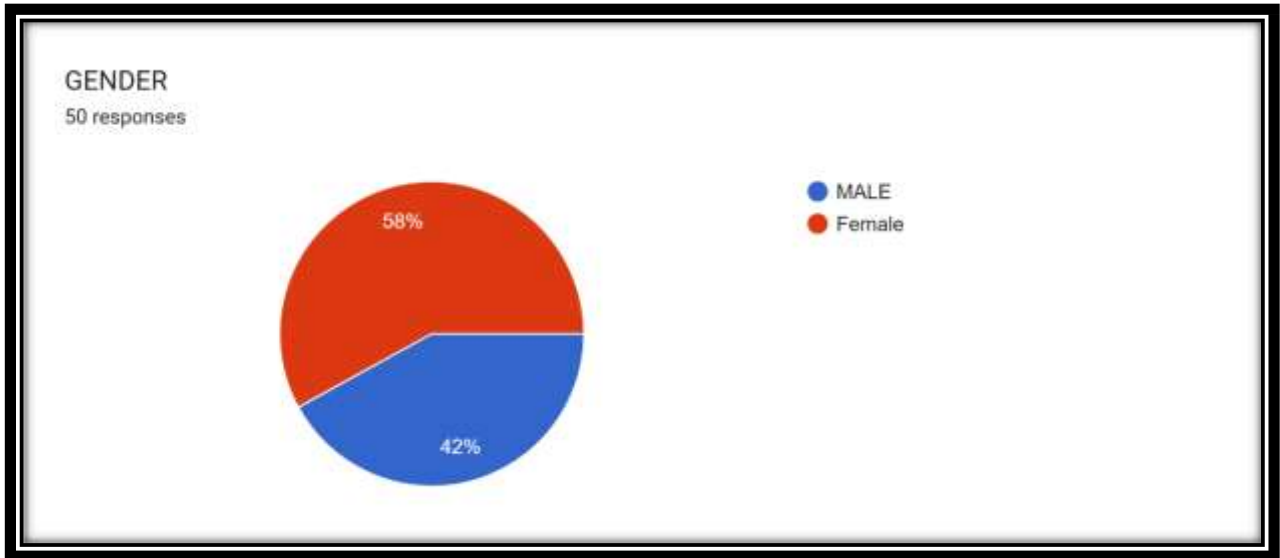
8. Findings & Discussion

8.1. Age (TABLE 1)

AGE					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	21-30	21	42.0	42.0	42.0
	31-40	9	18.0	18.0	60.0
	41-50	5	10.0	10.0	70.0
	51-60	7	14.0	14.0	84.0
	61 & ABOVE	8	16.0	16.0	100.0
	Total	50	100.0	100.0	

The majority of respondents are young adults aged 21–30, but all age groups are represented, showing a diverse age range in the study.

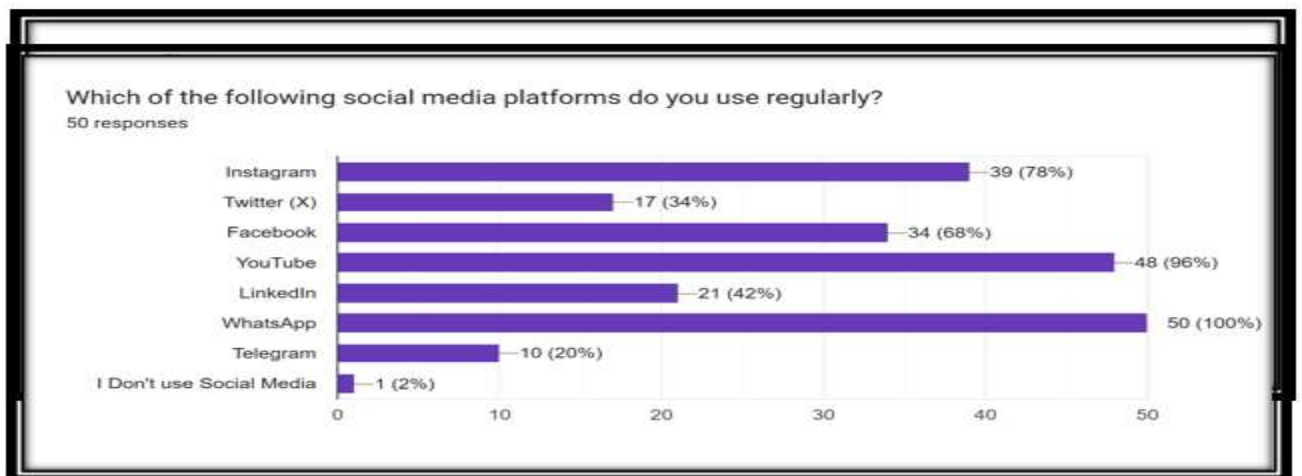
8.2. Gender (TABLE 2)



8.3. Occupation (TABLE 3)

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
STUDENT	6	12.0	12.0
SALAIRED EMPLOYEE	29	58.0	70.0
SELF-EMPLOYED	10	20.0	90.0
RETAIRED	5	10.0	100.0
Total	50	100.0	

8.4. Rate of Filling Income Tax Return (TABLE 4)



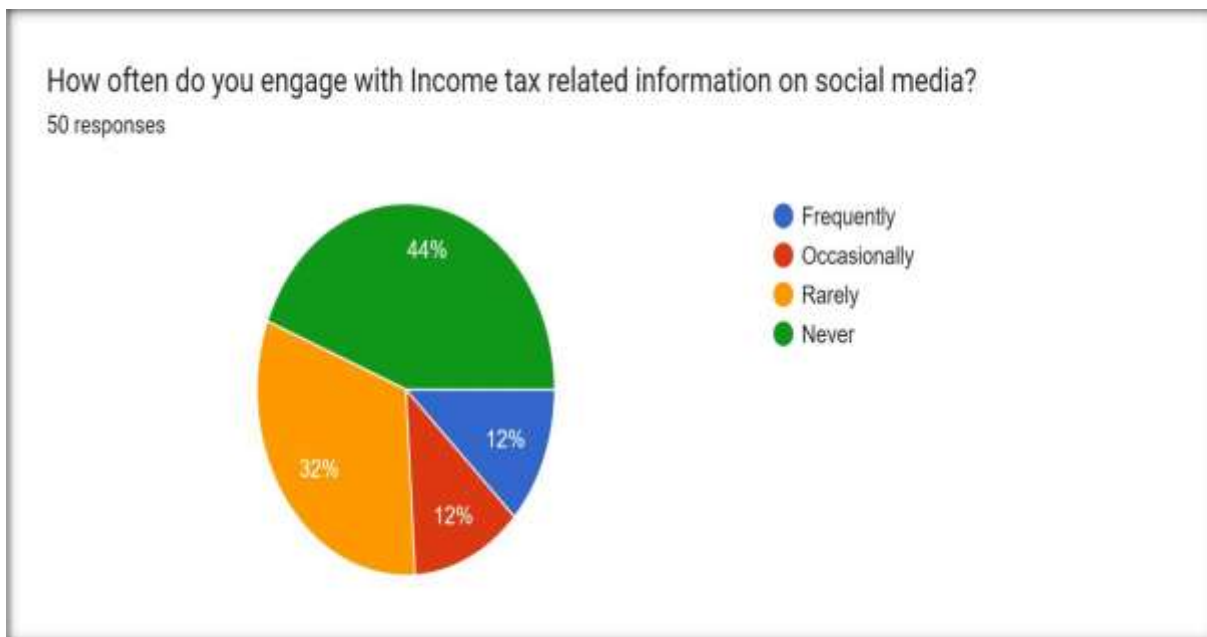
8.5. Social Media Usage (TABLE 5)

8.6. Occupation wise Income Tax Filing rate (TABLE 6)

8.6. Occupation wise Income Tax Filing rate				
Count				
		Do you file income tax returns?		Total
		YES	NO	
Occupation	STUDENT	0	6	6
	SALAIRED EMPLOYEE	21	8	29
	SELF-EMPLOYED	5	5	10
	RETAIRED	3	2	5
Total		29	21	50

8.7. Frequency distribution of Engagement with Income Tax-Related Information on Social Media wise Income Tax Filing rate (TABLE 7)

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Frequently	6	12.0	12.0	12.0
Occasionally	6	12.0	12.0	24.0
Rarely	16	32.0	32.0	56.0
Never	22	44.0	44.0	100.0

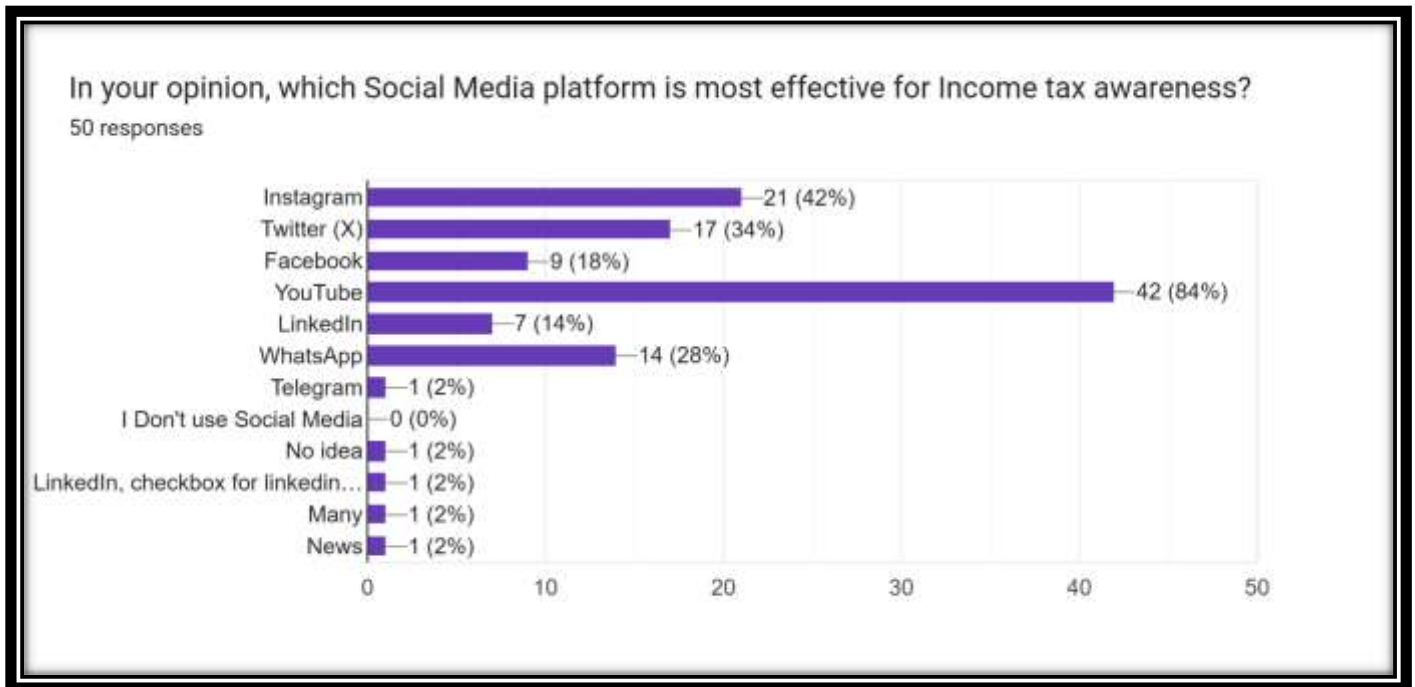


8.8. Key Correlation(TABLE 8)

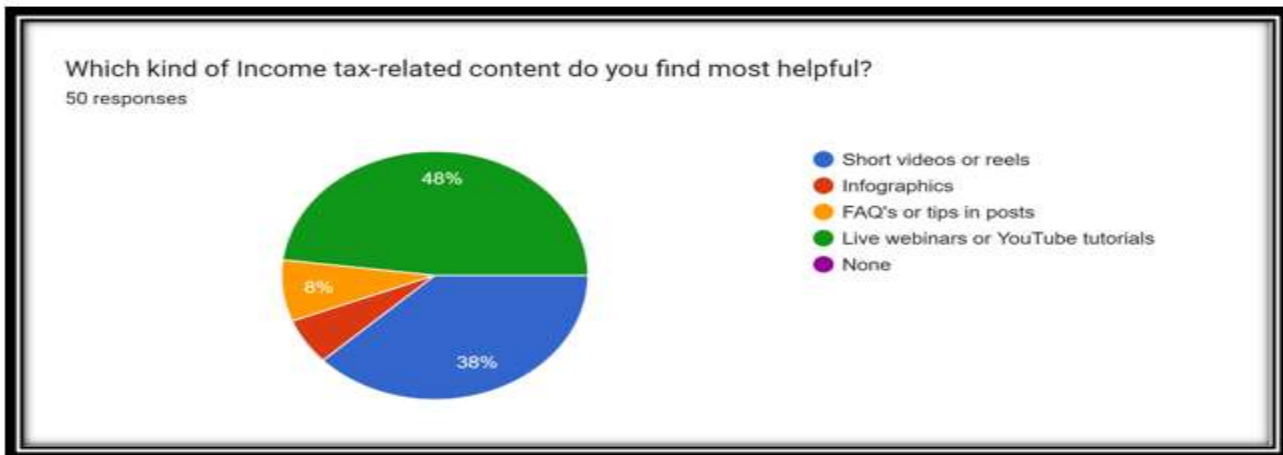
Table: Correlation Between Frequency of Engagement and Perception of Tax Content (Q7 vs Q8–Q13)		
Perception Question	Spearman’s Correlation (ρ)	Interpretation (Simple)
Q8: Content is informative	-0.741 (Strong Negative)	The more people engage with tax posts, the less informative they feel the posts are. This suggests that frequent viewers might find the content boring or unhelpful .
Q9: Helps understand recent tax reforms	-0.473 (Moderate Negative)	People who engage more feel less confident in understanding tax reforms. More exposure doesn’t make them feel clearer about tax laws or changes.
Q10: Prefer short videos or reels over written posts	+0.191 (Weak Positive)	There is a weak connection — some users who engage frequently prefer short videos, but the trend is too small to matter. There's no clear relationship .
Q11: Feel confident filing taxes after seeing posts	-0.249 (Weak Negative)	No clear link between engagement and feeling confident in filing taxes. More posts do not lead to higher confidence in filing taxes.
Q12: Trust content from official government pages	-0.305 (Moderate Negative)	More exposure to content seems to lower trust in official government posts. Frequent viewers may feel the content is less trustworthy .

<p>Q13: Take action (e.g., file taxes) after seeing reminders</p>	<p>-0.530 (Strong Negative)</p>	<p>More exposure to tax posts seems to decrease action. People who see more posts are less likely to take action like filing taxes or checking deadlines.</p>
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8.9. Most Effective Social Media Platform for Income Tax Awareness(TABLE 9)



8.10. Most Helpful Types of Income Tax-Related Content (TABLE 10)



- **Hypothesis Testing**

1. **Hypothesis 1 (H1):** *Social media campaigns by the Income Tax Department significantly impact public awareness of income tax reforms*
 - **Testing:** The data shows that social media campaigns, especially on YouTube, do help in raising awareness about income tax reforms. However, the impact varies depending on the platform and content type.
 - **Conclusion: Accepted.** The analysis supports the hypothesis that social media campaigns have a significant impact on public awareness of tax reforms, especially through visual content like videos and tutorials.
2. **Hypothesis 2 (H2):** *There is a significant relationship between the frequency of social media exposure and the level of tax knowledge among users*
 - **Testing:** Correlation analysis showed a **moderate negative correlation ($\rho = -0.473$)** between the frequency of engagement with tax-related social media posts and the perceived understanding of tax reforms. This suggests that more exposure does not necessarily lead to greater tax knowledge or confidence in filing taxes.
 - **Conclusion: Fail to reject.** The hypothesis is not fully supported, as frequent engagement with social media content did not significantly improve users' knowledge of taxes.

9. Recommendations

9.1. Improve Clarity and Accessibility of Information

- **Clear, Simple Language:** Tax content should be easy to understand, especially for individuals who are not well-versed in technical tax terms. Simplify the regional language and use visual aids (infographics, charts, etc.) to explain complex concepts.
- **Multilingual Content:** Considering India's diverse population, tax-related information should be available in multiple languages. This will ensure that information reaches citizens across various linguistic regions, catering to both literate and illiterate individuals.

9.2. Focus on Citizen Engagement and Trust

- **Engagement and Interaction:** It's essential to actively engage with citizens on social media platforms. Encourage discussions, Q&A sessions, and feedback on posts to increase participation and trust in the government's efforts.

9.3. Leverage Short-Form Video Content

- **Create Short, Engaging Videos:** Short videos or reels on platforms like YouTube and Instagram can be very effective in reaching a wide audience. Income tax department

should focus on small informative and easy to understand videos about major changes in tax policies, how to file Income Tax Return, Notices & assessment procedure in engaging manner.

- **Collaborate with Influencers:** Partner with influencers or "finfluencers" (financial influencers) who can create official, informative reels about tax reforms, filing processes, and benefits in a simple, relatable manner. Influencers often have a significant reach and trust among their followers, making this a powerful strategy for spreading awareness.

9.4. Improve the User Experience on Websites and Platforms

- **Website Improvement:** Ensure that the official website is easy to navigate, user-friendly, and mobile-optimized. The tax filing process should be made simpler, with clear instructions and interactive guides.
- **Promote the Rebate System:** Highlight tax rebate programs and ensure citizens know about the benefits they can receive. The government should also create awareness about exemptions and deductions, especially through social media and mobile apps.

9.5. Foster Awareness Through Targeted Campaigns

- **Youth Engagement:** The government should focus on engaging young citizens by actively promoting the idea of tax as a civil responsibility, not just as a burden. Educational campaigns that emphasize the importance of taxes in building the nation can resonate with this demographic.
- **Targeted Campaigns:** Use social media platforms' advanced targeting tools to run campaigns tailored to specific groups, such as employees, freelancers, or small business owners, to provide them with relevant information on tax reforms and filing procedures.

9.6. Make the Tax Filing Process Simpler

- **Simplify the Filing Process:** Tax filing should be as simple and straightforward as possible. Introducing a step-by-step guide or an easy-to-use mobile app can help demystify the filing process and make it more accessible to a larger section of the population.

By implementing these recommendations, the Income Tax Department can enhance its social media presence, improve the public's understanding of tax reforms, and foster greater trust and participation in the country's tax system. Social media campaigns that are clear, engaging, and targeted can significantly contribute to building a more informed and responsible citizenry.

10. Limitations

- The study involved a relatively small sample size of 50 respondents.
- The use of convenience sampling, where participants were selected through online surveys, may have introduced biases.
- This study is restricted to Mumbai, which limits the generalizability of the findings to the entire country.
- The sample was drawn from an urban environment, where internet penetration and social media usage are typically higher than in rural or remote areas.

11. Conclusion

The research conducted to understand the impact of social media in enhancing public awareness regarding the reforms introduced by the Indian government in the Income Tax sector has revealed significant results. It has been observed that the use of YouTube is the most effective social media platform for engaging the public regarding the information related to the reforms introduced by the government. This is because it is easy to explain the complexities of the topic through videos and tutorials.

A majority of the respondents claimed that they access social media quite frequently, especially Instagram and WhatsApp. However, it has been observed that YouTube is the most preferred platform for the public for accessing informative content. It is recommended, based on the results obtained, that the Income Tax Department should use more videos and tutorials to engage the public regarding the reforms introduced by the government. This is because videos and tutorials are the best source for explaining the complexities of the topic to the public. In addition to this, the influencer or finfluencer could be helpful in increasing the effectiveness of the campaign.

In conclusion, the usage of visuals or tutorials on YouTube can prove to be extremely effective for increasing public knowledge about the income tax reforms.

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