



An Analytical Study of Income Tax Return Filing for Defence Personnel: Process, Bottlenecks and Workflow Improvements at UdChalo

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ABSTRACT :

Income tax return (ITR) filing is a legal obligation, but for Defence Personnel it is also a service-delivery challenge. Their income may include salary, service-specific allowances, pension, interest, house-property income and capital gains, while postings and operational commitments make timely document collection difficult. This paper presents an analytical, practice-based study of ITR filing for Defence Personnel, drawn from an On-the-Job Training (OJT) placement in the Tax Advisory (ITR) department of UdChalo, Pune, during the filing season for Financial Year 2025-26 (Assessment Year 2026-27). The study documents the end-to-end workflow – client intake, document collection, Form 26AS/AIS reconciliation, allowance audit, old-versus-new regime comparison, ITR-1/ITR-2 preparation, review, e-filing and e-verification – and analyses it through the Technology Acceptance Model, the Theory of Planned Behavior, Tax Compliance Theory, Service Quality Theory and Process Standardisation Theory. During the placement, more than 500 potential clients were contacted and over 180 returns were completed (75% ITR-1 and 25% ITR-2), supported by offline camps at three defence locations. Five recurring bottlenecks are identified: late documents, AIS/Form 26AS mismatches, unclear allowance treatment, peak-season workload and complex ITR-2 cases. The paper proposes a twelve-stage improved workflow built on early outreach, digital checklists, automated verification, complexity-based segmentation, a Defence tax knowledge base, two-level review and continued physical support.

Keywords: Income Tax Return, Defence Personnel, ITR-1, ITR-2, New Tax Regime, AIS, Form 26AS, Tax Compliance, E-Filing, Process Standardisation

Introduction

Income tax filing is among the most common financial compliance activities for salaried individuals in India. Although the Income Tax Department's e-filing portal allows returns to be prepared and submitted online, many taxpayers still struggle to understand the applicable provisions, choose the correct ITR form, identify taxable income, claim eligible deductions and complete the process accurately. Errors or incomplete information can cause delays, rework, defective returns and compliance notices.

Defence Personnel form a distinctive taxpayer segment. Depending on rank, service and posting, they may receive field-area, high-altitude and other specified allowances; retired personnel receive pension and retirement-related benefits; and many also hold bank deposits, investments, house property or capital assets. Frequent transfers and remote postings limit access to conventional tax professionals, which makes both domain knowledge and flexible service delivery important.

This paper examines how ITR preparation and filing for this segment works in practice. It is based on a structured OJT placement with UdChalo, a Pune-based consumer-technology company serving the Armed Forces community. The paper makes three contributions: (i) it documents a replicable, stage-wise ITR workflow for Defence clients; (ii) it quantifies the operational profile of the placement and classifies recurring bottlenecks with controls; and (iii) it proposes an improved workflow grounded in established behavioural and operations theories. The study is anchored to FY 2025-26 / AY 2026-27 and concentrates on ITR-1 and ITR-2.

Sector Overview

1.1. Tax and financial advisory services in India

The tax and financial advisory sector covers return preparation, compliance, accounting, tax planning and digital filing support. It supports tax compliance and government revenue, employs chartered accountants, tax consultants, software developers and operations teams, promotes digital adoption, reduces compliance cost and influences savings and investment decisions. Major players include large professional-services firms (Deloitte,

EY, PwC, KPMG), digital platforms such as ClearTax and Tax2Win, traditional chartered accountants, specialised providers such as UdChalo, and the government's own e-filing portal.

1.2. Global and national trends

Globally, tax administration is shifting from paper to portals, automated data matching and analytics. Tax technology (TaxTech) and AI reduce manual entry and flag anomalies; cross-border income raises demand for expertise in double-taxation agreements; data privacy has become a core operational duty; and routine compliance is increasingly commoditised, pushing firms towards strategic advisory. In India, e-filing, pre-filled returns and the Annual Information Statement (AIS) alongside Form 26AS have transformed verification, while rising tax awareness and smartphone penetration have created demand for convenient, segment-specific services. Defence-focused services matter because service allowances, pension and disability benefits have specific statutory treatment that generic platforms may not handle well.

1.3. Porter's Five Forces

Table 1 summarises the competitive structure. Digital entry is easy, but trust, expertise and community relationships restrict credible entry. Buyers can self-file, use platforms or hire a CA, so buyer power and rivalry are high, and self-filing is the strongest substitute for simple salary cases.

Table 1 - Porter's Five Forces Assessment

Force	Assessment	Reason
New entrants	Low–Moderate	Easy digital entry, but trust, tax expertise and Defence relationships are barriers.
Buyer power	Moderate–High	Clients can self-file, use platforms or CAs; price- and accuracy-sensitive.
Supplier power	Low–Moderate	Software and professionals widely available; specialist expertise has value.
Substitutes	Moderate	Self-filing, local CAs and generic platforms.
Rivalry	High	Competition on price, speed, convenience and advisory quality.

1.4. PESTEL summary

Politically, digital tax administration and compliance drives shape service delivery. Economically, income, inflation and investment activity affect demand and price sensitivity. Socially, financial and digital literacy and the mobility of Defence Personnel shape needs. Technologically, AIS, pre-filled data and automation improve efficiency while raising cybersecurity needs. Environmentally, paperless filing reduces paper and travel. Legally, the Income-tax Act, 1961 (Sections 139, 115BAC, 87A, 10 and 80C–80U) and confidentiality norms demand continuous updating.

Table 2 - PESTEL analysis – key impact

Factor	Key impact on ITR services
Political	Government focus on digital tax administration and compliance shapes service delivery; policy on pay, allowances and pensions affects Defence clients.
Economic	Income, inflation, employment and interest rates affect willingness to pay for advice and demand for capital-gains support.
Social	Financial and digital literacy, convenience expectations and the mobility of Defence Personnel shape demand.
Technological	AIS, pre-filled returns, mobile communication, document scanning and automation improve efficiency; cybersecurity is critical.
Environmental	Paperless filing reduces paper use and travel, though digital infrastructure consumes energy.
Legal	Income-tax provisions, e-filing rules, privacy requirements and professional standards demand continuous updating.

1.5. Regulatory framework and sector challenges

For AY 2026-27 the principal framework is the Income-tax Act, 1961: Section 139 (return filing), Section 115BAC (new regime), Section 87A (rebate), Section 10 (specified exemptions and allowances) and Sections 80C–80U (deductions, chiefly under the old regime), together with Form 16, Form 26AS and AIS as verification sources and the e-filing portal for submission and verification. The Income Tax Department distinguishes AY 2026-27 returns, filed under the 1961 Act, from Tax Year 2026-27, which relates to income of FY 2026-27 under the new tax-law framework. Persistent challenges in the sector include frequent changes in laws and forms, complex provisions, record mismatches, cybersecurity and privacy risk, price competition, seasonal peaks, a shortage of specialised professionals and uneven digital literacy.

Host Organisation: UdChalo

UdChalo (Upcurve Consumer Technologies Private Limited), headquartered at Viman Nagar, Pune, was founded by Ravi Kumar and Varun Jain, with the original idea dating to 2012, to solve the problem of affordable, short-notice travel for military personnel. It now positions itself as a 'super-app for soldiers' with travel, holiday, housing, shopping, finance and tax services for Defence Personnel, veterans, paramilitary personnel and their families. Its mission is 'Service for Services'. It also has a social-impact orientation, including customer-care roles for specially abled former soldiers and employment for veterans and Veer Naris. The ITR department supports clients from onboarding to e-verification, with Defence domain knowledge as its main differentiator and a hybrid model of digital channels plus camps at military hubs.

Table 3 - SWOT analysis of UdChalo's ITR service

Strengths	Weaknesses
Defence-focused niche; client trust; digital + offline model; specialised advisory	Dependence on one segment; seasonal demand; need for continuous tax updates; dependence on trained staff
Opportunities	Threats
Year-round advisory; digital document collection; automated tax checks; cross-sell of financial products	Generic online platforms; cybersecurity risks; price competition; regulatory change

Theoretical Framework and Literature Review

1.6. Theoretical framework

- **Technology Acceptance Model (TAM):** perceived usefulness and ease of use explain adoption of the e-filing system and the difficulties Defence Personnel face.
- **Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB):** attitude, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control explain why many taxpayers prefer professional assistance.
- **Tax Compliance Theory:** awareness of rules and penalties, ease of filing and trust in the system drive accurate and timely filing.
- **Service Quality Theory:** accuracy, responsiveness, reliability, communication and support define the quality of filing assistance.
- **Process Standardisation Theory:** a consistent workflow from document collection to e-verification reduces errors and time.

1.7. Review of literature

Singh and Singh (2020) reviewed India's e-filing system as an e-governance initiative, outlining its benefits for stakeholders and the shortcomings of earlier systems that led to improved ones, which establishes digitalisation as a means of making filing efficient and accessible. Maji and Pal (2021) studied factors affecting the adoption of income-tax e-filing using TAM and TPB, concluding that user perception, ease of use and behavioural factors matter as much as technical capability. Thakur (2023) surveyed 250 individual taxpayers and found them generally aware of and satisfied with e-filing, although networking problems and complex compliance procedures persisted. Kotnal (2017) adopted a descriptive, questionnaire-based design and suggested that assistance through filing systems and service centres makes taxpayers more comfortable with online filing.

Table 4 - Summary of reviewed studies

Study	Focus	Relevance to this paper
Singh & Singh (2020)	Evolution and benefits of India's e-filing system	Digitalisation makes filing efficient and accessible
Maji & Pal (2021)	Adoption of e-filing; TAM and TPB	Perception and ease of use drive adoption
Thakur (2023)	Awareness and satisfaction; 250 taxpayers	Awareness is high; connectivity and complexity persist
Kotnal (2017)	Perception and satisfaction; questionnaire	Assistance and service centres build comfort

Collectively, these studies treat the taxpayer in general. They give limited attention to a high-mobility, allowance-rich occupational segment such as Defence Personnel, or to the operational workflow of the intermediary who prepares the return. This paper addresses that gap.

Objectives and Scope

The objectives of the study are to:

- understand the end-to-end ITR filing process for Defence Personnel;
- apply the Income-tax Act, 1961 and relevant amendments to practical cases for AY 2026-27;
- understand the impact of the old and new tax regimes on salaried Defence Personnel and pensioners;
- understand the role of AIS, Form 26AS, digital tools and e-verification in compliance;
- study operational bottlenecks and suggest workflow improvements; and

- develop client communication and document-collection capability.

The scope covers active and retired Defence Personnel and eligible family or pension cases; ITR-1 and ITR-2 as primary forms (with conceptual exposure to ITR-3 and ITR-4); client outreach, verification, computation, advisory, filing and e-verification; phone/WhatsApp-based support and physical camps; and FY 2025-26 (AY 2026-27).

Research Methodology

The study follows a descriptive, practice-based (participant-observation) design. Primary evidence comes from the author's direct work in the Tax Advisory department of UdChalo, including handling of live ITR cases, client communication, participation in the Quality Review and Escalation team, and work on special filing drives for 'Agniveer' and 'Mhow' clients. Secondary evidence comes from the Income Tax Department's guidance for AY 2026-27 (ITR-1/ITR-2 instructions and FAQs), the Income-tax Act, 1961, CBDT rules, standard taxation texts and the literature cited. Client identities and financial details are not disclosed; the data reported are aggregate operational counts.

1.8. Workflow followed

Cases were processed through the stages below (Figure 1).

- **Client requirement identification:** income streams, residential and taxpayer status, filing obligation under Section 139(1) and regime intent; clients segmented as salaried (ITR-1), Defence Personnel with allowances, multi-source/capital-gain earners (ITR-2) and business or freelance cases (ITR-3/4).
- **Document collection:** Form 16/16A, pay slips, bank and FD interest certificates, Chapter VI-A proofs (80C, 80D, 80CCD, 24(b)), rent receipts and capital-gain statements.
- **Verification and reconciliation:** Form 26AS is checked for TDS, TCS and advance tax; AIS and the Taxpayer Information Summary are checked for interest, dividends and securities transactions; mismatches are resolved or reported as AIS feedback before preparation.
- **Allowance and exemption audit:** HRA, LTA and Defence allowances (field area, high altitude, counter-insurgency) and pension components are checked against current statutory provisions rather than a blanket exemption.
- **Dual-regime computation:** gross total income across the five heads is computed under both the old regime and Section 115BAC, deducting TDS/TCS and advance tax to arrive at refund, nil or payable tax.
- **ITR form selection:** an incorrect form makes a return defective under Section 139(9).
- **Preparation, review and filing:** data are entered or imported as JSON, the portal's validation is run, the draft is reviewed and the return is submitted.
- **E-verification and closure:** Aadhaar OTP, net banking or demat-based EVC within 30 days; status tracking until processing under Section 143(1); and archival of acknowledgements, working sheets, AIS/26AS and proofs.

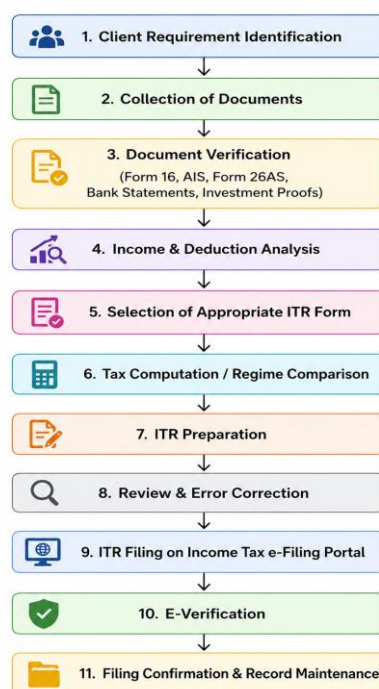


Fig. 1 - Flow chart of the ITR filing process

Tax Framework for AY 2026-27

Returns for FY 2025-26 (AY 2026-27) are governed by the Income-tax Act, 1961. Income is classified under five heads: salary (including pension and allowances), house property, profits and gains of business or profession (largely outside ITR-1/2), capital gains and other sources. ITR-1 suits resident individuals with salary or pension, specified other-source income, up to two house properties and eligible Section 112A long-term capital gains within prescribed limits; ITR-2 applies to individuals/HUFs without business income whose circumstances require it.

Table 5 gives the slab structure of both regimes. Under the new regime, a resident individual with taxable income up to ₹12 lakh gets a Section 87A rebate of up to ₹60,000. The standard deduction for salaried taxpayers and pensioners is ₹75,000 under the new regime and ₹50,000 under the old regime. The new regime is the default unless the taxpayer opts for the old one.

Table 5 - Slab rates for AY 2026-27 (individuals below 60 years)

Old regime – income (₹)	Rate	New regime – income (₹)	Rate
Up to 2,50,000	Nil	Up to 4,00,000	Nil
2,50,001–5,00,000	5%	4,00,001–8,00,000	5%
5,00,001–10,00,000	20%	8,00,001–12,00,000	10%
Above 10,00,000	30%	12,00,001–16,00,000	15%
		16,00,001–20,00,000	20%
		20,00,001–24,00,000	25%
		Above 24,00,000	30%

Table 6 - Old versus new tax regime

Basis	Old regime	New regime (AY 2026-27)
Tax rates	Higher slab rates	Lower, more gradual slabs
Deductions	Many available (80C, 80D, 24(b) etc.)	Most common deductions restricted
Standard deduction	₹50,000	₹75,000
Section 87A rebate	Up to ₹12,500 (income limit ₹5 lakh)	Up to ₹60,000 (income limit ₹12 lakh)
Best suited for	Large eligible deductions	Simpler computation, lower rates

For listed-equity transfers covered by Section 112A, long-term gains are exempt up to ₹1.25 lakh and taxed at 12.5% above that, while short-term gains under Section 111A are generally taxed at 20% for transfers on or after 23 July 2024. Defence allowances and retirement benefits (pension, gratuity, disability-related receipts) have specific treatment that depends on the provision, location, nature of the allowance and year, so each claim must be verified against current law and supporting documents.

1.9. Handling Defence-specific income

A recurring task was to separate income that is fully taxable, partly exempt or exempt. Table 7 lists the main categories encountered and the verification step applied. The guiding rule was never to assume a blanket exemption: each claim was tied to the governing provision, the posting or duty condition on the pay slip, and the supporting document, and was recorded in the working sheet so that the reviewer could re-check it.

Table 7 - Defence-related income and verification approach

Income component	Verification approach
Basic pay and regular allowances	Taxable as salary unless a specific exemption applies; match with Form 16.
Field-area, high-altitude and similar service allowances	Check the specific Section 10 provision, location, duty condition and limit for the year.
HRA and LTA	Verify eligibility, rent paid and conditions before claiming exemption.
Pension and retirement benefits	Pension is taxed as salary; check gratuity, commutation and other receipts against the relevant provision.
Disability-related receipts	Examine the nature of the receipt and the supporting order before treating it as exempt.
Interest, rent and capital gains	Reconcile with AIS/Form 26AS; select ITR-1 or ITR-2 accordingly.

1.10. Illustrative regime comparison

Table 8 shows two hypothetical salaried cases, computed from the slabs in Table 5 (excluding surcharge, with 4% health and education cess). Case A has gross salary of ₹11.5 lakh with ₹1.5 lakh under Section 80C and ₹25,000 under Section 80D. Case B has gross salary of ₹18 lakh with ₹1.5 lakh (80C), ₹25,000 (80D), ₹50,000 (80CCD(1B)) and ₹2 lakh of home-loan interest. In both cases the new regime is cheaper, in Case A because the

₹60,000 rebate wipes out the tax. This confirms that the comparison must be run explicitly for each client, because the answer changes as deductions rise relative to income.

Table 8 - Illustrative old versus new regime computation (₹)

Item	Case A old	Case A new	Case B old	Case B new
Gross salary	11,50,000	11,50,000	18,00,000	18,00,000
Standard deduction	50,000	75,000	50,000	75,000
Other deductions	1,75,000	–	4,25,000	–
Taxable income	9,25,000	10,75,000	13,25,000	17,25,000
Tax on slabs	97,500	47,500	2,10,000	1,45,000
Rebate u/s 87A	Nil	47,500	Nil	Nil
Tax + 4% cess	1,01,400	Nil	2,18,400	1,50,800

Analysis and Findings

1.11. Operational profile

Table 9 - Operational data of ITR filing

Metric	Result
Potential clients contacted	500+
ITRs completed	180+
ITR-1 cases	135 (75%)
ITR-2 cases	45 (25%)
Team size / supervised	7 / 5 members
Offline support	3 defence locations

Three-quarters of the cases were ITR-1, which indicates that most clients have straightforward salary or pension profiles and can be processed through a standard pipeline. The remaining quarter (ITR-2) involved capital gains, house-property matters or other conditions requiring detailed handling and disproportionate review time. The conversion from over 500 contacts to over 180 filings implies that outreach alone is insufficient: early education, document follow-up and offline support are needed to convert interest into completed returns.

1.12. Major findings

- High-volume filing needs a clearly sequenced process with quality controls at each stage.
- Defence-specific knowledge adds value because allowances and pension require case-by-case treatment.
- Many taxpayers need education on the old-versus-new regime; the choice depends on the complete income and deduction profile and not on rates alone.
- Early collection of Form 16 and other documents reduces last-minute workload.
- AIS/Form 26AS reconciliation is essential to detect discrepancies before submission.
- On-ground support remains useful where digital access or literacy is limited.
- Team leadership and delegation become critical as volumes rise, and data privacy is a continuing obligation.

1.13. Impact of the AY 2026-27 framework

The higher tax-free threshold (₹4 lakh in the slab structure), the ₹60,000 rebate up to ₹12 lakh of taxable income and the ₹75,000 standard deduction make the new regime attractive to many middle-income salaried clients, and often reduce their tax to nil. However, clients with large housing-loan interest, insurance and other old-regime deductions must still be evaluated under both regimes before a recommendation is made.

1.14. Discussion in light of the theoretical framework

The findings are consistent with the five theories. Under TAM, the portal's perceived usefulness is high, since pre-filled data and e-verification save time, but perceived ease of use falls when clients face unfamiliar terminology, connectivity gaps or a choice between regimes; assisted filing restores ease of use. Under TPB, clients with low confidence in handling allowances, AIS entries or capital gains (low perceived behavioural control), and peers who recommend a consultant (subjective norm), choose assisted filing. Tax Compliance Theory is reflected in the role of awareness and trust: clients who understood why mismatches matter supplied documents sooner. Service Quality Theory points to accuracy and responsiveness as the dimensions

clients noticed most, and Process Standardisation Theory is supported by the observation that checklist-driven, segmented cases moved faster than ad hoc ones.

These are practitioner observations and not statistically tested relationships. They should be read as propositions for later empirical testing, for example through a client survey measuring perceived usefulness, ease of use, confidence and satisfaction.

Challenges and Suggested Controls

Ten challenges were observed: high filing volume; understanding Defence allowances; incomplete documents; AIS/Form 26AS reconciliation; ITR form selection; regime choice; remote postings and limited client availability; accuracy under deadlines; team coordination; and client confidentiality. For the host organisation these affect capacity, turnaround time, notice and rework risk, client trust and repeat business. Five bottlenecks were most significant (Table 10).

Table 10 - Major filing bottlenecks and suggested controls

Bottleneck	Effect	Suggested control
Late document submission	Filing delays; compressed review	Early reminders; document checklist; secure upload portal
AIS/26AS mismatch	Rework; notice risk	Mandatory pre-filing reconciliation; AIS feedback
Unclear allowance treatment	Wrong taxable income	Annual Defence allowance matrix and tax-rule checklist
Peak-season workload	Quality risk; fatigue	Early outreach; segmentation by complexity
Complex ITR-2 cases	Longer turnaround	Senior reviewer and escalation queue
Digital access barriers	Stalled filings in remote areas	Hybrid model: camps at military hubs

1.15. Discussion of the main bottlenecks

Late documents disrupt the sequential workflow because computation cannot start until Form 16, interest certificates and loan statements are in hand; when these arrive near the deadline, review time is compressed and backlogs form. **AIS/Form 26AS mismatches** typically arise from omitted interest, dividends or TDS credits; resolving them after preparation causes rework and raises the risk of automated notices, so the check belongs before computation. **Unclear allowance treatment** affects taxable income directly: over-taxation harms the client, and an unsupported claim exposes both client and consultant. **Peak-season compression** produces long hours and reduces review bandwidth, so quality controls are the first thing to slip. **Complex ITR-2 cases** (several properties, equity transactions, capital-gain computations, foreign-asset disclosure) need more analysis and senior review. Finally, **digital barriers** such as poor connectivity in remote or high-altitude postings stall otherwise simple files, which is why camp-based support remains relevant.

Recommendations and Proposed Workflow

- **Start early:** begin tax awareness and document collection well before the peak period.
- **Standard digital checklist:** PAN, Form 16, salary slips, bank and interest certificates, investment proofs, property documents, capital-gain statements, previous ITR, Form 26AS and AIS.
- **Automated verification:** flag missing documents, duplicates, AIS/26AS mismatches, unusual values, missing bank details and calculation errors.
- **Complexity-based segmentation:** simple (salary, pension, basic interest), moderate (house property, investments, multiple sources) and complex (capital gains, multiple properties, foreign assets) cases routed to suitably skilled consultants.
- **Defence Tax Knowledge Base:** a living reference of allowance and pension treatment, updated every assessment year.
- **Two-level review:** preparer plus senior reviewer for complex ITR-2 returns.
- **Continue physical tax camps** where connectivity or digital literacy is limited.

Combining these gives the proposed workflow: client segmentation → early document request → digital upload → AIS/26AS reconciliation → income classification → old/new regime comparison → ITR preparation → reviewer check → submission → e-verification → client confirmation → record closure. In theoretical terms, it improves perceived usefulness and ease of use (TAM), strengthens perceived behavioural control (TPB), supports compliance, raises service quality on accuracy and responsiveness, and standardises repetitive steps.

Table 11 - Suggested performance indicators for the proposed workflow

Indicator	Purpose
Share of client documents received before the peak period	Measures effectiveness of early outreach
Average turnaround from intake to e-verification	Tracks speed by complexity segment
Share of returns accepted at first review	Measures quality at source
AIS/26AS mismatches found before computation	Shows value of reconciliation
Share of ITR-2 cases reviewed by a senior	Confirms the escalation control
Client confirmation and e-verification rate	Tracks closure of every case

These indicators are proposed for adoption by the host organisation; they were not measured during the placement.

Limitations

The findings rest on a single placement over a limited period at one organisation and may not generalise to all Defence taxpayers or tax consultancies. Client data are confidential and were not disclosed; some conclusions rely on the information available at the time. Illustrative cases explain concepts but actual liability depends on each taxpayer's facts. Tax provisions, slabs and utilities can change by notification, so they must be re-verified before filing. Filing also depends on portal performance and client connectivity, which the consultant cannot control, and the study did not include an independent client survey or internal financial data of the host organisation.

Learnings and Contribution to the Host Organisation

The placement showed that tax consulting is not only computation: it combines requirement analysis, document verification, reconciliation, regime comparison, communication, deadline management and quality control. Practical skills developed include tax computation and regime comparison, AIS/26AS reconciliation, client advisory in simple language, workload prioritisation, team coordination and problem-solving in incomplete-document cases. Supervising a small team showed that leadership means allocating work by strengths, monitoring progress and owning quality.

Several lessons were specific to Defence clients. First, document collection is a relationship activity: clients responded better to short, plain-language requests with a checklist than to long messages. Second, the regime decision must be explained with numbers, because many clients assume that more deductions always means less tax. Third, confidentiality is part of service quality, since pay slips, bank statements and identity numbers are handled in every case. Fourth, an unexpected mismatch is best treated as a diagnostic problem to be traced to its source (client record, employer return or third-party report) before any correction is made.

The contribution to UdChalo included direct support for over 180 filings, outreach to over 500 potential clients, coordination within a seven-member team (supervising five members) and on-ground support at three defence locations, along with the process-level insights reported above for future tax-season planning.

Conclusion

ITR filing for Defence Personnel is best understood as a complete service process rather than a calculation task. Early documentation, AIS/Form 26AS reconciliation, accurate treatment of Defence allowances, transparent regime comparison and structured review determine accuracy and turnaround. Technology has made filing convenient, but personal guidance and physical support remain necessary for complex cases and for clients with limited digital access. The proposed twelve-stage workflow offers a practical template for tax-advisory organisations serving the Defence community. Future research could test it with a client survey, measure turnaround and error rates before and after adoption, and extend the study to ITR-3/ITR-4 and to other mobile occupational groups.

1.16. Managerial implications

For service providers, the main implications are that capacity is determined less by the number of consultants than by how early documents arrive and how well cases are routed; that a small investment in a Defence allowance matrix and a reconciliation template prevents a large amount of rework; and that a hybrid model, combining digital channels with camps, serves a population that is geographically dispersed and often disconnected. For policy makers and the department, the findings suggest that clearer guidance on service allowances and pre-filled capture of Defence pay components would reduce errors at source.

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