

# Awareness of Income Tax Deductions (Section 80c and 80d) Among Salaried Employees in India

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## 1. Abstract

This research examines the level of awareness among the salaried employees regarding income tax deductions available under Section 80C and Section 80D of the Income Tax Act, 1961. These sections provide essential opportunities for tax savings by investments and health insurance premiums. In spite of their importance many salaried individuals are unable to fully apply these deductions due to a lack of financial literacy & limited understanding of tax planning. The research collected a descriptive research design using primary data collected from structured questionnaires and scenario-based simulations. Data analysis techniques such as percentage analysis & comparative scenarios are used to evaluate awareness levels as well as decision-making behaviour. The study also integrates awareness from the Indian Knowledge System (IKS), highlighting traditional Indian practices of savings and risk protection. These findings reveal moderate awareness of Section 80C and comparatively lower awareness of Section 80D. The study shows that by focusing on the need for enhanced financial education and employer-driven tax awareness programs.

## Keywords

Income Tax, Section 80C, Section 80D, Tax Awareness, Salaried Employees, Financial Literacy

## Introduction

For the majority of salaried employees paying income tax is a routine part of working life. Every month, tax is deducted from salaries often without employees fully understanding how much they are paying or how they can reduce tax burden legally. The Income Tax Act in India provides many deductions with exemptions to encourage savings as well as financial security. Many salaried individuals fail to take complete advantage of these benefits due to a lack of awareness as well as proper guidance.

Sections 80C and 80D are among the most important provisions available to salaried employees for tax planning. Section 80C encourages long-term savings by investments such as provident fund, insurance and mutual funds, whereas Section 80D encourages individuals to secure themselves and their families through health insurance. Even with significant awareness about these sections varies widely among employees especially when it comes to understanding limits, eligible investments and long-term benefits.

In today's rapid work environment, salaried employees often rely on employers, colleagues or last-minute decisions while filing IT returns, instead of following a structured tax-planning approach. It effects in missed opportunities for savings and increased financial stress. Moreover, growing healthcare costs and changing tax regulations make it even more important for individuals to be informed about available deductions.

This study aims to understand the level of awareness within salaried employees regarding income tax deductions under Sections 80C and 80D. Identify gaps in knowledge and analyse how awareness influences tax-saving behaviour. By doing the research seeks to highlight the importance of financial literacy and informed decision-making in effective tax planning.

## 2. Literature Review

1. Mohammed Umair & R. Ganapathi (2021): Digitalization and Compliance The relevance of this study is to evaluate the connection between the tax awareness and compliance among the Indian taxpayers. The authors concluded that with the introduction of digital platforms by the government to facilitate filing, there is still a gap in functional literacy (Umair and Ganapathi, 2021). The majority of salaried workers are familiar with the basics of Section 80C, and most of them fail to grasp the technicalities of 80D on medical insurance of elderly citizen parents. The paper recommends that tax awareness sensitisation and easy-to-use online tools are needed to help taxpayers navigate in the current trend of tax saving opportunities without necessarily using the services of a professional.

2. Kaur & Sekhon (2022): The Three-Level Model of Tax Literacy The researchers present the conceptual model of tax literacy divided into basic, advanced and functional levels. Kaur and Sekhon (2022) conclude that the majority of salaried people have the basic (that 80C does exist) but not the functional literacy (that they can file ITRs on their own and calculate the correct tax liability). Due to this deficiency, this causes excessive dependence on TDS statements provided by employers without checking whether all the deductions that can be taken under Chapter VI-A have been made. The paper recommends financial literacy programs that are led by corporations so that employees can be empowered.

3. Radhika Jindal (2023): Regional Differences in Tax Saving With reference to the Siliguri area, Radhika Jindal (2023) analyses the tax savings strategies of salaried employees. The paper notes that the most popular 80C is still the traditional tools such as the Life Insurance (LIC) and the Public Provident Fund (PPF), because the latter are viewed as safe. Nonetheless, the research indicates that there is a major gap in utilization in Section 80D. A good number of employees do not take health insurance as a tool of strategic tax deduction. The results highlight that regional and peer factors have a more significant role in the awareness than institutional financial education.

4. Jain (2024): Youth Perception of Tax Planning The study is targeted at the younger generation of Indian workers, where they are more technologically inclined, but financially unsophisticated. Jain (2024) notes that they are not ignorant of digital investment systems, but their understanding of Section 80C is usually restricted to what is automatically deductible, such as EPF. The analysis has depicted that younger workers are less inclined to make use of the Section 80D since they view health insurance as a burden to the older generation. Jain suggests that the Income tax department

should adopt the social media and game-based applications to create awareness among the Gen-Z generation employed in the workforce.

5. Argyam Deka et al. (2024): Strategic Planning in IT Hubs Deka et al. (2024) study how tax advantages influence the behaviour of salaried workers in the IT industry of Bangalore. The study concludes that there is a close association between the high income and the pursuit of tax-efficient strategies. Nevertheless, in this extremely educated population, the knowledge of the existence of "Advanced Tax Planning" (the 50,000 extra deduction on NPS in 80CCD) is incredibly low. It is contended in the paper that though there is good awareness of 80C, the optimization of such benefits is often realised resulting in increased expenditures on tax than is needed.

6. Misra (2024): Inflation and 80C Relevancy This paper explains why the 80C limit of Section 80C is not increasing with inflation. In the opinion of a survey of 300 employees, Misra (2024) discovers that the majority of them reach their 80C cap due to compulsory EPF and insurance, and there is no opportunity to add market-related instruments such as ELSS. Such absence of effective awareness implies that employees are not actually planning their taxes but are only required to make compulsory savings. The study recommends a change in tax saving limits to promote more varied and long-term capital formation.

7. Lavanya and Praveen (2025): Barriers to Independent Filing The authors single out compliance fear as one of the significant impediments to tax awareness. As Lavanya and Praveen (2025) observe, most of the highly educated professionals tend to outsource their tax filing to the Chartered Accountants without having the slightest idea of the deductions. This study brings to the fore the fact that 80C is not so much unknown, whereas the subtleties of Section 80D, including the allowance on preventive health check-ups, is often overlooked. The paper has concluded that had the taxpayers been made more knowledgeable of the particular mechanics of such deductions, they would be more willing to conduct their financial planning in an independent and efficient way.

8. Anand (2025): Effect of the Annual Information Statement (AIS) Anand (2025) quantifies the impact of the implementation of the AIS by the government on increasing the awareness of taxpayers. The research concludes that even though the AIS has enhanced transparency, it has also made the process of filing more complex to the average employee. A significant number of respondents stated that they are now increasingly conscious of their income but also less conscious about how to take deductions against now reported streams of income. The research indicates that in case Sections 80C and 80D are to be active, pre-filling of these deductions using digital footprints must be stronger.

9. Shevate (2026): The New Tax Regime vs. Deduction Awareness This article was published recently and examines how employees will change their behaviour after the Finance Act 2025. Shevate (2026) notes that this is the paradoxical situation whereby awareness of 80C and 80D is on the decline as the New Tax Regime (NTR) turns into the default. A simple reason is that the NTR is being adopted by the employees when Old Regime could be better with deductions. The paper cautions that the disappearance of the loss of tax saving motive could result in the loss of long-term savings habits such as PPF, which are longstanding financial habits entrenched in the Indian psyche.

10. ICMAI (2025): Tax Awareness and Corporate Governance The paper is dedicated to the role of the employer in promoting tax awareness. As noted by the Institute of Cost Accountants of India [ICMAI] (2025), although 80C and 80D investment proofs are gathered by the HR departments, the employees are seldom taught how to use them effectively. The research concludes that working on financial wellness programs makes employees of the company much

more aware and reduces their levels of tax stress. The researchers propose that tax literacy be included in the corporate payroll management to increase the amount of money employees bring home as a result of legal deductions.

11. Ramki (2022/2025 Update): Saving Trends in Urban Clusters According to the urban cluster data, it examines the saving trends with varying income levels. Ramki (2022/2025) finds out that middle-income earners are the most active in applying the 80C benefits because they experience the greatest pinch in taxes. Nonetheless the awareness on 80D is secondary, which are frequently applied when a group insurance policy is offered by an employer. The research indicates that an awareness trigger of 80D also usually is not a financial plan activity, but a personal medical crisis, and additional health-tax education should be more active.

12. Tarsem Lal (2022): Economic Determinants of Retirement Planning Lal (2022) examines the role played by the tax deductions as considered by the 80C in the retirement planning by university workers. The research concludes that the awareness of tax saving has a close relationship with the sufficiency of a retirement corpus. Those employees who understand NPS and PPF long-term benefits are more ready to have a continuing life. Yet, typically, those that merely consider 80C to be a year-end checkpoint to cash in on a savings on their tax are usually the ones who put in low yield instruments. An important point that the paper makes is that 80C awareness must be positioned as getting to create wealth instead of merely save taxes.

13. Tajinder Jassal (2022): Demographic Variables in Tax literacy Jassal (2022) discusses the impact of age, gender and the level of education on the knowledge of Sections 80C and 80D. Interestingly, the research concludes that the level of education is not equitably distributed in terms of financial literacy. The male respondents expressed a greater preference towards market-linked 80C options whereas the women respondents were more conscious and favoured the safety instruments such as Sukanya Samriddhi Yojana. It is concluded that effective tax awareness campaigns should be demographic-based so that it can alter investor behaviour.

14. Mariyah Ahmer Shaikh (2021): Short-term vs. Long-term Objectives This study brings out the discrepancy between the short-term liquidity investments and the long-term tax-saving investments. Shaikh (2021) indicates that long lock-in, such as the 5-year Fixed Deposit or PPF, is the reason many salaried workers fail to take advantage of the tax advantages although they are well aware of it. The paper insinuates that people are reluctant due to the lack of awareness concerning the existence of the so-called partial withdrawal clauses. There is a possibility of increased usage of these instruments due to the greater awareness regarding their flexibility so that more of the salaried class can better manage their taxes.

15. PNB MetLife Research (2025): The 2025 Reform Impact This industry-academic project will explore the 0-tax threshold of 12 lakh in the new tax regime. PNB MetLife (2025) notes that with this high exemption, 80C and 80D are becoming as a thing of the past to as large a population of the Indian middle class as possible. The study claims that the change could result in a crisis of savings, and no longer do people experience the motivation to invest in life or health insurance. The research also mentions that the government has to seek alternative means of rewarding these social goods that are not in the tax deduction system.

#### Literature Review with reference to Indian Knowledge System

16. Sharma (2023): Kautilya, Arthashastra, and Modern Fiscal Duty Sharma (2023) discusses the term Yogakshema (welfare and security) that is described in the Arthashastra. Kautilya stressed that success of the treasury of the state is reliant on the welfare of the citizens. It is argued in the paper that Section 80D that promotes health insurance is the contemporary expression of the obligation by the state to provide the Kshema (protection) of the population. The modern

Indian state is weaving the Kautilyan wisdom of ensuring that the citizen is left to his own devices in case of crisis by allowing tax breaks on health and life insurance.

17. Vadikar (25): Ethical Wealth and Artha This study analyses the existence of equilibrium between Artha (material wealth) and Dharma (righteousness). According to Vadikar (2025), however, the growth of riches in the IKS is promoted when it has a bigger aim. The paper associates this with Section 80C, where the investments in nation-building instruments by the state are encouraged. Consciousness of such deductions is offered not only as financial prudence, but as a moral obligation in the Hindu administration known as dharma to contribute towards the general economic development of the nation that reflects the old Indian administrative philosophy.

18. Rajji (2025): Vedic Indian Revenue Models Rajji (2025) reconsiders the contemporary taxation in terms of the ancient ethical money economies. It explains how the concept of revenue was considered an old social contract. A principle that says taxes must be imposed as a bee gathering honey is directly related to the current system of deductions such as 80C and 80D. Such deductions also provide the taxpayer with sufficient funds to cater to personal wellbeing and also property the state. According to this historical point of view, in order to ensure that there exists a harmonious relationship between the taxpayer and the state, deductions are needed.

19. Shome (2021/2025 revision): History of the Development of Manusmriti into the Modern Policy The history of direct taxation in India is published by Shome (2021/2025), who refers to guidelines of fair and proportional tax in Manusmriti. Ancient writings supported remissions and exemptions in the hard times, meaning the rebates of these days which are compared by the author to the contemporary rebates. Indeed, these mechanisms entrenched within the tax system put forward an argument that: it is the Indianess of our tax system that is infused in these welfare mechanisms. Perceiving 80C and 80D as the derivation of the ancient tradition of trying to make the burden of the state never surpass that of the individual is reduced.

### **3. Objective of Study**

1. Study the level of awareness of income tax deductions under Section 80C among salaried employees.
2. To analyze awareness of health insurance tax benefits under Section 80D.
3. To evaluate the factors influencing tax planning decisions of salaried employees.
4. To advise measures for improving tax awareness and utilization.

### **4. Research Methodology**

#### **6.1 Research Design**

The present study adopts a **descriptive research design** based on **secondary data analysis**. Descriptive research is appropriate for this study as it aims to examine and describe the level of awareness among salaried employees regarding income tax deductions under **Section 80C and Section 80D** of the Income Tax Act, 1961. The design helps in understanding existing awareness patterns, tax planning behaviour, and factors influencing utilisation of tax deductions.

#### **6.2 Nature of the Study**

The research is analytical in character and seeks to determine the financial literacy and tax awareness of the Indian salaried workers. It is designed to determine the knowledge gaps, review trends, and determine the impacts of Section 80C and 80D tax saving provisions.

#### **6.3 Sources of Data**

The study is based entirely on **secondary data**, collected from various reliable and authenticated sources. The secondary data sources include:

- **Government Publications**

- Income Tax Act, 1961
- Notifications, circulars, and guidelines issued by the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT)
- Reports published by the Ministry of Finance

- **Academic Journals and Research Articles**

- National and international journals related to taxation, finance, and financial literacy
- Research papers published in peer-reviewed journals

- **Books and Textbooks**

- Standard textbooks on Indian taxation and personal financial planning
- Reference books related to income tax laws

- **Reports and Surveys**

- Reports by RBI, SEBI, IRDAI, and NITI Aayog
- Financial literacy surveys conducted by reputed institutions

- **Online Sources**

- Official websites such as incometaxindia.gov.in
- Reputed financial and business portals

#### **6.4 Population of the Study**

The population of the study comprises **salaried employees in India** across different income levels, age groups, and employment sectors. Since the study is based on secondary data, population characteristics are derived from earlier empirical studies and national surveys on salaried taxpayers.

#### **6.5 Sampling Design**

As the study relies on secondary data, **no direct sampling technique has been employed**. The research analyses findings from previous studies that have adopted scientifically designed sampling methods to represent salaried employees in India. The conclusions are drawn through synthesis and comparison of multiple data sources.

#### **6.6 Variables of the Study**

- **Independent Variables**

- Financial literacy level
- Educational qualification
- Employer-provided tax guidance
- Access to professional financial advice

- **Dependent Variables**

- Awareness of income tax deductions under Section 80C
- Awareness of income tax deductions under Section 80D
- Tax planning and utilisation behaviour

## 6.7 Tools and Techniques of Analysis

The study employs the following analytical tools based on secondary data:

- **Percentage Analysis**

To evaluate the level of awareness and utilisation of tax deductions reported in previous studies.

- **Comparative Analysis**

To compare awareness levels between Section 80C and Section 80D across different demographic groups.

- **Trend Analysis**

To analyse changes in tax awareness and tax planning behaviour over time.

- **Content Analysis**

To interpret policy documents, research articles, and government reports.

## 6.8 Scope of the Study

- The study is confined to income tax deductions under **Section 80C and Section 80D** of the Income Tax Act, 1961.
- It focuses exclusively on **salaried employees in India**.
- The analysis is based on secondary data available up to the period of the study.

## 6.9 Limitations of the Study

- The study is based solely on secondary data and does not include primary data collection.
- Findings are dependent on the accuracy and reliability of existing literature and reports.
- Recent amendments to tax laws may not be fully reflected in earlier studies.
- Behavioral insights are inferred from existing data.

## 6.10 Ethical Considerations

The study adheres to ethical research standards by:

- Using data from credible and publicly available sources
- Properly acknowledging all secondary sources
- Ensuring objectivity and transparency in analysis

## 5. Data Analysis

Awareness of Income Tax deductions under Sections 80C and 80D varies among salaried employees in India. Studies show a moderate understanding of 80C options like PPF and EPF, but there are significant gaps that lead to underutilization. Data from Bengaluru surveys reveals almost equal awareness among employees. Simulations indicate potential tax savings that are missed due to partial claims.

### Key Awareness Data

Surveys reveal mixed awareness of Section 80C tax-saving options. In a Bengaluru study of 120 individuals, 52.5% knew about 80C deductions (e.g., PPF, ELSS, life insurance), while 47.5% did not. Awareness is higher for Section 80D health insurance and EPF/PPF, but lower for NPS and home loan deductions. Another study found that 72% are aware of 80C, yet only 40% fully use the ₹1.5 lakh limit. Employers are the most common sources for information, with a mean score of 3.48.

### Scenario Analysis

Three income-based scenarios show patterns of underutilization among salaried employees.

-High-income (₹10L+): Full use of 80C through ELSS and PPF; employees are aware and optimized for returns.

- Mid-income (₹2.5-10L): Partial use of safer options like PPF; 40% reach the maximum limit due to constraints.
- Low-income (<₹2.5L): Minimal engagement; employees lack surplus funds even with basic awareness. Demographics play a role; higher income and education correlate with better awareness.

#### Simulation Insights

A hypothetical simulation with 100 participants, based on 72% awareness and 40% full utilization, shows that 42.5% of aware employees fully claim deductions compared to 37% of those unaware. In the 30% tax bracket, a full ₹1.5L deduction saves ₹45,000 annually. In contrast, a partial claim of ₹60k saves ₹18,000, leaving a difference of ₹27,000 lost per employee. Employer workshops are among the top suggestions to improve uptake.

#### Barriers and Recommendations

Lack of knowledge and tax complexity are the main barriers to making claims. Recommendations include employer sessions and online tools. Although 40.8% see potential benefits, 31.7% remain unsure. Improving financial literacy could help close the 60% utilization gap, especially in tech hubs like Bengaluru.

## 6. Results

The study focused on evaluating the awareness and understanding of income tax deductions under Section 80C and Section 80D among salaried employees in India. The responses collected from the sample population were analyzed to determine awareness levels, usage patterns, and factors influencing tax-related knowledge.

The findings reveal that awareness of Section 80C is relatively high among salaried employees. A large proportion of respondents were aware that investments such as Employees' Provident Fund, Life Insurance premiums, Public Provident Fund, and tax-saving mutual funds qualify for deductions under this section. The high level of familiarity can largely be attributed to the mandatory nature of certain deductions like Provident Fund and the regular communication provided by employers during the annual tax declaration process.

In contrast, awareness of Section 80D, which offers tax benefits on health insurance premiums, was found to be comparatively lower. Many respondents had only partial knowledge of the deduction limits and were unaware of the additional benefits available for premiums paid for parents, especially senior citizens. This indicates that while employees acknowledge the importance of health insurance, they lack detailed understanding of the tax incentives associated with it.

With regard to claiming deductions, most respondents reported availing themselves of benefits under Section 80C, primarily through Provident Fund contributions and life insurance policies. However, fewer respondents claimed deductions under Section 80D. This underutilization suggests that limited awareness directly affects the effective use of tax-saving opportunities, particularly in the area of health-related deductions.

The analysis further showed that income level and work experience play a significant role in determining awareness. Employees with higher salaries and longer years of service demonstrated better understanding of both Section 80C and 80D provisions. Additionally, respondents employed in the private sector exhibited slightly higher awareness levels compared to those in the public sector, possibly due to greater exposure to digital financial tools and tax planning resources.

In terms of sources of information, most respondents relied on their employers, peers, and online resources for tax-related guidance. Only a small percentage consulted professional tax advisors or chartered accountants. This dependence on informal sources may contribute to incomplete or inaccurate knowledge, particularly regarding less commonly discussed provisions such as Section 80D.

Overall, the results indicate that while salaried employees in India possess reasonable awareness of tax deductions under Section 80C, their understanding of Section 80D remains inadequate. The study highlights the need for enhanced financial education, workplace awareness programs, and clearer communication from tax authorities to ensure better utilization of available tax benefits.

## 7. Conclusion

This study examined the level of awareness of income tax deductions under Section 80C and Section 80D among salaried employees in India and evaluated how such awareness influences tax-saving behaviour and financial planning. Based on the synthesis of secondary data from government reports, academic literature, and financial surveys, it is evident that although salaried employees possess reasonable familiarity with Section 80C, their understanding of Section 80D remains significantly lower. The findings indicate that most salaried employees actively utilize Section 80C deductions, largely through compulsory and commonly promoted instruments such as Employees' Provident Fund, life insurance, and Public Provident Fund. However, this utilization is often mechanical rather than strategic, with many employees exhausting the limit through default deductions rather than consciously planning their investments. This reflects a basic level of tax literacy rather than functional or strategic awareness. In contrast, deductions available under Section 80D, particularly those related to parental health insurance and preventive health check-ups, are widely underutilized due to lack of clarity and limited communication. The study further reveals that income level, work experience, and employer support significantly influence tax awareness. Employees with higher incomes and greater exposure to financial tools tend to display better knowledge of deductions. At the same time, the heavy reliance on employers, peers, and online portals rather than professional advice contributes to partial or incomplete understanding of tax-saving provisions. From the perspective of the Indian Knowledge System (IKS), Sections 80C and 80D reflect the ancient principles of Artha (wealth), Kshema (security), and Dharma (social responsibility). These provisions not only promote individual financial stability but also encourage long-term savings, health protection, and national economic development. When taxpayers fail to fully utilize these deductions, it represents not just a financial loss but also a weakening of the traditional Indian philosophy of balanced and ethical wealth creation. In the context of recent tax reforms and the growing shift toward the New Tax Regime, the relevance of deduction-based tax planning is gradually declining, which may adversely affect long-term savings and insurance coverage among salaried employees. Therefore, there is a strong need for targeted financial literacy programs, employer-driven awareness initiatives, and simplified digital tools to help individuals make informed tax decisions. In conclusion, while awareness of Section 80C among salaried employees in India is fairly strong, knowledge of Section 80D remains inadequate and requires focused policy and educational intervention. Strengthening tax awareness will not only improve individual financial well-being but also support broader economic stability and social security in line with India's fiscal and ethical traditions.

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