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A comparative analysis of the Padma Shri Awardees of 2010-2013 and 2023-2026

Kearaa Sourab Modi[1], Anjali Kumari[2], Atul Kumar Srivastava[3]
[1]*Welham girls school Dehradun, Uttarakhand, India*
[2]*Amity School of Engineering & Technology, Amity University Jharkhand, Ranchi, Jharkhand, India*
[3]*Amity Institute of Applied Sciences, Amity University Jharkhand, Ranchi, Jharkhand, India*

***Abstract*— In this paper, we present a social comparison of India's Padma Shri civilian awardees between two time periods of 3 years between two different national parties leading the central government, using real individual-level government data (757 total recipients). Our comparison analysis focuses only on social parameters and does not compare government policies. Our analysis is also based on the maximum number of awardees from different states of India, as well as field-wise. From our study, it is evident that there is a major shift in the nature of Padma Shri awardees from the previous time interval, 2010-2013, to 2023-2026.**

***Keywords*— Award; Comparative analysis; Field wise; Gender Based; Pradma Shri; State-wise.**

I. Introduction

Bharat Ratna and, out of the three Padma awards, Padma Shri is 4th highest civilian award of India. The Sanskrit word “Padma” means "lotus," and the Sanskrit word "Shri" is used to give honor, and in English, its meaning is "Mr." or "Ms.”. Padma awards are announced by the Government of India every year on 26 January (India’s Republic Day). This award was instituted in 1954. This award is mainly awarded by citizens of India in recognition of their distinguished contributions in various spheres of activity, including the arts, education, industry, literature, science, acting, medicine, social service, and public affairs. This award has also been awarded to some distinguished foreigners if they contribute in various ways to India [1].

It is clear that this award definitely recognizes and motivates the culture of doing arts, education, social work, industry, literature, science, acting, medicine, and public affairs. From time to time, the government decided the number and parameters for this award.

Here, based on two central governments of different ideologies, we did a comparative study of the recipients of the Padma award on some specific parameters.

Outline of the paper is given below:

- In Section~II, a comparative study has been performed.
- Section~III discussion about future scope.
- The study concludes with key findings in Section~IV.

II. A Comparative Study

A. Number of Recipients

Here we present a comparative study between the number of recipients of the “Padma Shri” award in 2010-2013 and 2023-2026. From a year-wise analysis, it is clear that the number of recipients is increasing from 2023 to 2026 compared to 2010-2013. In my opinion, possible reasons for this include the social status of the recipients and India's population. The results are also shown in figure 1 in terms of bar graph.

TABLE I
Number of recipients

Year	Recipients
2010	**81**
2011	**84**
2012	**77**
2013	**80**
2023	**94**
2024	**112**
2025	**114**
2026	**115**

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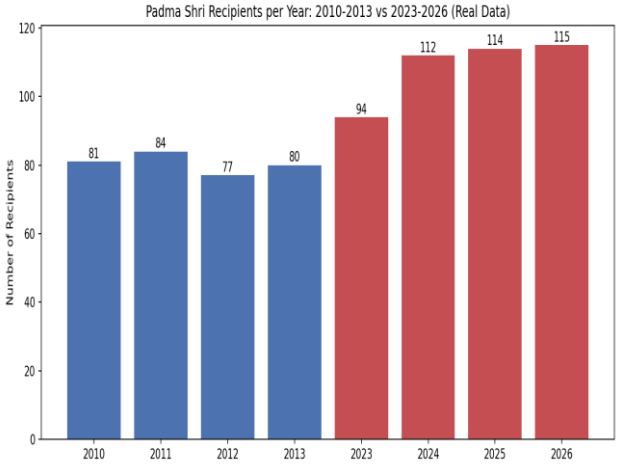


Fig. 1. Representation of number of recipients.

A. Field-wise Comparison

The table below compares how the award share by field has shifted between the two periods:

TABLE III
COMPARISON TABLE BASED ON AREA OF WORK

Field	2010-2013 (n=322)	% of Period	2023-2026 (n=435)	% of Period
Arts	87	27.0%	167	38.4%
Literature & Education	61	18.9%	74	17.0%
Medicine	40	12.4%	39	9.0%
Science & Engineering	33	10.2%	32	7.4%
Sports	27	8.4%	22	5.1%
Social Work	24	7.5%	44	10.1%
Trade & Industry	21	6.5%	14	3.2%
Others	20	6.2%	33	7.6%
Public Affairs	6	1.9%	7	1.6%
Civil Service	3	0.9%	3	0.7%

From the above-given data, it is clear that the Padma award given in the field of arts grew most sharply from 27% in the 2010-2013 time periods to 38.4% in the 2023-2026 time periods, while the award for civil service is constant in numbers but decreases in percentage of overall awards in the 2023-2026 time periods.

It can also be observed that the number of Padma awards in Medicine, Science & Engineering, Sports, and Trade & Industry all declined as a share from 2010-2013 to 2023-2026, while Social Work nearly doubled its share (7.5% to 10.1%), suggesting a shift toward recognizing grassroots community contributors alongside traditional achievers.

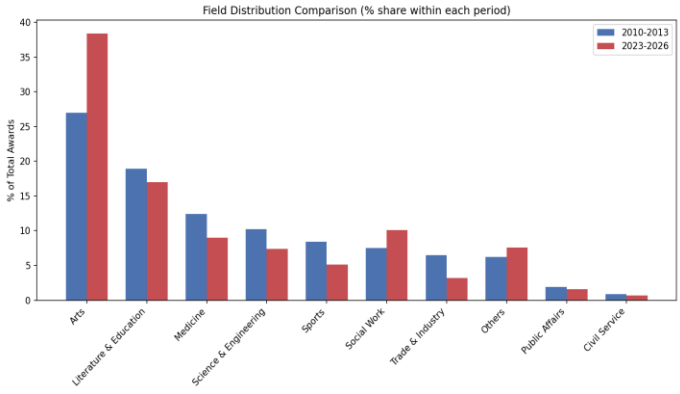


Fig. 2. Representation of awards in different field.

B. State-wise Comparison

The table below compares maximum award shares by different states (only top five states) shifted between the two periods:

TABLE IIIII
COMPARISON TABLE BASED ON STATES

Rank	2010-2013 State	Count	2023-2026 State	Count
1	Maharashtra	47	Uttar Pradesh	37
2	Delhi	46	Maharashtra	36
3	Tamil Nadu	23	Tamil Nadu	32
4	Karnataka	19	West Bengal	31
5	Kerala	19	Karnataka	26
6	Andhra Pradesh	19	Gujarat	23

From the above data it is clear that Maharashtra stayed in the top 2 in both periods. Delhi dropped out of the top 6 (from 2nd to below 6th), while Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal rose sharply into the top ranks - suggesting a broader geographic spread of awards in the period of 2023-2026, consistent with the government's stated 'People's Padma' initiative (since 2016) to reach beyond traditional metro-centric recipients.

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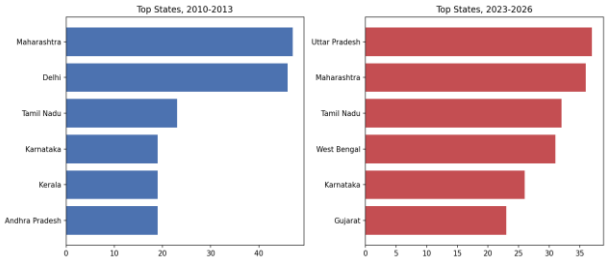


Fig. 3. Representation of awards state wise (top five).

III. Method

Both datasets were loaded into pandas Data-Frames. Fields were grouped into 10 standard categories. Totals, percentages, and cross-tabulations (field-by-year, gender-by-year) were computed using value-counts and crosstab. Charts were generated using matplotlib. All figures in this report are traceable to real, named individuals.

IV. Future Scope

Based on the above analysis, in the future, anyone can perform similar data analysis for the other two Padma awards, namely “Padma Vibhushan” and “Padma Bhushan,” and for India's highest civilian honor, the “Bharat Ratna." Also, anyone can perform political analysis of these awards based on these data.

V. Conclusion

Comparing 2010-2013 to 2023-2026 using real, verified data from government portal: Padma Shri recipients per year grew by about 35%, from an average of 80.5 to 108.75. Arts became significantly more dominant (27% to 38.4% of awards), while Medicine, Science & Engineering, and Trade & Industry each lost ground proportionally. Geographic representation broadened - Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal rose into the top ranks alongside long-standing leaders Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu. In the recent period, women consistently made up about one-fifth of recipients. Together, these patterns are consistent with the Indian government's stated goal since 2016 to transform the award into a more inclusive 'People's Padma', recognizing a wider range of fields, regions, and backgrounds.

REFERENCES

[1] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Padma_Shri