

Introduction to Parameswara Krishnan

This special issue of *Canadian Studies in Population* is dedicated to Parameswara Krishnan, the founder of this journal in 1974 and its first editor. Parameswara Krishnan (Krishnan for short) was born in Kerala, India on November 20, 1936, the fourth son of Parameswara Iyer and Narayani Ammal. After completing his High School Education in H.S. Peringottukara, Trissur District, and Government Boy's High School in Chittur-Palghat, he joined the Keral University affiliated Government College in Chittur-Palghat from where he graduated with first class honors in 1956 with a BSc degree in Mathematics. As well, he was awarded the His Highness the Maharajah's Junior Scholarship for undergraduate studies. Shortly after his graduation in 1956, Krishnan joined the Statistical Laboratory (now the Department of Statistics) in the Research Institute at Thiruvanthapuram to complete his Masters in Statistics, with a major in Theoretical and Applied Statistics. After graduating from this program with First Class standing, Krishnan participated in a State sponsored project on student life in colleges led by Dr. Aleyamma George, Professor of Statistics.

The call of a permanent job offer came from Jaipur, Rajasthan for the position of statistician to develop sampling design and questionnaire construction. This was a turning point in Krishnan's career. The Director of this organization was Dr. R.N. Bagchi, a PhD from London School of Economics. Dr. Bagchi inspired him to develop theory driven research and model building approaches. As part of his work experience, Krishnan organized seminars and discussion groups on this topic to help young research assistants working on Industrial and Economic Surveys. During this tenure at Jaipur, Krishnan investigated various applied agricultural problems as well as conducting a number of social epidemiological surveys of the farming population.

Krishnan joined the Department of Statistics at the University of Rajasthan in 1962. The University had opened the Department of Statistics to provide the State of Rajasthan with qualified graduates in Statistics. From 1962 through 1967, he taught a variety of subject areas in Pure and Applied Statistics. There he developed a number of research projects on sampling methods. A new approach to Rotation (Successive) Sampling was also prepared and presented at the Indian Agricultural Research Statistics Meetings in Jaipur. His paper on gain from sequential sampling in Pareto Distribution was discussed in the departmental seminar and it later paved the way for the sequential sampling approach in large-scale surveys. This method was later applied by a Masters Student in Sociology for his thesis at the University of Alberta in Edmonton, Canada. At Rajasthan Krishnan also taught Introductory Statistics as a part of a research methods program, as well as giving courses in Econometrics to students in the Department of Economics.

His strong interest in pursuing advanced studies in statistics and demography led Krishnan to apply to a number of universities in the United States for fellowships or assistantships. Cornell University awarded him a Ford Foundation Fellowship for three years to complete the Ph.D. The International Population Program awarded him a travel grant to join Cornell University. In 1971, Krishnan graduated from Cornell with Demography as his Major and Mathematics and Statistics (Applied Probability) as his minors. His advisor Professor, Robert McGinnis was a great inspiration and Krishnan has always been grateful to Dr. McGinnis for instilling in him the desire to pursue research in mathematical modeling.

After his tenure at University of Rajasthan had expired and having completed the Ph.D., Krishnan began to look for a full time teaching position. He was recommended to a number of universities, including Hacettepe University in Turkey, the Australian National University, and the United Nations Statistics and Population Research Branch. He was recommended to Professor Kingsley Davis at Berkeley, California. Professor Davis required that Krishnan should sign a contract for three years with the task of updating Davis' *magnum opus* on the Population of India and Pakistan. However, having been offered a permanent teaching position at the University of Alberta in Edmonton, Canada, by the recommendation of Professor Karol Krotki, Krishnan decided to join the Department of Sociology at the University of Alberta in July, 1971.

At the University of Alberta, Krishnan began in earnest to develop a program in Demography. From 1972 to 1975 he served as the Director of the Population Research Laboratory (PRL), a demographic research centre that was started by the late Professor Warren Kalbach in the early 1960s. Krishnan helped to expand the activities of the PRL to encompass population studies as well as survey research. Under his leadership, Discussion Papers, Alberta Series Reports and Western Canada Reports were started. The PRL began to organize Population Studies Seminars on a regular basis with student and faculty participation. And as already indicated, Krishnan founded the Canadian Studies Population in 1974. Students from the University of Alberta Sociology program began to participate in Learned Societies Meetings. He along with Professor Karol Krotki conducted a large scale fertility survey of Alberta province (the Growth of Alberta Families Study) with funding from National Health and Welfare Canada. A number of theses and dissertations were produced based on the data from this important survey.

Beside his extensive involvement in promoting Canadian demography, Krishnan was also interested in the demography of India. He organized India side meetings at the Population Association of America meetings. Along with a

handful of Canadian demographers, which included the late Professor Ronald D'Costa from the University of Ottawa, Professor Eddie Ebanks from the University of Western Ontario, Dr. Kottai Gnanasekaran from Statistics Canada, and several others, Krishnan conceived of the idea of forming a Canadian Population Society as an official demographic association. This proposal was presented and discussed at the PAA meetings in New Orleans in 1973. After a preliminary meeting in Kingston Ontario at the Learned Society Meetings in 1974, it was decided to form the Canadian Population Society. Interim Committees were set up and Dr. Betty Macleod, OISE, Mrs. Sylvia Wargon, Statistics Canada and others were to work out the details about this new professional association. The first meeting of the Canadian Population Society took place in 1975 in the context of the Learned Societies Meetings, which were held at the University of Alberta, Edmonton.

Krishnan's activities and research interests were not confined to the University of Alberta. Among his many professional involvements, he has held visiting assignments at Peking University Population Studies Department; Demography Program at Australian National University; the University of Kerala as a Senior Shastri Fellow; S.V. University, Tirupati, India; and Centro des Estudios Demographicos in Mexico City.

Krishnan has always been a tireless and highly devoted scholar. At the University of Alberta he supervised many students to completion at both Masters and PhD levels. Many of his students have taken teaching positions in Canadian universities and abroad. After 20 years as Professor of Sociology (Demography), Krishnan retired from official duties from the University of Alberta in 1998. In 2001, he accepted a Visiting Position at the University of Botswana. Concurrently, he holds the Ratan Tata Fellowship at Institute for Social and Demographic Change, in Bangalore, India. Some of his current research projects at this institute include socioeconomic problems and issues associated with Kerala's modernization, and the interrelationship of caste and politics in India. In 2005, he was given a regular appointment as Professor of Population Studies at the University of Botswana.

Krishnan has been highly involved in community activities in Edmonton. He organized the Kerala Bhajan Group. He successfully promoted the teaching of Indian languages at the University of Alberta and the creation of a scholarly group in South Asian Area Studies and Literature. Krishnan also helped the Alberta Hindi Association gain permission to teach Hindi to South Asian Children on Saturdays at the University of Alberta. In recognition of his contribution to the promotion of Hindi Language and Literature in Edmonton, the Hindi Association elected him as an honorary member.

Finally, through this special issue we wish to express our appreciation to a dedicated and productive scholar who made important contributions to demography, statistics, and sociology. All his former colleagues and students are especially proud to have had the opportunity to learn and study with him and most of all to know Krishnan as a person.

Frank Trovato, Editor
Canadian Studies in Population