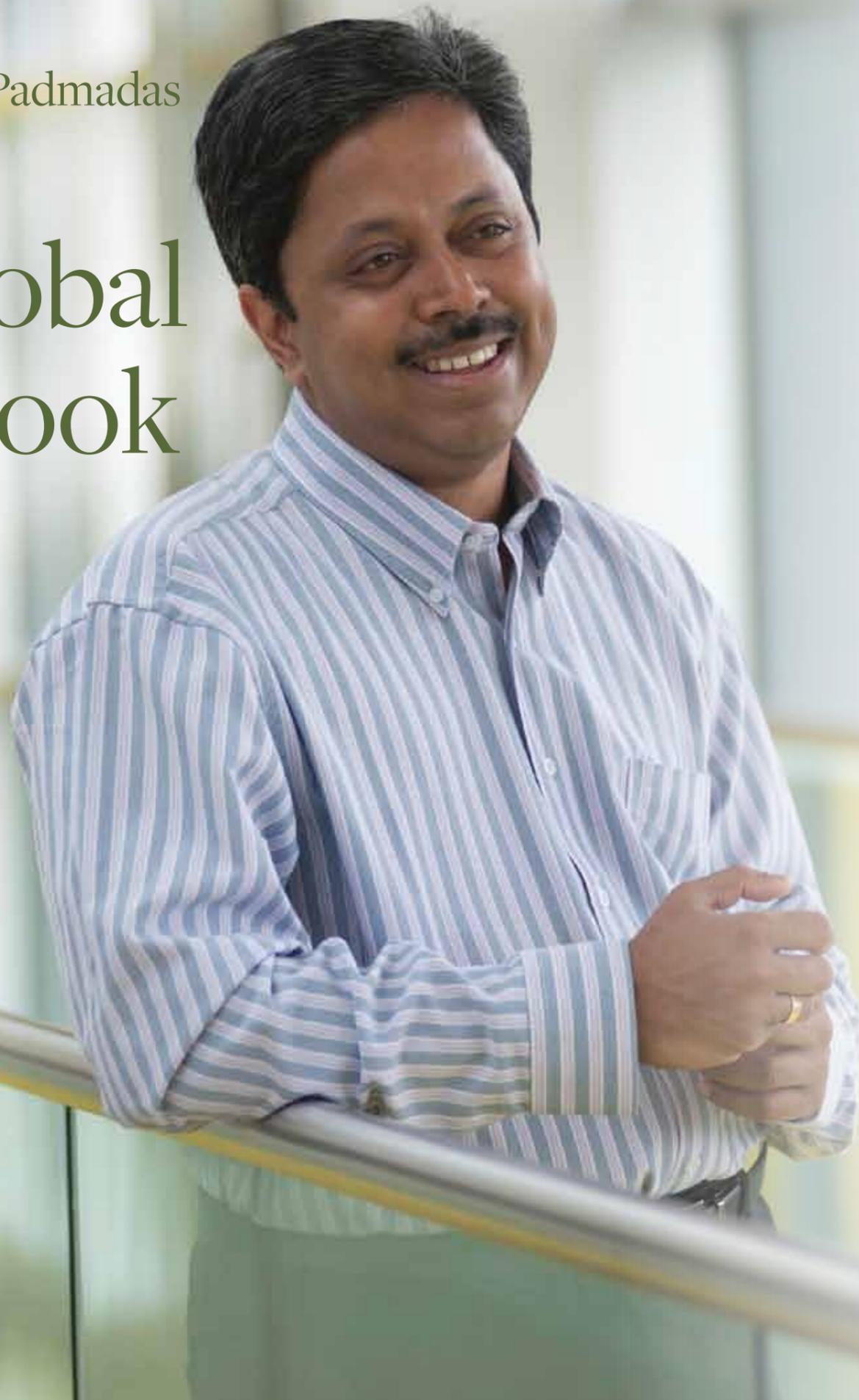


A global outlook



As Co-Director of the Centre for Global Health, Population, Poverty and Policy, Dr Sabu Padmadas is currently managing several international research projects. He also teaches a number of demographic and statistics modules including 'Population and Health'. In 2010 he received a Vice-Chancellor's Teaching Award, having been nominated by some of his students. When *the Voice* met up with him, he had just returned from a month in China, working on a UN-funded project.

Q *What projects are you working on at the moment?*

A Since 2003 I have been involved in evaluating a reproductive health intervention programme in China, which is funded by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) with the aim of removing birth targets and promoting informed choices. I have recently completed the final evaluation. I'm also working with a large global network of researchers on a project funded by the UK Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), looking at health care inequalities in Brazil and India.

Q *You are leading an interdisciplinary team to develop a new module as part of the Curriculum Innovation Programme (CIP). How did the idea for the Global Health module come about?*

A I was teaching a module called Population and Health and student representatives from Medicine wanted an opportunity to study this area as well as part of their intercalated study programme. At the time, their option to study global health was to go to London or Bristol. I got together a team of very enthusiastic colleagues and we realised that there was scope to develop a new module for a wider student community. In particular, Dr. Julie Wintrup from Health Sciences has been incredibly proactive in facilitating student-staff interaction.

Professor Al Ian Hill, currently based in our Faculty, is also involved with the design of the module. He felt that what they already offered at Harvard was different to our discussions and that we were

heading in the right direction. He even encouraged us to produce an academic textbook on the subject, which is something we plan to do in the future.

Although we had already started the conversation about designing something new, it has been great to continue this work with the support of the CIP.

Q *What will the Global Health module involve for the students who take it?*

A They will gain a unique opportunity to learn multiple dimensions of global health, which is under-explored and defined in many ways. They will study areas such as the role of society and technology in health promotion, the transition of dietary patterns and global burden of chronic diseases as well as the spread of infectious diseases in a global context. The expertise and resources available to them through a group of research-active teachers from Social and Human Sciences, Medicine and Health Sciences will be a major strength. The Vice-Chancellor will also be involved by teaching a session on health promotion and policy as part of the module.

One of the criteria for CIP modules is that they should make use of innovative delivery and assessment tools. Students studying Global Health will experience interactive lectures and multi-media tutorials, internet research and written essays, as well as taking part in online assessment.

Q *What do you think about the Curriculum Innovation Programme?*

A The CIP opens up a wide range of flexible opportunities for education and research. I think it is a brilliant initiative, which is long overdue. There are a lot of interdependencies and overlap around the world nowadays, in terms of issues and needs. The CIP's attempt to address this should motivate students to reach for a new knowledge horizon to meet new challenges. We want them to open windows to the outside world and prepare them for the global society in which they live. This is about preparing our future leaders.

Q *What achievements are you most proud of in your career?*

A Building an international research network with colleagues from China, India, Brazil, South Africa and some other African countries has not been easy, but I am proud that we have managed to build a strong team and maintain fruitful academic collaborations. It is a vibrant network and we are always looking for opportunities to apply for research grants – I'm pleased to say that we have been successful with most of our applications.

I am also proud of my six PhD students who have completed their doctorates. They are all well-placed, with good jobs and strong academic interests. One in particular came to me as a second-year undergraduate student attending one of my modules: he told me that through his reading he had identified an area that was under-researched and he wanted to research it himself through a PhD. He went on to complete his Masters and then his PhD, and is now working at the University of Bristol. Knowing that my lectures stimulated new thinking for research is highly rewarding.

Q *If you hadn't followed an academic career, what would you have done?*

A I love films, so I think I would have done something creative in the film industry. I have a long list of favourite films and whenever I try to pick one or two, it is impossible to favour one over the others.

Q *What are you currently reading?*

A *The Rational Optimist* by Matt Ridley; *The Chinese Century* by Oded Shenkar.

Q *And finally, who would be your ideal dinner party guests, dead or alive?*

A Swami Vivekananda, Mahatma Gandhi, Florence Nightingale, Frans Willekens, Tony Blair and Aishwarya Rai. Cooking is another of my passions, so I think I would experiment to cook them something delicious. ▀

Find out more about the Curriculum Innovation Programme by visiting www.soton.ac.uk/cip