

One of India's most renowned demographers finds new home for his research at Newcomb Institute

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Acclaimed Indian social scientist K.S. James joined [Newcomb Institute at Tulane](#) as Senior Visiting Scholar over the spring semester. His work as a demographer studying population changes in South Asia has led to distinct contributions in the areas of maternal and child health, aging, and gender equity.

“I’ve been an admirer of James’s work for many years and consider ourselves very fortunate to have him at Tulane. His vast experience measuring demographic shifts and their implications for gender equity will enrich Newcomb’s research mission in very meaningful ways,” said Anita Raj, Newcomb Institute’s executive director.

James’s research aims to better understand the root causes and effects of demographic changes in the context of developing and emerging countries. “It’s important that we understand how low fertility and increasing life expectancy impact the lives of women outside of high-income countries,” stated James. “We are likely not going to see the positive impacts generally seen in high-income countries, where these demographic trends are associated with educational attainment and women’s empowerment. I hope to shed more light onto the interventions that promise to empower women in resource-limited societies.”

Prior to joining Tulane, Dr. James was the Director and Senior Professor at the [International Institute for Population Sciences \(IIPS\), Mumbai, India](#) from 2018 to 2023. “I’m very grateful to be able to expand on my studies here at Tulane. Newcomb Institute is a great home for my research given the institute’s extensive work on gender equity and reproductive health,” he shared.

James has published widely in leading journals such as *Science*, *Lancet Global Health*, *Social Science and Medicine*, *Population Studies*, *Studies in Family Planning*, *BMC Public Health*, *Journal of Biosocial Science*, *Journal of Ageing and Health*, *Brown Journal of World Affairs*, *Maternal and Child Health Journal*, and *Economic and Political Weekly*. He received his PhD in demography in 1997 from Jawaharlal Nehru University in New Delhi, India, completed his post-doctoral fellowship at the [Harvard Center for Population and Development Studies](#) in 2000, and has held faculty positions at both Jawaharlal Nehru University and the International Institute for Population Sciences.

The professional and geographical move has come with big changes for James and his wife, who worked as a teacher before coming to New Orleans from Mumbai. Both

are originally from South India and were part of a thriving Catholic community back home. They credit [Ana Villar](#), senior program manager for international travel and engagement at [Tulane Global](#), with giving them “confidence and assurance” throughout the relocation process and helping them with everything from obtaining visas to finding housing.

James is currently interviewing undergraduate students for a research assistant position to support his gender and health equity research focusing on South Asia and is hoping to work with many more students—and faculty members—from across the university over time.

“Having a social scientist of James’s caliber at Newcomb Institute will not only advance our research but also the institute’s mission of training the next generation of gender equity scholars and leaders,” explained Dr. Raj. “I’m so excited for our students who will get to expand their skills under James’s guidance and mentorship. It’s an incredible opportunity for undergraduate students who want to pursue rigorous research.”