

A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF PROFESSOR MIR MASWOOD ALI

SERGE PROVOST

Department of Statistical and Actuarial Sciences
University of Western Ontario, London, Canada N6A 5B7.
Email: provost@stats.uwo.ca

Mir Maswood Ali was born on March 1, 1929, in Patuakhali, a Southern district of Bangladesh. He has three brothers (all of whom, incidentally, hold doctoral degrees) as well as four sisters. He is the proud father of eight children, five of whom are engineers. Two of his daughters hold Ph.D. degrees and one of his sons is pursuing doctoral studies in Electrical Engineering.

Dr. Ali received a B.Sc. degree in Mathematics from the University of Dhaka in 1948. In 1950, he completed a Master's degree in Statistics at the same university and was awarded a Gold Medal for exceptional scholarly performance. Over the next two years, he has been lecturing at that university. He then worked as an Actuarial Assistant at Norwich Union Life (1952-56) and Canada Life (1956-57).



In 1957, he obtained another Master's degree at the University of Michigan, this time in Actuarial Mathematics, and he worked as a Teaching Fellow from 1957 to 1959 and 1959 to

1961 at the University of Michigan and the University of Toronto, respectively. He completed his doctoral studies at the University of Toronto under the supervision of Professor Donald A. S. Fraser in 1961, after merely two years of studies. He then spent the remainder of his career at the University of Western Ontario. He was quickly promoted to the ranks of Associate Professor in 1963 and Professor in 1966. The University administration looked very favourably on his contributions, as he single-handedly developed undergraduate and graduate programs in Statistics within the Department of Mathematics. Professor Ali can indeed take pride in his accomplishments in this regard: out of his initial efforts, a separate Department dedicated to the study of Statistics and Actuarial Science is now a thriving entity at the University of Western Ontario. Dr. Ali was granted the title of Professor Emeritus in 1994.

Professor Ali has been a Visiting Scholar at the University of British Columbia, Queen's University and Dalhousie University. He also was a Visiting Professor at the universities of Islamabad, Dhaka and Toronto. While at Western, he has taught a wide variety of courses in Mathematics, Actuarial Science and Statistics and assumed a substantial portion of the graduate teaching. In contrast to the usual constructive approach to teaching wherein the material taught can be viewed as building blocks leading to a main result, Dr. Ali favoured an approach which consisted in initially stating the main results to be shown and pointing out their importance, and then, deriving them formally. He has been very active in graduate supervision: 40 Master's and 15 Ph.D. students, a select group comprising A.K.M.E. Saleh, L.K. Chan, B.C. Sutradhar and A.H. Joarder, have completed their degrees under his expert guidance.

Professor Ali published over 35 scholarly papers, many of which in leading journals such as the *Annals of Mathematical Statistics*, the *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society*, the *Journal of Multivariate Analysis* and *Biometrika*, to name a few. Two highly rated papers of his appeared in the *Pacific Journal of Mathematics*. His research interests encompass many areas of Statistics and Mathematics, including distribution theory, characterizations, order statistics, spherically symmetric and elliptically contoured distributions, multivariate analysis and geometry. He also published significant results in the *Bulletin of the Institute of Statistical Research and Training* (renamed *Journal of Statistical Research*). A list of Professor Ali's research contributions immediately follows this brief biography.

Dr Ali is a caring individual with high moral standards. For instance, he is one of the founders of the Muslim Mosque located in London, Ontario. And if I may, I would like to relate a personal anecdote: when I was hired as a Lecturer at the University of Western Ontario, Dr. Ali took it upon himself to visit, before my arrival, the apartment building where I subsequently resided for more than ten years, in order to ensure that it was suitable.

In light of Professor Mir Maswood Ali's significant scholarly contributions and his dedicated involvement in the development of Statistics as a discipline, it is most fitting that a Special Issue of the *Journal of Statistical Research* be dedicated to him. On behalf of the numerous individuals whose lives have forever been enriched as a result of their personal or professional association with Dr. Ali, I am deeply honoured to offer him my very best wishes as he is about to celebrate his 80th birthday.

List of Professor Ali's Publications

- Order estimation of location and scale parameters, *Bull. Inst. Internat. Statist.* XL (1963), 763-765.
- On Gupta's estimates of the parameters of the normal distribution, *Biometrika* 51 (1964), 498-501. (Joint paper with L.K. Chan).
- Some bounds for expected values of order statistics, *Ann. Math. Statist.* 36 (1965), 1055-1057. (Joint paper with L.K. Chan).
- Asymptotic optimum quantiles for the estimation of the parameters of the negative exponential distribution, *Ann. Math. Statist.* 37 (1966), 143-151. (Joint paper with A.K.M.E. Saleh).
- BAN linear estimators of the parameters of the normal distribution from the censored samples, *Ann. Inst. Statist. Math.* 19 (1967), 401-411. (Joint paper with L.K. Chan).
- Distribution of linear combination of order statistics from the rectangular population, *Bull. Inst. Statist. Res. Training* 3 (1969), 1-24.
- On the distribution of several linear combinations of order statistics from the uniform distribution, *Bull. Inst. Statist. Res. Training* 3 (1969), 22-40. (Joint paper with E.R. Mead).
- On some extremal simplexes, *Pacific J. Math.* 45 (1970), 1-14.
- Moments of Gini's mean difference for samples from rectangular population, *Metron* 28 (1970), 405-411.
- Content of the frustum of a simplex, *Pacific J. Math.* 48 (1973), 313-322.
- Estimation of parameters of a generalized life testing model, *J. Statist. Res.* 8 (1974), 67-19. (Joint paper with A.K.M.S. Hoq and J.G.C. Templeton).
- On a conjecture concerning the common content of an n-cube and a diagonal cylinder, *Ann. Inst. Statist. Math.* 27 (1975), 281-287. (Joint paper with W.A. Richards).
- An alternative proof of order statistics moment problem, *Can. J. Statistics* 4 (1976), 151-153.
- Geometric proof of a bound in order statistics, *Can. J. Statistics* 4 (1976), 315-318.
- On the joint asymptotic normality of quantiles, *Nanta Math.* 10 (1978), 161-165. (Joint paper with K.S. Kuan).
- Distribution of Student's ratio based on half Gaussian population, Transactions of 8th Prague Conference on *Information Theory, Statistical Decision and Functions Random Processes* (1978), 293-303. (Joint paper with A.K.M.S. Hoq and J.G.C. Templeton).

- On Hadamard inequality, Ball State University, *Proceedings of American Mathematical Society* (1978). (Joint paper with A.A. Bruen).
- A class of bivariate distributions including the bivariate logistic, *J. Mult. Anal.* 8 (1978), 888-895. (Joint paper with N.N. Mikhail and M.S. Haq).
- The distribution of student's ratio for samples from an exponential population, *Communications in Statistics*, A 7 (1978), 837-850. (Joint paper with A.K.M.S. Hoq and J.G.C. Templeton).
- Characterization of the normal distribution among the symmetric spherical class, *J. R. Statist. Soc. B* 42 (1980), 162-164.
- Asymptotic distribution of quantiles from a multivariate distribution. *Multivariate Statistical Analysis*, R.P. Gupta (ed.) (1980), 109-120, North-Holland, Amsterdam. (Joint paper with K.S. Kuan).
- Prediction of a future ordered observation based on a sample from the exponential population, *Statistical Climatology: Developments in Atmospheric Science*, 13, S. Ikeda et al (ed.) (1980), 109-117. (Joint paper with E.H. Gan and M.S. Haq).
- Common content of a regular hyper simplex and concentric hyper sphere, *Communications in Statistics*, A 10 (1981), 1297-1304. (Joint paper with J.G.C. Templeton).
- Least-squares triangle method for surveying, Abstracts, 19th Annual Meeting, Society of Engineering (1982), p. 216.
- Distribution of a linear combination of exponential variates, *Communications in Statistics*, A 11 (1982), 1453-1463. (Joint paper with M. Obaidullah).
- Bound for tail probability of t-statistic based on rectangular population, *Bulletin of the International Statistical Institute*, Proceedings of the 44th Session (1983), 96-101.
- Estimation of the parameters of a regression model with a multivariate t error variable, *Communications in Statistics*, A 15 (1986), 429-450. (Joint paper with B.C. Sutradhar).
- Characterization of spherical distributions, *Proceedings of the First Islamic Conference*, Lahore, Pakistan (1988).
- A generalization of the Wishart distribution for the elliptical model and its moments for the multivariate t model, *Journal of Multivariate Analysis*, 29 (1989), 155-162. (Joint paper with B.C. Sutradhar).
- An optimal property of the Gauss-Markoff estimator, *Journal of Multivariate Analysis* 32 (1990), 171-176. (Joint paper with R. Ponnappalli).
- Distribution of the correlation coefficient for the class of bivariate elliptical models, *Canadian Journal of Statistics* 19 (1991), 447-452. (Joint paper with A.H. Joarder).

- On some generalized Wishart expectations. *Communications in Statistics - Theory and Methods* 21 (1992) 283-294. (Joint paper with A.H. Joarder).
- Distribution of the correlation matrix for a class of elliptical models, *Communications in Statistics - Theory and Methods* 21 (1992) 1953-1964. (Joint paper with A.H. Joarder).
- On the characteristic function of the multivariate t-distribution, *Pakistan Journal of Statistics* 12 (1996) 55-62. (Joint paper with A.H. Joarder).
- On the characterization of spherical distributions, *Journal of Information and Optimization Sciences*, 17 (1996), 177-184. (Joint paper with A.H. Joarder).
- Estimation of the scale matrix of a multivariate t-model under entropy loss, *Metrika* 46 (1997), 21-32. (Joint paper with A.H. Joarder).