

# Rama Adithya Varanasi

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## Research Statement

My research interests are broadly in Human Computer Interaction (HCI) and User Experience (UX) with a particular focus on how technology can be used to improve learning outcomes, both domestically and abroad. My work engages with local communities to first understand how they use technology for education and then design, build, and deploy new solutions that augments their learning need and have a positive impact. I am currently working with Tapan Parikh and Nicola Dell. Previously, I had an opportunity to work with Jack Carroll and Marcela Borge.

## Education

2017 - Present Ph.D.	Cornell University Human Computer Interaction Education Psychology (Minor) Advised by Dr. Tapan Parikh
2015 - 2017 M.S.	Pennsylvania State University Computing & Information Sciences   GPA: 3.89 Advised by Dr. John Carroll, recipient of research assistantship
2009 - 2013 B.Tech.	S.R.M. University Information Technology   GPA: 3.95 Recipient of university scholarship

## Research Interests

Areas	Human computer interaction, usability & user experience, learning sciences, HCI4Development, emerging markets, crowd-sourcing, work communities.
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## Research Publications

Paper (2018)	Marcela Borge, Rama Adithya Varanasi, Shulong Yan, Dhvani Toprani, Prabhu Subramaniam (2018). "Making Design Practices Visible to Young Learners." <i>CHI'18: Proceedings of the 2018 CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems</i> [submitted].
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Paper (2018)	Dhvani Toprani, Rama Adithya Varanasi, Shulong Yan, Marcela Borge,(2018). “Ecological Usability Testing for Teachers: Design Narrative.” <i>ICLS’18: 13th International Conference on Computer Supported Collaborative Learning</i> [draft complete].
Paper (2017)	Rama Adithya Varanasi, Ben Hanrahan, Shahtab Wahid, Jack Carroll, (2017). “TweetSight: Enhancing Financial Analysts’ Social Media Use.” <i>8th International Conference on Social Media &amp; Society’17</i> [Acceptance-37%].
Poster (2017)	Rama Adithya Varanasi, Elaine Duccico, Andrew Gambino, (2017). “Facebook reactions: Impact of introducing new features in SNS on Social Capital.” <i>23rd International Conference on Collaboration and Technology</i> . [submitted]

## Conference Talks

Presentation (2016)	Rama Adithya Varanasi. Understanding the problems with traditional design evaluation methodologies in after-school learning environments.” <i>3rd International Rutger’s iconference, ’16</i> .
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## Awards, Recognitions, and Scholarships

Scholarship 2016	Master’s research thesis Bloomberg.
ACE award 2015	Outstanding performance and innovation in workplace. Standard & Poor’s.
\$2000 award 2014	Changemaker of the year for improving education access in elementary schools. Standard & Poor’s.
Media recognition 2013	Recognition for renovation of primary health centers in rural Hyderabad. The Hindu, Times of India.
\$500 Award 2012	Student Innovation Grant for developing student learning management portal (ColSync). School of Information Technology, SRM University.
Scholarship 2011	University merit award for academic performance. SRM University

## Research and Professional Experience

Research	Analysis & design of education technologies and their deep integration with the learning goals, specially to teach young learners implicit practices of programmers.
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Aug'17-Present	Cornell University
Research	Understanding the appropriation of technologies and usage of learning frameworks by teachers in the schools of marginal communities
Aug'17-Present	Cornell University
Thesis	Understanding and enhancing financial analysts' social media usage
Oct'15 - Aug'16	Bloomberg iSchool, Penn Sate University
Research	Discovering lost motivation in volunteering practices for smart and connected communities.
Oct'16 - Apr'17	Red Cross, Meals on Wheels & iSchool, Penn State University
Thesis	Understanding and enhancing financial analysts' social media usage
Oct'15 - Aug'16	Bloomberg iSchool, Penn Sate University
Research	New age collaborative learning management system (CLSM) to teach embedded design practice.
May'16 - Aug'17	Learning Design & Technology
UX Designer II	Understanding the user needs and improving the customer experience of 12 financial modules in the Platform - a flagship financial analytics tool.
May'13 - Jul'15	Standard & Poor's.
Design Intern	Improving workflows for Key Development and Business Intelligence data feeds. Designing visualization modules for client facing dashboard.
Dec'12 - Mar'13	McGrawHill Financials, Hyderabad, India.

## Teaching Experience

Instructor	Summer web designing & development workshop.
Jan16' - Jul'16	Penn State University.
T.A.	Geo-spatial Analytics for Information Security. (IST598)
Aug'15 - Dec'16	Penn State University.
Teaching Assistant	Introduction to Human Computer Interaction (IT430)
Jan'10 - May'11	S.R.M University.
Teacher	Maths and science for grade 2 and 4 classrooms for low-income community children.
Jan'13 - May'15	Teach For India

## Skills

Methodologies	Ethnographic methods, user research, wireframes, rapid prototyping, personas, user stories, scenario based design, usability testing, A/B testing.
Programming	HTML, CSS & JS, Bootstrap, D3.js, JQuery, Ruby on Rails, Python.
Tools	Pen and paper, Adobe Photoshop, Adobe Illustrator, Adobe InDesign, Inkscape, Axure RP, Balsamiq, Miramatrix eye tracker, SPSS.

## References

Dr. Tapan Parikh tsp53@cornell.edu	Associate Professor, Information Sciences. Cornell University.
Dr. Jack Carroll jmcarroll@psu.edu	Distinguished Professor, College of Information Sciences & Technology. Penn State University.
Dr. Marcela Borge mbs15@psu.edu	Assistant Professor, College of Education. Penn State University.
Dr. Shyam Sundar sss12@psu.edu	Distinguished Professor, College of Communication. Penn State University.