

# Rama Adithya Varanasi

[rv288@cornell.edu](mailto:rv288@cornell.edu) 

<https://merama.github.io/> 

## Research Statement

My research lies in Human Computer Interaction (HCI), computer science, and development sociology, where I study how day to day technologies are used for self-empowerment by working communities in marginal settings. In particular, I am interested in examining how collaboration between human and machine agents impact agency and motivation of digital workers. I plan to use my findings to design ethical and intelligent socio-technological systems that focus on improving overall wellbeing of working communities.

## Research Areas

Human computer interaction • HCI4Development • human-machine collaboration • digital labor • future of work • wellbeing • learning science • emerging markets

## Education

- 2017-cur. **Ph.D**, Human Computer Interaction, *Cornell University*  
Advisers: Dr. Nicola Dell & Dr. Tapan Parikh
- 2015-17 **M.S.**, Information Science, *Pennsylvania State University*  
Adviser: Dr. John Carroll  
CGPA: 3.89
- 2009-13 **B.Tech**, Information Technology, *SRM University*  
CGPA: 3.96

## Publications

### PEER REVIEWED

- 2021 **Varanasi, R. A.**, Vashistha, A., Kizilcec, R. F. & Dell, N. Technostress and Burnout: How Smartphone Use Impacts Teachers' Professional Wellbeing in Low-Income Contexts. *Proceedings of the ACM on Human-Computer Interaction: CSCW, 2021*. [**Under review**]
- 2020 **Varanasi, R. A.**, Vashistha, A., & Dell, N. Tag a Teacher: A Qualitative Analysis of WhatsApp-Based Teacher Networks in Low-Income Indian Schools. *Proceedings of the ACM on Human-Computer Interaction: CSCW, 2020*. [**Under review**]

- 2020 **Varanasi R. A.**, Vashistha, A., Parikh, T., & Dell, N. Challenges and Issues Integrating Smartphones into Teacher Support Programs in India. *In Proceedings of the 2020 International Conference on Information and Communication Technologies and Development.*
- 2019 **Varanasi, R. A.**, Kizilcec, R. F., & Dell, N. (2019). How Teachers in India Reconfigure their Work Practices around a Teacher-Oriented Technology Intervention. *Proceedings of the ACM on Human-Computer Interaction: Vol. 3, Issue CSCW, Article 220.* 2019.
- 2018 **Varanasi, R. A.**, Diccico, E., & Gambino, A. (2018). Facebook Reactions: Impact of Introducing New Features of SNS on Social Capital. *In International Conference on Human-Computer Interaction (pp. 444-451).* Springer, Cham
- 2017 **Varanasi, R. A.**, Hanrahan, B. V., Wahid, S., & Carroll, J. M. (2017). TweetSight: Enhancing Financial Analysts' Social Media Use. *In Proceedings of the 8th International Conference on Social Media & Society (p. 22).* ACM.

#### WORKSHOPS

- 2019 **Varanasi, R. A.**, & Dell, N. Understanding Technology Reconfiguration Practices by Teachers at the Margins of Intersectionality. *In Proceedings of the 2019 CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems.*
- 2018 **Varanasi, R. A.**, Parikh, T., & Nicola Dell. Solidarity in Education: Organizations' Use of Technology to Support Low-income Schools. *In Proceedings of the 2017 ACM Conference on Computer Supported Cooperative Work and Social Computing (CSCW '17).* ACM.
- 2018 Lim, S., **Varanasi, R. A.**, & Parikh, T. (2018, February). GLIDE (Git-Learning IDE; Integrated Development Environment): In-class Collaboration in Web Engineering Curriculum for Youths. *In Proceedings of the 49th ACM Technical Symposium on Computer Science Education (pp. 1112-1112).* ACM.
- 2017 **Varanasi, R. A.**, Yan S., & Borge M. (2017, January). Making Design Practices Visible to Young Learners. *Learning sciences conference 2018. Information Science & Technology, Pennsylvania State University.*

#### Talks

- 2020 Challenges and Issues Integrating Smartphones into Teacher Support Programs in India. *ICTD'20.*
- 2019 How Teachers in India Reconfigure their Work Practices around Educational Technology Interventions. *CSCW'19.*
- 2018 Teaching cognitive apprenticeship design thinking through learning by failure. *Learning sciences conference 2018. Information Science & Technology, Pennsylvania State University.*
- 2016 Understanding the challenges with traditional design evaluation methodologies in after-school learning environments. *3rd International Rutger's iconference,'16.*

## Grants, honors & awards

- 2018 Engaged Doctoral grant by *Cornell University*
- 2017 International research travel grant by *Einuadi Center for International Studies*.
- 2016 Student research grant by *Bloomberg Inc.*
- 2015 ACE award for outstanding performance and innovation by *Standard & Poor's*
- 2014 Changemaker of the year award for improving the education access to elementary schools by *Standard & Poor's*

## Service

- 2020 Co-president, *Information science department, Cornell University*.
- 2019 Co-chair, *IndiaHCI'19*.
- 2019 Co-organizer, *HCI across borders, CHI'19*.

## Professional Experience

- May'13- UX Designer, *Standard & Poor's, India*.
- July'15 Improved the customer experience of 12 financial modules in the Platform - a flagship financial analytic tool. Avg. user sessions increased by 3.4 mins.
- Dec'12- UX Intern, *McGrawHill Financials, India*.
- Mar'13 Improved workflows for Key Development and Business Intelligence segments. Improved turn around time of product data by 28%.

## Teaching Experience

- Jan'18- Project manager and coach for graduate level research projects
- May'18 *Cornell University*
- Jan'16- Instructor at summer web designing and development workshop
- Jul'16 *Penn State University*
- Jan'13- Teacher at Math & Science for low-income govt. school
- 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 • R

## TOOLS

Adobe Photoshop • Adobe Illustrator • Adobe InDesign • Inkscape • Axure RP • Adobe XD • Miramatrix eye tracker • SPSS.