

# Rama Adithya Varanasi

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

## Research Statement

My research lies in Human Computer Interaction (HCI), 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 workers. I plan to use my findings to design technological systems that focus on improving psychological wellbeing of working communities.

## Research Areas

Human computer interaction • HCI4Development • human-machine collaboration • work communities • motivation • wellbeing • learning science • emerging markets

## Education

2017-cur. **Ph.D**, Human Computer Interaction, *Cornell University*  
Advisers: Dr. Nicola Dell & Dr. Tapan Parikh  
CGPA: 3.86

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 & Talks

### PEER REVIEWED

2020 **Varanasi, R. A.**, Nicola Dell (2020). Examining the use of WhatsApp by teacher groups in Low-Income Indian Schools. *ACM Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems (CHI)*. **[in-review]**

2019 **Varanasi, R. A.**, Rene Kezelcik & Nicola Dell (2019). How Teachers in India Reconfigure their Work Practices around Educational Technology Interventions. *Companion of the 2019 ACM Conference on Computer Supported Cooperative Work and Social Computing*.

- 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 **Rama Adithya Varanasi**, & Nicola Dell. 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 **Rama Adithya Varanasi**, Tapan Parikh, & 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.*

#### TALKS

- 2016 **Varanasi R.A.** 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*

#### Professional Experience

- May'13- UX Designer, *Standard & Poor's, India.*
- July'15 Improving 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- May'18	Project manager and coach for graduate level research projects <i>Cornell University</i>
Jan'16- Jul'16	Instructor at summer web designing and development workshop <i>Penn State University</i>
Jan'13- May'15	Teacher at Math & Science for low-income govt. school <i>Teach for India</i>

## 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.

## References

Dr. Tapan Parikh [[tsp53@cornell.edu](mailto:tsp53@cornell.edu)], associate professor  
School of Information and Computer Science, Cornell University

Dr. Nicola Dell [[nixdell@cornell.edu](mailto:nixdell@cornell.edu)], assistant professor  
School of Information and Computer Science, Cornell University

Dr. Jack Carroll [[jmcarroll@psu.edu](mailto:jmcarroll@psu.edu)], distinguished professor  
School of Information Sciences & Technology, Penn State University.