

RAKSHA HUNGUND

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RESEARCH INTERESTS

Socio-technical systems, Gender and technology, Human-AI Collaboration, Education, Creativity Support, Digital Health, Digital Labor

EDUCATION

Masters in Information Science, University of Michigan (Ann Arbor, MI) December 2024
Coursework: Needs Assessment and Usability Evaluation; Online Communities; Fundamentals of Human Behavior; Foundations of programming with Python; Accessibility in technology; Introduction to AR/VR; Contextual Inquiry and Consulting Foundations; Generative AI & UX

Bachelors in Architecture, MS Ramaiah Institute of Technology (Bengaluru, India) August 2018
Coursework: Architecture design, urban planning, art theory, graphic design, introduction to sociology

PUBLICATIONS & WORKING PAPERS

1. **"If we post, what will people think of us?": Offline Norms, Online Engagement, and Unpacking Gendered Experiences in a Pakistani Facebook Tech Community**
Hamza Naveed*, Sheza Naveed*, Raksha Hungund*, Dr. Michaelanne Thomas (**first co-author, conditionally accepted for CHI 2026**)
[\[Abstract\]](#)
2. **Challenges and design opportunities for online schooling in India.** Nikith Joshua D'Souza, Samadrita Sarkar, Raksha Hungund, and Deepak Ranjan Padhi. In Proceedings of the 12th Indian Conference on Human-Computer Interaction (IndiaHCI '21). Association for Computing Machinery, New York, NY, USA, 94–98.
[\[Link\]](#)

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Anthrotech Lab, University of Michigan June 2024 - Present
Research Assistant. Mentored by: Dr. Michaelanne Thomas

- **Role:** Interpreted 20 semi-structured interviews of members of a Pakistani Facebook tech-support community uncovering patterns on gendered participation, privacy strategies and offline norms reflected from in-person tech markets.
- Synthesized prior literature on gendered participation, digital privacy, and sociocultural norms to situate empirical findings within existing HCI and CSCW scholarship
- Linked women's offline constraints in physical tech marketplaces to online participation strategies, demonstrating how socio-cultural barriers persist across digital and physical spaces
- Identified situational privacy practices within Tech Aids and proposed relevant extensions to vulnerability-centric privacy frameworks to account for culturally grounded practices, such as digital purdah
- **Methods and Tools:** qualitative analysis, literature review, interview interpretation, affinity mapping and synthesis, design implications, publication drafting and submission.

Netflix Workspaces, Netflix and University of Michigan
User Researcher. Mentored by: Lu Huang (UX Researcher, Netflix)

Jan 2023 - Dec 2023

- Role: Led mixed-methods research (interviews, usability tests, heuristic evaluation, surveys, competitor analysis) on Netflix's media management platform to examine workflow bottlenecks in bulk uploads, vendor onboarding, and bulk media sharing.
- Designed and conducted empirical studies with external vendors and internal production teams. Synthesized product analytics and user feedback (task success rates) with qualitative findings to guide iterative redesigns.
- Translated research insights into interaction artifacts (user flows, jobs-to-be-done models, and wireframes) that streamlined sharing and reviewing bulk media uploads. This improved operational efficiency for 500+ production hubs worldwide.
- Methods and Tools: Participant recruitment, Semi-structured Interview, heuristic evaluation, presentations to clients, summarizing findings on reports.

HCI Researcher, IIT Bombay
Mentored by: Dr. Deepak Ranjan Padhi and Dr. Aniruddha Joshi

Summer course 2020

- Role: In a team of 5, studied the dynamics of student-teacher participation in the online school context learning during the COVID-19 Pandemic.
- Conducted contextual inquiries with 14 secondary school teachers, 8 students and 3 parents from tier-1 and tier-2 cities of India. Outlined the teachers' difficulties in preparing digital content and making the class engaging.
- Presented design directions for building future systems for online schooling in poster and short paper for the India HCI Conference 2021. Paper published in ACM Digital archive in India HCI 2021 Conference Proceedings.
- Methods and Tools: Semi-structured Interview, Contextual inquiry, interview interpretation, Thematic analysis, Publication drafting and submission.

OTHER RELEVANT WORK EXPERIENCE

Butternut AI
UX Research consultant

Oct 2024 - Jan 2025

- Led usability testing and 1:1 interviews with 11 users to uncover friction in typing prompts while generating a website and navigating Butternut AI's website editor.
- Translated insights into user journey maps, jobs-to-be-done frameworks, wireframes, and prototypes to support non-technical users in generating websites and discovering features in the website editor.
- Designed website generation prototypes to iteratively improve the editor, boosting publish rates by 50% across 300K+ users, making AI-powered site creation more accessible.
- Spearheaded heuristic evaluations and co-led strategy workshops for Butternut AI's conversational assistant with design and product teams

Unbind
Co-founder and visual communication designer

June 2018 - March 2020

- Conducted ethnographic fieldwork (participant observation, field notes, and semi-structured interviews) and facilitated participatory design workshops across three rural immersion cycles, engaging 50+ design professionals and handicraft community members to co-create learning experiences grounded in local practices.
- Also collaborated with Raman Research Institute to create a 6x4 ft biodiversity infographic mural mapping 50+ rare tree clusters using Photoshop and Illustrator.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

SI 529: Online Communities

Fall 2023, Fall 2024 and Spring 2025 with Dr. Nicole Ellison and Dr. Michaelanne Thomas

- Led weekly discussion sections across three terms on theories, research methods, and applications of online communities, and delivered a guest lecture on the design of online communities.
- Mentored student teams on research and design projects focused on online communities, facilitating project scoping, methods selection, and synthesis.
- Hosted weekly office hours, coordinated grading meetings, and provided structured feedback on assignments.

SI 622: Needs Assessment and Usability Evaluation

Winter 2024, with Dr. Joyojeet Pal and Dr. Lei Zhang (then a PhD student)

- Led weekly discussion sections for ~100 students, covering core UX research and evaluation methods including interview analysis, heuristic evaluation, competitive analysis, and usability testing.
- Planned and facilitated in-class usability testing sessions, organizing pilot test runs to support hands-on learning.
- Mentored student teams on assignment deliverables and client collaboration, and graded and provided detailed formative feedback on research reports prior to client submission.

RECOGNITIONS

• Student Speaker, UX@UM, March 2023

Selected as a student speaker along with 2 teammates to present our findings on digital technology support for women and AFAB individuals with PCOS (Polycystic Ovarian Syndrome). Presented on literature review and findings of usability testing with 7 participants (PCOS patients and healthcare experts) of a supportive digital tool via click through prototypes.

• Speaker at India HCI 2021 Conference, Poster and demo track, November 2021

In a team of 5, presented a paper on the future of immersive online teaching and learning during the COVID-19 Pandemic at the India HCI Conference 2021. Paper published in ACM Digital archive in India HCI 2021 Conference Proceedings.

• Berkeley Prize Essay Competition: 4th place, 2018

Placed 4th in a team of 2 at international level among 215 entries for an essay competition on Social art of architecture organised by University of Berkeley, California

SKILLS

• Coding (foundational): HTML, CSS, JavaScript, Python

• HCI Research: Experiment Design and Execution (Think-Aloud, Interview, Survey, Observational Study, Focus Group), Qualitative Analysis, Rapid Prototyping

• Design tools: Figma, Cursor+Figma MCP, Unity, AutoCAD, Revit, SketchUp, Adobe Premiere Pro, Adobe After Effects