Rakesh Patibanda

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I am a passionate Human-Computer Interaction PhD candidate with extensive user research and design experience across diverse sectors, including education, mental health and gaming. I am eager to leverage my analytical skills, project coordination expertise, and collaborative approach to deliver impactful, data-driven insights within a dynamic consulting environment. My commitment to understanding client needs, delivering actionable insights, and fostering creative problem-solving aligns with my desire to contribute to meaningful projects that transform organizations.

Education

OCTOBER 2020 – JUNE 2024
PhD in Information Technology – *Majoring in Human-Computer Interaction (Submitting in June 2024),* **Monash University**.

JANUARY 2015 – FEBRUARY 2017
Master by Research (Design), **RMIT University** – *Awarded distinction (top 5%) for Master's thesis.*

Academic contributions: Published **35+ research publications** since 2017 with over **650 citations (H-Index: 12)**, organized international conferences such as CHI and DIS, and received multiple research awards.

Skills

- **Consulting & Project Management:** Project Leadership & Coordination (Experience in leading teams & initiatives), Stakeholder Communication & Management (Translating research into impact), Client-Focused Consultation (Experience tailoring work to stakeholder needs)
- **Research & Analysis:** Mixed-Methods UX Research (Surveys, interviews, usability testing, etc.), Quantitative & Qualitative Data Analysis (JASP, Python, R, plus qualitative methods), Research Communication & Presentation (Storytelling with data), Proposal Development (Experience writing functional documentation and securing funding)
- **Design & Innovation:** Collaborative Design Facilitation (Workshops, WWWWWH method), Design Thinking (4D & Double Diamond), Prototyping (Figma, Adobe XD)
- **Specialized Technical Skills:** Body-sensing technologies (MoCap, EMG, Heartrate etc.), Body-actuating technologies (EMS, Pneumatics, Exoskeletons), Electronic Circuits Design (Arduino)

Experience

FEBRUARY 2017 – OCTOBER 2020
Senior UX Researcher | RMIT University | Melbourne, Australia

Key Achievements:

- **Project Leadership & Impact:** Spearheaded the development of a comprehensive user research program, leading a 10-person team to drive data-informed improvements in the university's digital experiences.

- **Strategic Collaboration:** Partnered with stakeholders to execute a strategic redesign, resulting in a 15% increase in student satisfaction. Demonstrated the ability to integrate user insights with organizational frameworks for successful outcomes.
- **Transformative Change:** Initiated and led projects focused on enhancing student-university engagement, championing the power of user-centered design. Received the Education Leadership Award for these significant contributions.

Responsibilities:

- **Research Expertise:** Designed and executed diverse research studies to uncover student needs, informing strategic decision-making across the university.
- **Influencing with Data:** Translated research findings into insights that resonated with senior stakeholders, successfully driving the adoption of a strategic plan and leading to significant cost reductions (20%).
- **Collaborative Design Facilitation:** Fostered alignment across teams utilizing methods like the WWWWWH toolkit and facilitating workshops, showcasing expertise in cross-functional communication in a multidisciplinary environment.

OCTOBER 2014 – DECEMBER 2015
Lead UX Consultant & Strategic Design Innovator | 7 Cups | Contract | Remote

Key Achievements:

- **Driving Engagement in Mental Health:** Led the design and implementation of a gamified user experience within the mental health sector, significantly increasing user engagement with a 50% boost in new users and extended session durations.
- **Research-Backed Impact:** Conducted comprehensive user research (2000+ participants) to identify engagement drivers, strategically refining gamification features to enhance support-seeking behavior in a sensitive context.
- **Data-Informed Strategy:** Established key metrics to track gamification's impact, leveraging insights to inform iterative design and contribute to strategic growth initiatives within the mental health sector.

Responsibilities:

- **Strategic Research & Analysis:** Led user research initiatives to uncover engagement drivers, informing the design of an engaging and impactful gamified experience.
- **Data-Driven Decision-Making:** Analyzed quantitative and qualitative user data to guide iterative design and track performance, translating insights into design refinements and strategic recommendations.
- **Collaborative Design & Prototyping:** Partnered with developers using iterative prototyping (Axure) to implement and refine a user-centric gamification system, showcasing cross-functional collaboration skills.

JUNE 2011 – FEBRUARY 2015
Lead UX Researcher | GoLive Games | Hyderabad, India

Key Achievements:

- **Driving Impact & Funding:** Successfully secured $75K in government funding and $350K in seed funding for impactful game projects, demonstrating the ability to translate research insights into compelling proposals and secure resources.
- **Fostering Innovation:** Led research efforts within an award-winning startup environment, contributing to industry recognition for innovation (NASSCOM, CIE Incubator).
- **Data-Driven Growth:** Analyzed player data and research findings to inform strategic recommendations, resulting in increased engagement metrics (5% increase in MAU, 10% increase in player engagement).

Responsibilities:

- **Strategic Leadership:** Led cross-functional teams in conducting user research to drive product development decisions and ultimately optimize user experiences.
- **Influencing with Insights:** Translated research findings into compelling recommendations, influencing feature enhancements and marketing strategies within a dynamic startup environment.
- **Mixed-Methods Analysis:** Utilized a combination of qualitative feedback (surveys, playtesting) and in-game analytics to comprehensively evaluate player experience and identify opportunities for growth.