Swati Pandita

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Research Interests

Human Computer Interaction: embodiment, mental health, identity, virtual reality (VR), & social media

Education

2017–2022   **Communication**, **PhD**, Cornell University
Committee: Drs. Andrea Stevenson Won (Chair), Lee Humphreys,
Natalie Bazarova, Marlen Gonzalez, and JoAnn Difede
Dissertation: "Affective Avatars: Effects of Avatar Customization on Positive and Negative Emotions"

2020   **Communication**, **MS**, Cornell University

2016   **Information Science**, **MPS**, Cornell University

2015   **Neuroscience**, **BS**, Rhodes College

Research Experience

8/2022–present   **The Fear Lab,** California Institute of Technology, Pasadena, CA
Postdoctoral Researcher

8/2017–8/2022   **The Virtual Embodiment Lab**, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY
Graduate research assistant

1/2017–6/2017   **The Yau Lab**, Baylor College of Medicine, Houston, TX
Research assistant

4/2016–1/2017   **Pairade (now Current)**, Chicago, IL
User experience research intern

5/2016–8/2016   **Psycomm Lab**, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY
Graduate research assistant

2/2016–5/2016   **Communication & Collaborative Technologies Lab**, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY
Graduate research assistant

8/2015–1/2016 **Visual Cognition Lab,** Rhodes College, Memphis, TN
Undergraduate research assistant

5/2014–7/2014 **Cognition and Aging Lab**, Rhodes College, Memphis, TN
Undergraduate research assistant

9/2013–5/2014 **Learning Technologies Lab**, Rhodes College, Memphis, TN
Undergraduate research assistant

Awards

2021 CALS Alumni Association Award ($400), Cornell University

2020 Media Studies Graduate Working Group Grant ($1,000), Cornell University

2017 Cornell Graduate Research Fellowship ($28,036), Cornell University

2014 Cognitive Aging Fellowship ($4,329), Rhodes College

Publications

2023 Kao, D., Mubarrat, S. T., Joshi, A., **Pandita, S.**, Mousas, C., Liang, H. N., & Ratan, R. (2023). Exploring how gender-anonymous voice avatars influence women's performance in online computing group work. *International Journal of Human-Computer Studies*, 103146. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhcs.2023.103146

2021 Boydstun, C., **Pandita, S.**, Finkelstein-Fox, L., Difede, J. "Harnessing virtual reality for disaster mental health: a multidisciplinary systematic review." Translational Issues in Psychological Sciences. https://doi.org/10.1037/tps0000282

2020 Won, A. S., **Pandita, S.,** Kruzan, K. (2020). "Social interaction and pain threshold in virtual reality." Cyberpsychology, Behavior, and Social Networking, 23(12). https://doi.org/10.1089/cyber.2020.0055

Madden, J. H., **Pandita, S.**, Won, A.S., Schuldt, J.P., Kim, B., & Holmes, N.G. (2020). "Ready student one: Exploring the predictors of student learning in virtual reality." PLoS ONE, 15(3). https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0229788

Pandita, S., & Won, A.S. (2020). "Clinical Applications of virtual reality in patient-centered care." In J. Kim & H. Song (1), Technology and Health: Promoting Attitude and Behavior Change (pp. 129–148). Academic Press.

Archived Papers

2023   Sun, Y., **Pandita, S.**, Madden, J. M., Kim, B., Holmes, N. G., Won, A. S. (2023). "Exploring interaction, movement, and video-game experience in an educational VR Experience." In *Extended Abstracts on Human Factors in Computing Systems (CHI).*

Long, T., **Pandita, S.**, & Won, A. S. (2023). Perspectives from Naive Participants and Experienced Social Science Researchers on Addressing Embodiment in a Virtual Cyberball Task. In *Computer Supported Cooperative Work and Social Computing* (CSCW) (pp. 189-194).

Pandita, S., Humphreys, L., Won, A.S. "The Paradox of Customization: Negotiating racial identity with "multiple choice" in avatar creation." PsyArXiv.

Conference Papers & Presentations

2022   Won, A.S. & **Pandita, S.** (2022). "Being Yourself: A Scoping Review on How Avatar Personalization Is Implemented in Empirical Work." Poster to be presented at 72nd Annual International Association of Communication Conference, May 26-30, Hybrid Conference.

2021   **Pandita, S.**, Humphreys, L., Won, A.S. (2021). "The paradox of customization: Negotiating racial identity with "multiple choice" in avatar creation." Paper presented at 71st Annual International Association of Communication Conference, May 27–31, Virtual Conference.

Pandita, S., (2021). "Mechanisms of care: The importance of routine for mental healthcare in Animal Crossing New Horizons." Research escalator presented at 71st Annual International Association of Communication Conference, May 27-31, Virtual Conference.

2020   **Pandita, S.**, Yee, J., & Won, A.S. (2020). "Affective embodiment: Embodying emotions through postural representation in VR." Poster presented at 27th IEEE Conference on Virtual Reality and 3D User Interfaces, March 22–26, Atlanta, GA.

Pandita, S. (2020). "Affective embodiment: The effect of avatar appearance and gesture representation on emotions in VR." Doctoral Consortium at 27th IEEE Conference on Virtual Reality and 3D User Interfaces, March 22–26, Atlanta, GA.

2019   **Pandita, S.**, Humphreys, L., & Won, A.S. (2019). "Expectations of the self in virtual reality: A qualitative analysis of virtual avatar creation." Paper presented at 24th Annual CyberPsychology, CyberTherapy, and Social Networking Conference, June 24–26, Norfolk, VA.

        Pandita, S., Celikors, E., Rojas, N., et al. (2019). "Visualizing Movement with Learning Outcomes in Educational VR Environments." Poster presented at 24th Annual CyberPsychology, CyberTherapy, and Social Networking Conference, June 24–26, Norfolk, VA.

        Won, A.S., Kruzan, K.*, & **Pandita, S**.* (2019). "As long as you're with me: the effects of social presence and distance on pain perception in virtual environments." Paper presented at 24th Annual CyberPsychology, CyberTherapy, and Social Networking Conference, June 24–26, Norfolk, VA.

2018   Madden, J. H., Won, A. S., Schuldt, J. P., Kim, B., **Pandita, S.**, Sun, Y., et. al. (2018). "Virtual Reality as a Teaching Tool for Moon Phases and Beyond." In Proceedings of the Physics Education Research Conference, Aug 1–2, Washington, DC.

        Sun, Y., **Pandita, S.**, Shaikh, O., Kim, B. & Won, A. S. (2018). "Personalized Avatars and Self-presence." In Proceedings of the International Society for Presence Research Annual Conference, May 21–22, Prague, Czech Republic.

2017   Schrader, D., Tallapragada M., **Pandita S.**, Etri C., & Shore A. (2017). "Self Efficacy and Social Aggression." Paper presented at 43rd Association for Moral Education Annual Conference, St. Louis, MO.

        Schrader, D., Tallapragada M., **Pandita S.**, Etri C., & Shore A. (2017). "Personality, Trust, and the Privacy Creep." Paper presented at 43rd Association for Moral Education Annual Conference, St. Louis, MO.

2016   **Pandita, S.**, Suresh, S., & Haberman, J. (2016). "Average Size Estimation of Dots Completing behind an Illusory Surface Is Precise." Poster presented at 16th Annual Meeting of Vision Sciences Society.

2014   Person, S., **Pandita S.**,* & Schonhoff A.* (2014). "Politeness Strategies in Expert Tutoring." Poster presented at 24th Annual Meeting of Society for Text & Discourse, Chicago, IL.

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* indicates equal contribution

Manuscripts Under Review

2023 **Pandita, S.**, Difede, J., Won, A. S. "Breathing Room: designing mood regulation spaces for depression."

Pandita, S.*, Garg, K.*, Zhang, J., Zhang, J., Mobbs, D. "Virtual disembodiment and online social interaction: A boundary model."

Ratan, R., Lim, C, **Pandita, S.**, Foxman, M., Hales G. E., Liu, H., Lei, Y. S., Beyea, D., Lee O. JY. "Openness to the Metaverse Workplace: Zoom fatigue and metaverse information seeking mediate gender inequities."

Manuscripts In Preparation

2023 **Pandita S.**, Won, A. S., "Effects of avatar customization on AAPIs coping with negative emotions."

Ratan, R. & **Pandita, S.** "Avatars, Explicated: Toward a broad definition to last another 4,000 words."

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Cornell University Teaching Experience

Instructor of Record

Summer 2022	COMM 2010 Oral Communication
Spring 2020	COMM 2010 Oral Communication
Fall 2019	COMM 2010 Oral Communication
Summer 2019	COMM/INFO 2450 Communication and Technology

Graduate Teaching Assistant

Spring 2022	COMM 3200 New Media & Society
Fall 2021	COMM 1101 Introduction to Communication
Summer 2021	COMM 4300 Ethics in New Media, Technology, and Communication
Fall 2017	COMM/INFO 2450 Communication and Technology

Guest Lecturer

Spring 2022	COMM 3200 New Media & Society
Fall 2021	COMM 1101 Introduction to Communication
Summer 2021	COMM 1300 Visual Communication
Spring 2019	COMM 1300 Visual Communication
Spring 2018	COMM 1300 Visual Communication

Invited Talks, Workshops, & Panels

2021	Invited talk, "iLRN 2021 UX Insights." [Immersive Learning Research Network (iLRN)](). Online.
2021	Invited participant, "Research Collaboration Opportunity Jam." [XR Access Symposium](). Online.
2020	Invited talk, "Affective Embodiment: designing virtual environments for depression management." Visual Cognition Lab, Rhodes College.
2019	Organized Workshop, "Hands-on Workshop in Immersive Technology for Beginners." [Immersive Media in Medicine Symposium](). New York, NY.

Panel Moderator, "VR for Beginners." Immersive Media in Medicine Symposium. New York, NY.

Panelist, "Practical Replication and Data Sharing Examples." 69th International Communication Association of Communication Conference. Washington, D.C.

Service

Volunteer

2021   iLRN Assessment and Evaluation Team

2018   Connecting Opportunities Summer Event, organized by Lesa Carter and Kathy Dimiduk of Engineering, Cornell University.

Review

2023   Designing Interactive Systems
International Communication Association (ICA)

2022   Computer-supported Cooperative Work (CSCW)

2020   Cyberpsychology, Behavior, and Social Networking

2022   New Media & Society

Students Mentored

Current

Caltech

    2023   Julia Kim, Computer Science (BS)

Cornell University

    2021   Tao Long, Information Science (IS), now PhD student at Columbia University

    2018   Jueun Kwon, high school mentee now at Cornell University

Former

Cornell University

    2021-2022   Stephanie Tan, Communication (BS)

    2021   Winnie Chen, Communication (BS)

    2020-2022   Cathy Xie, Communication (BS)

    2020   Christabella Forest, Communication (BS)

    2019-2020   Nayana Paraviel, Computer Science (BS)
                      Annie Fu, Information Science (BS)
                      Michael Huang, Information Science (BS)

    2017-2020   Jessica Yee, Information Science (BS)
                      Joshua Zhu, Information Science (BS)

    2018   Grayson Rosenberg, high school mentee now at Cornell University

    2017-2018   Jane Kim, Computer Science (BS)
                      Frank Rodriguez, Computer Science (BS)
                      Anirudh Maddula, Computer Science (BS)

Rhodes College

    2014-2016   Ashley Bruneau, Biology (BS)

Association Membership

2019–present	International Communication Association (ICA)
2019–2020	IEEE
2015–2016	Vision Sciences Society (VSS)

Media Coverage

2019	Episode 65: Jack Madden and Swati Pandita. Leading Lines Podcast. Oct 7.
	Study Finds No Difference in VR Learning Outcomes Compared to Other Modes. Campus Technology. Feb 7.
	Study probes effect of virtual reality on learning. Cornell Chronicle. Feb 5.

Skills

Psychophysics	MatLab, Psych Toolbox, AFNI, FreeSurfer
Qualitative	Interview study design, semi-structured interviews, and thematic analysis
Quantitative	Experimental design, survey design, statistics (SPSS, R) VR movement data collection and analysis
User-centered Design	Development: Unity Engine (C#), WebGL, FTP Prototyping: Adobe Photoshop, Figma, Sketch, Invision, CSS, HTML Methods: Participatory design, Personas, User Modeling, Storyboarding, User-testing