

Soumitra Thorat

Qualitative Researcher

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Summary

User experience researcher with more than seven years of applied research experience across academic, non-profit, and product environments. Skilled in designing and running studies that explore how people use technology in complex, real-world settings. Experienced in usability testing, semi structured interviews, diary studies, surveys, and concept evaluations. Known for bringing together qualitative insight and behavioral data to guide design and product decisions. Comfortable collaborating with multiple stakeholders to turn research into actionable improvements for users and businesses.

Selected Impact

- Pulled 200+ hours of video and fieldwork together into journey maps and briefings that shaped product development plans and pilot programs.
- Built templates and processes for how to do this work consistently. Other researchers could now follow the same steps, get to insight faster, and feel more confident in what they were recommending.
- Combined what I saw in the field with what the analytics said. Found places where those two things didn't match—those gaps usually pointed to something important the product team was missing.

Work Experience

PhD Researcher, Work Interaction & Technology Lab, King's College London Oct 2021 to April 2026

- Planned and executed end-to-end research study aligned with program goals, including semi-structured interviews, usability tests, concept evaluations, and diary studies.
- Defined research questions and study scope in partnership with design and product teams to address key knowledge gaps.
- Combined qualitative findings and platform analytics to surface patterns that informed feature sequencing and rollout strategy.
- Created insight decks translating video and ethnographic work into presentations that linked user needs with organizational objectives and performance metrics.
- Facilitated design-thinking sessions with stakeholders to translate research findings into product priorities.
- Mentored junior researchers on method selection, analysis, and storytelling; established review rituals that improved consistency across interconnected projects.

Graduate Research Manager, Dept. of Anthropology, George Washington University May 2020 to Jul 2021

- Managed a funded user-research program from planning through reporting, coordinating with multiple partners on milestones and deliverables.
- Conducted usability and navigation studies on a public-facing website using prototype tools and remote platforms.
- Documented study progress and outcomes in Confluence and shared visual summaries that supported faster design decisions.
- Developed participant recruiting and consent processes that balanced compliance with efficiency.

Research Consultant, Dept. of Sociology, University of Massachusetts Amherst May 2020 to Jul 2021

- Led ethnographic fieldwork and synthesis observations, focus groups, interviews to map stakeholder needs across journeys; integrated qualitative results with national datasets for segmentation and validation.
- Operationalized analysis at scale: developed the qualitative codebook and intercoder reliability process, improving synthesis speed and decision confidence for partner briefings.
- Drew on qualitative fieldwork and comparative analysis to craft succinct policy and implementation briefs that linked research evidence with practical recommendations; shared findings with both local practitioners and academic audiences in conferences and committee sessions.
- Co authored peer reviewed work, demonstrating the ability to package complex evidence into clear narratives suitable for scrutiny and cross functional use.

Education

PhD Sociology, King's College London	HCI and workplace studies, qualitative methods, complex user journeys, digital ethnography	2021 to 2026
MA Anthropology, George Washington University	Mixed methods, discourse analysis, HCI	2019 to 2021
BA Anthropology and Sociology, Knox College	Qualitative methods, usability testing	2015 to 2018

Honors and Awards

Sep 2023	Research Prize in Public Interest Communications, University of Florida
Jul 2023	Outstanding Paper Award Co Winner, SSSP Poverty, Class, and Inequality Division
Jul 2019	IRT Fellow, Phillips Academy Andover
Jun 2018	Howell Atwood Award, Knox College