

# Meltem Odabaş, PhD

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*Available for remote collaboration across U.S. and international time zones*

## PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

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Data scientist and quantitative researcher with 10+ years building analytical systems on large, multi-source data and translating them into decision-ready answers for the people who must act on them. Designs and validates responsible, human-in-the-loop AI and NLP methods and applies them daily in applied research, alongside quantitative, qualitative, and mixed-methods analysis. Combines hands-on technical work with research leadership: sets analytical scope and methodological standards, runs projects end to end from initiation through closure, and mentors and develops analysts. Specializes in measuring how well programs and institutions perform against their goals, integrating structured and unstructured data from many sources, and assessing data gaps. Builds reproducible, well-documented pipelines in R, Python, SQL, Stata, Git, and AWS, and designs visualizations and dashboards that make findings legible to non-technical decision-makers.

## TECHNICAL SKILLS

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**Analytics & Methods:** Statistical Modeling • Measurement & Indicator Development • Program & Performance Assessment • Research & Program Evaluation • Causal Inference (Difference-in-Differences, Matching) • Survey & Questionnaire Design • Mixed-Methods Integration (Quantitative, Qualitative & Text-as-Data)

**AI & Text:** LLM-Assisted Classification & Information Extraction • NLP & Text-as-Data • Topic & Stance Analysis • Named Entity Recognition / PII Redaction • Human-in-the-Loop Evaluation • Inter-Rater & Inter-Model Reliability • Frontier LLMs (Claude, GPT)

**Programming & Data:** Python • R • SQL • Stata • Git/GitHub • AWS (S3, EC2) • Claude Code • GitHub Copilot

**Data Management & Quality:** Multi-Source Data Merging • Large-Scale Administrative & Survey Data • Data Quality, Gap Assessment & Imputation • Reproducible Pipelines • QC & Documentation Standards

**Data Products & Visualization:** Interactive Dashboards (R Shiny, Tableau) • Data Visualization (ggplot2) • Large-Scale Data Processing & Automation

**Leadership & Enablement:** Research & Technical Leadership • Team Leadership & Analyst Mentoring • Stakeholder Engagement & Translation • Full Project Lifecycle (Initiation to Closure) • ICF Associate Certified Coach Training completed (ACC accreditation in progress)

## EXPERIENCE

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**Founder**, [meltemodabas.net](http://meltemodabas.net) (Independent Research Consulting & Mentorship)

*Ongoing*

- Provide independent research and evaluation consulting to mission-driven organizations across monitoring and evaluation design, quantitative analysis and data science, survey and research design, and AI strategy, on project-based engagements.
- Design and deliver structured mentorship programs supporting MA/PhD researchers transitioning to applied and policy-facing roles.
- Build and maintain a public platform advancing research strategy, AI-assisted methods, and data communication in computational social science and policy research, and cultivate a cross-sector network of researchers at the intersection of AI, computational methods, and social science.

**Senior Data Analyst**, Guttmacher Institute, Washington, DC

*2024 – 2026*

- Served as technical lead for the cost-and-impact model behind Adding It Up, Guttmacher's flagship study across 128 low- and middle-income countries; proposed and set the analytical scope each cycle, merging international survey and population datasets (DHS, MICS, PMA, UN, OECD) to project service volumes, outcomes, and year-over-year costs under alternative coverage scenarios for policymakers and funders.
- Partnered directly with external researchers, country-level collaborators, and funders to adapt the global model to specific contexts and co-produce commissioned publications; produced Just the Numbers: Australia's Support for

Global SRHR (first author) from a funder's investment questions, translating their scenarios into projected health outcomes delivered as a service.

- Operationalized country-level indicators of need, service coverage, financing, and outcomes that fed an interactive multi-country dashboard used by external stakeholders.
- Provided strategic direction for the analysis to ensure reproducibility, integrity, and consistency; maintained well-documented pipelines in Stata and R with code-level QC and consistency rules that kept externally reported figures aligned across cross-national initiatives.
- Supported and mentored team analysts, developing their skills in advanced data analysis and reproducible research methods within a collaborative environment.
- Translated technical findings into decision-ready recommendations for leadership, communications teams, and external stakeholders.
- Used Claude Code daily to navigate, refactor, and debug an existing production codebase, keeping multi-country analytical pipelines reproducible and auditable.

**Computational Social Scientist**, Pew Research Center, Washington, DC

2021 – 2024

- First-authored an externally published content analysis of U.S. school district mission statements; led the collection and analysis, linking ACS, geocorr, and election-result data to classify a representative weighted sample of ~13K districts by geographic voting patterns and surface a partisan divide in how districts define their perspective in educating students.
- Contributed to large-scale LLM-assisted text classification labeling ~44M social-media observations, with human inter-rater reliability validation (Cohen's  $\kappa > 0.8$ ) on sampled cases to benchmark labeling quality.
- Led an LLM/NER pipeline to redact personally identifying information from collected text, enabling responsible public release of the dataset while preserving analytical utility.
- Led small teams through full research cycles (design, execution, delivery) across education, health, and media, implementing code review for reproducible, well-documented collaboration.
- Built measurement frameworks translating complex social constructs into reproducible, documented analytical pipelines, and produced public-facing reports used by journalists, policymakers, educators, and researchers.

**Postdoctoral Researcher**, Indiana University, Bloomington, IN

2019 – 2021

- Benchmarked a novel network-based risk indicator against standard measures across a ten-year longitudinal claims dataset of 318M observations (21.5M patients), using prognostic-score matching to adjust for confounding; the new measure held 63–75% predictive accuracy while widely-used threshold metrics decayed to chance after 2015 (published, *Addiction*).
- Built a difference-in-differences design estimating the effect of COVID-19 diagnosis and family bereavement on mental-health diagnoses, accounting for staggered exposure timing and within-family clustering.
- Mentored graduate researchers in quantitative and computational methods.

**Graduate Researcher**, University of Arizona, Tucson, AZ

2012 – 2019

- Conducted computational social science research on digital behavior, online communities, and information diffusion using large-scale text and social network datasets.
- Built scalable data collection and processing infrastructure using APIs, web scraping, NLP workflows, and social network analysis.
- Designed and taught undergraduate courses on social research methods and network analysis, mentoring students in quantitative and computational research.

## SELECTED OUTPUTS & PROJECTS

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Full list of reports and peer-reviewed work: [meltemodabas.net/works](https://meltemodabas.net/works) • [Google Scholar](#)

- *Country Profiles Interactive Dashboard* (Guttmacher). Produce the underlying country-level estimates of health needs, service coverage, financing, and outcomes across low- and middle-income countries that feed the dashboard.

- *Just the Numbers: Australia's Support for Global SRHR* (Guttmacher, 2026). First-authored analysis translating donor funding into projected health outcomes under alternative investment scenarios.
- *School District Mission Statements Highlight a Partisan Divide in K-12 Education* (Pew). First-authored study linking ACS, geocorr, and election data to classify ~13K districts by geographic voting patterns, using human coding and pointwise mutual information.
- *#BlackLivesMatter Turns 10* (Pew). Contributed to large-scale, LLM-assisted classification of ~44M social-media observations, validating labeling quality against human coders (Cohen's  $\kappa > 0.8$ ) on sampled cases.
- *Redacting Identifying Information with Computational Methods in Large Text Data* (Pew). Led an LLM/NER-based redaction pipeline enabling responsible public data release while preserving analytical utility.

## SELECTED PEER-REVIEWED PUBLICATIONS

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\* *Equal contributions. Selected from peer-reviewed articles and book chapters; full list on [Google Scholar](#).*

- Adesina, A., Odabaş, M., Quinn, H., Ali, M., & Sully, E. A. (2026). Cost savings of task-sharing in family planning: Estimates across 128 low- and middle-income countries. *BMC Health Services Research*.
- Odabaş, M. \*, Perry, B. \*, Yang, K.-C., Lee, B., Kaminski, P., Aronson, B., Ahn, Y.-Y., Oser, C. B., Freeman, P. R., & Talbert, J. C. (2022). New means, new measures: Assessing prescription drug-seeking indicators over ten years of the opioid epidemic. *Addiction*, 117(1).
- Yang, K.-C., Aronson, B., Odabaş, M., Ahn, Y.-Y., & Perry, B. L. (2022). Comparing measures of centrality in bipartite patient-prescriber networks: A study of drug seeking for opioid analgesics. *PLOS ONE*, 17(8).
- Odabaş, M. \*, Türkoğlu, D. \*, Yavaş, M., & Tunaoğlu, D. (2022). Political polarisation on social media: Competing understandings of democracy in Turkey. *South European Society and Politics*, 27(2).
- Lee, B., Yang, K.-C., Kaminski, P., Peng, S., Odabaş, M., Gupta, S., Green, H. D., Ahn, Y.-Y., & Perry, B. L. (2021). Substitution of nonpharmacologic therapy with opioid prescribing for pain during the COVID-19 pandemic. *JAMA Network Open*, 4(12).
- Odabaş, M., Holt, T. J., & Breiger, R. L. (2017). Markets as governance environments for organizations at the edge of illegality: Insights from social network analysis. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 61(11), 1267–1288.
- Odabaş, M., & Reynolds-Stenson, H. (2017). Tweeting from Gezi Park: Social media and repression backfire. *Social Currents*, 5(4), 386–406.

## EDUCATION

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| <b>PhD, Sociology</b> , University of Arizona, Tucson, AZ         | 2019 |
| <b>MA, Sociology</b> , University of Arizona, Tucson, AZ          | 2014 |
| <b>MA, Economics</b> , Boğaziçi University, Istanbul (High Honor) | 2012 |
| <b>BA, Economics</b> , Boğaziçi University, Istanbul (Honor)      | 2010 |

## ADDITIONAL

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**Certifications & Recognition:** ICF Associate Certified Coach training completed; ACC accreditation in progress (2026). Bunis Graduate Student Teaching Award, University of Arizona School of Sociology (2018).

**Languages & Authorization:** Turkish (native); English (fluent). Dual U.S.–Turkish citizen, authorized to work in the U.S. without sponsorship and available for remote collaboration across U.S. and international time zones.