# Mahdi Ansari

## Education

| *Degree* | *Field* | *Institution* | *Year* |
|---|---|---|---|
| PhD | Economics | University of Minnesota (expected) | 2023 |
| MA | Economics | University of Minnesota | 2020 |
| MS | Economics | Sharif University of Technology | 2017 |
| BS | Electrical Engineering | Sharif University of Technology | 2014 |

## Major Fields of Concentration

Macro, Labor, Firm Dynamics, Public Economics.

## Honors and Awards

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| 2021 | *Hutcheson-Lilly Dissertation Fellowship*, Department of Economics, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, Minnesota. |
| 2018 | *Distinguished Teaching Assistant*, Department of Economics, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, Minnesota. |
| 2018 | *Mythili and Varadarajan Chari Fellowship*, Department of Economics, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, Minnesota. |
| 2018 | *Dr. Harald Uhlig Award in Macroeconomics*, Department of Economics, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, Minnesota. |
| 2017 | *Bruce and Mildred Mudgett Fellowship*, Department of Economics, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, Minnesota. |
| 2010 | *Membership of National Elites Foundation*, Sharif University of Technology, Tehran, Iran. |
| 2009 | *Silver Medal in National Physics Olympiad*, Young Scholars Club, Tehran, Iran. |

## Research Experience

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| 2021 | *Summer Intern*, Middle East and Central Asia Department, International Monetary Fund, Washington, DC. Research Assistant to Dr. Suchanan Tambunlertchai and Dr. Monica Petrescu. |
| 2019-2020 | *Research Analyst*, Research Department, Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis, Minneapolis, Minnesota. Research Assistant to Professor Patrick Kehoe. |
| 2016-2017 | *Research Analyst*, Governance and Policy Think Tank, Sharif University of Technology, Tehran, Iran. |
| 2015-2016 | *Visiting Research Analyst*, Economics Group, Iranian Parliament Research Center, Tehran, Iran. |

## Teaching Experience

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| 2020-2021 | *Instructor*, Department of Economics, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, Minnesota. Instructor for lectures of International Trade and Public Economics. |
| 2018-2019 | *Teaching Assistant*, Department of Economics, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, Minnesota. Led recitations for Principles Macro and Principles Micro. |
| 2016-2017 | *Teaching Assistant*, School of Management and Economics, Sharif University of Technology, Tehran, Iran. Led recitations and graded for graduate courses: Macroeconomics II and Economy of Iran. |

## Computer Skills

Julia, Stata, Matlab.

## References

Professor Ellen McGrattan; erm@umn.edu. Department of Economics, University of Minnesota.
Professor Loukas Karabarbounis; loukas@umn.edu. Department of Economics, University of Minnesota.

## Contact

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## Statement of Interest in AI

I explore the possible role of artificial intelligence (AI) in the recent macro trends in the US economy, i.e. higher market concentration, lower labor share, and slower business dynamism. I investigate specific channels that might link AI to the trends in the modern business world. In my first paper I proposed a theory where AI reduces supervision cost and as a result lower management cost in the span of control model implies higher market concentration and smaller labor share of firm income. The idea is that improvements in IT lead to managerial efficiencies when operations are scaled up. Thus, as firms grow, they require fewer managers and rising concentration is a sign of greater efficiency in personnel management.

My second paper studies the impact of AI-based analysis of customer data on market concentration. With growth in software used for AI, there has been growth in the collection of customer databases allowing firms to provide better services to existing customers. A good example is Netflix, which streams movies and other content. Investing in AI technologies, Netflix can customize future services for consumers. The critical inputs are past choices which form a database that is needed for the new AI technologies to make more accurate predictions of consumer preferences. In this case, the data are a valuable asset for the company using it to predict the value of future products and services. Investments in these assets result in gains for consumers and market power for the firms.

The mechanics of both models work. However, estimating the actual impact of AI on supervision cost or marketing prediction based on customer database has been challenging for me. I believe the NBER Workshop helps me find creative methods to estimate and quantify my theories and overall to gain a better understanding of my ideas.