Leila Doumi

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OBJECTIVE

Application for the Digital Economics and AI tutorial.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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COURSE OF GRADUATE STUDY

In the fall semester of 2023, I will start the third year of my doctoral studies in Strategy at Harvard Business School. I started the Strategy program in 2021 and recently completed all course requirements as well as advanced to PhD candidacy.

As part of my qualifying exams, I was examined in Strategy as well as the field of Innovation and Digitization and Labor Economics, which I chose as my two minors. The Strategy major covered foundational concepts and primary frameworks in Strategy research, as well as topics of corporate Strategy. My minor exams were tailored to align with my research interests. Specifically, the Innovation and Digitization exam covered topics such as the invention, adoption, and diffusion of technologies, the commercialization of AI and Data Analytics, and the development of commercial digital infrastructure. On the other hand, the Labor Economics exam covered topics including human capital, personnel economics, and the impact of technological change on the labor market.

Following the Economics track of the Strategy program, over the past two years, I have completed coursework in the areas of economic theory, quantitative research methods, business management theory, and a class in the MBA curriculum. Courses include but are not limited to Economic Theory I and II, Econometrics I and II, Field Experiments, Methods for Causal Inference in Strategy Research, Labor Market Analysis, Empirical Studies of Innovation and Digitization, Foundation of Strategy, Advanced Topics of Strategy, and Field Experiments.

Prior to joining Harvard Business School, I received my BA and MA in quantitative Sociology from the University of Mannheim. My master's thesis entitled "The Role of Network Structures in Implementing Technological Innovations – balancing information access and social

reinforcement" examined the effect of network structures on the adoption of a new digital technology implemented across all production units of a large German car manufacturer.

RESEARCH INTERESTS AND PROJECTS

My research interests are in technology adoption, corporate strategy, and the future of work, with a focus on how corporations can develop and execute their strategies to become more digital and implement new technologies. I am particularly interested in questions such as how the implementation of novel technologies, such as generative AI for example, affects worker- and firm-related outcomes, including productivity, attrition, job satisfaction, firm performance, and more. Furthermore, given the accelerating pace of technological innovation, I am interested in how organizations can re-skill and upskill their workforce to support their workers in building or strengthening the necessary skills to thrive in a digital world. This may, in some cases, entail the retraining of workers from one occupation that is becoming obsolete to others that are growing or evolving.

To examine these questions, I am currently working with Professor Raffaella Sadun and Assistant Professor Jorge Tamayo in the Digital Reskilling Lab at Harvard Business School. We recently received a research grant from the Russell Sage Foundation to support our multi-year research project, "Reskilling and Upskilling in the Workplace". As part of this project, we investigate the following questions: First, what are the characteristics of the programs currently being launched to prepare "at-risk" workers for the digital transition, and what are the main obstacles that workers and firms are encountering in their implementation? Second, how should these programs be ideally designed and implemented to overcome these challenges? Third, how does the effectiveness of firm-led initiatives compare with alternative approaches, such as external recruitment policies, for example? To answer these questions, we utilize a multi-method approach to explore the upskilling and, more specifically, reskilling practices implemented by firms. Approaches include qualitative interviews conducted with over 40 multinationals, the design and implementation of a large-scale survey just launched in the United States and soon to be extended to other regions such as Asia and Europe, and deep dives with individual firms to measure the effectiveness of these programs using administrative data and experimental approaches. For instance, we are currently collaborating with a large German car manufacturer to measure the effectiveness of one of their reskilling programs. In line with broader trends in the labor market, they are experiencing an increasing need for industrial electricians while simultaneously facing a decreasing demand for mechanics, due to the increasing automation of their production facilities.

Additionally, and as mentioned previously, I am very interested in the adoption of novel technologies, such as generative artificial intelligence (AI), and its effect on worker- as well as firm- related outcomes. Just recently, during my recent field work, I observed how managers utilized generative AI for various tasks of their daily routines. Having recently studied some of

the literature on AI adoption and its effect on productivity, for example, I believe that there are many questions we have yet to answer, particularly in a non-medical setting. Thus, in a new project, I would like to explore the effects of AI adoption on managerial decision-making (and the respective interplay between machine prediction and human judgement) and its overall effect on productivity related outcomes and well-being.

Given my high research interest in digitization and AI adoption, I would be thrilled to attend the Digital Economics and AI tutorial in September and learn from the respective research leaders and about the current core research topics.

Thank you for your consideration.