Esma Ozer Ozturk

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ECONOMIST

Causal Inference | Experimental Design | Structural Modeling | Incentive Design | Online Platforms

Economist (PhD) with 7+ years measuring how people respond to incentives and design choices on online platforms, using randomized experiments and structural models. Runs projects end-to-end, from data pipeline and research design to the model and the recommendation, leading cross-functional teams of researchers and engineers. Python, SQL, R, and Stata; causal inference, structural estimation, experimental design, forecasting, and LLM pipelines for unstructured data.

TECHNICAL SKILLS

Languages & tools Python (pandas, NumPy, statsmodels, scikit-learn, SciPy) | SQL | R | Stata | Git | Azure | HPC | MATLAB

Methods Structural econometric modeling | incentive and contest design | causal inference (DiD, IV, RD, IPW, bounds) | experimental design, A/B and market-level testing | machine learning (time-series forecasting, classification) | survey measurement | LLM classification pipelines

SELECTED RESEARCH

Collaboration in Competitive Environments | *six-arm platform experiment (N = 1,405)* *Aug 2024 – Present*

- **Designed and ran a six-arm randomized field experiment with 1,405 participants** on a platform I built, measuring how reward structure and collaboration features change effort, engagement, and knowledge sharing.
- **Built an LLM classification pipeline over 5,000+ chat transcripts and web logs,** validated at 92% on a held-out set, turning unstructured interaction data into modeling features.
- **Estimated a structural model of behavior under competing incentives** and simulated counterfactual reward schemes, showing that moderate competition maximizes learning while winner-take-all rewards suppress collaboration.

Time-Constraints and Decision-Making | *structural model and policy simulation* *Oct 2022 – Apr 2025*

- **Estimated a structural decision model from a lab-in-field experiment** and simulated rule changes; revised timing rules narrow gender score gaps by 12% (NBER Working Paper, with Kala Krishna and Pelin Akyol).

Collaborative Frontier: AI and Peer Learning | *platform build and deployment* *Aug 2024 – Present*

- **Built and deployed** MTechO, a $9.6K J-PAL-funded learning platform used in partner schools; led a cross-functional team from research question to live product.
- **Building** PeeriumAI, an experimentation platform measuring the causal impact of generative AI on team decision-making and productivity.

Post-Disaster Educational Recovery | *survey measurement at scale (N = 2,951)* *May 2024 – Present*

- **Designed and fielded a survey of 2,951 students and parents on post-earthquake learning loss** across 18 stratified-sampled schools; classified 7,000 open-ended responses with LLMs, validated at 95% on a held-out set.
- **Corrected for selection and recall bias** with Lee bounds, inverse probability weighting, and parent-reported cross-checks.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY | Visiting Assistant Professor of Economics *Sep 2026 – Present*

- Teach Experimental and Urban Economics, building coursework around real-time behavioral games, market design, and LLMs as simulated economic agents and experimental treatments.

PENN STATE UNIVERSITY | Research Assistant, Economics *Sep 2020 – May 2026*

- **Forecast exit risk for 15,000+ firms** with time-series ML models (LSTM, DTW-KNN) in Python on HPC infrastructure; implemented non-convex optimization for spatial assignment (project).
- **Built scalable spatial data pipelines (R, HPC)** to model urban commuting dynamics (project); optimized codebases, wrote HPC guides, and mentored junior RAs; acknowledged as a research contributor (R&R at Econometrica).

PARIS SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS | Research Assistant *Jun 2019 – Aug 2020*

- Engineered a spatial panel dataset from 5,000+ unstructured historical documents with automated extraction and cleaning pipelines (project).

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Ph.D. in Economics, The Pennsylvania State University (Aug 2026) | **B.A. in Economics & Political Science,** Bogazici University, Highest Honors (2020) | **Visiting Student,** Columbia University (Spring 2018)

Training Price Theory Summer Camp, University of Chicago | Theory-Based Experimental Economics, Caltech