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Be a detective for a day: How to detect falsified interviews with methods of Data Science

Abstract

Interview falsification happens for decades on different levels but is still often detected & treated insufficiently in praxis. This is severe as interview fabrication can have major effects on final estimates. With this paper I want to again draw attention on this important topic, with focus on falsification by telephone interviewers. Also, I want to provide NSOs with a base of a data-driven, mostly automatic tool to detect interviewers with anomalies in their answers or their time patterns, written in R. The further application of traditional methods, as e.g. recontact or test calls, is far more effective on such data-driven, focused samples than on random samples. Because looking for conspicuous interviewers sometimes feels like detective work, this paper has a little detective side story. Together we will look at the means of evidence, investigate it with various methods, filter out the conclusive evidence and conclude how to close the case.