

Removed from real life(?) - Linking Hradil's (1987) social positions to Covid-19 conspiracism

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Global impact of the Covid-19 pandemic:

- ❖ Economic crisis (macro and micro level)
- ❖ Mental health issues
- ❖ Political Polarization
- > Rise of new conspiracy theories

Much research about (Douglas et al. 2019):

- ❖ Psychological and ideological causes for conspiracy theories
- ❖ Spread via (social) media

Little research about: Social position of conspiracy theorists

- ❖ Sociology of knowledge: Peoples' ideas and thoughts are tethered to their socio-historic positions (Mannheim 1985)

Research question:

Which social positions harbor Covid-19 conspiracism to what degree?

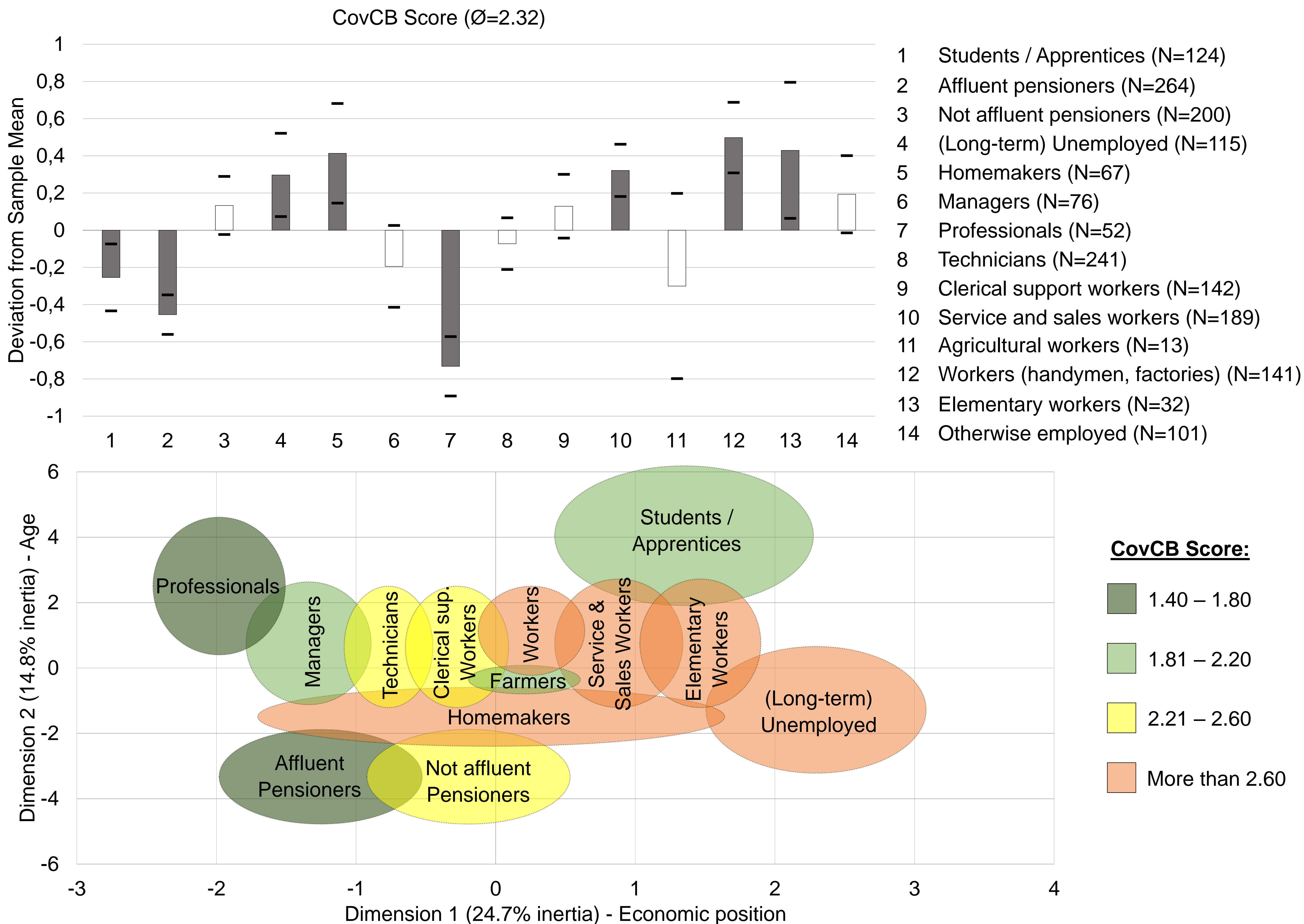
- ❖ Explorative analysis of the correlation between social position and Covid-19 conspiracism

Data source: Values in Crisis Survey (Austrian version) – wave 2 (N=1,757) (Aschauer et al. 2021)

Covid-19 Conspiracism (CovCB): Average Score over three attitude items ($\alpha=.85$; range=[1; 5]) – (Ulrich & Fux 2022)

- (1) "The virus was created by people", (2) "With the spread of the virus, one country is trying to destabilize another", and (3) "With the spread of the virus, a group of powerful people wants to make profit."

Social position (Hradil 1987): Multiple Correspondence Analysis with 18 active social structure variables



Discussion:

- ❖ Covid-19 Conspiracism is more prevalent amongst social positions with lower economic positions
- > More affected by shadow sides of pandemic management (job loss, reduction to shorter hours, business closures)?
- > Lesser educational levels?
- ❖ Social structure plays a substantial part in the adoption of conspiracy theories (Ulrich & Fux 2022)

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