

This doctoral dissertation, entitled *Corona-Solidarity: Perceiving and Experiencing (non)Solidarity during the COVID-19 Pandemic*, is formed by a series of six interconnected articles. The aim of the doctoral project, presented in the array of publications, is to explore, describe and understand perceptions and experiences of solidarity and non-solidarity in times of crisis, as they were manifested in people's biographies during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In the *Corona-Solidarity* project (the primary database for this dissertation), as well as in the dissertation itself, the adopted research paradigm belongs ontologically to constructivism, while its epistemology can be classified as an interpretative approach (Babbie 2003). Importantly, the research strategy follows a longitudinal research method (Qualitative Longitudinal Research, QLR; Saldana 2015, Neale 2019). The theoretical framework of the article series is based on three pillars: (1) risk society (Beck 2004) and the concept of the 'unsettling event' (Kilkey, Ryan 2021); (2) the meaning and understanding of solidarity (sociology of morality; Ossowska 2005; Bayertz 1999, Sangiovanni 2015, Kneuer et al. 2022); and (3) the sociology of everyday life and social practices (Schatzki 2001; Sztompka, Bogunia-Borowska 2008, Sikorska 2018). The main research question is consistent with the title of the dissertation, i.e., How do people perceive and/or experience of (in)solidarity in the COVID-19 pandemic?

Within the study, 67 in-depth interviews were conducted across three waves (Wave 1: March 2020, Wave 2: May-June 2020, Wave 3: April-June 2021). In addition, asynchronous exchanges were completed with the same interviewees via various methods, including online diaries; email and instant messaging. The selection of the study participants was based on the criterion of accessibility (Kalinowska et al. 2022) and supported by the snowball technique (Babbie 2003). One of the strengths of the project can be seen in the empirical part of the study (data collection) initiated at the very beginning of the COVID-19 epidemic and introduction of governmental preventive measures in Poland (March 2020). This fostered the capacity to capture perceptions and experiences of (non)solidarity from the very beginning of the crisis situation.

The findings of the *Corona-Solidarity* study were contextualized by the data collected within another, larger project called "ULTRAGEN: Becoming an adult in times of ultra-uncertainty: intergenerational theory of 'shaky' transitions" (NCN OPUS-19). The main research question in the ULTRAGEN project concerns the lasting impact of social crises on intergenerational relations, especially solidarity, in the process of becoming an adult. The project follows a mix-method approach as a longitudinal study (QLR, Neale 2019) and contains six research components in total. In the two articles based on the

ULTRAGEN data, the focus is on the first wave of in-depth interviews (N=70), which were conducted with young adults and their parents between May and November 2021. The thematic link between the two research projects resulted in a thematically coherent collection of articles centered on the theme of solidarity.

Six peer-reviewed journal papers encompassing this PhD dissertation are:

1. Radzińska J. (2022). Zmiana postrzegania i doświadczania solidarności w pandemii COVID-19, *Studia Socjologiczne* 3(246), 111-136. [The Change in Perceiving and Experiencing Solidarity During the COVID-19 Pandemic].
2. Radzińska J. (2022). Między elastycznością a spójnością: wykorzystanie metod asynchronicznych w jakościowym badaniu podłużnym realizowanym w trakcie pandemii, *Przegląd Socjologii Jakościowej* XVIII (3), 10-31. [Between Flexibility and Consistency: Using Asynchronous Methods Within a Qualitative Longitudinal Research Conducted During the Pandemic].
3. Kajta J., Pustułka P., Radzińska J. (2023). Young people and housing transitions during COVID-19: Navigating co-residence with parents and housing autonomy, *Housing Studies*, 38(1): 44-64.
4. Radzińska J., Pustułka P. (2022). Pandemiczne święta: typologia postaw Polek i Polaków wobec zmian w praktykach rodzinnych w kryzysie w świetle danych jakościowych, *Roczniki Nauk Społecznych*, 50(3), 63-81. [Pandemic Holidays: a Typology of Attitudes towards Changes in Family Practices during Crisis in the Light of Polish Qualitative Data].
5. Radzińska J., Pustułka P. (2021). A Win for the Middle Class? A Qualitative Study Mapping "Benefits" from the National Quarantine. *Kultura i Społeczeństwo*, 65(1), 43-63.
6. Radzińska J. (2021). Dojrzałość empatii wpływa na jakość solidarności, *Etyka*, 59(1), 66-80. [The Maturity of Empathy Influences the Quality of Solidarity].

The PhD project contributes new knowledge to several areas within sociology, specifically offering a new frame for investigating, exploring and describing perceptions and practices of solidarity during crises, here exemplified by the individual experiences tracked longitudinally during the COVID-19 pandemic in Poland. Theoretical input includes reflections at the intersection of the sociology of risk

and uncertainty, the sociology of morality (perceptions, meanings and evaluations) and the sociology of everyday life (social practices and their change over time).

Focusing on the key findings, three points should be highlighted. First, the crisis situation (an 'unsettling event' Kilkey, Ryan 2021; set in the context of a risk society, Beck 2004) becomes an impulse to act for and with others, which becomes a source of solidarity practices "by saying and by doing" (see Schatzki 2001). Secondly, in the *Corona-Solidarity* study, during the period of solidarity mobilization (mainly in the first wave of interviews), participants perceived and/or experienced solidarity in six areas, inductively identified from the collected narratives. These are: relationships and contact; help and support in personal networks and relationships; charity; citizenship attitudes; and spirituality and ecology.

Thirdly, through the use of longitudinal methods, it could be tracked how the practices of crisis solidarity change over time. After mobilization in the initial phase of the crisis, a rationalization of commitment has come next. In the case of three areas, namely support in relationships, things considered significant/personal and charity, resources were withdrawn in favor of the closest circle of important people and places. Civic attitudes, including, above all, adherence to COVID-driven governmental restrictions, successively weakened. Decisions of the authorities were increasingly judged by the interviewees as nonsensical. Spirituality, realized through prayer or meditation, among others, was practiced only by some of the interviewees and took the form of rituals characterized by varying regularity and permanence. Finally, ecological attitudes and practices were expressed primarily through concern about the environment. Only solidarity as a concern for relationships and maintaining contact remained strong throughout the study, although its specific elements for many people changed over time.

The most important findings from the doctoral study entail the discovery and mapping of the formative potential of practicing solidarity during crisis, through which cooperative competences are built. The study demonstrates that the function of bottom-up mobilisation, even if it is short-lived, compensates for institutional shortcomings during crises.