

*Part III*

**CASE STUDIES OF  
REFUGEE PSYCHOSOCIAL WELLNESS**

*Quantitative Approaches*

In this section, we turn our attention to the use of primarily quantitative methods in order to investigate the psychosocial wellness of refugees. The literature concerning refugees is replete with studies that attempt to understand the psychological consequences of forced migration and its traumatic experiences and to explain the factors that lead to health adjustment in the aftermath of the experience. The next three chapters reveal distinct ways to tackle the study of refugee wellness.

In chapter 6, the reader encounters the investigations of Rajja-Leena Punamäki whose purpose is to link political reality with psychological processes as she studies the suffering of Palestinian children, women, and ex-prisoners. Her emphasis is on psychological wellness that stresses strengths, such as mastery, goal-orientation, and the struggle for justice. Punamäki is interested in how these populations “mobilize all human capacities including political, social, and mental to encourage endurance.” She speaks of “action research” where investigators use their findings not only for the advancement of knowledge, but also for the planning and implementation of service programs and for advocacy and policy.

Miriam Potocky-Tripodi examines data of the United States’s national census to determine the economic integration of various refugee groups in the United States. Her studies focus on the relative adjustment of Southeast Asians, Central Americans, Cubans, Haitians, Eastern Europeans, including those from the former Soviet bloc countries as compared with non-immigrant/refugee groups. In chap-

ter 7, she: 1) presents a theoretical model that guides her work in refugee adaption and economic integration; 2) discusses six factors that influence economic integrations; 3) describes the U.S. census and the database from which she drew her information; and 4) elaborates on her sophisticated methodology utilizing quantitative measures and statistical analyses to ascertain the adjustment of resettled refugees and immigrants.

The literature contains meager reference to what happens to refugees who have returned to their former homes. In chapter 8, Maryanne Loughry and her Vietnamese colleague Nguyen Xuan Nghia present their findings about refugee youth who were forcibly repatriated to their home areas. This study is characterized by use of cross-sectional analysis of the adjustment of this returning group of young people, who did not escape their country. Loughry and Nghia explain how they defined and measured psychosocial wellness and present the factors that influenced the mental health of returnees and their counterparts.

These three examples illustrate issues in doing quantitative research: definition, operationalization of variables, reliability and validity of measures, sampling, difficulties in collecting data, use of statistical analysis, and finally, the use and generalization of findings.