CHAPTER IV

THE STUDY POPULATION

This chapter deals with the study population, the selection of the sample and to what extent the results of this study may be generalized to a broader population.

TARGET POPULATION

The target populatin is the population to which the investigators want to be able to apply the results of the study (Colton, 1974). In this study, the target population is 1990 Community Health Nursing Curricula of nursing schools in Thailand.

SAMPLE POPULATION

The sample population is the population defined by the eligibility criteria. Since most of the time, it is usually not possible to deal with the whole of the target population. In this study, the sample is:

1. The nursing schools under 3 agencies (MOPH, the Ministry of University Affairs, and the Private Institution). The sample in this study comprised of two

nursing schools from each agency, one from inside and one from outside Bangkok.

2. Senior students who have completed Community Health Nursing (both theory and practice) in these nursing schools.

3. The instructors in the Public Health Department in these nursing schools.

INCLUSION CRITERIA

The curriculum of a school was included in the study if it fulfills the following criteria:

1. The curriculum was endorsed by the Ministry of University Affairs and Nursing council.

2. The curriculum was a four-year programme of Bachelor of Nursing Science Programme.

3. The curriculum had been implemented for more than four years.

4. The school had senoir students who had completed Community Health Nursing subjects both in theory and practice.

5. The school had instructors in the Public Health Department.

SAMPLING TECHNIQUE

In this study, the selected Community Health Nursing Curricula was intended to be representative of

the Community Health Nursing curricula in Thailand. The steps in sample selection were agency selection and location selection. This study used following sampling techniques: simple random sampling technique, purposive random sampling technique, and conveneint sampling technique. It is show in table 1.

Table 1: Sampling Technique

INSTITUTION	AGENCY	LOCATION(Bangkok)	SAMPLING T.
1. Bangkok NC.	MOPH	inside	purposive
2. Chonburi NC.	MOPH	outside	conveneint
3. Rama NS.	MOUA	inside	simple
4. Burapa U.	MOUA	outside	simple
5. Christian NC.	Private I.	inside	simple
6. Payap U.	Private I.	outside	purposive

Remark: MOPH = the Ministry of Public Health.
MOUA = the Ministry of University Affairs.
Private I. = Private Institutions.

The purposive sampling technique was done because the study population emphasized representation in terms of agency and location. For example, it was intended to select the nursing school under MOPH in Bangkok. For this, there was no choice but to select the only nursing school under the MOPH in Bangkok, the Bangkok Nursing College. Similarly, the Faculty of Nursing, Payap University was the only one nursing school under Private Institution outside Bangkok. The Chonburi Nursing College was selected using the conveneint sampling technique because it was located near Bangkok. Further, there was no reason to believe that the curriculum planning as well

as teaching and learning conditions of the Chonburi Nursing College was different from other nursing colleges under the Ministry of Public Health because the curriculum was designed centrally.

THE SAMPLE SIZE

The number of study unit must be sufficeint to make the study reliable. A large sample is much more likely to be representation of the population. The large sample is very useful. It involves greater reliability, and increase the power of statistic test applied to data. However, too big a sample can be inefficient in terms of the inappropriate balance between resources input and the output of the study. Our study should be considered only hypothesis generating study rather than a hypothesis testing study since there was no existing hypothesis generated from previous study to be tested. Therefore, an appropriate sample size calculation could not be done (Prakong Kunnasut, n.d.).

The subjects comprised of 2 groups: students and instructors. In large schools (number of seniors were over 60), 50% of the students were selected by systemic random sampling. If the number of senior students were less than 60, all were included. Also, all instructors in Public Health Department were included.

The number of the sample population who responded to questionnaires were 330 as illustrated in table 2:

Table 2: Sample Size

INSTITUTION	NUMBER OF STUDENT	INSTRUCTOR	TOTAL
1. Bangkok NC.	71	6	
2. Chonburi NC.	48	3	
3. Ramathibodi NS.	46	8	
4. Burapa U.	44	4	
5. Christian NC.	44	4	
6. Payap U.	49	3	
TOTAL	301	28	330

Two instructors were selected from each schools for in-depth interviews. These were the ones who had direct responsibility in supervision of field practicum. Thirteen students were selected from each school by stratified random sampling and then they were interviewed. A total of 78 students had in-depth interviews to check the reliability of data obtained from the questionnaires.

The sample size (for interviewing) was calculated using the formula suggested by Taroyamane.

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + Ne^2}$$

n = the number of subjects.
N = the total population.
e = the acceptable error (the acceptable error of this study is 10%).

Substituting relevant values in the equation yielded the following number of subjects required:

$$n = \frac{330}{1 + 330 \left[\dfrac{10}{100}\right]^2}$$

$$= 77 \text{ students}$$