KWANTA PETMANEECHOTE : EFFECTIVENESS OF BUDDHIST MEDITATION ON ANXIETY AND PAIN AMONG RHEUMATOID ARTHRITIS PATIENTS. THESIS ADVISORS: SOMPORN TRIAMCHAISRI, Ph.D. TASSANEE NONTASORN, Ph.D. KITTI TOTEM-CHOKECHAIKARN, F.A.C.R. 208p. ISBN 974-664-225-1

Rheumatoid Arthritis is a disease with the major symptom being chronic inflammation of connective tissues. Many rheumatoid arthritis patients suffer from pain for a long period of time causing anxiety. As a result, nurses should make a strong effort to provide special support to the patients in order that they will be able to practise a proper and continuous self-care.

This is a quasi-experimental research aimed to study the effectiveness of Buddhist meditation on anxiety and pain among rheumatoid arthritis patients. A purposive sampling technique with a set of required qualifications was employed for a selection of the sample population to consist of 30 cases. The experimental period lasted for 6 weeks through the use of several research instruments which included a manual for rheumatoid arthritis treatment by using Buddhist meditation, a finger-thermometer, interview forms for gathering demographic data and for measuring anxiety, inquiry forms for pain assessment and a meditation practice recording form.

The analysis of data was carried out under the application of SPSS for windows program by using descriptive statistics.In addition, average scores of different variables at the pre-experimental period were compared with the post-experimental scores in the same sample group by using the Wilcoxon Matched Pairs Singed-Ranks Test, while a comparison between the two groups was conducted by using the Mann-Whitney U Test.

The major findings indicated that the average score of anxiety and pain found in the experimental group was statistically lower and a higher degree of skin-temperature was found when compared between before and after intervention (P value < 0.05). As for the control group, it showed that the average score of anxiety found after the experiment was statistically different from the score derived before experimented (P value <0.05). When comparing the two groups of population after experiment, it was discovered that the average score of anxiety in the experimental group was statistically lower than the control group at a level of significance P value <0.05, while the average score of pain was not statistically different (P value >0.05).

It can be recommended that public health nurses need to provide comprehensive nursing care to rheumatoid arthritis patients by making a strong effort to encourage and giving a special advice on practicing Buddhist meditation continuously.