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BOONTHIWA CHOOCHUA: THE EFFECTS OF SUPPORTIVE GROUP
THERAPY ON STRESS AND COPING BEHAVIOR OF MOTHERS OF
CHILDREN WITH MODERATE MENTAL RETARDATION. THESIS
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The purpose of this study was to examine the effects of the supportive group therapy program on the stress and coping behaviors of mothers with moderate mentally retarded children. The subjects of the study were mothers who attended the Rajanukul Intervention Program, Rajanukul Hospital, during June and July 1999. The study employed a quasi-experimental design. The sixteen mothers who were selected were divided into two groups, a control and an experimental group. The experimental group participated in the supportive group therapy program. The program consisted of eight sessions of 60-90 minutes duration once a week. The subjects were assessed using stress and coping behavior questionnaires both pre-intervention and post-intervention. The information gathered was then used to provide descriptive analysis and t-test statistical analysis. The threshold of statistical significance was set at 0.05.

The findings of study revealed that after participating in the supportive group therapy program; 1) the subjects in the experimental group had lower level of stress than they did before, 2) the subjects in the experimental group had a higher mean score for coping behaviors than they did before, 3) the subjects in the experimental group had lower level of stress than those in the control group, and 4) the subjects in the experimental group had a higher mean score of coping behaviors than those in the control group.

The results of suggested that a supportive group therapy program can help the mothers to reduce stress and use more effective coping behavior. Nurses should be prepared with the knowledge and skills relating to conduct the supportive group therapy for the mothers. The supportive group therapy should be made available to the mothers of different ages.