

**UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA**

**SENSORY PROCESSING DISORDER  
AND SLEEP DISTURBANCES  
AMONG CHILDREN WITH AUTISM  
SPECTRUM DISORDER**

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of the requirements for the degree of  
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## AUTHOR'S DECLARATION

I declare that the work in this disertation was carried out in accordance with the regulations of Universiti Teknologi MARA. It is original and is the results of my own work, unless otherwise indicated or acknowledged as referenced work. This thesis has not been submitted to any other academic institution or non-academic institution for any degree or qualification.

I, hereby, acknowledge that I have been supplied with the Academic Rules and Regulations for Post Graduate, Universiti Teknologi MARA, regulating the conduct of my study and research.

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## ABSTRACT

Little attention is given in research about sensory processing disorder and sleep disturbances towards the children with ASD. Understand the concept of sensory processing disorders, and sleep disturbances, will ensure the step of early management of ASD children. With accurate identification of the causes of the sleep disturbances, it will guide occupational therapist to select the best intervention of sensory components to reduce and manage the sleep disturbances not only in occupational therapy domain of practice, but also for the parents or caregiver of the ASD children at the home settings. This study was conducted to contribute additional knowledge on how the children's sensory processing disorder is associated to their sleep disturbances and to determine the pattern of sensory processing that most associated to sleep disturbances. 33 children with ASD aged 3 to 18 years old were enrolled to assess their sleep disturbances using Sleep Disturbance Scale for Children (SDSC) and Short Sensory Profile (SSP) to measure sensory processing issues. Generally, results showed that there was no significant association between sensory processing disorder and sleep disturbances,  $p > 0.05$ . However, in specific, there were a subscale of sensory processing disorder indicated a significant association with total score of sleep disturbances. Children with ASD indicated the taste/smell sensitivity ( $p < 0.05$ ) were moderately negative associated with sleep disturbances. In conclusion, this study reported that sensory processing disorder is not significantly associated with sleep disturbances among children with ASD in general, yet, specific subscales of sensory processing indicated significant association with total score of sleep disturbances. Thus, this finding may shed insight that SPD and sleep disturbances need to be address interchangeably.

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