



Managing 'Wayground' as a Multisensory Learning Medium for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)

Betty Margarety*, Khairul Anwar, Abdul Rahman, Jumira Warlizasusi

Institut Agama Islam Negeri Curup, Indonesia

Email : betty.margreti@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

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*Corresponding Author

This study aims to analyze the management of Wayground implementation as a multisensory learning platform for students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) at SLB. A qualitative case study design was employed to explore the planning, organization, implementation, and evaluation of Wayground in inclusive learning practices. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis involving the principal, classroom teachers, special education teachers, parents, and students selected purposively. The data were analyzed using the Miles and Huberman interactive model, including data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing, while credibility was ensured through source and technique triangulation, prolonged engagement, and member checking. The findings reveal that Wayground was systematically implemented through four management functions, enabling teachers to integrate visual, auditory, and kinesthetic activities that enhanced students' attention, motivation, engagement, and participation during learning. The implementation was supported by teacher competence, school leadership, technological facilities, and parental involvement, although limited digital devices, unstable internet connectivity, and diverse student characteristics remained challenges. The study implies that effective management of gamified multisensory learning platforms can strengthen adaptive, engaging, and learner-centered educational practices for students with ASD.

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INTRODUCTION

Education for students with special educational needs has become a global priority in achieving equitable and inclusive educational systems. Among these students, individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) require instructional approaches specifically designed to accommodate their unique cognitive, behavioral, communication, and social characteristics (Hikmah, 2026; Kunta, 2025; Nadhifah, 2026). As the prevalence of ASD continues to increase

worldwide, schools are expected to provide learning environments that are adaptive, engaging, and responsive to diverse educational needs (Fitriani, 2025; Kusumawati, 2026; Mohlas, 2025). Digital technology has emerged as one of the most promising innovations for improving instructional quality because it enables personalized learning experiences and supports differentiated instruction (Adzimah, 2024; Holidi, 2026; Najiburohman, 2025). Previous educational reforms have consistently emphasized that technology integration is no longer limited to delivering instructional content but has become an essential component of effective educational management. Therefore, optimizing digital learning environments for students with ASD is not merely a technological concern but also an educational and social necessity to ensure equal learning opportunities and improve the quality of inclusive education.

Despite significant technological advancements, many special education institutions continue to experience difficulties in implementing digital learning effectively for students with ASD (Albustomi, 2025; Ni'am, 2025; Rahman, 2025). The primary challenge does not lie in the availability of technology itself but in the ability of schools to manage its integration into daily instructional practices. Students with ASD frequently demonstrate diverse sensory preferences, limited attention spans, communication barriers, and varying learning speeds, making conventional instructional methods less effective. Consequently, digital learning media must be systematically planned, organized, implemented, and evaluated to ensure alignment with learners' individual characteristics (Khofsah, 2025; Rahman, 2026; Shoha, 2026). Without appropriate educational management, even advanced digital platforms may fail to improve learning engagement or educational outcomes. These challenges indicate that successful technology integration depends not only on instructional innovation but also on comprehensive management strategies capable of coordinating educational resources, teacher competencies, technological infrastructure, and stakeholder collaboration throughout the learning process.

The situation observed at SLB Negeri 01 Rejang Lebong reflects these broader educational challenges. Preliminary observations revealed that Wayground, a gamified digital learning platform formerly developed from Quizizz, has been introduced as part of classroom instruction for students with ASD. However, its utilization remains predominantly limited to assessment activities rather than functioning as an integrated instructional medium throughout the entire learning process. Teachers generally employ Wayground to administer quizzes and evaluate student achievement after instruction instead of incorporating its visual, auditory, and interactive features during learning activities (Hikmah & Mudarris, 2026; Holidi, 2025; Manshur, 2026). Consequently, many opportunities to stimulate multisensory engagement, sustain students' attention, and improve classroom participation remain underutilized. This condition suggests that the effectiveness of Wayground is

influenced less by the platform itself than by the way schools organize and manage its implementation within instructional planning, classroom practice, resource allocation, and continuous evaluation.

Previous studies have extensively investigated the effectiveness of digital learning technologies for students with special educational needs. Most findings indicate that gamified platforms, multimedia learning environments, and interactive educational applications contribute positively to students' motivation, participation, engagement, and academic achievement. Other researchers have demonstrated that multisensory instructional approaches integrating visual, auditory, and kinesthetic stimulation enhance attention, memory retention, communication skills, and conceptual understanding among students with ASD (Kusumawati, 2025; Syafiih, 2025). These studies collectively confirm the educational potential of digital technology in supporting inclusive learning. Nevertheless, the majority of existing research emphasizes learning outcomes and technological effectiveness while paying relatively limited attention to the educational management processes that determine whether such technologies can be implemented consistently and sustainably within school environments.

Furthermore, studies specifically examining Wayground remain relatively scarce, particularly within the context of special education (Al-Kasasbeh, 2024; Rahmatillah & Andayani, 2025; Rusdiah, 2024). Existing research generally evaluates user satisfaction, students' academic performance, learning motivation, or teachers' perceptions after implementing gamified learning platforms. Very few investigations analyze how educational institutions plan instructional activities, organize human resources, coordinate technological facilities, supervise implementation, and conduct continuous evaluations to maximize the educational value of Wayground for students with ASD (Hina & Paramole, 2025; Listrianti & Cahyono, 2023; Nuraini et al., 2025). Consequently, an important research gap remains regarding the managerial dimensions of digital learning implementation. Addressing this gap is essential because technological innovation alone cannot guarantee successful learning unless supported by effective educational management capable of integrating digital platforms into comprehensive instructional systems responsive to students' diverse learning characteristics.

This study offers a novel perspective by examining Wayground implementation through the lens of educational management rather than merely evaluating its instructional effectiveness. Unlike previous studies that primarily focus on cognitive achievement or student motivation, this research adopts George R. Terry's management framework consisting of planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling (POAC) to analyze how Wayground is systematically managed as a multisensory learning platform for students with ASD. This perspective provides a more comprehensive understanding of technology integration by connecting pedagogical practice with organizational

management. The study also contributes empirical evidence from a special education school in Indonesia, where research concerning the management of gamified digital learning platforms remains limited. Consequently, the findings are expected to enrich educational management literature while providing practical guidance for schools seeking to implement sustainable digital learning innovations for students with special educational needs.

Based on these considerations, this study investigates how Wayground is managed as a multisensory learning platform for students with Autism Spectrum Disorder at SLB Negeri 01 Rejang Lebong. Specifically, it examines the implementation process through George R. Terry's four management functions: planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling. This study argues that effective educational management is the primary determinant of successful technology integration because systematic planning, collaborative organization, adaptive implementation, and continuous evaluation enable digital platforms to address the diverse learning characteristics of students with ASD. By explaining how these managerial processes influence multisensory learning practices, this research contributes theoretically to educational management and technology integration literature while providing practical recommendations for school leaders, teachers, and policymakers seeking to improve the quality of inclusive education through sustainable digital innovation.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study employed a qualitative approach with a case study design to obtain an in-depth understanding of the management of Wayground implementation as a multisensory learning platform for students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). A qualitative case study was selected because it enables researchers to explore a phenomenon within its real-life context and to examine complex educational processes from multiple perspectives (Danford, 2023; Takona, 2024). The study focused on the management functions involved in the implementation of Wayground, including planning, organizing, implementation, and evaluation. Through this approach, the researchers were able to investigate how educational stakeholders managed and integrated the platform into teaching and learning activities while addressing the unique learning needs of students with ASD.

The research was conducted at SLB Negeri 01 Rejang Lebong, Bengkulu Province, Indonesia. This site was intentionally selected because the school has adopted Wayground as part of its instructional practices for students with special educational needs, particularly those with ASD. In addition, the school provides a relevant setting for examining the integration of gamified digital learning within a special education environment. Participants were selected using purposive sampling based on their direct involvement and knowledge of

Wayground implementation. The informants consisted of the principal, classroom teachers, special education teachers, parents, and students with ASD. Data were collected through classroom observations, in-depth interviews, and document analysis. Observations were conducted to examine learning activities involving Wayground, while interviews explored stakeholders' experiences, perceptions, supporting factors, and challenges related to its implementation. Supporting documents, including lesson plans, instructional materials, evaluation records, photographs, and other relevant documents, were also analyzed to enrich the data.

Data analysis followed the interactive model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña, which consists of data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification (Donkoh & Mensah, 2023; Meydan & Akkaş, 2024; Pregoner, 2024). Data condensation involved selecting, simplifying, and organizing information obtained from observations, interviews, and documentation. Subsequently, the data were presented in descriptive narratives and thematic categories to facilitate interpretation and identify meaningful patterns. The final stage involved drawing conclusions and continuously verifying the findings throughout the research process to ensure consistency and credibility. To enhance trustworthiness, the study applied source triangulation, technique triangulation, prolonged engagement, and member checking, allowing the researchers to validate the findings and generate a comprehensive understanding of the management of Wayground implementation as a multisensory learning platform for students with ASD.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Planning the Implementation of Wayground as a Multisensory Learning Platform

The findings indicate that the implementation of Wayground began with a systematic planning process involving collaboration between the principal and classroom teachers. Lesson planning was designed based on individual student assessments, enabling teachers to align learning objectives, instructional materials, teaching strategies, and digital media with the cognitive, communicative, and sensory characteristics of students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). Rather than relying solely on gamified quizzes, teachers intentionally integrated Wayground with complementary multisensory activities, including visual illustrations, concrete objects, body movements, and verbal reinforcement to provide meaningful and engaging learning experiences.

Classroom observations demonstrated that the digital interface was carefully adapted to accommodate the learning preferences of students with ASD. Teachers selected simple visual layouts, clear illustrations, limited color

distractions, and appropriate audio cues to reduce cognitive overload and maintain students' attention. Learning activities were also sequenced from simple to more complex tasks, allowing students to progress gradually according to their individual abilities. These findings suggest that effective instructional planning serves as the foundation for successful technology integration by providing clear instructional direction while minimizing potential learning barriers. This result reinforces George R. Terry's management theory, which identifies planning as the primary management function that determines the effectiveness of subsequent managerial processes.

Organizing the Implementation of Wayground

The organizing phase focused on establishing clear roles, responsibilities, and coordination among educational stakeholders. The principal was responsible for developing policies supporting technology-based learning, facilitating the provision of digital infrastructure, and encouraging teachers' professional development. Classroom teachers prepared instructional materials and managed classroom activities, while special education teachers provided individualized assistance to students requiring additional support during learning sessions. This collaborative organizational structure enabled instructional responsibilities to be distributed efficiently according to each stakeholder's expertise.

The findings further revealed effective communication and coordination among teachers before each lesson. Collaborative planning meetings were conducted to determine learning objectives, instructional strategies, classroom responsibilities, and student assistance procedures. In addition to organizing human resources, the school also managed technological facilities, including internet access, smartphones, laptops, and classroom learning environments. Although the availability of digital devices remained limited, resource management strategies allowed students to participate through scheduled rotations without substantially disrupting instructional activities. These findings demonstrate that successful implementation depends not only on teachers' technological competence but also on effective organizational coordination and resource management that support sustainable digital learning practices.

Implementing Wayground Through a Multisensory Learning Approach

The implementation stage revealed that Wayground functioned as an integral component of classroom instruction rather than merely as an assessment platform. Learning sessions typically began with introductory activities to activate students' prior knowledge, followed by teacher explanations and guided interaction with Wayground using smartphones or laptops. Throughout the learning process, teachers consistently combined digital activities with

multisensory instructional strategies that incorporated visual images, symbols, colors, audio stimuli, body movements, and concrete learning materials.

For example, during Indonesian language lessons, students identified pictures presented on Wayground, matched them with appropriate vocabulary, verbally pronounced the words, and subsequently practiced using real objects available in the classroom. Similarly, in Civic Education lessons, students first recognized the symbols of Garuda Pancasila through Wayground before identifying identical symbols using printed instructional materials. This integration of visual, auditory, verbal, and kinesthetic experiences enabled students to construct deeper conceptual understanding than would be achieved through digital instruction alone.

Classroom observations consistently showed noticeable improvements in students' learning engagement following the integration of Wayground with multisensory activities. Students who had previously demonstrated limited attention spans became more focused, actively participated in classroom discussions, maintained concentration for longer periods, and responded more confidently to instructional questions. Teachers further strengthened student motivation through positive reinforcement, including verbal praise, applause, and simple rewards after successful task completion. Consequently, Wayground evolved from a digital quiz application into an interactive learning environment capable of fostering motivation, participation, confidence, and active engagement among students with ASD.

Evaluating the Implementation of Wayground

Evaluation was conducted continuously throughout the instructional process rather than being limited to the measurement of academic achievement. Teachers assessed students' learning outcomes using Wayground's automated performance reports while simultaneously observing behavioral indicators such as attention, task completion, responsiveness to instructions, social interaction, and independent learning skills. These multiple sources of assessment enabled teachers to obtain a comprehensive understanding of each student's academic and behavioral development.

The learning analytics generated by Wayground were subsequently used to adjust future instructional planning by determining appropriate reinforcement strategies, reviewing difficult learning materials, and modifying question difficulty according to individual learning progress. Beyond student evaluation, reflective discussions involving the principal, classroom teachers, and special

education teachers were conducted regularly to identify strengths, limitations, and opportunities for improving the implementation process. The findings suggest that continuous evaluation not only measures student achievement but also functions as an essential management mechanism for refining instructional practices and ensuring that multisensory learning remains responsive to the diverse needs of students with ASD.

Supporting and Inhibiting Factors

The successful implementation of Wayground was influenced by several supporting factors. Strong leadership from the principal encouraged continuous innovation in technology-enhanced learning through supportive policies, infrastructure provision, and teacher professional development opportunities. Teachers' increasing competence in utilizing digital learning platforms also contributed to more effective classroom implementation. Furthermore, the availability of technological resources, including laptops, smartphones, internet connectivity, and supplementary instructional materials, facilitated interactive learning experiences. Active parental involvement further strengthened learning continuity by reinforcing classroom activities within the home environment.

Nevertheless, several challenges remained. Limited numbers of digital devices required students to access Wayground through rotational schedules, resulting in extended instructional time. Intermittent internet connectivity occasionally interrupted online learning activities, while the heterogeneous characteristics of students with ASD required teachers to continuously differentiate instructional strategies according to individual learning profiles. Some students demonstrated considerable independence in navigating digital learning activities, whereas others continued to require intensive teacher guidance. Despite these challenges, teachers adopted adaptive solutions, including alternating device usage, utilizing personal digital equipment, and integrating Wayground with concrete instructional materials. These strategies ensured that technological constraints did not diminish the effectiveness of multisensory learning and allowed instructional objectives to be achieved successfully.

Discussion

The findings demonstrate that the implementation of Wayground at SLB Negeri 01 Rejang Lebong reflects George R. Terry's four fundamental management functions—planning, organizing, actuating (implementation), and controlling (evaluation). These interconnected functions created a systematic instructional management process that facilitated the successful integration of

digital technology into multisensory learning for students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). The planning stage emphasized identifying students' individual learning characteristics before designing instructional activities, while the organizing stage established collaborative roles among the principal, classroom teachers, special education teachers, and parents. These findings are consistent with Terry's management theory, which argues that effective organizational performance depends on the integration of sequential managerial functions (Huda & Habibu, 2025; Kholifah, 2024; Najiah, 2025). They also support previous educational management studies that emphasize systematic planning and organizational coordination as essential prerequisites for successful technology integration in educational settings. Therefore, the present study extends the application of classical management theory to the context of digital learning in special education.

The implementation stage revealed that Wayground functioned not merely as a gamified assessment platform but as a comprehensive multisensory learning environment integrating visual, auditory, verbal, and kinesthetic experiences. This finding aligns with previous studies reporting that gamified digital platforms improve student motivation, engagement, and classroom participation while promoting active learning (Adeoye & Baharun, 2025; Khoiroh, 2025; Zohaib Hassan Sain Chanda Chansa Thelma, Uthman Shehu Lawal, Muhammad Lawal Habibu, Shahzadi Hina Sain, 2025). Likewise, research on multisensory instruction has consistently demonstrated that combining multiple sensory modalities enhances attention, memory retention, and conceptual understanding among students with ASD. However, unlike many previous investigations that primarily measured learning outcomes or technological effectiveness, this study demonstrates that these positive outcomes emerged because Wayground was strategically integrated into classroom instruction through structured management practices. Consequently, the findings suggest that technology alone does not guarantee meaningful learning; rather, its educational effectiveness depends on how teachers systematically manage and integrate digital resources within instructional activities.

Another important finding concerns the evaluation process, where Wayground supported both learning assessment and instructional decision-making. Teachers utilized the platform's learning analytics alongside direct classroom observations to monitor students' academic achievement, behavioral engagement, responsiveness to instruction, and independent learning skills. These findings differ from much of the existing literature, which generally focuses on automated assessment features as measures of academic performance. In contrast, the present study demonstrates that digital learning analytics become more valuable when combined with continuous teacher reflection and

collaborative evaluation involving school leaders and special education teachers. This integrated evaluation process enabled instructional adjustments based on students' individual progress, illustrating that educational technology can strengthen data-informed instructional management rather than simply automate student assessment.

From a theoretical perspective, this study contributes to the literature by integrating George R. Terry's educational management framework with multisensory learning theory and gamified digital learning in special education. Previous studies have generally examined these perspectives independently, focusing either on educational management, multisensory instruction, or technology-enhanced learning (Abas & Jamila, 2025; Hidayat, 2024; Kumala & Nadya, 2024). The present findings illustrate that successful digital learning implementation results from the interaction of these three dimensions rather than from technological innovation alone. Accordingly, this research extends existing theoretical discussions by proposing that educational management serves as the organizational mechanism through which multisensory pedagogy and digital technology can be effectively combined to support students with ASD. This integrated perspective provides a broader conceptual framework for understanding technology adoption within special education settings.

Practically, the findings offer valuable implications for school leaders, teachers, and policymakers seeking to improve technology-enhanced learning for students with special educational needs. School principals should prioritize strategic planning, infrastructure development, and continuous professional development to ensure sustainable digital innovation. Teachers should view gamified platforms such as Wayground as instructional media that support comprehensive multisensory learning rather than solely as assessment tools, while collaboration among educators, parents, and school administrators should be strengthened to address students' diverse learning characteristics. Despite challenges related to limited digital devices, unstable internet connectivity, and heterogeneous student needs, adaptive management strategies enabled the school to maintain effective instructional practices. Consequently, this study contributes practical evidence that successful implementation of digital learning in special education depends on effective educational management, collaborative stakeholder involvement, and learner-centered instructional design, thereby providing a reference for similar schools intending to implement sustainable technology-based multisensory learning.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the successful implementation of Wayground as a multisensory learning platform for students with Autism Spectrum Disorder

(ASD) is determined not merely by the availability of digital technology but by the effective application of educational management functions encompassing planning, organizing, implementation, and evaluation. The findings demonstrate that integrating Wayground with multisensory instructional strategies enhances students' attention, motivation, engagement, and participation while enabling teachers to provide more adaptive and learner-centered instruction. The study contributes to the literature by bridging educational management theory, multisensory learning, and gamified digital technology within the context of special education, offering a comprehensive framework for technology integration beyond instructional effectiveness alone. Nevertheless, this research is limited to a single case study conducted in one special education school, which may restrict the generalizability of its findings. Future research is recommended to involve multiple schools, diverse educational settings, mixed-methods or longitudinal approaches, and comparative analyses to further examine the long-term effectiveness and scalability of multisensory digital learning management for students with special educational needs.

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