

# **Naima Bhana Lopez, PhD, BCBA-D** (she/her/ella)

Assistant Professor of Special Education

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## **Areas of Specialization**

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Early Intervention  
Complex Communication Needs  
Cultural, Ethnic, and Linguistic Diversity  
Autism Spectrum Disorders

## **Languages**

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Spanish (Native Proficiency)  
Gujarati (Intermediate Proficiency)

## **Education**

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2021      *Doctor of Philosophy in Special Education*  
Cognate in Augmentative and Alternative Communication  
Pennsylvania State University

2013      *Master of Science in Curriculum and Instruction*  
Concentration in Autism Spectrum Disorders  
Florida State University

2012      *Bachelor of Arts in Exceptional Student Education*  
Florida State University

## **Professional Certifications**

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2021      *Board Certified Behavior Analyst Doctoral*  
Certification Number: 1-21-54519

## **Current Academic Appointment**

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2021-Present      *Assistant Professor of Special Education*  
Department of Advanced Teacher Education  
Niagara University

## Research

### Publications

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1. **Bhana, N.**, Raulston, T.J., Ousley, C., & Bagawan, A. (2023). Sequential Analysis of Photographs and Parent Training to Support Conversations about Past Events between Caregivers and Children with Autism. *Advances in Neurodevelopmental Disorders*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s41252-023-00333-6>
2. **Bhana, N.**, Rangel, G., & Raulston, T.J. (in press). Barriers and facilitators to services for individuals with disabilities in the Republic of Panama. *Journal of International Special Needs Education*.
3. Taylor, J.T., & **Bhana, N.** (2021). Incorporating High-Leverage Practice 7 in Classroom/Behavior Management Courses: Creating Supportive Learning Environments. *Journal of Special Education Preparation*. <https://doi.org/10.33043/JOSEP.1.1.47-54>
4. **Bhana, N.**, McNaughton, D., Raulston, T.J., & Ousley, C. (2020). Supporting communication and participation in shared storybook reading using visual scene displays. *Teaching Exceptional Children*, 52(6), 382-391. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0040059920918609>
5. Raulston, T.J., **Bhana, N.**, & McIntyre, L.L., & Ousley, C. (2020). Supported joint engagement with peers: Collateral effects of a playdate intervention for children with autism. *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders*. 51(1) 357-363. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10803-020-04544-x>
6. Ousley, C., Raulston, T., McNaughton, D., Gregori, E., **Bhana, N.**, & Mantzoros, T. (2020). A comparison of single-case evaluation tools applied to functional communication training with augmentative and alternative communication supports for students with developmental disabilities. *Research in Developmental Disabilities*, 107. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ridd.2020.103803>
7. Frantz, R., Douglas, S., Meadan, H., Sands, M., **Bhana, N.**, & D'Agostino, S. (2020). Exploring the professional development needs of early childhood paraeducators and their supervising teachers. *Topics in Early Childhood Special Education*. 42(1), 20-30. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0271121420921237>
8. Raulston, T.J., Hansen, S., Frantz, R., Machalicek, W., & **Bhana, N.** (2020). A parent implemented playdate intervention for children with autism and their peers. *Journal of Early Intervention*. 42, 303-320. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1053815119880943>
9. Raulston, T. J., Hieneman, M., Caraway, N., Pennefather, J., & **Bhana, N.** (2019). Enablers of behavioral parent training for families of children with autism spectrum disorder. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, 28, 693-703. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10826-018-1295-x>

## Nonrefereed Articles and Reports

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1. **Bhana, N.,** Andresen, J. (2021). *Supporting doctoral students: lessons from an online peer mentoring group*. In A. Markelz, (Ed.), TED 2021 Conference Proceedings: Steering into the Future (pp 07-11). Teacher Education Division of the Council for Exceptional Children, Fort Worth, TX.
2. Rangel, G., & **Bhana, N.** (2020) ¿Y cómo te fue hoy? La comunicación en niños/as con capacidad verbal limitada (And how did it go today? Communication in children with limited speech). *Revista Aula De Innovacion Educativa*, 299.

## Manuscripts Under Review

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1. **Bhana, N.,** Raulston, T. J., McNaughton, D., & Gilhuber, C., (2023). *Collateral effects of the Tell Me MORE! intervention on the joint reminiscing of parents of children with ASD*. Department of Advanced Teacher Education. Niagara University.
2. **Bhana, N.** & Bagawan, A. (2023) *Addressing the Needs of Practicing Muslim Families: A Guide for Practitioners*. Department of Advanced Teacher Education. Niagara University.

## Manuscripts in Preparation

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1. **Bhana, N.,** Lukins, J., Sallese, M., Calhoun., E., (2023) “*Comfortability comes from seeing people like you in positions of power*” *Experiences of Special Education Teachers of Color*. Department of Advanced Teacher Education. Niagara University.
2. Deger, G., **Bhana, N.,** & Frank., J. (2023). *¡Escúchame! Using simulations to prepare special educators to communicate positively with families with Limited English Proficiency via an interpreter*. Department of Special Education. Westminster College.
3. Lukins, J., **Bhana, N.,** Sallesee, M.R, Andresen., J., (2023). *Preparing Educators to Critically Think, Talk, and Teach About Disability*. Department of Teacher Education and Learning Sciences. North Carolina State University.

## Ongoing Research Projects

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1. *Diversifying the Educational Workforce in Special Education*.  
Principal Investigator
2. *Evaluation of the Social and Cultural Validity of the POWR+ Intervention within the Latino Community*  
Principal Investigator

3. *Development of a Culturally Responsive Caregiver Intake Form*  
Co-Principal Investigator

### Invited Presentations

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1. **Bhana, N.** (2023; March 31) *Strategies to support students with disabilities (Técnicas de apoyo para estudiantes con discapacidad)* [Invited Speaker]. Republic of Panama, National Secretariat of Science, Technology, and Innovation (SENACYT), “All Education” Conference Cycle 2023, Virtual.
2. **Bhana, N.** (2023; March 9- 11) *Servicing Racially and Ethnically Diverse Families Using Naturalistic Developmental Behavioral Interventions* [Invited Speaker]. CalABA 41<sup>st</sup> Annual Western Regional Conference on Behavior Analysis.
3. **Bhana, N.,** Sallese, M., & Rodriguez, W. (2021; November 2-5). *Preparing for the transition from doctoral student to independent scholar* [Invited Panelist]. Council for Exceptional Children, Teacher Education Division Annual Conference, Kaleidoscope Committee, Ft. Worth, Texas.
4. **Bhana, N.** (2021; August 9-12). *Conversations with Panamanian parents regarding their children with disabilities and Augmentative and Alternative Communication (Conversaciones con padres Panameños sobre sus hijos/hijas con discapacidad y la comunicación aumentativa y alternativa)*. In Soto, G.(Moderator) *De la investigación en CAA a la práctica en la comunidad Hispanohablante investigaciones actuales y necesidades en la investigación en español* [NIH sponsored round table presentation]. International Society for Augmentative and Alternative Communication (ISAAC) Connect International Conference, Virtual.
5. **Bhana, N.** (2019; August 24). *Creating new communication opportunities through augmentative and alternative communication systems (Creando nuevas oportunidades de comunicación a través de sistemas aumentativos y alternativos)*. [Invited Speaker] XIII Fundación Soy Capaz Simposio de Autismo Patologías Afines, Panama City, Republic of Panama.

### Conference Presentations

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1. **Bhana, N.** (2023; July 24- 27) *Creando nuevas oportunidades de comunicación a través de sistemas aumentativos y alternativos*. International Society for Augmentative and Alternative Communication (ISAAC) Biannual Conference, Cancun, Mexico.
2. **Bhana, N.,** & Rangel Rodriguez, G. (2023; July 24- 27) “*Conversations with Panamanian Parents Regarding Their Children with Disabilities and AAC*. International Society for Augmentative and Alternative Communication Biannual Conference, Cancun, Mexico.

3. Douglas, S. N., Bagawan, A., **Bhana, N.**, Rangel-Rodriguez, G., & Galley, K. (2023, July). *Including families in AAC interventions: Culturally relevant practices and considerations for various cultural contexts [panel]*. International Society for Augmentative and Alternative Communication Biannual Conference, Cancun, Mexico.
4. **Bhana, N.** & Sallese, M. (2023; March 1- 4). *Research-to-Practice Deep Dive: Implement, Monitor, and Succeed: A Deep Dive into Antecedent Interventions*. Council for Exceptional Children Conference and Expo, Louisville, Kentucky.
5. **Bhana, N.** (2023; January 18-20). *A Picture is Worth a Thousand Words: Supporting Communication, Early Literacy, and Social Skills with Photographs and Visual Scene Displays*. Council for Exceptional Children, Division of Autism and Developmental Disabilities (DADD) National Conference, Clearwater, Florida.
6. **Bhana, N.**, Bagawan, A. (2023; January 18-20). *Muslim Families and Family Centered Services. Recommendations for Increasing Cultural Sensitivity*. Council for Exceptional Children, Division of Autism and Developmental Disabilities (DADD) National Conference, Clearwater, Florida.
7. **Bhana, N.**, Lukins, J., Sallese, M., Calhoun., E. (2022; November 8-11) “*Comfortability comes from seeing people like you in positions of power*” *Experiences of Special Education Teachers of Color*. Council for Exceptional Children, Teacher Education Division (TED) National Conference, Richmond, Virginia.
8. **Bhana, N.** (2022; November 8-11) *Introducing Models of Disability*. In Lukins, J. (Moderator) *Re-Focusing Inclusive Teacher Preparation Through a Critical Lens*. [Quick Chat Session] Council for Exceptional Children, Teacher Education Division (TED) National Conference, Richmond, Virginia.
9. **Bhana, N.** (2022; August 1-4) *Sequential Analysis of Photographs and Parent Training to Support Conversations about Past Events between Caregivers and Children with Autism*. [Poster session]. National Autism Conference, State College, Pennsylvania.
10. **Bhana, N.** (2022; April 1). *Review of the Article “A Parent-Implemented Playdate Intervention for Young Children with Autism and Their Peers*. Behavior Analysis Certification Board Naturalistic Developmental Behavioral Interventions Special Interest Group, Virtual.
11. **Bhana, N.**, Ousley, C., Bagawan, A. (2022; March 23-25). *Primary and Collateral Effects of a Single Case Intervention for Children on the Autism Spectrum*. Badar-Kauffman Conference, Kent, Ohio.
12. **Bhana, N.** (2022; February 1-4). *Tell me MORE: Natural Strategies to Promote Social Skills and Communication*. Council for Exceptional Children Annual Conference, Virtual.

13. Sallese, M. & **Bhana, N.** (2022; January 16-19). *Data, Data, Data: Collect it and Report!* Council for Exceptional Children Annual Conference, Orlando, Florida.
14. **Bhana, N.**, Andresen, J. (2021; November 2-5). *Supporting doctoral students: Lessons from an online peer mentoring group.* Council for Exceptional Children, Teacher Education Division (TED) National Conference, Ft. Worth, Texas.
15. Deger., G., **Bhana., N.**, & Frank., J. (2021, March 8-13). *¡Escúchame! Using simulations to prepare special educators to communicate positively with families with LEP.* [Panel session]. Council for Exceptional Children Learning Interactive Virtual Event (L.I.V.E)
16. Ousley, C., & **Bhana, N.** (2021, March 8-13). *DICE: A strategy for practitioners on how to decrease challenging behavior and replace it with appropriate communication* [Poster session]. Council for Exceptional Children Learning Interactive Virtual Event (L.I.V.E)
17. **Bhana, N.** (2021, August 3-6). *Conversations with Panamanian parents regarding their children with disabilities and AAC.* Biennial International Society for Augmentative and Alternative Communication (ISAAC) Conference, Cancun, Mexico. (Conference postponed)
18. **Bhana, N.** (2021, August 3-6). *Creating new communication opportunities through augmentative and alternative communication system (in Spanish).* Biennial International Society for Augmentative and Alternative Communication (ISAAC) Conference, Cancun, Mexico. (Conference postponed)
19. \*Deger., G., **Bhana., N.**, & Frank., J. (2019, November 5-8). *¡Escúchame! Using simulations to prepare special educators to communicate positively with families with LEP.* [Poster session- Kaleidoscope] Council for Exceptional Children Teacher Education Division Conference, New Orleans, LA. \*Awarded best mixed methods poster.
20. **Bhana, N.**, Raulston, T.J., Hieneman, M., Caraway, N., & Pennefather, J. (2019, May 23-27) *Enablers of behavioral parent training for families of children with autism spectrum disorder* [Poster session] Association for Behavior Analysis International Conference, Chicago, IL.
21. **Bhana, N.**, McNaughton, D., Light, J. (2019, January 30-February 3). *Visual Scene Displays (VSD) to promote early literacy skills with children with complex communication needs* [Poster session] Assistive Technology Industry Association Conference, Orlando, FL.
22. **Bhana, N.** (2018, August 6-9). *Peer delivered academic interventions for students with autism spectrum disorders: A review of the literature* [Poster session]. National Autism Conference, State College, PA.

23. **Bhana N.**, Gormley, J., McNaughton D., & Light J. (2018, February 7-10). *Presentation of a massive online open course on alternative access* [Poster session- Kaleidoscope]. Council for Exceptional Children Conference, Tampa, FL.

### Grants & Awards

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- 2023      *Niagara University Research Support Grant* (funded, \$2000)  
 Project: Investigation of Service Needs of Young Children with Autism and their Families in Puerto Rico (ABA Accessible Para Todos!)
- Travel Award for Emerging Researchers*  
 Biennial Conference of the International Society of Alternative and Augmentative Communication (Cancun, Mexico)
- Travel Award for BIPOC Early Career Faculty*  
 Annual Council for Exceptional Children Convention (Louisville, KY)
- 2022      *Travel Award for BIPOC Early Career Faculty*  
 Annual Council for Exceptional Children Convention (Orlando, FL)
- 2021      *Niagara University Research Support Grant* (funded, \$906)  
 Project: Diversifying the Education Workforce in Special Education
- 2020      *Organization for Autism Research* (unfunded)  
 Project: Supporting Conversations with Teachers for Children with ASD and CCN using Visual Scene Displays  
 February 2020
- 2019      *First place mixed methods poster*  
 ¡Escúchame!: Using Simulations to Prepare Special Educators to Communicate Positively with Families with LEP.  
 Council for Exceptional Children Teacher Education Division Conference.
- 2015      *Nominated for the Viva Tampa Hispanic Heritage Teacher Award*  
 Hillsborough County Schools
- 2012      *Recipient of the Carolyn Daffin McAfee Scholarship*  
 Florida State University
- 2012      *Recipient of the Latin American and Caribbean Scholarship*  
 Florida State University

## Teaching

### University Teaching and Preservice Teacher Supervision

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- 2021-Present ***Instructor of Record, Niagara University***  
 EDU 239- Characteristics of Students with Exceptionalities  
 EDU 539- Educating Students with Exceptionalities  
 EDU 455- Assessment of Students with Exceptionalities  
 EDU 468- Methods for Teaching Children with Exceptional Needs  
 EDU572X- Reading Difficulties: Identification and Intervention\*  
 \*Independent study co-taught with Dr. Kathleen McGrath  
 EDU604- Observation & Assessment of Young Children and Young Children with Exceptional Learning Needs  
 EDU 700- Educational and Assistive Technology  
 EDU 778- Nature of Autism: Theory and Practice  
 EDU 757- Research Methods in Applied Behavior Analysis
- 2017-2019 ***Instructor of Record, The Pennsylvania State University***  
 SPLED 418- Assistive Technology for Persons with Disabilities  
 SPLED 419 Assistive Technology for General Education Teachers  
 SPLED 411- Intervention for Students with Severe Disabilities (Supervised)
- 2017-2020 ***Teaching Graduate Assistant, The Pennsylvania State University***  
 SPLED 412- Explicit Instruction for Students with Disabilities  
 SPLED 418- Assistive Technology for Persons with Disabilities
- 2017- 2019 ***Supervisor for Pre-Service Teaching, The Pennsylvania State University***  
 Practicum Experience in Special Education  
 Graduate Level Student-Teacher Internship  
 Practicum Experience in an Integrated Inclusion Classroom
- 2017-Present ***Selected Invited Guest Classroom Presentations***  
*Naturalistic Developmental Behavioral Interventions (2023, February)*  
 Guest Lecture for Applications in Developmental Disabilities (TLL 2234); University of Pittsburgh
- Accommodations and Modifications for Assessing Students with Special Educational Needs (2022, February)*  
 Guest Lecture for Assessment of Learning (EDU 451); Niagara University-Vaughn Campus
- Conducting IEP Meetings with Bilingual Families (2019, April)*  
 Five Guest Lecture Series for “Working with Families and Professionals in Special Education” (SPLED 404); The Pennsylvania State University



*Teaching Writing Skills to Students with Severe Disabilities* (2019, April)  
Guest Lecture for “Seminar in Writing and Content Literacy Instruction for  
Students with Disabilities” (SPLD 509B); The Pennsylvania State University

### **Professional Experience**

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- 2017-2021 *Graduate Research and Teaching Assistant*  
Department of Educational Psychology, Counseling, and Special Education  
The Pennsylvania State University  
University Park, Pennsylvania
- 2013-2017 *Autism Support Teacher*  
Buckhorn Elementary School  
Hillsborough County Schools  
Valrico, Florida
- 2012- 2013 *Bilingual Research Assistant*  
*Project:* Spanish-English Language Learner’s Early Literacy Skills  
Florida Center for Reading Research  
Tallahassee, Florida
- 2010-2011 *Teaching Assistant*  
Florida State University Children Center  
Tallahassee, Florida

### **Professional Certifications**

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- 2020 Applied Behavior Analysis Graduate Certificate  
Penn State University- World Campus
- Graduate Student Online Teaching Certificate  
Penn State University- World Campus
- 2013 *Florida Department of Education*  
Exceptional Student Education  
Elementary Education  
English for Speakers of Other Languages (Academic Endorsement)  
Autism Spectrum Disorders (Academic Endorsement)

### **Service**

#### **State and National Service**

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- 2023-Present *President (Elected Position)*  
2022-2023 *Secretary (Elected Position)*  
NY State Council for Exceptional Children (NYCEC)

2022-Present *International Member at Large (Elected Position)*  
Division of Emotional and Behavioral Disabilities  
Council for Exceptional Children (CEC)

### **Manuscript Reviewer**

#### *Editorial Board*

2022-Present Journal of Special Education Preparation

#### *Ad-Hoc Manuscript Reviewer*

2023 Behavior Analysis in Practice  
2022 Journal of International Special Needs Education  
2022 Advances in Neurodevelopmental Disorders  
2022 Review of Educational Research  
2020-Present TEACHING Exceptional Children

### **Grant Reviewer**

2023 *Ohio Deans Compact Blended Preparation Incentive Grants or Diversifying the Educator Workforce Incentive Grants, Ohio Deans Compact*  
Systems Development and Improvement Center  
University of Cincinnati

2021 *Development of IHE-District Partnerships to Develop, Implement, and/or Extend/Expand Effective Teacher Education Candidate Bridge to Practice Programs Grounded in the Science of Reading, Ohio Deans Compact on Exceptional Children*  
Systems Development and Improvement Center  
University of Cincinnati

### **Conference Proposal Reviewer**

2023 CEC; Division of Early Childhood Annual Conference  
CEC; Division on Autism and Developmental Disabilities  
2021 CEC; Teacher Education Division Annual Conference  
2021 Multidisciplinary Association of Educational Research; International  
Multidisciplinary Conference on Educational Research  
2020 CEC; Division for Early Childhood Annual Conference

### ***Invited Panelist/Moderator***

2023 CEC Division for Autism and Developmental Disabilities (DADD) Outreach  
Topic: *Hidden Curriculum in Doctorate Programs*  
*Part 1:* Interactive Roundtable, Annual Conference  
*Part 2:* Early Career and Student Webinar Series, Online

2022 Coach to Communicate Collaborative Involvement Discussion Forum (Project PI: Dr. J. Birdie Ganz)  
*Topic: Anti-Racism and Anti-Ableism in Parent Training and Coaching*  
Texas A&M University, Online

*Virtual Microconference on Single Case Research & Questionable Research Practices.*

2021 Virtual Panel: CEC Kaleidoscope Committee Student Event  
*Topic: Tips for the Job Search Process*

2021-Present *Single Case Research Design Twitter Chat #SCRDCHAT*  
*Social Validity Twitter Chat Section Lead*  
[Spring 2023](#)  
[Spring 2022](#)  
[Fall 2021](#)

### ***Workgroup Member***

2022 Aided Language Modeling (ALM) Supports for Low Resource Countries  
Organizers: Dr. Sarah Douglas, Michigan State University and Dr. Shakila Dada  
University of Pretoria

### ***Mentorship***

2023 Mentor; Early Career Mentorship Breakfast  
CEC Conference, Louisville, KY.

2020-Present Co-Founder Disability Scholars Collective (DISCO)  
Graduate and Early Career Writing and Peer Mentoring Group

2019 *Mentor*; CEC Pioneers Division Mentoring Program

2013-2017 *Minority Representative*; School Advisory Council  
Buckhorn Elementary, Valrico, FL

### **University Service**

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2021-Present *BIPOC Student Recruitment and Retention Committee*; Niagara University

2021-Present *Pi Lambda Theta Honor Society*; Niagara University Chapter

## Community Outreach

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- 2023      Invited Speaker  
Joyscape Therapy Services  
Topic: Practitioner Positionality and Servicing Racially and Ethnically Diverse Families Using Naturalistic Interventions  
Bay Area, California
- 2022      Invited Speaker  
Islamic Foundation of Panama Community Event  
Topic: Child Development and Behavior Tools to Support Families at Home  
Panama City, Republic of Panama
- Invited Co-Presenter  
Magic Leap, INC. Autism Awareness Month Event  
Topic: Assistive Technology  
Nationwide, Online
- Invited Speaker  
Nurturing in the Neighborhood Community Event  
Topic: “Behavior Tools to Support Families at Home”  
Niagara Falls, NY
- Invited Speaker  
Niagara Frontier Industry Education Council and the Niagara Orleans Counseling Association Career Exploration Night  
Topic: Careers in Education  
Niagara Falls, NY
- 2021      Invited Speaker  
Nurturing in the Neighborhood Community Event  
Topic: “Learning Through Play” and “Behavior Tools to Support Families at Home”  
Niagara Falls, NY
- Consultant  
Topic: “My Kid Is The Youngest (Or Oldest) In the Classroom. Does That Matter?”  
<https://tinyurl.com/2pt7dx3b>
- 2019      Invited Speaker  
Topic: Autism Spectrum Disorders  
“La Esquina de Manuel Nunez” Talk Show  
RPC Radio Panama

## **Professional Memberships**

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Association for Behavior Analysis International  
International Society for Augmentative and Alternative Communication  
Council for Exceptional Children:  
    Division on Autism and Developmental Disabilities  
    Division for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Learners  
    Division for Early Childhood  
    Division for Emotional and Behavioral Health  
    Division for International Special Education & Services  
    Teacher Education Division

## **Online Presence**

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Personal Website: [www.nbphd.com](http://www.nbphd.com)  
Google Scholar: <https://tinyurl.com/y29rcc73>  
Research Gate: [https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Naima\\_Bhana](https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Naima_Bhana)  
Twitter: <https://twitter.com/BhanaNaima>