

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

Assistant Professor of Special Education

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Areas of Specialization

Extensive Support Needs
Cultural, Ethnic, and Linguistic Diversity
Early Intervention

Languages

Spanish (Native Proficiency)
Gujarati (Intermediate Proficiency)

Education

- 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

Current Academic Appointment

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

Professional Experience

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's Center
Tallahassee, Florida

Professional Certifications

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

Research

Publications

1. **Bhana Lopez, N.,** & Bagawan, A. (In Press). Supporting Muslim Families of Young Children with Extensive Support Needs: Recommendations for Practitioners. *Inclusive Practices*.
2. Lukins, J., **Bhana Lopez, N.,** Sallese, M. R., & Andresen., J. (2023). Fostering Inclusive Dispositions: Integrating Disability Studies in Teacher Education. *Journal of Special Education Preparation*. <https://doi.org/10.33043/JOSEP.3.3.4-15>
3. **Bhana Lopez, N.,** Raulston, T. J., & Gilhuber, C.S. (2023). Collateral effects of the Tell Me MORE! intervention on the joint reminiscing of mother of children with ASD. *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders*. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10803-023-06103-6>

4. **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*. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s41252-023-00333-6>
5. **Bhana Lopez, N.**, Rangel, G., & Raulston, T. J. (2023). Conversations with Panamanian parents regarding their children with disabilities. *Journal of International Special Needs Education*, 25(2), 1-11. <http://doi.org/10.9782/JISNE-D-22-00001>
6. 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*, 1(1), 47-54. <https://doi.org/10.33043/JOSEP.1.1.47-54>
7. **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>
8. 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>
9. 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, 103803. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ridd.2020.103803>
10. 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>
11. 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(4), 303-320. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1053815119880943>
12. 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>

Manuscripts Under Review

1. **Bhana Lopez, N.**, Lukins, J., Sallese, M. R., & 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.

Manuscripts in Preparation

1. **Bhana Lopez, N.**, Ousley C., Wattanawongan, S., & Ganz J. B. (2023). *A systematic review of the cultural responsiveness of AAC interventions*. Department of Advanced Teacher Education. Niagara University.
 2. Rangel Rodriguez G*., **Bhana Lopez, N*.**, Carrillo Vega R., Medina Y. & Baires N. (2023). *An Examination of the Barriers and Facilitators of AAC Usage in Mexico*. Department of Advanced Teacher Education. Niagara University
- *Rangel Rodriguez. and Bhana Lopez contributed equally and are co-first authors of this manuscript.

Nonrefereed Articles and Reports

1. **Bhana, N.**, & Andresen, J. (2021). *Supporting doctoral students: lessons from and 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. <https://shorturl.at/bixH7>
2. Rangel, G., & **Bhana, N.** (2020) ¿Y cómo te ha ido 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. <https://shorturl.at/lmyU0>

Invited Presentations

1. **Bhana, N.** (2023, October 5). *Unlocking Expression: Serving and Empowering Diverse Students with Complex Communication Needs and Their Families* [Invited Speaker]. Simpson Autism Conference, Springfield, Missouri.
2. **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.
3. **Bhana, N.** (2023, March 9- 11). *Servicing racially and ethnically diverse families using naturalistic developmental behavioral interventions* [Invited Speaker]. CalABA 41st Annual Western Regional Conference on Behavior Analysis, Long Beach, California.

4. **Bhana, N.**, Sallese, M. R., & 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, Fort Worth, Texas.
5. **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 Hispánico hablante 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.
6. **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

1. **Bhana Lopez, 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 Lopez, 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 Lopez, N.**, & Rangel-Rodriguez, G. (2023, July 24 27). *Including families in AAC interventions: Culturally relevant practices and considerations for various cultural contexts [Panel Presentation]*. International Society for Augmentative and Alternative Communication Biannual Conference, Cancun, Mexico.
4. **Bhana, N.**, & Sallese, M. R. (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. R., & 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. R., & **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, Fort 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. 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, Louisiana. *Awarded best mixed methods poster.
18. **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, Illinois.
19. **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, Florida.
20. **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, Pennsylvania.
21. **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, Florida.

Grants

- 2023 *Institute of Education Sciences Grant* (submitted, \$2,000,000)
 Co-Principal Investigator
 Project: Partnering with Caregivers: Empowering Diverse Family Members to Promote Augmentative and Alternative Communication Use
- Niagara University Research Support Grant* (funded, \$2000)
 Principal Investigator
 Project: Investigation of Service Needs of Young Children with Autism and their Families in Puerto Rico (ABA Accessible Para Todos!)
- 2021 *Niagara University Research Support Grant* (funded, \$906)
 Principal Investigator
 Project: Diversifying the Education Workforce in Special Education
- 2020 *Organization for Autism Research* (unfunded, \$2000)
 Principal Investigator
 Project: Supporting Conversations with Teachers for Children with ASD and CCN using Visual Scene Displays
 February 2020

Awards

- 2023 *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)
- 2015 *Nominated for the Viva Tampa Hispanic Heritage Teacher Award*
Hillsborough County Schools
Tampa, Florida

Teaching

University Teaching and Preservice Teacher Supervision

- 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” (SPLD 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

Mentorship and Advising

- 2023-Present Dissertation Committee Member, Laura Sarchet
University of Rochester
- 2020-Present Co-Founder Disability Scholars Collective (DISCO)
Graduate and Early Career Writing and Peer Mentoring Group
- 2019 *Mentor*; CEC Pioneers Division Mentoring Program

Service

State and National Service

Professional Organizations

- 2023-Present *President* (Elected Position)
NY State Council for Exceptional Children
- 2022-2023 *Secretary* (Elected Position)
NY State Council for Exceptional Children
- 2022-Present *International Member at Large* (Elected Position)
CEC Division for Emotional and Behavioral Health

Editorial Service

- 2023 *Associate Editor*
Journal of Special Education Preparation (JOSEP)
- Guest Associate Editor*
Behavior Analysis in Practice
Special Issue on Latin American Women in Behavior Analysis
- 2022-Present *Editorial Board*
Journal of Special Education Preparation
- Ad-Hoc Reviewer*
Topics in Early Childhood Special Education
Behavior Analysis in Practice
Journal of International Special Needs Education
Advances in Neurodevelopmental Disorders
Review of Educational Research
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
Topic: Anti-Racism and Anti-Ableism in Parent Training and Coaching
 Texas A&M University, Online
- 2022 Virtual Microconference
Topic: 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 Section Lead
Topic: Social Validity
[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

University Service

- 2023 *Chair*, BIPOC Student Recruitment and Retention Committee; Niagara University
 2021-2023 *Member*, BIPOC Student Recruitment and Retention Committee; Niagara
 University
 2023 *Member*, Education Sector Inclusive Excellence, Niagara University
 2021-Present *Co-Chair*, Pi Lambda Theta Honor Society; Niagara University Chapter

Community Outreach

- 2023 Invited Speaker
 Topic: Culturally Affirming Special Education in Panamanian and Muslim
 Cultures
 The Behavior Speak Podcast w/ Ben Reiman
 Nationwide, Online

Invited Speaker
Margaret Murphy Center for Children
Topic: Muslim Families and Family-Centered Services
Auburn, Maine (Online)

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
www.sheknows.com
Topic: “My Kid Is the Youngest (Or Oldest) In the Classroom. Does That Matter?”
<https://tinyurl.com/2pt7dx3b>

2019 Invited Speaker
“La Esquina de Manuel Nunez” Talk Show
Topic: Autism Spectrum Disorders
RPC Radio Panama

Professional Memberships

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
 Division for Research
 Teacher Education Division

Online Presence

Personal Website: www.nbphd.com
Google Scholar: <https://tinyurl.com/y29rcc73>
Research Gate: https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Naima_Bhana
Twitter: <https://twitter.com/BhanaNaima>