

Sabbatical Report 2025 Academic Year (Spring 2025)

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Overview

The purpose of my sabbatical was to further my research contributions to the field of early care and education through peer-reviewed publications/presentations related to reflective consultation/reflective practice. The time allocated to engage in scholarly activities was instrumental to my professional development and growth.

Background/Rationale

There is limited research that centers the voices and experiences of Spanish-English bilingual early childhood (EC) educators participating in reflective consultation. The purpose of my sabbatical was to write-up research and prepare presentations from a collaborative research project: *Escúchanos*. This research project is a collaboration with Ayumi Nagase, Sonoma State University, Holly Hatton-Bowers, University of Nebraska, Lincoln and Ann-Marie Wiese, WestEd.

Key Sabbatical Activities

Project #1: Book Project: Reflective Consultation and Supervision in Early Childhood Development and Education: Cultivating Well-Being, Justice, and Transformation;
Co-Editors: Elita Amini Virmani and Holly Hatton

1. **Propose a book to Springer Nature:** The primary purpose of my sabbatical was to submit a book proposal to Springer Nature's Child and Adolescent/Developmental and Family Psychology Division. I collaborated with a colleague, Dr. Holly Hatton at University of Nebraska-Lincoln to submit a book proposal focused on reflective consultation in early care in education.
 - a. Collaborated with co-editor to write proposal
 - b. Submitted book proposal
2. **Excerpt from Book Proposal:** For far too long early childhood educators have been working in a system that compromises their mental health and well-being, and does not value the work they are carrying for society at large. This book examines reflective supervision and consultation (RS/C) in early care and education (ECE) to nurture workforce well-being and promote high quality educator-child interactions and attunement to young children's emotional worlds. Principles, approaches and strategies are offered to enable the provision of RS/C with a lens of care, cultural humility, and equity, honoring the humanity of early

childhood educators. The book advocates for early childhood educators to engage in RS/C in practical ways that are healing, trauma-informed, and justice-oriented. Chapters offer a unique opportunity to learn from practitioners and early childhood educators engaged in RS/C, sharing perspectives of what their experiences of culturally and linguistically responsive reflective consultation looks like in practice. Ways to observe, assess, and evaluate RS/C are shared. The book illuminates the possibilities of RS/C to transform the internal worlds of early childhood educators, their relationships with young children, and the world around them.

Key topics featured include:

- Reflective supervision and consultation in early care and education
- Trauma informed and justice oriented early care and education
- Professional development approaches in early care and education
- Practitioner voices in reflective supervision and consultation
- Culturally and linguistically responsive reflective supervision and consultation
- Assessing reflective supervision and consultation
- Transforming the internal world of early care and education professional
- Reflective practice to support social-emotional well-being
- Radical healing and reflective practice

Reflective Supervision/Consultation in Early Care and Education: Centering the Humanity of Early Childhood Educators is a must-have resource for researchers, early childhood mental health practitioners, early childhood professionals and leaders, as well as graduate students in early childhood mental health, child development, social work and child and family studies.

3. **Book proposal acceptance:** During the course of my sabbatical, the book proposal was accepted, and I stepped into my role as lead co-editor for the project.
 - a. Communicated with Judy Jones, Senior Editor Developmental and Family Psychology regarding the contract details as well as title that would maximize SEO (search engine optimization)
4. **Prepare book for publication:** *Reflective Consultation and Supervision in Early Childhood Development and Education: Cultivating Well-Being, Justice, and Transformation.*
 - a. As lead co-editor I managed the process of inviting authors to contribute to the book, engaged in back-and-forth communication with 22 authors
 - b. Set timelines and expectations for authors
 - c. Currently, I am in communication with authors regarding deadlines, expectations and conceptual framing of chapter contributions

- d. Engage in meetings with authors on an as needed basis

Project #2: Chapter 9: “Otra Vez Inhalamos”: Integrating Translanguaging into Reflective Consultation with Early Childhood Educators (in Co-Eds Virmani, E.A. & Hatton, H.)

Authors: Elita Amini Virmani, Holly Hatton, Ayesha Rabadi-Raol, Ann-Marie Wiese, Ayumi Nagase

Collaborated with co-authors to draft a chapter that integrates the practice of translanguaging with reflective consultation with early childhood educators. The article speaks to the integration of translanguaging into reflective consultation thus carries significant equity implications. It challenges deficit views of bilingualism, creates conditions for multilingual educators to feel seen and heard, and affirms the professional knowledge they bring from their cultural and linguistic backgrounds. By legitimizing translanguaging as a reflective and relational practice, consultants foster inclusivity, solidarity, and sustainability. In this way, translanguaging becomes more than a linguistic strategy; it represents an equity-oriented stance that strengthens reflective consultation's potential to heal, empower, and sustain those engaged in the complex work of early childhood education.

Project #3: Presentation Submission to Peer-Reviewed International (Bilingual) Conference: Reconceptualizing Early Childhood Education Conference (RECE) Justicia y equidad para las infancias y comunidades: La urgencia de descolonizar nuestro pensamiento y nuestras prácticas. Justice and equity for children and communities: The urgency of decolonizing our Thinking and Practices

Submitted presentation proposal for peer-review: *Reflective Supervision and Consultation in Early Childhood Development and Education: Cultivating Well-Being, Justice, and Transformation – A Novel Resource for Early Care and Education - A Transformative Book on Reflective Supervision and Consultation*
Authors: Elita Amini Virmani and Holly Hatton

Abstract: The focus of this session is for participants to learn of the collective work from a new book: “Reflective Supervision and Consultation in Early Childhood Development and Education: Cultivating Well-Being, Justice, and Transformation” that is to be published with Springer Nature. The session will discuss the cross-cutting themes of the book including: justice-oriented approaches to reflective consultation in early care and education, centering practitioner voices in reflective supervision and consultation, culturally and linguistically responsive reflective supervision and consultation, assessing reflective supervision and consultation, and supporting social-emotional well-being and radical healing through reflective supervision and consultation in early care and education.

Status: Proposal to co-present at conference was accepted and travel authorization is complete.

**Project #3: Submitted Academic Article to the Infant Mental Health Journal
(Peer-Reviewed Journal)**

Submitted article: *Escúchanos, “We do have emotions and we do have feelings”:
Exploring How Reflective Consultation Supports Early Childhood Educators*
*Authors: Elita Amini Virmani, Holly Hatton, Ayumi Nagase, Ann-Marie Wiese, Jennifer
Silverstein, and Heather Harsbarger.*

Abstract: Despite the promise of reflective consultation and the beneficial impacts it may have on enhancing early childhood educator social-emotional well-being and competence, there is limited research on reflective consultation with early childhood educators. The current project, *Escúchanos*, examined how English, Spanish, and bilingual Spanish-English speaking EC Educators (N = 16, 6 White, 9 Latina, 1 Asian/Pacific Islander) in the United States experienced reflective consultation at their child care centers. Semi-structured interviews were conducted in the participant’s preferred language to provide a better understanding of the perceived benefits and suggested improvements for delivering reflective consultation in early childhood and education settings. EC educators in the study were provided with reflective consultation sessions over 7 months offered by trained mental health consultants in a linguistically responsive manner. Given the cultural and linguistic diversity of the EC workforce, this study contributes to the practice of providing culturally and linguistically responsive reflective consultation. Findings from this study suggested that reflective consultation offered EC educators with the: space to express feelings; time to take a pause; opportunities to work as a team; and an enhanced awareness of self and others.

Status: Manuscript is under review and we have submitted the first and second revision to date.

**Project #4: Submitted academic article to a peer-reviewed practitioner journal:
Educating Young Children: Humanizing Early Care and Education through Reflective
Consultation**
Authors: Holly Hatton, Elita Amini Virmani, Patricia Cardellini de Almeida

Collaborated with co-authors to submit an article focused on advocating for reflective consultation in early childhood classrooms. Asserting that teachers with time and space for reflection become more grounded, intentional, and joyful. They can navigate stress more effectively, build stronger relationships, and respond to children with care and attunement. By supporting teacher well-being, reflective consultation may also improve classroom climate, program quality, and child outcomes.

Status: Submitted a manuscript to *Educating Young Children*, a practitioner journal in the field of early care and education.

Benefits to the University

The sabbatical provided a unique and necessary opportunity to engage in sustained focus on disseminating research and scholarly activities in the field of early childhood care and education. Over the course of the 6 month sabbatical, I engaged in several scholarly and practice-based projects focused on advancing reflective consultation and supervision in early childhood education, with an emphasis on equity, well-being, and transformation.

In summary, my key activities included: 1) Co-editing (as first author) an academic book titled: *Reflective Consultation and Supervision in Early Childhood Development and Education: Cultivating Well-Being, Justice, and Transformation*, in collaboration with Holly Hatton. 2) Co-authoring (as first author) a chapter titled: "Otra Vez Inhalamos": Integrating Translanguaging into Reflective Consultation with Early Childhood Educators 3) Submitting a peer-reviewed journal article (first author) titled: Escúchanos, "We do have emotions and we do have feelings": Exploring How Reflective Consultation Supports Early Childhood Educators. 4) Submitting a practitioner journal article: Humanizing Early Care and Education

I anticipate that the sabbatical activities I engaged in will yield several benefits to Sonoma State University over the course of the next several years and have already contributed to my own professional growth as a researcher. As a researcher, during my sabbatical I furthered my commitment to leading publications and presentations that elevated underrepresented voices in the early childhood education community. As an educator, my sabbatical project served to deepen my understanding of culturally responsive and equitable learning and practices at SSU. This work supports my growth as a tenured faculty member and as a collaborative and interdisciplinary leader at Sonoma State University.