



Influences on Mathematical Agency in Collegiate Mathematics Education



DIPARTIMENTO DI
MATEMATICA
E APPLICAZIONI

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After reviewing multiple perspectives on agency from education research, a view of “agency as felt capacity” will be introduced, which is jointly determined by contextual factors and internal narratives that expand or limit students’ perceived capacity to respond to challenges. Referring to a study of students who—STEM majors at a large mid-western university—who are transitioning to proof-based mathematics courses, a grounded model will be presented. It is comprised of external structures around course design, academic demands, and life context that shape agency, coordinated with personal narratives regarding mathematics, the role of mathematics in their future trajectory, their perception of their own learning processes and the way they see themselves in relation to sources of mathematical authority. In particular, the model for factors influencing mathematical agency can guide the design of undergraduate learning environments and policies.

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