

students with a disability by others, concerns about the impact of inclusive practices on academic standards, and on teachers' workloads.

The research conducted by Ahmmed et al. (2013) found that Perceived School Support, a subjective norm in TPB, was the strongest predictor variable, influencing teachers' intentions more than attitudes, teacher efficacy, teachers' age and teaching experience. Studies concentrating on levels of teacher efficacy towards inclusive education showed that teachers' self perceptions on competence were influenced by the type of training offered by the institution, the level of knowledge regarding legislation and policies on inclusion, and teaching experience and personal interaction with people with disabilities (Sharma, Loreman & Forlin, 2011; Loreman, Sharma & Forlin, 2013; Sharma, Shaikat & Furlonger, 2014).

As regards background factors, results have often been contradicting. In their study, Ahmmed et al. (2013) found that teachers' age and length of teaching experience were statistically significant in predicting teachers' intentions. Younger teachers, but with same experience, were more open to inclusion than older colleagues. However, teachers with more years of experience were more willing than their colleagues with fewer years of experience. A study conducted by Malinen et al. (2013) using a sample of 1911 in-service teachers from China, Finland and South Africa identified significant country-specific findings. In fact, the results from South Africa provided strong evidence of the impact of culture and context on teacher efficacy and the potential success or otherwise of inclusive practices.

Discussion and Conclusions

While taking into consideration that studies on human behaviour are constantly evolving and they are of interest for different scientific domains, some common denominators that can help to better understand and predict action can already be pinpointed. As outlined in the second part of this article, agentic theories are suitable theoretical frameworks, as they consider the individual as a complex adaptive system (Berthoz, 2012; Sibilio, 2014) with unique demographic variables, beliefs, values, concerns, attitudes, personality traits, perceived efficacy, experience, knowledge, intentions and objectives (Ajzen, 1988; Bandura, 1986; Bourdieu, 1977), who lives and works with other individuals within larger complex adaptive systems and among which there is a constant interplay of influences. Hence, as posited by Bandura (1986), the decision to take action and sustain it is a function of the triadic reciprocal causation between behaviour, personal and environmental factors. Further, agency is of an emergent interactive type (Bandura, 1982) that is preceded by

the act (Berthoz, 2012), or intentional behaviour (Ajzen, 1988) – “the act with its intentionality, its memory of the past, its projection onto the future, the specificity of what interests us in the world as a function of our Umwelt” (Berthoz, 2012, p. 206). Grounding research on such frameworks not only helps to provide data to support these theories, but also to avoid the risk of reductionist conclusions of a cause-effect type when investigating human and teacher agency.

In reviewing the literature available internationally, it is evident that quantitative research is predominantly used, although some examples of quali-quantitative studies have been conducted providing fruitful information for reflection (for example Ahsan et al., 2013). Studies reviewed tended to focus on whether the correlations exist more than the why, a common characteristic of quantitative research. One other limitation of such instruments is that “there is always the danger of the respondents giving socially desirable answers that have little or no correspondence with their everyday behaviour” (Avramidis & Norwich, 2002, p. 143; Armitage & Conner, 2001). Therefore, besides concentrating on the predictive element of such variables and the correlation among them, there is a need to examine more deeply the cognitive, affective and conative aspects, through the use of qualitative research methods such as focus groups, interviews and the use of professional development reflective journals (Pace & Aiello, 2015). These methods may well aid in providing data on the cultural meaning attributed to roles, educational purpose, expectations and significant others influencing one’s beliefs. This could be achieved through longitudinal quali-quantitative case studies “to examine the transformation across time and allow for a more thorough investigation in order to better be able to understand the complexities of inclusion and provide directions for change or continuity of provision as appropriate” (Avramidis & Norwich, 2002, p. 144). Moreover, research needs to expand on other variables, which haven’t yet received as much importance. Some interesting work worth mentioning as an example is the study carried out by Evers, Browers and Tomic (2002, p. 227) who included a burnout inventory for teachers to test whether “a negative attitude towards new instructional practices relate[d] positively to [the teachers’] level of burnout and that their selfefficacy beliefs regarding implementation of the practices and coping with stress involved in this relate negatively to their burnout levels”.

Despite the copious research on variables affecting teachers’ willingness to implement inclusive practices, very little research has been conducted in Italy to date. This country can surely offer valid insight into what factors impinge on the successful and sustainable implementation of inclusive practices, considering its longstanding pedagogical history and a consolidated political and educational infrastructure that has been in place for decades.

In connection with the authors' research interests in teacher agency that stemmed from studies on the science of teaching (didactics) rooted in a bio-educational perspective (Frauenfelder, 1983, 1994) and which, over time, sought possible allegiances with other research strands on didactics, mainly enactivism (Rossi, 2011), neurodidactics (Rivoltella, 2012, 2014), and simplex didactics (Sibilio, 2014; Frauenfelder, Rivoltella, Rossi & Sibilio, 2013), have undertaken this search on a theoretical and practical level. This article presented the first phase of the research, which aimed at providing insight on teacher agency and on the development of validated tools for research in didactics in Italy. So far, two of the scales, the TEIP and the SACIE-R scales have been translated, administered and validated in Italy with a group of in-service teachers (Aiello et al., 2016). Another three scales, the CIES (Sharma & Desai, 2002), AIS and ITICS (Sharma & Jacobs, 2016) have been translated, administered, and data inputting is underway with the intention of providing Italian versions of the scales to get a snapshot of what factors influence Italian pre-service and in-service generalist, subject and learning support teachers' willingness to implement inclusive practices and in turn provide information for teacher education planning.

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Appendix 1

Table 1. Scales to Measure Teachers' Willingness to Implement Inclusive Practices

Year	Authors	Scale	N. of Items	Reliability
1979	Larivee & Cook	Opinions Relative to Mainstreaming (ORM)	30	$\alpha = .89$
1980	Berryman & Neal	Attitudes Towards Mainstreaming Scale (ATMS)	18	$\alpha = .89$
1982	Ashton, Olejnik, Crocker & McAuliffe	Ashton Vignettes	50	NA*
1991	Semmel, Abernathy, Butera & Lesar	Regular Education Initiative Teacher Survey (REITS)	27	$\alpha = .82$
1992	Wilczenski	Attitudes Towards Inclusive Education Scale (ATIES)	16	$\alpha = .92$
1995	Antonak & Larrivee	Opinions Relative to Integration of Students with Disabilities (ORI) [Revision of the ORM (Larivee & Cook, 1979)]	30	$\alpha = .83$
1995	Bender, Vail & Scott	Mainstreaming Attitudes Survey (MAS)	NA	NA
1995	Sideridis and Chandler	Teacher Integration Attitudes Questionnaire (TIAQ)	12	$\alpha = .92$
1997	Bandura	Bandura's Teacher Self-Efficacy Scale	30	NA
1998	Stoiber, Gettinger & Goetz	My Thinking About Inclusion questionnaire - Short Form (MTAI-SF)	12	$\alpha = .80$
1998	Stoiber, Gettinger & Goetz	My Thinking About Inclusion questionnaire (MTAI)	28	$\alpha = .91$
1998	Cochran	Scale of Teachers' Attitudes Toward Inclusive Classrooms (STATIC)	20	$\alpha = .89$
2001	Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy	Teacher Self Efficacy Scale [Translated into Italian and validated for Italian contexts by Biasi et al, 2014]]	12-24	$\alpha = .90$
2002	Sharma & Desai	Concerns about Inclusive Education Scale (CIES) [Translated into Italian and is currently being validated by the authors]	21	$\alpha = .86$

Year	Authors	Scale	N. of Items	Reliability
2004	Bailey	Teachers' Attitude toward Inclusion Scale (TATIS) (used by Sharma & Nutal with teachers)	24	$\alpha = .91$
2007	Alvarez Mchatton & McCray	Inclination Toward Inclusion (ATI)	22-28	$\alpha = .91$
2007	Loreman, Earle, Sharma & Forlin	Sentiments, Attitudes, Concerns regarding Inclusive Education (SACIE)	19	missing
2007	Kuyini & Desai	Knowledge of Inclusive Education Scale (KIES)	16	$\alpha = .88$
2008	Mahat	Multidimensional Attitudes toward Inclusive Education Scale (MATIES)	18	$\alpha = .91$
2010	Cullen, Gregory & Noto	Teacher Attitude Toward Inclusion Scale	14	$\alpha = .82$
2011	Forlin, Earle, Loreman & Sharma	Sentiments, Attitudes, Concerns regarding Inclusive Education - Revised (SACIE-R) [Revision of the SACIE scale (Loreman et al., 2007)] [Translated into Italian and validated for Italian contexts (Aiello et al., 2016)]	15	$\alpha = .74$
2011	Sharma, Loreman & Forlin	Teacher Efficacy for Inclusive Practice (TEIP) scale [Translated into Italian and validated for Italian contexts (Aiello et al., 2016)]	18	$\alpha = .89$
2013	Ahmed, Sharma & Deppeler	Perceived School Support for Inclusive Education (PSSIE)	8	NA
2015	Saloviita	Teachers' Attitudes towards Inclusive Education (TAIS)	10	$\alpha = .89$
2016	Sharma & Jacobs	Attitudes towards Inclusion Scale (AIS) [Translated into Italian and is currently being validated by the authors]	10	missing
2016	Sharma & Jacobs	Intention to Teach in Inclusive Classrooms (ITICS) [Translated into Italian and is currently being validated by the authors]	7	missing

*Note: NA - access was limited to abstract or parts of document only; Missing - not reported in the article